



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

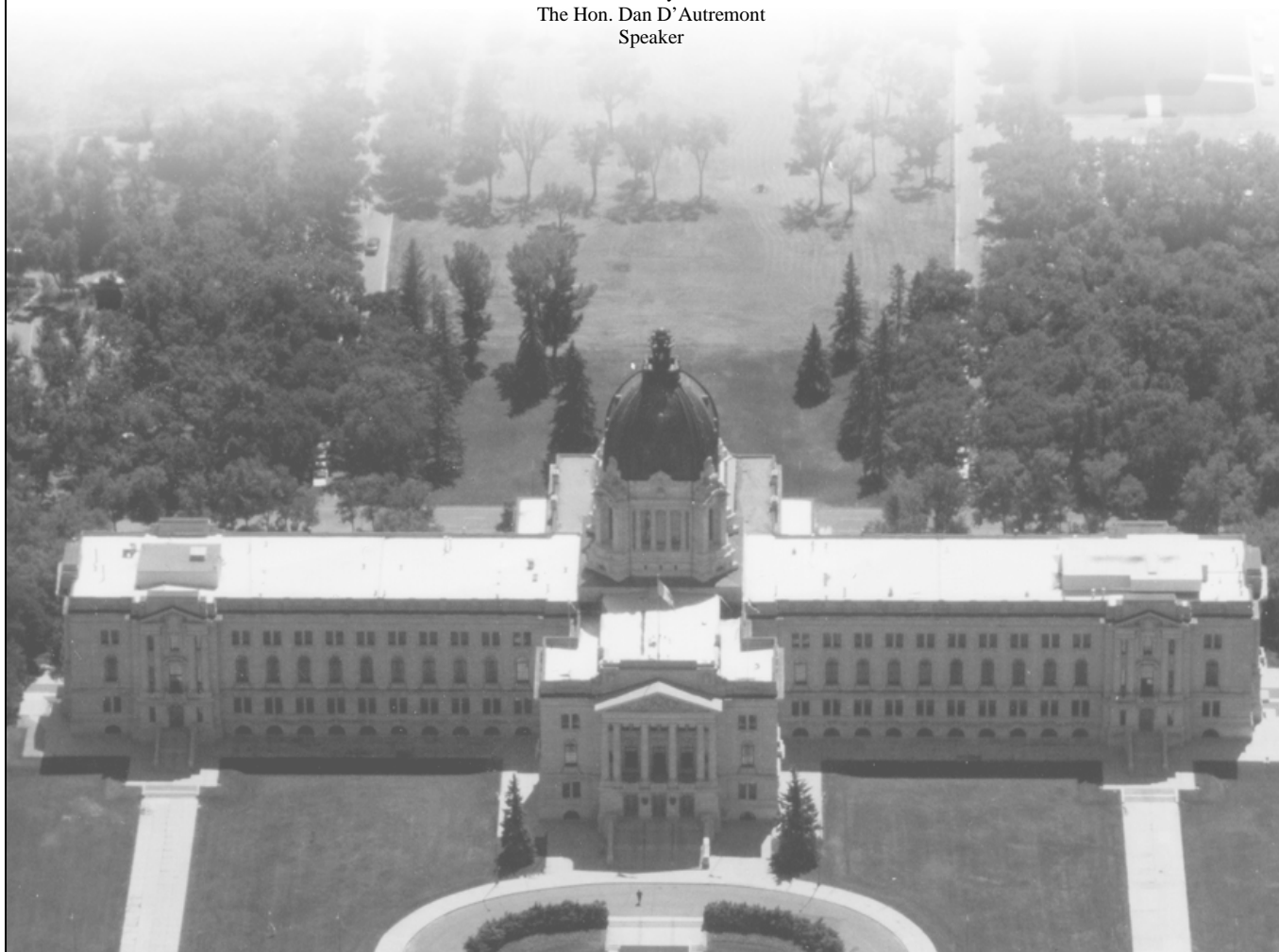
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Hon. Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
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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
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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
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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]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to make an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to members for the leave.

April 15th was a momentous day in the life of our province and our country as regards to the relationship that we value with the people of India. On that day, Mr. Speaker, in Ottawa, Prime Minister Modi of India and Prime Minister Harper, then Prime Minister Harper of Canada, with a delegation from our province, I had the honour of being a part of signing an agreement for the sale of 7 million pounds of Saskatchewan uranium to India for their very strong and robust civilian nuclear program that they have under way in their country as they seek to create energy security for their country and clean energy security for their country.

Mr. Speaker, this was a great day in the life of the relationship between India and Saskatchewan. And it's my pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to my honourable colleagues, someone who was there that day, someone who is the brand new High Commissioner from India to Canada, His Excellency Vishnu Prakash. Accompanying the High Commissioner is his wife, Neelam Prakash, and joining them from the Vancouver consulate office, the consul general of India in Vancouver, Mr. Rajiv K. Chander.

Also joining them is someone that's no stranger here to the province of Saskatchewan, especially with respect to this file, is our friend G.V. Shankar who is a Saskatoon-based consultant that we engaged that has helped us mightily and greatly on the file.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have a few more remarks, but I invite all members to welcome this delegation to the Assembly today. Mr. Speaker, very briefly, this is the first official visit of His Excellency to the province of Saskatchewan. I think, I hope it will be the first of many.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the High Commissioner and his wife are interested in golf. We had a bit of a chat about that today. I want to assure them both that it may not look like it today in Saskatchewan, but we have wonderful golf courses here in the province, and we hope that they'll be able to return

perhaps and enjoy some of them or at least one of them on a return trip.

Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Saskatchewan and India is well known, and there'll be a member statement a little bit later on from government members highlighting the importance of that relationship. But let it be known here again that almost 40 per cent of all Canadian imports to India come from the province of Saskatchewan. This is a very, very important relationship for us and for Canada. Seventy-five per cent of India's lentil exports, 79 per cent of India's pea exports are met by, well, the work of about 18,000 Saskatchewan pulse growers who provide for that market.

There's also a relationship in fertilizer and now in uranium. And we know His Excellency toured the McArthur River uranium mine yesterday. You had a first-hand look at that incredible resource, at that facility up and running, that will contribute to India's plans for energy security.

Mr. Speaker, it's worth noting as well that this is a mutual relationship, that exports from India to our province have increased 170 per cent since 2007. The scale's not quite there in terms of what we're able to provide for the people of India, but the directions are all pointed up in terms of increased exports on both sides.

We also have a strong research relationship and a strong relationship forged by our people — so many new residents have come from India — and Saskatchewan's connection to that country as well. I would just say to His Excellency in this welcome, we really cannot overstate how appreciative we are of the relationship we have with the government, with the people, with the companies, with the co-operatives of India.

We will never, ever take the relationship for granted. We've been there twice on trade missions; I plan to go back. It's an essential part of the relationship. And we welcome His Excellency again here to the Assembly today and to the delegation that's joined us, and we ask him to pass along our gratitude to the people of India for the relationship that we have.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I would like to join with the Premier in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Prakash and his wife along as well, as well as Mr. Shankar and the entire delegation.

You know, the Premier is correct in pointing out the importance of trade relationships and the significance between Saskatchewan and India. That's absolutely correct. But people in Saskatchewan also know that the presence and the contributions of Indians to our province is one that goes back generations. And I guess it goes back in the areas of business most certainly, but we think of the areas of education on our campuses here in the province. We think of in health care, with many physicians and other health care practitioners throughout the province of Indian descent. The contributions have been immense.

And so when I think about the example that India provides, Mr. Speaker, I think it's quite fitting. There might be a few words in a few moments about multiculturalism. We also think about the importance that India provides as a model, as an incredibly diverse country when we look at languages and people groups, and that's something that we can't forget as well when we think about the relationship between these two places. So, Mr. Speaker, I thank them for their presence, wish them all the best with their visit, and I would ask all members to welcome them to the Assembly. And I have one more introduction to make, Mr. Speaker.

I also, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, would like to introduce an individual seated in your gallery and that's Dr. Kathleen O'Reilly. Not a stranger to many here in the province, she obtained her Master of Education from the U of R [University of Regina] and went on to complete a Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] from McGill University, also studied at the famous Sorbonne University in Paris. She's currently a professor at the First Nations University of Canada, has also worked as a senior policy adviser to the Government of Saskatchewan, has a best-selling book titled *Tales Out of School*, and also gives back to the area of education as an elected trustee to Regina Public Schools.

And on top of all that, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to say that she is our candidate for the New Democratic Party in Regina Northeast, and I know we all look forward to her contributions after the election as a member of this Assembly. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming Dr. O'Reilly to her Legislative Assembly. And I'm assuming that's your son; I didn't hear if the Leader of the Opposition said . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's not your son? Okay, I'm sorry. I'm not sure of the young man who joined you. Anyway I would like to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to seeing you on the campaign trail, and I wish you all the best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In honour of Saskatchewan Multicultural Week, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the other members of the Assembly, some guests who work tirelessly to promote diversity and multiculturalism here in Saskatchewan.

In our province we're encouraged today to be proud of our cultural heritage and to share what makes it unique with each other. This year's theme is strength and diversity, strung directly from our provincial motto "from many peoples, strength."

In your gallery today is Rhonda Rosenberg, the executive director of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. Seated with Rhonda are two exceptional volunteers who are representative of the many who are working to make Saskatchewan stronger. Muna De Ciman. Muna lives in Regina with her family and is a Government of Saskatchewan

employee working as youth counsellor at the Paul Dojak Youth Centre. In addition to MCOS [Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan], Muna serves on the boards of a number of other cultural organizations. Neeraj Saroj. Neeraj lives in Regina. He works as a senior engineer with the city of Regina. He is currently finishing his executive M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration] from the Kenneth Levene School of Business at the U of R. Neeraj is an active volunteer for a variety of causes in the true Saskatchewan spirit.

Mr. Speaker, as you know so well, diversity is a cornerstone for the building of a stronger Saskatchewan for all of our people. In recognition of their contributions to the province, I ask that all members please join me welcoming these very special guests to our Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And on behalf of the official opposition, I would like to join with the minister opposite to welcome these individuals here from the multicultural association of Saskatchewan. Certainly, Rhonda, in your work as ED [executive director], I know you work hard every day to bring these issues home to the people that live here. And certainly with Neeraj and Muna, your contributions at a political level are also appreciated greatly, and we know how important the work you do is, especially in these times, and so it's ever more important. We all have ties to immigrant communities, no matter what our story is. And so you are bringing those stories alive here in Saskatchewan now at this very important time. So thank you very much for the work you do, and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I am pleased to introduce three guests that are seated in the west gallery. With us today is Eugene Paquin, the government relations Chair of the MS Society. And joining Eugene is Jackie Pilon, advocate and Saskatchewan division board director, as well as Bonnie Grove who is manager of government relations as well as stakeholder support.

Mr. Speaker, these three individuals obviously are very involved in the field of MS [multiple sclerosis] in our province and in this country. And we know that the goal of the MS Society is not only to help in the fight for a cure for MS, but along the way to help enhance the quality of life for those individuals in our province and in our country that have been diagnosed with MS. And they do a tremendous job for the people of this province and for this country, and I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming these three guests from the MS Society here to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the minister in welcoming these three individuals from the MS Society. Of course, Eugene Paquin and Jackie Pilon and Bonnie Grove, welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

On behalf of the opposition, thank you for all that you do when it comes to advocacy and education and support for those living with MS and their families. As the minister said, you do tremendous work on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, so thank you for that.

And I just want to note that Mr. Paquin has a connection to Holiday Park, which is my community, the community that my family has lived in for almost 60 years. His mother-in-law actually has lived in that community for quite some time. So Holiday Park is a great part of Saskatoon Riversdale.

But with that, thank you again to the MS Society for all that you do. And I'd ask all members to join with me too in welcoming these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly, it's my great pleasure today to welcome, sitting in the west gallery, a wonderful group of students from Grant Road School right here in Regina. Give us a wave, kids. Excellent. Now we can see where you are. There's 48 of them, Mr. Speaker. They're all grade 5 students. That's a great wave, yes. They're accompanied today by their teachers, Daina Seymour and Kristine Stephenson, and educational assistants, Janet Davies and Shelley Foster.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they're here to see how we do our business today, and right after question period I'm going to be leaving the Chamber to join for a very own, one-on-one question period. And I'm looking forward to their questions very much. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Indeed. And I invite all members to help us welcome them to their Assembly today. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Requesting leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Rosemont has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I welcome all of these esteemed guests to their Assembly here today. But I want to focus on one very special young man, a very bright student leader who's joined us here today, who is shadowing myself as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] here today, and his name is Tyan Cherepuschak that's here with us today. Tyan, give us a wave.

Tyan is a grade 7 student, and I have to say, in the time we've had together here today and his engagement in the issues and the discussion and what he cares about, he's a remarkable young man. He has in fact prepared some member statements completely on his own. He has prepared questions, Mr. Speaker. I suspect members opposite would suggest that those

questions are probably better than the ones I put to government on a daily basis, Mr. Speaker.

Tyan's parents are also incredible educators in Regina. Rob is over at Martin Academy. His mom, Natasha, is at Johnson. His dad, Rob, was a coach of the Regina Red Sox, exceptional hockey and baseball player himself, and involved still with player personnel. It's been a pleasure to have him join me here early for a Public Accounts meeting.

He's had the honour of meeting the Provincial Auditor of Saskatchewan, the Premier of Saskatchewan in the hallway, the Leader of the Opposition, the . . . Who else have we met here today? We've met Mr. Speaker himself as well. And we also had a good conversation with Emma Graney of the *Leader-Post*. So I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome this very bright student leader to his Assembly, and I suspect in a few more years we might hear more from this guy. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater support of GSAs [gender and sexuality alliance] in Saskatchewan schools. And we know that this province lags behind others in securing the rights of gender- and sexually diverse students, and this government's not doing enough to create safe spaces in our schools for sexually diverse students. There are students who are bullied because of their sexual identity or sexual orientation. This government must act so students have simple, easy-to-understand information about GSAs in their schools, how to form them, and who they should talk to in order to form a GSA.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan 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 as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the people presenting this petition come from the city of Prince Albert. I do so present. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present the petition asking for this government to support a new long-term care facility for Creighton and Denare Beach. Mr. Speaker, seniors have done their part to build this province, and northern Saskatchewan is no exception. According to the 2009 Croft

report, long-term care stats of our health region is at a code red level. Seniors from northern communities need immediate attention from this government and many residents cannot afford private care homes. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Saskatchewan government to treat northern Saskatchewan's senior citizens with respect and dignity and immediately invest in a new long-term care facility in the Creighton and Denare Beach area.

And in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by many good people of Creighton and Denare Beach. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I rise and present a petition as it relates to cellphone coverage in northwestern Saskatchewan. And the prayer reads as follows:

To cause the provincial government to 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 as I say day in, day out, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition have come from all throughout Saskatchewan and on this particular page they came from Dore Lake and Michel Point. I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise again today to present a petition in support of better seniors' care here in this province. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that the government, this government has removed regulations requiring a minimum quality of care which has led to neglect in our long-term care homes because of short-staffing, chronic short-staffing across the province, Mr. Speaker. I would like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to immediately undertake meaningful steps to improve the quality of seniors' care, including more spaces and more choices for seniors; ensuring higher standards of care in public facilities, private facilities, and home care; ensuring appropriate staffing levels in seniors' care facilities; restoring regulations that provide minimum standards of care; and providing more support to help seniors remain independent in their own homes for as long as they desire.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Regina and White City. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to join and to present a petition for undersigned residents in the province of Saskatchewan who are concerned about the high cost of post-secondary education in this province, a concern that is growing more pressing all the time under this government's watch, Mr. Speaker. In the prayer that reads as follows:

The petitioners respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to 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 rates.

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by individuals from Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present a petition in support of better schools. And the petition reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on this government to immediately stop ignoring schools and start prioritizing students by capping classroom sizes, increasing support for students, and developing a transparent plan to build and repair our schools.

These petitions are signed by residents of Saskatoon. I so submit. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

University of Regina Researchers Win Physics Prize

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just last week the University of Regina proved once again that it is a top contender among Canadian universities when it comes to high-achieving researchers. Physics researchers from the University of Regina were a part of a team that won the 2016 Breakthrough Prize in Fundamental Physics for their discovery of neutrino oscillations — definition quiz to follow — that are helping us increase our understanding of how the universe was formed.

Mr. Speaker, the project was a collaboration of approximately 500 leading researchers from around the world. The U of R team leader, Mauricio Barbi, emphasized how significant this achievement is in demonstrating our local research capacity. Other team members from the U of R included adjunct professor Roman Tacik, post-doctoral fellow Nick Hastings,

former graduate student Caio Licciardi, current graduate students Spencer Giffin and Anezka Kolaceke.

The \$3 million prize was divided by all 500 team members, but for the Regina researchers and I'm sure for all of us, it's the recognition that counts. This innovation work will hopefully lead scientists to learn more about the origins of our universe.

I would ask all members to join with me in congratulating the University of Regina physics team for their innovative research and recent accomplishment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Council Promotes Multiculturalism in Saskatchewan

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we're joined here today by many members of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. These folks do phenomenal work each and every day to promote and strengthen multiculturalism in Saskatchewan.

The list of events and initiatives that MCOS supports here in Saskatchewan is long and impressive: Black History Month, Heritage Week, anti-racism workshops, International Women's Day, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, Hispanic Heritage Month, Asian Heritage Month, Aboriginal History Month, Canada's Multiculturalism Day, Culture Days, Regina's Mosaic festival, Saskatoon's Folk Fest, and many, many more.

But MCOS does more than help with great events in our province. During the federal election, they helped raise the profile of the importance of multicultural values to our democracy and encouraged their members and supporters to raise these issues with their local candidates.

We know that the last federal campaign was particularly divisive, and MCOS was just one of many organizations calling for a more collaborative and respectful approach. MCOS has also led the way in calling for reconciliation with Saskatchewan's indigenous peoples. The treaty relationship binds all of us together: First Nations, recent immigrants, and the children and grandchildren of immigrants alike. And MCOS has been a strong voice for strengthening our communities by strengthening the treaty relationship.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking the leaders at MCOS for all the work they do today and the work they've done over the last 41 years to help our province realize the full potential of its motto "from many peoples, strength."

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Canora-Pelly.

Opening of Canora Health and Wellness Centre

Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow will be an exciting day for the people of Canora and surrounding communities. I will have the honour of attending the grand opening of the Canora Health and Wellness Centre in its newly renovated space at the Canora Hospital. This facility hosts Canora's collaborative emergency centre, the CEC. This CEC has been providing extended hours of primary care and

24/7 emergency care since July 2014 in two separate locations. Now it's all done under one roof at the health and wellness centre.

Mr. Speaker, the new CEC is a great achievement for the community and an excellent example of patient-centred care. It ensures reliable, timely access to care around the clock. I'm proud to say that there have been no emergency service interruptions in Canora since the CEC opened. This is another example of how our government is contributing to better health care for Saskatchewan people. Our government contributed \$775,000 to the renovation of the new space and will provide financial support of \$375,000 for the operation of the CEC.

Mr. Speaker, there were many dedicated partners who have helped make the CEC and the new centre a reality. I would like to thank a few of them: the Sunrise Health Region, the town of Canora and surrounding municipalities, the local health foundation, front-line health care providers and managers, and STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society]. Please join me in congratulating the community of Canora and district. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Sharing a Student's Member's Statement

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I have an inspiring and impressive student shadowing me as an MLA today. His name is Tyan Cherepuschak, and he's in grade 7. All on his own, without any help, he has prepared impressive member's statements today. Frankly they're better than the one that I had prepared, so I'm going to share his here today:

Mr. Speaker, as being a student attending Pilot Butte School I go there every day to get an education and learn. We have teachers and educational assistants to help us learn and grow strong.

However, Mr. Speaker, when we don't have enough teachers or too many students in a classroom, it makes it harder to learn. Last year in my class we had over 35 students in our classroom. That is way too many kids in one room. Having less students gives us more one-on-one time with our teachers, which is important, which is what lots of us need.

So I ask, Mr. Speaker, that there is a limit of students in one room because it is just not acceptable to have so many students in one classroom. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

He goes on as well to have written some questions, and I'll share one question. "Mr. Speaker, I ask to the Minister of Education: why does he think it's okay to have so many kids in one classroom?"

Mr. Speaker, these are questions prepared entirely by Tyan in a statement entirely on his own. I ask all members to certainly show respect for this strong, young leader within Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Grant Provides Financial Resources for Students

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to recognize November 15th to 21st as Education Savings Week. Education Savings Week is a nationally recognized week aiming at increasing financial literacy and encouraging people to save for their children's education.

Mr. Speaker, our government wants to ensure that as many students as possible have the financial resources they need to attend a complete post-secondary education. That's why we launched the Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings — SAGES — program in 2014. SAGES provides incentives for a family to save for their children's education.

Under the program, the Government of Saskatchewan provides a grant for 10 per cent per year on contributions made to registered education savings plans, to a maximum of \$250 per child. Over 30,000 Saskatchewan children have received more than \$8.5 million under the program today. That's direct money going into our children's dreams of becoming doctors, firefighters, teachers, tradespeople, just to name a few.

This is a prime example of how this government supports post-secondary education. Mr. Speaker, I encourage all Saskatchewan families to save for their children's education through the Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

Trade Relationship With India

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to join with the Premier in welcoming the High Commissioner, Vishnu Prakash, of the republic of India.

Saskatchewan enjoys a long trading history with India, and it's a relationship that has seen significant growth in the last decade. Since 2007 there has been an increase of 86 per cent in yearly trade to India, from \$591 million to \$1.1 billion, from peas, lentils, and mustard, to fertilizer products.

The benefits of this relationship are significant to both India and Saskatchewan. In addition to the strength of the already existing trade relationship, there is a willingness to grow that relationship. A great example of this is when earlier this year the Premier witnessed a historic agreement with India's Prime Minister Modi, making way for India to purchase uranium from Saskatchewan mines. This diverse trade relationship and the cultural contribution that India makes towards our towns, our cities make India a very close friend to Saskatchewan.

I ask all members to join with me in both welcoming the High Commissioner to the Legislative Assembly and acknowledge the importance of this trading relationship that we all share. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

Statements by Opposition Member

Mr. Steinley: — On Monday, the NDP's [New Democratic Party] Education critic mounted his soapbox to stoke fears about maintenance on the 18 new schools our government is building and attack another long-serving business in Saskatchewan. Looking at the NDP's record, it's no surprise they don't understand school maintenance because they didn't do any; in fact they closed 176 schools.

But the next part is even more worrying — the member from Rosemont's continual, unfounded attacks on businesses. Only a few months ago, he was forced to apologize after making a false claim about a local company in this very Chamber. Then only a few weeks ago, that same member had to apologize to the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association for not understanding how infrastructure projects worked. Now he's at it again. Johnson Controls is the most recent target of the NDP's politics, a business that employs over 50 Saskatchewan people in not one but two Saskatchewan offices.

Mr. Speaker, here is the reality of the company the NDP so readily attacks. They have been working on K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] schools in Saskatchewan for over 50 years. They worked on this very Legislative Building when it was first constructed. In fact they're at work right now in every public and Catholic school in Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, when will the member from Rosemont learn his drive-by smears on businesses just show how out of touch he is with Saskatchewan people?

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Carbon Capture and Storage Project

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, next week the Premier will have a chance to hear from top climate scientists in Ottawa. Now I think that's a really good thing, Mr. Speaker, because we've heard some really concerning messages from his team on this issue. In fact one of the messages they've given is that climate change is a "myth" based on "witchcraft reasoning."

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has never denounced that statement. I think it would be wise for him to do so before he goes to meet with the other premiers and before he goes to the UN [United Nations] climate change conference. So a simple question to the Premier: does he believe that climate change is a myth based on witchcraft reasoning, as a member of his team said, or does he denounce that statement for the backwards and out-of-touch statement that it is?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — I thank the member for his question, Mr. Speaker. The government obviously believes in the impacts of man-made climate change. Were it not the case, we wouldn't be making the largest single public sector investment in North America to deal with the problem.

Mr. Speaker, for the last number of months or weeks, I should say, the Leader of the Opposition has been attacking and calling

for, I think, the end of the carbon capture and sequestration project in southeast Saskatchewan. Well he wants to talk now. He's asked a question. I hope you'd give it a chance further to be an answer that's heard.

Mr. Speaker, this project represents the largest per capita investment, public sector investment that we're aware of, not just in North America but around the world, to try to mitigate the impact of CO₂ on the climate of the world. Mr. Speaker, moreover we have outlined a number of initiatives across government to deal with this particular issue, to help us meet the challenge.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to overcome in the province. We have high emissions per capita and we have taken over from a government, an NDP government that, like so many other issues, talks a lot about an issue, talks a lot about CO₂, but on their watch, emissions went up 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of work to do. We're committed to doing the work. That's why we're investing in carbon capture sequestration technology. I hope he'll join us in support of that effort.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear the member denounce the statement made by his candidate about climate change. You know, it's not just backwards statements coming from someone on the team about witchcraft-inspired myths, Mr. Speaker, as they believe. When the new Environment minister, when he was appointed back in May, he wouldn't even say whether or not he believed that climate change was real. When pushed repeatedly, he finally said that well he'd need to talk to his officials first to see where the science was on that, Mr. Speaker.

You might think that that sort of issue, believing in climate change, would be sort of important when appointing the Environment minister. You know, go along with questions like, do you believe that the earth is round? Do you acknowledge that gravity exists? Do you recognize that climate change is real? You know, that kind of thing. So it's odd that, Mr. Speaker, that the Environment minister could not answer that. And it calls into question, it calls concern about what the Premier actually believes.

Once again I say to the Premier: will he denounce the statement made by his candidate that said climate change is a myth based on witchcraft reasoning? Yes or no?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the government's commitment to help with the fight against climate change is pretty clear. We have invested more per capita than anywhere else in North America in technology that'll help solve the problem.

Mr. Speaker, the hon. member will know that Canada's emissions account for about two and half per cent, maybe sometimes closer to 3 per cent of world emissions. And so we must do better for Canadians and better by this issue environmentally, but we also need to be worried about the fact that in China they're building a coal plant, one every 13 days.

In India they have a number of coal plants on the books as well. And we need to be investing in technology that will actually reduce emissions in those parts of the world. And so, Mr. Speaker, that's why we've made carbon capture and sequestration a priority.

I will denounce something though, Mr. Speaker. I'll denounce the record of the members opposite. The record of the members opposite . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well he doesn't seem to care about the record of the members opposite. You know, he doesn't want to hear about it, Mr. Speaker, because under the NDP's watch, they talked a lot about the environment just like they talked a lot about health care, just like they talked a lot about helping people with intellectual disabilities.

They would talk about the environment, and their record under the NDP: 70 per cent increase in GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions. That's the problem that we're going to deal with, Mr. Speaker, going forward, with investments in technology, with our own greenhouse gas legislation that we passed on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, while they were inactive for 16 long years.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, it's embarrassing for the province of Saskatchewan that we have the only Premier going to the conference, Mr. Speaker, with such a backwards team when it comes to this. We have an Environment minister that waffles. We have the Premier continuing to denounce, a completely ridiculous statement by one of his candidates. But it shouldn't be surprising because if we look at the actions of this Premier, we will see that this is not an issue that he takes seriously one bit. The Highways minister is talking about actions, and this is a real problem here when it comes to climate change because we have seen cuts by this Premier to the Go Green and EnerGuide. We have seen him . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Thank you. I'll be able to hear the question now. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Broten: — We have seen him refuse to implement his promise for a technology fund, and he doesn't even mention climate change in the new Environmental Code. And this year he gave just \$100,000, just \$100,000 to climate change programming, and every cent of that was connected to the carbon capture project. He has put every climate change egg in one basket and look how that's turned out, Mr. Speaker. The project is not working. But even if it worked perfectly, Mr. Speaker, it would cut our emissions by about 1 per cent. So when the Premier meets with the other premiers, when he talks at the UN climate conference, what on earth is he going to talk about now that his marquee project is a disaster?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the hyperbole's been ramped up in the last few days, certainly in the last 24 hours. Maybe it's connected to the fact that that Leader of the Opposition has led his party to 25 per cent in the polls, down from Mr. Lingenfelter. I was wrong yesterday — I said he had taken the

NDP Party down six points from the days of Mr. Lingenfelter, those halcyon days for New Democrats. I was actually wrong. They're down 7 per cent from the days. So now they're getting a little desperate and there's more hyperbole. Sometimes it's anger and sometimes it's hyperbole. The bottom line . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we will proudly go to Ottawa and we will note for all of the other Premiers and anyone else that's interested that the province and the people of Saskatchewan, through their electrical utility, are investing more in the issue of CO₂ mitigation than any other jurisdiction in the Dominion of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

And when we do that, notwithstanding the impact on Saskatchewan emissions, we'll be able to speak to a global issue. The world's continuing to burn coal. China's building coal plants, I say to my hon. friend. India is building coal . . . Japan's reanimating their coal industry. Germany's opened up coal plants. So, Mr. Speaker, we need to find the solution to reduce the CO₂ emissions around coal, Mr. Speaker. That's part of this government's plan for leadership on the issue. We will proudly go to Ottawa and note this leadership.

And, Mr. Speaker, when . . . And I would say to my hon. friend that the plant has been restarted, that even through the problems it captured 400 000 tonnes of CO₂, about 400 000 more tonnes than the opposite members captured. And, Mr. Speaker, the restart is going very well. And I would caution, I would counsel him to be a bit circumspect about pronouncing disaster on the project because I have a feeling he'll be eating those words very soon, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The opposition seems to want to have five or six people talking at the same time. Please make up your mind who's going to ask the questions. And that goes for the government as well. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Broten: — You know, Mr. Speaker, it was Senator Manchin, the coal-loving senator from Western Virginia, Mr. Speaker, who talked about hyperbole and marketing spin. And do you know when he talked about that, Mr. Speaker? It was after learning the truth about what is happening with this Premier's carbon capture project and his frustration with what he was told by this Premier and the fact that it is not actually rooted and grounded in what are the facts and the truth of the matter, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I wish the Premier would see that we're missing out on an incredible opportunity as a province to create good jobs — thousands of them — by tackling climate change, by wrapping up renewable energy and investing in energy efficiency. But the Premier, we saw it again today, Mr. Speaker. He is happy to keep all of his eggs in the carbon capture basket.

In his presentation in Saudi Arabia, this government's head of carbon capture said the \$1.5 billion project has proven the economics of CCS [carbon capture and storage]. Mr. Speaker, that cannot be possibly true in any way. Leaked documents clearly show this: "The economics for BD3 ICCS was

developed around the 1 million tonnes being sold at a starting price of \$25 per tonne, escalating by 2 per cent per year."

But, Mr. Speaker, we know that's not even close to happening with this project. So to the Premier: why is the government saying that the economics are proven when we haven't even come close to selling 1 million tonnes a year?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, this is arguably the largest research and development innovation project undertaken in the province's history, larger even than the synchrotron, which was an important project and also had challenges in its commissioning year. Mr. Speaker, even with the challenges in the commissioning year for BD3 [Boundary dam 3], we have captured 400 000 tonnes of CO₂. Mr. Speaker, I would also point out for members that the restart so far is going well. There's a lot more work to do, Mr. Speaker, but very early on, very early on there's a good deal of optimism around the challenges, around the fact that challenges at the plant have been met, with more work to be done, Mr. Speaker.

And I do encourage the member to plan for the day when he might have to, might have to kind of walk back some of the remarks about this project being a disaster, Mr. Speaker, as SaskPower engineers have proven to be very innovative. SaskPower engineers have proven to be very, very formidable, Mr. Speaker, in overcoming the problems. And we have a confidence that they're going to do that again.

With respect to the whole file, Mr. Speaker, I hope that we have the support of members opposite when early next week we will be announcing through SaskPower the objective that by 2050 we will rely 50 per cent on renewable energy for our electricity supply in the province of Saskatchewan — 50 per cent by 2050 — and a huge ramping up of solar, Mr. Speaker, of wind, and possibly geothermal. We look forward to the support, the hyperbolic support of the member opposite when that announcement is made.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this project better end up working; we have sunk \$1.5 billion into it. Ratepayers in the province should expect absolutely nothing less. The catch is though, Mr. Speaker, they're going around the world saying the economics of this project are proven when, by the Premier's own admission, they're not meeting the targets that internal documents say need to be met in order to have an economic case for this project.

Let's look at the facts, Mr. Speaker. The government's \$1.5 billion project captured 114 000 tonnes in 2014. That's a 46 per cent capture rate. And it captured just 304 000 tonnes in 2015, a 37 per cent capture rate. But the economics of this project require a 90 per cent capture rate and 1 million tonnes of CO₂ being sold to Cenovus. The economics of this project certainly don't allow for tens of millions of dollars in penalties being paid to Cenovus. We know the Sask Party is already signing big cheques to this Alberta oil company. Now they say that of course this . . . Well we think it's unexpected. They say it was expected and that actually now they think that it would take

years to reach that 1 million tonnes a year. Completely not believable, Mr. Speaker, and very puzzling why they would enter into such a contract.

But again to the Premier: how can the Premier possibly claim that the economics of this project are proven?

[14:15]

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of people who have weighed in on this subject, most recently Carolyn Preston, the renowned expert in this area who holds a Ph.D. and degrees in engineering and chemistry. She has said something that I think is very important:

I'm wholly supportive of the project, and I believe that SaskPower made the right decision for Saskatchewan when it undertook the planning, design, and construction of the power plant retrofit to incorporate carbon capture and storage to assure environmental sustainability of coal-fire generation [Mr. Speaker].

She is a renowned expert in this area. She certainly believes that SaskPower made the right choice in this, Mr. Speaker, because she knows that there is about 2 to 300 years of coal supply down in the southeast part of our province, and if we're going to continue to use it for baseload generation here in Saskatchewan, we have to have the carbon capture and storage associated with it, Mr. Speaker. And that's why the Government of Saskatchewan made that decision, and that's why we're getting the kind of support from international experts that we are.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we see once again another example of being a salesman, talking about the fact that the economics of this project are proven. And then when I ask, Mr. Speaker, how they can make that claim based on the fact that they're not anywhere close to reaching 1 million tonnes a year, as the economics dictate according to internal documents — nothing. The Premier just sits there, hands it off to the minister, and we get an answer that's not even related to the economic fundamentals of this project. And they're joking about it, Mr. Speaker.

Independent analysis of this project show that Saskatchewan will lose, Saskatchewan . . .

[Interjections]

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

Mr. Broten: — Independent analysis of this project show that Saskatchewan people will lose at least \$1 billion as a result of this project. It could be as high as a \$2 billion loss. And that analysis, Mr. Speaker, is based on the notion of selling 1 million tonnes of CO₂ to Cenovus every single year, which we know is not happening in any way. The financial losses for the people of Saskatchewan could be even greater if this government is jettisoning around the world making claims, Mr.

Speaker, that the economics are proven.

To the Premier, I'll give him another opportunity to answer this question: when will the campaign, when will the campaign of misinformation finally end, and when will we start to see accountability and transparency?

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Mr. Speaker, the economics around this facility are this, that the sale of electricity from this facility is an important part of it. That's a part of the sale of the electricity. But otherwise this facility would likely have to be shut down because it doesn't meet the standards going forward. So there's that to begin with, Mr. Speaker.

There's a sale of 1 million tonnes of CO₂ and 400 000 tonnes so far in the past year, Mr. Speaker. We are expecting, and I think SaskPower engineers are certainly working very hard and diligent to make sure that we get towards our target of 1 million tonnes in the future, Mr. Speaker. There's that as well.

And then in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, the sale of the CO₂ will be used in enhanced oil recovery . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, then of course the sale of the CO₂ will be used in enhanced oil recovery, Mr. Speaker, which of course the province of Saskatchewan gets royalties from as well, Mr. Speaker.

So there's a number of areas that are important in this project, Mr. Speaker, the least of which of course . . . or the most important of course is the fact that we are going to be capturing 400 000 tonnes over the last year and we're working towards 1 million tonnes. That's something that's very, very important in terms of climate change initiatives from this province.

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

Changes to Liquor Retailing

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party inherited a fortune and they raked in record revenues, but they've blown through all that money, racked up a mountain of debt, and now they're putting up a bunch of for sale signs. This government's own survey shows that Saskatchewan people want our current hybrid liquor system fixed, but we don't want to sell over half of our public liquor stores. And that's what this government is doing because they're broke.

The minister admits that 99 per cent of liquor prices won't change, even though that's one of the things that Saskatchewan people want to see. So to the minister: why not just fix our current hybrid system and deliver better prices for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments and SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority].

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to finally stand in this House and answer a question again. What I want to say is that starting

about a year ago, in November, we started a consultation process that saw 6,600 people across the province answer the survey. Over 3,000 people have written submissions into the consultation process. That ended in January, Mr. Speaker.

Today, I was very pleased to announce a new retail system — if we are so chosen to be government after the next provincial election — that the people and consumers are asking for in this province. They're asking for more choice. They're asking for convenience, and they're asking for price competitiveness, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's what this system will do moving forward. We've seen it with the introduction of four private stores. Consumers are marching with their feet to those stores because of convenience, because of selection, and also because of competitiveness. That's why we're expanding the private system with 12 new stores and also conversion of 40 existing stores, Mr. Speaker, to follow what the general public are asking for, Mr. Speaker. They want to go back to the '90s, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have moved way past that.

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

Ms. Sproule: — This minister and this party don't want to fix anything. Their answer to everything is privatize, privatize, privatize. We could easily improve public stores to deal with more choice, more convenience, more competitive pricing. We can improve what we have. We can improve selection. We can improve more fridges. We can have growler stations and promote local craft brewers. We could put liquor kiosks in grocery stores. And we don't need for sale . . .

[Interjections]

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

Ms. Sproule: — We know we don't need for sale signs to do any of the things that the minister's talking about. So again to the minister: why won't you take meaningful steps to actually fix our current hybrid system? That's what people want.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, the consultation is very clear around choice and convenience and competitive pricing, as well as levelling the playing fields, Mr. Speaker, so that all retailers across the province have the same opportunity buying alcohol at the same price. Whether it's franchisees, Mr. Speaker — 190 — some had beer sales; some didn't. We're levelling the playing field so franchisees, off-sales, private stores, government stores will all be operating on the same level, Mr. Speaker, adding competitiveness and competitive pricing to the piece. That's what people are asking for; that's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker.

And she says why don't we do certain other things? And that certainly could have been done. It could have been done when they were in government. They failed to do it. They say that we

shouldn't be converting any stores. Under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, they converted stores in Estevan and Radville, Mr. Speaker. Under their government, they did the same thing that we are doing, but for some reason because we're going a little bit further, Mr. Speaker, it's not okay. Mr. Speaker, because I believe the general public want us to go further, Mr. Speaker, and I think we'll find out the NDP are still living in the '90s.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we already have a lot of private sector involvement in liquor retailing. We have 643 private outlets compared to 75 public stores. But if the Sask Party has their way, 40 public stores will be sold off and that won't mean better prices for Saskatchewan people. But do you know what it will mean? It will mean less money to fix roads, to put resources in our kids' classrooms, to reduce ER [emergency room] waits and pay for more specialists. We'll have less money for that because the profits, the profits from these stores will be flowing to private corporations, many from out of province. Why do you think they want to buy them, Mr. Speaker? So to the minister: setting aside his ideological desire to privatize everything, how can you justify that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, one other thing that was very clear through the consultation process, not only the choice of convenience and the competitive pricing, was also the fact that the government would remain revenue neutral through the new system. That is being accomplished. No matter what they say or what they tweet, Mr. Speaker, I would ask them to follow through with the background, Mr. Speaker, as well as the information that was provided in the consultation process, Mr. Speaker, because what they're saying, what they're saying . . .

The Speaker: — The member asked the question. She should perhaps listen to the response, including the two members at the far end who have been talking virtually the whole time. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, this system moving forward would be revenue neutral because the revenue that government generates to fix roads, to fix hospitals, to put into education comes from the wholesale piece, Mr. Speaker, not much from the retail at all. It comes from the wholesale piece, Mr. Speaker. We still control that. We'll still generate the revenue we need, Mr. Speaker, because on this side of the government, this side of the floor, Mr. Speaker, this government would rather put money into hospitals and rather put money into education, Mr. Speaker.

We saw what they did under NDP. They built a brand new liquor store in Riversdale, Mr. Speaker. They built a brand new liquor store in Moose Jaw. They built liquor stores all over, Mr. Speaker, while our hospitals suffered. That will not happen under this government.

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's become clear that the dominant theme of this session of the legislature is that we just can't trust what we're hearing from that government and that Sask Party, Mr. Speaker.

Last week, a reporter asked the Finance minister: "So you haven't made any cuts at all that you personally know of?" The Finance minister said, "No." And then the Finance minister said: "Have we pulled operational dollars from third parties? Not to my knowledge."

But now the truth is starting to trickle out and it's been learned that the Sask Party has actually pulled \$11.5 million back in post-secondary funding, Mr. Speaker. So either the Finance minister is mismanaging and not paying any attention to big financial decisions, or he's not being honest. To the Finance minister: which is it? Why won't he come clean with Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Rosemont knows he cannot use that terminology in the House. Will you please rise, withdraw that remark, and apologize. I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Withdraw and apologize.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, every single day in this legislature those members come into this House, every single one of them, and demand that the government spend more money. They demand that the government spend more money in health care. They demand that the government spend more money in education. They demand that the government spend more money in highways and infrastructure, even cellular towers, Mr. Speaker.

The people of this province are pragmatic. They understand when oil is at \$40 a barrel that you have to do things on the expenditure side.

We can follow the NDP way. We can follow the NDP way and have the citizens of Saskatchewan languishing on the longest wait times for surgical procedures . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, we can follow the NDP lead during economic challenging times. We could jack up property taxes to the point where there's a tax revolt in rural Saskatchewan. We can go and rip up GRIP [gross revenue insurance program] contracts with farmers, Mr. Speaker, and tell the people in rural Saskatchewan to fix their own highways to balance the budget. Or, Mr. Speaker, perhaps most egregiously, we could sit on our hands while thousands and thousands of our young people leave the province, and have the unmitigated gall to say, well, there's more for the rest of us here now, Mr. Speaker.

We're not going to follow the NDP plan. We're going to take a pragmatic and prudent approach to balancing the budget.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Proposed Changes to Liquor Retail System

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I was pleased to announce our government's intent to expand opportunities in private liquor retailing sales in Saskatchewan.

The new retailing model is our response to consumers' and stakeholders' feedback collected throughout a comprehensive review of liquor retailing in the province. The consultations concluded on January 30th, 2015, with more than 6,600 people completing a survey and more than 3,000 people posting comments. Respondents indicated that increased product selection and cost competitiveness were important considerations in any changes to the future of retailing of liquor in Saskatchewan, as was maintaining current levels of revenue.

Planned changes called on the conversion of 40 SLGA stores that currently do not meet targets of efficiency and will need significant capital expenditures. We will look to the private sector to provide liquor retailing services in those communities. We will also identify 12 other communities . . . or have already identified 12 other communities that are currently underserved. This means 52 new opportunities for business owners to be selected by a transparent RFP, request for proposal, process.

We're also going to create a level playing field for all liquor retailers, whether they are SLGA stores, rural franchises, off-sale outlets, or private stores. Soon there'll be one set of rules for all these different stores, replacing 70 years of inequity amongst the retailers.

[14:30]

Under this model, Saskatchewan residents will see more choice, more convenience, and more competitive pricing. Another change will allow commercial permittees like restaurants, sports facilities, and convention centres to purchase products from any liquor retailer. Under the current requirements they purchase exclusively from SLGA stores and franchises.

For the 39 communities where existing government stores are being converted, consumers will still be able to purchase alcohol through a private retailer once the transition takes place. Converting stores has happened both under previous governments and by this government. We've seen recent successes in regards to this over the past year in Ituna, Kerrobert, Langenburg, and Ponteix, all now home of successful privately operated franchises.

Government will not implement the new expanded private retail system until it has had a mandate from the people of Saskatchewan following the next provincial election. We believe these changes will produce a better alcohol retailing system in Saskatchewan while preserving an important source

of revenue for the people of Saskatchewan.

We believe we're taking the right steps towards a system that is fair to retailers and beneficial to the consumer while protecting revenues for the government priorities like health care, education, and infrastructure. It's about the consumer, Mr. Speaker — more choice, more convenience, and competitive pricing. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government has obviously ignored the results of its own survey, refusing once again to listen to Saskatchewan people. Retail SLGA stores are very profitable. They bring in hundreds of millions of dollars that help fund health care and education, and when the stores are gone, that income is gone. That's not what Saskatchewan people want.

The loss of that revenue, the money that pays for roads, for surgeries, and for teachers, the loss of that revenue is not a welcome change. This government says it can't make meaningful progress in ER wait times. It doesn't have the resources to fix overcrowding in our kids' classrooms. It isn't even trying to address the seniors' care crisis. And it can't get the job done when it comes to the budget, since it has a deficit of about \$1 billion this fiscal year.

Selling off hugely profitable retail SLGA stores is not going to help those problems. It's going to cut millions in retail profits out of the province's coffers. The minister was clear this morning that the retail prices for consumers won't change in 99 per cent of cases. The retail prices will be the same. If the price stays the same and a portion of the profits goes to a private retailer, Mr. Speaker, that means taxpayers are getting much, much less. The answer to SLGA not serving its customers well enough is to fix SLGA retail outlets. Privatization is now this government's answer for everything. And I think instead of privatization, we should look to modernization.

SLGA stores need better hours. They need better selection. They need more flexible pricing. They need growler stations and promotion for local craft beer and liquor, more cold beer. And why not SLGA kiosks in grocery stores? In short, SLGA stores need to be run like a business, something that this government refuses to do because instead of modernizing, they are privatizing. Instead of putting Saskatchewan families first, they're putting other corporations first.

One point I want to make is this: this government is dropping the ball in a big way when it comes to things that really matter — wait times in ERs, specialists, the overcrowding in our children's classrooms, the deficit both taxpayers today and taxpayers of the next generation will be paying for. I'd encourage this government to focus more on things that really matter to Saskatchewan people. NDP supports a hybrid system for liquor retailing as we currently have now. What we don't support is selling 40 profitable retail stores out from under the people of Saskatchewan who own them.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Economy Committee.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 187, *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2015* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on this bill and that the bill be now read a third time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Agriculture has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 187, *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2015* and that the bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed with third reading.

THIRD READINGS

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

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 187, *The Saskatchewan Farm Security Amendment Act, 2015* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader 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 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:37.]

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