



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

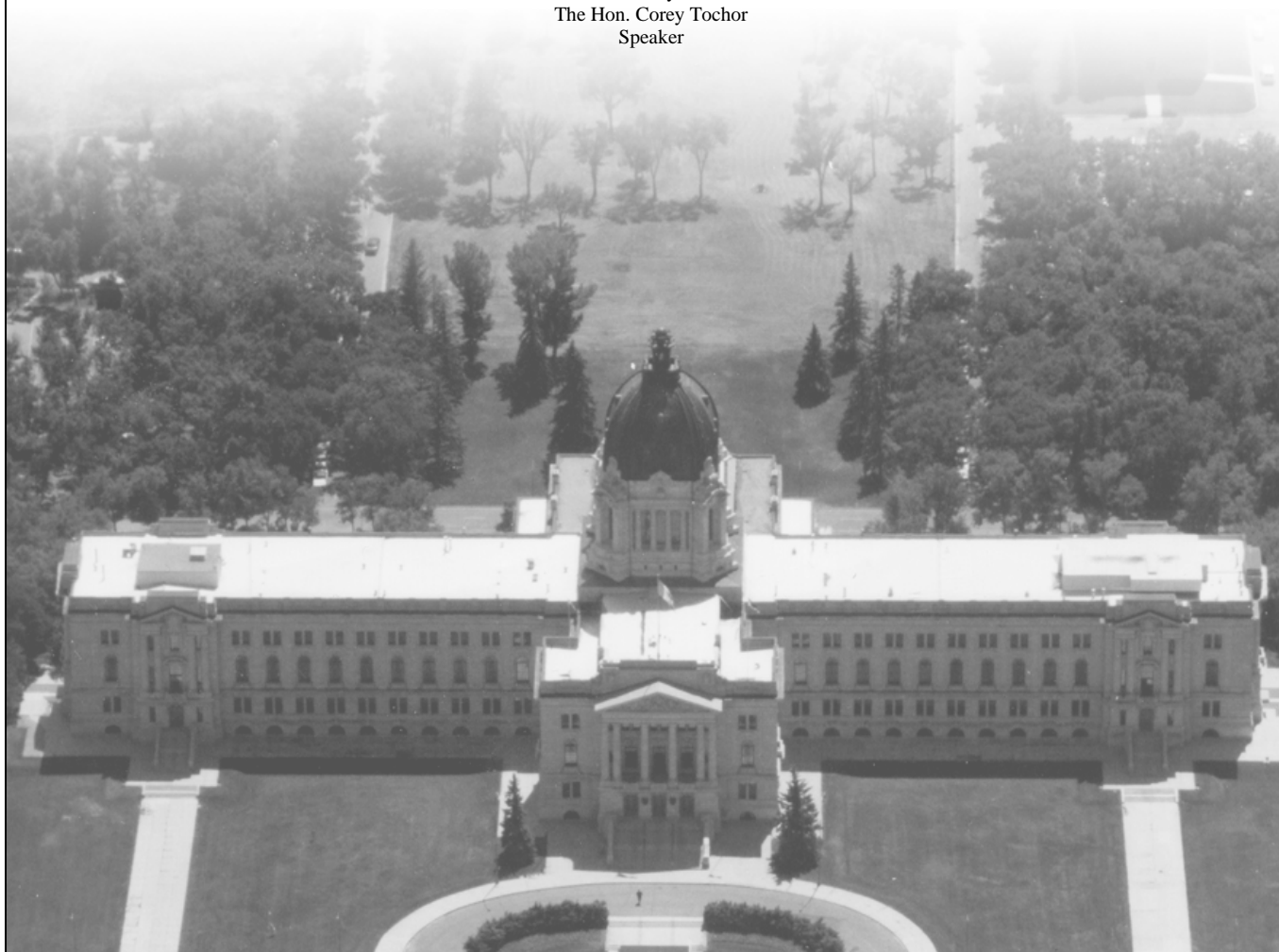
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
1st Session — 28th Legislature

Speaker — Hon. Corey Tochor

Premier — Hon. Brad Wall

Leader of the Opposition — Trent Wotherspoon

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Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 51; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 10

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota.

Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I have the honour of introducing a very important guest who has joined us in the legislature today. Child Find Saskatchewan, which was first established in 1984, educates and advocates across our province for the protection and rights of children and youth. Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to introduce the president of Child Find Saskatchewan, Phyllis Hallatt who has travelled from Saskatoon to be with us today.

Child Find Saskatchewan, along with its network of volunteers across our province, works hard to highlight issues relating to missing children. It promotes the message that a missing child is everyone's responsibility and all children have a right to be safe. I would like to thank Ms. Hallatt and the many individuals involved with Child Find Saskatchewan for making a difference in the lives of Saskatchewan children and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in welcoming Ms. Hallatt to the Assembly today.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all the members of this Assembly, I'd like to join with the members opposite in welcoming the individuals from Child Find Saskatchewan to our Legislative Assembly today. I'd like to thank the government for the good work they are doing in recognizing this month as Child Find Awareness Month and thank the folks at Child Find Saskatchewan for carrying the torch on this incredibly important issue. Please join me in welcoming them to this legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The member has asked for leave. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the member from Shellbrook.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the members and my colleagues in the House here for granting leave for this extended introduction of some very distinguished

individuals that we have here. We have with us today presidents from nine Mexican post-secondary institutions that are visiting the province, University of Regina, and they are visiting our Legislative Assembly here today. And I'm honoured to introduce these guests that are now seated in our west gallery. First of all, Mr. Speaker, we do have Lorena — and I do apologize in advance for the names — but Lorena Alvarado Buendía. She is the national academic director at the Technological and Polytechnic Universities in Mexico with the Ministry of Education in Mexico.

We have Ana Ydalia Sesma Caballero. She is the director of Canada Posible. We have Arturo Fragoso Corral. He is the president of the Technological University of Durango. We have Elva Patricia Saracho Martinez. She is the president of the Technological University of El Retoño. We have Gerardo Marcelino Lara Orozco, the president of the Polytechnic Metropolitan University of Hidalgo. We have Jesus Oscar Ballesteros, the president of the Technological University of Tamaulipas Norte. We have Marlene Medina Trejo, the president of the Technological University of Saltillo. We have Miguel Angel Macías Perez, the president of the Technological University of Altamira.

Mr. Speaker, last winter we had four Saskatchewan students that attended their post-secondary studies in Mexico. We have over 50 Mexican students, Mr. Speaker, that are now attending their studies just right here at the University of Regina.

Mexico is the second-largest Latin American source country for international students in the nation of Canada. And, Mr. Speaker, this interaction of our student studies is important between Canada and Mexico, but also important I think between Saskatchewan and Mexico, Mr. Speaker. In just the last five years, Saskatchewan's trade with Mexico has increased by some 81 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

The University of Regina and a number of universities in Mexico have had a relationship that dates back 20 years. It's present and strong today, and I think we're here to discuss how to improve on those relations into the future.

Mr. Speaker, also attending with our delegation are Dave Button, I believe, the vice-president of administration at the University of Regina. We have Livia Castellanos, the executive director and chief international officer at the UR International; and we have Sofia Martinez, the manager of the Americas & Europe, UR International.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all members, all members here today to join me in welcoming our delegation from Mexico to the Saskatchewan legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the minister in welcoming these very important guests to our Legislative Assembly. Certainly that they're accompanied by Vice-president David Button from the University of Regina is signal to the importance of this delegation, and certainly we've looked on with interest in terms of the reports of the great hospitality that was extended

yesterday under the heading of President Vianne Timmons from the University of Regina.

But I just want to say buenos días, bienvenidos a Saskatchewan. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Canada and Mexico is one that is strong, one that is enduring, and one that stands to grow only stronger in the years to come. But certainly in the post-secondary education sector, the wide-ranging group of individuals that we've got here from different post-secondary institutions in Mexico from right across the beautiful and diverse country of Mexico is again signal to the importance of this relationship and promising for the many years to come.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I join with the minister and all members in welcoming these individuals to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't stand in the House today to acknowledge Phyllis Hallatt from Child Find as well. The Ministry of Justice enjoys a very good working relationship with Child Find, and I wanted to stand and thank her very much for her very hard work and for the relationship that we have between the Ministry of Justice, the Government of Saskatchewan, and Child Find, and thank her for being here today.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and to you and through you to the House and all members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce my family, my beautiful son, Nickson, and my baby girl, Claire. They're up there in the west gallery. And the one that keeps the family together and does a lot of work when we do our jobs here, my beautiful wife Larissa Steinley. I want to thank them for coming down and witnessing proceedings today. I believe they have a jam-packed day. I think they're going to go and chase some geese after this and maybe pick up a few rocks, and Nickson loves to walk around in beautiful Wascana where our Legislative Building is situated. So I'd like all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to say hi and welcome to a constituent from Moose Jaw, Dianne Green, that's up in the west gallery. Dianne comes here almost every Thursday and is with the House of Prayer and is here to offer support and ask for divine guidance in our proceedings, and has come here often. And we want to welcome them, and especially the constituent from Moose Jaw. So Dianne, welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I too would like to introduce guests. I'm lucky enough to have the love of my life, Danielle my wife, in the west gallery. And with Danielle is my three-year-old boy, Jacob. Jacob, can we give a wave? And somewhere up there I

believe is James, which is our 15-month-old. And I would like to thank them for coming here and having fun, and thanks for all the loving and support over the years.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present a petition to improve PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] coverage for all Saskatchewan workers. The petitioners, Mr. Speaker, point out that post-traumatic stress disorder can severely impact the lives of Saskatchewan workers. They are simply calling on the government to make necessary changes to legislation to ensure that if a worker is exposed to a traumatic event on the job and they after that have a diagnosis of PTSD, that it should be presumed that that traumatic or those traumatic events actually caused the PTSD. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Saskatchewan government to make the necessary changes to ensure that if Saskatchewan workers are exposed to traumatic events on the job and are then diagnosed with PTSD, it is presumed to be caused by the worker's employment and the worker will be subsequently covered under workers' compensation and receive the same benefits as others with work-related injuries.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Regina. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of funding heritage languages here in Saskatchewan. And we know that now, after 25 years, the Government of Saskatchewan is discontinuing all support for heritage language learning in Saskatchewan.

Since 1991, heritage language schools have depended on this modest funding from the Ministry of Education to help sustain their programs. Now we know that in addition to providing language and cultural classes, these schools offer a welcoming environment and crucial support for newcomers who are searching for a way to feel at home in their new surroundings here in Saskatchewan.

These language schools contribute to the retention of immigrants in Saskatchewan by helping people to maintain their culture, identity, and traditions while at the same time learning about Canada and Canadian ways of life. Furthermore, studying additional languages offer many benefits for all Canadians, especially in today's growing international markets. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to reconsider this decision and restore funding for heritage language education in Saskatchewan heritage language schools.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Regina. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Asking leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The member has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Coronation Park.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, sitting in your gallery, I'm pleased to introduce a class of grade 7 students from Alameda School seated in your gallery, and they're joining us today. Mr. Speaker, this class recently won a provincial fossil video contest held through the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, and they'll be joining me this afternoon, an event to unveil the new provincial fossil.

[10:15]

And with us today, Mr. Speaker, is Xavier Gervais. Just give us a wave when I say your name. I got Bryce Gibson. I got Kari McNabb. I got Dixie Martens. I've got Jairyne Ritchie. I've got Keira Rutten, Lindon Schiestel, and Sophie Tillwach. And the teachers that are with them today are Chad Jeannot and educational assistant Koreen Kopelchuk.

I'm looking forward to the announcement today of our new provincial fossil. I think we're all on bated breath, wondering who it's going to be. And yes, there's an awful lot of punchlines within that, so . . . [inaudible] . . . But I would ask all members to join me, welcoming this school group to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — Reading and receiving petitions . . . Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, with leave to join the minister in welcoming guests.

The Speaker: — The member has moved leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and

through you to the Assembly, I would like to join the minister in welcoming the school, grade 7 class from Alameda and their participation in the Saskatchewan fossil video. I just want to let members know that I am not in that video, and I would also like to mention that the grade 7s and their teacher were in to the legislature not that long ago and visited my office at the time. So I would ask members to welcome them to the Legislative Assembly again.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Saskatchewan Outstanding Literacy Program Award

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to recognize the 2016 recipient of the Saskatchewan Outstanding Literacy Program Award, the Prince Albert early childhood level 1 and security officer supported program.

Mr. Speaker, this program, a project of the Prince Albert Literacy Network, was developed in Prince Albert as a means of supporting low-literacy adults in their educational journey and assisting them to succeed. It is a partnership between the Prince Albert Literacy Network, Sask Polytech Prince Albert campus, and many industry partners.

This year the program trained 34 adults and helped them develop essential skills for the workplace in the areas of early childhood education and security officer training. The students will leave the program equipped to get a good job and go on to lead productive and successful lives.

The award was presented last night at the Saskatchewan Literacy Awards ceremony which was hosted by the Lieutenant Governor at Government House. Program Director Delphine Melchert accepted the award on behalf of the Prince Albert early childhood level 1 and security officer supported program.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in recognizing the vast accomplishments of the Prince Albert early childhood level 1 and security officer supported programs, and extending congratulations on being the recipient of the 2016 Saskatchewan Outstanding Literacy Program Award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Benefits of Genetically Engineered Crops

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to bring to the attention of this Assembly a study outlined in the *New York Times* that speaks to the benefits and safety of genetically engineered crops. GECs, commonly referred to as GMOs [genetically modified organism], are a significant part of the agricultural landscape in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan is a leader in agricultural research and genetically engineered crops have been a part of the local agricultural sector for decades. Some of them are being developed at agri-science centres located right here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this research, and the crops that benefit from this research, contributes billions to the Saskatchewan economy. Unfortunately people often look past the science and are quick to listen to meritless claims that somehow genetically engineered crops are evil. I find it concerning that members opposite have been silent when faced with the overwhelming evidence saying that GECs are safe to eat and that there are other significant benefits in growing them.

Mr. Speaker, our government supports GECs, supports science, and supports agriculture innovation. And as the Premier said when the article was released, that this study “puts the myth to bed, saying genetically modified crops are safe and have many benefits to farmers, consumers, and the environment.” Mr. Speaker, from canola to yellow rice to GEC produce, the evidence shows that GECs are good for everyone. Thank you.

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

Mackenzie Infant Care Centre Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, it was my pleasure to attend the Mackenzie Infant Care Centre’s 30th anniversary celebration at the Wascana Country Club. This was an excellent event recognizing the decades of work done by an organization that provides important supports for young moms in our city.

MICC [Mackenzie Infant Care Centre] is a program run out of Balfour Collegiate and it helps to make sure that young moms have a safe place for their children to be supervised while they work towards completing their schooling. The centre provides 51 spaces for infants and toddlers whose mothers are taking classes through the Shirley Schneider Support Centre. In addition to extra help with their studies, these young moms also have access to prenatal wellness classes and teen parent support programs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking all of the sponsors who make this important program a reality for teen moms in Regina as well as thanking board Chair Shirley Schneider, executive director Edie Paquette, and the entire staff and board of directors for MICC for the very excellent work that they do in making sure that teen moms in Regina have the supports that they need to finish their schooling and to find success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Sexual Assault Awareness Week

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to announce that this week is Sexual Assault Awareness Week in Saskatchewan. This week provides us with an opportunity to educate ourselves and the people around us about the unfortunate reality of sexual assault.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the distinction of having the highest rate of sexual assault per capita in Canada. This makes it even more important that we work together to minimize the use of violence against all citizens in this province and make

Saskatchewan a safer place. It is up to everyone to take a stand and support the victims of sexual assault and hold the perpetrators of these crimes accountable.

I would like to thank the Sexual Assault Services of Saskatchewan and the numerous other organizations in the province. They truly are instrumental in raising awareness and providing vital services to survivors of sexual assault.

Mr. Speaker, we must work together to ensure that sexual assault victims do not face these challenges alone. I ask all the members of the House to join me in recognizing Sexual Assault Awareness Week in support of victims, survivors, and the workers who care for them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at Celebrates 50th Anniversary in Canada

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to bring to the attention of this Assembly a special milestone that took place yesterday. I had the tremendous opportunity to attend, along with my colleague from Regina Pasqua, the 50th anniversary of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at in Canada that took place at Saskatoon City Hall.

Mr. Speaker, Mayor Atchison and city council welcomed the respectable Lal Khan Malik, national president of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at, as well as other local and national dignitaries to commemorate this event. The local group of Ahmadiyya are in the process of building a new mosque, an exciting time for adherents as the new facility will provide tremendous opportunity for members.

Mr. Speaker, one of the signs at the event last night said simply, “love for all, hatred for none.” This outlines the core beliefs of the Ahmadiyya. The Ahmadiyya Muslims have a rich history in Canada and have become known around the world as a peace-loving, generous people who are quick to serve those in need.

Mr. Speaker, although they have faced persecution globally for their beliefs, they have been welcomed with open arms in Saskatchewan and Canada. Mubarik Syed, one of the local organizers, shared this last night, and I quote, “When we came to Canada we were actually given all the liberties and all the freedoms that were snatched away from us when we were born.”

Mr. Speaker, I would invite all members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama’at 50th anniversary in Canada.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota.

Missing Children’s Month

Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize that the month of May has been proclaimed Missing Children’s Month in the province of Saskatchewan. For many parents,

having a child go missing is quite simply unimaginable, yet every year we hear of Saskatchewan children going missing and see the terrible, tragic impact that this has on their family, friends, and community.

Missing Children's Month is an important opportunity to raise awareness on behalf of missing children and their families. This year marks Child Find Saskatchewan's 25th annual Green Ribbon of Hope campaign which runs throughout the month of May. Green ribbons may be obtained at participating Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority stores for a donation or by contacting Child Find Saskatchewan.

Child Find Saskatchewan is an important partner. We value the role it plays in assisting law enforcement agencies and other partners to locate missing children and to educate children and adults about staying safe. Our government takes this issue very seriously, which is why we have provided \$50,000 in funding to Child Find Saskatchewan through the Ministry of Justice.

Wearing a green ribbon of hope shows your concern for missing children and for their families. I ask that all members join me in wearing a green ribbon of hope this month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

International Education Strategy

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise in the House today to recognize our international education strategy.

Mr. Speaker, our government is dedicated to our students, and it is a priority of ours to help create as many opportunities to enhance their education as possible. With our international education strategy, we are showing how much we value not only our students going abroad to learn, but expanding opportunities for students globally to come to Saskatchewan. In fact, last winters' semester, 31 students from Mexico were enrolled in Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions and four students from the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] travelled to Mexico for their studies.

Mexico is the second-largest Latin American source country for international students in Canada. In addition, Saskatchewan's relationship with Mexico has grown as our trade has increased by 81 per cent in the last five years.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that we have Lorena Alvarado Buendía with us today. She is the National Academic Director of Technological and Polytechnic Universities in Mexico, Ministry of Education. With her today are several universities' and polytechnics' presidents from across Mexico.

During our time with our guests, we look forward to building strong relationships that will help support even more students coming here to Saskatchewan to study.

I would ask all members to join me in welcoming the delegation from Mexico here to the legislature today, as well as wish them fruitful meetings while they are here. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Wildfire Management

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the latest information from Environment Canada shows that the wildfire that has devastated Fort McMurray and area has crossed into our province, and there are other fires still burning across the province.

Throughout northern Saskatchewan, communities are faced with smoke warnings and now extreme fire conditions, and many are understandably very concerned for their safety. In matters of crisis, situations so serious, people deserve to know fully what their government is doing and what their plan is. They want to know what actions are currently being taken to ensure that lives and communities are protected.

So to the Premier: what is the budget? How is it allocated? And is there an evacuation plan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. And it is true with respect to the nature of the former, I guess, Fort McMurray fire that it is crossing the border into the province of Saskatchewan, still some distance away from the nearest community of La Loche. But certainly the level of preparedness has been heightened, not just as a result of the last 24 hours, but frankly from the very, very beginning of this event of the horrific fires that have destroyed so much of Fort McMurray.

As I indicated yesterday in the House, in terms of answers to questions, we stand ready to respond in every way, not just in terms of actioning the fire, which has been happening. We haven't waited to start fighting the fire on behalf of Saskatchewan resources. The actioning began on the Alberta side and continues in earnest even now. There was always plans ready in terms of evacuation, I would say to the hon. member.

[10:30]

As well, last year we took the time after our fires in the province to listen to community leaders and to listen to responders with the intent of wanting to improve where we could improve. Although I think the response was quite effective last year and I'm probably now . . . Time maybe elapsing on this answer, but I'd be happy to go through exactly the measures that we've taken, that we've implemented as a result of last year's fire, which are available to us now, as we prepare for this fire season and are already responding to this fire season.

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

Global Transportation Hub

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, shifting gears a little bit. Yesterday the Premier continued to defend the Sask Party's outrageous and indefensible stonewalling of the public on their GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal. And he

continues to stand by that scandal-plagued, money-wasting minister that should have been punted a long time ago. The member from Kindersley has offensively called serious questions that have been asked by Saskatchewan people as “laughable” and, Mr. Speaker, the Premier’s answers aren’t any better. The Premier stands here; he was laughing yesterday and says he has nothing to hide.

Well, Mr. Speaker, why then at every turn are he and his minister hiding the facts? Why do we have to wait for the auditor’s report? Why won’t he show Saskatchewan people the truth now?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it was the NDP [New Democratic Party] that asked for the Provincial Auditor’s report. They asked for the Provincial Auditor’s report. The response from the government, response from myself and my office, was to agree to initiate the Provincial Auditor, to request that the Provincial Auditor conduct a fulsome review and report on the particular transaction in question. And perhaps we should let that work continue before we start characterizing in ways that indeed may not be accurate, as the Leader of the Opposition may have just done.

Mr. Speaker, moreover when concerns were first raised, as I indicated yesterday, the minister went directly to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, an independent officer of this Legislative Assembly, who reviewed the transaction and the nature of the transaction and those who were involved in it and said, and I quote . . . The Commissioner wrote, and I quote, “I can state unequivocally that you [the minister] are not in breach of *The Members’ Conflict of Interest Act*.”

In addition to that, we’ll have the Provincial Auditor’s report here in a number of weeks, I would hope, or sooner perhaps. I’m not sure of the timing that the auditor has in mind, but we’re going to have the report made very public and we look forward to the recommendations that will be made.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that that government has been anything but forthright on this matter. And let’s be clear, dismissing legitimate concerns and defending the actions of the minister is beneath the office of the Premier. The Sask Party have been hiding the true state of our finances, hiding the budget, hiding their plan, and hiding the facts in their GTH land scandal. Yes, an auditor’s report is coming, but a judicial inquiry is also possible. There’s been a lawsuit that’s been filed. There’s been matters referred and information taken to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police].

And yes, the Premier has boasted that they’ve just won another term of government. So why not start fresh? Why not come clean with Saskatchewan people now? And why has this Premier still refused to clean that scandal-plagued, money-wasting minister out of his cabinet? It’s past time to show some leadership and do the right thing.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP opposition asked for the Provincial Auditor’s look at this matter, to look at every detail of this matter. That’s exactly what’s happening. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I can tell members of the House that cabinet minutes, cabinet documents, are being made available to the Provincial Auditor, all emails that she might need or require to conduct her review. The appraisals that have been the subject of some debate are all made available.

I would suggest to the hon. member, and I know this doesn’t fit his current political agenda that he has for question period, but he’s asked for the Provincial Auditor to conduct the review. So have we. Let’s let that work be conducted and then let’s see what the findings are. We look forward to those findings and we look forward to working with the Provincial Auditor on the recommendations she may come forth with.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan people have a lot of questions when it comes to the GTH and they don’t end with the sketchy deal itself. Access to information requests are a key part of our democracy. They let sunshine in when the government refuses to be open. For example, the Canadian Taxpayers Federation asked about the GTH and was handed a bill for just over \$7,000, but the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] was asked to pay more than \$180,000 for the same documents. Yesterday the Attorney General was asked for an explanation in the rotunda. His answer was, and I quote, “I can’t explain the difference.”

Mr. Speaker, today does the minister have a better excuse for charging such ridiculous fees for access to basic information?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I welcome the new member to the House and look forward to working with her in her new responsibilities.

Well the simple answer to the question, Mr. Speaker, it’s not my question to answer. When these requests are made, they’re made through the government officials. Well you know the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition, he wasn’t completely happy with my answer yesterday either, Mr. Speaker. But I’ll tell you what’s outrageous about this is the fact that he doesn’t understand how this process works.

These requests are made to members of the civil service. They compile the list and they compile a fee schedule based on the amount of work that it will take to retrieve those documents and the amount of work that it will take to redact those documents for personal information, Mr. Speaker. If they’re not happy, if the CBC isn’t happy with the fee that’s been quoted by a government official, then that can be appealed to the Information and Privacy Commissioner. And that’s where the answer is, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the

minister for welcoming me and I'm looking forward to working with him when I can.

But the truth is, in this matter there is absolutely no excuse. Michel Drapeau, a national access to information expert, has looked at the situation and said that the fees show an attempt to deny access. The government is making these fees up as they go, and hiding behind the Act is no excuse.

The last two information and privacy commissioners have recommended updates that would ensure transparency, and the federal government has recently scrapped all fees for requests beyond the initial \$5 application fee. That means, Mr. Speaker, had the CBC asked for the federal government the same questions they asked the Sask Party, they would have been charged five bucks for a question, not the \$180,000 bill the Sask Party has slapped them with.

So will the minister do the right thing? Will he ensure these punitive fees are withdrawn so the truth can finally come out?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know what's so difficult about this for members of the opposition. If the CBC does not like the fees that have been quoted by a civil servant . . . And quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, this is offensive. These questions are offensive to the people that work in the civil service that do the very hard work of compiling the list of documents and compiling the fee schedule.

Mr. Speaker, if they're not happy with the fee, they can appeal it. And I will tell you this, Mr. Speaker, that our fees are generally commensurate with fees that are charged by most other provinces. The federal government can do what they like, Mr. Speaker, but as far as the provinces are concerned, our fees are generally commensurate with what other provinces charge, a fee schedule, Mr. Speaker, that was established by the New Democrats in 1993 and hasn't been changed since.

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

Rural and Remote Health Care Services

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, six-year-old Jackson Strykowski and his family are here with us today. They live in Preeceville. On Tuesday they found out that their community would no longer have any emergency or acute care services. People in Preeceville are understandably upset about losing these services and have made these concerns known to the Premier, the Minister of Health, and the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

However, the Strykowski family is particularly worried because Jackson has a severe anaphylactic peanut allergy. He carries two EpiPens but he still needs to be taken to the hospital within 20 minutes to survive. If they can no longer access these services in Preeceville, Jackson will not make it to Canora or Yorkton in an ambulance. What does the Minister of Rural and Remote Health have to say to this family?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Yorkton.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, the facility in Preeceville is very important to us, as are services to people in rural Saskatchewan and around the whole province of course. Mr. Speaker, in a case as has been brought forward, we do have advanced care paramedics in Preeceville with ambulances available that can respond very quickly. They are equipped to deal with anaphylaxis and other acute emergencies, and as well in the need of STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] being dispatched, they can be dispatched immediately as well.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, this minister needs to stop the political spin and acknowledge that these cuts affect real people in very bad ways.

Mr. Speaker, last July, Floyd Head suffered a heart attack in his home, a home he bought because it was one block away from the hospital. But the hospital was closed. It took seven hours for him to get the treatment he needed in Regina. It was too late to save Mr. Head's life. Back then the hospital was closed every second week. Now it is going to be closed every day.

These cuts are hurting people in a direct way. There are dire consequences when services are cut, and the residents of Preeceville want to know why this government is not concerned about these cuts. What will it take for this government to listen to the people of Preeceville and take this issue seriously?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, again, health care in this province is a high priority to this government. Rural health care is a high priority to this government. The members continually twist the facts. Mr. Speaker, there's been no cuts to the facility. The region has made no cuts to this facility. All current systems and all current available services are still in place, Mr. Speaker. What we have is a case that, not only in Saskatchewan, many jurisdictions, provinces, the country, in fact the research articles as far away as Australia that have retention and recruitment issues in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

This province, this government has been very aggressive in making sure we have the proper complement of professionals in rural Saskatchewan. We've got very aggressive training schedules. We have increased the training seats in the province, almost double. We've got double the residency positions in rural Saskatchewan. We have in fact 650 more doctors in this province. We've got a very aggressive international physician program that is targeted at rural Saskatchewan. In fact, we have 180 new SIPPA [Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment] doctors in the province. Seventy-five to 90 per cent of them are practising in rural Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, today there are services in Preeceville, acute services and emergency services in Preeceville. On June 1st there no longer will be. In tough times, tough decisions have to be made. No one denies that. But this is

the government that blew through the rainy day fund and drove the province into deficit during our sunniest economic days. They are also the ones who allowed the senior administration in the health regions to get so bloated — 46 per cent in RQHR [Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region], 37 per cent in Five Hills.

They have mismanaged the Saskatchewan economy, and here in the home of Canadian public health care, they are failing on hospitals. Mr. Speaker, those failures have consequences and those consequences are felt by real people. So I ask again, what will it take for this minister to listen to the people of Preeceville and take this issue seriously?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, again, we take these issues very seriously. We work very hard to make sure we have a proper complement of services throughout the province. In fact, Mr. Speaker, that is why we have done what we have done throughout the province.

I mentioned the international physician practice assessment which serves rural Saskatchewan very well, something that the members opposite denied to do, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned STARS, something that was continually brought forward under the former administration, under the NDP. They said no to rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They continually closed facilities. They continually got rid of doctors, nurses, and opportunities. They continually turned their back on rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

What this government, what this party has done, has hired 650 more doctors for this province. Again, 180, 190 of those doctors, SIPPA doctors, are working in rural Saskatchewan. We have 13 new long-term care facilities. We have continued investment in facilities in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We have more nurses, nurse practitioners, which 75 per cent of those nurse practitioners practise in rural settings, which do complement the primary health care in our rural settings, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, my first question: I'd like to know how that helps the Strykowski family. The minister can spout rhetoric as much as he wants, but the Strykowski family is here, and they would like to know how his answer helps this family and will keep this little boy alive if he has an anaphylactic attack.

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, again, advanced care paramedics, which are the most highly trained paramedics available, are available in Preeceville and the Canora area. They will be dispatched immediately. I don't understand — does the member disregard, does the member disregard the value of our advanced care paramedics or our other health care professionals in the continuum?

We have a doctor in the community. We have nurse practitioners in the community. We have advanced care paramedics in the community. We have surrounding emergency departments that will back up this service, Mr. Speaker. So I understand the challenges and I understand the concerns of the family. But I have confidence in the system. I have confidence in the advanced care paramedics in the area.

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

[10:45]

Tabling of Budget

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we know that there are even more cuts coming in the budget that the Sask Party has been hiding for months, and yet the Premier is making Saskatchewan people wait until June to see it. Everyone knows that it was ready before the election. Even the Premier himself admitted to reporters yesterday that "some of the work had been done last year."

Now let's look next door in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. Over there the new government is going to present its budget before the end of this month, and their election was a week after ours. And the Premier wants us to believe that his three-term government needs even more time?

To the Premier: when will he drop the excuses and admit that his bad news budget was drawn up before the election and that he's waiting until people are out at the lake until he'll come clean?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, contrary to what the members went around the province and said during this most recent provincial election campaign, there was not a predetermined budget sitting on the Premier's desk or my desk.

I presented a fiscal update on February 29th, just days before the election was called, Mr. Speaker. We were going to go about the province and campaign on election promises. We wanted those fully costed in a new budget we brought down if in fact we were fortunate enough to be re-elected, Mr. Speaker. We assumed that the opposition wanted to do the same thing.

They went around the province with their so-called fully costed platform, Mr. Speaker, promising to run a deficit in this coming fiscal year. The problem with their fully costed document, Mr. Speaker, was it left out 18 different items that they campaigned on and didn't talk about in their fully costed document, Mr. Speaker, including the lowest cost utility bundle in all of Canada. It's not in their document.

It would cost hundreds of millions of dollars to the people of this province, if they were in fact elected, to bring down a budget after the election, Mr. Speaker. We're not going to do that. June 1st you'll see the budget.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon

Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we know treasury board was meeting. We know the public officials have been working on this, and that kind of response from that minister is completely unacceptable. Had this been a good news budget, the Sask Party would've campaigned on it, but instead they are waiting until the last minute to finally bring it out. So now school boards, health regions, and municipalities are waiting on tenterhooks. They're waiting for the bad news. And while they wait, budgets for our hospitals, our schools, and our communities are faced with uncertainty and even greater delays. Does the Sask Party really not understand the consequences of those delays?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Finance minister.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, when faced with economic challenges that we're faced with in this province like we are today, like the province of Alberta is today, like all energy-producing provinces in Canada are today, Mr. Speaker, when I was going around to the doorsteps during the most recent campaign, I think I heard at the doorstep, like others heard at the doorstep, is that the people of this province expect their government to manage through difficult economic challenges without shocking the economy, Mr. Speaker. That means keeping taxes low and competitive. That means not pulling back spending like we've seen in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Mr. Speaker. That means not raising taxes like in the province of Alberta to shock the economy more.

I'll tell you what we're not going to do, Mr. Speaker. We're not going to adopt a radical document like the Leap Manifesto that would destroy, that would destroy the economy of this province.

This member, who is the Finance critic — and ironically enough, Mr. Speaker, also the Agriculture critic — went off to Edmonton and, in the heart of the oil and gas sector in our country, stood with the eco-activists from downtown Toronto and voted in favour of the Leap Manifesto that would destroy our energy economy, that would destroy our mining sector, that would destroy our agriculture sector as we know it, Mr. Speaker. We're not going to adopt radical policies like that, I can tell you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party embarrasses themselves when they get the facts so wrong. I will take no lessons from the way they have failed our resource sector and our workers, Mr. Speaker.

Even when there was a Conservative government in Ottawa, there was a Conservative government in Alberta, and this conservative government in Saskatchewan, their heads-in-the-sand, blinders-up approach resulted in no more of our resources getting to tidewater, did they. Under their watch, we have lost thousands of resource sector jobs.

Now they might get a kick out of their made-up attacks and false accusations, but while they're busy writing fiction and

attacking me, our focus is on the workers of Saskatchewan, on the people of Saskatchewan, and the future of Saskatchewan. When will they drop the games, accept the facts, and get to work to build and diversify the Saskatchewan economy to protect and create good jobs for the people of Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the member is on her feet, and I encourage her to stay on her feet perhaps after this response and clarify something.

She went to the NDP national convention in Edmonton and she voted in favour of the following resolution: "Therefore be it resolved that the NDP recognizes and supports the Leap Manifesto as a high-level statement of principles . . ." Well that's what she voted for. What are those principles in the document, Mr. Speaker? Here's one: "The drop in oil prices has temporarily relieved the pressure to dig up fossil fuels as rapidly as high-risk technologies will allow."

And then the principle she voted for says this: "This pause in frenetic expansion should not be viewed as a crisis, but a gift." That's what she voted for in Edmonton, that the drop in oil prices should be considered a gift to this country. There are 3,000 Saskatchewan families who have lost their job in the resource sector who don't consider it a gift, Mr. Speaker, not for a moment.

It is the obligation of every member in this House, regardless of what side they stand on in the Assembly, NDP or Sask Party, when confronted with a principle like that, to not vote in favour of it, but to stand up for Saskatchewan's interests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Sixties Scoop and Government Conversations With Interest Groups

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday we saw the Prime Minister make an historic apology for wrongdoing by the Canadian government. It has been almost a year since the Premier promised to apologize to the victims of the Sixties Scoop. He said that would happen last summer, but still nothing.

We've heard from many people affected by the Sixties Scoop, including First Nations and Métis leaders who haven't heard a single thing from this government. To the Premier: why not? What happened to your apology?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is not entirely true that nobody has heard a word. Myself, along with the Minister for Government Relations and the Premier's office, have been working with the Métis Nation and FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] to try to arrange a mutual date. We have yet to get that date. When the Premier is available, the chief of FSIN has not been. There was one date set, but unfortunately it had to be cancelled. So we are working on that mutual date when this can take place, because of course we're looking forward to this event and we need

everyone to be able to participate. So it is something . . . The conversation continues with FSIN and the Métis Nation.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I ask for leave to move an order of reference motion.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

MOTIONS

Organ Donation Rate in Saskatchewan

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the Standing Committee on Human Services, in accordance with rule 149 of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, shall conduct an inquiry and make recommendations to the Assembly respecting improving the rate of organ donation in Saskatchewan, and

That the said committee shall hold public hearings to receive representations from interested individuals and groups, and report its recommendations to the Assembly by November 30th, 2016.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Health has moved a motion. Will the members take it as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — 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.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Buckingham, seconded by Ms. Carr, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Ms. Sproule.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and enter into the debate on the Speech from the Throne 2016.

It's in the start of our new session and we're all back. And I do want to say to you, Mr. Speaker, congratulations to you. This is a very critical role that you play. It's not an easy one. It's one that you have to maintain balance and fairness and a little humour. I know we were just talking about some episodes that happened a while ago when I forgot to stand up for my member's statement, and I had the good fortune of being looked well upon. But, Mr. Speaker, I do want to wish you the very best. And it's not just in here that you serve your role, but also throughout Saskatchewan and our role within the Canadian parliamentarians association. So I look forward to working with you, and I do also want to thank the previous Speaker for his good work. He was a fine Speaker, and we appreciated his work as well.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to recognize that we are in Treaty 4 land, and I do want to recognize that a year ago, approximately a year ago in June, we did receive the final report from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. And in that spirit I think that the work that we do forward — and I did feel that there was a lack of understanding or even a signal from the Throne Speech about the truth and reconciliation work that lies ahead — is very, very important. And I think the question we had today about the Sixties Scoop, and unfortunately . . . This is interesting that it's just a matter of a date. It's a hugely important issue to many, many people, and I hope that we hear quickly about that. But I also hope that we hear more from this government about their approach to truth and reconciliation because it is something.

I do want to recognize all the members who've been re-elected and the new ones who have been just elected. This is a huge honour to be in this House. And it's one that I know and has been mentioned earlier this week, only 800 people have sat in this Chamber over the course of 100-plus years, and so it's very much a real privilege. And so congratulations to all, but a particular congratulations to the new members. And I just want to recognize our three new members that are bringing a new spirit to the caucus and want to thank them and congratulate them.

I want to say thanks as well, and that's part of this speech, to the many people who have supported me over the years. Of course, my own family: my wife, Dawn; my kids; and now, Mr. Speaker, my two grandkids. You know, when we launched the campaign we had the family picture. We had two new additions, two grandkids — Felix and Frances. Now they may not understand what we're doing hanging around this orange sign and taking pictures, but it was pretty special and I hope over the course of the years that they may come to appreciate that.

I do want to single out one person who has been a huge help to me over the past few years in my office, Erica Spracklin, who was my constituency assistant but who has left my employ. But she did work on my campaign; she was my campaign manager and was fantastic. She was last time and this time and did an

incredible job of helping getting me back here. And I sure appreciated that.

[11:00]

And there were others. There were Bruce and Darren, the sign people; and of course David, who is just a fantastic door knocker and so many others, so many others. I just want to say a big thank you to all those who helped to get me re-elected, more importantly getting a New Democrat elected in Saskatoon Centre so that we can raise the issues and have our point of view, our set of values represented here in the House.

It's very, very important that when we have the party system that people do think about, what does it mean? What is a Conservative? What is a Sask Party? What is a Liberal party? What is a New Democratic Party? What are their values in making sure that the constituents say, yes I can align; I can think along those lines. Those are the kind of values and ideas and platforms they can identify with. So I'm happy to be here as a New Democrat.

I also want to single out my two main competitors, Brad Hoffman, who ran for the Sask Party. He owns a printing shop in the riding and, interestingly, I did some printing there. I have for many years. So it was interesting to see Brad running against me. I was wondering, Brad, what are you doing? But anyways, I guess I wasn't doing enough business there. I'll have to do more. But the other one was Roman Todos. I have to say a big shout-out to Roman, the Liberal in Saskatoon Centre. He ran a great campaign. But he's a good stand-up guy in Caswell, and both of these fellows I think of as good friends in the riding.

Yes, but you know, I just want to say that one of the things that I've found very interesting . . . This was my fifth campaign and it was very interesting, very different than the previous ones. You know, as you get a little older you do things a little differently but you still . . . Things are always the same. You get out and knock on doors, and that's what you've got to do. You've got to go up and down those streets.

And this time I just want to say that probably the most interesting door I knocked upon — when you knock on a door, you don't know what's behind the door — was a Syrian refugee family. And that was pretty neat. They were in a home. They were getting set up. They were being Canadian. And I felt like, this is great. This is wonderful. This is how we work. And it's very important that we do have Syrian refugees in all our ridings, I suppose, but it was very interesting to meet the mom and dad and the little one come to the door.

Now they weren't ready to vote, but we had a little discussion. And I said just, you're welcome. Welcome, welcome to Canada and I hope all things go well for you. And it was nice to know that, a nice reminder. We can read about refugees in the newspapers. We can go out to the airports welcoming them. We can do all those things we should be doing. But they are our neighbours. They live in our communities. Their kids go to our schools. And that's a super, wonderful thing.

So I do want to speak a bit about my riding, Saskatoon Centre. I think it's one of the most compact, most diverse. Now when I

look across and I see a lot of the rural people, when I think I can walk from one end of my riding to the other — I think in two hours I can walk it, you know — and I know some of the folks over there, and over here, I look at the folks up north where they can't . . . I don't think you could fly from one end of your riding to the other in two hours. I don't know. But it's nice to have a pretty compact riding, and after the boundary changes to have some of the neighbourhoods.

And you know, I have 20th Street, and 20th Street in Saskatoon has had a very colourful reputation. But it's going through such a re-energization with the new people living there, the new infill, the condos that are just amazing, the designs. The farmers' market is a wonderful thing.

And some of the restaurants on 20th Street . . . Actually if you go down 20th Street and you go to a restaurant on Saturday night, it used to be you could get into any restaurant. Now you have to go earlier or phone for a reservation. That is so unusual. So I just have to say, you know, 20th Street . . . And you have to be kind of dressed up. That's kind of, for me, just out there in my jeans and my wife and we're just taking it easy, it's not what we used to think.

But I just wanted to give a shout-out. There's some wonderful places. The Underground Cafe has great coffee. The Park Cafe has been recognized a few times in this, in the legislature I've spoke about them. And they continue to do a great, great breakfast on Sunday morning. But if you . . . And I find sometimes my fellow colleague from Nutana comes over to have the odd breakfast. And The Hollows, have to give a shout-out to The Hollows. But I do have to say, you know, my colleague from Nutana and I have this big debate about which is the best riding, on one side of the river or the other side of the river.

But I have to say as well, the other . . . I mean there's wonderful streets, but the other one that's going to be coming up pretty soon on Spadina Crescent — a beautiful street, a beautiful street along the river to walk through by the Bessborough Hotel — the jazz festival is coming up. And I have to give a shout-out. I think it's the 30th anniversary for the jazz festival. And I can remember I used to drive, I used to be the volunteer transportation coordinator back when it was I think 14, 15 years old. I remember those days. It was great. But it continues to be one of the best, if not the best festival in the province. But then there's others that may debate that: the Regina Folk Festival, Ness Creek. There's so many in this province in the summer. But check out the jazz festival. That's a wonderful thing.

But I have to say that I just want to give a shout-out to my neighbourhood, Caswell. Caswell is — and again my friend from Nutana may argue this — but Caswell is the original neighbourhood for Saskatoon. We did have three communities. There was Saskatoon Nutana, Riversdale, and way out there was Sutherland. But Saskatoon, the original community, was on our side of the river and Caswell was the original neighbourhood . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . So anyways, we won't get into that debate, Mr. Speaker. But anyways, Caswell's a great community, and it's undergoing again a real growth spurt with young families coming and moving in, and there's some wonderful things.

And we're going to be looking forward to our own festival coming up in a few short weeks, Art in the Park, that I think it's celebrating its 11th anniversary, or could be 14th. Actually it's 14, 14 years old. And it's a wonderful thing if you get a chance to come.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to enter into the debate on the Throne Speech. And when I read it and when we listened to it a few short days ago, we were struck by how it was weak on vision and really short on anything meaningful that people in this time . . . And even the folks over there will recognize that we're in economic difficult times, really difficult times, and that people were looking for something more stronger, something they could really hang their hat on, something they could grab onto and say, hey this is a real plan going forward, a real plan going forward. And we see a government instead that really wants to deflect attention away from what's going on in Saskatchewan, how they should be working on that, but onto other issues, and we are really, really concerned about that.

And I was just struck, and I just want to refer to an article that was in the paper a couple of weeks ago that talked about really the spin that's coming from the government side and really what's happening in this province today. And it's Bruce Johnstone's column: "Stats show Saskies' strategy in a shambles." This is from May 14th, 2016: "Some recent statistics seem to show that the Sask. Party's economic development strategy is in a bit of a shambles."

Really, and this is from the economic, the business writer from the *Leader-Post*. It's not from us. But really it's interesting what he wrote about what's happening in Saskatchewan under the Sask Party. And he's talking . . . I want to quote this time. I say, and I quote:

During that time, oil-producing provinces have seen their economies shrink, unemployment rates rise, capital investment dry up and other economic indicators . . . stagnate or decline.

And 2016 looks to be more of the same. BMO forecasts the Saskatchewan economy to grow by a minuscule 0.5 per cent, which is pretty close to a recession . . .

And so he talks about some of the problems that they're having here. But he goes on, and he gives them a little slack. He says:

I wouldn't . . . mention it, except for the fact the Sask. Party government keeps harping about how much more diversified the provincial economy is today than it was [when they] . . . took office in 2007.

And they do. They just keep harping on it. And then they talk about when they're doing relatively well, and I'll quote:

Of course, "doing relatively well" is, well, relative to the provinces we're compared to. Compared with Alberta and Newfoundland and Labrador, we're "doing relatively well." Compared with the other seven provinces . . . [not so much].

More importantly, there's no evidence to suggest Saskatchewan's economy is . . . more diversified than it

was eight years ago. In fact, the energy sector currently represents 25 per cent of the provincial economy, the same as it did in 2007.

[And I'm quoting] What about Wall's claim the government doesn't "pick winners and losers?"

Yet another report from Statistics Canada this week showed that cultural industries made up only 1.3 per cent of GDP, the lowest share among the provinces and less than half of the national average of 3.0 per cent.

This is the same government that axed the Saskatchewan Film Employment Tax Credit in 2012. In an ill-advised, politically motivated decision to save about \$1.3 million a year, the government effectively killed the film and video industry in the province.

Hundreds if not thousands of jobs were lost and a foundational cultural industry gutted on an ideological whim.

So that's from Bruce Johnstone and he is neither Sask Party or NDP. He's just calling it as it is. And so we have some real concerns. And of course we're hearing . . . And this Minister of the Economy that the Premier continues to defend . . . And whether the issue is SkipTheDishes or GTH, we have a real problem.

And you know the other thing, we haven't forgotten about Enterprise Saskatchewan. Do you remember Enterprise Saskatchewan a few years ago? What happened to enterprise and Enterprise Saskatchewan, that plan? And now what we have from the Throne Speech, what we have from the Throne Speech is committing to helping small, home-based food businesses grow in Saskatchewan. This is where we're at now. What happened to Enterprise Saskatchewan? And now we're helping cookies by Kevin. That's incredible. Why are we doing that? Why are we doing that? Now there's nothing wrong with that, and we enjoy the farmers' market, and we understand people bring home cooking and home baking to these local sales. But really this isn't where we've come from. Enterprise Saskatchewan to helping selling cookies. Incredible, incredible.

But the other thing I was struck by . . . And I'm the associate Education critic, and I know our Education critic will speak more about the education issue here. But how many times was education mentioned in the Throne Speech? Or schools? Schools was mentioned once under the infrastructure thing. That is it. That is it. Here we have a real need. This is the time. If there's ever a time when we should be investing in education, this is the time. This is the time. And we hear from a government that refuses to really step up and recognize what it has to do. And here we have just this one line about schools. That is incredible.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know . . . And the Minister of Finance, he just gets himself in a knot all the time when the critic on our side, critic of Finance gets up, and he loves to talk about Edmonton and all of that. But I have a question for him. He's talking about different documents. Where is the anti-poverty strategy in the Throne Speech? Where is the anti-poverty strategy in the Throne Speech? Not a mention about that and the

Minister of Finance or the Premier doesn't want to talk about that. Where is the mental health strategy? Not a mention about that. Not a mention about that. Where is the disability strategy? Not a mention about that.

I think when he's talking about standing up for Saskatchewan, he should be standing up for Saskatchewan people. Those who are living in difficult times, those who are living in poverty, near poverty, and having to use the food banks — that's what he should be talking about. That's what he needs to be focusing, those people who are living with a disability, those people who really need more work to make sure our homes and our businesses are accessible and they have opportunities for jobs. That's what he needs to be talking about. And he needs to be really focusing on mental health as they've had the report, they've had the report for well over a year now. And instead the Minister of Finance wants to talk about other documents when he's got documents stacked high on his desk. He should. . .

An Hon. Member: — On the shelf.

[11:15]

Mr. Forbes: — On a shelf. On a shelf gathering dust. The anti-poverty strategy, the mental health strategy, the disability strategy, where are they talking about that?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I know my time is coming close to an end, but I do want to talk about the issues around labour. And I am looking forward to . . . And I want to say to the Premier that I am glad to see that the compassionate leave is recognized and we'll be moving on that. That is a good, good move.

But I am very concerned about what's happening in occupational health and safety in Saskatchewan, and I am happy to see some recent statistics to show that there's been improvement in injury time loss due to injuries. That's a good thing. I think we're at fourth worst instead of being second worst. Now we're fourth. So we are moving up a bit and that's a good thing, and I congratulate all those who are involved in making Saskatchewan safer.

But we had a real opportunity this year, a real opportunity. There are now . . . The Workers' Compensation Board has reported out at their AGM [annual general meeting] that they have a surplus of over \$240 million, \$240 million. They had the same circumstance last year where they had a surplus of \$140 million and they refunded that money back to all the employers. And we said last year, and we're saying again this year that I've written the board to take some time to think about how they should be spending that money. I really urge them not to do a quick refund of all that money. You know, the occupational health and safety budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is about \$8 million, \$9 million. And if you think about since this government has taken office, the number of workers that have increased in Saskatchewan — that's great — but also the cost of living, the money that this, the dollars that this government is spending on occupational safety has actually fallen every year, fallen every year.

Here we have a wonderful opportunity to have a legacy around occupational health and safety. Now my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale has been raising and will continue to raise

every day the issue of PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. This is a critical issue. And we think about what's happening in, whether it's Fort McMurray or what happened in Moncton with the RCMP shootings, where people are in traumatic circumstances, and whether it's the police force or whether it's the firefighters or emergency rescue, we have a situation where we could do the right thing. And we have \$240 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker, \$240 million. That's a lot of money. If we were to take some of that and put that towards PTSD, it would be a wonderful, wonderful thing. And we're going to be urging the government to tell WCB [Workers' Compensation Board], hold back on that money.

Now the other thing that's happening is the committee of review, and the Minister of Labour will be aware of this, should be reporting out anytime now, anytime, any day actually. And I'm sure they will be saying that there are things we could do in Saskatchewan to make sure our workplaces are more safe than they were the day before. We need to listen to that report. And we have the opportunity, with \$240 million, to make a big difference, to make a huge difference. So I would urge the Minister of Labour, with the spirit of this Throne Speech, keeping Saskatchewan strong, let's keep our workplaces safe and strong, and we have an opportunity to do that. So we should be standing up for Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan people, and this is hugely, hugely important.

I also want to just talk about briefly that I was struck by the silence on this Throne Speech about Saskatchewan diversity. I think this is huge. This is huge. We have, as I've said, we've gone through a winter where we've brought in and welcomed many Syrian refugees, and we know the population and growth in Saskatchewan has been largely due to new immigrants coming into Saskatchewan, whether they be . . . whatever country from around the world. This is a significant thing. This is a significant thing and yet, and I will every day stand up, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and present petitions calling for the restoration of funding for the heritage language program that's operated by some 17 schools, 17 communities in Saskatchewan. And we have a government . . . I mean, today we had people in the legislature from Mexico, and they were being welcomed and we were saying great things about them. But here for a small amount of money, \$225,000 that has been cut by this government, we're doing more damage. We have people in communities that are calling for this to be restored. And, Mr. Speaker, this is a significant, significant issue.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say . . . And in case you're curious, you know, this is . . . *The Globe and Mail* this last week talked about this. This is a piece by Adrienne Clarkson, a special to *The Globe and Mail* on Friday, May 13th. In the 2011 census, there were more than 200 languages regarded as home languages. Can you believe that in Canada? Two hundred languages reported as a home language. Nearly six million Canadians reported speaking at least two languages at home and seven million speak French at home. Interestingly, the rate of bilingualism in Quebec among immigrants is higher than the rate for those born in Canada. And, Mr. Speaker, that speaks to how important heritage languages are. This is huge, 200 languages, and we're turning our back and the minister is turning his back on this.

And so when I think about this Throne Speech, I think about

talking about keeping Saskatchewan strong, and yet they're ignoring some very important sectors of Saskatchewan. And our motto is from many hands, strength. And that's significant because we are all immigrants to this province. We were all immigrants at one time except for the indigenous folks. And this is a very, very important issue.

So it shows that this government has been engaged in a lot of small thinking. They're getting their . . . As I say, the Minister of Finance and other ministers in the front row seem to be all bent out of shape about some things that . . . They should be just taking, you know, not paying so much attention to, but thinking about the things at home like the anti-poverty strategy report, the mental health report, the disabilities report, but also some of the other cuts that are coming up in the budget. And our questions about the budget really show that in fact we need to be moving on that as quickly as possible.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I definitely not, I cannot support the main motion but I will be supporting the amendment. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And like many other colleagues in this Legislative Assembly, I'll start my response to the Throne Speech with thank yous to, first of all and foremost, I want to thank the constituents of Regina Walsh Acres for allowing me to represent them for another four and a half years. It's nice to get that extra six months until the next election comes in November 2020.

And I'd also like to put out a congratulations to every member that was elected in this House. Sixty-one people were successful but our democracy is a fantastic thing. Two hundred and sixty people put their name forward to try and represent the people of Saskatchewan. Sixty-one were successful, but I think all 260 deserve a lot of credit because it takes a lot of guts and a lot of courage to put your name forward and want to represent the people of the province. And I firmly believe that anyone who puts their name forward to run as a candidate in any election wants to make the province better. And I think this side, the other side, they all agree that Saskatchewan is a wonderful place to live, but they want to work hard to make it better, and we just have different and better ideas than that side over there has.

And I want to say congratulations to all the new members, all the new MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. It's a wonderful experience to swearing in. I congratulate the new members over there: the member from Douglas Park, the member from Lakeview, and the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote. I want to say congratulations.

It's a wonderful lifetime opportunity to be able to represent the people that you know and get to know as friends, and in my case, twice, maybe three times . . . Interim leader, we'll see. But after that first and foremost, it's a humbling experience and we're going to try and be as humble as possible when we go about our duties and do our duties with humility and try and make sure that we do the best for the people of Saskatchewan.

After that the people that I have to thank the most are my campaign team, our campaign team in Regina Walsh Acres. We had a fun group. It was a bit different in the 2016 as myself and the member for Rosemont were able to do a profile on CJME. We both had very different campaigns.

In 2011 Larissa and I didn't have children and neither did the member for Rosemont and his wife, and I think it's a lot different going through a campaign in 2016 with kids there. You're missing a lot of family time. And I think him and I agree on some things, and I think missing the family time was probably the hardest part about this campaign and not being able to do the bedtime stories as frequently as we liked. So we owe our spouses a lot and great thanks for what they put up with during the 30-day campaign. So thank you very much to my wife, Larissa. I really appreciate everything she did.

But for us, our kids were not the only kids within the campaign office. We had a bit of a day care; we had five or six kids running around under the age of four. But it just made us have a great feeling in the campaign office. There was always a great bunch of kids around there.

And I want to start with thanking all the campaign team. I want to thank Jason Wall who was my campaign manager for the second year in a row, second election in a row. He did a fantastic job. Alicia Hubbard, Chantelle Coderre, Heather Howell-Shiplack, Raeleen Hamann, Ashley Boha, Rhys Williams, Lance Richards, Chris and Shauna Oyka; Charlie and Susan Pirie, my business manager Eric Clark, and my lawyer — everyone has a lawyer, and I think he'll be thanked again later — Kevin Mellor who was the lawyer for election day. We really appreciate that.

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood on her feet?

Ms. Lambert: — I ask for leave to introduce guests.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Lambert: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a class from Holy Cross High School. They're waving up in the west gallery. There are 52 English as additional language students that are all taking an EAL [English as an additional language] credit language course. They are accompanied by their teachers, Mr. Dale Scott . . . Is Mr. Scott there? I saw him coming in. Hi. Yvonne Musey Johnson, hello; Maureen Bzdel; and Barb Fredrickson. In addition to Canada, these students come from such faraway countries as China, Hong Kong, Philippines, Vietnam, Iraq, Mexico, Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Colombia. This class also helped run the Holy Cross student provincial election on March 23rd and 24th.

I attended Holy Cross High School as well as my six brothers

and sisters. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Forbes: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to join in with the member welcoming the students from Holy Cross. I just want to say a big shout-out to a good friend, Dale Scott, a teacher. And we've done a lot of work on teachers' associations and that kind of thing over several years, but several years ago.

But welcome to all the kids. And we've just been debating about heritage languages and all of that. But we won't get into that now. I just want to welcome them all to their legislature. Thank you.

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

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Buckingham, seconded by Ms. Carr, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Ms. Sproule.]

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and to you, congratulations on your successful election as Deputy Speaker once again. I'm looking forward to working with you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to break my Throne Speech response into a couple of different parts. I want to talk about the election we all went through on April 4th. I think that was a monumental . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, it's not. I went through the monumental task of running in a provincial-wide election, and I want to thank a lot of other people. We had 61 candidates that stayed on message and did a fantastic job, working hard in all 61 constituencies with amazing volunteers and great campaign teams.

I'd like to thank our Saskatchewan Party team: Patrick Bundrock, JR, Samantha, Mark Shmelinski. They did a fantastic job of working hard and making sure that we were ready for anything that came up. And we appreciate all the support.

And also our Premier: he did a fantastic job going around the province and making sure the people of Saskatchewan knew what we were going to do to keep Saskatchewan strong. And I think that's the focus of our Throne Speech as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because it really plays off our platform commitments.

I think it's important to go through your platform and make sure that when you present a platform to the people of Saskatchewan, that platform's realistic; it's affordable; people believe that the promises you make in that platform, you're going to follow through on them in your four years in government if you get the wonderful responsibility to try and serve the people of the province and form government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[11:30]

So I think after a long campaign and getting to swear in, which is amazing for all 61 of our candidates, I think we get to the business of governing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that's what the Throne Speech is all about. It's about fulfilling your promises in government and your promises you made to the people of Saskatchewan. And our Throne Speech was broken down into three separate areas: keeping our economy strong, keeping the province's finances strong, keeping Saskatchewan's position in Canada strong by always standing up for the Saskatchewan interests of people. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that might be one of the most important parts of our Throne Speech, ensuring that you always stand up for the interests of Saskatchewan people.

And I know that some members over there may not want to talk about this, but I think we're going to have to have a conversation about the Leap Manifesto because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe this is one of the most dangerous pieces of information written since really . . . Actually the NDP are pretty famous for manifestos because I have the *Regina Manifesto* here as well, ironically. So I'll quote from the *Regina Manifesto*, July 19th to 21st, 1933:

The C.C.F. [which is their parent company] is a federation of organizations whose purpose is the establishment in Canada, of a Co-operative Commonwealth in which the principle regarding production, distribution and exchange will be the supplying of human needs and not the making of profits.

We aim to replace the present capitalist system [that sounds familiar], with its inherent injustice and inhumanity, by a social order from which the domination and exploitation of one class by another will be eliminated . . .

So let's fast-forward here a lot of decades and see what the NDP, the left wing, thinks with . . . It's interesting that the NDP in Saskatchewan are taking their lead from Avi Lewis, Naomi Klein, and not really the people of Saskatchewan.

So the member from Nutana says she did not sign the Leap Manifesto. So she may not have signed the Leap Manifesto; I'm not sure. She could have printed it off and signed it and hung it up on her wall in the office, and I'm not sure. But she did have a discussion about this in Edmonton at the NDP convention. And let's talk about what the convention . . . what was on the convention floor at the NDP convention in Edmonton this year.

Leap Manifesto . . . And I'm quoting, Mr. Deputy Speaker. "Therefore be it resolved that the NDP recognizes and supports the Leap Manifesto as a high-level statement of principles . . ."

I'll read that one more time, Mr. Deputy Speaker: "Therefore be it resolved that the NDP recognizes and supports the Leap Manifesto as a high-level statement of principles that speaks to the aspirations, history, and values of the party."

I would think that that would mean, Mr. Deputy Speaker, reading between the lines, that the member from Nutana supports the Leap Manifesto. But not only does the member of Nutana support the Leap Manifesto. After the election loss, and the interim leader — which congratulations to the member from Regina Rosemont as being elected interim leader unanimously; well done — I think that he made an interesting decision because they have a new renewal committee. And the new person that's heading that renewal committee is Nicole White who also subscribes to the Leap Manifesto.

So the NDP are trying to renew their party, Mr. Deputy Speaker, based on — and, Mr. Speaker, this is what they voted on — based on, "Therefore be it resolved that the NDP recognizes and supports the Leap Manifesto as a high-level statement of principles that speaks to the aspirations, history, and values of the party."

So I'm assuming that she's going to take most of her lead from the Leap Manifesto, which I haven't really got into exactly what's the . . . I'm going to hit the main points of Leap Manifesto, which most people in Saskatchewan are going to disagree with. I can tell you right now that . . .

So first of all, one of the main points of the Leap Manifesto: "There is no longer an excuse for building new infrastructure projects that lock us into increased extraction for decades into the future." So I find it somewhat ironic and maybe a little bit offside, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the new Finance critic . . . Another interesting choice for the interim leader who appointed a Finance critic who doesn't believe in capitalism. That's quite interesting. So I would think that talking to the new Finance critic who asked a question yesterday about Evraz, which is a huge employer in Regina, which is an important part of Regina's manufacturing industry. So she asked a question about Evraz, about 150 people that were laid off, which affects people in Regina, and she says something needs to be done so that there won't be more layoffs at Evraz. But yet she supports the Leap Manifesto. It says, "There is no longer an excuse for building new infrastructure projects that lock us into increased extraction decades into the future."

And the member from Rosemont just said she supports pipelines. Those two are diametrically opposed. You cannot support the Leap Manifesto and support pipelines, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's actually impossible because you're going against the Leap Manifesto if you support pipelines. It says no increased extraction decades into the future.

Not only that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member from Rosemont also appointed the member from Nutana as the Ag critic. And believe it or not, the Leap Manifesto says something about agriculture as well. It says, "Moving to a far more localized and ecologically-based agricultural system would reduce reliance on fossil fuels, capture carbon in the soil, and absorb sudden shocks in the global supply — as well as produce healthier and more affordable food for everyone."

So I have an idea, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for them, because they're rebranding; they're focusing on the Leap Manifesto. They should go back to the hammer and sickle as well. Because this is basically where they want to take agriculture. It's unbelievable. And the fact that they don't have the knowledge that improved technologies in agriculture allows the idea that there's not topsoil blowing all over.

I was talking to one farmer actually a couple of weeks ago. He said, if we were doing the same tilling and the same agriculture practices that we did in the '80s, there'd be topsoil blowing all over Saskatchewan. And right now because there is zero-till and crop rotation, that's not happening. And that's an improvement in agriculture I think we all believe is healthier for the people of Saskatchewan because you can grow more food and be able to feed more of the world's population with these improved technologies in agriculture.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's very interesting that the two pieces that the Leap Manifesto focuses on, the people of Saskatchewan will be strongly opposed to, he appoints the member that signed on to the Leap Manifesto as the critic for both of these portfolios. Might be a question of leadership there from the member for Regina Rosemont which, to be fair, he's young, new, and I think mistakes will be made by all new MLAs. He's third term now so I'm not sure if those mistakes can be just swiped under the rug.

Another interesting part of the Leap Manifesto is they like to live in a country powered entirely by truly just renewable resources — laudable goal. I think that is something that is interesting because in Saskatchewan, I believe . . . The member from Martensville is very excited about reading this right now actually.

Our goal to reach 50 per cent renewable energy by 2030 is I think a responsible goal, a goal that can be done without harming the economy. I think a lot of these ideas that were written in the Leap Manifesto really don't take into account the harm they can cause to the economy. And I think it's important that if we're going to represent the people of Saskatchewan, try and make sure that you represent the economy that these people are working in because it affects people's lives each and every day, the jobs they do so they can feed their families, so they can supply the necessities that their family needs.

And one thing that I would like to talk about is kind of a focus of change that's been in my life since having a second child, is looking towards the future and making sure that our kids have opportunities because I think in the past couple of years those opportunities have become more and more available to the young people of our province.

And I think the Throne Speech talks a little bit about that as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And some of the things when we were door knocking before the election on April 4th, I talked to the people because in Regina Walsh Acres, there's a lot of schools. And I talked to people about the investments we made in the schools — \$1 billion in infrastructure over our terms in government, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think when we talk about our commitments, we show our commitments in our actions. We show that we take education serious by investing in education.

We show that we take health care serious. I believe our current Health minister's one of the best Health ministers this province has ever seen, and he works hard each and every day to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan have the basic services that they need to ensure that there's a healthy society within Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I also think that we show our commitment by ensuring that we don't want to take more money out of taxpayers' pockets. And throughout our campaign we said, we want to work towards keeping Saskatchewan strong and keeping our finances strong and not raise taxes. And I talked with people on the doorsteps about that saying, Saskatchewan, the economy's . . . We've hit a bump. We're going through a bit of tough time but we're going to do something different. This is a government problem, not a citizen problem, and we're going to make sure that we try and fix this problem by not dipping into your pockets.

We've had consistently . . . There's some things government control. We can't control what the price of resources is. We can't control what the price of commodities are going to be, but we can control our expenses. And I think on this side of the House, this is something the government's done very well. We've been very close on, and I think it's something where our government can be proud of the way that we handle the expense side of government, of the government ledger, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a couple of more things I want to talk about. And there's quite a few differences between our side of the House and the opposition side of the House, mostly seats, but there's a few other differences, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And one is, I was listening intently to the member from Athabasca's speeches because I enjoy them. I think he can spin a tale better than lots of other members in this Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I was listening intently, and lots of his speeches could be called tall tales actually because they go in and out of the realm of reality. But he made a slip and one thing that the NDP do believe is on their side of the House when they talk about their 16 years in government, they don't talk about serving the public. They don't talk about being public servants. And this is a direct quote from the member from Athabasca yesterday: ". . . Mr. Speaker, for the record, the 16 years that the NDP ruled this province . . ."

Mr. Speaker, that says a lot about peoples' expectations of how they feel if they would ever have the honour to be able to serve the people of Saskatchewan. How do you . . . I don't think you should say that you rule the province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You serve the province. And I think that's something we've been very cautious, and I believe that every person on this side of the House thinks we don't rule our constituents. We serve at the pleasure of our constituents. We serve to make sure that their voice is heard in this Chamber, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I believe as long as I have the honour of sitting in one of these desks, I will never say that I rule or preside over anyone. I serve at the pleasure of the people of the province. And I serve at the pleasure of the people of Regina Walsh Acres, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think that's something you can never ever take for granted.

I believe on that side of the House I think they've maybe lost their north star, lost their guiding principles, but they've looked to the wrong spot for those new guiding principles. They've looked to a document called the *Leap Manifesto* for their new guiding principles, which no one in Saskatchewan is going to strongly support, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think they should be talking to Saskatchewan people, not Avi Lewis and Naomi Klein, I'm not sure they represent the people's opinions in their province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I also . . . My time's getting short here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but there's just a few more things I'd like to talk about before I end with my support of the Throne Speech. And one is, the election was not too long ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I believe that we were given a strong mandate to serve the people of Saskatchewan. I believe that we're going to work hard to keep all of our commitments followed up with a Throne Speech that outlines those commitments we've made and how we're going to commit and follow through on those promises.

But I'll say one thing, and listening to a couple more speeches over there and listening to the member from Athabasca and the member from Cumberland, I think they still are of the opinion that — and I'm just, I'm trying to get into the head of a member opposite which is not easy to do — but I believe they think the people of Saskatchewan have just got it wrong again.

I think, and I've talked to a lot of people across the province, and the attitude that the members opposite still have is they'll come back to us. We can keep doing what we're doing. They just don't understand it yet because they don't get it. And I think that's a very dangerous perspective to take on something as important as trying to ensure that you represent the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House I believe we'll never have that attitude. We'll never have the attitude that we rule the people of Saskatchewan. We are here to serve, and humbly serve at that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And with that and for the reasons outlined in my speech, I will definitely be supporting the Speech from the Throne.

And I am very grateful for having the honour to represent the people of Regina Walsh Acres for a second term. I'll never take that responsibility lightly. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[11:45]

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is an absolute honour to be participating in the Throne Speech debate while representing the good people of Melville-Saltcoats constituency.

First off I'd like to congratulate you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on your accomplishment as well as the Speaker on his accomplishment as well.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before this honourable Assembly for the first time in awe of those who have gone before us, the decisions that they made, and the vision that they had for this

great province. And at the same time, as I've been reading the backgrounds and biographies of those members sitting among us, both in government and in opposition, I appreciate the diversity and background of all hon. members and can only envision the notable discussions, decisions that we're going to be making to provide a direction for this great province into the next 100 years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I could take a couple of minutes to extend my appreciation to the people, the constituents and communities in Melville-Saltcoats, for giving me this opportunity to serve them with pride. They've entrusted me with a valuable possession and that is their democratic vote. Many men and women around the world have fought for the right and lost their lives fighting for and defending our democratic rights. And I really do appreciate the fact that this is a very hard-earned right and the act of placing that vote with us is not to be taken lightly.

As well I would like to thank the constituents for providing me their wisdom, their insight, their opinions, their generosity, and their support and, not to forget, a lot of coffee and muffins as we embarked on the electoral journey. As in typical Saskatchewan fashion, if they were not going to vote for me, they still invited me in, and we had to have a discussion over coffee and muffins.

Mr. Speaker, I'd not . . . be remiss if I didn't thank my family for being the support network that virtually all members who spoke before me have indicated. And first off I would like to thank my wife, Carla, who, I'm not sure if the Hon. Minister of Advanced Education wanted anyone to know, actually babysat the minister when he was a little tyke. And she knew even then that he was off to great things.

Carla's the administrator for the town of Churchbridge, so she has provided me with abundant insight into the world of civic duties and concerns. She was always in the background providing endless support and encouragement and was a taskmaster, ensuring deadlines were met and calls were made when they needed to be. She knew just the right words of encouragement or motivation when it was needed. And as well, she endured a lot of alone time as our nomination occurred in the fall of 2014 and we began campaigning at every hockey rink, curling rink, community barbecue, and fall supper in the constituency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd also like to thank my mom, Phyllis Kaeding, who was, like a lot of moms, the unsung hero. She was always looking to help. No job was too big or small. Her and her grey-haired army, as she called them, would stuff and address envelopes, count flyers, and do anything else that I could give to them. And all she asked in return was that I keep her up to date on the happenings in the constituency and the scuttlebutt of what was going on around us.

My father, Roger, had always been involved politically, as I remember getting to drive around in the half-ton, out in the dusty backroads, putting up signs every election. And I'd be the quiet one listening in the corner of the room whenever dad hosted a political meeting in our farmhouse. I remember getting to tell Premier Devine, a guest of my dad's, about my intentions to farm, over a steak at our kitchen table one evening in the

early '80s.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to acknowledge the incredible work that my good friend and campaign manager Rick MacIntyre provided for the campaign. He was out there door knocking in the heat, the rain, the snow, and the ice, as well as hitting every sporting and community event and barbecue over the last two years with me, all the while trying to maintain his purebred Simmental herd. He became a confidante and, as myself, was all new to this election process. We definitely learned a lot together. We got quite a few high-fives at the door, met a couple of angry dogs. But I'm not sure if it's a reward or a sentence, but I've since appointed him as my constituency assistant.

The majority of our campaign team was a young, energetic group that had little to no experience in running a campaign, so we learned a lot together. We had a lot of fun. We found out a lot more about ourselves, but best of all we became a team. And I appreciate their loyalty and dedication even when we took them out of their comfort zone and took them to the city to do some door knocking. So thanks, Jon Adams, Kelly Fatteicher, Pam Marfleet, Blair Harris, Keith Rathgeber, Jack Dawes, Dave Nussbaumer, Ed Myers, Char and Randy Slager, Barry Dilts, Arlynn and Lillian Kurtz, and the many others that helped us on our campaign.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank Bob Bjornerud, previous member from Melville-Saltcoats. And he provided me a tremendous amount of political insight into the process, and I consider him to be a mentor as I do many in the caucus today. And I see the high regard that he's got within the legislature and as well throughout the constituency, and I understand that really his are impossible shoes to fill, and all I want to do is just follow in the same path.

Mr. Speaker, as in every democratic process, we had competitors, and I would like to take the time to thank all the nominees for letting their names stand for the election. In particular I would like to recognize Leonard Dales, my main opponent with the NDP. It was indicated this is his last go at the election process. He worked extremely hard. He actually retired from his job to campaign, and he missed, I know, a couple of major family events, life events, during the election. And I wish him well into the future.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge the leadership that we have with this government. To be honest, it was pretty easy campaigning when you introduced yourself as being with the Premier and the Sask Party. He has always had my respect and the respect of voters in our constituency and across the province. He earned this respect by being down to earth and keeping his promises and defending the province every opportunity that he got. The Premier and this government have a solid record of doing what they promise, doing what they say they're going to do and that has provided an incredible level of trust between this government and its citizens.

Mr. Speaker, during the course of the campaign, I made a goal for myself, a personal goal, to call on every urban household in the Melville-Saltcoats constituency, whether it was the village of Bangor or Calder or Tantallon or towns like Langenburg or Esterhazy or Stockholm or the city of Melville. And I found

everyone had a story, whether it was about their family history of their parents first emigrating to Canada or maybe it was about their personal journey here from other parts of the world. And the common theme was that they came to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, what did they see here? What did they stay for? Everyone will tell you that they came here because of opportunity and, Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Melville-Saltcoats has an incredibly diverse economy. Certainly the Mosaic potash mines are significant employers, but we also have two major railways that go through the constituency, major hubs in a CN [Canadian National] hub in Melville, CP [Canadian Pacific] hub in Bredenbury. We have a major government employer, being crop insurance AgriStability in Melville.

Agriculture plays a dominant role in our local economy. We have very large high-tech grain farms in the 30- to 40,000-acre range, down to small organic farms. We have large cattle herds numbering 800 to 1,200 head. We've got families raising goat herds numbering 10 to 20. Melville-Saltcoats actually has the majority of commercial turkeys raised in Saskatchewan, and many say there is one standing here right now. We have dairy, broiler chicken and egg farms. Northern Quinoa, based in Melville, is Canada's largest commercial quinoa processor and exporter.

These are all contributors to the record \$15.3 billion of agriculture food exports that this province achieved in 2015. Mr. Speaker, these are also agricultural enterprises that support this government's position in promoting the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement currently in front of the federal government.

From 2009 to 2014, manufacturing sales rose in the province by nearly 47 per cent. This was the second-largest growth rate among all provinces. Exports from Saskatchewan now total over \$32.5 billion. Manufacturers in the constituency of Melville-Saltcoats play a significant part in that statistic. You're going to find grain and gravel semi-trailers built in Saltcoats. You will find pre-made rafters that are shipped all over Western Canada from a manufacturer in Bredenbury. You're going to find plastic tanks manufactured in Spy Hill, grain bins, hopper cones, harrow bars, and bale shredders manufactured in Gerald. There are high-tech agricultural guidance systems being developed in Stockholm. Honey is being produced and exported around the world from major producers in MacNutt and Langenburg. Potash and uranium mine parts are made in Esterhazy. And the list goes on.

Mr. Speaker, these are businesses that have set up in Saskatchewan because they see opportunity — opportunity to grow and expand, opportunity to earn a fair living for their owners and employees. And this Throne Speech continues to provide hope and opportunity for these and other businesses in Saskatchewan to develop on the provincial, national, and international stage.

In the last two months we have had a major industrial company located in Saltcoats, EMW Industrial, be asked by a business in the United States to establish a parallel business there. Just recently they opened their new office in St. James, Missouri. EMW Industrial is a privately owned company by local

shareholders and employees, over 250 local tradesmen, millwrights, steelworkers, apprentices, and journeymen. The majority are young men and women from this area, from the area of Melville-Saltcoats, and EMW has provided them an opportunity to develop their trade with the potential of working anywhere in the world. And that is opportunity for our young people. They live in our towns and villages; they buy goods and services, and they have families.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency we have the exciting developments in our towns, villages, and city and that is population growth. Virtually every community in Melville-Saltcoats has grown significantly over the past five years. Why? Because they have people wanting to live in this province because they see opportunity.

As I was door knocking, I came across endless stories of parents my age and older thanking this government for helping to create opportunities for their kids to come back home. And they weren't just coming back to entry-level jobs. They were coming back as professionals, some as engineers in the numerous large building projects that we have going on in this province such as the new hospitals in Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, North Battleford. I met parents who had their kids working on the bypass in Regina, the potash projects in Rocanville and Esterhazy. I ran into parents whose kids were working at K+S near Bethune and Evraz in Regina.

But I also talked to people who have moved in from other provinces with no previous ties to this province. Just on the block that I live on, in the town of Churchbridge, there is a Mosaic employee to the left of me who comes from Manitoba. The other side of my house, a mine engineer and his wife who is a nurse, who comes from Kenora, Ontario. Another neighbour and his family just became Canadian citizens after leaving the Philippines. And none of them envision ever considering to go back. Saskatchewan is now their home.

Mr. Speaker, in our constituency we have another major event going on, the building of a brand new school in Langenburg. And this is one of the 40 new and replacement schools that this government has undertaken in the last eight years. This is part of a billion-dollar investment in our children's future. And this government has the vision and fortitude to invest in our province's future. It's interesting to note that from kindergarten to grade 3, we've had a significant increase in the number of kids going to school. For example we're accustomed, in our local rural schools, to having class sizes from an 8 to 12 kid range. Now we're seeing 20 kids per class, and if we do the math we find that this population growth coincides with the time the government changed in this province. What a tremendous opportunity to develop more home-grown doctors, nurses, teachers, tradespeople, and business professionals.

The other factor I noticed while campaigning was the number of first-generation Canadians that are now in our province. In one area of Esterhazy, I ran into first-generation Canadians of five different nationalities. And apart from their reason for coming to Saskatchewan, what was so refreshing was their willingness and desire to become Canadian citizens and take on all the responsibilities that come with that. They wanted a vote in the worst way, and were very aware of what full Canadian citizenship would provide them. And they represent the 132,000

new people that have come to this province in the last 10 years because they saw opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, I directly remember the conversation I had with Manny Ada, a new Canadian citizen who brought his family to Churchbridge. He's currently working on our old seed farm. In the Philippines, he was an accountant. In Churchbridge, he's managing a poultry barn. He's not concerned he's not working in his area of expertise because his daughters received a tremendous education in a great school in a super learning environment.

Last summer he had two daughters who graduated high school here and were able to take nursing at the Parkland College in Yorkton. This is a new facility that was funded by this government. They were able to go to university while staying at home in rural Saskatchewan. This is the result of more than 272 more nurse training seats established by this government over the last 10 years. They will also be able to find a job in this province in an area they were interested in — nursing. Not a likely scenario they would have been afforded back in Manila or even back in Saskatchewan 10 years ago. Manny came here because he was given an opportunity to make a better life for his family in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, my wife and I have been blessed with two tremendous boys, adults now. Michael is a mechanical engineer working for Brandt agriculture. He and his wife, Laine Goertz, who has worked for various ministries in this government, have made their home here in Regina. They were both offered opportunities when they graduated to find work in Alberta and BC [British Columbia]. They looked at their options and found that Saskatchewan was going to provide them the best opportunity now and into the future.

[12:00]

We're glad for this because we now have a grandchild, Brynn, who is a fifth-generation Saskatchewan resident in our family. What helped motivate them to stay was the graduate retention program and the low personal taxes that this government has introduced. When they compare their take-home salary to the other cousins they've got throughout Canada, they find out they're pretty darn good here. With the assistance they received through the Sask advantage scholarship and the graduate retention program, they've been able to build equity in their home and also start providing for their little girl's future education. This is certainly not something that their parents were able to achieve in their start, and this contributes once again to young people seeing Saskatchewan as a place to be.

Total tax reductions since 2008 have put nearly \$6 billion back into the hands of Saskatchewan taxpayers. Today a family of four with \$50,000 annual income will pay no provincial sales tax, no provincial tax. So although Michael and Laine already own their home, numerous friends of theirs are anxiously awaiting their opportunity to use their . . . in the graduate retention program first home initiative where they can utilize their unused GRP [graduate retention program] credits towards a down payment on the purchase of their first home in Saskatchewan. This is another tremendous tool in the economic tool box to help keep our young people in this province.

Our youngest son, Matthew, is an aerospace engineer located in Ottawa. Although we don't have a large aerospace industry to lure him back to Saskatchewan yet, there are positive signs. The Throne Speech mentioned the creation of the Saskatchewan commercial innovation incentive, providing significant tax incentives to the commercialization of patents and qualifying intellectual property into new products. As well, we will also provide a significant refundable component on the provincial research and development tax credit. This intrigues him and the company that he works for. This will continue to position Saskatchewan as a hotbed for science and innovation, and policies such as these continue to show the optimism that this government has on the potential of this province. Policies such as these show that this province is open to the new and innovative ideas of new entrepreneurs, bringing new business to our province.

Mr. Speaker, I have continued hope for the citizens of this province and continued enthusiasm for the potential of this province. But, Mr. Speaker, we must also recognize that there are many constituents who have disabilities or have children with disabilities. Therefore this government has also lowered taxes for persons with disabilities and increased tax benefits for their caregivers.

This government is extending job protection to allow employees caring for a family member in the final stages of life, entitling them to 28 weeks of leave per year.

We're increasing the funding to the CNIB [Canadian National Institute for the Blind] to integrate visual loss rehabilitation services into the mainstream health system.

Our government will provide for individualized funding for preschool children with autism spectrum disorder, and this will provide parents of children with autism the ability to determine what the best expenditure of funds is for the benefit of their child's development.

Mr. Speaker, but we also need to look after our seniors, the hard-working pillars of our province. By allowing seniors to defer the education portion of their property tax enables them to utilize their disposable income for more discretionary expenses.

Mr. Speaker, to wind up, I'd like to confirm that this Throne Speech has fulfilled the desire of the majority of our constituents who requested that we not spend beyond our means. As we went door to door, the single request many taxpayers sent us back with was, keep moving us forward. They appreciated the efforts of this government to pay down debt when we could. They appreciated that this government needed to continue to replace aging infrastructure that has been neglected through the previous government's terms.

Constituents understand there are obvious income deficiencies over the last 18 months, and this government has done all that they can to keep expenses in check. They appreciate the fact that this government didn't overpromise to spend their way into the next election.

This Throne Speech identifies the real and immediate needs of Saskatchewan residents, and it shows this government's determination to get back to a balanced budget in short order.

The Throne Speech outlines our government's vision of how to keep our province competitive with a competitive tax structure, incentives to promote ingenuity and entrepreneurship. It provides a vision as to how we can continue to make Saskatchewan the economic beacon that the rest of the country now looks to. And it provides this province with the resolve to continue to be proud of who we are, and the vision of what we still have yet to become.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, for these reasons I will be supporting the motion put forward by the member from Saskatoon Westview.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Wood River.

Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It truly is an honour for me to rise in this Legislative Assembly for the first time as the MLA from Wood River to address the delegates here.

I just want to say, first of all I want to thank the constituents of Wood River for giving me this honour and this privilege to serve them as their Sask Party MLA, and I also want to thank our former colleague, Yogi Huyghebaert, for all his hard work in the past 17 years as our Sask Party MLA. The election campaign was a great opportunity for me, Mr. Speaker, to meet many people in my constituency: farmers, ranchers, business owners, teachers, nurses, seniors, doctors, and children of all ages.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say a few words about my parents, if I could, who have both passed on. Our father, Marvin, was a very hard worker, as were all farmers. At the age of 19, he owned farm land and bought his very first grain truck and custom hauled grain to pay for that truck at 1 cent a bushel. At the age of 23, he married my mother, Irene, and they started their own farm machinery dealership in the community of Fife Lake. They owned and operated that business for 17 years, along with farming and raising four children. It was our parents' love of farming that got me and my two brothers into farming. Our sister Cheryl became an RN [registered nurse] and has had a very successful career. I believe it was my father's strong commitment to free enterprise and his passion for politics that has led me to where I am here today.

And I must take some time, Mr. Speaker, to thank my family, for all those that helped in my campaign. First of all, Mr. Speaker, I must thank my wife, Lois, for supporting me in this new chapter in my life. My children have also been very supportive of the opportunities that have come to me in the past 15 years. There were many days and nights, Mr. Speaker, when my family was home alone while I was off doing SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] business on behalf of rural Saskatchewan. And Lois was with the kids, and in later years she spent many days and nights at home alone. And for her, she's been my rock and I really have to thank her, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank a member of my family, and that's my brother Robert and his wife, Viv, Mr. Speaker, because without their support none of this would even be possible. Robert and I have been farming together since the '70s, and he was one of the first to tell me to go for it and take the challenge of representing rural Saskatchewan on the SARM

board. And when I told him I was interested in seeking the nomination for the Sask Party for Wood River, he just said, do it; we will make the farm work. He has made a huge sacrifice for me, Mr. Speaker, to achieve my goals, and I can't thank him enough.

Also, Mr. Speaker, our youngest brother, Cameron, who actually got people to work for him when his shift was due at the mine in Coronach so that he could take time off and help Robert with harvest or seeding time when I was away on SARM business.

There are so many people to thank, Mr. Speaker. My years on the SARM board gave me the privilege of working with some great board members and some excellent staff that really helped me along the way. And if I could, Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to thank some of the them. People like Sinclair Harrison, Keith Carleton, Don Taylor, Jim Hallick, Ray Orb, and my colleagues here now today: the Minister of Government Relations, and the member from Cypress Hills.

And I had the privilege of seeing our first women elected to the SARM board: Deb Groning, Mr. Speaker; Judy Harwood and Carmen Sterling, which is great for the organization, and many great staff that really guided me along the way, Mr. Speaker, with all their hard work and knowledge. But one, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to single out, Mr. Neal Hardy. This gentleman really helped me to become the person I am today. It was under his guidance as president of SARM that it really prepared for me my role as SARM president of a great organization. And I owe Neal my greatest gratitude.

I also want to take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to thank all the volunteers that have helped me achieve my goal of becoming the Sask Party MLA for Wood River. To my campaign manager, Randy Clark, we spent a lot of time putting signs up and making sure I was where I had to be, and to his lovely wife, Sandra, who was also my business manager and who also came door knocking with me a lot of times. She accounted for every penny, Mr. Speaker, and made sure we stayed on budget. I want to say thank you to both of them, and also to their boss, Mr. Speaker, Darryl Meyer of Swift Current who owns the bulk Petro Canada dealership there, allowed them to take that time off to help me during my campaign.

And to Wayne and Rita Royal for putting up signs and door knocking. To Curtis Nelson of Nelson Motors for leasing us a vehicle during the campaign. To Tim and Penny Dlouhey who own a restaurant in Assiniboia, for donating food during the campaign.

Mr. Speaker, to Wendel Patzer for putting up signs and taking me around the Wymark and Swift Current area and introducing me to a lot of people. To my cousin, Bobby Switzer, for phoning and making sure people got out to vote. It was tremendous what he did. And to Garth Dorgan for introducing me at a grand opening at one of his facilities.

I guess what I'm saying, Mr. Speaker, is it takes a lot of people and their hard work and sacrifice to help all of us get here to this beautiful facility so we can serve them and ensure that they have every opportunity to live, work, and raise a family in this great province of Saskatchewan. This is why, Mr. Speaker, I

wanted to serve as the MLA for Wood River, and to them I say thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a few words on why I decided to run for the Sask Party and why I wanted to represent Wood River. The Sask Party government has been working very hard to track investment for growth and to give our young people every opportunity to stay in this province to work, live, and raise their families. For years we watched our families and friends leave this province for jobs. I come from a large rural constituency that saw many of our schools and hospitals close, and many of our towns had lost businesses and had vacant homes. Today, Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Sask Party government, we are seeing those towns become vibrant again. Young people are staying and starting their own business. Older people are moving back for quality of life. New homes and condos are going up in our towns, Mr. Speaker. That is why I wanted to become an MLA, to ensure our rural communities have every opportunity to grow and for our young people to want to stay in this province.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the Sask Party record in government. And I'm not going to dwell on the past, Mr. Speaker, because I've heard the saying, the windshield is much bigger than the mirror. And let's look at what they've done: 85,000 more people in this province since 2007, and taxes, property taxes . . . And I have to talk about education property tax on property, Mr. Speaker, I have to. As the SARM president for years, it was the biggest issue that came to our convention floor. And when my colleague, the Minister of Government Relations, brought forward the proposal for education property tax reduction, it was the biggest tax reduction in this province's history.

Also with hospitals, we've seen double the investment in hospitals and health care facilities since 2007. Schools, we're seeing more and more schools being built, invested in 40 new replacement schools and 25 major renovation projects including, Mr. Speaker, a major addition in Gravelbourg.

Highways, we're looking at in eight years they'd invested \$5.2 billion in repairing Saskatchewan highways and committed to another 2.7 billion over the next four years. And we've seen some very significant highway infrastructure in the Gravelbourg-Lafleche area in my riding, and it was great to see.

In finances, you look at Saskatchewan as now a have province with a sound record of financial management, and we are a AAA rating.

Mr. Speaker, I want to touch on resource development. We are seeing new potash mines being built in this province at K+S near Bethune and BHP in LeRoy. We have seen more than 25,000 new oil wells drilled in this province since 2007. We're seeing a helium plant being built in Mankota. Mr. Speaker, all this development has added to the tax base of rural municipalities that helps to address their needs for new infrastructure and provide thousands of new jobs. Mr. Speaker, even in depressed oil prices, there were approximately 1,900 new wells drilled in this province in 2015.

I want to talk a little bit about agriculture, which is very near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker. And the Sask Party has

made agriculture a priority with increased funding in ag research at the U of S and many changes to improve crop insurance, introducing an affordable livestock insurance program, finding new markets globally to see our agriculture products grow in value. We've seen record exports of agriculture products reaching over \$15 billion, surpassing our government's growth plan of 15 billion by 2020. As a farmer myself, Mr. Speaker, this is great news.

[12:15]

I want to talk about the graduate retention program, Mr. Speaker, something that is very near and dear to me. The Saskatchewan government introduced the graduate retention program where upon post-secondary grads can receive tuition rebates of up to \$20,000 if they choose to live and work in Saskatchewan after graduation.

Mr. Speaker, this was an important program to my daughter. Our daughter used this program, which really assisted her and her husband, Darrel, where they bought their house four years ago and have also started a family. And we're blessed with two great granddaughters, Lily and Olivia. Our son, Mr. Speaker, who took his medical degree as a doctor at the U of S, also is planning to return to Saskatchewan to practise medicine upon completion of his residency in Calgary. Once again, Mr. Speaker, this government is finding ways to make sense to keep our children and grandchildren close to us in this great province of Saskatchewan. And now they have the ability to access up to 10,000 for the down payment on a house.

These are many reasons, Mr. Speaker, why I wanted to run for the Sask Party. And I lived and farmed in this province all my life and I'm not leaving. And I want to do everything I can that our children and grandchildren never want to leave either.

I want to touch on one thing that is very near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker, before I wind it down, and I do want to talk about STARS. I want to thank the Sask Party government for bringing STARS to Saskatchewan and not reinventing the wheel, but going to STARS and asking them to expand to this province.

It was their presentation at a SARM convention a few years ago that brought forth the resolution to ask RMs [rural municipality] to make a voluntary contribution of up to \$2 per capita. Mr. Speaker, that resolution has resulted in RMs contributing more than \$1.3 million into the STARS fund. It shows us how important rural Saskatchewan values STARS and does their part to ensure its viability. And every year, Mr. Speaker, SARM has a . . . and STARS do a presentation at the convention where they have a survivor speak of the importance of STARS. And it is very important to us.

Mr. Speaker, our government has always stood up for interests in Saskatchewan, and we continue to do just that.

Too often in recent years, misguided dogmatists have been attacking many of Saskatchewan's most important industries. There are people in this country who don't like that we in Saskatchewan take advantage of our vast natural resources to provide our country and the world with the food and the fuel and the fertilizer we need to grow. They wish to shut down

major parts of our economy and put thousands of hardworking Saskatchewan people out of work because they believe in some ill-conceived notion that these jobs are somehow bad for our country. We will never hesitate to stand up for our province and our economy by telling those people just how wrong they are.

Mr. Speaker, in closing I just want to say, I want to thank you for allowing me this time to speak on the Throne Speech. I am supporting the Throne Speech as is presented, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am honoured and humbled, the opportunity to represent the constituents of Cypress Hills during this 28th sitting of the legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize some of the people who, without their help and support, it would have not been possible for me to be here today. First and foremost, I want to thank my wife, Phyllis. She is an amazing woman, has been with me every step of the way since my nomination and throughout the election period. My wife and three children have been my strength and encouragement. I would like to sincerely thank them for supporting me and being by my side throughout it all.

I'm also very thankful for my campaign team for all that they did and all the time that they have given for our campaign. I am humbled by their generous support to me and to our province. They went above and beyond and I would not be here today without them. I can never express my sincere gratitude to the constituents of Cypress Hills who have given me this opportunity to represent them.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to address my constituency in which I have the pleasure to represent. The Cypress Hills has a very strong and diverse economy. Even during this time of economic challenge, the Southwest continues to diversify and grow strong every day. We have so many precious natural resources produced throughout the region, including crude oil, natural gas, and now helium. In the agriculture industry, the cattle producers are going strong and the grain producers have kept their great west rail and grain elevator system operating strong.

As a direct result of our government's goal to have our power supply supplied by 50 per cent renewable by 2030, the Cypress Hills region has seen an influx of companies looking at the area to erect wind turbines for power and generation.

However, Mr. Speaker, it is not all work and no play in the Cypress Hills. Tourism attractions are plentiful in the Southwest, some of which include the National Historic Site of Fort Walsh; dino country at Eastend, proud home of the T. Rex; festivals; rodeos; parades; fairs; and camping in many of our regional parks.

All of these sectors — energy, agriculture, tourism, and renewable resources — all require extensive support from local services to ensure that projects get completed and their tourism destinations are successful. In the Southwest, we have many constituents with entrepreneurial spirits to develop and provide

these services. Some of these new and expanding businesses include Fauser Energy Inc., Welltraxx Ltd., Crazy Cowboys Instrumentation, Millenium Land, Cypress Hills Winery, and the list goes on and on. These successful companies provide services to the industry and employment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, all of our sectors, including tourism, will only flourish under this government as we have strived to grow through private and public partnerships. As a government, we'll provide these people and businesses the tools and support they need to grow and be successful.

Mr. Speaker, we will also continue to keep our economy strong. We will consult with the industry on establishment of new and growth tax initiatives. This new tax incentive is designed to create jobs and investments by our advantages and tax advantages, rates for the commercialization and patents and copyrights here in the province.

Saskatchewan's strong and diverse economy will continue to attract new investments. Currently a number of companies have announced new major investments and expansions within Saskatchewan, such as Crescent Point announced a capital budget between 950 million and 1.3 billion in 2016, with most of this money expected to be committed to Saskatchewan; Husky Energy, with more than 1 billion invested in Saskatchewan related to the heavy oil thermal project creating approximately 90 full-time jobs and 50 construction jobs; Weil Group Resources, 10 million at the helium facility; K+S Legacy Mine, a 4.1 billion projected; RII North America, with 60 million enhanced oil recovery operation; BHP Billiton, 20 million to establish a carbon capture storage knowledge centre with SaskPower; Revera, 75 million in retirement community, creating 300 jobs during the construction and 150 permanent jobs when completed.

Mr. Speaker, highways are identified as an important aspect of the undertaking. This government will keep our promise to fix more highways through the 70 million surge in highways repair and maintenance over the next three years.

Mr. Speaker, we will also continue to move forward on many important projects such as schools, hospitals, long-term care facilities using both traditional funding and P3s. These important investments by the ministry and the Crowns will total 3.6 billion this year and a record investment.

Mr. Speaker, as a child growing up in this province and living in rural communities like Gull Lake, I have learned that one of the main things that tie the people of this province together is their work ethic and their commitment to their families and their communities.

I am proud to call Saskatchewan my home and am happy to see change in attitude in its people knowing that together we are great. Together there are great things that lie ahead. We have a quality of life here in Saskatchewan that is unparalleled to anywhere else in Canada. From an abundance of natural resources to our people, and everything between, Saskatchewan is simply the best place to live.

And, Mr. Speaker, we will make Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and invest as we will do this with action. As stated

in the Speech from the Throne, we will take the action to sustain growth and opportunity to address affordability issues and maintain a competitive tax royalty regime to improve our quality of life and to assure we remain responsible, trustworthy, and accountable to the people of the province. We are a government of action and a government with focus to keep Saskatchewan strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to provide a response to the Throne Speech. I want to start by congratulating all members in the House. As we all know, it is quite something to put your name on a ballot and ask people to support you and your party, and so to everybody here on both sides of the House, congratulations on a job very well done.

I also want to recognize the two members . . . or the Sask Party candidate and the Liberal candidate, Marv Friesen and Robert Rudachyk, who worked very hard. In fact Robert Rudachyk, the Liberal, was knocking on my door on the Sunday at 6 o'clock before the election, so there was lots of hard work done. So congratulations to everyone. It's no small thing to be able to do that.

I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that I was so incredibly proud to be part of the team of New Democrats that ran in this last election, a historic team in fact. Mr. Speaker, there were more than . . . more than half of us were women. And we had a huge diversity more reflective of the makeup of this province than has ever been seen on a team.

And I would be remiss if I didn't say thank you to our former leader, Cam Broten, for making that happen. He was committed to diversity from the time that he ran in the leadership, Mr. Speaker, and we have a caucus of half women, Mr. Speaker, because of Cam Broten's leadership. So I'd like to say thank you to Cam for the work that he did ensuring that. He recognized that diversity around decision-making tables is absolutely imperative and I'm quite excited about being part of this team, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say thank you to the people of Saskatoon Riversdale. Riversdale has been my home for much of my life, and actually my family's home. My dad, when they moved from the homestead, in fact moved to that constituency and he's been there pretty much ever since, Mr. Speaker, from a little boy. So my grandparents were there, and my parents chose to build a house in Holiday Park when it was a new neighbourhood, and they're still there. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to call Holiday Park and the constituency of Saskatoon Riversdale my home.

There are so many people in the constituency who I've known over the years. It's funny, when you door knock, you meet people who you went to high school with, who you went to elementary school with. The one thing that I notice about my community is that those of us who grew up there, many of us have come back which is kind of neat. So it's great to see so many people I've known for so many years. And over my years as an MLA, continue to get to meet so many of the wonderful community builders and folks who call that constituency home.

[12:30]

I need to thank the team who's helped get me elected and provided me much needed support, Mr. Speaker. When I really needed . . . Actually, this was a tough election campaign for me. My dad broke his hip four days into the campaign. My parents actually have always been more support to me than I to them, and they're in their 80s, 83 and 84 respectively. And now the tables have turned a little bit. But my team have provided me support: Lily, Vanessa, Judy, Dianne, Tracy, Grant, Ted, all the volunteers who door knocked, made phone calls, brought food, put up signs, all those things that I know all of us here really appreciate. Those are the things that keep us going, Mr. Speaker.

My family, I've spoken just briefly about my parents. As someone who was elected when her daughter was one, Mr. Speaker, some of you have seen Ophelia or know Ophelia, my now 8-year-old. And an 18-year-old, Mr. Speaker, I have an adult child living in my house which is the strangest thing. But my youngest daughter was one when I was first elected so she doesn't really know life any different than her mom being an MLA. And as such, I've needed a whole team of people to support me to be here, Mr. Speaker. And as I said, part of that team is my parents.

But I come from a big family. I'm the youngest of seven and it's really been my sister Michelle and her husband who have been a huge support for me, both when I'm in Saskatoon and have events, but also when I'm here in Regina. My sister is a pretty amazing person and I'm very lucky to have her, Mr. Speaker.

My parents, my parents are the reason that I'm here involved in politics. I grew up in a political household. My parents were both community activists and they were partisans as well. They were New Democrats. But the one thing they always taught all seven of us growing up is your job . . . But political parties reflect values. Political parties have values. Our job growing up is to learn about those values, political parties, find out where our values match and get involved in that political party. And if there's something you don't like, you need to fight to make change, Mr. Speaker. My parents taught me that. They live that. Not only did they say it but they lived it. And I'm grateful for not only the support that they've provided me over the years, but I'm thankful that I had that kind of upbringing, Mr. Speaker.

I have to say thank you to some extended family, my neighbours, Anita and Graham Langford. Anita was a former city councillor in Saskatoon and is a good family friend and is my neighbour. And when my dad broke his hip, all heck broke loose in my house. And sort of emotionally, there were some concerns about how my dad would fare. But also just the logistics of taking care of my dad in the hospital, making sure he was okay, making sure my mom was okay, and making sure my immediate family was okay, my two kids. And Anita and Graham . . . For the duration of the campaign, Anita Langford fed my family and I for the whole campaign. And I can tell you, much better food than I ever feed my kids, so they were incredibly spoiled and very sad to have the campaign come to an end. So again, it's those kinds of things that keep us going on those long days of campaigning.

So all those people have played a part in getting me here, in having the privilege to serve. One of my favourite quotes, and I actually haven't been able to find the origin of the quote, but it's, "Leadership is about submission to duty, not elevation to power." And I think that that is really what this is all about for all of us, Mr. Speaker.

So I humbly take on my role as part of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, we will hold this government to account as that's our job. But we will continue to propose, as we have done throughout the last session, and provide solutions, and not just oppose government actions. So I look forward to that, Mr. Speaker, to have the opportunity to continue to do that.

To that end, I'd like to get down to the real work of this speech. It's always challenging, whether it's a Throne Speech or a budget, to know exactly where you want to put your focus, and obviously on this side of the House we have critic responsibilities and that's a logical place. But I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that it's sometimes hard to narrow the focus in our allotted time. There's so many things to talk about.

So I think I'm going to start framing this conversation . . . I think it's easiest to start the discussion about talking about the finances, Mr. Speaker. One of the themes of this government's Throne Speech is keeping our strong finances. That, Mr. Speaker, is ironic as this is a government who in just a few short weeks from now will be tabling their sixth deficit budget out of nine budgets, Mr. Speaker, six deficit budgets in the sunniest of economic times. They've drained the rainy day fund. They have not put a single cent away. And I think as a mom of two kids, that's one of the things that drives me most crazy about this, Mr. Speaker.

A country like Norway since about 1992 has put \$1 trillion away in their sovereign wealth fund for when those times when oil drops or when resources are no longer available, they can rely on their sovereign wealth fund. This government has drained the rainy day fund. They have not created a sovereign wealth fund, and they have racked up debt and have run six, it'll be six out of nine deficits, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, honestly, Mr. Speaker, services, as the Health critic I can tell you services . . . People tell me day in and day out that services have not improved, despite the government having the record revenue that they have had. As a parent of kids who attend schools in Saskatoon, I can tell you, speaking to other families I hear about the challenges in education. Coming from a family where there are three educators in my immediate family, I can also tell you the many stories that I hear about under-resourced classrooms, overcrowded classrooms. Those kinds of stories are regular table conversation in my house, and I hear it from all kinds of people.

But I think the reality is, despite having lots of money, one should not simply throw money at a problem. That isn't the issue here, Mr. Speaker. One should not simply throw money at a problem. One should make good investments. That's what good governance is about, Mr. Speaker. It's about making good investments.

And as the Health critic, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about

good investment in health care. Health care is really where we need to make good investments. We had the minister yesterday in a scrum pointing out some fairly obvious things that I don't disagree with him. The reality is baby boomers are starting to retire. We have an aging population that will have some impact on our health care budget, and the minister pointed out that we have to be ready for that. And he also pointed out that each year we're being asked to do more for people, and we need to be on the right path to make sure we can deliver what we need to people.

I couldn't agree more with the minister, Mr. Speaker, but I would disagree about the path he's chosen to get there. Health spending is approximately half our health care budget, so how do we reduce some of that spending or at least make sure that it isn't growing exponentially, particularly with the challenges that health care with an aging population is going to face?

So I would like to talk about some good investments. Can you imagine in a time of prosperity, if the government would have spent money in a real and meaningful way on some of these issues, the decreased cost to the system rather than dumping money into something like lean?

So you think about something like poverty reduction. The real costs of poverty are often coming from the social determinants of health: making sure people have housing, Mr. Speaker, making sure people have education, making sure people have good jobs. Could you imagine if \$40 million that they spent on John Black would have actually been spent on poverty reduction? The number that I hear cited quite often: every dollar spent on poverty reduction will yield you \$2.00 in savings down the road in health care savings, justice, social services, all those kinds of things.

So think about what this government could have done in the sunniest of times in reducing health care costs by making sure people had what they need to live healthy lives. And think about what that would have meant for the health and well-being of people, Mr. Speaker. Not only is it about financial costs but it's also about costs that people face in their daily lives of not fulfilling their potential, Mr. Speaker.

So a couple of days ago, the Premier had some comments to say about transformational change, not just in health care but in education. He said this is going to be a cross-ministry thing that they need to look at transformation. Well in health care, Mr. Speaker, he also said that this is something he — this is paraphrasing — he said that it's time for us to engage with Saskatchewan people and stakeholders in health care, education, social services, corrections, and ask them if there are opportunities for substantial and major changes. And he said we shouldn't look to the budget to specifically announce immediate changes. We want to engage. We want to look at that.

Well I would argue that in health care that conversation has been going on for several years. The Canadian Medical Association, the national nurses organization, several other organizations have been engaged in that health care transformation discussion. Patient First, one could argue, is part of health care transformation.

So I just want to talk a little bit about what a health care

transformation strategy or some principles around health care transformation. This is from the CMA [Canadian Medical Association] document, *Assessing Progress on Health Care Transformation: 2010-2014*, from May 2014. So some of the principles are best health care which means it should be patient-centred, improving the patient experience by building a culture of patient-centred care across all levels of the system.

Another principle is quality. Under best health care, increase the delivery of “services that are appropriate for patient needs, respect individual choice and are delivered in a manner that is timely, safe, effective and according to the most currently available scientific knowledge.” I know from my experience as the Health critic, Mr. Speaker, that there are many people who don’t feel like they’re getting health care in a timely fashion, whether it’s waits for specialists, waits in the ER [emergency room] — and I’ll talk about some of this in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker — or actually even growing waits in surgeries, and I’ll talk about that in a moment as well.

But I’d like to talk about some of these principles. Another principle is best health. So that’s about health promotion and prevention, increased supports to Canadians to prevent illness and enhance their well-being. I could argue and I would argue that this government could do a far better job. I think about anti-smoking legislation, Mr. Speaker, and the opportunity to improve it. There are many organizations who’ve brought really positive ideas forward about improving the health and well-being of Saskatchewan residents. We haven’t done what we need to do around health promotion and health prevention.

Another big piece which is near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker, is health equity: “Improve equitable access to quality care and strengthen advocacy for multi-sectoral policies to address the social determinants of health.” So when we talk about health equity, I can tell you in my constituency I have people who can’t access home care because they live in my community, Mr. Speaker. Because of their postal code, they have trouble accessing even home care. There’s doctors writing a recommendation for home care and because of where they live they cannot access home care. And that’s throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, that there are people who do not have access to the necessary health care that they need.

We had a case today from Preeceville, a six-year-old boy who is anaphylactic and he carries two EpiPens but would need to be treated within 20 minutes of the exposure to the allergen. And by not having a doctor and emergency services in Preeceville anymore, this little boy’s life may be in jeopardy. So the reality is we haven’t done . . . this government hasn’t done the work that they need to do on improving equitable access to quality care and strengthen advocacy.

The piece around strengthening advocacy for multi-sectoral policies, Mr. Speaker, that is all about addressing social determinants of health. That’s all about addressing housing. That is about addressing education. That’s about addressing child care and jobs. And again this is a government who has an anti-poverty strategy that isn’t really a strategy. Someone who worked on developing the recommendations, Dr. Ryan Meili actually, when this government quietly . . . They’re all . . .

[Interjections]

Ms. Chartier: — Actually it’s funny that I’m hearing some rumbling over there. This is the government that actually put Dr. Ryan Meili in their Throne Speech two years and were quite proud of that, Mr. Speaker. But Dr. Meili has been less than impressed with this government’s anti-poverty strategy as have many people who work in . . . as with many people, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a quote from *The StarPhoenix*:

“If you look at what constitutes a poverty reduction strategy, if you look at experts in the field and what they say has to be in there, we don’t have one,” he said.

So Mr. Speaker, an anti-poverty strategy again is something that would go a long way to reducing health care costs, a real anti-poverty strategy, Mr. Speaker, with targets and designated expenditures, not fobbing them off into the future. When there’s money, Mr. Speaker, we might invest in domestic violence programming, Mr. Speaker. Those kinds of things cannot wait until today, especially when we have some of the rates — I’m just thinking domestic violence in particular — especially since we have some of the rates that we have, Mr. Speaker.

[12:45]

So some of the things that Dr. Meili and others talk about actually, the anti-poverty strategy . . . But one thing I’d like to propose for this minister to think about and this government to think about is a health-in-all approach to creating public policy, Mr. Speaker. So it’s recognizing that health . . . So you can talk about prevention and promotion for one individual, Mr. Speaker. So get someone to stop smoking. That’s great and that is useful. But the reality is it does little to change the underlying drivers of health like income, education, and employment.

So we need an anti-poverty strategy, and this government should be adopting a health-in-all policy across government. So whether it’s transportation or education, whatever policy is being implemented, Mr. Speaker, should be done with a lens of health in mind. How does this legislation, how does this policy impact people’s overall health? That needs to happen, Mr. Speaker. Other jurisdictions are moving in that direction and that would go a long way.

So this is a government, when they had record resources could have made a huge difference in reducing health care costs by investing in the right things, Mr. Speaker. And it becomes even more imperative at this time when oil is low and many of our other resources are being challenged, Mr. Speaker, that we make smart investments. And this is a government who just doesn’t seem to think that investment in anti-poverty is the way to go. The rest of the world seems to think that, Mr. Speaker.

Study after study shows this, including one from last month, a local study actually. Dr. Cory Neudorf at the U of S points out that most health inequalities have either seen no change in recent years or are getting worse in our sunniest of days. So people, even though that there’s been more money in this province, our health outcomes have not gotten better. Those health inequalities actually have seen no change or they’ve gotten worse in recent years.

And that’s front and centre for me in the community that I call

home, Mr. Speaker, the community that I have the privilege of representing. It's both the right thing from a financial and a moral perspective to invest in poverty reduction. Again, every dollar spent will yield two in savings down the road.

I hear stories around what a poverty reduction strategy would do. So some of the stories that come in my office . . . Just this past year we worked with a mom who had seven kids. She moved to Saskatoon to have a fresh start and go to school. She struggled to find housing, Mr. Speaker. It was a huge challenge. And not everybody I work with has seven kids, but I work with many people who struggle finding housing, Mr. Speaker.

In my constituency, there are multiple families living in homes meant for a single family. The speed of illness, the lack of privacy, so . . . Or the spread of illness, sorry. So when so many people are living in close proximity, any of us who have children all know that children are little germ spreaders when they come home from school. But when so many people are living in close proximity, people are ill more often.

There's a lack of privacy when you've got multiple families living in a single dwelling home. And for example, kids who have the inability to study, or you have so many people living in a home and so many pressures, so people couch surf. Even with families, families couch surf, going from home to home.

So how do you put roots down in a community? How do you keep a kid, a child in one school consistently for a year to build bonds with teachers and get the best possible education? It makes it so hard for kids, that housing piece.

I have constituents who are trying to manage diabetes and a diabetes diet on a low income. The lack of access to child care becomes a real problem for some people trying to get to work, especially those who are working in lower wage jobs in some of the vulnerable sectors.

Tim Hortons. If Tim Hortons opens at 6 and you are supposed to start at 6 and your child care isn't available until 7 or 7:30, it's a real problem. And that is a problem for many people I speak with, Mr. Speaker.

I worked with a family a couple of years ago who received the employment supplement. Both parents were working. One of them was a day home provider, and one of them worked as a caretaker. The dad had received a slight increase in his income. I think it was . . . He got a raise which . . . We should all be excited about getting a raise. It was a modest raise, probably accounting to the total of about \$25 a month. But you know what happened with that raise, Mr. Speaker? It bumped them out of being able to receive the employment supplement. And the employment supplement itself wasn't the big deal, but it was the employment supplement makes you eligible for family health benefits. And the father was diabetic, the mother had fibromyalgia and some other challenges, the kids had some health issues. So losing those family health benefits really made a difference.

And this government hasn't made . . . They've made changes. They've pulled families out of the employment supplement. I believe it's those families over the age of 12. Forgive me, I might have that number wrong, but I believe it's those children

over 12 now are no longer eligible for the employment supplement. That was a change made in last year's budget. I can tell you as having an 18-year-old in my house, it's those families who have the older kids that have some real financial challenges. So that was not a smart move.

People, as I've said earlier, people who don't get home care because of where they live, so what they end up doing is showing up, presenting at the ER to have a bandage changed or at the ER because things have gotten worse for them, Mr. Speaker.

So a poverty reduction strategy and using a health-in-all policy would make a big difference. And as I said, I think everybody else around the world and in Canada is realizing that. That would be a smart investment, Mr. Speaker. And instead this government is refusing to do that.

I think about this Throne Speech and some of the pieces that are missing. I talked, Mr. Speaker, about health care transformation, some of the principles, best health care, best health, and best value. So we'll wait and see for the budget. So we'll be up having this conversation here again in a few weeks.

But the things that I've talked about—being patient centred, quality health promotion and prevention, health equity, sustainable, and accountable — some of the things that I've heard rumblings and we'll hear in the budget about what transformation looks like, is the possibility of reducing the number of health regions. If that's what the government thinks, that would fall under accountability — strengthening the system accountability through good governance, responsible use of resources, public reporting, enforcement, and innovation. That's a part of that piece, Mr. Speaker. But you can't just . . . There's no one issue in this world that has a silver bullet. There are many parts and pieces to fixing a system that is under stress, Mr. Speaker, and I would argue that this government has not taken that big-picture view.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've talked about the need about poverty reduction and using a health-in-all policy for the reason, again, this is a government who had lots of money, lots of resources available, didn't make those transformational changes at this time, and now it becomes even more important, sort of that overall picture. But I want to talk about a few individual pieces.

So in this Throne Speech, we hear about a committee that's going to be struck on organ donation — and the minister actually read the bill today — which, as the Health critic, I suspect it will likely be me as one of the members on that committee from this side of the House. We'll wait and see from our leadership here. And I'd be very happy to serve on that committee. I lost a friend about four years ago, Mr. Speaker, because she didn't get a timely lung transplant. She did end up getting a lung transplant, but she'd already progressed so far in her illness that her body was weak and she passed away. So it's quite near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker. So I will be grateful to sit on that committee.

But I do know a year ago we had *The Human Tissue Gift Act* before us and in that bill . . . I'm assuming that the government did some consultation and did some legwork prior to that bill. When you open up a piece of legislation, I guess you should

never assume anything, Mr. Speaker. But so this government would have done or should have done some serious and meaningful consultation before bringing that bill forward. So you'd think a good chunk of this work is already done. But again I will happily hear evidence from all kinds of people, stakeholders, people who know this much better than I do.

But I want to point out that the one thing, when I did my consultation and due diligence on this bill, the one thing that I heard from people who work in organ donation and transplants, the one thing that would really, really help improve our organ donation rates is hiring donor physicians. They're called donor physicians. And people who work in this area had asked for four donor physicians, two in Saskatoon and two in Regina. So these donor physicians would likely be intensivists and they wouldn't be full time in this role. But what their role would be, to educate their colleagues about donation. Their job would be to review any missed opportunities on a case-by-case basis and find out how we can do things better.

Ontario has been using donor physicians for many years, and I understand that they're increasing the number of donor physicians that they have. Because death, Mr. Speaker, is awkward and often what happens is physicians are uncomfortable having that conversation with families. So these donor physicians are outside of the circle of care and (a) can have some of those conversations, but can also support their colleagues to be able to do that more effectively.

One of the things I've heard from people is that really the ask, and having trained professionals being able to do this, is a huge part of increasing the number of donors that we have here, Mr. Speaker. So as I said, I'll happily sit on this committee.

But I would like . . . And I'll have an opportunity to ask the minister in estimates, post-budget, but from what I understand there aren't any donor physicians. But I look forward to having the opportunity to have that conversation with them, as that was one of the recommendations: start with four and then expand to other health regions as well, Mr. Speaker.

ER wait times. I think when we talk about ER wait times, we look at the commitment that this Premier made in 2012 to end ER waits by March 31st, 2017. What has ended up happening is the government has walked away from that commitment in the 2014-15 annual report. So the reality is, if any of us have visited an emergency room in Saskatchewan, we would know that we're nowhere near no wait, and in many cases, there are very, very long waits.

There are stories . . . Actually just last year the overall wait times have not gotten better, according to the Ministry of Health's own annual numbers. But if we can look in 2015, and in four health regions in . . . Sorry. In 2014-2015, more than 18,000 patients registered but left without seeing a doctor. And those aren't people who maybe just have an earache, Mr. Speaker. Some of those were . . . So more than 1 in 4 semi-urgent patients left the ER without being seen, and 3 in 10 patients assessed as non-urgent left the ER, and more than 1 in 10 patients left without being seen. So the reality is you think about those 1 in 4 semi-urgent patients leaving the ER without being seen. What happens then? So they go home either to get sicker and end up having to come back to the ER or they

self-medicate, which can sometimes make matters worse, Mr. Speaker.

I think we've all heard scary ER stories, and as the Health critic, I hear those on a regular basis. One that just happened a few months ago, Mr. Speaker, a woman who was 15 weeks pregnant went to the ER at noon on Saturday. She was finally seen by a doctor at 4:30. He took some blood, checked her vitals, gave her Tylenol and Gravol, and sent her home at around 6.

She came back at 11 o'clock that night feeling worse. So she's pregnant. At this point in time she's 15 weeks pregnant. She calls her midwife, and her midwife tells her, get back to the hospital; it sounds like it's your appendix. So she went back to the hospital that night, at 11 o'clock at night, and lay on a stretcher in the hallway all night long. The night shift doctor ran more tests and said her white blood cells were higher than they were earlier, but they could only try to keep her comfortable until the morning because they couldn't do an ultrasound. They don't do tests. Some of those tests don't happen overnight, Mr. Speaker. So she was on morphine for pain.

In the morning at 9:30, she was finally taken for an ultrasound and they discovered that her appendix had been perforated and was leaking. So a woman who's pregnant, who's lied all night on a hospital bed, is very sick. She needed immediate surgery and was finally taken to the OR [operating room] at 2:30. She slept on that stretcher for two nights. She spent her nights on that stretcher throwing up. Awful story.

And those are not uncommon stories, Mr. Speaker. Not everybody feels like they can come to the legislature and share those stories, but I'm sure we have all heard those stories, Mr. Speaker. So ER waits, this government has certainly not improved ER wait times.

Surgical wait times. So this is an area in which the government had made some progress, and I have commended them on that progress in the past. But the reality is that they have gone exactly the opposite direction. So I would argue that their progress . . . They talk about their progress being made because of innovation. I would argue the progress they made was because they threw lots of money at an issue. So when you pay for surgeries, you can do more surgeries, Mr. Speaker.

So what has happened since then? Starting on March 2015, wait times for surgeries have . . . Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, what has happened since March of 2015? When the surgical initiative ended, wait times for surgeries across the province started increasing. So those waiting more than three months, the number of people waiting over three months for their surgeries has tripled in just 11 months. In Regina, the amount of people waiting more than three months for surgery has increased by 285 per cent in a year.

The member from Moose Jaw who always shouts, what are you talking about, I'm talking about his record, Mr. Speaker, his record, his government's record on surgeries. So they made some progress. The one thing on which they made progress in in health care, they've gone exactly the opposite direction. It's very . . .

The Speaker: — It now being 1 p.m., this Assembly stands adjourned until Tuesday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

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