



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

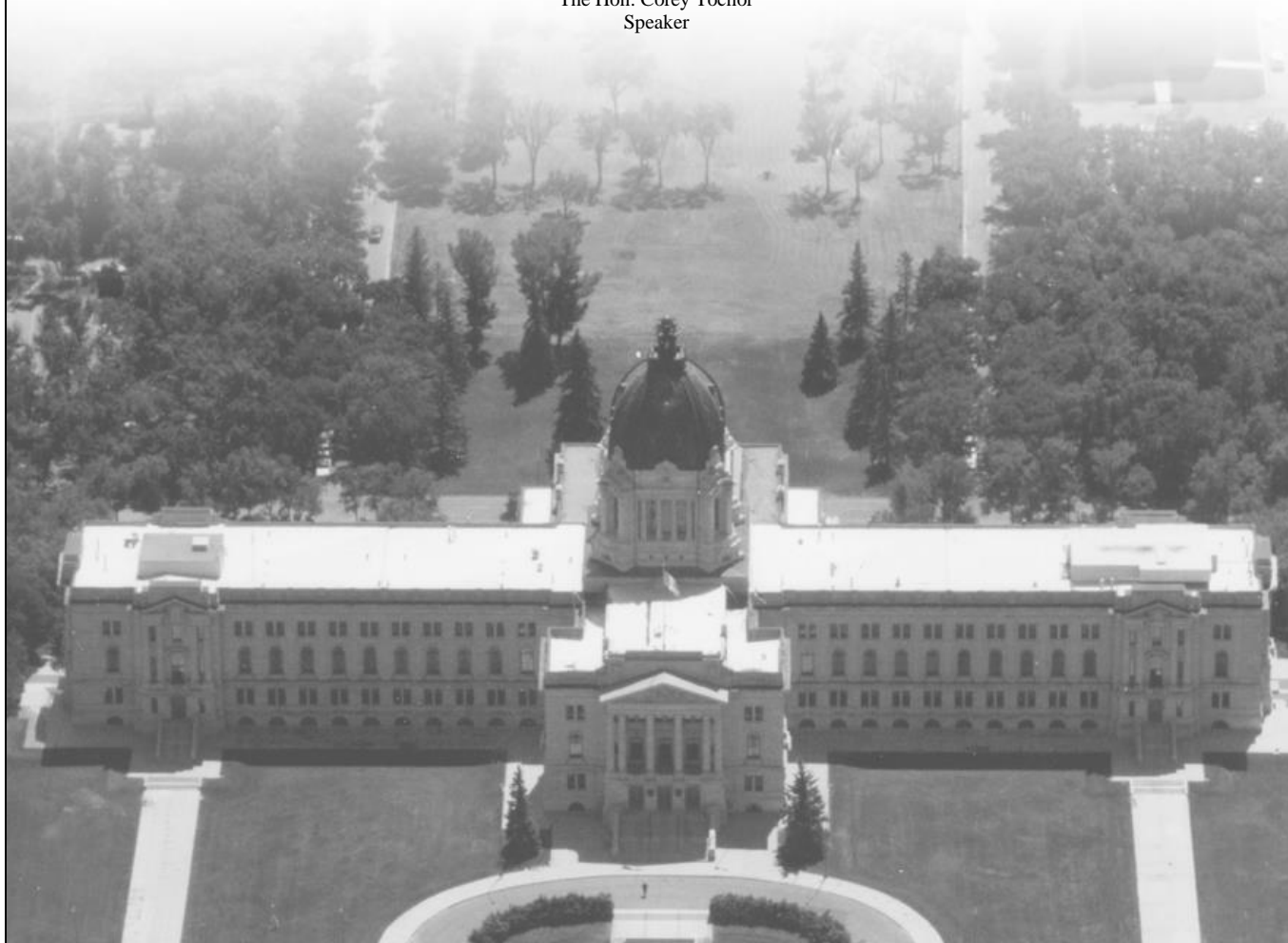
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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authority of
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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Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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 Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — With leave, Mr. Speaker, for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery I have a number of guests here today. The first guest that I want to introduce is not a stranger to this Assembly. It is her 10th-year anniversary from when she was a topic that was debated extensively on the floor of this Chamber. Her name is Paige Hansen. She is a successful cancer survivor now for 10 years. So congratulations, Paige.

Paige is an active fundraiser for a number of causes, one of which is the Ronald McDonald House. Many of you may have seen her in ads for the Wish Foundation. Paige is also a very accomplished Ukrainian dancer. So she is a very, very, very well-rounded young woman. Accompanying her is her mom, Michelle Hansen.

Also here is someone who worked diligently on my campaign. He was a real little trooper. So the young man here is Wyatt Flory, and he's accompanied by his mother, Sandy Flory.

I also have someone that I sat on a doorstep through the campaign. We had a good chat and we could agree to disagree, but hopefully at the end of the conversation I still gained his vote. I'm not sure. But we have Leonard Boehm here from Allan, Saskatchewan.

And I have my constituency assistant, last but not least by any means, who keeps me looking good back in Humboldt, and that is Susan Dunne.

So could we welcome these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to briefly join with the member and the minister to welcome a very inspiring young lady here who was once baby Paige, but now a vibrant grade 6. That's Paige Hansen, who's certainly giving back in so many ways and an inspiring survivor within our province. It's also a pleasure to welcome Michelle, her mom, here today. So I ask all members to join with me in

welcoming these two individuals to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Dennis: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce to you our former MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Canora-Pelly seated right behind me, our deputy premier, former Finance minister, and former Education minister, and a great mentor of mine. He's not only a good friend, but he's really taught me a lot along the way. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to welcome the minister, former minister of Education and Finance and member for Canora-Pelly to his Assembly once again. We miss his presence in this Assembly; it might be a little quieter in here on a given question period day. We're not sure if he was brought in as a bit of backup to help out with the budget preparation here for next Wednesday. Regardless of that, it's a pleasure to see a good friend. Welcome him to this Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise again to present a petition to improve PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] coverage for all Saskatchewan workers. The petitioners point out that post-traumatic stress disorder can severely impact the lives of Saskatchewan workers. They point out that the delay in diagnosis and treatment for PTSD can be detrimental to recovery, that PTSD isn't one of the presumed . . . It's not on the list of workers' compensation illnesses presumed to be work related in Saskatchewan, and that many currently who suffer from work-related PTSD are burdened by lengthy investigations and approval processes.

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

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 subsequently be covered under workers' compensation and receive the same benefits as others with work-related injuries.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Prince Albert and Swift Current. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of funding heritage languages here in Saskatchewan. And we know that after 25 years the Government of Saskatchewan is now 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. And as a result from the Ministry of Education, many of these non-profit heritage language schools will be faced with a difficult decision of whether they can continue to operate. You know, the heritage language schools contribute to the retention of immigrants in Saskatchewan by helping people maintain their culture, identity, and traditions while at the same time learning about Canadian ways of life. Furthermore, studying additional languages offer many benefits for all Canadians, especially in today's growing international markets.

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

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 the petition today are from the city of Regina. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask for leave to make an introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the member from Carrot River.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce 27 pupils from Whitewood School in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, their teacher, Mrs. Gina Kodman, and the bus driver is Crystal Ennis Marnier.

Now there is a little catch on this. We're glad to see the kids here, but Gina Kodman was Gina Bradshaw until last summer. So this is the first time I've ever been able to introduce her in this House and, Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to introduce them to their Legislative Assembly. I ask all members to welcome them. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Military Family Camping Program Celebrates Fifth Anniversary

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will have the privilege of attending the Military Family Camping Program's fifth anniversary launch today. Each summer the MFCP [Military Family Camping Program] is a program that supports our men and women in uniform and their families by providing the opportunity for military families to go camping. These families are able to enjoy the beauty of Buffalo Pound Provincial Park with everything necessary to have a great camping trip.

Mr. Speaker, military families face unique challenges because of their lifestyle which often affects family relationships in many ways. This program helps families overcome the stresses related to family separation, promotes healthy family relationships, and enables effective family reintegration after or during an operational deployment or training. We are eternally grateful to the Canadian Forces for their service and for the family time that they give up to serve our country. That is why we believe that programs like this are so important.

Mr. Speaker, the military camping program is sponsored by the 15 Wing Moose Jaw, Canadian Forces Morale and Welfare Services, along with Sask Parks in addition to other public and private sponsors. I would like to invite you and all members of this Assembly to first, thank those that serve in the Canadian Forces; and second, thank you organizers and sponsors of this great summer program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Remembering Roy Atkinson

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to remember a man who devoted his entire life to fighting for farmers. Roy Atkinson died last week at the age of 92. A founding member of the National Farmers Union, he served for many years as its president, providing a voice for farmers all across Canada. He was adamant that farm families needed to organize and work together in order to get a better deal. He fought hard to empower local farmers and was also on the front lines during the battle for medicare.

Roy also made important contributions to empower farmers through his service on the board of the Economic Council of Canada, the Canadian Council for Rural Development, the Canadian Wheat Board Advisory Committee, and the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool. Roy was also an important leader in the co-op movement and was a founding member of the Landis Producer Co-op and served on the board of Federated Co-op. And Roy found time for all this organizing and activism while running his own farm operation on land that has been in the family since 1905. Among the well-deserved awards earned throughout his career, Roy was made a member of the Order of Canada and inducted into the Saskatchewan Agriculture Hall of Fame.

Members will also know that Roy's daughter, Pat Atkinson, served for many years in this Legislative Assembly, and I know that all members will join me in sending condolences to her and

her extended family at the loss of her dad.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the significant contributions Roy Atkinson made to the people of Saskatchewan through his career of activism and service.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Unity Community Daycare Grand Opening

Mr. Doke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise in the House today to celebrate the grand opening of the Unity Community Daycare on May 7. Mr. Speaker, the grand opening of the daycare was seven years in the making and I want to thank the board members and members of the community for their hard work on this project.

It took a village to make this daycare a possibility and I'd like to take a moment to recognize some of the people and organizations who made it a reality. The local credit union and co-op together donated \$25,000. The Town of Unity guaranteed the loan for the daycare, and Unity Public School donated tables and chairs. Marion Kelly donated a washer and dryer, and Randy Sander contributed accounting services.

It is so important that we give our children a good head start in life and parents must feel comfortable leaving their children in a safe environment. Mr. Speaker, our government was very proud to grant \$94,000 to this project, which currently has 20 licensed spots as part of our commitment to create 4,500 more daycare spots available in this province.

Lastly I would like to thank Carmen Bowker, Crystal O'Brien, and Carey Baker, who were on the board for all seven years. Their hard work and commitment to this project did not go unnoticed. I ask all members to congratulate the town of Unity for their new daycare. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[10:15]

Cathedral Village Arts Festival Celebrates 25th Anniversary

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Cathedral Village Arts Festival is a creative celebration of community through the arts, and I am proud to have it in my constituency. From May 23rd to May 28th, Cathedral area residents invite their neighbours to celebrate the gifts that arts and culture bring to our community. The festival features visual arts, writing and poetry, crafts, and many impressive performances — I believe over 100 this year. The festival also encourages children, youth, and adults to create, participate, and enjoy the arts.

This year they mark their 25th anniversary, and the theme of this year's event is Paint the Town. From humble but spirited roots in 1991, the festival has grown immensely over the past quarter century and now attracts upwards of 45,000 audience members, making it one of the largest festivals in Saskatchewan.

The CVAF [Cathedral Village Arts Festival] operates as a community of the Cathedral Area Community Association and is made possible by the efforts of over 300 volunteers from across the artistic, professional, and business spectrum. In the spirit of inclusion and due to generous support from cultural organizations, funders, local businesses, and corporations, access to all events is free.

I ask all members to join me in thanking this year's festival Chair, Barbara Tomporowski, and her team for their hard work in making this year's festival a success, and I invite everyone to come by the festival this weekend and check out the arts and culture on display. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Lloydminster Teacher Receives Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize Nicole Blais, an outstanding teacher at St. Mary's Elementary School in Lloydminster. Earlier this month Ms. Blais received the Prime Minister's Award for Teaching Excellence. She teaches all subjects to her grade 6 class, and she serves as a technology lead at her school. Ms. Blais brings a positive attitude, quick wit, and a genuine care for others to her classroom.

Mr. Speaker, in partnership with a colleague from Holy Rosary High School and Our Village Uganda, Ms. Blais spearheads an outreach group through which students in Lloydminster and Uganda hold joint prayer services and classroom discussions over Skype. Her students in Lloydminster also raise funds to help a Ugandan village develop and become more sustainable. In 2015 Ms. Blais and her colleague were recognized by the Canadian Education Association for their work with Our Village Uganda.

Ms. Blais takes advantage of every opportunity to integrate technology into her classroom to help prepare students for the technology- and knowledge-driven economy of the future. She has also worked to improve her school by championing projects to install a living wall in the school's foyer and waste-reducing water bottle refill stations.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Nicole Blais on receiving the Prime Minister's teaching excellence award and in thanking her for her excellent work in the classroom. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Celebrate Success Awards Gala

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege and honour to acknowledge the 2016 Saskatoon Celebrate Success award recipients. Celebrate Success is a yearly awards gala that recognizes some of the top businesses in the Saskatoon region that have demonstrated excellence.

This year's gala was held last Thursday, which I had the privilege to attend along with the Minister of Justice. It was a

wonderful evening where the nominees, finalists, winners, and the whole business community in Saskatoon was showcased. Doing an excellent job emceeding the event were Evan Drissner and Shauna Nelson. Mr. Speaker, the event truly showed how Saskatoon and indeed all of Saskatchewan is a world-class place to do business.

This year's award recipients were Reed Security, Vendasta, Three Farmers Products, Social Spiral Technologies, Sandbox in the City, Envirotec Services Incorporated, and special recognition to Saskatoon Willowgrove residents Mackenzie Firby and her dynamic business, Two Fifty Two Boutique, the young entrepreneur of the year — and she was a double winner — and Wieggers Financial & Benefits, Cliff and Debbie Wieggers as well.

In addition to the business awards handed out, there was an inductee to the RBC SABEX [Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence] Hall of Fame. This year's inductee was well-known Saskatoon resident Dr. Red Williams.

The final award was also given to an individual, the Oslo international Business for Peace Award. It was awarded to Steve Dechka.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to help me congratulate the Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce on a job well done.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Pasqua.

Construction Begins on Affordable Housing Development

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform members that on May 25th, I attended a sod-turning ceremony for a new housing development in my constituency. This development will enable 14 Saskatchewan families with complex needs to improve their quality of life.

The project is being initiated by Silver Sage Holdings, which is helping to change the landscape of housing in this province so more people have access to safe, adequate, and affordable homes.

Mr. Speaker, our government shares this vision. It is not just about constructing a new building, which is why Silver Sage Holdings has partnered with Foxvalley Counselling Services to ensure families have prompt access to programs and services.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud that Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, along with their federal housing partner, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, are jointly contributing \$1.3 million under the Canada-Saskatchewan Investment in Affordable Housing Agreement.

Mr. Speaker, housing has been and continues to be a key priority of my government. Since November 2007 there have been 1,242 affordable rental units completed in Regina, including 233 for households who are hard to house. Including this project, an additional 36 affordable rental units are currently under construction. This is money well invested. Mr. Speaker, our goal is to keep Saskatchewan strong, and housing is a key pillar of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Carbon Capture and Storage Project

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, they say everything is bigger in Texas, but their tolerance for bloated boondoggles and wasted money on failing projects is apparently a lot smaller than the Sask Party's. Mr. Speaker, the Texas clean energy project includes carbon capture, and something that will come as no surprise to anyone who's paying attention to carbon capture projects, whether it's in the UK [United Kingdom] or right here with the Sask Party's fiasco, the project isn't going well. They've had some cost overruns. After spending \$116 million and seeing a series of struggles, they've decided they can't waste any more tax dollars. That's \$116 million. That's with an "m", Mr. Speaker.

If the US [United States] is backing out after blowing \$116 million, why did the Sask Party stubbornly stand by their boondoggle while already burning through \$1.5 — this is with a "b", Mr. Speaker — billion?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Based on the member's preamble, I would ask him to state unequivocally for the record: is he advising the government that we should shut down and back out of Boundary dam 3?

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's about his due diligence. Everyone in this province knows that, when you shovel \$1.5 billion into a project, that it's too big to fail. So we need to make this thing work, Mr. Speaker. But everyone also knows, Mr. Speaker, that sticking Saskatchewan people with arguably the most expensive power possible — \$1.5 billion for a little over 100 megawatts — is incredibly reckless.

And you know, they smile over there, Mr. Speaker. But I think they forget who's paying to put those smiles on their faces. That's the people of Saskatchewan, the families, the businesses, and industry who often they pretend to stand by and support.

Just last week, Mr. Speaker, we see the results of this. We see rate increases — not one, but two, Mr. Speaker, in just six months. Still SaskPower's debt is at a critically high level, Mr. Speaker, and they've handed control and millions of dollars over to Cenovus. But since they still want to defend putting ratepayers on the hook for \$1.5 billion in this boondoggle, let me ask three simple questions. How much exactly have they spent on this? How much have they paid to Cenovus? And when will the ratepayer tap finally be turned off?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to correct for the record some of what the Leader of the Opposition has said in terms of his characterization of the project. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to report to members of the House that now for some months the project

is meeting, has been meeting its nameplate expectations, Mr. Speaker. I can inform the House that the plan for the plant was that this year it would capture 800 000 tonnes of CO₂ and it is on track to do precisely that, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why the world is coming to southeastern Saskatchewan to find out about this technology. That's why, in a world where 1,000 coal plants are being built, Mr. Speaker, countries from around the world, countries where those plants are being built are wanting to find out about SaskPower's technology. It's why the federal Minister of the Environment just yesterday — strange timing for these questions — just yesterday toured Boundary dam 3. And when you go through some of the quotes of what she had to say — I'm sure the Leader of the Opposition has read those quotes — she is very supportive of the project. The federal government recognizes the importance of this technological development.

Mr. Speaker, we have come through a general election campaign where the member for Estevan campaigned on this project and also campaigned on the viability of coal. And what we have yet to hear from the NDP [New Democratic Party] is unqualified and full-throated support that this government and that they as opposition would work together with us to explore every way to keep those coal jobs going in the province of Saskatchewan, sustained in the province of Saskatchewan, through technology that can clean up the power that comes from that coal.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, these lines from this Premier remind me a little bit of what we heard earlier this week in the House. On Tuesday the member from Moosomin stood in this place and he said, “The Boundary dam carbon capture facility . . . can capture 1 million tonnes of CO₂ a year . . .” No, it hasn't. He said that “It would be the equivalent of taking a quarter of a million cars off the road.” No, that just isn't happening. And he said that this is world-leading, homegrown Saskatchewan technology. No, we don't own any of the intellectual property. So, Mr. Speaker, even if that were true, which again it is not, it still cost \$1.5 billion. It frequently fails. It's an expensive and inefficient technology that is being rejected in many other jurisdictions.

So, Mr. Speaker, how can we trust that that minister gave the correct information to the federal minister yesterday if his own colleagues can't even get the facts straight?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, some of the quotes from the Environment minister I think are quite effusive — the federal Environment minister — about the project and the nature of the technology. Here's what she had to say. She had to say, “The opportunity . . .” Now she's talking about the opportunity for this technology in China. She said, and I quote, “The opportunity is 50 trillion.” That's with a “t”. Fifty trillion in China alone, in one country alone.

Now I'm glad that the Finance critic for the NDP has stood up to ask these questions, because she endorsed at the federal NDP

convention, Mr. Speaker, not very long ago, she endorsed full and favourable consideration of the Leap Manifesto. And we know what she would like to do to the coal industry. She wants to shut it down, Mr. Speaker. That's why they've lost the support of IBEW [International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers] union members in the Estevan area. That's why they've lost the support of businesses in the Estevan area. And it's why they've lost the support of Saskatchewan people who realize that we need to find a way to clean up that coal, as we are doing at Boundary dam 3, so that it's part of the solution going forward, so that Saskatchewan can continue to lead.

This strategy didn't work for them prior to the election. Will they now join with the government members, join with our approach to clean up coal, sustain those jobs, and present this technology as the solution that it is to climate change around the world?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, while they've been huffing and puffing, they have built no new pipelines, and thousands of resource sector workers have lost their jobs. The low price of oil is not their fault, but their reckless spending and lack of planning for a more diverse economy, while the price of oil was high, is entirely their fault.

In his meetings with the Environment minister yesterday, did the minister admit that they can't even decide if they want to keep using CCS [carbon capture and storage] on their other coal plant units? That despite all of their marketing, others around the world have rejected this technology, that other countries are cancelling their billion-dollar plans for carbon capture? Or, Mr. Speaker, did the minister just use the same lines that we heard today and on Tuesday from the member for Moosomin?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

[10:30]

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it's very curious that the Finance critic, the Finance critic hand-picked by the leader, the new Leader of the Opposition, would raise the question of pipelines in her preamble because, Mr. Speaker, here's what has happened under the new Leader of the NDP. The new Leader of the NDP has appointed a Finance critic who tacitly at least endorsed the Leap Manifesto, which would shut down all pipelines. He's also, Mr. Speaker, hired for his party's renewal Nicole White, a former candidate for his party who has signed the Leap Manifesto. And then he hand-picked his new chief of staff. Who's his new chief of staff? His name is George Soule. He used to work for Thomas Mulcair, and there was a string of tweets from him opposing pipelines.

It's time for the NDP to stand up for Saskatchewan's interests. It's time for the NDP to recognize the good work of the SaskPower engineers to get this project working, to capture 800 000 tonnes of CO₂, Mr. Speaker, and to present to the world and the federal Minister of the Environment the technology that is being pioneered in the Estevan area.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier knows that I didn't endorse that document. But the point is they have built no new pipelines. You have built no new pipelines, and thousands of resource workers have lost their jobs under his watch. Their reckless spending and their lack of planning for a more diverse economy while the price of oil was high . . .

[Interjections]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, their reckless spending and lack of planning while the price of oil was high is entirely their fault. These answers are an insult to the Saskatchewan people, and it's the Saskatchewan people who they are making pay the price. The Boundary dam carbon capture fiasco has cost \$1.5 billion. This is not a partisan point. It's a fact. And they cling only to the good reports that they've gotten since it started.

So I'm going to give them another chance to actually answer the questions that were asked earlier by our Leader of the Opposition, and the questions are simple. First of all, how much have you spent? How much have you made? And when will the taxpayer tap finally be turned off?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I know, I think it's fair to say that members on this side of the House prior to the election — the minister, myself, and others — recognized that the first year for the project, its commissioning year, it wasn't meeting expectations.

Mr. Speaker, the good news is, the good news is this: it is now. The good news is we have a great group of engineers at SaskPower, and those engineers have made the adjustments that are necessary for this technology to be working, Mr. Speaker, to take the equivalent of 200,000 cars off the road in terms of emissions.

Mr. Speaker, we fundamentally believe that coal can play a part in the future energy mix of our province. We know that it's going to play a part in the future energy mix around the world. There's 1,000 coal plants being built. Mr. Speaker, we need to clean up. We need to clean up that coal, those coal emissions. And, Mr. Speaker, this technology gives us the chance to do it.

Mr. Speaker, we campaigned on our intent to continue with the technology. The member for Estevan campaigned on the government's plan for this technology, and I think she won well approximately 80 per cent of the support. I think the NDP got about 20 per cent down there because that community knows . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . 9 per cent . . . that they would shut down coal. They'd shut down this world-leading project when we clearly know that would be the wrong direction for the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Funding for Recruitment of Physicians

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, since they seem unwilling to answer any of those questions, I'd like to give them a chance to correct themselves on another file. Yesterday the Premier and his Health ministers claimed they have added to bursaries to recruit doctors. Well, that is kind of true. I would suggest they may not want to keep using that line.

Mr. Speaker, there was a specialist bursary program which offered \$25,000 to residents in return for a commitment to the province, but for reasons I for one would like to hear about, these bursaries are no longer being offered. Let me quote the government document: "due to a decreased number of specialist vacancies in the province, no further bursaries are being offered . . ."

Mr. Speaker, could the Premier or anyone over there explain how a cancelled bursary program is supposed to recruit and retain a doctor?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Health minister.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to having a debate this morning in terms of the record of this government when it comes to recruiting not only family physicians, but as well specialists, and the plans that we have put in place and the programs that we have put in place.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important first of all for the Leader of the Opposition to clarify what he meant yesterday when he said, and I quote, that:

. . . this government wasted . . . [and I quote, an] opportunity to implement the expert recommendations and bring meaningful and positive improvements to the health care that Saskatchewan people rely on?

Mr. Speaker, is the NDP urging this government to implement the remaining recommendations of the Fyke Commission? If that's the case, Mr. Speaker, the NDP is advocating that we close 50 of the remaining 70 acute care facilities and emergency facilities, leaving this province with just 20 acute care facilities.

Is he advocating, Mr. Speaker, that we close 50 hospitals? Is he advocating that we hire more health care managers? Is he advocating, Mr. Speaker, that we reduce the number of acute care beds in this province? And is he advocating that we turn family physicians into employees of health regions?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, nowhere in that answer did he explain how a cancelled bursary program is supposed to recruit and retain a doctor.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear. The program was cut because they've said they're doing good enough on specialists here in Saskatchewan. And yet almost half — 47, Mr. Speaker — of the current provincial postings are for doctors, for specialists, Mr. Speaker.

So let's try another question. Maybe he can answer this one. In March 2015, back when they actually presented budgets before June, the Sask Party slashed funding for surgeries. And to no one's surprise, wait times have gotten longer. When pressed for how long wait times would have to get before they were too long, the Minister of Health said, six months.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we're there. Since then, the number of people waiting more than the minister's stated limit of six months has more than doubled. Reducing surgery wait times was the one thing the Sask Party used to do well. Now they've more than doubled — more than doubled, Mr. Speaker — the number waiting more than six months.

Again, even the minister has said this is too long to wait for surgery. Will the minister finally admit that on surgical wait times, they are going the wrong way?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, Mr. Speaker, I hope the members opposite, the Leader of the Opposition, perhaps the Health critic, will clarify whether or not yesterday the Leader of the Opposition chastised this government for not fully implementing the Fyke recommendations that would see us close an additional 50 hospitals on top of the 52 that were closed by the NDP, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic that the Leader of the Opposition would stand up and urge this government to keep Preeceville hospital closed at the same time when the premise of his question urged this government to implement Fyke that would close the Preeceville hospital, Mr. Speaker. He can't have it both ways.

In terms of, well in terms of specialists, Mr. Speaker, under the NDP, anesthetists, 93, Saskatchewan Party, 131. Cardiologists — 24, 28, Mr. Speaker. General surgery — 64, 92. Internal medicine — 146 under the NDP, 191 under the Saskatchewan Party. Psychiatrists — 87 under the NDP, 107 under this government. And I can go on and on and on.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Northern Health Care Services

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Getting and keeping doctors is very important for northern Saskatchewan. But so is northern control over northern health care. With so many remote and fly-in communities like Fond-du-Lac, Stony Rapids, Wollaston Lake, Mr. Speaker, it just doesn't make any sense to have central control and a central office here in the capital city calling all the shots.

I've been to the health care centre in Stony Rapids, and the people out there are doing a fantastic job. They offer culturally appropriate care; they hire local people, and they have Dene speakers on site.

Communities in the North need more investment and more supports, not less input. So will the Health minister guarantee today that his transformational change won't mean less northern investment and less input over northern care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I would say, what doesn't make sense is the Leader of the Opposition standing up yesterday urging this government to keep a hospital open when at the same time in the premise of his question, urging this government to implement recommendations that were done in 2001 that would see that exact hospital closed, Mr. Speaker, including 40 hospitals across this province. That's what truly doesn't make sense.

Mr. Speaker, we will be undergoing a process of looking at how do we continually make improvements in the health care system. We will be looking to consult with people all across this province during that process. Mr. Speaker, we'll ensure that we have northern involvement in that, northern input, Mr. Speaker, as we look to see not only what is the best way that we govern the health care system in this province, but how do we best deliver services as close as home to possible, which this government has made a priority over the last eight years whether you live in urban, rural, or northern Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, once again, no answer. And the people of Saskatchewan are beginning to lose confidence and faith in this government right across the province. In northern Saskatchewan they saw, Mr. Speaker, northern Saskatchewan people saw that the Saskatchewan Party over time has turned its back on them, time and time again. They scrapped the department of Northern Saskatchewan. They scrapped the ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations. They scrapped the fish freight subsidy. They cancelled the road to Wollaston Lake. And I could go on, Mr. Speaker, but I won't.

Most people in the province now realize the frustration, and they'll understand why northerners are getting more and more concerned with this government. We need a clear guarantee. So let me try and get an answer of John Black's champion over there: will the minister's transformational change to health care not mean less investment, or less control, to northern people over northern health care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the record of this government is very clear. Keewatin Yatthé Health Region, under this government budget, is up 55 per cent, Mr. Speaker, to \$26.9 million. Athabasca Health Authority budget is up 46 per cent. Mamawetan Health Authority went from a budget under the NDP of \$16 million to last year \$28.8 million, an 80 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker. We have made record investments in health care in the northern part of this province as we have all over this province, Mr. Speaker.

We are making transformative investments in very innovative projects such as remote technology, the work that Dr. Ivar Mendez, the leading expert when it comes to remote technology and robotics as it relates to health care, Mr. Speaker. Those are the types of investments we're going to continue as we move forward. Mr. Speaker, what we're also going to do though is we're going to have a conversation with the people of this

province to look at what is the best way to deliver services for 1.1 million people spread out all across this province, Mr. Speaker. And we look forward to engaging all people, including northerners.

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

Delays to Toxicology and Coroner Reports

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Moving on to another topic, Mr. Speaker, Nadine Machiskinic's death was a tragic one. But for the family, the pain and suffering has been dragged out ever since she was found last January. For nearly 18 months, Nadine's family has waited for a coroner's report from the province. Eighteen months they've spent waiting, waiting for some insight as to how and why their daughter was taken from them so tragically.

We're now told the answers will be coming for the family in June but, Mr. Speaker, 18 months? And this is a family that was told by the minister that their case was a priority. The situation is absolutely unacceptable. To the minister: what is going on? Why did Nadine's case take so long and why did his assurances for quicker resolution still result in an 18-month delay?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We truly are . . . take these issues seriously. When we have a death in custody, our condolences go out to the family and loved ones of the deceased, Mr. Speaker.

We too are discouraged and frustrated with the timing of the toxicology reports. Of course the coroner cannot finish his or her work until the toxicology reports are in, Mr. Speaker. Our investigation in our facilities cannot be concluded either until we have the toxicology reports and the coroner's report, Mr. Speaker.

I think we all share on both sides of the House that deaths in custody are definitely cause for concern. We are always working to try and find ways through our investigations, the police and otherwise, to find ways to hopefully prevent these things from happening in the future. We are both frustrated as to the length of time that this toxicology report has taken, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister's answer would be a little bit more believable if Nadine passed away in custody. But she wasn't in custody. She was at the Delta Hotel. I think what the minister is speaking about is Breanna Kannick and her family, Mr. Speaker, who also has no answers as to why she died in custody. There were no clarity . . . there was no answers given to these families.

Breanna was the one who lost her life while on remand at the

White Birch Female Remand Unit. I think the minister, as she said, would agree that someone in custody is still entitled to protection and is the responsibility of the province. Her family wants answers. But both families should be getting answers, whether in custody or not.

This has been, Breanna's issue has been five months ongoing and the family still doesn't have any answers. So does the minister have any explanation for this delay? And what is he doing to prevent this from becoming a growing trend?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House are always concerned when there's delays with regard to the preparation of these reports. We have had some discussions with the coroner's office, Mr. Speaker, but, as the Minister of Corrections and Policing has stated, we're waiting far too long to get the toxicology reports, which is a prerequisite to completing the work not only at the coroner's office, but any investigation that is done by the Ministry of Justice officials.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to press for those reports and we'll continue to press for answers as to why those delays are taking place. But, Mr. Speaker, I'll repeat the answer of the Minister of Corrections and Policing. This is all about the receipt of the toxicology reports. Coroners' work can't be done, nor can the work be done in terms of the investigation at the ministry, until those reports are in, Mr. Speaker. But we will continue to investigate the reasons for the delays and the preparations of those reports.

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

Reforestation Jobs

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, the latest Stats Canada figures show that unemployment in the Prince Albert region is the highest in the province and one of the highest rates in Western Canada. But that didn't stop this government from sending nearly half a million dollars worth of tree planting contracts out of the province this year, Mr. Speaker — \$160,000 to Brinkman & Associates Reforestation in BC [British Columbia], over 320,000 to Outland Resources in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, the government said it would stop this from happening with its revamping tendering process, but Saskatchewan workers and Saskatchewan companies are being left out by this government. Mr. Speaker, I know the Sask Party has a history of ignoring Prince Albert, but I'm here now. Why is the Minister of Environment shipping jobs out of the province when so many people in Prince Albert are looking for work?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thanks for that question. Mr. Speaker, since early in the '30s, 1939 I believe it was, we've reforested approximately 99 000 hectares — 250,000 acres — of forestry in this province, and that's part of our ongoing commitment. It is always done with an open and transparent request for proposals, and the proposal that has been

accepted here was the lowest qualified proposal.

We also use several reforestation companies from here in Saskatchewan, some from the Prince Albert area. Our trees come through there. Several other contracts are also done from the North, and we employ a lot of the northern people in planting those trees, in preparing the site work, in tending our trees, and in other contracts. But in this case, this was the lowest on an RFP [request for proposal] process that was open and transparent, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 12 — *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 12, *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 12, *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and be read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the Minister of Health.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 13 — *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 13, *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 13, *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time? Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Next sitting of the House.

The Speaker: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

Bill No. 14 — *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it in the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

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 Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to enter debate into the Throne Speech here this afternoon. I do want to start with welcoming all new members to this Assembly, and all members on that side, on both sides of the Assembly, and I want to wish them well with their service. Certainly it's an important responsibility and privilege.

I also want to say that I've been incredibly impressed with so many of the maiden speeches that have been delivered on both sides. And I have to say I really valued the responses from the members of our caucus. I thought they engaged in this debate in a thoughtful, meaningful, community-focused way, one that focuses on what's important to our province, and did so with a level of independence and critical thought that certainly provides strength to Saskatchewan people.

Before I get into my own response, I'd like to take a moment to offer a few thank yous. First, I'd like to start with thanking you once again, Mr. Speaker, for the role that you'll provide, the important role and service you provide to this Assembly.

And I'd like to thank our team of MLAs in the official opposition. It's an honour to serve as the Leader of the Official Opposition, but it's a greater honour to work with this albeit small but mighty team. We're a strong and diverse group of people and, Mr. Speaker, as I've noted before, we're the first caucus in the history of our province to achieve gender parity. And I'm really proud to be a part of that, Mr. Speaker.

Our new MLAs in Lakeview, in Douglas Park, in Northcote, are incredible additions to this Assembly. They'll be assets not just to their constituents but to our caucus and our province as a whole.

Only a week and a half into this session, I'm proud of the strength our team has already shown. Yesterday was another example of how we will stand up on issues that matter to Saskatchewan people, as we stood shoulder to shoulder with the good people of Preeceville and area as they're being mistreated with their hospital being closed, one that they fundraised so hard for. Whether they voted for us or not, people across this great province need to know they can count on us to stand up and defend their interests.

When the government turns . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And the member from Moose Jaw says he should close it down. And sadly, Mr. Speaker, that's what this government is doing, you know. And this kind of callous heckling from members opposite is so unbecoming from that big majority who should be focused on every solution to keep the Preeceville Hospital open. When the government turns its back on families, when the Sask Party makes damaging cuts or refuses to invest in necessary programs and services, we'll be there — standing strong and pushing back, certainly including coal families, as heckled already by the Premier. It should be below and beneath the office of the Premier to make sure that there's futures and opportunity and jobs for all of those families, Mr. Speaker.

You know, some days it might feel that we're in maybe a small canoe up against and alongside a big, old battleship, Mr. Speaker, a big majority, a big government. But I'm here to tell you, Mr. Speaker, I'm confident in the team that we have here as the official opposition. I know that we're paddling with common purpose, guided by common sense and compassion. You know, and it would seem as well, Mr. Speaker, that maybe earlier than many of us would have ever expected, that there's already signs that that big, old battleship is taking on some water, Mr. Speaker, and falling off track.

Now we couldn't be here without the work and votes from supporters and volunteers across the province. And whether their candidate won or lost, our democracy is strengthened when people get involved, whether it was those that knocked on doors, whether it was people that stepped up to serve. Whatever party they stepped up to serve for, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank every last person that was involved in the democratic process. And I want to thank the exceptional team of candidates that signed up, that stepped up and served as candidates for the Saskatchewan New Democrats.

Earning the trust to serve is a tremendous honour and a responsibility. On a personal note, I want to say a big thank you to the good people of Regina Rosemont for offering me that trust once again. I certainly work for good people: hardworking, common sense, compassionate. And it's an honour to do so. I'd also like to recognize the other candidates and good people: Kevin Dureau, Sara Piotrofsky, and Reid Hill for their involvement, meaningful involvement in the democratic process.

Without a doubt, the greatest strength of our community, the communities that make up Regina Rosemont, just as it is for our province, is its people — people committed to bettering their community, focused on what matters to their families. Serving is a responsibility I don't take lightly. It matters, and I know how hard my constituents work. And I've always been of the belief that they deserve a representative that will work as hard as they do, that will care as much as they do. These are basic things, but they're important to me.

I'm so thankful for all the ongoing care, engagement, input, and honestly, so much good humour as well of constituents, whether it's on the doorsteps or whether it's the countless community events, school activities throughout the community, Mr. Speaker. To all the people in our community that do all they can to strengthen our community — the community and cultural associations, the hard-working, caring families, the coaches and volunteers, the schools and the churches, those in public service, the businesses and entrepreneurs — to all these people and organizations, I simply say thank you. Together you help us fulfill the promise of our province's motto, "from many peoples, strength".

Importantly, I want to say thank you to our caring and dedicated local campaign team. I'm so lucky to have the support and involvement of this local impressive team. Their level of care and commitment is inspiring and energizing. To each and every one of them, I say thank you.

I also want to say thank you to my wife, Stephanie, and to our son, William, for sharing in public service and for their full support. And I have to admit it's been really special toting around my sidekick to community event after community event, and I believe he's gaining rich experiences and special relationships at an early age through this process. I also want to say thank you to our extended families, my mom and dad, my in-laws, my sisters and their families, my brother-in-laws, my herd of nephews. I'm so thankful for all their care and their support.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to the topic at hand, the Throne Speech. Its length, Mr. Speaker; one of the shortest throne speeches in recent memory. Certainly that reflects its lack of vision and plan. Mr. Speaker, it's vague, and it offered little comfort to the people of Saskatchewan who are already growing increasingly concerned with this government's lack of transparency — from hiding the true state of our province's finances from Saskatchewan people, from hiding and delaying our budget, to hiding the facts surrounding their GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, how can a Throne Speech ignore some of the things that matter most to Saskatchewan people? How, Mr.

Speaker, can this government fail to address health care, education, or job creation in a meaningful way, especially at a time where we're in tighter times where the deficit is growing, where we've had some of the worst unemployment numbers in years, Mr. Speaker — numbers that are causing challenges for families across Saskatchewan, families that have been displaced from employment, and numbers and realities that are particularly harsh for Aboriginal people across Saskatchewan. These are the things that Saskatchewan people are concerned about during difficult times. The Throne Speech, sadly, didn't do a thing to reassure them.

[11:00]

It didn't show any commitment from this government to protect and enhance vital services or do all they can to create good, mortgage-paying jobs. Instead, Mr. Speaker, health regions and school divisions are left scrambling to make ends meet. At the same time that they're being warned by the government about, quote, supposed transformational change and a tough budget, they're left hanging in the lurch.

Meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, our hospitals are crowded with patients. Our classrooms are bursting at the seams. Wait times for surgeries are growing, and people are sadly waiting months to see a specialist. Still, Mr. Speaker, there is no talk about making investments to improve services in either health care or education. That's because instead of investing, this government is making cuts, dismissing the realities in classrooms all across Saskatchewan, and in hospitals — Preeceville as a prime example.

The fact is classrooms all across Saskatchewan are under strain, and students are losing out as a result. The loss of one-on-one attention matters as class sizes have been forced to grow. Complexity of classrooms have grown, and educational assistants have been lost. And then in a damaging move that defied common sense, we've a government that scrapped the mid-year adjustment — dollars that were there to dedicate to support new students entering into classrooms — leaving classrooms shorted, students shorted, leaving our schools without the resources that they require.

You know, Mr. Speaker, education is the foundation of our future, our future society, our future economy, and it's past time this government treated it as the priority that it must be and made an investment in our kids and our province's future. And members can heckle election outcomes across the floor if they choose. I think that big majority would be better focused on actually addressing the realities facing Saskatchewan people. But that's their choice.

In health care, they've cut budgets for surgeries, and they've cut nurses and health care aids. Now they're closing hospitals like Preeceville. And to add insult to injury, as a sad disgrace, Mr. Speaker, they're closing that hospital just three weeks before that community pays off its mortgage that they worked so hard to raise \$3.5 million towards, Mr. Speaker.

This government's only solution to create jobs appears to be to allow people to sell baked goods from their kitchens. Mr. Speaker, I'm a big fan of baked goods, of farmers' markets, and of small businesses. So on its own, this is great. But that

promise does little for the thousands of people in our province who have lost jobs, who are unemployed and looking for work, or who are underemployed in precarious and low-paying work, working harder and harder but falling behind, Mr. Speaker.

This Throne Speech was a clear sign that the Premier and this government lacks any sort of meaningful plan. They don't have a plan when it comes to improving health care and education, and they don't have a plan when it comes to diversifying the economy, creating good jobs that will help put this province back on track, Mr. Speaker.

Another thing that was noticeably missing from this Throne Speech was any commitment to practical and meaningful environmental action. Nothing to protect the air we breathe, the water we drink, or the land we grow our food on, the food that we share with the world, Mr. Speaker. Imagine, Mr. Speaker, if instead of spending \$1.5 billion in an inefficient and expensive carbon capture scheme, if this government had invested in renewable energy and diversifying our economy. Imagine what that could have done to reduce emissions and simultaneously create jobs, all while keeping bills, power bills for Saskatchewan people more affordable.

While the speech was of little substance as I mentioned before, Mr. Speaker, there were some promises made by this government that I find concerning. The government has promised to move ahead with their paying more and paving less highway scheme. I think anyone out on May long weekend, last weekend, will have recognized the state of these highways and the disrepair, and so many live with these highways as their arteries every day. But this government is plowing ahead, continuing to gut the Highways ministry and to outsource, Mr. Speaker. And as such, the cost of repaving our highways has skyrocketed under this government. In fact, Mr. Speaker, at this rate the government spends on highway repaving, their pledge for \$70 million in additional roadwork will only pave around 100 kilometres of highway. They're going on and on about a promise that will only get us, Mr. Speaker, one hour down the road. Hardly visionary, Mr. Speaker. Under this government so many of our highways will remain in a state of disrepair, and that's unacceptable.

You know, they promised, Mr. Speaker, to continue plowing ahead with their costly P3 [public-private partnership] privatization schemes. Not only have these projects proven to cost more, but they're sending good mortgage-paying jobs out of Saskatchewan by giving P3 contracts away to companies from out of province and out of country. The cost of these projects are enormous, Mr. Speaker. The Regina, well the so-called Regina bypass that actually doesn't bypass the city, Mr. Speaker, being built by a company from France, has ballooned from the originally estimated cost of \$400 million to an outrageous \$2 billion. That's the kind of mismanagement and obscene waste, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan people are being subjected to.

Maintenance for the new hospital in North Battleford has been contracted out to a company from the United Kingdom. It's costing a whopping \$6 million a year for maintenance, more than the entire health region's budget for maintenance, Mr. Speaker. In fact recently a study from the University of Calgary, not exactly a bastion of left wing thought, Mr.

Speaker, noted that the people who benefit from these sort of P3 projects are the politicians who can “. . . take the credit for new infrastructure while passing future maintenance and operating costs off onto future politicians, taxpayers and/or users.”

Mr. Speaker, we know that P3 projects are costing taxpayers more today. We know that they're tying the hands of taxpayers into the future. And we know that they're sending good jobs outside of Saskatchewan when we need that opportunity right here, Mr. Speaker.

And I know this government has struggled with their finances. They didn't balance the books during the best days. They piled on \$5 billion of new debt in just one term, Mr. Speaker, and I know they conveniently try to hide debt and not share the true picture, Mr. Speaker, but Saskatchewan people are common sense. They know debt is debt, Mr. Speaker. So they can . . . Mr. Speaker, they do all of this to kick the cost down the road, creating greater debt into the future, and ultimately, ultimately on to our kids, Mr. Speaker. That's not good planning, and it's not right, Mr. Speaker.

They promised, Mr. Speaker to commit to privatization by opening the Crown protection Act, something they said for years they wouldn't do. Now liquor stores will be sold off, and others are at risk, Mr. Speaker. You know, those stores, in the end, they belong to the people of Saskatchewan. They make money and they provide communities with good jobs.

Instead of being sold off, they should be modernized, Mr. Speaker. Selection should be improved; beer should be refrigerated; and policies should be improved to better support our very impressive and dynamic craft brewers, distillers, and wineries across this province, Mr. Speaker.

Instead this is a government that's liquidating a valuable asset and making promises that they know full well they can't keep, Mr. Speaker. And who knows, Mr. Speaker, with this government — cash-strapped, third term — what else is at risk, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our Crowns? But a message to Saskatchewan people is that we'll be there to fight, Mr. Speaker, if we see a government moving in that direction.

Mr. Speaker, they continue, they promise to continue undermining public health care by offering private CT [computerized tomography] scans in addition to private MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging]. Now this fundamentally goes against what the public health care system stands for, Mr. Speaker. It gives those with an extra buck in their pocket — quite a few dollars in their pocket they need — to jump the queue, Mr. Speaker, leaving those that can't afford to do the same to be left behind. Mr. Speaker, privatization is not the answer to improving health care. This is Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and here everyone should have access to health care with their health card, not their credit card. This government needs to stop undermining public health care and work to improve services for all, not just for those who can afford it.

And we see from this government an enormous amount of lacking or amount of a lack of transparency — a government that hid the budget from Saskatchewan people and continues to delay it; a government that hid the true state of our finances from Saskatchewan people, leaving school divisions and health

regions and families wondering, hey how big the deficit will be, and what the cuts are that'll be coming. What are the consequences? What's the government's plan?

They've continued to hide facts around their GTH land deal, refusing to release documents, Mr. Speaker, unwilling to put any sunlight on this deal, Mr. Speaker, one that's wasted millions of dollars. You know, the people of Saskatchewan should be able to count on their government. They should be able to count on them for honesty, for good roads, good jobs, quality education for our kids, and access to health care.

And if we are to be judged as a society by how we treat the most vulnerable, which I believe we should be, then it is clear this government is failing. Far too many are being let down, pushed to the margins, left in crisis. And of course the impacts are often tragic and harsh, and they impact all of us. A few poignant examples: we have a government that is unwilling to address the damaging prevalence of poverty. The fact that so many kids across Saskatchewan don't have food in their bellies or a safe roof over their head or the fact that so many seniors are being forced to choose between food and medications, often compromising on both fronts, should trouble us all and serve as one enormous wake-up call.

The fact that food bank usage has skyrocketed, something none of us should accept. The fact that Aboriginal people in our province are subjected to so many factors that contribute to poor health, inequality, whether it's the national injustice of underfunding of on-reserve education, the lack of services and supports like mental health, addictions, and community supports, the alarming loss of jobs for Aboriginal people within the province, or whether it's the need for partnership and meaningful action to address the recommendations of the truth and reconciliation committee. There's so much more work to do to ensure that every kid has a fair shot to live up to their full potential in Saskatchewan and to ensure that we can live up to our full potential socially, culturally, and economically, Mr. Speaker.

And we must do a better job when it comes to mental health supports, a stigma that must be overcome, and supports and services that must be bolstered and made accessible. The reality is too many suffer in silence. Too many can't access the services they need. Too many are damaged in the process: partners and families and communities. And the damage and hurt caused by domestic and sexual violence is intolerable. It requires meaningful focus and resources. On too many fronts, people deserve so much better.

We'll be seeking solutions on many fronts such as water management, solutions that will work for agricultural producers and communities that have been subjected to damage and that respect and value wetlands. And we need to focus, ensure a focus on our province's broken transportation system, including our rail system that's currently not up to the task of getting our exports to market, leaving producers and so many other exporters without the certainty of performance they deserve.

[11:15]

The need for safe, responsible pipelines and as mentioned, fixing the failed highways strategy, this is critical to our

economy. You know, and when it comes to pipelines, Mr. Speaker, we need access for our product and for our market. We've advocated, will continue to ensure we have safe, responsible pipelines. We have a government whose approach has failed, not building a kilometre of pipeline, Mr. Speaker, not finding access for the Saskatchewan economy, and I think it's the failed approach of the Premier that's in part to blame.

Let's be clear. This is a Premier that grandstands on this issue time and time again. Just to be clear, we'll choose pipelines any day of the week over headlines, Mr. Speaker.

In closing, we are a beautiful province full of innovators, creative thinkers, full of hard-working and common sense people. I love our province and I know that we have incredible potential and so much more we can be. But that requires working with Saskatchewan people, and that requires a vision and a plan to ensure a bright future.

Instead all we see from the government in this Throne Speech is boasting, big boasting and small thinking. It would seem that the Premier and the third term Sask Party government are taking a lot for granted. Instead of rolling up their sleeves and responding to the needs and opportunities we have as a province to ensure we can be as strong as we can be, seems like they're just mailing it in, Mr. Speaker. That taking things for granted and just mailing-it-in attitude is on full display in this weak, short-sighted Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that we have a lot of work to do as the official opposition. I look forward to that work along with Saskatchewan people right across our province. The reality is we are a province of big ideas, tremendous opportunity, and have important needs, needs that must be addressed, and opportunities to improve the lives for Saskatchewan people. For all Saskatchewan people, not just those who voted for us, we will not only oppose but we'll propose solutions as well.

And when the government goes against what's in the best interests of Saskatchewan people, we will be ready to stand strong and to fight on the things that matter — things like good jobs, strong public health care, quality education, and protecting and improving life for the most vulnerable all across Saskatchewan.

This Throne Speech does not stand up for those things. And so for those reasons, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting it and I'll be supporting the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is never lost on me, the honour that it is to stand in this Assembly and really participate in any debate, but it's all the more poignant I think when we all, and in this case obviously for myself, when I get to stand in my place as the MLA for Swift Current and participate in the debate, the Throne Speech debate.

So I want to state that for the record again, how grateful I am to the electors of the constituency of Swift Current, those who voted for me and those who didn't. It is a great honour to serve them. It has ever been since 1999; it continues to be. And I'll work hard to earn the support that was given on the 4th of April

in my constituency, and I'll work hard to also earn I guess the moral support for those in our constituency who voted in another way.

I want to very quickly go through some thank yous. I note that members on both sides of the House have done that since the election, and I think it's meet and right that we would acknowledge those who helped get us here. And so for me the list is long.

I'm very grateful to the campaign committee and the volunteers in Swift Current. I wasn't really much of a candidate in Swift Current, I'm afraid to say. I didn't do a lot of door knocking there, which is to say, I didn't do any door knocking in Swift Current. They did all of that hard work during and before the election.

Trevor Moe was the campaign Chair. And I'm not going to list a bunch but I'll just, through this place and on the record of *Hansard*, thank him and all of those who participated. I also need to thank all of those who helped with the other campaign, the central campaign. As I said on election night, I think they're the best in the country and I want to acknowledge them.

I especially want to say thank you to someone I don't thank enough, and his name is Everett Hindley. And he's been with me since 1999. He's been a constituency assistant for me and now he's stuck travelling the province with me. And he's a great individual. And he's become a good friend and a trusted source of counsel, and I want to get on the record my appreciation for Everett.

I am blessed to be married to Tami. She has been, since I began this political career or journey, she's been just an amazing partner and someone who's given much, both for her own career but of her time over and above that, and her support to me has always been unqualified. And I want to thank her.

We have three great kids. Our oldest is Megan. She got married last year in the Cypress Hills. And her and our new son-in-law Kyle Dase, who is of the great Dase family from Hillmond, Saskatchewan in the constituency of Lloydminster . . . I'm looking . . . There's the MLA for Lloydminster. It's a large group, and you lose track of folks. And so they're doing well studying. And I'm happy to report to the House that they'll both be coming back to the province of Saskatchewan here in the fall and can't wait for that to occur.

Our middle child is Colter, and very, very proud of what he's been doing lately and the career that he's started. I'll just tell this quick story, Mr. Speaker. It was a great day just a few months ago when I checked into a hotel in Saskatoon and the young woman that was the professional at the desk asked for my name, and I said it. And she said, are you . . . and I thought she was going to say something about politics. And she said, are you Colter Wall's dad? So that was one of the best days I've had on this job. I'm also known as the guy who sits beside the dad of Mark McMorris and Craig McMorris, so now we have . . . There's another descriptor there. And I want to acknowledge Colter.

And then our youngest is Faith and she's in grade 12, graduating this year, heading off to the University of

Saskatchewan. And she has just grown into this beautiful and funny and witty, intelligent, young woman, and we're proud of what Faith's doing.

Mr. Speaker, I think it was interesting how the week began. The week of the Throne Speech of course began outside the sessional activities of this place when there was the swearing in of members of the Legislative Assembly on both sides of the House and when there was also later that evening the unveiling of the dome. And I know some people were hoping that the unveiling would show a little more, as it were, but we knew that this is going to be a long process where the scaffolding is going to come down, up until about . . . it's going to take until about July.

But the ceremony itself, I think, provided some historical symmetry, both for this session, but I hope it had all of us remembering the importance of the tradition of this place and the history of this place. And more to the point, I hope that it had us thinking about those who went before us, whose vision was great and worthy of this province, but who were also worried about the day-to-day things like getting this building opening and getting the education system implemented across the province and getting a university built and just delivering on the day-to-day affairs of government. And more on that in a moment.

Shortly after that October day when the building was first opened — in fact it was the 14th of November 1912 — there was from your throne, Mr. Speaker, the very first Speech from the Throne, at least in this Chamber, because obviously they had been presented to the Assembly before they moved into the new digs, as it were. And on that particular day, the Lieutenant Governor was the Honourable George W. Brown. He was the Lieutenant Governor when the building opened and obviously then he delivered the very first Speech from the Throne. There have been 20 other Lieutenant Governors who've taken that seat where you sit today, Mr. Speaker, and delivered, well, approximating 100 speeches from the throne to the people of this Assembly, to the members and through them to the people they represent across the province.

And if you think about that span of history, consider that there have been six monarchs in terms of the Commonwealth since the province really began: Edward VII; George V; Edward VIII for a very brief time as we all know; and then the Queen's father, George VI; and then for the last six decades now, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. That's quite a span of history.

I would expect though and consider what this room would have been like. Frankly, it would have looked a lot like it does today with just a few changes. In fact the dais where you preside, Mr. Speaker, and from which the speech is read, is basically as it was the day it opened. Members will know that for a time they took down the centrepiece and it was just a throne, and it wasn't until 1978 when they found that centrepiece up in the dome, ironically enough — there's nothing like that up there now, I don't think; we've all had a look — but that's where it was stored. And in '78 they basically wanted to restore this Chamber to the way it was when this place first opened for business with that first Speech from the Throne, middle of November 1912.

Many of these desks are original. Most of the chairs — I think all of the chairs along the back — are original. And so when that first speech was read, there would have been a lot of things similar. If we could travel back in time, this place would not be that strange to us at all. Obviously a number of changes have occurred since then, and I think that's probably a bit of metaphor for where I would like to go in some brief remarks I have today.

It strikes me, Mr. Speaker, that what the Lieutenant Governor surveys when he or she delivers the Speech from the Throne from your seat there, from the throne or the Speaker's Chair, they're looking at really two things. Whether they're thinking about it or not, they're looking at the very temporal nature of the legislature in the faces of the members that are here as we're just passing through. Some of us will be here for a little bit longer than others, I say to the member for Cannington. And some have just got here and have only been here a short time. But here's the inimitable truth of it all, faces are all going to change. That's the temporal perspective from that place.

But as you look around this Chamber, there is much that commends it to endurance. This place is going to be around long after we're gone. And it was here obviously for 100-plus years before this day, before we had this particular debate and this particular Speech from the Throne.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I think a good Speech from the Throne would also reflect that. A Speech from the Throne should deal with the more temporal issues, the challenges that face a government, that face our jurisdiction, that face the people of the province. But that speech should also glance above the horizon and take a longer view on behalf of the people, have a bit of vision about what we expect for this province and its people for generations to come.

And I'm not claiming perfection for this Speech from the Throne or any other that we've had anything to do with. But I think that basic test was met in the Speech from the Throne that was delivered just last week from where you're sitting now. I think that particular Speech from the Throne dealt with a number of short-term issues that are important to the people of the province and that were campaigned on by the Saskatchewan Party, by our party, culminating in that election on the 4th of April.

We did commit, and the Leader of the Opposition just mocked this, but we did commit to adding to historic highways investment in the province of Saskatchewan. He didn't reference that, by the way, when he was mocking the \$70 million surge, these extra additional dollars for particularly problematic roads.

And by the way, if I could offer some counsel to my friend — and I congratulate on his job — I think some circumspection and description of some of these things is probably advisable. Because he would know that the \$70 million over a number of years is on top of about \$2.7 billion dollars-plus, actually. The record investments that are being made in highways by this government that have been made — we broke our own record in every successive budget — those will continue. This is in addition to that. And we would rather it be more, but we also would rather to balance the budget by '17-18, and make sure

that we are paying the bills as we go.

And so, Mr. Speaker, there's a good example in the Throne Speech of maybe a shorter term, but important issue that we should be addressing, and the Speech from the Throne should lay out the government's plan to do it.

Another perhaps shorter term item in the Speech from the Throne that I think is certainly worthy of its presence there and commends itself to this particular debate is the commitment on the part of the government in the Speech from the Throne to keep another campaign promise to extend the two-for-one MRI practice to CT scans in Saskatchewan. And I also heard the Leader of the Opposition sort of return in his speech to that, the tired, old ideology of the '40s and '50s and '60s.

He stood in his place and ruled out supporting the common sense of this two-for-one model. And do you know what's ironic about that, Mr. Speaker? When they sat in government they implemented this very policy. Again, sometimes I wonder if there's the self-awareness over on the other side or maybe they're not familiar with their own history or they don't read their own reports, like say the Fyke Commission, before they ask questions as the Leader of the Opposition did yesterday, fighting for a hospital that would've been closed by the very report that he was recommending the government follow. It was a bit bizarre.

But with respect to MRIs, let's remember the genesis of the model that the Minister of Health has brought to diagnostics. The NDP government wanted to provide the chance for Roughriders to jump the queue; I think that's the word he just used in his debate. How could they get ahead of the line and get their MRIs so they could hopefully return to action on the field? Well they came up with a pretty innovative way to do it — the NDP did — which they now deny.

What they said was, well the Riders can do this and workers' compensation clients can also do this, but workers' comp and the Riders will have to actually buy a scan on the public system too. So you can have yours, you can pay for yours, your MRI, but you have to provide one to the public system to shorten that list. And so the Minister of Health presented to the people of this province and, supported by members, and we ran on expanding that to CTs, expanding that good common sense to Saskatchewan people.

Why in the world would the Leader of the Opposition want to allow workers' compensation clients that opportunity, or Roughriders that opportunity, yet deny it to Saskatchewan people who would like timely diagnostics? And again, may I just say, hopefully in a helpful way, to my friend the Leader of the Opposition, this is kind of . . . some of the thinking that I think needs to change if they're to reconnect with Saskatchewan people.

Saskatchewan people, they're informed by common sense. They're a veritable well of common sense, if all of us would just listen to them a bit more. And I know all of us could do that, including members on this side of the House. And they would say it does make a lot of common sense for the government to say you can have your private MRI, and now your private CT scan, but provide one on the public system and

reduce that list.

And I can inform the members of the House — I don't have a specific number — that only in the matter of weeks since we've implemented this measure for the MRIs, there have been people that have taken advantage of it. And so we know there are scans that have been provided on the public system and we will expand it to CTs. And it's a good example of improved diagnostic wait times or shorter wait times, a short-term measure that's referenced in the Speech from the Throne as well.

[11:30]

There was a commitment as well that we would reduce the amount of administration in health care and redirect it to the front lines, and specifically in long-term care — another good short-term measure in the Throne Speech.

And then there were a number of specific items that were . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the Deputy Premier's absolutely right. He just reminded me that the NDP called for this. And I remember in the debate, in the televised debate during the election campaign, we talked about this for a moment and the then leader of the opposition, the then leader of the NDP, Mr. Broten, said, well yours isn't enough. You're only going to save seven and a half million, and we would save 20 million.

So I hope that members opposite will remember that they campaigned on that because we think there is merit in exploring an increase to that number, and that's not the only reason that we're looking at transformational change, also referenced in the Speech from the Throne. But that may well be one manifestation, that balance between admin or board governance and front-line care that we'll want to have a look at and engage with stakeholders on that particular subject as well.

There are a number of long-term, aspirational — well more than aspirational — long-term, very definitive plans for the government that were outlined in the Speech from the Throne as well, and that included a reference to SaskPower's extension of the net metering program for solar power and our commitment to hit 50 per cent renewables by 2030. That speaks very much to a long-term vision for this province, being very engaged on the climate change file and providing sustainable low-cost electricity for the future growth of the province of Saskatchewan.

You know, the member from Moosomin dealt with this in his maiden speech, the campaign promise for a new patent box in Saskatchewan. It's also referenced in the Speech from the Throne and that's another great example of taking the long view, of having a vision for a continuing diversification in the economy especially as it relates to creating a broader innovation sector and a more robust IT [information technology] sector perhaps. Even apps that deal with food could qualify perhaps as that.

But, Mr. Speaker, the patent box itself was something that we announced during the campaign, and we're moving to implement now. It's referenced in the Speech from the Throne, and I'm excited about it. We're going to be the only jurisdiction

in North America to offer this. What it is, is some tax protection while inventors and creators take the time to commercialize their idea, creating jobs as they do it, and get a bit of a break from the tax man, as it were, but only if they'll come to Saskatchewan. And this will be for home-grown inventors and creators, and it'll also be for those who might want to come from outside the province and try their hand at business here and innovate here in Saskatchewan.

It's called a patent box, but I want members of the House to remember that we're going to expand it beyond what patent generally connotes as manufacturing. And we want to make sure that trade secrets — and that's a term that's readily used in that sector — and recipes are part of that protection because what's happening in this province in the food industry is remarkable.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of food exports, we've seen huge progress. For many, many years in this country, it was taken as given that the province of Ontario would be the number one food exporter of all the provinces. That was taken as given. That was taken as an undeniable fact that was not likely ever to change. Well until Saskatchewan people decided to change that fact and in the last number of years — I think now three in a row — the number one food exporter in the Dominion of Canada is no longer our friends in Ontario but it is this province. And it's not just the crops that we're producing. Increasingly it's the diversified sort of value-added, up-the-value-stream innovation around food development, and I'm looking forward to what the patent box idea will bring to that.

Mr. Speaker, I can share the anecdote I did during the campaign very quickly with respect to one particular innovation at the food centre at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. There is a very well-known international . . . Canadian, but an international presence that's looking at a brand new investment in the province and came here to meet with the food development centre in part, certainly. And he himself is a vegan, and so the food development . . . as is our oldest daughter, Megan.

So the food development centre, knowing he was visiting, said, when you come here is there any kind of food that you missed when you weren't a vegan? And he said, yes. He said, I miss pulled pork. I wish I could still eat pulled pork. Some would say maybe Kentucky Fried Chicken but for him it was pulled pork . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The Minister of Health is thinking of leaving this speech right now to go enjoy some. So they used the extruder at the food development centre and a pea protein replacement and made pulled pork. And then I met with the individual afterwards and he said it tasted like pulled pork. He would order it in a restaurant. That's an anecdote.

It's one little story but it's the kind of innovation that's being done here in Saskatchewan, and we want to promote it because this side of the House has a vision for this province continuing as an answer to the world's food security concerns. This side of the House has a vision for this province continuing to build on its amazing export records over the last number of years, and we think at the core of that plan is the support for agriculture from the government. And that doesn't mean sort of cash support but that means fighting for better access to

transportation. It means fighting for trade access as well, supporting things like TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership]. That's what that means.

Mr. Speaker, I would point out again for members of the House that the new Leader of the Opposition has hired a chief of staff who used to work for Tom Mulcair in Ottawa, who is on the record as opposing TPP. We need to not send mixed signals from this place, not by whom we hire or the things that we say. TPP holds singular opportunities for us to reduce agriculture-related trade barriers around the world, especially in Asia where they exist. And so we ought not to send mixed signals from this place wherever we sit on something so fundamental to the province's future as trade opportunities in agriculture. We also want to continue to support agriculture's diversification through things like the patent box and investment in research.

The bypass, that's a long-term investment that we're making for the province, and an important one, the largest infrastructure project in the history of the province. The project as it's constituted now was never \$400 million. The project has grown and . . . You know, it's interesting because what we heard to some extent and what the Leader of the Opposition has just said was a bit of a rehash, a relitigation of their campaign platform. Well people weighed in on that campaign platform. People made some decisions about which aspects of the platform . . . And there were good ideas in their platform, certainly. But people weighed in on their platform and on their rhetoric and made a decision as to what didn't seem quite right. And some of the rhetoric and some of the hyperbole didn't sit well with Saskatchewan people who knew that the original price of \$400 million didn't have all the interchanges, wasn't anywhere near the scale and scope of the current bypass project, because this project needs to be for the long term and it needs to be generational.

And yes, we're using a P3 model, and the P3 model will save money over the conventional model as it has with the long-term care facility in Swift Current, as it's doing for the school constructions, the new schools that are being built across the province.

Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House I think what you'll find — and I hope what people supported on April the 4th — is a pragmatic approach to these things. There will still be conventional infrastructure builds as long as we have the honour to serve in government, whether it's highways or schools. But we'll also look at innovation like P3s, and we're going to pick the best one, best value for taxpayers, what gets the job done as quickly as it's needed. And in the case of schools, we've needed those quickly because of the rapid growth, the welcomed growth, that we've seen in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, if I may, I think the Throne Speech does one other thing. It should speak to some short-term, immediate needs of the province and how the government plans to address them, and it should also offer again that glimpse above the horizon to the excellence that we want for Saskatchewan, the plan for growth that we have, the vision of this place for decades to come.

It also does a third thing I think. It sets up the debate that we're going to have. And each Speech from the Throne would do that I think at any particular session. This is the twenty-eighth session, and it's already been marked by debate back and forth, whether it's question period or this Throne Speech debate. But I do think that the Speech from the Throne initiates a contest of ideas, or at least it should. At least at its best, this place should kind of defer to being that contest of ideas, knowing that we're also going to have some raucous debates and we'll have some rhetoric back and forth. But I think the Speech from the Throne should initiate a contest of ideas.

And I want to say early on that I'm concerned about whether or not the Speech from the Throne has been responded to in that way by everybody in the Assembly. It's early days and so I'm still hopeful but . . . And what I mean by that is I'm hopeful to see from our friends across the way something more than what they have been talking about for the four years prior to the election. Because I do think the election changes something. I think the election on April 4th is a bit of a reset, much as the Speech from the Throne is. And so it gives us a chance to learn lessons from the campaign that we heard.

And I know as we were door knocking, we heard very specific concerns from Saskatchewan people that maybe weren't represented in our platform. And we know we've got to work on those. We know we have to do better.

But I am betting, I think, that the members across the way who are elected here and those that were not elected for them also heard a little bit from Saskatchewan people about what they expect from them. And I do think we've heard the Leader of the Opposition say, they're going to do more than oppose. They're going to propose. Haven't seen that just yet. But I'm hoping that's the case because I believe that's a mistake that's been made by the opposition in the last two terms. I don't think they presented early enough or often enough something more than criticism. And an opposition . . . We're imperfect at this as well, but we genuinely try.

We released an economic paper that highlighted what we believed in for our growth plan. By the way, the elements of that are included in the growth plan for the province of Saskatchewan even to this day. And those elements are: competitive taxes and competitive regulations, changes to the labour laws of the province so they'd be fair but they would be competitive, infrastructure investment, export engagement, innovation, diversification. That's what our . . . Well that's the name of the document. And those principles have found their way into the growth plan.

Does anybody know what the NDP believes on any of those? And yet there's been two, now, campaigns since 2007. I don't know if they would increase taxes or not. They kind of ran on, it sounded like, increasing taxes in the last election, whether it's a carbon levy or changes to income tax.

I don't know what they believe about labour legislation, labour legislative balance in the province. I don't know if they would undo all the changes that we've made — remove essential services legislation, go back to the day when we didn't have a secret ballot for certification votes — because they're silent on it. And you can't have a contest of ideas and a debate if only

one side is saying, here's our program; here's our plan.

And I would argue that political parties won't find success if all they do is criticize and they're silent on these major issues. People deserve and demand more. They demand to know what you'll do in the short-term.

And they demand, they should demand to know: what is your vision for the province of Saskatchewan? Do you really subscribe to growth? I don't really know if members opposite honestly believe that growth is fundamentally a good thing. On this side of the House, we know that growth comes with challenges. You have more people, you need to build schools. You have more people, there's greater demand for health care. Growth brings its challenges but on this side of the House, without doubt and unequivocally, we welcome the challenges of growth versus the challenges of waving goodbye to a generation of young people like we used to in this province.

I have to believe that the Leader of the Opposition personally supports growth, acknowledging the challenges. I don't know about some of the other ones. I don't know how you would go to a political convention and sign on in principle for the further discussion of the Leap Manifesto that quite literally would destroy our economy, that would shut down oil, that would shut down pipelines, that would shut down coal, that would end modern agriculture. And their answer is, well I just wanted there to be a discussion.

Well do you know what we say on this side of the House? Some things are not worth discussing, including the devastation of the Saskatchewan economy — not anywhere. It's not worth talking about. On occasions like that we need NDP MLAs or any MLA, if there's a convention talking about it, to line up at the microphone and say the Leap Manifesto has no business being talked about, especially in Edmonton and so close to the oil sands, but really anywhere in the country because it would devastate the nation's economy.

And then, Mr. Speaker, someone who would sign the Leap Manifesto I don't think has any business doing renewal for any political party in the province of Saskatchewan. And yet the Leader of the Opposition has hand-picked someone, Nicole White, who ran for him and for his party and signed the Leap Manifesto. Signing it is an endorsement. So a good start would be for the NDP to come up and say unequivocally they're cutting ties with people that are opposed to the things that we do best in the province.

[11:45]

The Speech from the Throne said, it says though, some people in this country are uncomfortable with what we do here. They're uncomfortable with modern agriculture. They're uncomfortable with GMOs [genetically modified organism]. They don't really like oil. They don't really like coal. They don't really like mining. They don't really like uranium. This is what we do. This is how we've been able to contribute to the Canadian economy over the last number of years in ways that we've never been able to in the decades previous to that. It's how we've been able to build more roads and hospitals and schools and provide operating grant increases to universities and to those schools. We've done it on the strength of those

very sectors. And there are people who are uncomfortable with it, Mr. Speaker, and some of them oppose it, and they just . . . I don't think that argument should be countenanced at all in this place. And there shouldn't be even tacit support for a discussion of that in this place, and there shouldn't be someone appointed to do renewal of a political party in this province in this place. And so I'm looking forward to the contest of ideas that should be enabled, and the Throne Speech should be the conveyance for that contest.

I will just say this in closing: there were three themes to the Speech from the Throne. People would say, well they're pretty general themes, but I think they say a lot. They were the themes of our campaign, that we would keep Saskatchewan strong by keeping our economy strong. And for us that means keeping taxes low and not hitting the economy now with any kind of a tax hike. It means keeping our finances strong in the province of Saskatchewan, and that means dealing with the challenges of this fiscal year and then moving towards a balanced budget, getting to a balanced budget by '17-18.

An Hon. Member: — That'd be novel.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, well the Leader of the Opposition says that would be novel. Since we were elected in 2007, this government has earned two AAA credit ratings. This government has retired just below 40 per cent of the operating debt of the province of Saskatchewan. His counterparts in Alberta have been downgraded, I don't know . . .

An Hon. Member: — Twice. Twice in a week.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Twice in the last couple of weeks. And so, Mr. Speaker, we will stand on our fiscal record. We will stand on our fiscal record as the credit rating agencies are in terms of how they've weighed in, and we'll move to strengthen even further in the months ahead.

And then finally the other theme, the third theme of how you keep Saskatchewan strong is that we would continue to stand up for Saskatchewan's interests. And, Mr. Speaker, this isn't just our duty. It is an honour. It is an honour for each of us to be able to stand up for the interests of our constituents, their jobs, whether they're in the cities or in the country, whether they're in agriculture or oil or mining or whether they're on Broadway or the Cathedral area, whatever those jobs are, it is our unqualified honour to be able to stand up for their interests.

What does that mean exactly? Well it means when our economic interests are threatened externally, perhaps by policies from the federal government or trade actions of another country like country of origin labelling, our resolve is that we are going to stand up and speak in a clarion way on behalf of the people of this province, on behalf of their economic interests. We're not going to worry too much perhaps about being too polite sometimes because we need to be able to make the case for Saskatchewan people.

I noted again in the member for Moosomin's maiden speech, he told a great story actually about I think a 15-year-old girl in his constituency whose dad was a financial planner and I think a supporter or he was. There's a pretty good chance if you're in the Moosomin constituency, he's probably supported the

member. But she was uninterested in politics, I think is how it went, didn't see how it really would impact her life. And so the member quite I think in an elegant way connected some of the dots as to why politics might be important for that young person. He pointed out that there was a manufacturer down the road and if that manufacturer was doing well because there weren't international duties holding them back and because the government was not taking more than its share of taxes and that it was ensuring there was a competitive environment, if that was happening, the people would be working at that plant, and there would be a greater customer base for the father who is a financial planner. And that father, who is a financial planner, wouldn't have to make some drastic household budget decisions up to and including possibly getting rid of her horse which I thought was pretty graphic. I'm glad to hear they're still supporting you.

That's a pretty graphic description but a connection between why politics is important, why things like the Speech from the Throne and its contents are important, how it can impact the daily lives of Saskatchewan people. But more importantly, how it can set the right environment, how it can set the right tone for an entire province so that manufacturer in that constituency and entrepreneurs across this province can grow and thrive and create jobs that are the basis for every quality of life that we want for our electors, regardless of where we sit in the House.

And the Speech from the Throne is an adjunct to the growth plan of this province that we have implemented since 2007, that we've updated in 2011, that is precisely all about that. And more important than just the daily enjoyment of that horse by that young woman, our vision is that she will be able to go to school perhaps, in this province, post-secondary education. She'll be able to graduate. Or maybe she wants to start her own business. She'll be able to do that.

If it is post-secondary school, that she could use the graduate retention plan to stay and maybe use the graduate retention plan to build or to buy her first home. And it's our vision that beyond the temple that she would be able to stay in this province, create a life in this province, have the choice to stay, to build her future here so that she could raise her own horses for her own kids and not have to worry about her dad's household finances.

Mr. Speaker, that's what a Throne Speech should be about the short term but also the long term, a vision that's worthy of the people that sent us here, worthy of a province as blessed as this one with all of the resources that we have. We're going through a time of economic challenge today. But make no mistake, make no mistake, we're coming out stronger on the other side. And we will be stronger for the contents of the Speech from the Throne, stronger for the growth plan that this party has implemented and will stand with and stick to for as long as we have the humbling opportunity to serve on this side of the House.

And I am honoured to vote for a Speech from the Throne that was moved by the member for Saskatoon Westview. And if our government works as hard as he did, we'll be okay. And the same is true for the seconder, the MLA from Estevan. I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment. Order. The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment to the address in reply to the Throne Speech moved by the member from Saskatoon Nutana, seconded by the member from Athabasca:

That this Assembly does not support the government's refusal to properly address issues in health care, education, adequately protect Saskatchewan jobs, and ensure transparency and accountability for Saskatchewan people.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the amendment?

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion please say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the motion please say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — I think the nos have it. On division. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 11:53 until 11:56.]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment to the address in reply to the Throne Speech moved by the member from Saskatoon Nutana, seconded by the member from Athabasca:

That this Assembly does not support the government's refusal to properly address the issues in health care, education, adequately protect Saskatchewan jobs, and ensure transparency and accountability to the people of Saskatchewan.

All those in favour of the amendment please stand.

[Yeas — 10]

Wotherspoon	Chartier	Belanger
Sproule	Forbes	Rancourt
Beck	McCall	Sarauer
Vermette		

The Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion please stand.

[Nays — 48]

Wall	Stewart	Morgan
Wyant	Duncan	McMorris
Boyd	Harpauer	Doherty
Moe	D'Autremont	Weekes
Beaudry-Mellor	Cox	Docherty
Campeau	Heppner	Cheveldayoff
Harrison	Ottenbreit	Tell
Bonk	Brkich	Hart
Steele	Doke	Hargrave

Makowsky	Marit	Merriman
Wilson	Ross	Olauson
Young	Kaeding	Parent
Fiaz	Nerlien	Bradshaw
Dennis	Phillips	Steinley
Lambert	Lawrence	Carr
Michelson	Buckingham	Kirsch

[12:00]

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 10; those opposed, 48.

The Speaker: — Declare the motion lost. The question before the Assembly is the main motion, the address in reply to the Throne Speech moved by the member of Saskatoon Westview, seconded by the member from Estevan:

That an humble address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Yea.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — All those in favour of the motion say yea.

Some Hon. Members: — Yea.

The Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion say nay.

Some Hon. Members: — Nay.

The Speaker: — The yeas have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:01 until 12:02.]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the main motion moved by the member from Saskatoon Westview, seconded by the member from Eastview:

That her honourable address be presented to Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor as follows:

To Her Honour the Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor of the Province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, her majestic dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Saskatchewan in session assembly, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech from which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

All those in favour of the motion please stand.

[Yeas — 48]

Wall	Stewart	Morgan
Wyant	Duncan	McMorris
Boyd	Harpauer	Doherty
Moe	D'Autremont	Weekes
Beaudry-Mellor	Cox	Docherty
Campeau	Heppner	Cheveldayoff
Harrison	Ottenbreit	Tell
Bonk	Brkich	Hart
Steele	Doke	Hargrave
Makowsky	Marit	Merriman
Wilson	Ross	Olauson
Young	Kaeding	Parent
Fiaz	Nerlien	Bradshaw
Dennis	Phillips	Steinley
Lambert	Lawrence	Carr
Michelson	Buckingham	Kirsch

The Speaker: — Those opposed please rise.

[Nays — 10]

Wotherspoon	Chartier	Belanger
Sproule	Forbes	Rancourt
Beck	McCall	Sarauer
Vermette		

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 48; those opposed, 10.

The Speaker: — I declare the motion carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt this motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:05.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS	
INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS	
Harpauer	161
Wotherspoon	161
Dennis	161
Bradshaw	162
PRESENTING PETITIONS	
Chartier	161
Forbes	161
STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS	
Military Family Camping Program Celebrates Fifth Anniversary	
Lawrence	162
Remembering Roy Atkinson	
Sproule	162
Unity Community Daycare Grand Opening	
Doke	163
Cathedral Village Arts Festival Celebrates 25th Anniversary	
Beck	163
Lloydminster Teacher Receives Prime Minister’s Award for Teaching Excellence	
Young	163
Celebrate Success Awards Gala	
Cheveldayoff	163
Construction Begins on Affordable Housing Development	
Fiaz	164
QUESTION PERIOD	
Carbon Capture and Storage Project	
Wotherspoon	164
Wall	164
Sproule	165
Funding for Recruitment of Physicians	
Chartier	166
Duncan	166
Northern Health Care Services	
Belanger	167
Duncan	167
Delays to Toxicology and Coroner Reports	
Sarauer	168
Tell	168
Wyant	168
Reforestation Jobs	
Rancourt	168
Cox	168
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS	
Bill No. 12 — <i>The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016</i>	
Duncan	169
Bill No. 13 — <i>The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016</i>	
Duncan	169
Bill No. 14 — <i>The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016</i>	
Stewart	169
ORDERS OF THE DAY	
SPECIAL ORDER	
ADJOURNED DEBATES	
ADDRESS IN REPLY	
Wotherspoon	169
Wall	173
Recorded Division (amendment)	179
Recorded Division (main motion)	180

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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

Hon. Jennifer Campeau
Minister of Central Services
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