



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

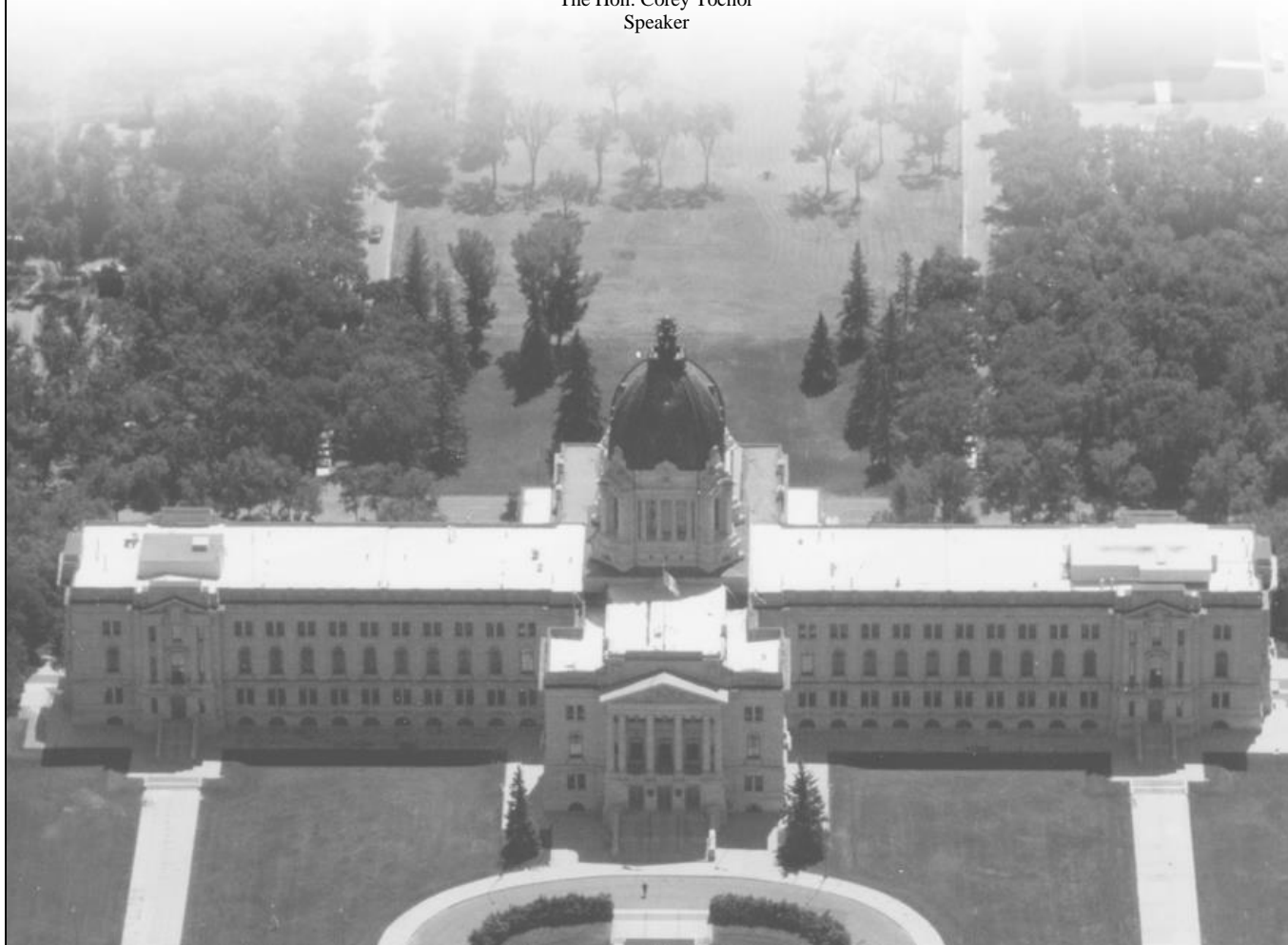
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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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Wilson, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to request leave for an extended introduction, if that's all right.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to introduce a few guests seated in your gallery this afternoon. They are victim services volunteers and they are among, I think we would all agree, some of the most dedicated, compassionate, and all-around inspiring people that we have in this province. They are people that we turn to in times of crisis, Mr. Speaker. Recent events in this province certainly underscore the very important work that they do to support victims and communities, so their work, Mr. Speaker, is invaluable.

And today our honoured guests are celebrating some milestones, 10 and 15 years in what they do. Celebrating 10 years, Mr. Speaker: Deb Macdonald from Southey — you can give a wave; there she is — Lynn Pelzer, and Ashley Young from Regina. And we also have three people celebrating 15 years of service with us today, Mr. Speaker. They are Dianne Smutt from Kamsack, Tina Bird from Estevan, and Sharon Dunham from Swift Current.

As I do every year, Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of meeting with them for lunch earlier as part of victims week, known nationally this year as Victims and Survivors of Crime Week. So, Mr. Speaker, I had the great honour of expressing to them our great respect from a grateful government on behalf of all members of this legislature and our heartfelt thanks for what they do. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members in joining me today in welcoming this truly exceptional group of people to their provincial legislature.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I would like to join the minister in welcoming these volunteers from victim services. Congratulations on your years of dedication and amazing volunteer work. Thank you for all the work that you've done in helping victims in what, as you know, is likely one of the most traumatizing experiences of their lives. Your work in this province is truly invaluable. I ask that all members join me as well in welcoming these individuals to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, while I was on my feet I neglected to introduce someone else that was in the legislature today. In your gallery, and to you and through you we have Geri Williams-Borne from Amherst, Nova Scotia. So welcome to the legislature. She is here visiting her daughter, Ellen Williams, who is currently employed in the caucus office, the government caucus office. But as of tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, we're very pleased to have her join the Ministry of Justice up in room 355. I'd ask all members of the legislature to welcome Geri to the legislature.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I'd like to welcome all the guests that are here today and specifically victims services volunteers that are here today.

But I'd like to welcome some very special guests that have joined us here today that are with our cultural associations and with our heritage language organizations that contribute in so many ways — from a cultural perspective, from a social perspective, from an economic perspective, Mr. Speaker. And they're primarily seated in the east gallery here today. There's a very large gathering here today.

I'd like to welcome Ms. Tamara Ruzic, the executive director of the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages, SOHL. I'd like to also welcome Ms. Rhonda Rosenberg, executive director of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan, MCOS. I'd like to welcome Dr. Jim Leskun, president of the Multilingual Association of Saskatchewan. And I'd like to welcome Ms. Eleanor Shia, chairperson of the Saskatoon Multilingual Schools, Saskatchewan Intercultural Association. I'd be remiss if I didn't also welcome one of our former colleagues, MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and minister Sandra Morin who's also very highly involved in the heritage language schools and the German school specifically.

These individuals have given so much to our province and our community from a cultural perspective but also from an economic perspective. They assist in settlement. They provide strength within our province and operate on very limited resources — almost 80 heritage language schools across our province. They do so through the goodwill of volunteers. They do so with borrowed space, and they do so with very limited resources from government that go a very long way in helping build the bright future that everyone deserves in Saskatchewan. So it's my pleasure to welcome these very impressive leaders to their Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these individuals to the legislature. The rich mosaic that we enjoy of citizens from all around the world are something that we celebrate, value, and appreciate the work that they do. Our provincial motto is "from many peoples, strength," and I think the people that you see here today are representative of that. We thank them for being

in the province, and we thank them for the efforts that they make in preserving and sharing their culture with all of us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you, through you and to all the members, Madeeh Ur Rehman. He is a fourth-year student of University of Regina.

On May 20th in Regina, first-time, he arranged a Best Buddies gala and raised a lot of money for that. I was there with my colleague from Regina Rochdale, and Her Honour was there as well, the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

I would like to introduce Safeer Ahmed as well. Safeer Ahmed is president of the Muslim Youth Association for Saskatchewan and for Manitoba as well. And I was talking to him, to help us for organ donors in Saskatchewan and in Manitoba and other communities. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Rosetown-Elrose.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, a group of grade 7 to 9 students from Swanson Christian School near Delisle. They're accompanied by their teacher, Myra Hiebert, and chaperones: Merle Hiebert, Melanie Hiebert, Darcy Loewen, Rosalie Loewen, Warren Isaac, Valerie Isaac, Renaldo Wiebe, Brenda Wiebe, and Carrie Anslow.

Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to meeting with them after question period. I hope they enjoy today in the Assembly, and I'd ask all members to please give them a warm welcome to their Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to rise in the House and join with our leader and the minister in welcoming the guests in the east gallery. It's very impressive to see so many folks out in support of heritage languages.

I want to say a special welcome to Tamara; Eleanor Shia from Saskatoon, as she's come all the way down for this very important day; and Rhonda and all the rest.

I do also want to make mention of three important people from the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour. They're here in the back bench up there: Kent Peterson, Paige Kezima, and Matt Lensen. They are working so hard to make sure that workers' rights are respected and we have a fair and safe workplace. So, folks, let's give them all a warm welcome to their legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and

through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a really fine group of grade 7 students — 51 in fact — in the west gallery from Yorkdale Central School. With them are teachers Mr. Noel Budz, Mr. Evan Neibrandt, and Mr. Grant Edgar.

Also with them is one very special guest, a good friend of mine, Klay Sawatsky. I know him very well; he keeps me in line when I'm back home quite often. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to recognize these guests, welcome to their Assembly, and ask Klay to give us a wave. I'll be seeing them a little bit later as well, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to rise today and recognize a young lady from my home community of Ile-a-la-Crosse, and it's Marva McCallum. Marva is here today with two of her children. Heidi right now is involved with the Bold Eagle program but is not here, Mr. Speaker. But she brought her son, Neil McCallum. And Neil was telling me now that he wants to be Neil Graham fairly soon.

But I want the record to show today that I'm really glad that they're both here today and to tell Neil that I did beat his dad, Bill Graham, in an arm wrestling competition for \$15 one night. So maybe he should keep the name McCallum and not take the name Graham. But I'd ask all members to recognize this very special young lady, a great mom, and a great granddaughter, and her children that are here visiting today. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I'm going to take this opportunity to welcome some guests that are sitting in the Speaker's gallery today. They're from visitor services, information officers. They welcome visitors from around the world to the Legislative Building. The extended summer hours are now in effect. Tours of the building are to be offered now every half hour starting at 8 a.m. till 9 p.m. every day. Tours are available in both French and English.

I'd like to introduce the visitor services team consisting of the summer staff: Jean-René Robillard, Zane Davey, Katelyn Major, Tatiana Orłowski, Kingsley Erlo, Devon Peters. Joining also with them today are the permanent staff that I'd like to introduce: Arnold McKenzie, Kelly Liberet, Marianne Morgan, Lorraine deMontigny. Please join with me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present a petition to improve PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] coverage for Saskatchewan workers. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that post-traumatic stress disorder can severely impact the lives of Saskatchewan workers. They point out that PTSD is not on the list of workers' compensation illnesses presumed to be work-related in Saskatchewan, and that many workers suffering

from work-related PTSD are burdened by lengthy investigations and approval processes, and that presuming PTSD is work-related will reduce the stigma and allow workers easier access to services and supports.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: 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 of Regina and Swift Current. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to stand today and present a petition in support of funding heritage language schools here in Saskatchewan. And we know that after 25 years, the Government of Saskatchewan is discontinuing all support for heritage language learning here 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 of the announcement made by the Ministry of Education, many of these non-profit heritage language schools will be faced with the difficult decision of whether they can continue to operate.

[13:45]

Now we know in addition to providing language and cultural classes, these schools offer a welcoming environment and crucial support for newcomers who are searching for a way to feel at home in their new surroundings. It's also increasingly important to work towards improving access to indigenous languages, many of which are endangered.

Heritage language programs provide support not only for immigrants, refugees, and their descendants, but also for the Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians who recognize the benefit of learning additional language. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Reginans Support Fort McMurray in Time of Need

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are very generous and that kindness was on display during the wildfire crisis in Fort McMurray. There were numerous acts of generosity across the province, and many Regina residents stepped up to help as well. On May 7th, Hasan Hai and Niall O'Hanlon took cash and new item donations at the Regina Farmers' Market for the evacuees of Fort McMurray.

This isn't their first foray into public kindness. Last winter when there was concern over whether the government was going to accept Syrian refugees, they made it clear that the people of Saskatchewan were more than ready to accept newcomers, through sale of a T-shirt bearing the slogan We're All Welcome, and taking item donations.

Hasan and Niall raised \$1,727 in direct cash donations for the Red Cross, and the value of physical donations received was \$12,000, including a donation of over \$2,000 in pet food from PetSmart. The Regina Farmers' Market donated the space for the drive, and a number of vendors donated portions of their sales to the Red Cross that day as well. The Fat Badger, O'Hanlon's Irish Pub, and Regina Douglas Park's own Malty National Brewing all helped to gather donations before and after the Farmers' Market event. Cameron Beaton of Bennett Dunlop Ford helped with the transport of all donations to Alberta. I would also be remiss if I did not give a special thanks to the other people I was able to volunteer with that day, Lisa Luzney and David Burke.

I have the privilege of calling all these people my friends, and I ask all members to join me in thanking these Regina residents for their generosity in Fort McMurray's time of need.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Watson Student Recognized at National Science Fair

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to stand in the Assembly today to acknowledge an innovative young woman from the community of Watson in my constituency. Grade 11 student Teresa Deng won the bronze medal in her category at the prestigious national science fair held in Montreal earlier this month.

Mr. Speaker, her project was called Algae Bio-Fuel, where Teresa was able to grow algae and then process it into an oil that can be used as a fuel replacement in everything from automobiles to airplanes. Teresa Deng's project turned heads at the national science fair because it showed promise as a realistic and economical fuel substitute. Kal Lefebvre, Teresa's teacher, said this about the fair: "The calibre of Teresa's project and other winning projects were so advanced that they were actually creating or developing new products on their own." As a result of her forward thinking, she has already been approached from universities from across the nation, offering her scholarships.

Mr. Speaker, young people from all over this province are able to dream big, be creative, and innovate. It's innovations like this that shows Saskatchewan's future is very, very bright. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly join in with me in congratulating Teresa on her accomplishment and wish her the best as she moves forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Lakeview Educator Receives Saskatchewan Order of Merit

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise in the Assembly today in recognition of a role model and constituent of mine, Ms. Anne Luke. Last week Anne was invested into the Saskatchewan Order of Merit for her outstanding contributions to early childhood education in our province.

Anne came to Saskatchewan from England in 1969 and was a leader in developing rural kindergarten programs. In 1977 she founded the Early Learning Centre here in Regina, which still provides today some of our city's most vulnerable families and youngsters with healthy development and a great start in life.

At the awards ceremony, Anne was joined with family and friends from across the world to help celebrate with her. One thing that stood out for me was that she had a huge table of enthusiastic supporters. It was a real testament to the tremendous impact that she has had on so many lives here in Regina. She always puts kids first.

And this was far from her first award, having received an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of Regina, a fellowship from the Muttart Foundation, and countless other accolades.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Anne Luke on her well-deserved award, and also thanking her for her many years of service and contributions in early education. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Weyburn Officer Completes Marathon for Mental Health

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I rise in the House to talk about a remarkable man in my constituency, Constable Jeffery Bartsch, a member of the Weyburn Police Service. Constable Bartsch ran the entire 42.2-kilometre-long Saskatchewan Marathon in Saskatoon in his full police uniform. He is one of just four officers who have attempted and successfully ran a marathon in full uniform in North America.

Mr. Speaker, this was part of Constable Bartsch's fundraiser to raise funds for mental health programming in Weyburn. As quoted by the constable, and I quote: "Running has really helped me with my own mental health." He also said, and I quote:

Around the world with mental health there is a huge

initiative right now and it helps me to learn to deal with those people on a professional level and have the empathy to try and understand what they may be going through.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to announce that Constable Bartsch's fundraiser raised nearly \$2,000 for mental health programs in Weyburn. As for this, his third marathon, he successfully completed, in full uniform, in five hours and 45 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in congratulating Constable Bartsch on completing his marathon in full uniform and for bringing awareness to mental health.

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

2016 Moose Jaw Transplant Trot

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 22nd I attended Moose Jaw's second annual Transplant Trot, held in the beautiful Moose Jaw Wakamow Valley. Transplant trots are 3-, 5-, or 10-kilometre walking and running events which are organized by local volunteers to increase awareness about organ and tissue donation, and to raise funds for the Canadian Transplant Association.

Mr. Speaker, Roxanna Gadd-Frey brought the transplant to Moose Jaw in 2015 after she learned about the events when she was in Edmonton with her son Kevyn Gadd who received a double lung transplant in 2014. About 195 people registered this year for Moose Jaw's run, which raised \$15,000 for the Canadian Transplant Association.

Mr. Speaker, Canada's rates of organ donation are quite low when compared to the United States and many other European countries. Our government is committed to helping to increase the number of organ donors in our province. I'm looking forward to working with members of the Standing Committee on Human Services to study how we can work to help increase organ donation rates in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, potential organ and tissue donors are encouraged to sign their donor card and to talk to family members about their wishes.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Roxanna Gadd-Frey and everyone who helped organize the 2016 Moose Jaw Transplant Trot on another successful event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Moose Jaw Rotary Club Celebrates 100th Anniversary

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, this past Friday I, along with the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, had the pleasure of attending the 100th anniversary banquet of the Moose Jaw Rotary Club.

The Rotary theme of Service Above Self reflects the 100-year history of Rotary, both in Moose Jaw and around the world. Ken Krebs, the governor of district 5550, paid tribute in his address, stating, "One hundred years is a long time for any organization to be around. Rotary has thrived since its inception

here in Moose Jaw.”

Mr. Speaker, during the event, members, families, and guests celebrated the accomplishments of the last century and honoured some Moose Javians who exemplify the value of Rotary. Special recognition was given to Eric and Erna Pullman for their 35 years of service. Other recipients of the Paul Harris Fellowship Award included Lyann and Lloyd Pethick, Clayton Finnell, Scott Elger, the late Al Buchanan, Joe Dueck, Dale Clarke, David Chow, Brenda Walper Bossence, and the Moose Jaw Health Foundation board.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating the award recipients and the Moose Jaw Rotary Club on 100 years of service to our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

New Group Home Opens in Regina Rochdale

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week I attended a grand opening ceremony for a new group home here in Regina that supports four individuals living with disabilities. This home, located in my constituency of Regina Rochdale, provides these individuals with the chance to live independently in a safe and supportive environment.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to making our province the best place in Canada to live for individuals with disabilities. To reach this goal, we have partnered with Cheshire Homes Society of Regina to support the home’s four new residents to help them lead independent lives. Mr. Speaker, Cheshire Homes Society of Regina plays an incredible, valuable role in ensuring inclusivity for these individuals. I applaud all of the important accomplishments of this group that it has made in providing quality, sustainable services for Saskatchewan residents living with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to this ongoing partnership. That is why we are providing Cheshire Homes Society of Regina with over 380,000 in annual funding for this project. Together we will improve the services and support for these four individuals and all Saskatchewan residents living with disabilities through our ongoing work with our province’s disability strategy.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

SaskPower Rate Increases

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party’s failures are costing Saskatchewan people their jobs. Their mismanaged \$1.5 billion carbon capture scheme and their smart meter debacle have left SaskPower cash strapped and deep in debt. As a result, the Sask Party says they need to jack up rates by 5 per cent — not once, but twice in just six months. Now job creators, from producers to manufacturing and resource companies, are

saying they may not be able to afford to operate. They say they’ll have to cut jobs, shut down, or scale back. One business leader said these rate increases were “outrageous” and would result in “significant amount of layoffs.”

Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier justify making Saskatchewan workers pay for his mismanagement with his job-killing carbon capture tax?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question, and I would point out that, should these increases be approved by the rate review panel and subsequently by the cabinet, Saskatchewan would still have the third-lowest-cost utility bundle in all of Canada.

I would also point out that, should the rate review panel approve of these rate increase requests by SaskPower, Saskatchewan — when you combine both the taxes that families pay and businesses pay, and the utilities — we’re second best in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker. And we want to maintain that competitive advantage both for families and for our businesses.

I believe the member was referring to a quote from an official from Meadow Lake Mechanical Pulp, Mr. Speaker. Since then, they have issued a retraction of that statement in terms of jobs at that particular facility. And we could table that or share this note with the Leader of the Opposition so his information is accurate and updated.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier, certainly I would appreciate him tabling that document. But to dismiss the \$1.5 billion carbon capture tax that he’s passing along to Saskatchewan businesses and to families all across Saskatchewan is wrong and disrespectful, Mr. Speaker.

We have workers who now may be facing layoff because of this very hike and this mismanagement of this government. And when those workers and if those workers face layoff when they go home, they’ll be facing larger power bills there directly as a result of that Premier’s mismanagement.

[14:00]

How is that fair, Mr. Speaker? Why is it that Saskatchewan people are left to pay, along with businesses, for that government’s mismanagement of our Crown corporations? Why can’t this Premier stand up and take responsibility for his job-killing carbon capture tax and finally work with us to develop a plan to strengthen and diversify our economy creating good, mortgage-paying jobs for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question, notwithstanding some of the hyperbole and inaccuracy in the preamble.

I would just say this to all members of the House: that the president of SaskPower, Mike Marsh, has been commenting publicly on the rate, the reasons for the rate increase. And he was asked specifically about the relationship to the very successful Boundary dam 3 project. And he's indicated . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well I guess they're discounting the fact that Mr. Marsh has served this corporation ably for a number of decades spanning different administrations in office.

And he would point out to members of the House and members of the public that we have a growing economy, Mr. Speaker, and it's been growing rapidly over the last number of years, and so SaskPower has had to build out its infrastructure, not just in terms of generation but in terms of transmission. Mr. Speaker, part of that has been to find a solution for coal so we can continue to use it in the mix while cleaning it up. Members opposite want to shut that coal industry down and shut those plants down. We don't want to see that happen.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also point out that since we took office, we've only taken a dividend from SaskPower in two years. Previous to that, when they were in office from 2000-2007, they stripped money from SaskPower every single year. They also were not reinvesting in the infrastructure required to keep the electrical utility healthy. We inherited billions of dollars worth of an infrastructure gap at SaskPower. We're going to fill that gap. We're going to provide power for a growing economy, and we're going to have the third-lowest-cost bundle of utility rates in terms of the entire country, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Employment and Services in First Nations, Métis, and Northern Communities

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the fact is this government has been in power for a decade, and under the Sask Party unemployment rates are on the rise. And they won't even acknowledge nor talk about the unemployment rates for First Nations and Métis people. This government is failing our communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission made some clear calls for action to the provincial government including for employment, mental health, and education. But this government doesn't even acknowledge the issues that our people are facing, Mr. Speaker.

The most recent unemployment rates for off-reserve First Nations is at 25 per cent and it's much, much higher on-reserve. Mr. Speaker, certainly this government does not think that these are numbers that they should be bragging about. To the minister: when will this government acknowledge these unemployment rates and get serious about jobs for First Nations and Métis people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly the unemployment rate in the First Nations community is much higher than we'd like to see. But our government has taken a great deal of action in that regard. Mr. Speaker, we definitely see the correlation between education opportunities and the unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker. That's why the

unemployment rate is much lower than it was, for First Nations, is much lower than it was just a few years ago.

Mr. Speaker, we've spent record amounts of money on adult basic education. We've spent record amounts of money funding the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue on the education front. We're going to continue with programs that work for First Nations and, Mr. Speaker, that work for all citizens of the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that these small programs are not going to solve the problem, and it won't make a difference because this government has undercut the essentials like education. Time and time again this government is failing to provide what is so desperately needed for First Nations, Métis, and northern communities. The TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] called on the provincial government to take action on the health inequities of indigenous people.

Today a psychiatrist spoke out about the lack of services in northern Saskatchewan. After paying for her own flights — and I'll repeat, after paying for her own flights — she only has a few hours to see all of her clients from across the North. No other psychiatrist is doing the work that she does. One psychiatrist for northern Saskatchewan who flies in for a few hours every couple of months — how is this acceptable, Mr. Speaker? This government continually hears desperate calls for better mental health services in the North and nothing changes. They see tragedies occur on a regular basis and yet nothing changes. Mr. Speaker, why do lives in the North matter less?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, this government recognizes issues in the North, and we pay a lot of attention to northern issues including northern health. There has been challenges in the past when it comes to psychiatric and mental health access to services, Mr. Speaker, but there is psychiatric services. We do have a psychiatrist that does travel to the North. There's always the option . . . We are continually searching for more psychiatric services, Mr. Speaker, but we're also researching other options where we see Telehealth and remote presence technology as very accessible and makes these services very accessible to people in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So we're exploring every opportunity we can to make sure these services are accessible to people all over the province, especially in the northern regions.

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

Aboriginal Population in Correctional Facilities

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, another one of the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is the need for provincial governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people in custody, and transparently report on their efforts and progress. The

overrepresentation of First Nations and Métis people imprisoned in Saskatchewan remains rampant. But instead of addressing this issue and recognizing the historical injustices that have led to these inequities, the Sask Party is flippant about these circumstances, paints entire communities with one brush, and offers no understanding to communities who are struggling.

So in line with the commission's call, what efforts is the minister taking to reduce this overrepresentation? Will the minister commit to genuine compassion to communities who are struggling and take meaningful action to address the overrepresentation of First Nations and Métis people in custody?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, we do realize that there is a high representation of First Nations people within our facilities. As a result, we are focusing on reducing the demand of individuals coming into our provincial correctional facilities. We look at the Hub program, Mr. Speaker — and I don't know if I need to explain that to anybody — where the professionals, they talk about an individual, an individual case to help get people to the point where they get the services they require before they come into our correctional facilities, Mr. Speaker.

The other program that we offer within our facilities of course is training programs because what we want to do, we want to turn our inmates, the people in our facilities into taxpayers, providing them employment opportunities, employment training.

Mr. Speaker, we are fully cognizant of the fact that our First Nations population is higher in our facilities and we're working to address as best we can. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Multi-Ministry Team on Aboriginal Issues

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, we see such disparity amongst our First Nations and Métis population because of historical injustices. Indigenous cultures were undermined and under-valued. Indigenous languages, the lifeblood of our culture, were suppressed. The TRC recognized the importance of indigenous languages — what our elders have been telling us all along. We must take action to reclaim our languages and ensure their survival.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.]

Which is, in Cree, we have to keep fighting.

In response to the TRC the Premier stated:

The Government of Saskatchewan is committed to meeting this task through the adoption of practical solutions. We will create a multi-ministry team to carefully examine this report and the full report once released.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm curious: what has this multi-ministry team done so far, and what practical solutions can we expect to

see from this Premier, and that government?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the member knows, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released a very lengthy report that the multi-ministry team he's referring to continues to deal with. A great deal of work has been done. Mr. Speaker, as sort of the summary to that report, there was 94 different recommendations in that report, 34 of which pertained directly or indirectly to the provinces. Of those . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well if the member would quit heckling he might be interested to learn that of those 34, 22 of those are already been addressed either in whole or in part by the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work with First Nations communities, with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] in regard to the balance of those Mr. Speaker. The multi-ministry committee's going to continue to do their good work. And, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the next question from the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Heritage Language Education

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As my friend from Athabasca said, building and growing indigenous languages is so important for our province's future, and unfortunately this government is going in the wrong direction, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this March, the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages learned that the government is pulling its \$225,000 grant. We are joined today by many people who help organize the heritage language schools all across the province. This grant has provided for the past 25 years, Mr. Speaker, and the heritage language schools depend on their grant. Students throughout this province depend on this program not only to learn their heritage language but also to learn the cultural histories behind the languages. Will the minister fix this mistake and restore funding to this heritage language program today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to start off by thanking the heritage language teachers and schools for the work that they do in making education in Saskatchewan a more culturally diverse and rich place to live.

This was a decision that was not taken lightly, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you this: we have changes in our current economic climate. Right now we have seen resource revenue fall by approximately \$1 billion. We are focused on and committed to ensuring that our core services are provided in our classrooms. This was an after-school program and, as much as we value and respect the program, it does not fall within our core mandate, and accordingly we made a very difficult decision. I can advise, Mr. Speaker, I can advise the members opposite this was a program that had a total expenditure of \$225,000. It affected 4,000 students, a difference of \$55 per student per year.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, this minister seems to have forgotten Saskatchewan's motto, "from many peoples, strength." The heritage language schools are an important part of that strength. We need to give our students every opportunity to explore their culture and learn their language, our province's rich multicultural history. And again it's what gives us our strength and makes Saskatchewan strong. So why is this government moving ahead with a cut that undermines Saskatchewan's strength?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we respect and appreciate the value that that program provides. The people that participate in that program are preserving their own culture. In our province, we are promoting English language. We are promoting the things that are core to our province. We do that in our classrooms each and every day. This is an after-school program.

Mr. Speaker, the grant was providing \$55 per student per year, or \$4 and 58 . . . dollars per month per student. Province wide, it's almost a quarter of a million dollars, but we feel it's something the parents can raise on their own and encourage them to do so. The school divisions, Mr. Speaker, are providing space and other resources for this program. And, Mr. Speaker, we recognize and want to emphasize the fact that we have a \$1 billion shortfall in revenue resources in our province.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, these answers are just not good enough for the people who have come to the legislature today and filled the galleries to fight for the heritage language schools.

Mr. Speaker, governing is about choices. This government is happy to hand out big contracts to out-of-province companies to build and operate P3 [public-private partnership] schools, happy to pay millions of dollars to American health care consultants, but they can't come up with the money to support our heritage language schools. Talk about misplaced priorities. Why is this government cutting valuable programs for heritage languages instead of cutting their own mismanagement?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, this is a program that is not core to the educational services that are provided by our province. I can advise the members opposite that it was their . . . When they were in government, they closed 176 schools. They neglected the schools that they didn't close.

But in our province, Mr. Speaker, now under this government, we've increased operating funding by 31 per cent. We've increased capital spending by 400 per cent. We've increased child care spaces for the benefit of families by 53 per cent. We've increased pre-K [pre-kindergarten] spaces by 104 per

cent. Mr. Speaker, we have a good record and we're looking forward.

[14:15]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, those answers from the minister defy common sense, are absolutely nonsense, Mr. Speaker. This is a regressive, short-sighted cut and it undermines our multicultural well-being. It undermines us. It undermines us from an economic perspective, a social perspective, and a cultural perspective. This is \$50 per month per student that supports thousands of students across Saskatchewan and helps us build a stronger future. My question isn't to the minister for more nonsense here. My question is to the Premier: will you stand today, will you scrap this regressive, short-sighted cut?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. He is wrong. It's actually \$55 per student per year and \$4.58 a month. And, Mr. Speaker, the decision was not taken lightly, Mr. Speaker, but the minister is right. We are looking to support and improve core services in education. We're going to have a budget tabled in just a couple of days where we challenge many areas of government and our partners to focus again on core services so we can deliver the best quality of those core services to Saskatchewan people at the lowest possible cost.

Mr. Speaker, when that budget's tabled in two days, members will note in the House that the province is short \$1 billion in resource revenue alone from last year. That number will be released on Wednesday. We're \$1 billion short in terms of resource revenue, and so that calls for a complete and focused review on all the services that government provides and all of the funding.

We want to be able to focus on the cores. We've been increasing operating funds for school divisions. We've been building new schools. We've been ensuring there are more teachers, not less as there were under the NDP [New Democratic Party]. Those are core functions in education that need to continue and along the way there'll be difficult decisions made including this one, Mr. Speaker, that the government will stand by, and there'll be more information in two days in the budget.

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

Funding for Education Infrastructure

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party cuts are forcing extreme measures on our schools. Our schools are in such a state of disrepair, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatoon Public School Division is preparing for the worst. Last week they held a two-hour drill at one of their elementary schools to prepare for a "facility failure."

Mr. Speaker, we know it's common for schools to have fire

drills, even duck and cover drills in case of wartime bombing, but a drill to train students and staff what to do in case their schools falls apart, Mr. Speaker, gives duck and cover a whole new meaning.

In 2013 the Provincial Auditor found that this government did not have a proper plan in place to fix our schools. In the follow up last year, the auditor found that this government had implemented just three of the eight recommendations. Why does this government keep ignoring the serious infrastructure needs our schools are facing?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, when I went to school, we had fire drills. We now have drills in the event of a terrorist or other type of attack. We have methods in place for lockdowns. I presume the school division in Saskatoon has chosen to take other steps to make sure that they're being proactive. Mr. Speaker, if they have a danger of a structural collapse, I hope they contact the ministry right away. I hope they use their PMR. [preventative maintenance and renewal] money to try and address whatever the problem is, and I hope they come to us if there is an emergency that arises that they need to use some emergency capital, and we'll help them.

I can say this, Mr. Speaker, that since we formed government we have invested \$966 million in capital. We've built 40 new schools including the nine joint-use schools. We've had 25 major renovations and additions. We were left with a horrible shortfall from the members opposite. And for them to stand up and turn to us and say we're not investing enough in education capital, they need only look backwards and see where they were.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, nearly a decade in power and a decade with the best of economic times, and they chose not to invest in our kids. No more excuses, Mr. Speaker. And this isn't on the school boards. We know that our schools are in desperate need of repairs. While Saskatoon schools are having facility failure drills, there are other schools across the province where facilities are already failing.

Mr. Speaker, in Rosthern, the high school's roof is at risk of collapse — collapse. Parents worry about sending their children to school. But it's not just Rosthern High School, Mr. Speaker. In fact, the government's own documents show that at least \$1.5 billion in repairs are needed in schools across this province. That's a familiar number, Mr. Speaker. But this government has set aside just a small portion of what is needed. When will this government start ignoring our schools, stop blaming school boards, and come up with a plan to invest in and fix our schools before the situation gets worse?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the ultimate facility failure is when it closes completely. Mr. Speaker, under that government when they were in government, it happened not once, not twice, not three times — 176 times. And where did

those students go when that facility failure happened? They went to Alberta; they went to BC [British Columbia], and they left our province. That's the facility failure that came from that failed group of people over there when they were in government, and they ought never be allowed to be in government again.

Mr. Speaker, this government has a track record on education funding that we will put up against theirs any day.

Mr. Speaker, right here in Regina, we've got construction under way on Connaught and Sacred Heart. We have renovation and additions taking place in St. Brieux, Hague, Langenburg, Gravelbourg, Hudson Bay, Martensville High, Weyburn, Georges Vanier, St. Matthew, and Holy Cross. Mr. Speaker, this year we have provided over \$27 million to preventative maintenance and it keeps going on.

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

Prince Albert Bridge

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, once again along with my NDP team, I am the only one speaking up for Prince Albert. The Sask Party government, they have sat on their hands and failed to invest in a badly needed new bridge. Resource companies rely on the bridge to move people, products, and equipment.

Tourists use the bridge to get to cabins and camps in the North. Over the May long weekend, drivers were stuck in traffic for hours because of construction on Prince Albert's only bridge. And what's the government's solution? A zipper merge sign.

The federal government has removed the P3 requirement for infrastructure projects. When will this government open its eyes, do the same, and finally commit to building a new bridge in Prince Albert?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to respond to this question. We are pleased as a provincial government to be partnering with the city on repairs to the bridge. As we all know, the NDP refused to do that. They were going to make the city pay for those repairs, Mr. Speaker.

That being said, we're paying for it, but the contract management and traffic management is up to the city of Prince Albert. The members opposite know that, Mr. Speaker. If they have issues about the traffic management when it comes to that bridge, they can redirect that to the city officials.

Mr. Speaker, this bridge was such a priority for the NDP, we just came off our provincial election and how many dollars did they set aside in their cost, in their platform for the P.A. bridge, Mr. Speaker? Absolutely zero. Wasn't a priority when they were in government, Mr. Speaker. Wasn't a priority this last election when they were trying to get back into government, Mr. Speaker.

And let me read the headlines. And this is the difference between our two parties. In 2003 when the bridge needed

repairs, and I quote, “. . . Highways Minister Mark Wartman, who’s . . . determined his . . . government won’t part with a thin dime because . . . the bridge isn’t an integral part of Highway 2.”

Mr. Speaker, here’s the difference between our parties. This is a quote from the newspaper from 2015, and I quote, “The province will foot the bill for the full cost . . . [to repair] the bridge.”

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

Medical Isotopes

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week the Saskatchewan Centre for Cyclotron Sciences at the University of Saskatchewan received clearance from Health Canada to supply radioisotopes to the Royal University Hospital on a clinical trial basis. This is good news for Saskatchewan patients.

Locally produced radioisotopes can now be supplied for use in PET [positron emission tomography] and CT [computed tomography] scans as part of the clinical trial. Starting next month, the Royal University Hospital will no longer have to rely on isotopes produced outside of the province. The cyclotron and the Sylvia Fedoruk centre are working with the Saskatoon Health Region to officially start supplying the hospital in June.

Radioisotopes are now also produced by the cyclotron for research purposes. A University of Saskatchewan team is studying the development of prostate enlargement and prostate cancer using radioisotopes produced by the cyclotron, opening up new methods of research.

In 2011 our Premier called on Saskatchewan to become a leader in research in the areas of nuclear science, power generation from small modular reactors, and nuclear medicine. This is in stark contrast to the NDP Environment critic in 2009, who I might add is actually sitting in the Chamber today, Sandra Morin. This is what Sandra Morin had to say in 2009: “By all accounts, an isotope reactor simply doesn’t make sense from an economic standpoint so I would question the rush for the province to get involved with one.”

Innovation Saskatchewan’s \$30 million investment announced in 2011 into the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation is creating a world-class centre of excellence in nuclear science and medicine, located right here at home in our Saskatchewan.

Since 2012 the Fedoruk centre has granted over \$3.7 million to 25 nuclear research projects with a total value of close to \$7.7 million, when combined with matching funds and in-kind contributions. I was pleased to be at the conclusion of construction of the \$25 million cyclotron back in 2014 in which Innovation Saskatchewan, the Fedoruk Centre, University of Saskatchewan, and the government of Canada all contributed towards.

Saskatoon is getting a reputation worldwide as the place to be for innovative research. I wish to thank the Saskatchewan Centre for Cyclotron Sciences and the Sylvia Fedoruk Centre for Nuclear Innovation for the work they’ve done to date and wish them well in their current clinical trials and research projects.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to thank the minister for providing an advance copy of his remarks so that I as the critic for Innovation might be able to respond in a more fulsome manner.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to say right off the top that this is, having listened to the announcement by way of media on Friday, this is a good piece of news for the province of Saskatchewan. I don’t know if the Deputy Premier is getting . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I don’t know if it’s his seatmates that are busy yelling and he can’t hear over that or what’s the case there, Mr. Speaker, but I’ll say it again for him. This is a good bit of news for the province of Saskatchewan. We’re glad to see the developments moving forward in the whole field of nuclear medicine.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, the field of nuclear medicine goes back decades in this province, and certainly the Sylvia Fedoruk Centre is rightly named for that pioneer in the field of nuclear medicine as it stands, Mr. Speaker. And we’re glad to see that this critical aspect in terms of nuclear medicine, the radioisotope, is now being locally produced, and there’s some work that can now progress in terms of seeing what the most complete application of that capacity is for the system in Saskatchewan but also going beyond our borders, Mr. Speaker, in terms of spreading the benefit of this critical development as far as is humanly possible.

So certainly in terms of this being an advance in the field of nuclear medicine — building on literally decades of advances that have been made in the province of Saskatchewan and certainly the good work, the partnership between the Sylvia Fedoruk Centre, the University of Saskatchewan, the federal government, and the Saskatoon Health Region — we are very interested to see what other good possibilities may come from this.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in case the Deputy Premier or others over there weren’t able to hear me the first time, this is certainly a good bit of news for the province of Saskatchewan. And we await further developments in the field of nuclear medicine and the advances that that means for health for Saskatchewan people and people around the world. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 15 — *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2016*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 15, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and

read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General that Bill No. 15, *The Provincial Court 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 the second time? I recognize the Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 16 — *The Adoption Amendment Act, 2016*
*Loi modificative de 2016 sur l'adoption***

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 16, *The Adoption Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and read for the first time.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Social Services that Bill No. 16, *The Adoption Amendment Act, 2016* be now introduced and 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 this bill be read a second time?

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 1 through 8.

The Speaker: — Questions number 1 through 8 are tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 2 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Crown Corporations' Fiscal Year End Standardization) Amendment Act, 2016*

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of the miscellaneous statute amendments Act, 2016.

As each Crown corporation is formed by separate legislation, some fiscal year-ends are not on a specific date, while others are subject to change by order in council. This amendment will standardize all CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] Crowns by having a fiscal year ending determined by order in council as opposed to a legislative date.

By changing the Crowns' year-ends, we will be better able to align the budget planning process between CIC and executive government. This will provide government with greater efficiency in the planning process. The alignment of budget years will also provide Finance with more current information on Crown earning expectations and their impact to the provincial budget.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of the miscellaneous statutes amendment Act, 2016.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Crown Investments that Bill No. 2, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Crown Corporations' Fiscal Year End Standardization) Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am once again pleased to stand in my place today to offer our initial comments as it relates to Bill No. 2.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what's really important on the miscellaneous statutes amendment Act is the fact that when it comes to the Crown corporations, we in the opposition are going to be paying very close attention to what the Sask Party government does around our Crowns on any front.

And, Mr. Speaker, while this particular bill talks about harmonizing year-end with that of the executive government, which is the Government of Saskatchewan, we wanted to make sure that any concerns as it relates to the accounting procedure or the accounting process is something that we clearly understand and that we have to make the effort to try to speak to as many organizations and groups that are out there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what this bill does, according to the notes here, this allows the government to harmonize the Crown corporations' fiscal year with the fiscal year of the Government of Saskatchewan, as is described in the bill. Now, Mr. Speaker,

what this does, as according to the bill notes as well, is it allows cabinet to set the fiscal year for all the Crown corporations out there so they coincide with their fiscal year, Mr. Speaker.

Now one of the things that's really important for the people of Saskatchewan to know . . . and most of the people of Saskatchewan see the Crown corporations as something that they highly value. They also see their Crown corporations providing them with a sense of security, Mr. Speaker. So when the Crown corporations get involved with, for example, if there's dividends taken out of the Crown corporation, if there's more debt placed on the Crown corporations, which we've seen from the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, they obviously pay very close attention to that.

Now as innocuous as this change might be in its simplest form, Mr. Speaker, we cannot be certain that there isn't any other rules or regulations that they'll be changing now or in the future that impact the effectiveness and the bottom line of many of our Crown corporations.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is often our job in the opposition is to briefly explain what the bill is about, what the proposed changes are. And we're going to ask the people of Saskatchewan to look at the bill and really try and offer some opinion and some advice as to what we need to watch out for.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said at the outset, it's very, very important that we pay very close attention to what the Sask Party is doing with our Crown corporations. And as I travelled throughout Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, a lot of people — again, as I mentioned several times — they really want to protect the Crowns. The Crowns are vitally important to our province. And it doesn't matter where you come from, Mr. Speaker, whether it's Strasbourg or whether it's Swift Current or whether it's Buffalo Narrows, people in the province really do care about the Crowns and they want to see the Crown corporations stay as profitable and functional as possible.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what's happening now, we're seeing a lot of evidence that the Sask Party now is musing about selling off the Crowns. We've seen some of the examples, as I mentioned in the past, whether it's the Information Services Corporation which generated \$14 million in profit for the people of Saskatchewan; well they sold that, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's the liquor stores that they're now privatizing and selling off, Mr. Speaker; once again they said they wouldn't do that. Now they're doing this.

Now they're looking at coinciding their year-end, Mr. Speaker. And it always pains me whenever I hear the word Crown corporation coming out of the Saskatchewan Party's corner, Mr. Speaker, because it always gets my defences up. And I think overall a lot of people of Saskatchewan will also pay very close attention to what they're saying.

So once again, as innocuous as this bill may seem in terms of harmonizing their year-end with their year-end, as well as the Crown corporations' year-end, I think it's important that we pay very, very close attention to this one. And I would encourage all my caucus colleagues to make the connect and talk to a lot of organizations, and especially those that are involved with the accounting industry to see what this really means.

And one of the things I hope it doesn't mean, Mr. Speaker, is that if they coincide with their budget, that we're not seeing the Saskatchewan Party either, at the very worst, trying to sell these Crowns or, Mr. Speaker, at the very least, trying to raid these Crowns to cover up their mismanagement at the executive government or the provincial government level. That's something that we really, really have to pay close attention to.

And that's one of the reasons why, Mr. Speaker, we go through these processes in the Assembly, just simply to let people know that this is what they intend to do. We obviously ask for your advice and your input, Mr. Speaker, and we would also make connection with the people that are involved with this particular exercise — whether they're an accountant firm or a member of the Crown corporation — to see if they have any advice, sage advice for us as the opposition.

So again when it comes to the Crown corporations, we're all very defensive, we're all very wary when the Saskatchewan Party tries to get themselves involved with the Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. And I'll close on this point as I add a few comments here.

The fact is the people of Saskatchewan want to keep the Crowns, Mr. Speaker. They want to keep the Crowns that provides them with a lot of security. And young and old and people from right across the province, Mr. Speaker, they all want to see the Crowns retained for the people of Saskatchewan. And why I think it offers a sense of security, Mr. Speaker, is because these Crowns generate a lot of revenues — a lot of revenues, Mr. Speaker. I think Liquor and Gaming alone generates something like half a billion dollars. And, Mr. Speaker, those profits, that money goes back into provincial coffers to be used for education, to be used for infrastructure, to be used for health care, and the list goes on.

So these Crown corporations make a lot of money for the people of Saskatchewan. They own them. And to me I think, to a large extent, the profits made from the Crown corporation actually lessens the stress and the strain on the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker, because we're making profit from these entities. And that really helps with the bottom line.

So one of the key messages that we have and will continue to hammer home when it comes to the Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that when the Saskatchewan Party started tinkering even in the smallest way, even in the most minute way, that we've paid very close attention to what they're doing. Because, Mr. Speaker, they have broken their word. They have broken their promise to not look at the Crowns. And, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of Saskatchewan are not very happy with that at all.

So once again I point out that we're going to have eight other people look at this in the immediate . . . interim as a staff, and we're going to have nine other MLAs also having their opinion on this particular matter, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to continue, we're going to continue being very careful and watchful as to what the Saskatchewan Party have to do. It could be a smaller detail like this, Mr. Speaker, but my assumption is that the only reason that they're doing any change to the Act is to serve their political direction and assert their philosophy, and that is to try and sell them.

And, Mr. Speaker, that is something that the people of Saskatchewan do not want. I'm not sure how . . . any clearer I can get on that. But that's one of the points that I would want to raise at the outset.

So once again, I'm pleased to give initial comments on Bill No. 2, and I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 2.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 2, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Crown Corporations' Fiscal Year End Standardization) Amendment Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 3 — *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2016*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 3, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2016*.

A new provincial collective bargaining agreement was signed with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation on February 12th, 2015. As a result, amendments are required to *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Act* to reflect the terms of the agreement.

The first change proposed is to repeal clause 27(2)(f) regarding denying refunds on members' contributions where a member of the Saskatchewan teachers' superannuation plan has less than 20 days of contributory service. The amendment will allow teachers with less than 20 days of teaching service to receive a refund of their contributions with interest.

The second change proposed is to subsections 43(1) and (3) and the inclusion of a new subsection to outline the revised contribution amounts for the Saskatchewan Teachers Retirement Fund. The new collective bargaining agreement identifies that the contribution amounts be amended to 7.25 per cent and 9.25 per cent of a teacher's salary respectively. The required amendments for the change in contribution amounts are scheduled to be brought into force on July 1, 2016.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move therefore that Bill No. 3, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 3, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thanks again, Mr. Speaker. Again I rise in my place to present our initial thoughts on Bill No. 3. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out for those that are listening that one of the things that is really, really important is to respect what the teachers' wishes are because in the province of

Saskatchewan we often say that we don't do enough to appreciate the teachers and the amount of respect that we afford them, Mr. Speaker. And this is why this bill is so very, very important from our perspective.

As an opposition, Mr. Speaker, we look for the leadership and the lead on issues of this sort from the teachers themselves. We don't look at the Saskatchewan Party as being the protectors of the public health, or public education system, and that's why it's so very important that we look at what the teachers themselves are saying, as represented by their collective bargaining team.

Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 3, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2016* primarily has three points. Number one is this bill changes the structure for retired teachers who are living with a disability. The second change, Mr. Speaker, is they were agreed upon by the teachers' union and the government through the collective bargaining process, and we've heard this particular issue from the teachers' union directly. And, Mr. Speaker, again as I pointed out, one of the things that was asserted in this particular agreement, or this particular bill — and we continue saying that as an NDP opposition — that we support the collective bargaining process and look forward to moving these changes along to the Assembly. As long as the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] and the teachers' association have agreed to these changes, Mr. Speaker, the opposition will certainly respect and support our teachers as we should.

One of the important points I would raise, Mr. Speaker, to northern Saskatchewan, I want to take a few moments to recognize some of the teachers that have worked years and years and years and have done so much for the northern Saskatchewan communities. I think it's important to reflect some of the values that we have as an opposition when it comes to the teachers themselves and how they've impacted our lives.

[14:45]

And I've travelled to many, many northern communities, Mr. Speaker. And whether it's to Stony Rapids or La Loche or whether it's in Pinehouse or whether it's in Pelican Narrows, Mr. Speaker, we've been pretty much to every community in the North, and I can tell you that these teachers are making a significant contribution to our communities. You often see the hub of many of these communities surround itself in terms of activity and leaders. Usually it's a lot of teachers that are involved with some of the initiatives and the movement to strengthen the various communities. So whether it's fundraising or whether it's coaching a volleyball team or whether it's awareness to exercise that the community may be doing, you can find teachers from all of these communities being very, very active. So I want to point out that one of the reasons why I think we have made it thus far in northern Saskatchewan has been a direct result of some of the influence that teachers have had on us in the past, but certainly, Mr. Speaker, the effect that teachers have had on our children and our grandchildren, as I have witnessed over time.

Now, Mr. Speaker, northern Saskatchewan itself is quite involved with the STF. They've got a lot of solid leaders from the North that are a big part of the process to make sure teachers

are respected and treated fairly. And as an opposition, we want to make sure that we are in tune and that we're in concert and that we're certainly in touch with our teacher bargaining team to make sure that their points are raised and to make sure that their privileges and their rights are certainly protected. And more so, Mr. Speaker, is that we offer that continual dialogue with them. I think that's a really important point I want to raise, that continual dialogue is key to making sure that we as an opposition know what the concerns are.

So as we look through Bill No. 3, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act*, we see that the STF — I'm assuming that's their primary team — that they've agreed to the changes in this particular bill. We want to take a few more weeks to understand the bill better so we know exactly what we're doing as an opposition as it relates to building the relationship with our teachers, and that's why it's important that we take the time to study it, to have more consultations and discussion.

But as I mentioned at the outset, again as long as their union's on side . . . And we always indicate as an opposition that we support the collective bargaining process. And as I mentioned at the outset, we want to move these changes along primarily because, and only because, the teaching bargaining unit has agreed to this, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to the Saskatchewan Party, we will not take the Saskatchewan Party's take on it. Our allegiance is with the STF and the people that represent the teachers in the province.

And I just wanted to take a few moments to pay tribute to many of the northern teachers that are doing a tremendous job out there, a tremendous job, Mr. Speaker. And they are the value and the lifeblood of any community, and it's something that I wanted to share with the Assembly today.

So we have a few more people to make comments on this, our staff as well as our MLA team, and I'm certain that there'll be other people that'll pay tribute to the teachers as we move along. So on that front, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 3, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 3, the teachers . . . [inaudible] . . . and disability benefits amendment Act, 2016. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 4 — *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016*. As members of the Assembly will know, this Act establishes criteria for the operation of that superior court.

Mr. Speaker, amendments to the Act are required to fulfill Saskatchewan's obligations as a signatory to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, which will allow existing or future awards made by dispute resolution panels to be enforced against any party as if they were civil judgments of the court. Amendments to the Act will be made to allow awards to be made by dispute resolution panels under trade agreements to be enforced as if they were civil judgments of the court, and allow awards to be enforced against persons other than the Crown.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will also make a number of other changes. It will amend the reference to the size of the court from a chief justice and 31 other judges to a chief justice and 32 other judges to reflect the actual size of the court, and it will include a notice requirement specific to the appointment of court-appointed legal counsel.

In addition, related amendments to *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012* will be made to provide for the appointment of an administrator for the purposes of managing the court-appointed lawyer process, set out rules and processes for the appointment of a court-appointed lawyer from a list of approved lawyers established by the administrator, provide that those lawyers are to be paid at a fee rate set by the administrator, and provide that any lawyers appointed outside this process are not entitled to payment by the government.

Mr. Speaker, the lack of a statutory basis for the administration of the court-appointed legal counsel program has resulted in inconsistencies in when and how such counsel are appointed. Providing for a notice requirement specifically designed for court-appointed counsel and introducing those rules in *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012* will enhance the ability to address these matters in the Act, and improve certainty.

Mr. Speaker, members of this Assembly will know that Saskatchewan residents have every reason to be proud of this hard-working and professional court, and I think these changes will facilitate their continued good work. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General that Bill No. 4, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And again I rise in my place to offer initial comments on this particular bill, a bill that is referenced or titled *An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act, 1998 and make related amendments to The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I look to this bill, there are so many different aspects of law that one has to really understand the basis of what the law is all about. And, Mr. Speaker, some of the language is very complex and a lot of the people, the lay people such as myself, we really need to take the time to understand what this bill really means. Now at the outset I can point out that it's important that due process of the law, from my perspective again not being a lawyer, that it be done as respectful and responsive as possible from my perspective.

Now what I see happening in terms of Bill 4 itself, and it's very difficult to explain all the nuances of the particular clauses here because there are just, let's see . . . There's 109 different clauses in this particular agreement. It has a wide-ranging impact on other parts of the law, including *The Adoption Act*, *The Child and Family Services Act*, *The Children's Law Act*, *The Dependants' Relief Act*, *The Adoption Act*, *The Divorce Act*, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act*, *The Family Maintenance Act*, *The Homesteads Act*. All of these Acts, Mr. Speaker, there are numerous of them. *The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act*. *The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Act*.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous different Acts that are impacted by some of the changes as we've identified or as the minister has alluded to, and that's why it's important that we take the time to understand this particular process. And what exactly does it mean for the average citizen? What does it mean for somebody that isn't aware of how the law works to a point where it's very manageable in terms of what they understand? And certainly, Mr. Speaker, I think that part of understanding what this bill is trying to do should be afforded to as many people as possible. And that's why, as legislators, we take the time to try and understand the bill and read and observe what some of the changes are.

And the great news, Mr. Speaker, is we do have lawyers on this side of the Assembly, some very capable and able lawyers that could help decipher some of the language that the court uses and certainly decipher what is being proposed in this particular bill so we can understand better as our constituents may approach us and we turn around and we say, well some of the Acts that, as it relates to Bill 4, these are some of the concerns we have.

But more so, Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that many people and organizations out there are very astute and they're very observant when it comes to any kind of changes to our law and certainly to the justice Act because the administration of justice is everyone's responsibility. So a lot of organizations and a lot of people, not just the lawyers but outside of the legal circle so to speak, they pay very close attention to what is happening in these particular bills. And these are the people that we want to outreach to and ask for the advice and their support in terms of giving us information that they feel is relevant to what the Act is going to impact as it relates to any of their services or their personal circumstances, etc.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's really, really important that we give time to those organizations to approach us and to share their perspective. The great news, as I mentioned at the outset, we do have a couple of lawyers that do sit in the opposition caucus, and very capable lawyers, and they'll explain to us what a lot of the changes are being undertaken as a result of this particular Act.

At the outset I can tell you that there are some concerns that are being expressed. The Act itself makes changes to the court-appointed counsel process and that may result in limiting access for legal services for some vulnerable people. And that's exactly the point that we would raise, is that it's this kind of knowledge and background that the opposition needs to rely on to ensure that bills of this sort, Bill No. 4, doesn't forget the fact that there may be some areas of concern that lay people such as

myself would not be aware of. And that's why it's important to give the time for the opposition to make that connect, get advice from our own legal experts so to speak, and to also take the time to understand the bill as best as we should.

So, Mr. Speaker, again this bill has a lot of implications to a variety of Acts that are too numerous to mention. But there's quite a few Acts that it makes changes to or has influence on and that's the part that we have to really, really pay attention to as well. But at the outset as I mentioned, there are some concerns about how the process works where there are some vulnerable people that may not be included in the process. And that's the point that we want to make, is that it's important to understand what impact it has on them and how it can hurt them as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, there's a lot of language, there's a lot of documentation around Bill 4. There is tons of different Acts that is being impacted. So again it's important for us to get some clear advice and to make sure that we're able to shuffle through what this information is all about and what changes that the minister is making on this particular bill.

Again at the outset, the first initial comments we have as it results to this bill is that there may be some changes — it makes changes; never mind may be — but it makes changes to the court-appointed counsel process. And vulnerable people may be adversely affected by that process, and that's not something that we want to see happen because the whole basis and premise behind the law is justice and fairness, Mr. Speaker. And if it's not fair to one particular group, then it's not a just law.

So it's really, really important to point that out that we will have more capable and more determined and more knowledgeable people within our caucus, and certainly out there that are available, that may want to participate in this process. We welcome their participation as well. But they will have an opportunity to look at this particular bill and they'll certainly have the opportunity to give us advice. And we will certainly fight on that front that if there's any injustice as a result of this bill in terms of hampering access to fairness, Mr. Speaker, then we will certainly highlight those concerns, bring forth amendments, and do our very best to let the people of Saskatchewan know that this is what the Saskatchewan Party government is trying to do. And if there's any adverse effects, then we will certainly undertake to do that.

So on that point, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that it's again an open invitation to people out there that may want to pay attention to the changes. Again it's Bill 4, and we will certainly have our critic and other members of the NDP caucus certainly have their opportunity to say a few words on this particular bill at a later time.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 4, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 4, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 5 — *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*.

This Act provides for the legal recognition of documents in electronic form where legislation asks for documents to be provided in writing. The Act has facilitated the legal translation of paper to electronic documents in the private and public sectors without requiring each individual Act or regulation to be amended to allow for electronic documents. Mr. Speaker, this Act does however exempt certain documents, such as wills and health care directives, so that paper-only requirements are not overridden by the Act.

Following requests from the real estate and credit union communities, it's recommended the Act be amended to remove the existing exemption from the application of the Act for documents that create or transfer interests in land and that require registration to be effective against third parties, and to update references in the Act from department to ministry.

Mr. Speaker, the exemption provision was originally intended to protect the registry system from land transactions occurring without adequate evidence and proper registration.

[15:00]

Mr. Speaker, the modern electronic registry process has removed this concern and overrides the Act by specifically prescribing the electronic registration requirements for the land registry. Accordingly, transactions for real estate matters between private parties are not caught by this exemption as they are not actual documents used by ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] to file transfers in the electronic registry. However, given that this particular provision is no longer relevant, there is no downside to removing this potential irritant, regardless of our view that it does not legally inhibit electronic real estate transactions.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 5, *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm pleased to stand in my place today to give initial comments on *The Electronic Information and Documents Act*. And this basically, from what I understood from the minister, that there is a . . . really it's an administrative process that's designed to streamline the delivery of legal services such as dealing with particular issues that the court may deem as not overly serious,

in the sense that an electronic information process is available to that court, as opposed to just having paper being the only need for the courts to consider some of the issues before the courts.

So I think it's really important to explain as briefly and as simply as I can. From what I understand from the minister's points is that there is the opportunity to have electronic information shared to the application of justice or in the pursuit of services that are associated with justice in the sense that we don't need actual physical paper to be present, that there could be electronic form or electronic transfer of that information and that would be sufficient.

I understand that this Act doesn't also engage different parts of the law, which is really important to point out because obviously there are wills that shouldn't be part of the electronic distribution process. There's probably a variety of reasons for that, Mr. Speaker. Trusts as well, those are some of the things that you've got to be very careful, that you're not electronically transferring a bunch of documentation all over the place.

And, Mr. Speaker, power of attorney, land transfers, these are some of the things that I think overall that you've got to be very, very careful when you have the electronic exchange of information. There is certainly some very, very private, confidential stuff that people don't want shared as part of their estate or their will or their family business.

So that's why it's really, really important that the minister pointed out in the bill, *The Electronic Information and Documents Act, 2000* that there are certain areas that they will not accept for court purposes, the transfer of electronic information, that they do want the documentation in front of them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, given the fact that in this day and age we have so many things that are available to us electronically, Mr. Speaker, with the introduction of the Internet and the various degrees of information shared on cellphones, it's really a society now, Mr. Speaker, where privacy is something that is always at risk, and people are always worried about that.

So it's really important that we identify, or the minister has identified that certain information shouldn't be sent electronically in the application of justice, that there has to be paper documentation right at source. And that's something that really needs to be emphasized.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I would say offhand is that — as we begin to identify which parts of the court process or which aspects of the court process that the minister will be allowing under this new Act — to be allowing the electronic information to be part of the process, we need to identify what specific areas of the Act is the minister suggesting, through this legislation, that he would allow electronic transmission, Mr. Speaker. That's something that we have to find out for sure.

And obviously, if it's meant to deliver a more efficient system in the pursuit of justice and the attached services of justice, then certainly it's something that the opposition would like to look at as well because it's all about improving efficiency. If it's all about improving services and a quicker response for people that

are impacted by the courts, then, Mr. Speaker, there is some value. But you've got to be very, very careful, I think, given the electronic age that we're in. As you know, people can hack into various secure sites and extract a lot of information.

So again it's all about making sure that we're paying due diligence to the two aspects as we begin our job to share information with the courts, whether it's electronically or by paper trail, that some of this information has got to be protected. And as long as that information is protected, and as long as it doesn't go too overboard in terms of having everything electronically sent to various court processes, Mr. Speaker, then we want to be assured of that. And that's the purpose of our involvement as the opposition.

So one of the key points, as I mentioned in earlier comments, is the fact that we do have very capable legal counsel in our team. They will look at this particular bill, and I can assure the public that if there is any part of the bill that is weak, is misunderstood, or not necessary or overly onerous on the process or the system we have in delivery of justice, then we will certainly want to take the time to point that out, find out about it first and point it out, and certainly give our opinion to make sure peoples' interests are protected.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on *The Electronic Information and Documents Act, 2000*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 5, *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Bill No. 6 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. I rise today to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016*. Mr. Speaker, this bill will make amendments to 24 Acts to update language and correct grammatical and reference errors. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's last general statute revision occurred in 1978, and since that time several statute law amendment Acts have been introduced to correct various errors.

As time passes, Mr. Speaker, the terminology we use also changes. So this bill amends three Acts to remove the term "provincial magistrate" in favour of "provincial court judge." And in order to be consistent with the Queen's Bench rules, the bill amends eight Acts to replace "substitutional service" with "substituted service." The bill will also repeal and replace words that have a variety of spellings such as extraprovincial or tortfeasor to work toward more consistency within the legislation. This will assist in accurate electronic searches of Saskatchewan legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I will also be introducing a second bill to amend the bilingual Act. So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 6, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again on Bill No. 6, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016* and Bill No. 7, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016 (No. 2)*, I'm understanding that there is really two parts of the bill that are impacting the delivery of Bill No. 5 overall, Mr. Speaker. As we talk about the electronic distribution of certain information as part of the legal process, the key point that the minister wanted to allude to in both these bills, Bill No. 6 and Bill No. 7, really it's about the spelling, Mr. Speaker, about some of the spelling and the terminology used in these various bills. And I understand that there's also not only the English spelling that needs to be clarified but there's also the French spelling, Mr. Speaker.

And there may be also the point of the fact of the designation of certain officers. It's alluded to somewhat in the bill, Mr. Speaker. And that's why I think it's important that if it's as simple as making sure that we have the correct terminology, the correct spelling not only in English but certainly in French as well, and as a result of the right terminology being implemented and the right spelling in both in English and French and that's all part of the process for the electronic filing, Mr. Speaker, I think those are adjustments that would have to be made.

And we certainly want to make sure that we're as diligent in making sure that if there's any problems that we find out. But we'll also be vigilant in ensuring that we don't hold up bills that are unnecessary or that we're not really playing politics with the bills that are going to ensure that the application of justice is as swift and fair as possible.

So I think as a result of some of the initial comments we have, if there's any particular designation of a certain title that is problematic to any group out there, then we certainly want to know about that. If there's any kind of language that is not properly utilized in the bill, we obviously want to know about that as well. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, again in the pursuit of trying to ensure that our system runs as smoothly as we can through the electronic transfer of information, if there are designations that have to be changed for the purposes of achieving that, if there is spelling that has to be corrected in both French and English, then we certainly want to make sure that we're not holding up the process just for the sake of holding up the process.

So those are my initial comments on this particular bill. And again we'll have other information that's attached to the previous bill and this new bill as we unfold and connect with the various organizations that may have comments on this, and we invite that. But on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 6 and Bill No. 7.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 6, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

**Bill No. 7 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016*
(No. 2)/Loi n° 2 de 2016 modifiant le droit législatif**

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I rise today to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016 (No. 2)*. Mr. Speaker, as noted when introducing the English bill, this bill will amend three bilingual Acts to update language, remove an unnecessary section, and correct a reference error. For example, Mr. Speaker, this bill will amend one Act to replace substitutional service with substitute service, as an example.

So, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016 (No. 2)*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that *Bill No. 7, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016 (No. 2)* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to point out that I may have erred in passing the motion to debate, to adjourn the debate on Bill No. 7. I understood that both these bills were connected and they were both presented under the same title.

But however, Mr. Speaker, that being said, I think the same process will certainly unfold from our perspective in the sense that we will take the time to go through the process and, as I mentioned earlier, that if there is something that is going to correct spelling, correct designation of title, correct both spelling in French and English again to accommodate the electronics information effort, Mr. Speaker, we simply want to be able to see what the bill entails and to see if there's anything that we should be concerned about or worried about, and to connect with the groups and organizations out there. So on that front, I think I want to take the time to do that, and as our lawyers go through this as well to ensure that there's nothing nefarious about what is being implemented here. And that's our role as the opposition.

So on that front, Mr. Speaker, I again move a motion to adjourn debate on Bill No. 7.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on *Bill No. 7, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 8 — *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. I rise today to move second reading of *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016*.

Mr. Speaker, this Act deals with the procedures for charging people with provincial offences and offences against municipal bylaws. The Act also prescribes the court's power and duties respecting provincial offences, which generally follow the summary conviction provisions of the Criminal Code and the enforcement of fines resulting from those convictions.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, the amendments that I'm proposing are aimed at reducing court volumes and improving court efficiency. These amendments were developed in response to the significant increase in traffic tickets resulting from the automated speed enforcement photo laser project which is currently running on a two-year pilot basis in Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw. The bill will implement improvements to court processes to address these increased ticket volumes and will also support the development of other innovative solutions to further reduce court volumes in the future.

Mr. Speaker, this bill establishes a new administrative process for defendants who want to plead guilty but want more time to pay their fine. Currently, if a defendant wishes to plead guilty but would like more time to pay the fine, he or she has to apply to a justice for an extension. This bill will move these applications for an extension of time to pay out of court and into an administrative process through the fine collection branch, which will reduce the number of people who need to attend court.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will also expand the regulation-making authority to support other changes to court processes. One potential option is a reduced fine for early payment of fines. Expanding this authority will support the future development of innovative solutions to reduce court volumes.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this bill will also incorporate the Criminal Code provision that authorizes the swearing of information by means of telecommunication and make that provision applicable to provincial offences. The information is a document that begins a criminal proceeding, and it must be sworn by the informant who's typically a peace officer.

In remote communities, Mr. Speaker, it's often impractical for a peace officer to attend personally before a justice to swear the information. The Criminal Code provision authorizing the swearing of information by telecommunications such as by fax will be adopted into the Act and made applicable to summary offences in Saskatchewan, which in turn will improve court efficiency.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that *Bill No. 8, The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is a very interesting particular bill that we have probably a lot of questions to, Mr. Speaker.

I really want to point out that *The Summary Offences Procedure Act* is an Act in which they're amending, as the minister alluded to, spoke to very briefly in the sense that he's looking at ways and means in which they're able to really deal with the fine collection process when people are charged, I'm assuming under not only speeding tickets, but also municipal bylaws and so on and so forth. And, Mr. Speaker, he also spoke very briefly about the reduced fines for earlier payments and how they are able to speak to officers in a sense of how they can make those earlier payments and who they make them to. I think the minister basically touched briefly on a few of those points.

Mr. Speaker, again when you look at the whole provision of justice, we find that there's tons of activity in our courts on a regular basis. And of course, as we know, the severity of some of the crime ranges from very, very, very serious to those that are minor in nature, Mr. Speaker. It could be anything from murder to a simple case of theft of a small piece of property. So the courts have a wide variety of responsibility and have a wide variety of work that needs to be done to make sure that the system is delivered in the province of Saskatchewan.

Now we in the opposition, we always want to make sure that the court system is as efficient and certainly as practical as possible. Because obviously if you look at the whole notion, a lot of people say the court system now we have is bogged down. Sometimes it takes two or three years to settle, you know, settle a case, that there's just so many different nuances to so many different cases that sometimes justice is delayed on a consistent basis.

Now I look at some of the activity that you want to keep out of the courts just so that the courts can operate and concentrate on those activities that are more serious, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important that we have the opportunity to look at that. So as I mentioned at the outset, if there are some ways and means in which we can make the justice system more streamlined, more efficient, less onerous in terms of time in the courtroom and so on and so forth, then I think most of, the majority of the people in Saskatchewan look at that as common sense.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are so many things that could go wrong with this system as we try and make it as efficient as we can. One of the things I think is important is that you look at the fine payment process, or the fine collection process if you will. What's really curious to me in terms of the pilot project that the minister has alluded to is, exactly how much revenue have they raised from some of the speeding tickets that have been issued? How much revenue have they raised from, like in particular, the process of municipal bylaws? Are the towns and cities and villages, are they involved with this particular exercise? Are they in concert with the changes that are being proposed here? These are some of the questions instinctively a person has.

So the minister talks about really trying to make sure that if people do get speeding tickets or there's municipal bylaw infractions, that there be a separate process, a more streamlined process, to allow for two or three provisions, one being that there's actually a reduced fine if you pay earlier. And secondly

of course is that the fine payment process is better in the sense that you don't have to tie up a lot of the court time or the court process simply to deal with a fine, that there is administrative opportunity for someone out there to collect the fine for you.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are two areas that I want to, really want to concentrate on. One of course is, what kind of revenues are we generating from the issuance of speeding tickets in the province of Saskatchewan? Just exactly how much money are we making? How are the fines being determined in the sense of saying, do you want to do a . . . pay your fine off sooner? What kind of revenues are you saving? What kind of savings are there for the average person? And who exactly would be in a position to accept your reduced fine, on what time frame? And as well, if you need more time to pay your fine, who would make that final decision?

So again, Mr. Speaker, these are all the questions we have on some of these bills. And that's why it's important we take the time to read these documents and see what exactly is being proposed.

So I just want to recap for those that may be paying attention. What is being proposed on this particular bill, *The Summary Offences Procedure Act*, is to take some of the process away from the court system so our courts are not tied up as much as they have been. So there's a separate process to pay your fine off sooner and then you'll pay less of a fine, and that the fact of the matter is that they can also go to an administrator, maybe a Justice of the Peace or a peace officer, and they could accept that fine or the reduced amount as prescribed by the Act, I'm assuming, and that they don't have to go to court for some of these tickets.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that part is I think that the average person out there, the average common sense person, would say, yes if it keeps our courts clear of all these speeding tickets and all these unnecessary tickets that are not life threatening or of major concern, then we should undertake that. My only point is if that's what the intent is, if that's what the intent is on this bill, then we should undertake that. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm very curious to find out exactly what kind of revenues that the Government of Saskatchewan would generate as a result of all these speeding tickets being issued, and we also want to make sure we have that information available.

I think it's part of the process of justice to say, well what exactly did you collect from all these fines? We should know that, Mr. Speaker, because some people out there are telling me that there are organizations out there that are worried that all of a sudden there's a backdoor taxation grab, especially around the . . . about the hidden cameras catching speeders, Mr. Speaker. Exactly how much money do they generate from that?

We would like to know that particular information, Mr. Speaker, because at the end of the day, if people of Saskatchewan know that the Sask Party government is making millions of dollars off those cameras catching speedsters, then we need to know that, to share that with them so people of Saskatchewan know that this is a tax grab. And hopefully they'd slow down and not speed so much, and I think that would be a good deterrent for them to find out about.

So on that point, Mr. Speaker, we need that information. We need to find out exactly the full intent of what is being proposed. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 8, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 8, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 9 — *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur l'exécution des jugements canadiens*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016*.

Mr. Speaker, this Act currently provides a registration procedure for the enforcement of civil judgments between Canadian provinces and territories, and between Canadian and foreign jurisdictions that does not require reciprocity or court supervision as a prerequisite to enforcement.

The amendments that we're proposing will confirm that Canadian tax judgments can be enforced under this Act. The Uniform Law Conference of Canada has recommended these amendments to provide greater certainty with respect to the enforcement of Canadian tax judgments.

The Supreme Court of Canada has confirmed that courts in each province need to recognize tax judgments from other jurisdictions in Canada. These amendments will specifically include Canadian tax judgments in the definition of the types of judgments that can be enforced under the Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will add a definition of Canadian tax judgment to the Act. The new definition will include both a judgment for the recovery of money under a tax law and a certificate of an amount payable under a tax law that has been registered as a judgment in a court of a province or a territory.

Mr. Speaker, this Act currently requires that an application for directions respecting enforcement be made to the court for enforcing any judgment that was obtained without notice against a judgment debtor. An exception to this requirement will be added to the Act so that an application to the court for directions respecting the enforcement of a Canadian tax judgment will only be required if one of the parties specifically requests it.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has recently implemented these amendments. By being among the first of the provinces to make these changes, Saskatchewan will be leading by example and will be encouraging other provinces and territories to adopt these amendments which will support the efficient enforcement

of tax judgments throughout the country. Mr. Speaker, these amendments will apply to all Canadian tax judgments, whether they are issued before or after the amendments come into force. Extending the Act to all tax judgments will make administration easier and will allow for uniform and equitable enforcement of Canadian tax judgments.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that the Bill No. 9, *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure by the time I'm done all these bills, I'll be a professional lawyer. But I think what's really important, Mr. Speaker, on Bill No. 9, *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016* is that it's really, really important to understand how this impacts the province of Saskatchewan.

I'm assuming, Mr. Speaker, that the provisions of this particular Act really talks about enforcing the tax judgment from other provinces in the country, that we are streamlining our operations, streamlining our language, streamlining our law to make sure that we're able to fit in with what the rest of the Canadian provinces are doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, how does this impact the tax judgments that we're currently struggling with in terms of what does it mean? Does it mean a corporate tax judgment against someone? Does it mean a personal tax judgment? We need to find out those details so people out there know exactly what the bill is proposing to, you know, to do.

Obviously, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of different laws and a lot of different jurisdictions and provinces, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you that lawyers throughout the province, if you want to be able to get an interpretation of some of these Acts and some of these bills, some of the opinions may be as diverse as some of the language in some of these bills. So it's really important that, from the layman's perspective, that we understand exactly what is being proposed as being presented here by the minister, which is *An Act respecting the Enforcement and Registration of Canadian Judgments and making consequential amendments to a certain Act*. So what I'm assuming, Mr. Speaker, is that they're streamlining the operation as you made reference to Manitoba doing the same process, and that Saskatchewan also wants to be part of that particular . . . be ahead of the curve, so to speak.

[15:30]

But we really need to know what exactly, what type of Canadian judgments are out there, like who's impacted. How big of a problem is that for Saskatchewan? Is there companies or businesses that obviously are involved with this, and what is their involvement? We need various examples of what exactly this bill does, Mr. Speaker, for people that are lay people such as myself don't understand exactly what the intent of this

particular bill is all about.

So we have, as I've mentioned, the call out to various people that could be involved with this, a lot of legal firms and groups and organizations that, if they have a particular opinion, if they have any information, if they have issues that are of concern to them as a result of this particular bill, that we would like to hear from them. We would like to get their opinion. We would like to get their input so that we're able to bring forward some of these comments that they may share with us at a later date.

So again, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day we look at this. If this is all about streamlining the administration of justice with the proviso that justice is not being interfered with and that it be free and clear then, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what our point is. We don't want to have a system that's onerous and certainly out of sync with the rest of the country. So we need to make sure that we do all we can to help out.

So, Mr. Speaker, on that note I want to move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 9, *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 9. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 10 — *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After some brief remarks I will move second reading of *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*.

These amendments address a variety of subjects, streamlining processes for industry while enhancing government's ability to ensure that forests are sustainably managed and that our environment remains protected. The amended legislation is consistent with other provincial resource management legislation and is also in line with Saskatchewan's results-based approach to environmental regulation. The proposed amendments will provide streamlined, more flexible processes to adjust management fees that the forest industry pays. The amendments will help ensure that fees collected are in line with actual forest management costs, ensuring public forests are properly renewed and that the Saskatchewan forest industry remains competitive.

As well the amendments provide a mechanism for the ministry to form partnerships to address the long-standing issue of abandoned forest roads and trails. These roads can pose both public safety and environmental risk, and legislative changes supporting enhanced efforts to address this issue will be welcomed by all stakeholders.

The proposed amendments also outline several provisions for

greater accountability for forest companies operating in publicly owned forests. These include requiring long-term forest management planning following the second renewal of the term supply licence, making licensees accountable for the actions of their contractors, and issuing long-term licence prohibitions for those who refuse to follow the rules.

Because the amendments address matters in a number of diverse subject areas, I'd like to take a moment to expand a bit on each one. Under the forest management fees, forest management fees are an important mechanism by which appropriately the costs of forest renewal are borne by those benefiting from the use of publicly owned resource. The 2009 Provincial Auditor's report included a number of recommendations to the ministry regarding the reforestation of lands in the provincial forests that are being harvested for timber. One of the auditor's findings was that the forest management fees need to be sufficient to cover the actual cost of reforesting the harvested areas which can vary depending on the site. The current fee rates as established in the regulations are not appropriate in all circumstances, making the proposed amendment necessary.

Also supporting the proposed amendment is the fact that holders of five-year area-based term supply licences who have an obligation to reforest their harvested areas are seeking the flexibility of an alternative to fixed regulation fee rates. The proposed amendments will enable and establish a mechanism to periodically adjust the fee rates to ensure that they are consistent with the actual cost of reforesting the harvested areas.

Forest management fees are reserved for funding reforestation activities conducted by the licensee and must be spent accordingly. In the event that a licence holder becomes insolvent, the government is the beneficiary of the fees held in the forest management fund established for that licence area and becomes responsible to ensure that they are spent responsibly.

The obligation to reforest harvested areas is established in two types of licences: the 20-year forest management agreement and the five-year area-based term supply licences. The terms and conditions of the forest management agreements ensure that the fees are set at a level to cover reforestation costs. These are easily adjusted if costs change.

Area-based term supply licence holders pay rates established in the regulations which are not easily adjusted currently. Regulatory reforestation fee rates have not been updated since 1999. Area-based term supply licence holders are seeking an alternative to the fixed regulation fee rates similar to the terms established in the forest management agreements. In 2014, during the development of a new provincial dues system, the ministry was advised that an amendment to the Act would be required to establish a more streamlined and timelier process to adjust the fee rates for area-based term supply licences. Ensuring that sufficient fees are collected to renew harvested areas, as the proposed amendments will do, will reduce the government's potential financial liability associated with nonregenerating areas on provincial forest lands that are not under a forest management agreement.

Crown timber dues. On July 1st, 2014 a new provincial dues

system was established in consultation with and supported by stakeholders. This new provincial dues system has made the provision that allows Crown dues rates to be set out in a forestry licence redundant. The proposed amendment will repeal that provision, streamlining and updating the legislation.

Road agreements. Abandoned roads and trails constructed in preceding decades are currently a potential public safety concern and a liability for our government. The legacy of roads and unreclaimed access remaining on provincial forest lands are a result of past industrial activities. Culverts and bridges associated with abandoned access are in various states of disrepair. The abandoned culverts and bridges have a significant ecological impact and pose a safety risk to the members of the public who may be using them. In addition, the unreclaimed access does not provide a productive environment for the re-establishment of forestries and are a major concern in the preparation of a woodland caribou recovery plan for Saskatchewan.

Expanding the existing authority to enter agreements that may include road allowances and other rights of ways, as the amendments do, will help reduce the ecological impacts and serve to protect the public by managing the hazards that the roads and water crossings create. This amendment will serve to lessen the government's liability from a maintenance, reclamation, and public safety perspective because the cost of maintenance and reclamation can be negotiated with the proponent. The amendments are focused on addressing the unmanaged access resulting from past practices. More recent practices are greatly improved and have resulted in significant advancements in the proper construction, maintenance, and reclamation of roads and trails.

Forest management plans are long-term, strategic plans that establish management objectives for large forestry licence areas. Requiring the preparation of a forest management plan after the second renewal of an area-based term supply is in keeping with the intent of the Act. The requirement would apply where, in the opinion of the minister, the level of harvest activities has the potential to significantly impact the sustainability of the forest resources in the licence area. The amendment will remove the opportunity for licence holders to lobby to circumvent the forest management planning requirements, and require long-term planning that will help ensure the sustainability and health of the forest.

Originally the Act contemplated term supply of forestry licences being issued only to small- and medium-scale operators with volume-based timber allocations. Over time, a subset of those licences was adopted to be transitional five-year, area-based term supply licences. These traditional licences were intended to provide a reasonable window of opportunity for larger scale companies to harvest timber while seeking to transition to the longer term forest management agreement. The government has found itself in a position whereby proponents were negotiating for multiple renewals of the five-year licence with the intent of avoiding the requirement to prepare a forest management plan.

This is not to say that current licence holders are trying to avoid this important responsibility. The five-year, area-based licence holders who would be subject to this provision have all

committed to preparing forest management plans. This change is intended to address future situations where new companies may be seeking long-term licences without committing to long-term planning and investing in sustainable forest management.

Vicarious liability. There's a general move in the forest sector for licence holders to disassociate themselves from the actions of their contractors when the contractor's actions have resulted in contraventions of this Act, the regulations, the Saskatchewan environment code, *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2010*, and *The Environmental Management and Protection (General) Regulations*.

Holding a licensee accountable for the actions of their contractors does not preclude compliance and enforcement actions against the contractor, but would serve to limit the liability of the licensee to shift accountability for the contravention without demonstrating their due diligence.

Currently the holder of a forestry licence may be held accountable for the actions of their employees, helpers, and agents. The current business practices of forest licence holders include them contracting out a significant part of their forest operations.

Recent court decisions have also brought into question the relationship between the licence holders and their contractors, underscoring the need for clarity in this matter. Also highlighting this need is a small number of licence holders who consider it appropriate to disassociate themselves from the actions of their contractors. The amendment will clarify that licence holders are accountable for the actions of their contractors while they're undertaking forestry operations on behalf of the licence holder.

Licence prohibitions. While it is a small minority, we know that there are people who simply refuse to follow the rules that are in place to protect our forest ecosystems. Currently there's no authority to prohibit persons who have a history of non-compliance or who have caused significant environmental damage from applying for or obtaining a licence to harvest forest products.

Existing remedies only include suspension, cancellation, or refusal to issue a licence. Adding prohibitions, as the amendments do, would offer another enforcement option in serious cases of repeated non-compliance. Prohibiting persons with a history of non-compliance from applying for or obtaining a licence has proven to be an effective enforcement tool in other resource management legislation such as *The Wildlife Act, 1998*. This amendment would enable a convicting judge to impose a licence prohibition for a period not exceeding five years.

As with other legislative changes before this House, this amended legislation builds on several important government commitments, and they are continued economic growth, providing a competitive business environment for Saskatchewan's forest sector, and making sure that our provincial forests are sustainably managed and healthy over the long term.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will further enhance the public's confidence that their valued forest resources are well managed and that there are significant consequences for those who break the rules. The proposed amendments demonstrate our commitment to support the province's forest sector and to fully implement a results-based approach to environment regulations. The ministry will continue to work with the forest sector to identify additional opportunities to refine and streamline the province's forestry legislative framework, including the Act, regulations, and the Saskatchewan Environmental Code. The proposed amendments represent a significant step forward for sustainable forest management in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I move that *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*, be read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm quite pleased to stand in my place today to speak about the particular changes to the forest management Act. And I listened with great interest to what the minister spoke about in terms of the significant changes that he mentioned prior to getting into the details of the significant changes that he proposed, Mr. Speaker.

The whole notion around significant changes, he spoke about two things that I think were significant in their minds, Mr. Speaker. One is talking about the increased forestry fees, and the other, what do we do with the culverts that are left on some of the roads built by the forestry companies? And, Mr. Speaker, he finished off his statement as it relates to their priorities as the government. And one of course is to continue making sure that the forests are certainly, that they have business growth, Mr. Speaker. He led with business growth. And the third level of priority, Mr. Speaker, he spoke about having well-managed forestry.

And that's the point that I want to raise in this particular bill, that they talk about some of the smaller details and they're not dealing with the bigger, larger issues, Mr. Speaker, that we often talk about in this particular Assembly.

[15:45]

And there's three or four areas that I want to speak of, Mr. Speaker. One is that I was hoping that, as the result of the minister bringing this bill forward, that we can actually talk about the trappers in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We were hoping that in this particular bill, an Act respecting the management of forest resources Act, that you would talk about the trappers association that are all concerned and very heavily involved with the management of the lands in northern Saskatchewan and throughout our forest areas of the province.

And there was not a peep about the trapping industry, Mr. Speaker. And they, Mr. Speaker, as I've said time and time again, from my perspective the trappers of northern

Saskatchewan are the conscience of the land. We always maintain that. And we see a lot of times, Mr. Speaker, that they're continually being disregarded. They are disregarded on a regular basis, not only by the forestry companies, but by the government as well, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm trying to figure out where in the scheme of this particular Act is a provision that recognizes the trapping industry — and the long-standing trapping industry, I might add — and why their importance is not noted in the particular Act, nor is there any provisions to deal with their matters and their issues.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've had hundreds of photographs of trappers that have trapped in a certain area for years, and they take pictures of their traplines and their cabin, and then a few months later they come back and most of the land has been harvested. And there's not a provision in there to deal with the fact that they've lost their livelihood.

Now somewhere along the line, Mr. Speaker, we have to have an acceptance that if you affect or impact the livelihood, the livelihood of one particular group of people, then that should be cause for alarm. That should be cause for concern. That should be cause for generally recognizing what they're going through. And we have not had one inkling of any indication from that minister about any kind of support to recognizing the trapping industry that the forestry companies' activity has negatively impacted.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a lot of people could say, yes, well the trapping industry is not as important as the forestry industry. We hear that on a continual basis from many people across the way. But, Mr. Speaker, I would say this. I would say this: their actions dictate the fact that the trapping association is not important to them. Why? Because they cut the trappers' funding to nothing. Nothing. They have not included any trappers' compensation in any forest resources management Act. They have continued to ignore the trapping industry. So their actions, Mr. Speaker, speak a lot louder than their words.

But it's clear from this side of the Assembly that the trapping industry is not important to the Saskatchewan Party government. We see it every single day. And I sat here hoping that the minister would make a provision or discussion or even a connection to the trapping association in the North. Why? Because they're important, and they're an integral part to the economy in the North, and yet when we talk about the forest resources and harvesting the forestry opportunities out there, Mr. Speaker, he continually ignores the trapping association.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I also want to talk about the larger issues. And I know this is going to come as a shock, you know, to the minister, but when you have, when you have a very thorough process of deciding how much of the land that you can actually harvest, how much of the forestry product that you actually can harvest, Mr. Speaker, what I think typically happens, and I can be corrected on this, when you allocate a TSL [term supply licence] or an FMA [forest management agreement], what they do is they assess the wood supply. They actually go in there and different companies provide that service and they actually walk the area in which they're going to be doing, which they're harvesting forestry products.

So the net result is as these group of people go in there, they do an assessment of the area. They use aerial photographs. They actually walk some of the areas, and they say, and they say, Mr. Speaker, that based on what we see, this particular TSL area or FMA area can sustainably be harvested at a certain amount of cubic metres per year. They have a lot of science attached to it, and they also make sure, they also make sure that it's done with the most up-to-date science. What can a forest actually produce in a healthy way so it's able to reproduce and continue providing opportunity for trappers, for hunters, and yes, for forestry companies as well?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I can remember several years ago when I was talking to the Minister of the Economy where he I think overruled, I think he overruled the minister of SERM [Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management]. Why? Because all of a sudden, in one particular area — I'm going to use my area as an example — where there was actually a consultant hired to determine how much wood could be cut within the northwest communities' TSL, term supply licence, and, Mr. Speaker, after an exhaustive, expensive process, the officials came back from that particular company and they said well, this area can actually harvest 260 000 cubic metres of wood annually, and it'll be a great sustainable practice. That's what was told to us as a government and certainly to the officials that were present. The private company said that that area could actually harvest 260 000 cubic metres of wood annually in a very sustainable way. Well, Mr. Speaker, what happens is you fast-forward a year and a half later, and all of a sudden this other forester comes out of Alberta telling this particular government, well actually you can double that harvest and it'll still be sustainable.

Now, Mr. Speaker, how is it that you can double a harvest area and it would still be sustainable? How could the first consultant or the first forester be so wrong? Well, Mr. Speaker, what I think happened was that the Minister of the Economy went and found somebody that was willing to say that. The fact of the matter is we just can't see it. The trappers association were the ones that brought that issue forward.

So when the minister talks about making sure that it's all about business growth, Mr. Speaker, you've got to make sure that you have sustainable forestry practices. And some of the people that you should consult with are the trappers themselves. You can find any consultant that'll give you the figures that you want, and that's exactly what the Minister of the Economy did at the expense of the environment. There is no reference to that point in this bill. We're talking about sustainability of forestry. Well the Minister of the Economy should have sat on his hands and not said a word. But no, they found somebody that was willing to say they can actually double the harvest and it'll still be sustainable. We know it's not sustainable. The trappers know it's not sustainable. And yet the minister found some guy to say that and bang, now they're doubling that harvest in that particular area, and it's simply not sustainable.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll point out as well, when the Minister of the Economy came along and ripped away the TSL opportunity for a number of Métis communities in the Northwest, what he done, the Minister of the Economy came along and he wanted to talk about forestry dues and forestry issues. And at the end of the meeting, the minister walked away with 77 per cent

ownership to a company out of BC and left the people of the Northwest with a 23 per cent ownership of their TSL. Now, Mr. Speaker, how respectful is that towards the Aboriginal people in that particular area? How respectful is that towards the notion of the duty to consult and the duty to accommodate? So the Minister of the Economy comes along. He doubles the harvest, then he rips ownership away from the Aboriginal groups in that area. And today we're talking about the dues for stumpage fees.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let's continue on. The road damages . . . Last fall we had a nice visit to Dore Lake and Sled Lake, Mr. Speaker, and they're hauling product out of there. The forestry company is hauling product out of there, and people are up in arms in that area saying, what is going on?

The reason why they're angry, Mr. Speaker, is a number of points. One is they're hauling out the forest resources. They're smashing up their road. They're putting their families at great risk of a major accident, and they're actually literally smashing up their road with the big heavy-haul trucks. And the minister's fully aware that he's gotten letters. The group came to the Assembly here and they spoke about these issues, and yet the minister is talking about stumpage fees.

I know of one fact that the way the system should work, and it's a fair system, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister of the Economy should never trump the Minister of the Environment on some of these sustainable forestry practices, Mr. Speaker. I think it's in the constitutional design of our country that you cannot turn around and say, well your science on environmental integrity is wrong; my effort to try and get some company to double their harvest trumps your environmental concerns. That's what happened over there, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what happened.

So we look at the damages around the roads. Is that incorporated overall with what is being proposed here in making sure that the forestry practices are sustainable? How about the damages to highways? Is that incorporated in some of these discussions? It is not, Mr. Speaker. It is not. So you cannot come to us and saying, we're sustainable, that the forestry industry itself is going to be healthy for years to come, because you have not incorporated a lot of costs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to say this, that we have always advocated that we need a strong, vibrant forestry industry, Mr. Speaker — we do. There are a lot of jobs attached to it. There are a lot of issues that people are very, very connected to the industry itself. And I'm proud to say that there are certain organizations, even in the Meadow Lake area which the Meadow Lake Tribal Council are an integral part of the forestry development, Mr. Speaker.

But there's two things the government did wrong, Mr. Speaker, in recent years. Number one is they found some guy to give them that voodoo science that doubles the harvest of our forestry. Second thing they've done, Mr. Speaker, is they ignored and ripped away the opportunities from the Aboriginal people to own forestry rights. That was a slap in the face with the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling around duty to consult and duty to accommodate.

And the third thing they've done, Mr. Speaker, is they never

invested in highways. They never invested in highways one little bit to make sure that there's safe transportation of all goods, including forestry rights.

And the final piece, Mr. Speaker, is they totally ignored a very essential part of the forest management team and that is the trapping industry, Mr. Speaker. So you see the disregard, Mr. Speaker, it goes on and on under this bill.

And I was hoping that the bill itself would include some of these points. I was hoping that the minister would get up today, and I was hoping he would say, we erred. Mr. Speaker, I was hoping he'd say, we erred in making sure we took away and ripped away the TSL opportunity that the northwest communities enjoy. And I was hoping the minister would say, we erred in the way in which we estimated the total annual harvesting amount that was allowed in various areas including the northwest TSL. We erred in the way in which we dealt with the trapping industry. We should have corrected that, Mr. Speaker. And finally, Mr. Speaker, we erred in the way in which we respect the regions that support forestry by putting the proper infrastructure in place and that includes safe highways for our people to travel.

If you think the people of Saskatchewan, northern Saskatchewan don't support development, Mr. Speaker, they absolutely do. But they want it to be sustainable, respectful of all industries, and making sure that it is safe development and that includes safe travel on our highways. And, Mr. Speaker, at 10 o'clock at night you meet a loaded logging truck on a small highway coming out of Dore Lake, your life is in danger, Mr. Speaker. Your life is in danger. And that's the message that group brought when they came here.

Now I'm going to go on a bit more in terms of the minister mentioning insolvency. Some of these companies are insolvent. Well what do we do? We go in there and we get their reforestation fund, whatever the case may be. Well, Mr. Speaker, the reforestation fund that the northwest communities enjoyed one time through their TSL, where is that fund? What is the amount? Is there a lot of money in there? Like who has access to that fund? Nobody seems to want to give the northwest community that information. So I know they've been operating for a number of years, Mr. Speaker. There must be some money in that reforestation fund. Who has access to that money? What's the amount? And why have the people of the northwest communities not been given that information? I think it's shameful. It's disrespectful, and they need that information.

And finally I'll say this, Mr. Speaker, on forest management Act, we've got a lot of issues that we're going to deal with when it comes to this particular bill. There's a lot of organizations that are going to be paying very close attention to this because this really misses the point. This whole notion around what the Minister of the Economy done, when he come along and he actually, he actually forced, Mr. Speaker, he forced the northwest communities to give up their TSL. He walked in the room there as the Minister of the Economy and said, you guys aren't using your TSL so we're going to invoke the use-it-or-lose-it clause. And that use-it-or-lose-it clause is very simple: either you're using the forestry rights or if you don't use them, we'll take them back. We'll give them to someone else.

[16:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister knows very well . . . Both the Environment minister and the Economy minister, they know very well that at the time the forestry sector was in the tank. They were having a lot of trouble. So the northwest communities, there was a cluster of seven or eight Métis communities that made up the Northwest Communities Wood Products entity. Well, Mr. Speaker, what are they supposed to do? Are they supposed to go out there and harvest logs they can't sell? Well that doesn't make any sense. You can't harvest logs you can't sell. So what the minister does, he tromps into the room and says, well you're not using it so we're going to take it away and give it to a company out of BC. Now how does that make sense from a forestry management perspective?

So, Mr. Speaker, there's many fronts that this bill and this Act and this government have failed. They have failed miserably on many of these fronts, Mr. Speaker, and I think that the minister ought to know exactly the sentiment out there in the Northwest, that they feel that they're really hard done by. It starts right from the trappers to the local contractors to the original TSL owners to the people that argue about sustainability, about our forestry rights.

We know the Minister of the Economy trumped the Minister of the Environment on this front, and that's not the way it should work, Mr. Speaker. In fact it's not the way it does work. What happens here is the Minister of the Environment has certain autonomy even within cabinet where he can't be told, you will let that development through even though it's bad for the environment. He has that independence and the autonomy to say, I'm going to make a decision based on environmental sustainability not a political agenda by a minister who had no right to make that decision, Mr. Speaker.

And not only should he have stood up and said no on that front, he should have also got the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs saying, well that also throws mud in the face of the Supreme Court of Canada ruling around duty to consult and duty to accommodate. They had an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to consult with the First Nations and the Métis people, and they chose not to.

Now what happens now, we're left to pick up the pieces. The company and the people of the Northwest are left to pick up the pieces to try and figure out where we're going. And this particular bill talks about fee increases. It talks about abandoned culverts. Well, Mr. Speaker, we've got to have a lot more strong leadership on that front.

And this is the part that's really important I think, Mr. Speaker, is in the absence, in the absence of good government, people will rebel. And in the North the people are getting tired of seeing their resources being sucked out of the North and nothing left behind in terms of decent highways or good paying jobs or partnership in the forestry sector.

And then you get the trappers who see their land being decimated. Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the question: when does one industry's need trump the other industry's need? We used to have all this argument all the time. When was it right, Mr. Speaker, when was it right that they got to displace the trappers'

economy with that of the forestry sector with no discussion, no negotiations, and no provision? Did the forestry companies' activity impact the trapping industry of the North? The answer is yes it did. Yes it did. Was there any discussion or provisions or negotiations to accommodate that new opening opportunity in forestry? The answer is no, there was none of that.

So the point being, Mr. Speaker, is that a smart, astute government should have learned from that, and they should have accommodated that because we do need the forestry jobs. Let me be clear. We do need the forestry jobs, Mr. Speaker. And we do need to make sure that there's peace in the valley, that there's peace in the valley, Mr. Speaker, that the trappers can coexist with the logging contractors, that tourism can exist with the forestry sector, Mr. Speaker, and that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people can live in harmony on a land that is so rich in all these resources.

And yet, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing this government make certain choices and certain arrogant choices. And I go back to the Minister of the Economy, in which he came along and took away the TSL from an Aboriginally owned group. And Mr. Speaker, there's not so much as a boo from that particular government and yet people are standing around saying, what happened here? How did he get away with this? How could he do this to us? And there's that anger, Mr. Speaker, and that anger is so very prevalent and still relevant to this whole argument around forest resources management.

So the minister should do a couple of things. The first thing the minister should do is tell the Minister of the Economy that you ain't trumping me no more on the forest resources harvesting technique. I'm going to make that decision on my own.

And secondly, you're not going to tell who owns forestry opportunities. We have to respect the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling that the Métis and the First Nations do have rights in their backyard. They do have rights in their backyard, Mr. Speaker, and those rights talk about resource development. So why isn't the minister speaking of those issues, Mr. Speaker?

And we still can't find out the basic, basic question of what happened to all the forestry dues that were paid by the northwest communities? Where is that money? What is the amount? Who has control of it? And why can't that information be forthcoming? None of that, Mr. Speaker, is identified in this particular bill.

So I just look at all the arguments that were made today, the points that he made, Mr. Speaker. He talked about business growth being the primary function. Well, Mr. Speaker, you've got to be careful because industry will tell you, if you overharvest your forestry, that dries up their industry. We've got to do this right.

Mr. Speaker, they didn't mention anything about the trapping association. They are important users of the land. There's an economy attached to trappers. They should have much respect afforded to them. We don't see any of that in this particular bill, Mr. Speaker.

We also have to make sure that if we're going to look at the

forestry company, I think road maintenance is a big part of it, Mr. Speaker. I think the government should incorporate a whole plan to make sure that the roads in the North are safe. Where they're harvesting sustainably, I might add, where the companies are harvesting sustainably, there should be the proper infrastructure put in place. And, Mr. Speaker, if that's not part of the overall cost of promoting and supporting the forestry industry, then I'm not certain what is, Mr. Speaker. So the part of the process has got to be . . . If he's talking about, talking about the fees in line with the maintenance cost, well, Mr. Speaker, he's missing a big-ticket item as to how much damage is being done to our roads that many people in the North suffer from.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also make a quick point under the notion of insolvency. Who makes the determination around a company being insolvent? What happens if there's certain conditions, Mr. Speaker, certain conditions around the notion of actions by the government to create an insolvency?

And I want to talk about the North West Communities Wood Products. They lost 77 per cent of their TSL, Mr. Speaker, 77 per cent of their TSL. That was an action caused by the government, by the Minister of the Economy. The Minister of the Economy took away 77 per cent of their TSL, and he gave it away. Now does that create insolvency for that company? Well most of the mayors that owned that particular forestry company, well they're asking those questions now. So is that part of the process when we talk about insolvency?

So I think, Mr. Speaker, this bill has got a bit fat F in terms of trying to deal with the big issues around forest resources management. The minister primarily talked about culverts left on highways and bringing fees in line to deal with the maintenance of our forestry.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are many fronts that this government has failed miserably on, and one of them is forestry. One of them is sustainability. One is respect for the Aboriginal people and the trappers, and one is making sure that they divide all these groups so that we're not working together to build that economy, that promising economy, that we have our own . . . We're working apart from what is necessary for the future, and that is to make sure that we continue to fight each other, as opposed to working from each other's strength.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have tons of more questions. I know some of my colleagues have a lot of issues they're going to bring forward around forestry. But I can say this: that the Aboriginal people and the northern people as a whole — First Nations, Métis, and many northerners that make the North their home — they are getting tired of the same old treatment of seeing resources extracted out of the North but no investment put back in. They are getting sick and tired of it. And what I would suggest is that before you bring your voodoo science that justifies doubling your forestry harvesting because you found somebody that'll say that to you as a government, then you have failed miserably on that front as well.

So I'd ask the minister again, do the right thing; deal with these issues. And if the northwest communities have questions of you around certain issues, be forthright and honest with them. Don't be political nor misleading because that does a great injustice to

what we're all about in this province, and that is developing a sustainable, integrated economy that makes the best of our resources, that makes it last well into the future for our children and grandchildren.

So, Mr. Speaker, I have a lot more comments to make on this particular bill, as my colleagues will also be part of the process. On that note I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

**Bill No. 11 — *The Forestry Professions
Amendment Act, 2016***

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

Hon. Mr. Cox: — Mr. Speaker, after some brief remarks, I will move second reading of *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016*.

Forestry professionals have an important role to ensure that Saskatchewan's forest ecosystems remain healthy in the long term and continue to provide us with all the benefits we have come to enjoy. The need for legislation recognizes the importance of this role, and assuring the people that they can rely on the competence and professionalism of those that fulfill it was confirmed several years ago.

In 1998 a committee of members from Saskatchewan section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry conducted a survey of forestry and other resource professionals in Saskatchewan. The Canadian Institute of Forestry represents forestry professionals from across the country and has a strong presence in this province. Seventy-two per cent of the survey respondents agreed that a registered professional forestry association would be a positive step in enhancing the professional practice of the forestry in Saskatchewan. As well, 70 per cent of the respondents responded favourably to the idea of the Saskatchewan section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry pursuing such an association here in Saskatchewan. With such overwhelming support from our province's resource professionals, *The Forestry Professions Act* was developed in consultation with the Saskatchewan section of the Canadian Institute of Forestry and other stakeholders.

In April 2006, *The Forestry Professions Act* came into force, establishing the Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals, an organization independent of government and industry responsible for ensuring that its membership subscribe to and meet the standards of competence, ethics, and public accountability. The Act and the Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals established Saskatchewan as a desirable place to practise forestry.

The Act initially served as a protection of title, meaning that members of the new association had the exclusive right to use

the titles of professional forester, professional forest technologist, forester-in-training, and forest technologist-in-training. People retaining the services of a forester or forest technologist in Saskatchewan now had the option of hiring a registered professional and, with that designation, be assured of the individual's competence, ethics, and accountability. Saskatchewan joined seven other provinces that already had legislation governing forestry professionals, and enabled the province to become signatory to the mutual recognition agreement.

In 2013, *The Forestry Professions Act* was amended to establish it as a right-to-practise legislation, adding to its effectiveness. Under the right to practise, persons are prohibited from engaging in the professional practice of forestry unless they are registered with the Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals or are exempt under the Act. The change to right to practise provided further assurances to the public that those undertaking the professional practice of forestry in Saskatchewan adhered to consistent standards of competence and ethics, whatever they chose to call themselves.

Today *The Forestry Professions Act* further enhances the public's confidence that Saskatchewan's forest resources are being managed by professionals whose competence, ethics, and public accountability are recognized nationally. The Act is supported by industry and stakeholder groups including the Saskatchewan Forestry Association, the Saskatchewan Trappers Association, the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Saskatchewan Nature and Tourism Saskatchewan, Ducks Unlimited, Saskatchewan Outfitters Association, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the Saskatchewan Research Council.

[16:15]

This Act protects the interests of the people of Saskatchewan by ensuring that the experts charged with making decisions affecting our public forests' long-term health are competent, ethical, and accountable.

The amendments before the House today will further enhance public confidence in government's commitment to professionally manage natural resources by ensuring that our forests are being administered and managed by skilled and nationally recognized professionals.

The amendments enhance accountability, enabling the application of financial penalties to persons who unlawfully engage in the professional practice of forestry. The change is required to further enhance the accountability that is built into a legislation. Currently the financial penalty provision may only be applied to unregistered persons using their professional titles. Without these amendments, financial penalties cannot be applied to persons who unlawfully engage in the professional practice of forestry.

The amendments add an element of accountability that will further enhance the Act's effectiveness. The amendments will also ensure that the limitation of prosecution provision in the Act is applicable to persons engaging in the professional practice of forestry who are not members registered with the association. Similar financial penalties are already established in law for many other professions in Saskatchewan, including

agrologists, engineers, geoscientists, and land surveyors.

The proposed amendments are consistent with provisions applicable to forestry professionals in the other New West Partnership provinces as well as in other provinces in Canada. The amended legislation continues to build on several important commitments of this government, and they are sustainable economic growth, a competitive business environment for the forestry sector, and the sustainable management and long-term health of Saskatchewan's provincial forests.

The Association of Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals, the body responsible for regulating this profession in our province, fully supports these amendments. Mr. Speaker, I believe that the proposed amendments are a substantial step forward for the forestry profession and for sustainable forest management in Saskatchewan. Through them we demonstrate our government's confidence in our forestry professionals and their association, and we acknowledge their key role in ensuring the long-term sustainability of Saskatchewan's forests.

Mr. Speaker, I move that *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 11, the forestry provisions amendment Act, 2016 be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm pleased to inject myself into the conversation and certainly the comments around forestry generally. On Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016*, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out, I want to point out it's very, very important that we engage and that we respect and that we support the integrity of those that move forward and their particular professions such as the foresters. And, Mr. Speaker, a lot of these guys go to school a long time and a lot of years, and I think it's really important that we recognize them and we engage them. That's what's really, really key, Mr. Speaker.

And the point I would raise on this particular bill is that the minister alluded to a mutual recognition agreement in which our foresters are recognized, those that have the designation and the proper certification, that they're recognized throughout the country, and that they certainly have, they have a lot of collaborative approaches when dealing with forestry professionals overall.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I prefaced my comment on this bigger bill, I talked about integrity, which is a real important part of any professional association. And, Mr. Speaker, the association themselves, they have a lot of, a lot of good people organizing the people that they represent. They lobby for them, they give them great venues to express their concerns on their particular industry, such as the day at the Legislative Building with a bunch of MLAs.

So I really take part in those activities. I want to learn what the association does, and certainly I have had access and been privy to a few presentations by the professional forestries association. And I'll point out, Mr. Speaker, that it's always, always key to

engage professional people that have good standards and have solid integrity in terms of their approach. And, Mr. Speaker, the professional association of foresters in general have done and have met the standards that they aspired to meet.

What's really important, Mr. Speaker, is that while they represent individual foresters overall, it's important that we also have a good, solid discussion around the different approaches, different terminology, and the different circumstances, Mr. Speaker, around how they operate in each jurisdiction. Like for example, you would assume that a forester coming out of BC would have a certainly different take on a forester coming out of Saskatchewan, as an example.

Now how we interact with the different associations from BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, the territories, Mr. Speaker, there's a radical change of activity. There's also a radical change of environment. There's also the whole issue around what forestry products look like and activities that forestry companies in each jurisdiction. Because I would assume a forester in Nunavut, Mr. Speaker, probably has a lot less experience dealing with large tree stands in BC.

So as you begin to meld the two values of one forester from one particular region with another, it's important to incorporate — as I know that different associations do — the different dynamics and different challenges attached with these jurisdictions. So it's important to incorporate that into how we can have what the minister alluded to and that's certainly the whole notion of working together. Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll suggest as well that it's going to be their professionalism and their integrity that's going to dictate how they proceed in dealing with different provinces with different agendas.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be a tough act to balance, but clearly I think I want to point out in my final comment on this particular bill that we need to ensure that these associations are protected. We need to ensure that they're respected in terms of consultation. But we also have to make sure that if we're able to do so under the mutual recognition agreement, is work to develop a capacity and answer the questions is, are the different jurisdictions different in the sense of the forest management practice and knowledge? And if they are, we have to make sure that we work together to minimize those differences.

Because I go back to my earlier point, how can one forester, say a professional company, a consultant firm say we can sustain 260 000 cubic metres of harvest in this particular land area, then a year and a half later it's doubled. This is the point I would raise is that we've got to make sure we eliminate some of those wide discrepancies. So if you're talking about mutual recognition agreement, I think the biggest point is these associations will move forward on integrity, consistency, and professionalism. And, Mr. Speaker, I would say that that particular effort by them is something that the government can learn from so they're able to do a better job, Mr. Speaker, overall.

So not to worry, Mr. Speaker, I think some of the mutual recognition that should be incorporated in all these things are different users, the different users, Mr. Speaker, and that includes the trappers, that includes the tourism industry, that includes the traditional resource users. They are also part of the

land management scheme.

So I'll assume, Mr. Speaker, that there's professional associations that will do what they have to do professionally and with great integrity, I might add. But there's another group of people that really want to be in on the whole notion of mutual recognition. And I would suggest and submit to the minister that trappers, people that traditionally lived off the land, wild rice growers, the Aboriginal people of the North that want a job as well, I think they would like to have that mutual recognition as well.

So on that point, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more information on this particular bill. So on that point, I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016*.

Mr. Speaker, amendments to *The Public Health Act, 1994* are required for several reasons. This amended legislation will enable improved public access to public health inspection information. Saskatchewan already provides residents with public health inspection reports about eating establishments. These amendments will allow public disclosure of a broader range of public health inspection reports and related information. We recognize the value of making information available to the public, and we know our residents want greater access to information to help them make decisions about their health and safety. The changes reflect our government's commitment to being open and transparent with important health-related information. This will bring Saskatchewan in line with disclosure practices in other provinces.

The Act will also, Mr. Speaker, the amendments will address another key public health area in terms of communicable disease control. We want to ensure that reporting requirements for communicable diseases are current and reflect health practitioners' scope of practice. The amendments to the legislation will also better reflect nurse practitioner and clinic nurse roles in reporting and following up on communicable disease cases. Mr. Speaker, our government is making changes needed to strengthen and sustain our health care system for future generations.

We believe in, support, and bring these amendments to the House today and with that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Public Health (Miscellaneous)*

Amendment Act, 2016.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 12, *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm proud to stand in my place today to give initial comments around Bill No. 12, *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, the minister basically alluded to three particular areas that he's of concern to that the bill really impacts. And I understood it could be the restaurant safety of food handling, addressing the communicable disease situation, and certainly identifying the roles and responsibility of a nurse practitioner.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think what's really, really important is that obviously public safety is really paramount in terms of having restaurants serve, you know, safely-handled food and serve food to the public because there's hundreds of restaurants that are coming online, and certainly it's important as you see just a splurge of activity all throughout the province. And whether you're eating in a small restaurant in Eston or eating in a large, fancy hotel restaurant or in northern Saskatchewan, I think the integrity of public inspection to make sure that food is handled safely and that there's quality staff there, I think if people had that assurance, Mr. Speaker, it would really, really be something that they would be pleased with and that they would certainly continually encourage the government to bring those standards forward.

I think the whole notion around nurse practitioner, the definition, what we don't want to see happen, Mr. Speaker, is we know that the nurses and the support staff and point-of-care health professionals, Mr. Speaker, they're all part of a team, a matrix of support, if you will, for the various people coming into our facilities. And they are certainly the people that work with the many challenges our province has when it comes to health care. And I know that in northern Saskatchewan we do use nurse practitioners as other areas do, and while they are very, very proficient in their work, we don't have enough numbers, Mr. Speaker. We need more nurse practitioners, and they provide an invaluable service, a support mechanism to not only the nursing staff but certainly to the doctors as well. So we can never, ever be . . . We can never eliminate nor should we diminish any role of any part of the point-of-care health staff that are working as a team in our various facilities and our various communities in various locations of our province.

And the whole notion, Mr. Speaker, is that when it comes to restaurant safety, recognition of communicable disease challenges, nurse practitioner role and responsibility and definition of that, Mr. Speaker, the list goes on as to all the different points that the minister raised, that it's important that we take the time to really begin to understand exactly what is being proposed and how we can incorporate that with the different sectors that are providing those services. And we'll certainly undertake to do that work.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 12, *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment*

Act, 2016.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 12, *The Public Health (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[16:30]

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 13, *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act*. I want to provide some context for the proposed amendments and outline their nature and the intended impact.

Providing high-quality cancer control services to Saskatchewan people is a priority for the government and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Saskatchewan has a long history of innovation in cancer treatment, prevention, early detection, research, and technology. Recognizing the need for focused resources to deal with cancer, the provincial government established a Cancer Agency more than 85 years ago. Mr. Speaker, the members of this legislature understood then that progress could only be made through research, concerted effort, and by allowing health care providers to develop their understanding and skills over years of accumulated experience. These pioneers at the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and in our universities and hospitals laid the groundwork for the development of a network of services in Saskatchewan today.

Mr. Speaker, our government has strengthened cancer control services, with annual funding to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency increasing from \$78.5 million in 2007-2008 budget year to 157.3 million in 2015-16. This has enabled the Cancer Agency to introduce many improvements including expanded coverage for a range of drugs, a provincial screening program for colorectal cancer, digital imaging equipment for mammograms. Funding for health regions has also increased, resulting in better access to chemotherapy, improved diagnostic services, and strengthened support for prevention and healthy lifestyles, just to name a few enhancements.

Despite these efforts, Mr. Speaker, the number of new cancer cases diagnosed in Saskatchewan is projected to increase 54 per cent by 2036. In order to counteract this expected increase, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency developed a strategic plan for influencing care across the province while establishing Saskatchewan and the organization as leaders in cancer research, treatment, education, population health, promotion, and disease prevention. The long-term goal is to create a province where people understand how to minimize their risk of getting cancer and play an active role in their personal health and well-being. The desired future is one where the cancer services that are needed can be accessed equitably, safely, and in ways that best support those who are dealing with cancer as a chronic illness. Our government supports the Cancer Agency's vision for the future.

I'm pleased that these amendments update the language being used in legislation related to the agency's work and resolve some instances where its legislative authority lags behind its needs for effectively administering services and handling information.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments in this legislation will fill some gaps in *The Cancer Agency Act* so that we can better equip the organization to perform its role of strengthening cancer control in our province.

The Cancer Agency Amendment Act will provide statutory authority for the agency to request and collect information from other organizations, to report to various registries, and to enter into agreements. The proposed amendments also provide consistent definitions of cancer services and reflect the current government structure in naming conventions.

In cases where the administrative authority of the Cancer Agency is not already consistent with that of its sister organizations, the regional health authorities, this Act will allow for better alignment with provisions of *The Regional Health Services Act*.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed amendments will ensure the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has the statutory authority it needs to request, collect, and disclose information in order to effectively meet its responsibility for providing cancer control services.

Another amendment will enable the Ministry of Health to inform the agency when, in the course of administering health services, the ministry becomes aware of a reportable case of cancer. One example would be when the ministry is billed for services provided out of province. This will help the agency maintain an accurate picture of an individual's care status and a more accurate picture of cancer services provided to Saskatchewan citizens. The amendment also clarifies the agency's authority to disclose information to the North American and international cancer registries which act as central registries for cancer research, surveillance, statistical reporting, analysis of outcomes, and assessment of cancer risks.

All central registries in Canada and the United States are members of these multinational registries which enable the use by authorized organizations of de-identified patient information in order to better understand, prevent, and treat cancer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all members that the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner will be consulted about the agency's ability to collect information and disclose it for specific purposes, and to specific organizations that will be prescribed through the regulations. Our government appreciates the commissioner's insights in this area and his office's role as an advocate for and protector of the privacy rights of our citizens.

These amendments align with ongoing work by government and the health system to create a citizen- and patient-centred system that values continuous improvement and innovation.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act*.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 13, *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm very pleased to stand in my place this afternoon to hear what the minister is proposing through this particular Act, *The Cancer Agency Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out this is certainly a topic that affects many, many families, the notion that we have to do what we have to do to make sure we provide as much knowledge, that we do as much research and we provide as much support and that we prevent as much as we can the introduction of the disease of cancer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that cancer can be beaten. We've had many presentations with the Cancer Society of the province of Saskatchewan. And they certainly are champions in determining how people perceive cancer. And certainly it's a challenge to have them continue to fight. It's not everybody's challenge to fight cancer, but there are quite a few families and an alarming number of people in the province that do battle with cancer.

And, Mr. Speaker, they're champions; there's no question about it. They're champions, the Canadian Cancer Society, and of course the Saskatchewan chapter. They're doing their very best to promote the four attributes spoken when the minister alluded to the Cancer Agency overall, and of course the Act that guides them.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in northern Saskatchewan we have many people that struggle and battle with cancer. And the whole issue around health transcends a lot of the political ramifications of sitting in this particular Assembly because we've seen the battle of cancer and the face of cancer in many of our northern communities as well as southern communities.

And, Mr. Speaker, as you look at some of the rural parts of our province, when we see the alarming rates of cancer amongst our farm families, men and women that struggle with cancer in rural parts of our province, Mr. Speaker, we need to provide critical support and certainly focus our effort in making sure that many of the farm families . . . that we've seen the trends and that perhaps we have to really focus on ensuring that the prevention, knowledge, research, and supports are there right across the board. And perhaps the Cancer Agency needs more support. They need more outreach. They need more resources to help many of the areas that are struggling with cancer overall.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when you look at the rural parts of our province and the challenge of cancer itself, as I've said, many families have struggled with that. I go to a lot of home visits with people that have that challenge in the northern part of the province and they speak to me about some of the issues that they want to raise. And I do this because it is part of the Act, it is part of the bill, it is part of the knowledge effort around what the Cancer Agency does, Mr. Speaker. We're talking about knowledge. We're talking about prevention, research, and support. These are some of the issues that we hear of back in the northern part of the province.

What happens, Mr. Speaker, is lot of the northern people that struggle with cancer . . . As I've said, they're champions, but they have to travel a long distance. The cost of travelling and relocating to the cities is also problematic, Mr. Speaker. And they also need the supports of their family when they're getting treatment or being diagnosed or in many cases being cured of cancer. You can see the support and the thankfulness that many of them have when they do beat cancer. But it's always a battle, Mr. Speaker, and it's important that we continue supporting the work of *The Cancer Agency Act* and all the supports it provides.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've got a quick story to tell you. A number of years ago — it was 1981 to be exact — I had an uncle of mine who worked in Uranium City for a number of years. He worked very closely with a number of other people from the North. In 1981 he had succumbed to cancer. And a couple of weeks before he passed away, I had the opportunity to go visit with him while he was still talking because shortly thereafter he went into a deep sleep and then thankfully, Lord, and thankfully his suffering ended. And as difficult as it was for the family, they let my uncle go. And the most amazing thing is he was very stoic. He was very strong and he was very courageous, and to me that's the face of cancer, Mr. Speaker.

And I think the Cancer Agency certainly have a lot of that experience. I know they have a lot of that experience and it's important that we provide as much support, as much of a benefit to the people that are going through this. Mr. Speaker, I think that's key that we recognize that.

So from the opposition perspective, Mr. Speaker, any supports that we can do to strengthen the Cancer Agency, any supports we can do to recognize the specific areas that have extra challenges, the challenge overall but other areas that have extra challenges, whether it's rural people or the farm families that are suffering through the increase in cancer rates, Mr. Speaker, or the northern people that have specific challenges traveling for treatment, and those that get cancer in our urban settings, Mr. Speaker. It is a tough, tough task.

And getting back to my uncle's story very quickly, it was 1981, Mr. Speaker. And as I sat and visited with him one day he said to me, he said, you keep working hard and you'll have it made. You'll have it made, he said. And, Mr. Speaker, I'll always remember those words because I wanted to talk about him and he wanted to talk about me. So I always thank my uncle George for the great courage he showed me on that day, and that he made one comment to me that had a profound effect. He said, it's going to be your turn to work. It's going to be your turn to live, but you'll have it made. Just keep working hard. That's what he said. And a week later he took a turn for the worse, and then he went into a deep sleep and later on he passed away.

And the words he said to me, Mr. Speaker, were profound because it wasn't until a full seven years later, Mr. Speaker, that I entered the race for mayor of Ile-a-la-Crosse. And we worked very hard. We remembered his words. And later on we became the MLA, and by virtue of the support of my colleagues, we were placed in cabinet and we got a lot of things done for our region.

But we never forget those that made the sacrifice in cancer to promote more understanding, not only of how the disease

works, but how people react to it and respond to it. And some are very courageous. Some are in need of support. But, Mr. Speaker, it's a battle nobody wants but many people have to live through.

So I want to point out that any work that the Cancer Agency does . . . We need to improve on services, yes. We need more expansion of knowledge and research, yes. But the number one thing, Mr. Speaker, is to provide supports where supports are necessary. And that's the critical point I want to make as a result of this particular bill.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is with great urgency that I express to the government to continue to build the Cancer Agency, strengthen it. We will support every effort in that regard. But the more people that are out there helping those that are struggling with this particular disease, the better.

So I would say that we will look into this legislation to see where we're able to improve it, where there may be some lapses in supports. And, Mr. Speaker, that's the job we do as an opposition member. It's not there to criticize people that are struggling with cancer, because we all are very supportive of that battle. Just to make sure that we do it right. And that's the reason why we take our time to research the bill that's presented.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 13, *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016*.

[16:45]

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 13, *The Cancer Agency Amendment Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will move second reading of *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016*.

Mr. Speaker, our government is moving forward with the repeal of horned cattle legislation in the province. The Act came into force in July 1939 to penalize the marketing of cattle with horns in Saskatchewan. The intention of the Act was to reduce the number of cattle with horns being marketed. The deduction was set at that time at \$1 per head. In 1940, more than 40,000 cattle were penalized, representing 19 per cent of cattle marketed that year.

Horned cattle breeds were dominant in the cattle industry, and the transportation and handling of horned cattle risked injury to people and other animals. In particular, at that time cattle were transported long distances by rail.

The Act was amended in 1949 to increase the penalty to \$2 a head. Almost 80,000 cattle were penalized, representing 19.2 per cent of cattle marketed that year. It was noted in the 1949-50 agricultural annual report that little improvement had been made in reducing the number of cattle marketed with horns since the Act came into force.

At its peak in 1977 and '78, nearly 180,000 cattle were penalized for horns. But a lot has changed in the industry over the last 40 years. Now only 15 to 17,000 head of cattle are penalized each year. That's just over 1 per cent of cattle marketings. And this is due to a number of reasons including an increase in the use of polled or hornless genetics in common breeds of cattle, market price signals, and more diligent dehorning. In addition, the industry has developed and adheres to a code of practice that recommended dehorning cattle to decrease the risk of injury to workers and animals and to minimize economic losses due to carcass bruising.

The code of practice for the care and handling of beef cattle are nationally developed guidelines. These codes did not exist in 1939, so industry asked government to intervene with legislation, legislation that is no longer required in 2016. We don't enact legislation that penalizes producers for failing to do other important management tasks such as vaccinating animals against disease, so why would we continue to focus on horns? Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is not the only province to repeal horned cattle legislation. Alberta and Manitoba both repealed similar legislation several years ago. In fact British Columbia is the only other province with horned cattle legislation at this time.

Mr. Speaker, continuing *The Horned Cattle Purchases Act* doesn't make sense from an economic perspective. In 1949, the penalty of \$2 per head was established. That penalty remains in place today. It doesn't make sense for government to be in the business of horned cattle penalties or to subsidize the collection and administration of *The Horned Cattle Purchases Act*. It would be an unnecessary expense for us and for taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, the deduction is set in the Act at \$2 per head. It only generates 30,000 to \$35,000 of revenue per year, and this revenue collected no longer covers the costs of inspecting, collecting, and administering the penalty. The horned cattle fund is nearly depleted. If the government were to subsidize the collection and administration of the penalty, it would represent a new and additional cost for government and for taxpayers.

The last time *The Horned Cattle Purchases Act* was looked at was in 2002, almost a decade and a half ago. In June 2002 *The Horned Cattle Purchases Amendment Act* was assented to but was never proclaimed. That amendment Act would have increased the penalty from \$2 per head to \$10 per head and updated the membership of *The Horned Cattle Purchases Act* advisory committee. There are some industry stakeholders, most notably the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, who support proclaiming the amendment Act. However, after the amendment Act was assented to, the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association was created as a development commission under *The Agri-Food Act*. The SCA [Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association] would not have been represented on the advisory committee if the amendment Act were proclaimed.

Mr. Speaker, it's important to recognize that the repeal of *The Horned Cattle Purchases Act* has the support of cattle organizations and many beef cattle producers in the province. In April the Ministry of Agriculture met with industry reps to discuss the possible repeal of the Act. There were some concerns, but most agreed that existing legislation is outdated and a new approach should be considered.

The first step in modernizing means repealing the existing legislation. The Ministry of Agriculture is already working with the cattle sector to explore industry-led options. Industry supports this approach. The Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, for example, has already requested information related to administration costs and is prepared to lead industry discussions around penalizing horned cattle. If the cattle sector decides that producers marketing horned cattle need to be penalized, then we will work with them to develop an industry-led solution. I'm confident that a viable solution can be found.

However I'd once again like to stress that the solution has to be industry led. It's worth repeating that less than 1.5 per cent of cattle being marketed have horns, compared to 19 per cent in 1940. Our neighbouring provinces of Alberta and Manitoba have repealed similar legislation and have not seen an increase in cattle marketed with horns. Many of our cattle producers see this as being unnecessary regulation and that the marketplace will determine the value of these animals.

Mr. Speaker, let's put our trust in our cattle producers and let industry figure this out. They will know the right thing to do when it comes to marketing cattle with horns. Our government talks a lot about how our producers need to maintain and grow the trust of the public. How can we encourage that without showing that we trust our producers? So let's trust them. Let's listen to them. Let's work with them through their associations to develop an industry-led solution supported by this government.

The Horned Cattle Purchases Act is outdated and a fresh, modern, industry-led approach should be explored. All existing horned cattle legislation needs to be repealed. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move that *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016* be read a second time. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016* be read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, that in northern Saskatchewan . . . A lot of people don't assume that there is a lot of cattle industry in the northern part of the province, but the reality is there is, Mr. Speaker.

There's a lot of history in northern Saskatchewan and certainly was a lot of history in the sense that at the time . . . [inaudible] . . . the Thatcher government that promoted and wanted to see agriculture become part of the northern economy, and as a result of that they established three farms, Mr. Speaker. The three farms were in Green Lake, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and in

Cumberland House, Mr. Speaker. There was actually land that was cleared and cattle brought in and they certainly began a cow-calf operation and they actually had these farms operate for many, many years, Mr. Speaker.

So a lot of times what I see nowadays is since then, when the Conservative government was in charge in the 1980s and part of the early '90s, Mr. Speaker, they shut down those operations even though the operations were very, very valuable to the people. Because some of the spinoff benefits of that, Mr. Speaker, is people actually started getting into cow-calf operations themselves. There was a few families that assumed that role, and certainly Green Lake is still very active in that regard.

Although there isn't a cattle operation in Ile-a-la-Crosse, there are a few people in the community that did raise cattle and continue raising cattle. And one of them of course is my Uncle Gordon and my Aunt Bernice. They bought a piece of land. They continue having a small cow-calf operation. I'm not sure the number of head that they have nowadays, but they continue building this industry, and Green Lake of course is much further ahead. So, Mr. Speaker, we do have a bit of experience. Not to disrespect any of the industry — we know the incredible value and the incredible opportunity attached to the cattle industry.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would say I'll remember this day for a long time, which the Minister of Agriculture introduced this particular bill, Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act*. Because, Mr. Speaker, when they had challenges around the transportation system in which many of the producers in the province of Saskatchewan were struggling with, you didn't hear a peep from the Minister of Agriculture at the time. And there was billions of dollars left in producers' storage bins, and the minister was sitting on his hands and not saying a word, Mr. Speaker.

So I think there's a lot of different areas of focus that this government could continue to look at in terms of what is necessary out there. I think water management is a key area, power generation, environmental stewardship, developing an adequate transportation system to get our commodities to market, Mr. Speaker, certainly doing a regional economical modelling, strategic supports for certain industries, Mr. Speaker, working with the RMs [rural municipality] and the council to these various areas. And, Mr. Speaker, one of the things I think that a lot of the farm families consider as really key is to make sure that their children have a school to go to and their families have a health centre that they can go to when the time comes for those services that they may need, Mr. Speaker.

So I look at the effort by the particular bill, Bill No. 14, and I can tell you on many other fronts, and this will soon become apparent, I think the Sask Party has simply lost their way, Mr. Speaker. They don't have any innovative strategies for the rural parts of the community and the province. And *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act* simply is not going to be the panacea and the silver bullet that's going to help the people in rural Saskatchewan be happy at all.

There are tons of area in which they need their strategic help, Mr. Speaker, and that's why it's important that we continue

paying attention to what they're doing on some of these bills, but more important, Mr. Speaker, what they're not doing and what they're unable to deliver on. And, Mr. Speaker, that research will continue and we will continue building and educating all members of our caucus on what the farm families need and what the rural parts of the province desperately need to continue strengthening them. Because a strong rural economy means a strong provincial economy, Mr. Speaker. We clearly understand that from the opposition perspective. And every bit of effort, whether it's *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act* or acknowledgement of some of the health concerns of our farm families, Mr. Speaker, we'll continue supporting those efforts.

The problem we have is a Sask Party government that simply can't think beyond the smaller efforts such as this particular bill and start dealing with the larger picture items, which is things like a decent transportation system in the province of Saskatchewan. They have failed to deliver on that front. They continue to fail, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure the farm families will be pleased to hear that we'll continue holding them to account on their failures as a government when it comes to their supporting rural parts of our province.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more comments on this particular bill, and if those people that want to add to this bill on how things could be strengthened in the rural parts of our province, we would suggest to you, our door's always open.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that this Assembly 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 tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:58.]

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