



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

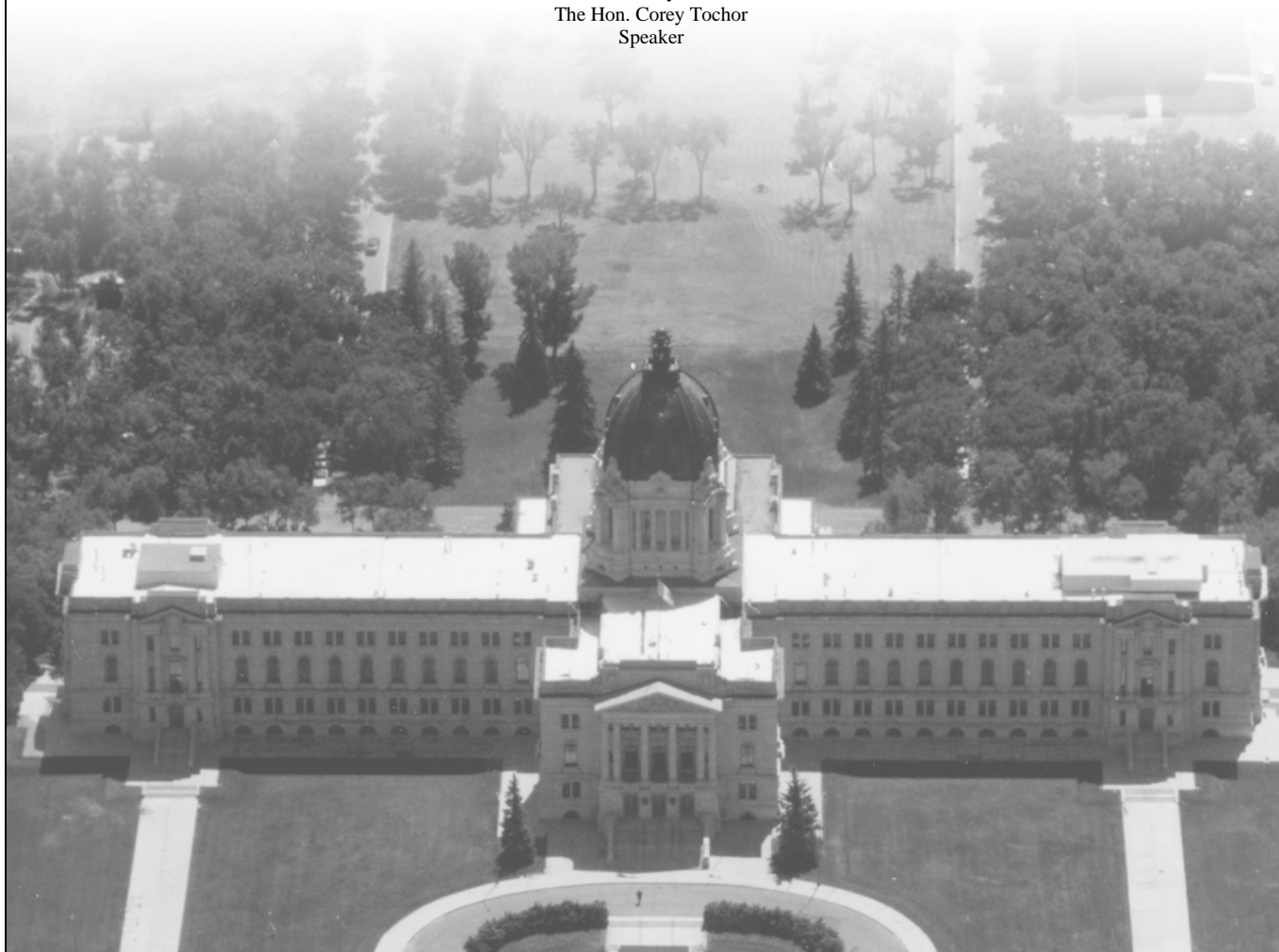
of the

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

Beaudry-Mellor, Hon. Tina — Regina University (SP)

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Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Makowsky, Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

McCall, Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

McMorris, Don — Indian Head-Milestone (Ind.)

Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

Michelson, Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)

Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Olauson, Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)

Ottenbreit, Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)

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Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Wall, Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)

Weekes, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

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) — 50; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 10; Independent (Ind.) — 1

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — I'm prepared to rule on the point of order that was raised by the Government House Leader immediately after question period on Thursday, October 20th, 2016. The Government House Leader alleged that the Leader of the Opposition had said that the Premier cannot be trusted. In response to that point of order, the Opposition House Leader contended that the Leader of the Opposition used language that was within the accepted rules and usage of this Assembly.

I reviewed *Hansard*, and on page 771 the Leader of the Opposition stated, and I quote, "And we should be able to trust, we should be able to trust what the Premier is saying about the finances."

Members are well aware that it is not permissible to accuse or suggest other members were not being truthful. This practice is codified in the rule 51(f) in paragraph 484(3) of Beauchesne's *Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, 6th Edition, and on page 618 of *The House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, 2nd Edition, 2009.

In this Assembly, many Speakers have ruled that the integrity of members should not be questioned, and the imputations of intentional falsehoods are not permissible. While it is not unparliamentary to criticize statements made by members as being contrary to the facts, the integrity, motives of the members, whether individually or collectively, should not be questioned directly or indirectly.

After reviewing *Hansard*, I find that the Leader of the Opposition's comments were not directly specified at the Premier; rather, they were directed at the accuracy of information provided by the Premier related to the finances of the province.

As outlined by Speaker Toth in his ruling on March 29th, 2010, and I quote, "Members' understanding of the facts often differ, and that is why we have debate in this Chamber." For this reason, I find the point of order not well taken. In closing, I would like to caution all members to avoid words and phrases that could be construed as a reflection of another member's personal character.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

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

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much. To colleagues and Mr. Speaker, it is an honour today to make a very special introduction to the Assembly today and through the Assembly to all those that might be watching, to the province. It's a great pleasure to introduce, in your gallery, His Excellency Kenjiro Monji, the ambassador of Japan to Canada. Accompanying Ambassador Monji today are Mr. Kunihiko Tanabe, the consul general of Japan in Calgary; Mr. Akinori Ando, the consul for economic affairs at the consulate in Calgary; and Mr. Paul Price, an adviser to the consul general. Mr. Speaker, also joining the ambassador's delegation is someone that needs no introduction at all to members of the House, or to really anybody in the province of Saskatchewan, I would think, by now. Victor Sawa is the honorary consul of Japan in Regina, and we want to welcome Victor to his Legislative Assembly as well.

Mr. Speaker, the ambassador and his delegation are here for a three-day visit to the province. They have already met with officials from the University of Regina. They met with officials from Viterra. They met with the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Economy. I'll be meeting with the ambassador a little bit later this afternoon, as will the ministers of Advanced Education and Energy and Resources. Tomorrow the delegation heads to Saskatoon for meetings with Cameco as well as the University of Saskatchewan. They're also going to tour PotashCorp's Lanigan mine.

Mr. Speaker, our province has a long-standing and important relationship with the government, with the people, and with the companies of Japan. Japan is our fourth largest export market. Last year we shipped nearly \$890 million worth of goods their way, mostly in agricultural commodities. And so I think it's very important, whenever presented with an occasion like this, that we would say thank you through the ambassador to the people of Japan. There are any number of families in this province who depend on that \$890 million in trade with that great country.

Over the years, we've sold a lot of potash and we've sold a lot of uranium to Japan, as well as those agricultural products. Mr. Speaker, I can also share with members of the House that the fourth most popular malting barley used in Sapporo and Asahi beer comes from Biggar, Mr. Speaker. It comes from Biggar, Saskatchewan, where in fact together with the folks at the University of Saskatchewan, a special breed of malting barley meeting the exacting standards of brewers in Japan has actually been developed for that particular market.

Mr. Speaker, when we have been to Japan for meetings, we've been grateful for meetings with government officials, but we've been also very grateful to meet with very important organizations, large international companies like Sojitz Corporation, Tokyo Electric Power, and the Japan-Canada Uranium Company, among others.

Japan companies are also playing a major role here in the province of Saskatchewan, assisting with leadership in carbon

capture and sequestration, Mr. Speaker. And we're grateful for Mitsubishi Hitachi Power Systems and their partnership with the international CCS Knowledge Centre at the University of Regina. And we're grateful, I would say, Mr. Speaker, that Japan is joining us in developing CCS [carbon capture and storage], which will be a critical technology in the battle against climate change.

Mr. Speaker, our relationship with Japan has many dimensions and it is long standing. We're very honoured to have the ambassador here today and the officials from the consulate, as well as Victor. And I just want to say on behalf of this House and on behalf of the province of Saskatchewan on the public record how grateful we are, how thankful we are for the relationship in general and this visit in particular, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming the ambassador and his colleagues and Victor to the Legislative Assembly today.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my honour to join with the Premier and welcome this very important delegation from Japan here today. As noted by the Premier, this is a long-standing and very important relationship to Saskatchewan and to Canada, one that we value greatly. Your presence here means a lot.

I want to welcome His Excellency Kenjiro Monji, Mr. Tanabe, Mr. Ando, Mr. Price. I welcome you to Regina and to Saskatchewan. And it's a pleasure, as the Premier mentioned, to welcome, I want to say maestro, but Mr. Victor Sawa to his Assembly. This is in fact someone who has enriched and enlivened our communities in so many ways, particularly as a leader within the arts as conductor and director of the Regina Symphony Orchestra for many, many years. And so, thank you so very much.

I understand that they have a busy agenda, with meetings lined up that look to be incredibly constructive and of mutual benefit both for Saskatchewan, and I certainly hope for Japan, meetings that will include meeting with leaders in agriculture and education, in mining and our manufacturing sectors. I'm thankful for our relationship from an economic perspective, certainly from an educational perspective, and from a cultural perspective. And I think that it's important that we recognize that when we trade our knowledge and our strengths with each other, we're all made stronger, which is why I'm so thankful for your presence here today, so thankful for your partnership with our province, and looking forward to that relationship continuing to grow for the mutual benefit of both Japan, Saskatchewan, and Canada. Welcome to your Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to welcome a few guests today seated in your gallery. These individuals are with the group, Keep Meewasin Vital. We have the co-founder, Lorna Shaw-Lennox. Lorna, if you want to give us a wave. Lorna's a constituent of Saskatoon Willowgrove. Joining her are a number of youth: Elizabeth Lennox-Quiring, Blake Davis, and Wyatt Davis. I

look forward, Mr. Speaker, to meeting with this group later today. Please, I ask all the members to help me welcome them to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the minister in welcoming these friends to the legislature. It's important work that they do, specifically Lorna Shaw-Lennox in her work of co-founding the Keep Meewasin. You know, it was an important signal that we value all our conservation agencies and urban parks throughout the province. And I hope the meeting is very fruitful today, and we hear positive things in the days that come forward.

I want to welcome as well Elizabeth, Blake, and Wyatt to their legislature. Thank you for coming down from Saskatoon. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and all the members, a group of 20 or so grade 12 students from F.W. Johnson Collegiate here in Regina. And their teacher accompanying them today is Mr. Scott McKillop.

It's great to see Mr. McKillop again. He's very diligent in bringing students every session down to watch the democratic process, have a chance to chat with him after routine proceedings. All members, please help me welcome them.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The season is upon us where the Saskatchewan legislative interns have made their picks for the first season. And I'm one such lucky Member of the Legislative Assembly to have been matched up with Anna Tsui with the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program.

Anna is a graduate with high honours from the University of Saskatchewan. Born and raised in Saskatoon and, you know, came through a program in the Aboriginal public administration program, again where I believe she was graduated top of the class, most outstanding graduate, Mr. Speaker.

And Anna is an individual that's got a lot of interests locally and globally. She's been seeing those interests through in work around human trafficking as a high school student, but certainly with the World University Service of Canada in places like Tanzania. And has also taken some time to learn some French language at the Université de Laval in Quebec this past summer and is again a great example of the kind of sharp, engaged people that come through the Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program.

And certainly, it's going to step . . . I'm going to have to step up my game, Mr. Speaker, in terms of keeping up with someone so intelligent, so passionate, and with such a great array of interests. So please join me in welcoming Anna Tsui to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask my colleagues for leave for an extended introduction, please.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, it's to you and through you I'm really proud today to introduce members of the University of Regina Rams football team who are seated up in the gallery. The Rams are a highly successful sports organization with a long and proud history which can be traced back to the early 1900s. More than 50 players have advanced on to the CFL [Canadian Football League]. I don't know what the U of S's [University of Saskatchewan] record is but I'm not sure it's not the same.

In 1999 the Rams and the University of Regina formed a community partnership enabling the team to join the Canada West conference of the Canadian intercollegiate athletic union, and just one year later, they made a huge impact on CIAU [Canadian Interuniversity Athletic Union] football by winning the Canada West conference championship and playing in the Vanier Cup.

And earlier this year, Rams alumni Stephen Bryce took the helm as the team's new coach, bringing more than a decade of coaching experience. And I can personally attest to his skills and his leadership as he worked with my son on the U14 Sask Selects that went to the Texas School of Football in Arlington last year.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday the Rams, I note, clinched a playoff spot with an exciting 35-33 victory over UBC [University of British Columbia], which means that they will play host to a semifinal game here on November the 5th, which I'm pretty excited about.

But the University of Regina Rams, and why I wanted them here today, is that they're more than a football team, Mr. Speaker. The team's focus is not only on excellence in sports but on developing players as role models in our community. And this is emphasized when they walk into the locker room, where for many years this poem has been displayed. It's called "A Man of Worth."

To be true, faithful, devout to the ideals of what is a man
 To understand and practise the virtue of honesty, the
 quality which gives one peace
 To have empathy for a less fortunate suffering soul and
 compassion to make a difference in that life
 To recognize what needs to be changed and possess the
 courage and patience to change it
 To be discerning and steadfast in love, the condition all
 men fear, yet long for
 To be resolute and firm in oneself while owning the
 dignity to be humble
 To have the will to commit to a cause, the passion to seize
 it, holding a vision, pursuing a goal

To believe and trust in a higher power guiding the path of
 all humanity
 To determine what is moral and right and then stand for it
 To know what is honour and strive for this cradle of
 justice
 To be loyal to a friend yet remain bold and brave in your
 own convictions
 To be co-operative and protective of your planet in
 reaching to discover, to know, and to learn
 To be generous and thoughtful, giving of your life to a
 better world, seeking no reward or fame from this gift
 To be genuine, to be wise, to be caring is to be a man of
 worth.

[13:45]

The Rams work hard to be men of worth, getting involved in special events and important causes throughout the city. Today marks the beginning of the Violence Prevention Week in Saskatchewan, and I'd like to highlight that the Rams are participating in the university's landmark UR Safe Gendered Violence Prevention Project at the U of R [University of Regina]. And this week they will be participating in a Man Up Against Violence workshop as a team as well.

And with that, I'm proud to introduce members of the Regina Rams, starting with head coach Stephen Bryce, offensive coordinator Mark McConkey, defensive lineman Bryce McKinnon, defensive lineman Kerrick Huggins, defensive back Marcus Kuling, linebacker Travis Semenok, defensive back Josh Tipton, defensive back Kahlen Branning, and linebacker Alex Rorke, as well as the video coordinator for Thomas Retzlaff.

So I ask the member for Athabasca, he's going to have to be careful today because we have some linemen in the room. I would like you all to join me in welcoming the University of Regina Rams to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join with the minister opposite and welcome these leaders to their community who are seated in your west gallery. Certainly the Regina Rams have an incredible record as part of our sporting history in our province, and this year's been special.

It's nice to welcome Coach Bryce here today, and we've been enjoying watching the success on the field and watching Noah Picton light it up game after game, and that incredible team that you've been putting on the field earning that home playoff berth on November 5th and, I believe, ranked eighth in the nation here right now.

So those exploits themselves deserve recognition here, but the second part of your efforts are in fact the game changers in many ways within our community. And we want to say thank you to all members of the Regina Rams, the entire organization along with all out at the University of Regina and other partners who are teaming up together to Man Up Against Violence to change cultures of sexual violence within our community. And certainly the Rams and those players are in an incredibly strong

position to be leaders on this front.

Certainly the Rams organization, based on the motto or the message that was shared here today by the minister, have long been focused on developing more than just great players but great people, and that character and those values to go with it. But I am so very thankful for the participation of the Regina Rams along with all of the partners in the UR Safe and the Man Up Against Violence. So I welcome these leaders here today and I wish them well on November 5th as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members, I noted in the . . . seated in your gallery is a gentleman today that really needs no introduction to this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, but I think it's appropriate that we do acknowledge his presence: Mr. John Hopkins, the president and CEO [chief executive officer] of the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Speaker, you might be aware of the fact that the Premier had the opportunity last week to address the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce luncheon with hundreds of hundreds of people at that luncheon, and Mr. Hopkins made it clear on that day the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce position on the federally imposed national carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. I think it's apropos he's here today as we debate that very important issue later today. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming John Hopkins to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And on behalf of the official opposition, we too would like to extend greetings to Mr. Hopkins and really thank you for your leadership in the Regina Chamber of Commerce and throughout the community of course. I had some fruitful meetings earlier and look forward to continued dialogue so that we have understanding of where the Regina Chamber of Commerce is going, and I really appreciate that opportunity. So I would like to welcome Mr. Hopkins to his Legislative Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I also see, seated beside Mr. Hopkins, Mr. Chad MacPherson from the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, a venerable organization in our province, a long-standing organization. And certainly Chad is working very hard to represent the interests of the stock growers of Saskatchewan, does a great job. And we'd like to welcome him to his Legislative Assembly as well.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I notice Mr. Chad MacPherson in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. And he's the executive director of the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association, a long-standing organization of cattle producers in this province of more than 100 years, Mr. Speaker. And we are always happy to be associated with the stock growers, and I ask all members to welcome Mr. MacPherson.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to join the Premier and my leader in welcoming His Excellency, Kenjiro Monji, Mr. Tanabe, Mr. Ando, and of course Mr. Price.

I would point out that my niece travelled to Japan as part of her studies to become a teacher. She really enjoyed an excellent time there when she visited your country several years ago. She spoke very highly of the gracious, resilient people. And she just loved the cities and the countryside, and she really enjoyed her visit to your great, gracious country.

And I also want to point out that, from our perspective, I live in the North where much of our mining occurs for the company called Cameco. And I want to put a plug in for the company called Cameco. Cameco has done a wonderful job working with the Aboriginal community. Of course, there's always work to be done, but certainly their history and some of the work and investment they made in the northern Aboriginal communities is great.

So I would certainly want to encourage you, when you meet with Cameco, to share our support. And I hope that your visit with the province on all fronts is very productive and, once again, thank you for visiting our Assembly.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour today to introduce, seated in your gallery, Ms. Alicia Miller. Alicia and her colleagues David, Anna, and Rachelle, as has been previously noted, are the 2016-2017 Saskatchewan legislative interns.

And I'm very happy to be paired with Alicia. Alicia is a very accomplished young woman. She is a graduate of Stewart Russell Elementary School in Regina, a graduate of Campbell Collegiate in Regina where she obtained an IB [International Baccalaureate] certificate. She also has a degree in international studies with a focus on international affairs, and with that, she graduated with great distinction and had some of the highest marks in her faculty.

In addition to that very, very busy and accomplished work, she also spends a lot of her time volunteering, including for the Regina Sexual Assault Centre. She is an avid environmentalist and is very active in a number of activities such as kayaking, camping, hiking and, I think to note, has been for the last three years a year-round cyclist. And those of us who spend winters in Regina know what an accomplishment that is. So I know that she's destined for very great things, and I'm so pleased that she has chosen to spend some time with us while she's on that path. And I invite all members of this legislature to invite Alicia and her colleagues to this Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise again to present a petition to improve PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] coverage for all Saskatchewan workers, Mr. Speaker. The petitioners point out that post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, can severely impact the lives of Saskatchewan workers and that delaying diagnosis and treatment for PTSD can be detrimental to recovery. The petitioners 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.

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 today is signed by citizens from Saskatoon. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. I would like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Melfort, Tisdale, Kinistino, Archerwill, Fairy Glen, Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Star City, Naicam, Yorkton, and Nipawin. I do so present. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am rising to present a petition to reverse the cuts to the Lighthouse program. In April 2014 the Minister of Social Services said that the Lighthouse in Saskatoon would "... take pressure off of existing detox facilities, hospitals and police cells, while keeping people safe, especially in our brutally cold winters." On the same day the Minister of Health said, "We want to ensure that individuals with mental health and addictions issues have a safe place to stay." These ministers are now trying to place the responsibility for repairing budget deficits on those experiencing addictions, unemployment, and poverty and who are living from day to day without proper services.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately reverse their recent cuts to funding that allows extremely vulnerable people to access the services of the Lighthouse stabilization unit in Saskatoon, and revisit their imposition of a strict and narrow definition of homelessness on November of 2015 which forced the Lighthouse to cut back its hours of central service in February of 2016, and take immediate steps to ensure that homeless people in Saskatchewan have emergency shelter, clothing, and food available to them before more lives are lost.

Mr. Speaker, I so submit. These individuals are from Saskatoon.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of Wakamow Valley Authority. And we know that as a result of the passage of *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2016* on June 30th, the Wakamow Valley Authority lost its statutory funding of \$127,000 from the Saskatchewan government in addition to \$30,000 in supplementary funding. This loss of annual funding negatively affected the ability of Wakamow to maintain and conserve its lands and repair its facilities and provide services to its community. So on June 21st the provincial government members voted in favour of this bill, resulting in cuts to Wakamow and the subsequent job losses. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to immediately repeal *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2016* and reinstate statutory funding to the Wakamow Valley Authority.

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

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Moose Jaw, Lumsden, Saskatoon, and even La Ronge. I do so present.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to present to you a petition condemning the Sask Party's cuts to the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program. After nearly a decade of wasting the economic boom and blowing through the savings, this government is now forcing the province's most vulnerable people to pay for the Sask Party mismanagement. The Sask Party's latest cold-hearted cuts will take money away from people who are unable to work due to a disability. The many people who are being hurt by the Sask Party cuts live with serious illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, autism, and many other illnesses. And contrary to the Minister of Social Services' claim, the

government underfunds clients in regards to shelter allowance, and that shelter allowance should be reflective of the current rental costs. I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to stop their plans to cut the SAID funding and immediately restore funding for those living with a disability; that shelter allowance is reflective of the current rental costs; and that the Saskatchewan Party government implement the recommendations of the advisory group on poverty reduction.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing these petitions are from Saskatoon, Shaunavon, and Maple Creek. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on the taxation of child care centres in Saskatchewan. Across Saskatchewan licensed, non-profit child care centres are taxed inconsistently and many of our licensed, non-profit child care centres pay commercial taxes. This is not done in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, BC [British Columbia], or New Brunswick.

[14:00]

Child care is essential to the economy, yet most centres struggle to balance their budgets. This issue threatens both the number of child care centres and the quality of care. Quality child care has an enormous positive impact on our child's future outcomes and yields high rates of economic return. Child care centres are institutions of early learning and childhood development. It's appropriate that they have the same tax treatment as schools. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan recognize that licensed, non-profit child care centres provide programs that are foundational to a healthy society by including them in the Saskatchewan Education Act; and that we exempt all licensed, non-profit child care centres in Saskatchewan from property tax through changes to the appropriate legislation.

Mr. Speaker, those signing this petition are from Regina. I do so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the stop to the Sask Party sell-off of SaskTel:

The petitioners, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to keep their promise, stop their plan to sell off SaskTel, and keep our valued Crown corporation in the hands of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by individuals from Sedley, Shaunavon, and Maple Creek. I so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to stop privatizing public liquor sales and profits. The signatories to this petition wish to bring attention the following: that the Government of Saskatchewan intends to privatize 40 Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority stores, which will result in millions of dollars being channelled into private profits instead of being used to pay for public services like health care, education, and highways; that hundreds of good jobs across Saskatchewan will be lost; and that rural economies will be weakened. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan stop the privatization of Saskatchewan's publicly owned liquor stores and instead direct SLGA to expand its store network and selection to meet Saskatchewan's growing needs.

I have 1,535 signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, and they come from all over this great province including, but not limited to, Estevan, Bienfait, Kipling, Watson, and Saskatoon. I do so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to stop the redirection of funding of the Northern Teacher Education Program Council, Inc. A recent report showed that 94 per cent of NORTEP [northern teacher education program] grads found employment in the North. NORTEP has improved teacher-retention rates in the North. NORTEP has a positive economic impact on northern Saskatchewan.

NORTEP provides high-quality, face-to-face instruction and services to students. The province's financial deficit cannot be fixed by cutting indigenous education in the North and the program that has served the North for over 40 years. And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately restore their five-year agreement to fund the Northern Teacher Education Program Council, Inc. and to continue funding NORTEP/NORPAC programs in La Ronge.

It is signed by many good people of the North. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Prince Albert Police Service Celebrates 130th Anniversary

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was pleased to attend the celebration held to honour the 130th anniversary of

the Prince Albert Police Service. A free barbeque was held at the Cornerstone parking lot, with officers cooking burgers and serving the public. Two former police chiefs provided the entertainment. A tent was set up as a museum and people enjoyed looking at the old uniforms and learning a lot more about the history of our police service.

Mr. Speaker, our police service is older than the province of Saskatchewan. The first town constable was William Dilworth. The first duty he was tasked with was to deal with wild dogs running through the town. Our police service has come a long way since then. From a one-person operation in 1886, the Prince Albert Police Service has grown to today's department of 91 police officers, five bylaw officers, 28 civilian support, and a dispatch centre.

The Prince Albert Police Service is the busiest police force in Saskatchewan. Our officers respond to more incidents than police services anywhere else in the province, even more than in the two biggest cities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating Chief Troy Cooper and the Prince Albert Police Service on their 130th anniversary and acknowledging the great work done in our community by its members.

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

Remembering Corporal Nathan Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two years ago Saturday, we watched in horror as the Parliament building in Canada was locked down as a violent shooting took place. We learned quickly that not only was the shooting in the halls of parliament, but it started with the tragic killing of Corporal Nathan Cirillo who at the time was standing sentry over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at the National War Memorial. Further, it was only two days prior that a vehicle deliberately rammed two servicemen as they left a shopping mall, killing Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent.

Mr. Speaker, today we pay tribute to these men who were not killed in the heat of battle but rather on our own soil in peacetime. We saw in those two days, two years ago, some of the greatest cowardice imaginable as these terrorists tried to instill fear into our nation. Yet, Mr. Speaker, I can say they failed in their objective. It was not fear they caused but rather an outpouring of courage. In both instances, bystanders ran to the aid of the men attacked and did everything they could to save them. We saw our nation rally together in support.

Mr. Speaker, today remember that our freedom came with a price. I invite all members of this Assembly to join me in remembering the sacrifice of Corporal Cirillo and Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Resolutions at New Democratic Party Convention

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This

weekend more than 400 people from across Saskatchewan came together in Saskatoon for our party's annual convention. And I know members on that side jumped to conclusions about what would come out of our convention, but Saskatchewan New Democrats are excited about some great resolutions we passed to help support Saskatchewan families and stop the waste by the Saskatchewan Party.

We called for a judicial inquiry into that government's GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal that has wasted millions of taxpayers' dollars — millions that we are now seeing cut from schools and from hospitals. We called for an immediate action to address the long-standing suicide crisis facing First Nations and Métis communities of our province. We talked about the need to restore funding to the Lighthouse and the SAID program so that vulnerable people won't have to pay for the Sask Party's mismanagement any longer.

We talked about honouring the funding agreement with NORTEP and NORPAC [Northern Professional Access College], and helping more women find work in the trades so that they can create more good-paying opportunities for our people of Saskatchewan. We stood together, shoulder to shoulder, to oppose the Premier's plan to sell SaskTel in order to pay for his decade of bad choices and failure to diversify our economy.

We are standing up for Saskatchewan values, Mr. Speaker, and we're building together to make sure everyone in Saskatchewan is as strong as they can be so that we all could be as strong as we should be. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatoon Achievers in Business Excellence Awards

Mr. Olauson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to congratulate a number of outstanding Saskatchewan businesses that were celebrated at the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce's 33rd annual tribute to achievers in business excellence.

I along with the Deputy Premier, the member from Saskatoon Fairview, and the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood, attended the 2016 ABEX [Achievement in Business Excellence] awards gala which was held on Saturday at TCU Place in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, more than 50 finalists were nominated for awards. The winners included Hospitality Network Canada; Viterra; Crestline Coach; Cornerstone Credit Union; the Park Town Hotel; Saskatoon Co-op; Black Bridge Brewery; and Standard Motors.

Mr. Speaker, a number of additional businesses and entrepreneurs were recognized at the gala. Prairie Mud Service was inducted into the Saskatchewan Business Hall of Fame. Pat Tenney from Lloydminster received the Roger Phillips Chamber Builder Award. Gavin Semple, chairman of the Brandt Group of Companies, was presented the Business Leader of the Year Award. Elysia and Natasha Vandenhurk of Three Farmers Products were recognized as the young

entrepreneurs of the year. Finally, Hillberg & Berk was the biggest winner of the evening, taking home both the Marketing Award and, top prize, the Business of the Year Award.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating all of the outstanding nominees and winners of the 2016 ABEX Awards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Battleford.

Battlefords Business Excellence Awards Gala

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm also pleased to rise today to congratulate a number of Battlefords area businesses that were recognized at the 23rd annual Battlefords Business Excellence Awards gala. This sold-out event was hosted by the Battlefords Chamber of Commerce and was held at the Dekker Centre for Performing Arts in North Battleford on October the 4th.

Mr. Speaker, a record 41 finalists were nominated for awards in six categories this year. The winners included All Out Graphics & Design Ltd. in the category of New Business Venture; Fisher's Drug Store for Customer Service; Lakeland Veterinary Services for Community Contribution; Gold Eagle Casino in the category of Marketing; Jewellery Connection Inc. in the category of Microbusiness; and Anderson Pump House Ltd., winner of the Battlefords Best Employer.

Mr. Speaker, two additional groups were recognized for their exceptional business contributions in the Battlefords area. The Dekker family was honoured with the Heritage Award for their dedication to broadcasting and community involvement. The family's 60 years of involvement with Battlefords area radio stations came to an end last year when David Dekker retired from his role as general manager of CJNB, Q98, and 93.3 The Rock.

Mr. Speaker, the evening culminated with the member from Biggar-Sask Valley presenting the Business of the Year Award to Fortress Windows and Doors Ltd.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating all of the outstanding nominees and winners of the 2016 BBEX [Battlefords Business Excellence] awards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Girls Self-Esteem Workshop

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On October the 2nd, the Minister of Central Services, the Minister of Social Services, Dr. June Zimmer, and myself had the privilege of hosting the 6th annual Girls Self-Esteem Workshop here in Regina, with over 200 in attendance. Girls ages 10 to 13 are invited to participate in the workshop with their mothers or their mentors free of charge.

Mr. Speaker, 7 in 10 girls believe they are not good enough or don't measure up in some way, including their looks, performance in school, relationship with friends or family

members. We want to change these girls' negative views about themselves. Every young person deserves to grow up feeling confident about the way they look and feel so they are able to reach their full potential.

The purpose of this workshop is to show young girls that they are valued, that they can have a positive impact on the world around them, now and in the future. Strong girls grow up to be strong women, and we need to encourage and champion our youth to become the leaders of tomorrow. We want our youth to be proud, to be bold, to be strong, to be brave, and to be themselves.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank our sponsors Girls in the Game, Tim Hortons, the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association, and Western Litho Printers. I would also like to say a big thank you to all the girls and the mentors who attended this wonderful event. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Former Deputy Premier Receives Shevchenko Medal

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on the evening of October the 1st I was pleased to bring greetings on behalf of the Premier and the province to the XXV Congress of Ukrainian Canadians. The Ukrainian Canadian Congress meets every three years, and this was the first time ever, Mr. Speaker, that it was held here in Saskatchewan.

Canadians of Ukrainian descent from all over Canada gathered to celebrate their 75th anniversary of their organization, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress or UCC. In attendance that evening was the Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, the Ukrainian ambassador, federal ministers Dion and Goodale, and a number of senators and members of parliament.

During the evening, the UCC presented their highest award, the Shevchenko Medal, to a number of well-deserving Canadian Ukrainians. The medals were awarded in areas of education, community development, culture and arts, and public service. An individual from Saskatchewan was awarded the Shevchenko Medal for Public Service.

That individual, Mr. Speaker, was formerly deputy premier, Ken Krawetz. The UCC recognized Ken for his many years of service to this province, starting out in the classrooms, later on with the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, private business, and for many years serving in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join with me in congratulating Ken Krawetz on receiving the Shevchenko Medal, Mr. Speaker, a very well-deserved award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Role of the Global Transportation Hub in Land Acquisitions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, let's try this again. The Premier's lines last week simply weren't supported by the facts. We know that the Ministry of Highways was actively working to acquire the east parcel of lands, and then all of a sudden instead, the government swooped in with the GTH. Question to the Premier: why did he purchase these lands through the GTH instead of having Highways do it and save millions of dollars?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for his question. The Provincial Auditor that did a review of the land transaction indicated that there were problems within government with respect to this transaction. A lot of the problems she identified centred around communications.

The auditor . . . Well the Leader of the Opposition just shook his head. That's what the report says. The report says that different areas of government were not communicating properly during the process. This is why, this is why GTH officials were unaware that Highways was engaged in a broader land assembly. They should have been. There should have been better communications; there wasn't. We've taken action to remedy that situation going forward, Mr. Speaker.

But I would point out that same Provincial Auditor's report indicated that there was no fraud, that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no conflict of interest. And in a subsequent interview the auditor, in July of this year, said there were no red flags with respect to any of those issues in the report. But there are problems she identified and we are going to respond to those and we take responsibility for those issues. And one of them was a communications issue between Highways and other parts of government.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — We have a communications issue on the floor of this Assembly with a Premier who won't answer a very simple question. Highways, we know, were actively acquiring those lands. They would have saved millions of dollars. To the Premier: why did he use the GTH instead of using Highways? What's the real answer on this front?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the fact that the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like the answer makes it no less an answer. It is precisely, it is precisely the answer in this particular case. And the auditor noted the fact that different parts of government were not communicating properly.

Mr. Speaker, I would also point this out: Highways doesn't actually, under the policy that existed during the transaction . . . It was the long-standing policy of the Ministry of Highways, including when they were in government, that until an entire land assembly plan is done, until entire planning is done for any particular interchange or roadwork, they do not pull the trigger, so to speak, on purchasing the land, purchasing the land. And so

when it was discovered that Highways was looking at this, the timelines didn't match up with respect to the need for the Global Transportation Hub to move forward with the assembly, and the decision was made that the Hub would make the purchases.

Mr. Speaker, these are questions that were all before the Assembly and before the province when the Provincial Auditor . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well the Deputy Leader of the NDP [New Democratic Party] doesn't want to hear the answers, Mr. Speaker, and we know why: because it doesn't fit with their narrative; it doesn't fit with their agenda.

The bottom line is all of these questions, including the one the Leader of the Opposition just asked, were before the province, were available to the auditor. Cabinet documents were turned over to the auditor. She said there is no conflict of interest. There is no fraud or evidence of wrongdoing. There were no red flags, Mr. Speaker. And we've answered the question with respect to Highways versus GTH.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Not a single adequate answer from that minister. Saskatchewan people deserve answers, not tired talking points from the Premier. So we'll try another one to the Premier. In April of 2012, who called the scandal-plagued Sask Party minister responsible to suggest the scandal in this land deal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated with regard to the phone call that was referenced, the member for Kindersley doesn't recall who the call was from. The facts are the call wasn't followed up on by the GTH or by the Ministry of the Economy, and the auditor didn't feel that the call was germane to her audit. The auditor had full authority to look into all of the matters with respect to the transaction, had access to all of the cabinet documents and all of the individuals whom she wished to speak to, and her conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and that there was no conflict of interest.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The auditor's report was scathing and it exonerated no one. And the question was to the Premier, not to the junior minister to jump up with an answer like that. And I guess the question, honestly, to the Premier: how does the scandal-plagued minister remember who it wasn't, but not who it was?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well you know, as I've said, Mr. Speaker, the auditor had full authority to look into all of the matters with respect to the transaction that we're discussing on the floor of the Assembly. The auditor had access to all of the documents, all of the individuals. The auditor identified challenges, Mr. Speaker, with respect to communication

between the GTH and with respect to the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure.

We've accepted the 10 recommendations that were made by the Provincial Auditor. We're moving forward on implementing those recommendations. We're moving forward in terms of governance improvement at the Global Transportation Hub Authority. That's what our focus is on, Mr. Speaker — how we can move the file forward, how we can make the Global Transportation Hub the success that we know it's going to be.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The question was to the Premier. How did the scandal-plagued minister know who it wasn't but not who it was?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well I've addressed the issue with respect to the phone call being referenced and I'll reference it again. The member for . . .

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated, the member for Kindersley doesn't remember who the call was from. I would note that there was no follow-up on that call from the Global Transportation Hub Authority or from the Ministry of the Economy. And frankly the auditor didn't feel that that call was germane to her audit.

So you know, as I said, the conclusion of the Provincial Auditor after fully canvassing all of the issues with respect to this transaction was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and that there was no conflict of interest.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Question was to the Premier; no answer again. So let's just be clear here. You're telling me that through all this time in the investigation and this period of time, that no one from government ever went over to that minister until last week to ask him who had called him on April of 2012? Is that seriously the story this Premier wants to stick to?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think we've fully gone through the facts with regard to the call. The member from Kindersley doesn't remember who the call was from. The fact is that there was no follow-up on that call from either the GTH or from the Ministry of the Economy, and the auditor herself didn't feel that that call was germane to the conduct of her audit.

What she did identify were challenges in terms of communication, particularly between the GTH and the Ministry of Highways. She made 10 recommendations. We accept those recommendations. We're working hard on implementing those

recommendations. And we feel that those recommendations are going to be improvements in terms of the communication between MHI [Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure] and the GTH.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The question wasn't answered; it was to the Premier. To the Premier: this has been a scandal that's gone on for months. It's wasted millions of dollars. Are you telling the people . . . Is the Premier telling the people of Saskatchewan that last week was the first time the scandal-plagued minister was asked that question about that phone call?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The conclusion of the Provincial Auditor, after fully canvassing and having full authority to look into any matter to which she considered important with respect to this transaction, her conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and that there was no conflict of interest.

The Provincial Auditor did identify challenges in terms of the communications between the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure and the Global Transportation Hub. We take those recommendations very seriously. We're working very hard on implementing those recommendations and we're focused on moving forward in terms of making the GTH a great success.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable and it's pathetic. To the Premier: when was the first time that his government asked the question of that scandal-plagued minister, who had called him on April 2012?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the Economy and GTH.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. You know, as I've responded repeatedly, the member for Kindersley indicated that he doesn't remember who that call was from. The call was not followed up on — that's a fact — by either the Global Transportation Hub Authority or the Ministry of the Economy, and the auditor herself didn't see that the call was germane enough to follow up on in terms of her audit.

So, Mr. Speaker, what we know though is what the conclusion of the Provincial Auditor was, which that there was no wrongdoing; there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Support for the North

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, there is a price being paid for the Sask Party's scandals, waste, and mismanagement, and it is the people of Saskatchewan who are being forced to pay it. And

no more than the people in northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] had recommendations related to health care and to many more to build hope in our communities, but this government has just failed. They failed to apologize for the Sixties Scoop. They failed to keep their promise for the NORTEP-NORPAC.

From job training to court worker programs, they have failed. Now with the tragic crisis we are facing, this government is sending short-term solutions. What commitment will they make to support the North in the long term and to stop failing our communities?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and as the member opposite should know, our government's plan for growth outlines a number of initiatives for the entire province including the North. We recognize the importance of the North, the people of the North and the resources of the North, and how vital they are to our province.

In reference to the truth and reconciliation, Mr. Speaker, we have . . . 22 of the 34 recommendations that refer to provincial responsibility have been supported or are being worked on, Mr. Speaker, and we will move forward with First Nations people and northern people on furthering those initiatives. Many of them, Mr. Speaker, have been in the area of education because we feel education is vital for our northerners and the northern students in order for them to be able to enjoy the success of our province. So, Mr. Speaker, that is something that we will be working with our northern communities and our northern leaders in order to move that agenda forward.

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

Funding for Emergency Shelters

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, this government needs to stand up and own up to the consequences of their cuts. On Saturday hundreds and hundreds of people gathered at a rally to protest the cuts to the Lighthouse and to tell the government how wrong these cuts are. People are coming together because these cuts are cold-hearted and wrong. They cut \$70,000 from the Lighthouse in Saskatoon. Now, instead of people staying at the Lighthouse, they are being picked up by the police. And instead of people staying at the Lighthouse, they are being dropped off at the emergency room.

Mr. Speaker, if this government is unmoved by the human consequences and they think they are saving money with this cut, they need to do the math again. The cost of having people in ERs [emergency room] and jails is huge when compared to the Lighthouse. To the Minister of Social Services: how do these cuts make sense?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, first of all, there have been no cuts to the Lighthouse. We continue to fund the

Lighthouse the exact same funding as the previous year and in the exact same way that we fund every other emergency shelter in Saskatchewan.

In addition to that, we have a cold weather strategy, Mr. Speaker, whereas anyone who presents themselves to a shelter is either referred to another shelter to spend the night and/or is given a meal voucher and a hotel room to spend the night in cold weather, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, it isn't just Saskatoon where the Sask Party has made these backward cuts. In fact their cuts to the Lighthouse in North Battleford made national news. The Lighthouse in North Battleford serviced not only that city but all the communities surrounding it. Front-line workers and community members have told us about the devastating consequences to these cuts. Most governments would have fessed up and reversed this terrible decision, but not the Sask Party. They have gone further and cut deeper. Mr. Speaker, how does this make any sense?

[14:30]

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, we have no contract with the North Battleford Lighthouse, and we will be meeting with the Saskatoon Lighthouse to discuss longer term, sustainable planning. But let's remember that our government has created 252 new shelter spaces in Saskatchewan as a government, which is more than double what existed before. We've also increased the per diem rates up to eight times since 2008, and we've increased our investments in 332 units for those who are hard to house — exactly the kinds of people who are looking for longer term, sustainable housing that exist here.

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

Funding for Health Care

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, the consequences are real; in fact they are record-breaking. Just last Friday there was a new all-time record set for hospital over capacity. Between RUH [Royal University Hospital] and St. Paul's alone, they were 116 people over capacity and they had 49 people in their ERs waiting for admission. That's a record 165 people waiting in hallways, pods, and the emergency room — 49 people waiting in emergency rooms for admission.

That is pretty astounding since this government promised no waits, and is building their new hospitals with tiny waiting rooms. This record comes even before the flu season hits. We are in crisis now and it is only going to get worse. Beds are still in hallways. They've been shuffled around so they aren't blocking paths to exits, but this is not a solution. To the minister: how can the government be getting things so wrong?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since we've been given the privilege of forming government, we've seen a dramatic increase in the population in the province. The province has grown by almost 150,000 people, Mr. Speaker. That adds strain to our health care facilities. Mr. Speaker, we've responded by increasing acute care bed capacity across the province, but Mr. Speaker, these incidents do arise from time to time. The member opposite mentioned flu season. Potentially during flu season . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I'm finding it increasingly difficult to hear the minister's response. I would ask all members to please . . . who's asking the question and replying, that we give them the decency to listen to their responses well. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, at different times of the year, incidents arise which cause extra strain on capacity. This isn't new to Saskatchewan, and this isn't new across the country, Mr. Speaker. The other day I mentioned I was recently at a meeting of Health ministers across the country who are all grappling with the same sort of issues. We're working with the health regions who in turn are working with the hospitals to ensure that we're doing things in a most efficient manner possible to ensure that patient care always comes first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, we know that programs have been cut in the community, and we know that this is contributing to over-capacity issues and long waits in the emergency room.

This government cut 20 positions in the RQHR [Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region], and those were to mental health services. In the government's own report on mental health and addictions, Dr. Stockdale Winder said, "By far the area I heard identified as needing the most improvement throughout the consultation was enhancing the access and capacity for services, followed by prevention and early intervention."

We need to enhance the access and capacity for service, and the Sask Party's solution to this is to cut 20 front-line care workers from mental health. How can they justify this? Do they not realize it is this lack of access to care that is making issues worse?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, on the issue in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, the health region is in the best position, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that any decisions they make don't affect patient care. Mr. Speaker, that's what they're attempting to do. We have faith that they're doing their job appropriately. Mr. Speaker, they publicly said that there won't be a reduction in services to mental health. They won't halt programs. And any of the mental health unit beds will not change as a result of the layoffs.

What they're doing, Mr. Speaker . . . In fact this is a quote from the CEO [chief executive officer] of the health region that says, "During this process, the region will not be reducing services, closing beds, or halting programs related to this initiative." That's in the news release from Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, from CEO Keith Dewar on September 16th, 2016. Mr. Speaker, we trust health regions will make the appropriate decisions.

Back to the original issue that the member opposite was raising, the same came from the CEO of St. Paul's Hospital. In an interview, Jean Morrison said:

[They've] affirmed the government is committed to fixing the problem.

"They've prioritized patient flow as a provincial priority," . . . adding it's not as simple as building a new hospital.

Mr. Speaker, we're working hard through the ministry with the health regions and the hospitals to make sure they have the appropriate resources and that they're doing things in the most efficient way possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has to stop making light of these cuts and start taking ownership for them. Instead, on Thursday they showed that they are the biggest bullies on the playground. The member from Lloydminster, a previous school board Chair, proclaimed and I quote, ". . . if students in this province are not receiving the supports they need, it can only be laid back on school boards for not making appropriate decisions which are in the best interest of students."

Mr. Speaker, this is unacceptable. This government is solely responsible for funding education and yet we now see them throwing school boards under the school bus. Mr. Speaker, that minister has ultimate control over funding and that minister refused to fully fund the teachers' contract that he signed. So from where do they get the audacity to drag school divisions through the mud?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition is on record as supporting the autonomy of individual school divisions. In the funding that the school divisions get, they receive allocations that they can reappropriate between teachers, TAs [teaching assistant], and a variety of other things that they choose to do. Mr. Speaker, the overall funding that this government has provided to school divisions since 2007 has increased from \$1.6 billion in 2007 to \$2.8 billion . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the operating funding has

gone up some 33 per cent in that period of time, from \$1.4 billion to \$1.8 billion, an increase of 33 per cent. Enrolment during that time, Mr. Speaker, increased by only 9 per cent, Mr. Speaker. The school divisions received significant funds, dollars from this government. Mr. Speaker, we value and respect the work that's done by our teachers . . . [inaudible] . . . We will provide funding and we respect the autonomy of the divisions to make decisions appropriately and fairly for students in our province.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, so we're clear, let's make this more simple for the minister. A simple yes or no will do. School boards used to set their own mill rates, but do school boards now have the ability or control to generate their own revenue?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'd encourage the Education critic, if she doesn't want to take my word for it, simply do a drive down Elphinstone Street. Part of that is in her constituency. When she takes that drive she will see the new Scott Collegiate under construction. She will see a new Sacred Heart school under construction. She will also see a new school for Connaught under construction, a school, Mr. Speaker, which she in fact opposed.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to stand up and tell the people in that area that this is something we're providing because that's something . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I know it's the second week in, guys, but please show respect to the critic asking the question and the minister answering the question. I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're going to be telling the people in that neighbourhood that the member opposite opposed the new school in Connaught, which is in her constituency. Mr. Speaker, that is something that is needed by that community. We are going to provide that to the school. And, Mr. Speaker, we value and respect our education partners in this province and we will not take advice from the people opposite. We will continue to fund our schools, Mr. Speaker. We value our students and we value our teachers.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Position on Climate Change and Carbon Tax

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today members of this House will engage in a very, very important debate in terms of this province's economy. And may I suggest, I think a very, very important date in the eternal question in this confederation of

jurisdiction between the federal government and the provincial government. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will be making a specific motion with respect to the issue of the nationally imposed carbon tax.

Mr. Speaker, by way of context . . . And actually just before I provide that context, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge some of the groups that will be in attendance here today for part or all of the debate. There are many other groups in the province who have weighed in in opposition to the federal, to the Liberal-imposed carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, but some have joined us today. John Hopkins from the Regina Chamber of Commerce was introduced a little bit earlier on. John and the Regina Chamber have been a clarion voice for the growth of the province of Saskatchewan, for the growth of Regina. They played an instrumental role, as I recall, in making sure the facts were brought to light in the referendum on P3s [public-private partnership] in the city of Regina that really helped inform this government's plan going forward and created support in our capital city for the notion that we need to be pragmatic and practical when it comes to infrastructure solutions. And John has brought that same pragmatism to the issue of the carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of his members.

Todd Lewis with APAS, the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan, have indicated concern about the carbon tax. Chad MacPherson was introduced earlier on from the stock growers. Levi Wood is with the wheat growers, Mr. Speaker. And these folks are certainly welcomed in their Legislative Assembly today. And we will be hearing from other groups as well in the coming days, Mr. Speaker.

I noted in fact that just a few days ago without a lot of fanfare the Canada West Equipment Dealers, who represent some very key businesses right through urban and rural Saskatchewan, came out in strong support of the Government of Saskatchewan's position that this carbon tax was the wrong approach of the federal government, and that we needed to be focused on the actual solutions, the actual technological solutions for worldwide emission.

So I want to thank those groups for coming forward. We've noted the support in Saskatchewan from the people of the province. It ranges between 70 and 75 per cent support, depending on the survey or the poll you're looking at. This represents a full-throated, firm support for the Government of Saskatchewan's position and against the position of the federal government.

We've also heard some muted support from members opposite. Now I'm hoping that in the course of this debate, they will be able to take their places, stand in their places, and provide a much clearer position with respect to carbon taxes — not just timing of them, but a universal carbon tax versus the kind of carbon pricing that our province might be able to, willing to engage in when the economy strengthens, for example a heavy emitters tech fund, Mr. Speaker. We look forward to hearing from members opposite.

A little while ago, I guess now just about a week ago, I had the chance and the honour to present to the Regina Chamber of Commerce. Normally at that time of year we'd present a state of the province address. This was obviously going to be different.

This was going to be about not just laying out the opposition of our party to what the Prime Minister has unilaterally announced, but also to propose an alternative.

And I'd like to just summarize the remarks that I made at the Regina chamber, if I can. But the context is important, Mr. Speaker, because we know that when the current Prime Minister was a candidate for this high office as leader of the Liberal Party, he made some solemn commitments with respect to federalism.

He criticized the predecessor, former prime minister Harper, for what he depicted as sort of a unilateral or at least a bilateral approach to provincial-federal relations, and said when the country, and if the country were to elect a Liberal government and he would be the Prime Minister, it would herald in a new era of collaborative federalism.

[14:45]

Well, Mr. Speaker, based on what we saw three weeks ago in the House of Commons, I don't hold out much hope for a new era of collaborative federalism. What we've seen in the days since that announcement with respect to health care and the health accord doesn't give me a lot of hope that this current federal government will keep its promise to have a more collaborative approach to the provinces.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, there are three provinces that walked out of the Environment ministers' meeting. I'll talk a little bit more about that in a moment. And I'm happy to note that the Environment minister's actually still in the room right now. He's not . . . He's stayed with us.

It's interesting to note that as a result of that minister's meetings, we've had subsequent interactions with the federal government on different files, and there seems to be anything but a collaborative approach coming from the federal government.

Picture this, Mr. Speaker. While Environment ministers of this country are meeting in Montreal, ostensibly to do the final work of the working groups — the federal-provincial working groups to which we agreed in Vancouver when the Prime Minister convened the first ministers' meeting on climate change — while they were working on the final recommendations of working groups to be sent then to the first ministers' meeting when we meet in early December for a final discussion and deliberation and decision, while they're doing that work in this new collaborative approach, at the very time of that work, the Prime Minister stands in his place in Ottawa and makes the unilateral announcement on the most important part of any climate change plan.

The meat of the federal government's approach to climate change was announced in a unilateral way in the House of Commons, and frankly there hasn't been a lot of criticism about that. I've been surprised at the lack of criticism either from perhaps observers or pundits or, well certainly there's been some observations by political people that they don't appreciate that tactic. But really it's sort of come and gone. And obviously now we're debating the merits of what's been proposed by the federal government with a little discussion about how that

approach differed significantly from what they promised in an election campaign.

We came out very early on . . . And I want to credit now, if I may, the leadership of the Minister of the Environment who worked in advance of and during that meeting to make sure that we could avoid what we have since been unable to avoid as a result of unilateral action by Prime Minister Trudeau. But the Environment minister did an excellent job of working with colleagues at that table, as we all know. And I was in constant contact with the Minister of the Environment throughout that meeting, and he was more comfortable frankly after that, well that very disrespectful act of the Prime Minister in the House of Commons, just to cut short the meeting, there wasn't really much to talk about after the Prime Minister had announced the carbon price issue. And so Saskatchewan had resolved that we didn't really need to be a part of that meeting anymore.

And I'm happy to report to the House something they well know already, that Nova Scotia and Newfoundland and Labrador agreed, and they also left that meeting. I was in contact, both texting regularly and in a phone conversation, with Premier McNeil of Nova Scotia and also Premier Dwight Ball of Newfoundland and Labrador after the meeting. And I want to also put on the record that the province of Saskatchewan is grateful for their actions and their courage to leave that particular Environment ministers' meeting.

In the days following, we've tried to lay out the reasons why we might be opposed to what the federal government has announced. And let's be clear. The federal government has announced that beginning in 2017, there will be in every province — territories exempted — but there will be in every province a price on carbon or a tax on carbon of \$10 per tonne. That will be the number in 2017, and it'll escalate to \$50 a tonne by 2022.

We knew we had some of our homework done as to what a carbon tax or price would cost the province of Saskatchewan, but we were able to quickly point out to Saskatchewan people and the country that on average this tax, when fully implemented, would cost Saskatchewan households about \$1,250 on an annual basis. And we were also able to point out that, based on our level of emissions and what they're forecast to be, it would take out two and a half billion dollars by 2022 from the economy. And then there's a bit of a debate that ensued about revenue neutrality. And more on that in a moment.

But a carbon levy, a carbon tax by definition is going to hit carbon-intense industries more, in a greater way with greater pain, than other sectors that are not as carbon intense. So do we have carbon-intense industries in this province? Well yes we do. And you know what? We're proud of those industries. Oil and gas is a carbon-intense industry. Mining is a carbon-intense industry. Agriculture is seen to be — not by those inside our province, not by agricultural leaders or our Agriculture minister — but there's a perception that agriculture is a heavy-emitting, a carbon-intense industry when you don't give them credit for natural absorption and sequester. And more on that in a moment as well.

So you can see, Mr. Speaker, the very things that form the

bulwark of the economy of this province, that provide for livelihood, that provide for income and jobs and a way of life, those very industries would be hit hard by a carbon tax — never mind if it's revenue neutral. The cost of operating a farm in southern Saskatchewan will be higher and significantly higher. I saw the news on CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] where someone involved with the Western Wheat Growers did the quick math on his farm. His farm alone, I think the costs were going to be \$80,000 every single year, right out of that farm near Davidson, Saskatchewan.

So he, by the way, is a price taker. Our farmers take the world price. He competes with, for example — if he grew any lentils and I bet he did; he probably does — let's use the example of a lentil farmer in North Dakota. He now faces a higher cost structure than his farmer does in North Dakota — same market, taking the price. Principally the market's in Asia and, more specifically, in India where we have a strong market share. You know, north of 80 per cent of all the lentils they would have to import come from the province of Saskatchewan, come from about 18,000 amazing pulse farmers in Saskatchewan. So we know that farmer is at a competitive disadvantage notwithstanding revenue neutrality.

What about a potash mine in Saskatchewan? With whom do they do they compete for world market share? Well they compete, for example, with mines in Russia or Belarus. I would say to the Prime Minister, through this Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan, to just think reasonably about this for a minute. Do we believe that Putin will ever implement a carbon tax that would be the equivalent that we are facing in this country on his potash mines? Of course not.

Here again our potash producers — and we have 40 per cent of the world's reserves in this province — here again, our potash producers are price takers. They can't just jack up the price to China if their costs go up. And yet Mr. Trudeau's plan and the federal Liberal plan will unilaterally and arbitrarily increase their cost structure.

What about oil and gas? You know the Bakken Formation where the Minister of Energy and Resources is from, in that general area of Saskatchewan, we share that formation with North Dakota and with Montana. Begrudgingly, but we share it. And so we always have to be competitive.

We have to compete with oil rigs to have them in our province to create jobs and sustain jobs on our side of the border, to create investment that pays for highways and schools. In question period we talked a lot about funding education and health care. It all comes from the ability to successfully compete for investment dollars, see those investment dollars spent in a growing economy, and thereby have a tax base so you can support all the things you want to do in Saskatchewan.

What are the chances for Saskatchewan to compete successfully with North Dakota, with the North Dakota share of the Bakken Formation for example, if we've got a \$50 a tonne additional cost to Canadian producers? The Minister of Energy and Resources was talking to one of the major companies that has actually kind of voted with their money about what kind of policies and environment they want. About 90 per cent of their drilling, even though they're Calgary-based, happens in our

province. A little bit in Colorado and a much smaller bit than that yet in the province of Alberta, where they have some real concerns about policies in that particular province — policies we don't ever want coming back to this province, may I just say, by the way.

An Hon. Member: — Never will.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Never will. But he does invest in, that company invests in the United States. So have we made, has Prime Minister Trudeau's plan made his decision easier to invest in the US [United States] rather than in the province of Saskatchewan or in any other Canadian jurisdiction with an additional \$50 a tonne? That's exactly what has happened with this carbon tax, or will happen with this carbon tax, and that's why we categorically reject the notion of revenue neutrality.

And I've heard, and I've seen on my Twitter feed, there's a lot of supporters of the opposition, of the NDP, say, just sort of spout this federal government notion that, well it'll be revenue neutral. Even the minister for the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Goodale, was on a local radio station. He said, yes it may take 2.5, the carbon tax might take two and a half billion dollars out of your economy but, don't worry, you can pay it all back in income tax relief.

Well how does that help the energy worker near Weyburn, Saskatchewan who lost his job because we're not competitive anymore? And how does that help the Evraz worker, 900 of them who've lost their job because Evraz has said, look we can't compete here anymore, we're going to have to go to some of our US bases to invest in the future? And how does that help the lentil farmer from . . . [inaudible] . . . Saskatchewan who's probably laid off people that he's got working on his farm because the \$80,000 he'll lose to the Trudeau carbon tax has to come from somewhere? And how does that help a potash mineworker that's not working to full capacity — or worse, laid off — because now they have a higher cost structure in Saskatchewan, thanks to this federal Liberal carbon tax, than they do in Russia or Belarus?

How does income tax relief help any of those people if they've lost their job? And that's our message not just in this House today but to the entire country, and specifically to the federal Liberal government, Mr. Speaker.

And so, Mr. Speaker, more than simply just complain about this carbon tax, to point out that it's not neutral and to point out . . . By way, one other issue we have with the carbon tax is its efficacy. Does it work? Have these carbon taxes . . . And again on social media, I had a few people say today, well why don't you check out . . . When I asked for where's the economic impact assessment from the federal government before they announced this transformational change, some people were able to share with me, well why don't you just look at the BC example because they've had a carbon tax since 2008. Well you don't need an economic impact assessment because you can use their real-life example. Oh yes, we can use the real-life example of British Columbia. Here's the bottom line, Mr. Speaker: a carbon tax in that province at \$30 a tonne, at \$30 a tonne, has seen an increase in emissions from 2010. What is the point of a carbon tax universally applied? That emissions would come down.

Now I've had people say — and I mentioned this at the Regina chamber speech — I've had people say to me, well you know, to be fair, you have to note the fact that the carbon intensity has come down in BC. In other words, the GDP [gross domestic product] has increased and so the emissions haven't maybe kept . . . They've gone up, but they haven't kept pace with GDP increases. Or they've said, look, there's a per capita consideration. The population's grown. Well the same considerations can be made in the province of Saskatchewan where finally we see population growth at historic levels.

And that's not what the Paris Declaration is all about. Paris is about absolute reductions, not per capita . . . per capita and not intensity . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . and maybe not about per capita either. They're about, Mr. Speaker, absolute reductions which have not come to bear as a result of the longest standing, universally applied carbon tax that we're aware of in Canada.

They say, well what about other examples around the world? Australia implemented a carbon tax. They cancelled theirs. What about France where the Paris Declaration quite obviously was signed? There are reports today, there are reports today, Mr. Speaker, out of Paris that they have amended legislation in their counterpart to parliament that removes the carbon tax on coal-fire plants. They're walking away from a carbon tax in France, and we'll know more about that in November.

So if this is the way forward, if this is the answer, why do emissions increase in BC where they've had them? And why did Australia move away? And why did France move away? And at such a time as that, why is our federal government moving ahead without so much as an economic impact assessment to determine what the impact would be on people's jobs or their household budgets?

You know, Mr. Speaker, on that front I want to point out that COPA [Canadian Oilseed Processors Association] — and this circles back a little bit, but that's the Saskatchewan canola oil processing industry — COPA has done their review of the federal government's impact on carbon tax. I gave a preliminary number at the Regina chamber speech. I talked about it being about \$1 million increased cost for every \$10 of the federal Liberal carbon tax. But I was wrong. COPA has calculated the impact of the carbon tax on four plants in Saskatchewan to be \$3 million additional cost for \$10 per tonne, 15.2 million at \$50 a tonne.

So are those canola plants going to operate in this province or would those canola plants locate closer to some of their markets in China or would they locate in the United States where there's no such carbon? And so what would the federal Liberal income tax relief do to the families that work in Clavet, Saskatchewan at that canola plant? It would do nothing because they wouldn't have income to pay income tax to reduce in the first place.

[15:00]

Mr. Speaker, I know there's others that want to speak. I can probably go on a little bit longer. I do want to share a few things very quickly. We don't think it's enough simply just to complain in the province. We've presented a white paper that builds on our track record on this issue already. And I said at

the Regina Chamber of Commerce and I've said it to our provincial media, I say it again in this place. If Saskatchewan people are listening and watching this debate and they've had someone tell them, well you're not really doing enough in Saskatchewan; you haven't done your share in the first place — don't let them say that to you is my message, Mr. Speaker. Because there's not another jurisdiction in all of this nation that has made a larger public sector investment in actually doing something about CO₂ emissions, and that's the Boundary dam 3 project near Estevan.

That's the only post-combustion capture unit in the world that's today operating, and successfully operating, a project that only months ago our friends across the way wanted to wind down, and thank goodness that we didn't. 800 000 tonnes will be captured this year alone. That's the equivalent of 200,000 cars off the road. But it is the largest per capita in public investment made in the country. So if someone says to you as a Saskatchewan resident, well you haven't done your share, you can actually point out that fact that the Boundary dam 3 is actually representative of us doing a per capita more of our share than anywhere else we're aware of, not just in Canada but perhaps of any subnational government in North America.

Almost a year ago now we announced another part of our plan, and that was simply to move SaskPower to 50 per cent renewables by 2030. I think that's a goal that was shared by members opposite. That's part of our plan to actually do something about emissions, not price it or cap it and trade it and shift it around and try to hopefully find a market that might work, but actually do something about the problem.

We added to that, Mr. Speaker, in our white paper. We talked about the importance of increasing support for adaptation because the evidence of climate change is real. And you only have to talk to a territorial premier and they'll tell you about what's going on. And yet in this country we spend a paltry \$250 million a year to deal with adaptation, to deal with the fact that Premier Pasloski in Yukon has a school falling in on itself because the permafrost is melting.

We've got \$250 million in all of this federal government programming on climate change to actually deal with adaptation. So that's point number one. We asked that the federal government would double that, and for our part we're going to continue to increase supports to our University of Saskatchewan Crop Development Centre. A big part of adaptation is food security. We need to grow crops that are resilient to climate change and we need to continue to research crops that actually fix nitrogen to the soil because that also captures, that absorbs CO₂ as well and that's part of adaptation.

The second part's about innovation and our continued efforts in CCS, Mr. Speaker, that aren't just about BD3 [Boundary dam 3] but also about the test station at Coronach where other companies can come in and test their own technologies.

It's also about Aquistore where we're testing new ways to store CO₂. What we need to get to, I would say, members of the House and Mr. Speaker, where we need to get to is the point where what's working in Boundary dam 3 is not reliant on enhanced oil recovery to make it work financially and that we can store CO₂ efficaciously in things like aquiformations,

geological aquiformations. And we're doing that research here too in the province.

That research will be available to the world. And I would say that that's pretty important, Mr. Speaker, and here's why. Because while we're having this debate about a carbon tax in this country which, if successful, would help reduce a third of 1.6 per cent of global initiatives . . . That's what we're talking. In our province, by the way, where we're responsible for 10 per cent of emissions, it's 10 per cent of 30 per cent of 1.6 per cent of global emissions. While we are focused on a carbon tax to achieve that reduction of 1.6 per cent, about a third of 1.6 per cent of global emissions, according to the Paris accord there are 2,400 coal plants on the books or being built around the world and the emissions from those coal plants represent 6.5 billion tonnes per year.

The amount of reductions we're after in Canada to reach our target — 221, 221 million tonnes, that's the reduction we're after. So we could hit our target, Mr. Speaker, and a carbon tax won't do it. We know that from the BC example, but let's just say it might. Carbon tax gets us to 220 million tonnes less; meanwhile when these plants are built there's 6.5 billion tonnes being emitted in coal.

So we say in the province of Saskatchewan, we're got to find a solution for coal. And that's a role we can play. Maybe other provinces can pick out their spots in terms of technological innovation. Here's our spot we can pick out because we made this investment going back years. Because this technology is working. Because 31 countries from around the world have come to Estevan to find out what's going on. Because the United Nations, in advance of Paris when they canvassed all the countries that were participating to find a highlight of success in each country, they found one in Canada that they noted before the Paris conference and it was Boundary dam 3. That's our spot. That's our spot.

Mr. Speaker, Jim Yong Kim is the president of the World Bank. Here's what he said about coal in Asia. This is very recently, and I quote: "If Vietnam goes forward with 40 gigawatts of coal, if the entire region implements the coal-based plans right now, I think we are finished."

What he's referring to there is Paris. What he's referring to there is trying to reduce the temperature by 2 degrees, the growth by 2 degrees. That's the goal of Paris. The president of the World Bank — not some Sask Party politician or someone trying to advance some interest in fossil fuels — the president of the World Bank says unless we do something about Asian coal plants, and specifically Vietnam, we are finished.

And what have we been doing in our country? We've been spending all of the oxygen and all of the resources and all the time around debating a carbon tax, a carbon price that if successful — and again, it's questionable — would reduce emissions around the planet by one-third of 1.6 per cent.

That's what our white paper says. It says Canada should be aspirants to more than that. We can be technological leaders because of what's going on in our province. That's what we should be doing. That is the focus that we would want to present to our federal government and why we're opposed to

this particular carbon tax.

Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker: this tax may be revenue neutral I guess in principle, but it is not sector neutral. And it is not neutral as to the regions of this country. There are two provinces that will pay mightily with jobs that Saskatchewan and Alberta families depend on if this tax goes ahead. And all the revenue-neutral bell whistles don't change the fact that when you make this carbon-intense part of Canada's economy uncompetitive, it's going to go somewhere else, and so will those jobs.

Do you know, the economists call it carbon leakage. And here we call it layoffs, in Saskatchewan. We call it declining business and declining opportunity. And if we let that happen, Mr. Speaker, we have less of a tax base upon which to provide better health care and better education and to fix more roads, and we are determined that it not happen in Saskatchewan.

If pricing is to happen in the province, it'll be through a tech fund. It'll be through a levy, and only when the economy has returned to strength, only when such an initiative would not cost jobs, cost Saskatchewan families. There have been thousands of layoffs in the oil and gas sector, and we will fight any effort from the federal government to make that situation worse for either those families or other families who depend, frankly, on a federal government that might understand the situation here.

For many, many, many years, these provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta have provided — and they still do today — opportunity for other Canadians. And we've seen them come and work here and then go back, sometimes, to Atlantic Canada. But that's when the country's working at its best, and well we are proud to play that role.

That's a role we didn't always play in this country. We're proud that we play that role as a have province. We say to the federal government, let it continue. Let's actually focus on the real problem. And let us not go down the road with an ill-considered and reckless carbon tax that will cost the jobs of Canadians without any relief in sight, Mr. Speaker. And so I will move this motion:

That this Assembly supports the Government of Saskatchewan's position on climate change as outlined in the climate change white paper released on October 18, 2016; and further

That this Assembly opposes the federal government's plan to impose a national carbon tax.

The Speaker: — The Premier has moved:

That this Assembly supports the Government of Saskatchewan's position on climate change as outlined in the climate change white paper released on October 18, 2016; and further

That this Assembly opposes the federal government's plan to impose a national carbon tax.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wotherspoon: —Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for allowing me to enter into this debate on the motion brought forward by the Sask Party today on carbon pricing.

I do want to welcome as well some of the stakeholders across Saskatchewan industries within our province that are here, industry leaders: APAS, the Regina Chamber and John Hopkins, the Wheat Growers, the Stock Growers. We appreciate your presence and your involvement. It's critical that you're being directly engaged meaningfully by your government at this critical time to make sure that plans that are being advanced address what we're trying to accomplish and make sure that we respond to the needs of your members.

Without question, members on this side of the House are opposed to anything being imposed on Saskatchewan, our province, without the input — by Ottawa — without the input of Saskatchewan at the table. Our party has a long history of standing up to Ottawa when it chooses that it's going to impose something upon our province without our involvement, and we'll continue that great tradition as well and not waiver from that position. But as wrong as it is for Ottawa to be imposing this action upon our province, it's the Sask Party's lack of leadership on climate change that has left a void, that has left an invitation, and has left this potential for this imposition onto our province.

The reality is, they haven't taken any meaningful action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions here in our province, Mr. Speaker. They haven't in fact even implemented their own plan to reduce emissions. That's right, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party actually passed a price on carbon through this House a few years ago, and they never, they never passed it; they never signed it into law.

It's almost hard to believe that the Sask Party proposed the bill — of course we supported it — and then they did nothing. By doing nothing, the Sask Party has thrown away so much of their credibility on this very important issue and given up in many ways Saskatchewan's voice at a time we need that voice to be strong, and a voice that's going to be effective with Ottawa.

Mr. Speaker, they cut funding for addressing climate change year after year after year. First order of business, they drained the \$300 million legacy fund that was there to act and provide leadership for generations on climate change. Then they threw sand in the gears — sand in the gears, Mr. Speaker, by way of renewable power generation that would have had us making progress and would have provided us some leadership. In fact, not long ago before this government came into power, by way of renewable power we were leaders and now we're laggards, Mr. Speaker.

Now of course there's no tech fund, no levy for heavy emitters. And you know, I hear the Premier talking a bit about that again. And oil price has been up and it's at a challenging place right now. But I think the question for the Premier is, well when is the right time to implement that fund? Certainly it wasn't, it would appear, when he brought it forward and we supported it.

And they have no credibility on climate change, no leg to stand on when it comes to standing up for Saskatchewan families. And the Premier, I sat in my chair and I listened to him rant and

rave, Mr. Speaker, and he can shout and heckle across the floor all he wants, but it's a lack of voice with Ottawa is the problem, and his lack of action has put us in this position.

The Premier mentioned in his remarks, and we'll agree on this, we'll agree on this, that the plan being imposed by Ottawa, if left to be imposed, definitely puts at risk trade-exposed industries within our province. This is why we need the Premier's voice, not just to grandstand and to chase headlines, but to provide constructive solutions at this point in time that will protect those industries and allow us to act on climate change. So on that point, we may agree.

We need to make sure that farm families are protected. We need to make sure that steelworkers are protected. We need to make sure that our miners and that our oil and gas workers across our province have protection because they certainly do have a lot to lose. But they haven't been well served by this government that failed to act in their interests, failed to diversify our economy, failed to create jobs with renewable power and conservation efforts that right now could be putting people to work in our province, Mr. Speaker.

[15:15]

He talks about his tech fund of course, Mr. Speaker, something that we've supported, something that we support on the floor of this Assembly. It's been highlighted by the Conference Board of Canada that in fact had the Premier not sat on that tech fund, he would have actually created 8,500 jobs within Saskatchewan. When I look at the reality that Saskatchewan families are facing today, and 10,000 more people unemployed this year than last year alone, those 8,500 jobs would have been welcomed, Mr. Speaker. So it's that Premier's lack of leadership on these files that are costing us, not just environmentally, not just with our voice with Ottawa, but economically as well, and that's why his approach is so damaging.

And if we look at actually what his approach is and what he's touting here again today, it's the last thing that the very industries that he pretends that he's supporting can afford. It's the very last thing that families across Saskatchewan can afford when we look at what he wants to double down on. Let's just make sure we understand what he wants to double down on: his carbon capture debacle, \$1.5 billion for just a hundred and some megawatts of power — a very small portion of power within our power grid for \$1.5 billion.

This is a carbon capture tax that Saskatchewan people can't afford. It's this Premier's carbon . . . [inaudible] . . . And it's one that Saskatchewan people have been paying for already with three rate increases of 5 per cent each, two of them within the last six months alone. This is something farm families are paying for. This is something industry across our province is paying for. This is something families are paying for. And if the Premier wants to get high and mighty about economic analysis — and this stuff does matter and studies matter — we need to see the economic analysis that justified spending \$1.5 billion of the hard-earned dollars of Saskatchewan people's dollars on his carbon capture tax that shows up on our power bills, month in, month out, Mr. Speaker.

So what we also need is honest . . . [inaudible] . . . with all the facts whenever possible, Mr. Speaker. And it does not help to have a Premier simply chase his way to headlines and then get called out on his facts, Mr. Speaker. In fact there was one feature that reviewed some facts and said that the Premier didn't even meet the test of the basic baloney meter, Mr. Speaker. I think that it was assessed that he was full of a whole lot of baloney, I believe was the assessment.

We need a Premier right now that's not going to torque the facts. We need a Premier right now that's not simply going to grandstand, looking for entry into national stories. We need a Premier that's going to take a principled and strong stand for Saskatchewan by working with and respecting Saskatchewan people and all those involved in our economy, Mr. Speaker, looking to the future.

And of course the lack of action has cost us. It's cost us our voice at a time where really it would appear pretty much every other province has a seat at the table and a position to negotiate with the federal government. We need to make sure that we're working constructively to make sure that jobs are protected and that are built upon, Mr. Speaker.

We see a government next door, Mr. Speaker, that's focusing on expansion of pipelines and getting our product to market. And you know, that's clearly, that's something that this Premier wasn't able to get done even though his buddy was in 24 Sussex for a good decade, Mr. Speaker. So we need a more constructive, substantive debate and a strong voice for Saskatchewan with Ottawa right now.

Mr. Speaker, instead of leadership and meaningful advocacy, time and time again we have seen this Premier and his party pass on the chance to invest in renewable energy and technologies that would lower emissions and create good mortgage-paying jobs for Saskatchewan people — the kind of jobs that would be driving and helping our economy right now, Mr. Speaker.

When there's so much at stake for Saskatchewan people, we need leadership. We need Saskatchewan action and a made-in-Saskatchewan plan. Doing nothing isn't going to cut it. The Premier's response of doing nothing and sitting on this just won't cut it.

Do we need to act on climate change? We certainly do. It's unfortunate that this Premier has denied Saskatchewan people having that opportunity to be leaders from this point into this debate, Mr. Speaker, and as such has given up the voice that we should have.

So I'll propose the following amendment to the Premier's motion:

That all words in the motion after "supports" be struck out and replaced with the following:

the implementation of *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act* so that Saskatchewan can once again show leadership in reducing carbon emissions and earn back credibility on this file; and further

That this Assembly condemn the Premier for his failure to address climate change after nearly a decade in power, and for giving up Saskatchewan's voice and credibility when it comes to protecting Saskatchewan's interests in our environment; and further

That this Assembly opposes the federal government's plan to impose a national carbon tax.

I so submit.

The Speaker: — The Leader of the Opposition has moved the following:

That all words in the motion after "supports" be struck out and replaced with the following:

The implementation of *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act* so that Saskatchewan can, once again, show leadership in reducing carbon emissions and earn back credibility on this file; and further

That this Assembly condones the Premier for his failure to address climate change after nearly a decade in power for giving up on Saskatchewan's voice and credibility when it comes to protecting the Saskatchewan interest in our environment; and further

That this Assembly opposes the federal government's plan to impose a national carbon tax.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, last week there was a lot of sympathy for federal International Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland when she walked out of meetings with the now famous Walloons in Belgium. She was depleted, frustrated, exhausted. She chided the European Union to finally get its economic house in order.

All ironies aside here, and there are plenty including that the Trudeau government chided the UK [United Kingdom] post-Brexit for daring to criticize the free trade machine that is the European Union. That was until the plucky Walloons came on the scene.

But there is another irony, Mr. Speaker, and that is the very different reaction in many quarters, including the federal government, when our own honourable Minister for the Environment, our colleague, walked out of the meeting last month in Halifax with his fellow ministers from Newfoundland-Labrador and Nova Scotia. He had walked in in good faith. As a province, we had been assured, he had been assured that we would be talked to, collaborated with, and included as the federal government formulated its so-called policy.

But no, the Prime Minister blindsided Environment ministers during their own meeting. He stood up and announced that the federal government would act unilaterally and impose a carbon tax on the provinces. That was perfectly acceptable to most

pundits. And much like their view of the recalcitrant Walloons as provincial hicks who couldn't properly read a trade agreement, so they reacted when we — all of us in spirit — walked out along with the Minister of the Environment on the shocking unilateral treatment of the provinces.

It was hard not to feel deflated and demoralized, Mr. Speaker, hard not to feel as if the tide was against us, as if most quarters were engaging in nothing but wolf pack literalism on climate change. Of course that's not true. Most Saskatchewanians certainly know in their common-sense hearts that it takes a much deeper, nuanced reaction to climate change than a slap-and-dash tax.

So what did we do? What did the Premier do, Mr. Speaker? He released a response, a sophisticated white paper, an in-depth counter-argument and it should be heralded from the rooftops, from this copper-domed rooftop, Mr. Speaker. This paper is a victory of far-sightedness on this issue, a victory for common sense, and I can only hope that it is picked up and circulated internationally which is what it deserves to be.

Just consider as background, as the Premier referenced, the more than 2,400 new coal-fired power plants being planned or under construction around the world which will emit 6.5 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide a year, nearly nine times Canada's annual greenhouse gas emissions. Of course something needs to be done to wean those countries off CO₂, but it's not to impose a carbon tax on us. After all, Canada overall accounts for less than 2 per cent of the world's CO₂ emissions. In Saskatchewan we're talking 10 per cent of Canada's total, 10 per cent of 1.6 per cent. That just does not make sense, Mr. Speaker. The federal government shouldn't punish us in these challenging economic times, shouldn't punish the thousands of people in this province who make their livings in trade-exposed, carbon-intensive industries that are so vulnerable right now. They should help us help those countries whose carbon emissions are exploding.

And we can. That's where the white paper comes in. The federal government, it argues, should redirect funding for climate change adaptation research and target areas specifically affected by the impacts of climate change such as remote northern communities. That makes sense. Entities such as the Crop Development Centre, the Global Institute for Food Security of course should be better supported to continue to work on new crop varieties that are better able to withstand climate change. The federal government should partner with SaskPower and other agencies to develop the next generation of CCS, carbon sequestration, a made-in-Saskatchewan solution for export worldwide.

And let's not forget this is the same carbon sequestration technology that the federal environment minister called very important when she visited Boundary dam 3 last spring. BD3, Mr. Speaker — we have been committed to real solutions through technology, through innovation there for years. How can members opposite say, how can they say that BD3 is anything but the only real solution Canada is offering? It is a tangible solution that is actually putting this country on the map.

Finally the federal government should of course redeploy its

\$2.65 billion five-year commitment to developing countries to deal with climate change and use that funding for research and innovation in Canada to reduce emissions worldwide with technologies such as CSS and small nuclear reactors. That's not anti-developing countries; it's pro, providing them with the best climate-change-fighting tool that money can buy, CO₂ capture technology. As for small nuclear reactors, SaskPower VP [vice-president] Tim Eckel had said, while conventional power plants are too large for the province's needs, small modular reactors could be a game changer not only for Saskatchewan, but they could cut emissions worldwide which is really what we're supposed to be about here.

Of course renewable energy should also play a role. But it's also a no-brainer, as the white paper points out, that emission-reducing carbon offsets such as hydro exports from BC, Manitoba, Quebec and the CO₂ that's perpetually absorbed by Canada's vast forests and wetlands and farm land should all be taken into account. The most recent report by the prestigious Australia-based Global Carbon Project, Mr. Speaker, found that of the 36 billion tonnes of global human-induced CO₂ emissions, 36 per cent roughly stays in the atmosphere, 27 per cent is absorbed by water, and 37 per cent is absorbed by land. And the Global Carbon Project went on to note that Canada absorbs 25 per cent more CO₂ than it emits. That is an important reality.

Finally when the resource economy strengthens, Mr. Speaker, of course we should move forward on a fund supported by a levy on large emitters with the fund's expenditures limited to new technologies, new innovation to reduce greenhouse gases and not for general revenue. Doesn't that make sense?

These are solutions — all round, tangible, practical solutions. To quote the member from Melfort, what colour is your sky if you prefer to leap into the costly abstract over the cost-effective practical? We should be having a real point-for-point debate on this issue and not lazily spouting slogans, Mr. Speaker.

Last line goes to Dr. Bjørn Lomborg, a Danish political scientist who advises policy-makers and governments around the world on how best to invest development money. He was named by *TIME* magazine as one of the most influential people in the world. And he says we should spend money where we know how to fix the problems. The problem with the Paris conference resolutions was that countries promised everything to everyone, everywhere, but by focusing on the things that will do the most good, we may feel less virtuous, he says, but we will do much more good in the end.

[15:30]

And that's the point of this white paper. We will do much more good if we can get to work, lose these facile, virtuous-sounding slogans, and invest in the innovation and technology that gets us to a greener place, Mr. Speaker, which is why I support the motion brought forward by the Premier and absolutely reject the amendment.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And as always it's . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Do you want to get in on the debate? As always it's an honour to be able to enter into debate in this House and each take our turns to have our comments made.

I want to start off with a quote that is one that the Premier uses often and I think there's a perfect application to that quote here today. And what he often says is, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. And I think that is the actual nub of the problem here today, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has not acted in the best interests of Saskatchewan people from the get-go, despite the fact that he made big promises before he became Premier.

So what I want to do today is to get on the record for a lot of our stakeholders that are here, stakeholders that I know are listening . . . My texts are kind of ringing off the wall here with some of the comments that we're hearing. And I want to sort of lay out the real picture of what's happening in Saskatchewan so that our ratepayers, our SaskPower ratepayers and certainly those who are in industry, understand that this Premier has failed us completely. And that's how we got into the pickle we're in today, where the federal government is imposing onerous obligations on the provinces.

First of all we need to go back, and I want to go back in history. On September 24th, 2007, the Sask Party government released their platform for the election. And I want to share with you what the Sask Party government said they were going to do regarding Saskatchewan's greenhouse emission reduction targets. Yes, they had targets, Mr. Speaker, and they were interesting.

First of all, they've actually failed on the first two, and I highly doubt they'll be able to reach the third one. First one, this is a promise by the Sask Party that they would do this when they got elected. They would stabilize greenhouse gas emissions by 2010. Mr. Speaker, the government has failed miserably on that promise, and in fact greenhouse gas emissions are now 8 per cent higher than they were before. So that's a massive failure on the part of this government right from the get-go.

Secondly, what did they promise? I'm quoting from their platform from 2007: "Reduce greenhouse gases by 32 per cent from current levels by 2020." So that is four years from now, and right now rather than reducing them at all they've gone up, 8 per cent higher than the 2005 levels. So again, fail, massive fail on the part of this Premier and this government to deliver what they promised the people of Saskatchewan.

The third target that they introduced in their platform in 2007, "Reduce greenhouse gases by 80 per cent from current levels by 2050." Mr. Speaker, we don't hear about that anymore. We don't hear any such thing at all, and this again I think is what we can expect as this government continues to fail to deliver on its greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. Again, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. So what do we have so far on this? Three complete fails on the part of this government in terms of its promises that it made to the Saskatchewan government in 2007.

Now let's move forward a little bit. Let's go to 2009. We have a press release dated December 1st, 2009. And what do we have

here? Well there's still a very ambitious goal but it is not at all what this government promised in 2007. They indicated they were going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions at that time by 20 per cent from 2006 levels by 2020, and foster innovation in low-carbon technologies. Have they done that? Mr. Speaker, no — again a complete fail.

They introduced a bill called *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*, which they've now had to reintroduce twice in this Assembly since there was mistakes in the first one and there was mistakes in the second one. So once again they had to take three swings at the ball before they can actually hit it. The trouble is, they didn't hit it out of the park on this one, Mr. Speaker. They got all the way to third base. They passed it through this Assembly: first reading, second reading, third reading. But in 2010, what happened? Nothing. This bill has sat on the shelf. It was the one bill that they used in their election platform. It was the bill that they used in 2009. And the minister of the day had some very lofty things to say about this bill.

An Hon. Member: — What did he say?

Ms. Sproule: — It was a woman who introduced it. It wasn't a he. And she said, "Our government is committed to taking action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to meet our national-international obligations." Okay. What else did she say? Oh, well they consulted with industry. Here's what she said:

Consultations with industry have made it very clear that they prefer a tech fund located outside the government to ensure that contributed funds are directed toward greenhouse gas emission reductions and don't just sit in the GRF [General Revenue Fund]. [She said] And, Mr. Speaker, we agree.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we agree too. That's exactly the way this government should be going. This was on December 2nd, 2009, so we're looking at almost seven years ago when that minister made those commitments in this House to the people of Saskatchewan.

She went on and described how this bill would operate. There would be a technology fund where high emitters . . . They were all identified. About 32 of them were high emitters, and SaskPower was one of them. And then they would create an office of climate change, and then they would create the Climate Change Foundation as well so that the monies that would flow from these high emitters would go into a fund separate from government, completely regulated, and that would provide an opportunity for these high emitters to seek out low-carbon technologies. Makes total sense, Mr. Speaker.

So what did they do with it? In 2010 when revenues were as high as they've ever been, or almost as high as they've ever been, record revenues, what did they do? Nothing. So we have . . . One of our members got up in the House, and I just want to share what he had to say when she made these comments. She said, she quoted what the Environment minister said in her press release, and he says:

Oh I can just hear the staff saying, real or is it really? It

sort of like reminds me of the *Saturday Night Live* news. Really? Really? You're really going to do this, really? I just have to say I don't think I can quite believe it.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker? He was right. He was actually telling the future. Because again we see that future behaviour is best predicted by past behaviour. So I didn't know he was a fortune teller and was able to see into the future, but he was absolutely right. His incredulity about the promises that were being made by that minister and by that government were unbelievable, because he knew they weren't going to do it.

The minister then went on to say in committee in 2010, on April 29, 2010 she said, and I quote:

We have stated what our targets are. It would then be up to large emitters to meet their reduction obligations. If they are unable to do that, they will be charged a carbon compliance price [a carbon compliance price] that those funds would then go into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund.

Now call me a hairsplitter, Mr. Speaker, but carbon compliance price sounds very much like what this Premier is now shouting and Twitter tantruming about. And I mean that's a part of the problem here. He talks on one side of his mouth and then he says something that sounds completely different.

This minister was calling on a carbon compliance price for the high emitters in this province, about 32 of them who were responsible for a large portion of the greenhouse gas emissions that we are emitting here in Saskatchewan. And it's all fine and dandy to say, well it's not that much so we don't have to do anything, Mr. Speaker. But I think that's irresponsible and I think it goes right against the many promises that this government has made in this House to the people of Saskatchewan to do the responsible thing.

So we then asked the minister, well when are we going to see this technology fund? And this is what the minister said:

With the passage of this Bill — hopefully in the spring session — we are hoping to have the program implemented by spring of 2011, so a year from now.

The carbon compliance [tax, I mean] price hasn't been set yet. It's still something that we're examining. The range that we're looking at is \$15-25 per tonne.

Now that sounds kind of familiar, Mr. Speaker. It sounds like something that's coming from the other provinces and it sounds like it's something that's coming from the federal government. But for some reason, this minister's carbon compliance price has never been established. She said it was going to be in place by 2011. Mr. Speaker, that's five years ago, over five years ago. And what's happened? Nothing.

So the best indication of future performance is past behaviour. Here again we have a government that's made promises to set a carbon compliance price on the high emitters in this province, something that we think is a good place to start. It was their carbon compliance price. Even the House Leader says, well that's a tax. Yes, Mr. Speaker, anyone can figure that out, and

that's the problem. It's their carbon compliance price. He's astonished that his former minister wouldn't call it a tax, Mr. Speaker, and we're astonished too.

That's the problem. She said it on April 29th, 2010, and yet we still don't see any admission on the part of this government that that is exactly what this government promised to do, and should be doing, and at least doing something so we don't get into the pickle we're in now where we have to have white papers produced by the Premier.

There's a few other comments that would be fun to read back into the record, but I do encourage anyone who's listening right now to go back to April 29th, 2010, look at what the minister had to say in the committee, and just read it for yourself. It's a good little read.

But the next question we had is, well now what's going to happen with these equivalency agreements? We hear a lot from the various ministers of the Environment — there's been at least five since I took over as the critic for this area — and we hear a lot from them about, well we need these equivalency agreements with the federal government. Well other governments, other provinces have seemed to do it, Mr. Speaker, so I'm not sure why this government has so much trouble getting these equivalency agreements in place, and why they're dragging their heels on it. Instead of being leaders, as we've said many times, they are actually being laggards.

Mr. Speaker, what did the minister say in April of 2010? We were asking about these equivalency agreements. She said:

Yes, an agreement in principle was signed between myself and Minister Prentice to work towards an equivalency agreement. That equivalency agreement would allow the province to be the chief regulator on the file. [Good idea.] We felt it was important particularly because of the Technology Fund. [Again, good idea.] We didn't want monies to be shipped out of our province; we wanted that money to stay here for reinvestment here. So we thought an equivalency agreement was the appropriate avenue to take.

Again, where are these equivalency agreements? It's been six years and we still don't see them, Mr. Speaker. So again, if the minister could show us the repeated efforts to sit down with Prime Minister Harper's government to find these agreements, maybe they could prove and table that they've actually been trying. But, Mr. Speaker, we know other provinces have done it, so why hasn't this province? Again nothing, nothing from this government.

Here's what she says. This is a quote:

So when our bill is passed and implemented, we are the chief regulator. Once the federal program is in place and an equivalency agreement is signed, we will then be able to continue to be the chief regulator instead of the federal government regulating us.

Mr. Speaker, she promised to get that in place even before the equivalency agreement. What did she do? Nothing. Once again, this is putting us in a bad position. It's putting the people of

Saskatchewan in a bad position. And again, as we heard our leader say, all we've got from this government is a carbon capture tax. We have a carbon capture tax, this \$1.5 billion job-killing carbon capture tax that every ratepayer in Saskatchewan is paying. Every month now there's hike after hike, and they've put SaskPower almost in bankruptcy as a result of it, Mr. Speaker. Completely irresponsible and again no responsibility for implementing what this minister actually had a good idea of doing.

She went on to talk about her relationship with Minister Prentice who was minister of Environment at that time, rest his soul. She said this, and I'm quoting:

The discussions that I've had with Minister Prentice to date — and he's done a lot of meetings individually with provinces and then collectively, whether it's the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment or just holding separate meetings to discuss climate change issues — it is my belief that there is a willingness on behalf of Ottawa to let the provinces oversee their own program.

She had that commitment from Minister Prentice. She had a promise to the people of Saskatchewan to make that happen. And again, Mr. Minister, what did we get? Nothing. It's shameful, Mr. Speaker, it is absolutely shameful and it has put us in a terrible position today.

Now the media had some comments to say about this particular bill, and in fact it was quoted on April 28th in *Hansard*. I believe it was from the committee as well. Oh no, this is the second reading speech that was given by one of our members on this side. He quoted an article by Murray Mandryk from May 2009, and the headline was "Saskatchewan adopts Harper's hot-air plan." And in that article, Mr. Speaker, he quoted it, and this is the quote from the quote once again. And it says:

[15:45]

Even if one accepts the Sask. Party's premise that its own 2007 campaign promise of a 32-per-cent reduction in greenhouse gases was just too costly to the provincial economy . . . why did it have to be 20 per cent? Why not a 25-per-cent reduction?

And the journalist went on to say:

Well the only magical thing about a 20-per-cent emission reduction target is that it happens to be the same as the federal Conservative government's, which takes us to the biggest problem with this supposed "made-in-Saskatchewan" strategy: It's really a "made-in-Ottawa" strategy.

So that Premier was being criticized in 2009 for implementing a made-in-Ottawa strategy. That was by his Conservative friends in the Hill, and now he's crying about that when we see it's a different government in charge.

He goes on to comment about the relationship between the Sask Party and the federal Tories, but he says his last part of the article here, the quote is, "And about the last area in which the

Saskatchewan Party should want to be tied to the federal Tories is the environment and greenhouse gas emissions," Mr. Speaker.

So that was an interesting comment that was made in 2010 by one of our colleagues in the discussions that we were having at the time about *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*, which again is sitting on a shelf collecting dust.

2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, oil prices were quite healthy at that time, Mr. Speaker. And what was done? Nothing. Now the Premier's saying, well we can't do it now because oil prices have dropped. But I want him to tell us why he didn't do it. Why didn't he do it in 2010? Why didn't he do it in 2011? Why didn't he do it in 2012? He didn't do anything. And now he's putting us in this position with the federal government because of his lack of inactivity.

My leader referred to this earlier, but there was a report done by The Conference Board of Canada about the economic impact of technology funds. And this is chapter 5 from that report in 2010. And again, Mr. Speaker, at that time, everyone believed this government. Everyone believed that they were going to do what they said they were going to do. And they did a study on that and they said wow, well what's going to happen if we actually get these technology funds in place? They were considerably popular at that time.

Here's from table 6 on page 31 of that report from The Conference Board of Canada. The title for anybody listening online is *The Economic and Employment Impacts of Climate-Related Technology Investments*, May 2010. So in table 6 they show a table of all the provinces, technology fund spending, five-year impacts on real GDP and employment. And if you go across the line, you see what their estimate in Saskatchewan of the person-years of employment that would be in this province right now in green technology jobs, mortgage-paying green technology jobs that we could have had if this fund was introduced, is \$8,568. Now the Premier finds that funny. I'm not sure why he finds The Conference Board of Canada funny, but you know, he has a real . . . He thinks it's a funny little story. It's too bad he's laughing, Mr. Speaker, because I don't think anybody else is.

I'm going to wrap up very soon, but I just wanted to talk a little bit about some of the things that was said in committee over the years by the various ministers of the Environment that have been recycled through the position. June 16th, 2016, the minister said, "Well . . . it is a fact we're waiting for the feds." And that's in total contrast to what was said by his predecessor in 2009.

So who are we supposed to trust here? Well I think, given that past behaviour indicates future performance, I think we'd better believe this guy in 2016 rather than what was promised in 2009. Waiting for the feds. Well we're waiting for the feds, and look what happens, Mr. Speaker. We know what happens. We wait for the feds and then when the feds act, we have a temper tantrum. That's not appropriate, and it's not helpful. He talked a little bit about first ministers coming back in September with reports. We haven't seen that; they weren't getting that job done. And so now we have these heavy-handed actions of the federal government.

This was in March 31st, 2015. And in that time, the ministry indicated that once again they were changing the direction of the climate change branch of the Ministry of the Economy. They changed it again in 2016. And we just see time and time again, the minister's not able to deliver on what they've promised.

May 1st, 2013, the minister said, I asked him when the fund would be up and running, and he said, "Thanks very much for the question. Once the Act is through the various stages of legislation . . ." Which it already was . . . [inaudible] . . . point, although that's when they had to introduce amendments because they now hadn't caught up with some of the federal regs that came in in the meantime:

. . . we begin by looking at the [estimated] regulated emitters and receiving information from them and estimating what the fees would be that they would have to pay into the Technology Fund. We anticipate gaining that information early in 2014 and so funds probably wouldn't flow into the technology fund until early 2015, probably January 2015.

Now once again, Mr. Speaker, we have a Premier who says we can't do this. We can't do it then. We can't do in 2011, 2012, 2013. His minister said, oh we can do it in 2013. His other minister says, we can do this. But the Premier keeps saying we can't. So who's he talking to, Mr. Speaker? Who's telling him that we can't do this? His own government passed the bill. It went through the House. And he finds excuse after excuse after excuse.

Mr. Speaker, I think that the . . . We have to reiterate again that we already have a carbon capture tax here in this province, brought in by that minister. We have a bill with carbon compliance pricing brought in by that Premier. And so he's talking different stories depending on who's listening, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's really confusing the people of Saskatchewan. I think you find that same kind of language in his white paper.

And you know, one of my constituents wrote to me and he says there's very little . . . He actually read the white paper. I'm not too sure how many people have, but here's what he had to say. He said, there's very little in here. It's basically just the status quo and 53 pages of arguing and complaining about why we don't need to do anything.

The Premier argues that we basically don't need to do anything because our emissions are so low, and yet the paper acknowledges that global warming is caused by humans and is an issue. It's just doublespeak. And he goes on, he has a lot of very interesting comments about the white paper, Mr. Speaker.

But before I forget, I do want to talk a little bit about some facts because we had the previous speaker give us some facts. I want to talk about China, Mr. Speaker. And these are some statistics from China that I think would inform the Premier because I don't think he's getting all the facts all the time.

First of all, China spent a record \$111 billion on deployment of clean energy infrastructure in 2015. That's a really big number. When we think that our debt right now is 13 billion, that seems

high to us. They spent \$111 billion on deployment of clean energy infrastructure in 2015. In Beijing, the city of Beijing, they're going to build four gas-fired power and heating plants. So they're switching to gas-fired power, and they shut down the last of their coal-fired generations. They're going to shut them down by 2017.

So Beijing is shutting down coal. They're not buying into the carbon capture sequestration technology that Saskatchewan people and taxpayers spent \$1.5 billion on. And we have to remember, Mr. Speaker, we don't own the technology. That's owned by industry. So we handed over one and a half billion dollars to industry. We now see it as a tax, and I know the parliamentary board in Ottawa has said it's about a \$50-a-month tax right now. So that's what we get for carbon capture.

Seventeen per cent of the world's solar capacity is in China. How much capacity do we have here in Saskatchewan? Less than 5 per cent? And now we've just lost the next project so we're not moving ahead very quickly on that. China's way ahead of us.

In China, coal use fell 3.7 per cent in 2015, following a 2.9 per cent drop in 2014. In China, their coal use is dropping. In June of 2016, Beijing ordered 500 million metric tons of coal capacity to close by 2020 — 500 million metric tonnes, or 9 per cent of China's coal capacity is going to close by 2020. China was the largest developer of renewable energy projects in 2015, accounting for almost 40 per cent of all the wind, solar, biopower, and small hydro installations around the world. Mr. Speaker, these are very interesting statistics that I think need to form part of this discussion.

China has now banned approvals for new coal plants in oversupplied regions, although they are still building some plants. We have to acknowledge that because we're being fair. We're using all the facts, and not just some of the facts . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The Premier doesn't like it when I use all the facts. One theory about the continued construction of coal plants is that the Chinese government is building them — and this is why they're building coal plants, Mr. Speaker, according to this article — to improve the GDP and boost employment. So that's the reason why we're seeing more coal in China.

There's some other statistics that I may or may not share. Oh yes, just about renewable fact sheets . . . This is where we're missing opportunities here in Saskatchewan. In Canada there are 800 cleantech companies directly employing more than 55,000 people in 2014, an increase of 11 per cent over the previous year. Cleantech revenues in Canada were pegged at an \$11 billion market in 2014. Canada's lost 41 per cent of its global cleantech market shares since 2005 because other countries are moving more aggressively into the growing field of cleantech. Canada's cleantech companies invested \$1.2 billion in research and development in 2014, which is a bigger share of R & D [research and development] against revenues than the aerospace industry, Mr. Speaker. And for the first time in 2014, more than half the industry revenues — or 6.6 billion, or 57 per cent — came from those exports.

Here's a really important statistic that I think gets lost in this

discussion. Direct employment, direct employment in the clean energy sector — which encompasses hydro power as well as wind, solar, and biomass — is up 37 per cent in 2014 to 23,000 people in Canada. And that compares with 22,000 directly employed in the oil sands.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've talked about this before. We've introduced a bill in this House that would've allowed this government to look into a green economy, a growing economy, one that deals well with the needs of all the stakeholders in Saskatchewan so that agricultural producers don't have to see these hikes in their power bills under this Premier's carbon capture tax, so that all the industries and transportation industries are treated fairly, and that the high emitters are the ones that need to start looking at low-carbon technologies to improve.

And they can do it, Mr. Speaker. They can do it. We know they can do it. We've seen the benefits of cogeneration, for example. That's something that needs to happen in this province. We see the benefits of demand-side management, where people are encouraged through building codes to actually use building materials that would create a sustainable envelope, thus reducing their need for carbon-fired . . . fossil fuel power. And you know, I think everyone's wearing this, Mr. Speaker, right now, and our province is simply looking, as we've said before, like a laggard and not a leader.

So again, Mr. Speaker, I really think that the amendment that my leader proposed makes a lot of sense. I think this is something that we need to incorporate into this motion that will make us look better rather than the . . . I don't know how to describe this paper, but it's wasting people's time basically, Mr. Speaker. It is. It's a waste of people's time because this Premier has wasted our time for the last six years.

As I said at the beginning, Mr. Speaker, the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. We've seen a government that has made promise after promise after promise to take action. They have the carbon capture and sequestration plant which deals with less than 2 per cent of our emissions right now, Mr. Speaker. Emissions have gone up 8 per cent rather than flattening out in 2010. One of the ministers said in 2010 he promised that the emissions would be levelled. They're not levelled. They're going up and we have a government that can't deliver. So when we see these high-handed actions by the federal government on our province, we know whose fault it is, and we need to place the blame directly there. It's on this Premier and this government.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge all you members to think about this motion, think about the amendment being something that directly improves, and it tells the truth. It tells what's going on, that after nearly a decade in power, you have given up Saskatchewan's voice and credibility when it comes to protecting our interests. And that's unacceptable. So I . . . [inaudible] . . . support the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: — Before I recognize the Premier, I'd just like to remind members of the rules of debate as found in the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*. On page 22, rule number 54(2) says as follows:

A reply is permitted by a Member who has moved a substantive motion but not to the mover of an amendment, the previous question, or an instruction to a committee. A Member closing the debate by reply cannot propose an amendment.

Having said that, I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very, very much. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll be brief. There are many members that want to participate in the debate.

But I was a little incredulous as to the amendment that the member just spoke to, and our friend the Leader of the NDP just proposed, Mr. Speaker. And just, if I may very quickly repeat what it says, the NDP are calling through this amendment for the implementation of *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act* so that Saskatchewan can once again show leadership in reducing carbon emissions. This was the Act that on the 3rd of May, 2010, the NDP voted against. Every single member of the NDP, on the 3rd of May, 2010, voted against this Act that they're now calling for in terms of implementation. This is part of their amendment.

[16:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, we don't actually agree with the amendment because that particular amendment would result in what? It would result in, by the member's own admission and by the NDP leader's own admission, it would result in an immediate carbon tax on heavy emitters in the province. Again I'll canvass who those heavy emitters might be in Saskatchewan for the member from Nutana. She's just called on the government to tax, through a heavy emitter's levy, the mining sector, potash miners, many of whom who are still laid off, especially at Colonsay. They're laid off. Mr. Deputy Speaker, she just called on the Government of Saskatchewan to implement a carbon tax on the oil and gas industry because they're heavy emitters.

The Energy and Resources minister just told me about an encounter he had with an oil driller, a directional driller from the Carlyle area, who has been . . . Well the member might want to hear about this because the individual that she wants to tax with her motion, a directional driller from Carlyle, has been out of work for two years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He has two kids and he wished us good luck because he'd like to get back to work.

And the NDP's solution to this, her solution to this, is to call on the Government of Saskatchewan to implement a levy, a carbon tax on heavy emitters. Who else would be impacted by that? Farmers in the province of Saskatchewan. At a time when this economy can least afford it, the NDP's solution, the Leader of the NDP and the Environment critic for the NDP, their Finance critic, their solution is to stand in the legislature today and call for an immediate levy, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's unbelievable. It's no wonder why you can count them basically on two hands over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because the people of the province of Saskatchewan would be absolutely shocked, they'd be so shocked to hear that the NDP today on a carbon tax debate have amended the motion to call for a carbon tax on that oil worker, on potash miners, on farmers in the province, on 900 families that depend on a paycheck from Evraz.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll sit and take my place, but I'll tell you what. Not only will members on this side of the House vote in favour of the motion, but we will vote against the NDP's amendment, their plan to amazingly impose a carbon tax on the sectors that generate jobs at a time such as this in the province of Saskatchewan. We will be against this NDP job-killing amendment.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Arm River.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible] . . . to join in this debate, one of the most important debates that this province is going to face probably in the next few years. This is one of the most important issues that's coming forward.

The member that spoke from Nutana had mentioned a quote. Well I'll do a quote: "I'm entirely a farmer, soul and body, never scarcely admitting a sentiment on any other subject." That quote was made by President Thomas Jefferson hundreds of years ago. They realized then how important agriculture was to keep moving, to keep this industry and this province moving.

This particular tax is going to set this province back something like the energy program did to Alberta in the '80s. And I can't believe that the NDP is not supporting that. You don't have to support the government. You don't have to support Saskatchewan Party on this. But stand behind the people of Saskatchewan on this one because I'll tell you what: you're dead wrong if you think that the people are behind you on this.

I was here when Lingenfelter wouldn't back certain things when it came to the people of Saskatchewan. You can look back in his speech on a particular issue. And I said then, you're going to be gone. And he was. Broten, same thing, would not stand with the people of Saskatchewan when it came to supporting this province. We were growing it. He kept running it down. Where did you end up? With 10 members. I guarantee you that if you don't support this and get behind the people of Saskatchewan — not behind the government, the people of Saskatchewan — you're going to lose your next leader again. You'll be like the Green Party and the Conservative Party in Saskatchewan and the Liberals, each leader losing with less members.

And you may think that's rhetoric. But if you're that out of touch, if you're that out of touch with reality and the people of Saskatchewan, I'll tell you what. I talked to a farmer from Imperial today. It was on another issue, another issue completely. But at the end he says, you guys are going to fight this carbon tax, aren't you? And I says, you better believe we are. Because he says, you know what it's going to cost me? And he's a rancher. And he says, you know what it's going to cost me? You know, we've heard about the . . . [inaudible] . . . anywhere from 10 to \$15,000 a year depending on the size of that particular ranch or farm. That's just the agricultural industry, never mind the spinoffs. We've heard about how it's going to hit the potash, the oil, all the mining sector.

You know, I was in West Australia this summer, and they had imposed that. And I'll tell you what: I talked to members about it, and you know what? Their mining industry took a hit, and he says, that didn't help when we initiated it. That's why they pulled it back. Each and every member from all parties said,

you know, that wasn't the way to go, just to put a tax on carbon. That's not the way to go. Says what we're trying to do over there is looking actually a little bit what we're doing. Innovation, trying to . . . You know, is climate change real? Yes, but it's how you want to handle that, how you want to fix that problem. We're not fixing it.

The way with the tax coming from Trudeau, and if you guys, the NDP . . . And I, you know, this isn't sometimes even political on my side on this. I just can't believe that you wouldn't stand with the people of Saskatchewan on this, you know. I mean there's a little piece of me that says that I'm almost glad that you're not because it's going to come back to haunt you because this is an issue that's going to be played over many years. And if you're not careful, you're going to dig a hole deep enough, you're not going to be able to climb out when it comes to . . . when this tax is implemented.

Right now we have 70, 75 per cent of the people that don't like it but they haven't been affected by it yet. You start mentioning what's happening in BC, 6 cents already on a litre of fuel, and they haven't even . . . dealing with what Trudeau's going to bring forward at that end of it and the added costs. When you start paying an extra 10 cents in fuel for the working guy and he has to pay for more heating, and all of a sudden there's job losses, it's going to affect right across this province.

And then you're going to see the people rising up and saying, we need to fight this; we need to find a different way to affect climate change. And we've had one. We brought this up years ago on the Boundary dam. There's a better solution to addressing the carbon issues of cleaning it up instead of just, oh, let's just tax everybody, leave the oil in the ground and all the minerals. Let's just leave that alone and we're all going to ride bicycles and live on wind power. You know, that's unrealistic.

You talk to the average guy out there, the average working guy. I won't go to farmers and the ranchers. I'll go to the working-class people. I door knocked in Riversdale. I door knocked in a few other constituencies on that side. And I'll tell you what: there's, in their constituencies, many hard-working-class people that can't afford an extra tax, can't afford to pay more for fuel. You know, they're just making it as they are, and then if they lose a job or the industry that it affects, you know, it's just not . . . The oil and gas industry which is going to take a hit, you know, there could be thousands in layoffs. That comes into the service industry going. That's restaurants maybe being, one restaurant being closed in a small town, tire shop having to lay off people, garages.

That just affects a domino effect and it was like that in Alberta when Trudeau tried to bring in the energy program. You know, he almost wrecked that province, and he's doing the same way here. And I don't think he knows any better. That's the trouble. The Prime Minister I don't think knows any better. He's never worked a day in his life. And from what I understand, he's taking advice from a chief of staff and a few people that basically want to shut the oil down. I think his chief of staff is Gerald Butts. You know, I've read tweets on it where he just condemns the oil industry. That's who's running the show down there.

I don't think the Prime Minister is actually smart enough to

realize the damage that he's going to cause not only Western Canada but even Eastern Canada. You know, and that should scare . . . And I think that's a message we have to get. We have a Prime Minister that basically promised, oh, there's going to be more co-operation with the provinces. We're going to work. It's going to be sunny days, and we're going to work together.

And what did he do? He made an announcement when our Environment minister and the Environment ministers were down east just going to talk about what needs to be done, to bring our argument to the table and the other provinces to work on solutions. That's what we're dealing with. You know, they talked about Harper. They ran down, the NDP and the Liberals ran down that oh, he was too forceful, one-man control doing things. He didn't do anything like that, that's going to wreck this province and Western Canada if it goes ahead.

We don't know if ag is going to be exempt. If it's not, you're going to be looking at 5 to \$15,000 extra on the farm. And sure you can say . . . Well you have the Liberal MP [Member of Parliament] saying, well you'll just get it back after we take it. Well I'll tell you what. I've dealt with Liberals over a number of years, and they take tax money. You're not going to get it all back because I tell you what: they'll set up a level of administration — they're going to have to — create a bunch of jobs in Ottawa, and they will take that money off the top to pay for that first before it comes back.

And that doesn't mean in a couple of years that they don't all of a sudden put restrictions on that once they start collecting it, they start looking at it. We're talking about two and a half billion dollars coming out of our province. There's billions of dollars floating down there, going to go down to Ottawa across Canada. You think after three or four years that they're going to say, oh we're just going to give that back?

I can see another . . . Just what he did before, basically just saying we're going to do this, imposing his will. How about if he imposes . . . You know what? We're going to start running this, or we're going to take half of the money because we don't think you provinces are doing it right. And you'd better believe that he won't look at that.

What did he do with the health? He told the provinces that they did not know how to do it, that they weren't putting the money into health. They weren't doing it right. So now he's going to put, from what I understand, he's going to put restrictions on how we spend that money. You think he's not going to do that with carbon, the carbon tax? You better believe he's going to do that in a number of years. And if you're going to support him, I can tell you right now that the people of Saskatchewan will punish you a lot harder than they punished you in the last two elections if you don't stand behind the people of this great province.

You know, this is one of the biggest debates this province is going to face. This could actually . . . We're struggling right now, you know. Our resources are down. And now you want to stand up and say, you know what. Let's let the Prime Minister give us another hit on this. You know, let's just let them tax and help shut down our oil industry.

You know, you had a convention on the weekend. And I'll

admit that some of them batwing ideas, and you had a few of them, didn't hit the floor. But I'll tell you what. You never did talk about carbon capture. You never talked about the carbon tax. You know, sure the people in that room would say, anything that we're supporting as a government, don't do that. But you better get out in reality. When you go door to door . . .

Some of you have farming roots. I know that. You go talk to some of the farmers in that area and just say, you know what. What do you think of this carbon tax? And they're going to tell you this could be our breaking point on this. You know, as we move forward in this province, we're going to face some challenges, and I don't think we need anymore coming from Ottawa, especially when we have worked on this file for a number of years, how to address the carbon problem.

The Premier is right when it comes to innovation, how to solve it. The world is moving in another direction, especially the poorer nations. We don't do something to help them clean it up, we're just making the problem worse. Putting a tax on this province and this, well all the country, but it's going to hit Western Canada more severely, and don't ever think that that probably didn't cross an odd Liberal's mind when they were talking about this and when they decided they were going to implement it, you know.

As we move forward to implement a 50-tonne tax by a certain year . . . But now it's saying don't know what's exempt; how they're going to take it. Without the rules . . . You know, that's what we sent a minister down there for, to say, what's happening? Let's discuss things. Let's see how we can, instead of taxing people, how can we . . . And what are the rules if you do want to put some price on carbon? I don't think there is any. I don't think they know yet, you know. What's going to be exempt, what's not? Is what we did and invested, hundreds of million dollars . . . and it's working cleaning up coal? Because I'll tell you what, coal's going to be used as we move in the future.

[16:15]

I just had, at 1 o'clock had a conference call from Carolyn Orr, who heads up SARL [State Agriculture and Rural Leaders], state rural agricultural leaders, you know, and I asked, you know what: Is anybody down there talking about carbon capture? She just laughed. She said, we're not going in that route. And I told her I couldn't believe the carbon tax, you know. She said, I couldn't believe that you guys are looking at taxing carbon because she says, you know, the states up there would rise up and especially if it was to hit ag like it could hit this one with the carbon tax. You know, we've talked about the capture program, and there's been some states looking at it, and they're still, looking at it. There's interest. It's a technology that's going to take . . . that has been working, and it's going to get better as time goes on.

I can remember the synchrotron. The first year, it didn't work right. I mean there was nothing but issues. I remember it was being . . . I wasn't here, but it was being discussed in the legislature, a waste of money. Why would you bring that in? And that thing's, you know, it's giving nothing but problems. Now look at it. It's a leader in Saskatchewan, you know, known all over the world for that, and so will this technology as we move forward.

That's what we're going to be, you know, dealing with, is how do we fix the world? And doing a tax is not going to fix what's happening in the rest of the world. We put out less than two per cent of the world. A tax that they said, well, it'll be returned, so then you can just turn around and just, like Goodale said, well you can just give it back to the guys that paid it. Well then what are you putting it on for? How are you solving the problems if you're not going to work through innovation and ideas as we move forward?

You know, that's the Liberal attitude. And they love taxes when it comes to, you know, governments. The Liberals always did love to tax, you know. They weren't that great at giving it back, and I guarantee you, they won't give this tax back after a few years. They will find a way to keep a lot of it.

You take two and a half billion dollars out of this province every year, and I tell you what. You're going to be looking at a Newfoundland or a Maritimes province. Now if that's what the members opposite want, well then that doesn't speak very much for them because like I said before, stand up for the people of Saskatchewan. Go out and talk to a farmer. Go up and talk to an average working guy and just say you know what: do you think this is a good tax for you to pay? And then you might get a break back in your income tax a little later. That's if, if you got a job to pay the tax at the end, you know. The average guy, he just wants a good job, good-paying job, and he wants that industry to go. And I'll tell you what. Our oil and our mining and uranium, they provide many, many good-paying jobs. You start killing them and you're going to feel the effects in Saskatoon and Regina, the bigger centres.

You know, another motion . . . You know the NDP never talk about uranium. Well you want some clean technology, you know, why not look at that? So then that just boils down to at the convention just rhetoric, just you hate oil companies, you hate pipelines. You know let's not even move our oil to tidewater where at least maybe we can get a little extra money for it. You know we have the East stopping that, and yet they want to tax our oil industry. I still believe . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well it is. You have a couple of chief of staffs in the Prime Minister's office who want to shut it down. They've said so much. They believe it should stay in the ground.

And I'll tell you what. People of Saskatchewan don't think it should stay in the ground. It should come up. It should come up responsibility with it, and come up responsible. And you do lots of, which there is, the environmental safeties. We have some of the stringent environmental records in and rules in North America, as good as anybody's, you know, and yet we have people that oppose any use of oil, uranium, eventually the next thing.

A certain group, a little group, if they shut down the oil, the next thing they'll shut down potash. You know, why are you digging holes in the ground? We don't need to be doing that you know; that's wrong, you know. And if you're going to listen to that certain little bit segment of population, you're going to end up in a lot of trouble. And our side doesn't. It's with a majority of people that are in this great province, you know.

And this is an issue that's not going to go away. I mean anybody I've talked to in my constituency have said you've got to fight this. You know we got to. We can't have anything that's going to hurt this province and set it back. I haven't had one guy say you know what, that's a good thing. Let's do the \$50 a tonne of tax and let it go. And yes, if I get some money back, I'm all right with it. You know, I haven't . . . You know that's the sentiment in my constituency.

And I've talked to a few others in other constituencies. But I would guess, and maybe I'm wrong, but I would guess that the majority of people in each and every constituency does not support this tax. And if it comes in, they're definitely not going to support it, especially when it hits them in the pocketbook, because that's when people will actually take notice.

They're taking notice now when it doesn't affect them in the pocketbook. They will. You know then it's a pretty . . . It's already an issue they're aware of. And when it starts to hit them in the pocketbook, they will really become vocal, and they will remember who was fighting that tax. And they will, you know, they'll be saying, you've got to fight it any way you can, even if we have to go all the way — you know, heaven forbid — to the court route, you know.

But when you're dealing with something that could potentially destroy your province or set it way back at the, I would almost say maybe not the expense, but basically when other provinces aren't going to be set back in Eastern Canada as much, you know, because they don't rely on oil and gas. That's to me totally unfair when you have a federal government that's going to look . . . basically while penalizing you as a province just because that you have natural resources and we don't, so we're going to punish you.

I'm going to sit down. I could talk about this for hours, but I know that many, many of my colleagues want to speak to this very important issue that's going to dominate this province in the next couple of years. So I would encourage the members opposite to pull that amendment and support the motion, and there might be a few more of you here next time, next election.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for allowing me the opportunity to offer my support of the government's position on climate change as outlined in the climate change white paper released on October 18th, 2016, and to also further support this Assembly's opposition to the federal government's plan to initiate a carbon tax. And I will not be supporting the opposition's amendment.

I hope to discuss the direct effects that such an ill-conceived plan has to the hard-working members of Melville-Saltcoats and provide my support to some well-explained alternatives and potential made-in-Saskatchewan solutions.

It's very concerning when our Premier questioned the Prime Minister after his surprise announcement to the House of Commons, where the Premier asked Prime Minister Trudeau more than once if the government had done an economic impact assessment that such a massive tax imposition was going to do

to our federal economy. And from what I understand, you could hear the crickets in the Prime Minister's office. As our Premier rightfully questions, has this government decided to just push ahead with such a plan without studying what the impact might be on local jobs or do they just not care what the impact might be?

The federal government has admitted that when competitiveness is affected, Canadian firms face pressure to reduce domestic production or ship production and/or investment to a country that has not yet priced carbon at a comparable level. This is referred to as carbon leakage. Carbon leakage, in a very callous definition, it's a person who has become expendable in the name of a federal carbon tax because the federal government didn't bother doing a due diligence analysis on the potential effects of their carbon tax.

Mr. Speaker, when this province was under the NDP government, we experienced far too much carbon leakage. We lost far too many good-paying jobs under the NDP in times of increasing taxation and chasing jobs away. We understand what happens when bad taxation ideas are thought of to be an easy way to balance a budget. How many years pre-2007 did we experience job leakage, population leakage, our kids' leakage due to ill-conceived tax strategies?

On October 20th, the *National Post* wrote an article quoting our federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau, warning that our slowing Canadian economy could add billions to the federal deficit. "The Bank of Canada now forecasts real gross domestic product to grow just 1.1 per cent in 2016 . . ." and maybe 2 per cent in 2017. I'm not convinced that adding another tax to Canadian businesses at this time is going to enhance our contributions to GDP. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I think it will be detrimental to the future growth.

Derek Burleton, deputy chief economist with the TD Bank Financial Group, asked to comment on the GDP revelations of our federal Finance Minister, and he isn't expecting any financial stimulus in the fall update to boost the economy, but he believes that any new measures will be grounded on the government's long-term plans for innovation. He didn't claim taxation was going to help, but rather putting more meat on the bones on the longer term vision for innovation. Innovation is the key here, and that's something that I want to discuss later on.

And I'm quite perplexed really by the opposition's efforts to criticize the white paper, which identifies priorities and plans. And I ask, what is their legacy? What can I show my granddaughter that they've contributed, that they've left for her from their legacy? At least BC implemented a plan. It wasn't a good one, but they implemented a plan.

So drilling down to the constituency level, I want to indicate really what the carbon tax burdens are going to be for the residents of Melville-Saltcoats. Agriculture is a key driver to our local and regional economy, whether our constituents are involved in primary, or they're involved in value-added business.

The potash producers of Mosaic in Esterhazy and PCS [Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan] Rocanville directly employ over

2,000 people between the two entities, and likely another 500 directly through secondary and contracted businesses. Potash royalties are expected to provide 3 per cent of this province's total revenue in 2016-2017. I know the Finance Minister, using a forecast assumption of potash sales at \$207 US per tonne, in our budget, you can see there's not a lot of margin left in the potash industry at this time. So unfortunately, it's pretty difficult that we've seen a Saskatchewan mine suspend operations until potash prices improve.

Over the weekend, sitting with some officials with Mosaic, they indicated power and gas consumption was estimated to be anywhere from 5 to 10 per cent of their overall cost production, depending on their extraction and drying process. And another big factor of their production costs is the rail freight on getting their product to port. And it's safe to assume that most potash production's been retailed at or even under their cost of production. So they're likely ending up with a lot of negative and local and provincial effects if we implement a carbon tax on that industry, whether it's layoffs, work slowdowns, or ultimately closure. There is no carbon tax in Russia. None in Belarus or New Mexico. How is it fair to add an additional tax on this industry that competitors do not face?

So again we ask, what is the impact to local good-paying jobs? And what indication do we have that how many jobs . . . How many jobs is the federal government willing to lose or to accept as carbon leakage in this industry? Melville-Saltcoats is blessed with the easy access to three canola processing plants. Although not in our constituency, we can see them from here. Our producers can haul directly to them, but we also have a number of constituents who work there.

The Premier indicated, with new information, that now a carbon tax assessment of \$10 a tonne would create an additional \$3 million expense to each and every plant. Moving at \$50 a tonne for carbon, we're looking at over \$15 million yearly expense added to each crush plant. You may rest assured that the canola crush plants in North Dakota, Montana, Michigan, they're not going to be assessed a carbon tax. Neither are the soybean crush plants that we're going to be competing directly against. Even if the crush plants were able to factor the additional costs into their cost production, ultimately it's going to come back to the primary producer.

A study released in 2013 shows Canadian canola production . . . [inaudible] . . . \$19.3 billion to the Canadian economy each and every year. That includes more than 249,000 Canadian jobs and \$12.5 billion in wages. Canola generates one quarter of all farm cash receipts. So how many of those jobs, how much of that revenue are we willing to lose to carbon tax leakage?

Locally, the carbon tax is going to affect the primary producer in many ways. A \$50 carbon tax is going to add up to thirteen and a half cents per litre of diesel fuel. That's going to increase fuel costs up to 25 per cent. Fuel costs typically represent 5 to \$6 an acre. In addition, fertilizer costs are going to go up another \$6 an acre. Freight costs, through road and rail freight, it's going to go up as a result of the carbon tax. Energy used for farm operations, we're certainly using a lot right now through grain drying, conditioning. General operational energy use is going to go up.

[16:30]

The family who took over our farm can expect up to \$100,000 additional expense due to the carbon tax implication to his farm. So all these costs are borne by the producer. In the global marketplace, he's going to have to have, he's going to have difficulty competing with his fellow competitors in South America, in the Soviet Union, certainly with the ag economies in the US.

One of our significant export competitor is Australia. Tried the carbon tax, didn't work. They were able to measure its negative effects pretty quickly and dropped it. So ultimately the strong profitability of agriculture, which is now fleeting, it's now once again under financial duress. So not only are Saskatchewan farmers worried about a carbon tax that's going to undercut their ability to compete, but they're wondering is it actually going to protect the environment. So how many primary producers is the federal government willing to lose to carbon tax leakage?

Mr. Speaker, let me emphasize it. Climate change is real. In our quest to support the ever-growing population of the earth and to provide it a reasonable standard of living, we're generating gasses that are polluting the earth and they're causing irreparable damage. We have to take the initiative to limit the negative effects. However the ultimate question is, are we able to measure the success of these different types of initiatives that we take on?

Interesting. When I had a conversation about carbon tax with my millennial son Matthew living in Ottawa, his comment was, and I quote:

Now I want to clarify that I'm against the carbon tax, very against it. I look at it as the government trying to make an instant decision to drastically improve conditions. I would go as far as comparing it to Montreal banning pit bulls. [He has an issue with that.] Somewhere, somehow, [he thought] we needed a solution that had to happen instantly without actually thinking it through. And when they have difficulty to modify the carbon tax or they get a chance to re-evaluate it in the near future, they're going to look like a bunch of buffoons.

What I'd like the government to do is emphasize the need for cleaner energy and promote advancements in carbon capture and cleaner energy production methods. We do not need to lead by example or enforcing and failing reduction of carbon emissions. Rather we need to lead by using our technological advancements and global relations to promote other countries to follow suit in improving their energy production methods.

We do need to protect our carbon-capturing trees, all the while reducing our output, but we should focus on being the technological leader rather than just having a lower number. We need to be the one that's offering that cleaner, coal-burning power plant rather than focus on reducing the number of coal-burning power plants that we have right now. We can reduce the number of coal-burning power plants we have in the long-term plan, but right now we need to focus on sharing our scientists and

forward-thinking individuals with the world's best scientists rather than limiting their potential.

Mr. Speaker, those are the thoughts of a 23-year-old millennial and the summary of discussions that he's been having with his co-workers and his friends.

In the climate change white paper, initiated by the Government of Saskatchewan, we have a detailed analysis of how we as a province are going to take on the climate change issues and its attempt to refocus the conversation away from the easy stuff, from the easy process of creating an economic penalty for carbon production. And we want to move it to a new conversation that has a more global perspective with a focus on true innovation. In that white paper are 13 specific recommendations as to what this province can do and what it will do to help steer the innovation conversation along.

Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to comment on one thing that we found out about cap and trade. It's to me an illogical method of trying to create taxation. And I simply look at what's going on in Ontario where the cap-and-trade system is so heavily supported — both in Ontario and Quebec — and it may end up costing them billions of dollars. The last two recent auctions have only been 35 per cent sold at levels far under everyone's expectations. Ontario has a five-year, \$8.3 billion climate change plan that it was going to fund entirely from the cap-and-trade revenue from these auctions. There are so many uncertainties at play, including legal challenges in the state of California who the Ontario and Quebec trade is so to be aligned with. There could be a significant transfer of wealth that moves from Ontario to California if there remain significant discounts in this whole cap-and-trading network.

But, Mr. Speaker, innovation is what I really want to talk about, and that's something that this province is very good at. A great example of this is found in agriculture, and through the great work of our University of Saskatchewan Crop Development Centre, we've been developing an amazing array of pulse crops such as field peas, chickpeas, lentils, fava beans, and dry beans. Then they're improving on nitrogen use — efficiency, improving on disease resistance, and the environmental stresses.

The further adaptation of oilseeds, including the increased adaptability of soybeans to Saskatchewan agriculture, would help further reduce agricultural's dependency on synthetic fertilizers as pulse crops extract most of their needed nitrogen from the air around them. Pulse crops in our province have moved from 400,000 acres in 1990 to over 6.2 million in 2015, and this has a potential to increase significantly — over 10 million acres in 2030 in this province alone.

Where do we go from here? Well maybe it's finding a mechanism to introduce nitrogen fixation into cereals. Plant scientists who study nitrogen fixation caught a break in 2011 when Microsoft founder Bill Gates became intrigued by the concept of developing nitrogen fixing in cereals. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation funds agriculture development around the world, particularly research to boost production in sub-Saharan Africa. And that organization has and will continue to invest billions of dollars into private research into these and other world-changing technologies.

There are other significant technologies that primary producers today have access to that's going to help mitigate the production of greenhouse gases: variable rate fertilizer, pesticide applications, spatial soil testing, utilization of satellite and infrared analysis technology, RFID [radio frequency identification] tags in cattle and livestock that can measure and monitor feed uptake and the rate of gain.

Genetic improvements in all aspects of agriculture, whether livestock or grain production, have the potential ability to reduce emissions throughout the food chain. Mr. Speaker, I found a headline in the *National Post* dated October 21st that's titled, "How one researcher is fighting cow [flatulence] — and climate change — by feeding the gassy beasts seaweed." Rob Kinley, a Dalhousie-educated researcher working in Australia, is finding that feeding artificial cow stomachs seaweed reduces the amount of methane produced by up to 99 per cent. He hopes to replicate the experiment with living cows whose methane-filled farts and burps make them really the largest animal contributors to climate change. Believe it or not, as ridiculous as the headline reads, research is ongoing, not only in our Saskatchewan labs, but throughout the world on its own, and without the threat of carbon tax to make a difference in greenhouse gas production.

Mr. Speaker, locally-produced technologies, such as the carbon capture process at Boundary dam, has been and will be discussed by those that understand the process far better than I do. However I do want to introduce or reinforce that we are not the only ones who have been working on that technology locally. Shell Canada put out a press release in mid-September indicating that they had successfully stored 1 000 000 tonnes of carbon dioxide under ground with a \$1.35 billion Quest project in the oilsands, with the help of \$745 million from the Alberta government, and \$120 million from the federal government. The Quest project is designed to capture about a third of the emissions from the Shell Scotford Upgrader near Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta. And officials of the Quest project estimate that if they were to build it again, they could reduce the cost of building that by 20 to 30 per cent — 20 to 30 per cent less to construct or operate another new facility. The more you build, the cheaper they get.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's very evident that we need to focus on innovation and technology to reduce emissions. With more than 2,400 coal-fired plants being built around the world, carbon capture technology can do more to reduce greenhouse gas than a carbon tax can. But, Mr. Speaker, we also need to identify the positive contributions that agriculture and forestry can present to carbon capture. We're just beginning to now quantify the significant contribution that agriculture's providing to assisting this country in mitigating carbon production. We need to develop a system of accounting and verification done federally to ensure Saskatchewan gets full credit for its relevance in accounting for greenhouse gas reductions.

Mr. Speaker, in summary, I believe that my millennial son agrees with the majority of tax-paying citizens of Canada, certainly of Saskatchewan. And it's interesting to note that Larry Martin, the former deputy minister to the Premier of Saskatchewan, was quoted recently saying, while most Canadians want a climate change response that is, "... scientifically sound, environmentally sustainable and

financially realistic . . . the [current] . . . discourse is driven by a myopic, ideological obsession with carbon emissions alone."

Mr. Speaker, we need to continue to develop strategies that will assist us both to plan for climate change but also help reduce our greenhouse gas footprint. This cannot be undertaken by a one-skate-fits-all approach. Each jurisdiction has a unique and distinct part that it's going to play in the national climate change stage.

National programs are not going to have a universal fit. They will penalize some and be of minimal benefits to others. Let's continue to work convincing the federal government to allow us to develop a Saskatchewan-made solution that will benefit all of Canada and will help keep Saskatchewan strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for giving me the opportunity to speak about this very important topic, the topic of a carbon tax that is going to be imposed by the federal Government of Canada.

In my maiden speech, I talked about the constituency of Estevan. I talked about the trials and tribulations of the current economic environment that is happening there. To refresh people's memory, I will give you a recap.

The economy of Estevan revolves around agriculture, the oil industry, coal mining, and energy production. Sounds like a pretty well-rounded constituency, but I'm afraid that all of those industries are high emitters of greenhouse gases. With what is happening around the oil industry and the price of oil, the constituency of Estevan has taken a huge economic hit.

In my travels, I have had the opportunity to visit with various service industries — businesses like restaurants, lounges, hair salons. I could list more but I think you've got the point. They are telling me that their sales are off by 40 per cent. Could you imagine taking a 40 per cent pay cut and there is nothing you can do about it? If the people who live in your community have less disposable income to spend, there's nothing you can do about that. Some oil companies have asked their employees to take pay cuts; some of them, I've heard, as high as 30 per cent.

The member from Cannington likes to tell a story about a business in his constituency. And I guess it's not really a story; it's the truth. The owner went to the staff and he gave them a choice. He said, you can all take a 20 per cent pay cut or I'm going to have to lay off 29 people. And then he left the room and he let the employees make the choice. Of course, the catch for them is they don't know who's on the list of people that may get laid off. In the end, they chose to take the pay cut so that everybody can keep their job.

Some of these companies have had to lay off people. And let's make it clear, these positions go right from managers to engineers, geologists, consultants, floor hands, and office staff. It has affected people in all areas of oil production. No one is immune from these cuts. Then there are companies that have actually had to close their doors, companies that employed good people with spouses and children and mortgages to pay. The fall

out from these people losing their jobs is very heartbreaking.

So all of what I have just described is happening because of low oil prices and a slowing industry. So, Mr. Speaker, when I heard about this carbon tax that is being unilaterally imposed on the provinces of Canada, I was even more concerned about the province of Saskatchewan and its economy. Needless to say . . . something like that would do to a constituency like Estevan, a constituency that is already on its knees because of what is happening in the resource industry.

Saskatchewan is very reliant on the resources this province has to offer, resources that also happen to be heavy emitters of GHGs [greenhouse gas]. And what does the federal government do? It imposes a tax without proper consultation, which I might add they agreed to do, imposed a tax while a meeting . . . which our Minister of the Environment was trying to negotiate with other ministers from across Canada.

This is very serious for our province. And I might add that I stand behind the decision of the Minister of Environment for walking out of that meeting when he heard the news that the Prime Minister had announced a carbon tax while these ministers were trying to come to an agreement in good faith.

The member from Saskatoon Nutana stands over there and says our Premier has failed miserably. I beg to differ. I'm proud to stand on this side of the room because we have a government and a Premier that is fighting for this province.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our opposition across the room does not take this economic future of our province very seriously. You might ask how I know this. I know this because one of the resolutions that was to be brought forward by Saskatoon Nutana NDP at their conference this past weekend was to shut down all coal-fired power plants. That is right. They want to shut down a reliable source of power for the people of Saskatchewan.

[16:45]

So not only are they not satisfied that the federal government is going to tax this industry, which will make it difficult enough and may cause rate increases or job losses, they just want to shut the industry down completely, which will cause an uncountable amount of job losses, not to mention the fact that this is a very reliable source of power for the province.

The Leader of the Opposition says this government is doing nothing and investing nothing. In his own words, "We as a province have invested 1.5 billion in carbon capture and sequestration in Estevan at Boundary dam 3." The Leader of the Opposition calls this a carbon capture debacle. On the contrary, this is a success story that helps take out up to 90 per cent of all CO₂ that is emitted from Boundary dam 3.

And one of the most exciting pieces of this technology is the fact that it can be used all around the world. We already know that these other countries are not going to stop using coal any time soon. In fact, they are continually putting up new coal plants all the time.

So why not embrace the technology that has been designed in our own backyard so that greenhouse gas emissions go down

globally also? We also know Canada is responsible for approximately 2 per cent of all emissions globally. So if we have technology that can help other parts of the world reduce their emissions, why would we not do that?

Mr. Speaker, the constituency of Estevan has coal mines. The primary customer for these mines is SaskPower and SaskPower uses that coal to fuel the coal-powered plants that are in Estevan. So not only would the NDP close down our plants, the mines would no longer have their primary customer to sell to which no doubt will put that industry at risk in Estevan, once again creating more job losses. If this were to happen, our service industry would be feeling more than a 40 per cent revenue loss as well as creating more job losses in those industries.

And this carbon tax that will be imposed on our province, it will affect agriculture in this province of Saskatchewan. There is a farmer named Jake Leguee that wrote an open letter to the Prime Minister of Canada. In his letter he writes, and I quote, "A carbon tax has the ability to drastically increase my costs, without creating an incentive to reduce my emissions," which I guess brings us to what should be the point of this whole conversation — reducing greenhouse gasses or emissions.

Will imposing this tax on the people of Saskatchewan actually reduce emissions? My thoughts are it will do one of two things. The price of goods to the consumer will go up as Mr. Leguee has pointed out, which will come at a cost to the people, all of the people of Saskatchewan or the heavy-emitting companies will cut their costs so it doesn't get passed on to the people of Saskatchewan. And those companies will most likely have to lay off people to compensate for this increase which has not reduced emissions at all.

The federal minister from Regina said the tax can be revenue neutral, meaning we will tax the heavy emitters and then just turn around and give the money back to them in a form of a credit — money in and money out. Of course I'm sure, as our other speakers talked of, it will come at a cost in the form of an administrative fee from the federal government. But we don't know that for sure because we don't know the details of what exactly this new carbon tax will look like or how it will be administered. But regardless, if it is the federal minister's rationale that all of the money will stay in the province of Saskatchewan and it can all be rebated back to the companies, what is the point? This is definitely not reducing our carbon footprint which is supposed to be the goal of this whole exercise.

There was also mention that we could just tax the heavy emitters and give tax reductions to the people of Saskatchewan. Then I go back to the fact that there will be job losses because of this carbon tax. And do you think the people who are not working really care if they have a tax break? They will have no income to tax.

But back to the point. We are trying to reduce greenhouse gasses, and this would not help us reach our goal either. So let's make a plan. Let's look at the ways we are already helping to reduce our carbon footprint and what we can do to help reduce it in the future. Our provincial government has already committed to getting to have our power supply 50 per cent

non-renewable and 50 per cent renewable by 2030. And I believe this goal will be met.

And lastly, the Premier of Saskatchewan released a document called climate change white paper last week. This document is absolutely jam-packed with facts and figures, ideas, and possible solutions, information that is evidence-based and very, very thought provoking. If you're interested, you can find this document on the Government of Saskatchewan's website.

I am sure that some of my colleagues will be getting into some of these details as some of them already have with their comments. So when we are talking about this issue please ask yourself, what is the goal? And are we achieving it through this type of arbitrary carbon tax?

I support the motion brought forward by the Premier of Saskatchewan and do not support the amendment. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — Mr. Speaker, as we all know, global warming continues to be the greatest existential threat of our time. There is unfortunately a lot of poor science thrown around about the problem. But there's even more good science from which we can learn and begin to tackle the dilemma that we can't leave for our children to solve.

But we have plenty of stark facts. The global population is expected to reach 10 billion. We have land that is turning to desert, and we have climate change. Mr. Speaker, no one can refute that we will only solve the problem of replacing fossil fuels with technology. But fossil fuels, carbon, coal, and gas are by no means the only things that are causing climate change.

I propose to you today, Mr. Speaker, that international research suggests that what is happening globally in agriculture is causing climate change as much as burning fossil fuels and maybe more. It is estimated that the average person today needs about half a tonne of food per year, yet we are creating 10 tonnes of eroding soil for every person alive on the planet today. This is causing global desertification and land degradation at an alarming rate. But Saskatchewan, with our knowledge and experience in regenerative agriculture, can offer more hope than you can imagine. We are part of the solution.

Mr. Speaker, desertification, or biodiversity loss, is what happens when we create bare soil. There is no other cause. And this is what I intend to focus on today. In many parts of the world that are humid year round, it is almost impossible to create bare ground. Nature just covers it up so quickly. But where we see desertification occurring is the seasonal rainfall areas that have long periods of humidity followed by periods of prolonged dry spells. And as I've already stated, these tend to be the seasonal grasslands of the world — the North American prairies, the Central Asian steppe, and so on.

You see, Mr. Speaker, when soil is left bare and you receive rainfall, most of that moisture is left to run off, causing erosion and, in many circumstances, flooding. Or it is simply lost to evaporation just as it would on your driveway after a rain.

Now, Mr. Speaker, water and carbon are linked to soil organic

matter. And when soils are damaged, they release both carbon and water back to the atmosphere, creating more bare, eroding soil. This simply perpetuates the problem.

Traditionally we have been taught that crop production, along with livestock and overgrazing, are the cause of soil degradation. But as we rested the land and reduced stocking rates, we've only accelerated the problem. When we use summer fallow, as an example, as a way to rest the land, we produce bare, eroding soil and we expose the micro-organisms living in that soil to the elements, effectively destroying them. Think of it as a tornado going through a town. If the tornado happens once, the residents — and I'm talking about the micro-organisms here — will rebuild. If it happens two or three times a year for 20 years, some of those residents will undoubtedly be killed, while others simply move away.

When we try to rest grasslands or by reducing the stocking rate, we break the carbon, water, and nutrient cycle. As plants grow through photosynthesis, they store carbohydrates in their roots. These roots then feed the plant material growing above the soil. The aim of plants is to produce seed, and after that, plant material must break down biologically before the next growing season. In areas that are rested, this biological process cannot occur. It then switches to oxidation, which is a slow chemical process that smothers the plants, blocking sunlight from reaching the plant's growth points, and results in bare eroding soil and increased woody vegetation. This releases water and carbon into the atmosphere.

We have traditionally used fire to control this problem by removing excess plant material and allowing plants to regrow, but this creates bare ground and releases carbon from the soil as well as releasing black particulate carbon into the atmosphere. As we know, we can't rest the land because this causes bare eroding soil and releases carbon. We know we can't burn the residue because this causes bare ground and releases carbon. What are we to do?

As we begin to understand nature's complexity, we have adopted management techniques that mimic nature. By keeping livestock bunched and moving as a proxy for former herds of wild animals and by the use of specific planning processes, we are able to account for the variables that are inherent in agriculture and nature. We have also developed technology in crop production that regenerates the soil instead of depleting it. By incorporating organic matter back into the soil and protecting the micro-organisms in the soil with minimal soil disturbance and increasing moisture retention, we can rejuvenate and build healthy soils. In Saskatchewan we are absolutely world leaders in this effort. There have been huge strides made in adopting management techniques and technology. Many of these have been pioneered and developed right here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, take 1 square metre of bare soil. I promise you that it will be much cooler in the morning and much hotter at midday than another square metre of soil that is covered with plant litter. If you were to water those two plots and come back a day later, you would see that the water from the bare ground would have been evaporated, but the ground that was covered with plant litter would still be holding moisture. By holding this moisture, what you have done, Mr. Speaker, is that you have

effectively changed the microclimate. When we multiply this by the area of the world's grasslands, which cover about 40 per cent of the land on Earth, Mr. Speaker, we have changed the macroclimate.

Soil restoration may be our greatest ally in countering global climate change and creating a liveable future. The benefits of restoring soil are many. In addition to providing safe haven for atmospheric carbon, soil restoration provides localized cooling, builds resilience to droughts and floods, and helps produce nutritious food.

Our prairie grasslands co-evolved with vast herds of herbivores over millions of years. These herds were kept bunched and moving by pack-hunting predators. This action of keeping herds bunched and moving is what created our deep, rich prairie soils. These grazing animals would remove some of the plant material and trample the remaining material into close contact with the ground. This close contact allowed for the biological decay process to take place. This allowed a healthy flush of plants the next season and increased and promoted biodiversity. With varying roots depths in the different plant species, it also supported the nutrient and water cycle.

As foliage above the surface is eaten, the root mass below the surface dies back. The dead root material turns to carbon in the soil and creates capillaries which in turn allow the soil to act like a giant sponge, absorbing and retaining water. As the cycle continues it creates layer and layer of new soil. Imagine the pages of a book being laid one of top of each other. This increases both production of plants and animals, building healthy soils that are able to break down methane and store carbon.

Remember the stories of the 10 feet of black topsoil that the settlers found when they arrived here. Well this is how these soils were created. On Saskatchewan's 12.5 million acres of native grassland we store three times Canada's annual emissions of CO₂. To quote the very well-respected ecologist Allan Savory, very little attention has been placed on the biological soil that can be created very quickly through holistic management. This had led to a dramatic underestimation of the soil organic storage in assessing sequestration potential with respect to global warming.

Furthermore, there is a predominant assumption that soils have a carbon sequestration capacity that is limited, or we would call that . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, I'll keep going. Both estimates, however, effectively remove new soil from the equation and thereby underestimate soil sequestration capacity by a yet unknown but potential significant magnitude.

To further highlight the potential of growing soils, last fall at the Paris climate talks the Agriculture minister of France, Stéphane Le Foll proposed a declaration called four in one thousand. Its mandate is to increase soil organic matter by point four per cent per year on the world's agricultural soils.

The Speaker: — It being 5 p.m., this Assembly stands recessed until 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

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