



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

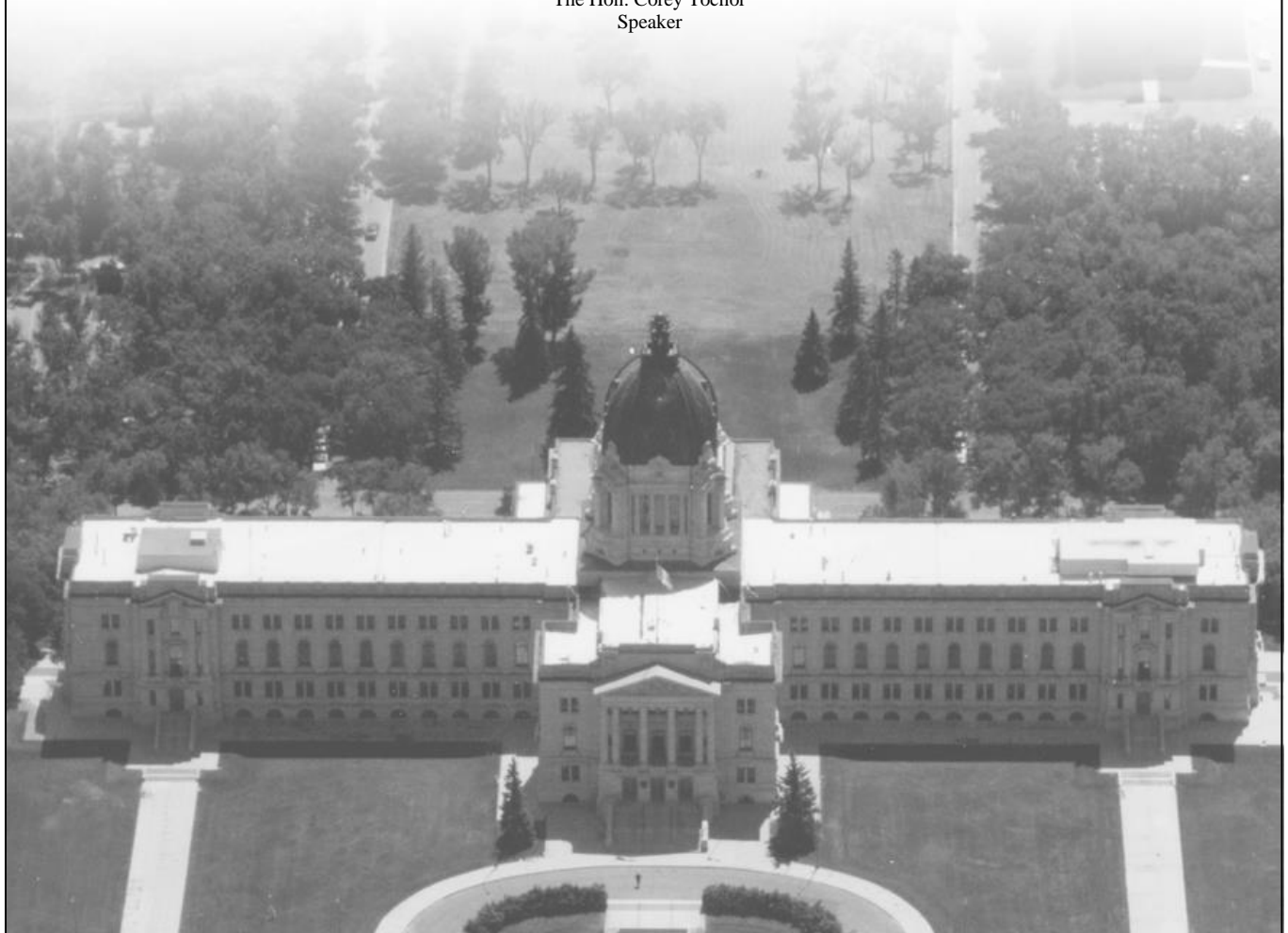
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



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

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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 7 o'clock, we'll call the House to order.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 1

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 1 — *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Amendment Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to right off the bat wish everybody at home a happy Halloween. Here we are on October 31st stuck in this . . . I shouldn't say . . . this Chamber.

We could be out handing candies. But you know, I think about all those orange pumpkins out there and people are looking at them and saying, that's a great thing. And if people are out trick-or-treating, kids are out trick-or-treating, first I hope they're all safe and sound and doing well. But you know, for the people of Saskatchewan when I think about Bill No. 1, *An Act to amend The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act*, is that a trick or is that a treat? I have to tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have big question marks about that, and I tell people in Saskatchewan, be wary, be wary.

This is just a one-line, one-line piece of legislation. And I'll read that as "Subclause 2(b)(ii) of *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act* is repealed." But we all know, we all know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one line leads to another. One line leads to another.

And of course here we have 2(b)(ii). That is *The Liquor and Gaming Authority Act*, and then we just go through the list. So we are very, very worried on Halloween night. It's a big question mark. Is it a trick or is it a treat?

I don't think this bill is any treat for Saskatchewan. I think it's a big trick, a big trick. It's a Trojan Horse that leads to bigger, bigger issues. And I have to tell you that I am deeply, deeply concerned. So all those folks who are watching this in between kids ringing the doorbell saying trick-or-treat, be wary because Bill 1 is just leading to things like Bill 40, and we've got big, big question marks.

Now before 5 o'clock and we had that time, there's some comments I made about innovation and the Internet. And I'll come back to that because I know the members opposite are very clear about wanting me to set the record straight, to set the

record straight. And I did say some things that I need to straighten the record on.

But I did want to say that I am deeply concerned, on a serious note, and we are deeply concerned on this side about Bill No. 1. I said before the House wound up for the supper hour that in many ways this, the fact that it's the first bill of their term as government . . . And they did win a mandate and we accept that, but what a vision to set forward in Bill No. 1. Bill No. 1 is fixing up their financial mess that they had created by mismanagement of the very strong years this province had record revenues, and they had mismanaged those years. And here we are, here we are in their third term fixing up those mistakes.

But it's sort of like a double-edged sword here. Part of it is mismanagement, and we can talk about their fiascos, scandals that they've had, whether it be lean and hiring international consultants at an outrageous price. Or we can talk about the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] and the scathing reports by the auditor and many, many unanswered questions that remain and that they don't seem willing to be as transparent and as accountable as once they said they would be, once they said they would be. And they said they'd be different than anyone else because they would be accountable for their actions. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we haven't seen that. We haven't seen that happen. And in fact we've seen a government who has been stubborn, stubborn in their ways about being accountable for the kind of mismanagement we have.

And of course I haven't talked about . . . I talked a little bit about this earlier before the supper hour, and people just tuning in now, be well aware of this. Of course, the Finance minister who has yet to table the first quarter financial reports of this province, saying there's not much to see. We are deeply concerned about that. When someone says there's not much to see, you know, there's the old saying, where there's smoke, there's fire. And of course . . . [inaudible] . . . saying it's not much to see, I bet there's a lot to see. So we're waiting for the second quarter. But I can just bet, in fact, Mr. Speaker, I can just bet that it will be released in early December after we have risen for the holiday break, the Christmas break.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, one of the books . . . I'm very interested in this. This is called *Superforecasting: The Art and Science of Prediction*. This is one of the books the library had sent around in their flyer last week, and I thought it would be very interesting. How can people predict the future here in Saskatchewan? What can you think of, what holds for us in the next four years in terms of this government?

Well it doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that we're going to see more and more of this kind of privatization. Bill 1 is just the first of many to come, I'm thinking. Now don't . . . You can call me a superforecaster if you want, but I bet a dollar that we'll see more of this when you start to see Bill 1 and its companion piece, Bill 40, these two tools in the tool kit that this government is putting out about how they can get quick, easy money to fix their financial problems. And they forget about the mess. They forget about what that means in the long run for a province like ours in Saskatchewan.

And whether it's a Liquor and Gaming Authority selling off 40 of its liquor stores in a variety of communities, whether they be a smaller communities of 3 or 400, 500 people up to, in the city of Saskatoon. And in fact in my own riding, in Riversdale, there's a centre in the Riversdale neighbourhood, one of the liquor board stores is for sale, I believe. And so you have the whole gamut here. And so it really, really does cause us a lot of concern.

And so while they may think this is a straightforward and a done deal . . . And they did, they did campaign on this. This is one thing that we did know about before the election, but we did not know about Bill 40 before the election. Nobody knew about it. So this is the thing that's going to be happening that causes people concern.

If this was going to be . . . They were out there talking about this. And we had the debate, and of course we believe that we can modernize and make the liquor stores more attractive for customers, do what we can, thinking about how we can make them competitive, that they would continue to serve the purposes that they do in our province, selling liquor in a responsible manner, a socially conscious manner, and yet at the same time providing a return on their investments to the people of Saskatchewan and creating meaningful employment throughout the province with well-paying jobs, well-paying union jobs. And we know that if it's a union job, that quite often that means there are pensions involved, there are benefits involved, that type of thing. But if it's non-unionized, quite often that's not the case, that there aren't benefits, there aren't pension plans, and people are reliant on CPP [Canada Pension Plan] and that type of thing.

So this bill has a lot of concerns for us and what does it really mean for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now I just want to take a minute. I was talking about why SaskTel was such an important Crown corporation. And it's further down the list; it is about four down the list. And as I said, if you remove one line, then you've got one line that leads to another. And then there is no reason why they might think, well it's pretty easy to take out one. Why don't we take out another?

But I was talking about innovation. And I do want to say that if the members across the way, if they did happen to look up what Archie was when I was talking about, I was talking about innovation and the Internet and what all of, you know, in the early days, in the '90s, of the Internet, even before graphics and images were on the Internet and it was all text. It was all text and this FTP, file transfer protocol. There were search engines involved, and I was reminiscing, when I was a teacher, about how SaskTel was quite actively involved. And so I just want to set the record straight. There was such a thing as Archie search engine.

And interestingly, if I can just educate everyone here, this was developed at McGill University and it was a way of, it was "a tool for indexing FTP archives, allowing people to find specific files. It is considered to be the first Internet search engine." And I'm quoting Wikipedia here. And while the people making that search engine didn't say it had anything to do with Archie Comics, it's actually based on the word "archive" without the

"v." That's how they got Archie out of it. But then it did spring forward to other search engines, the Veronica [very easy rodent-oriented net-wide index to computer archives] search engine, which was developed in 1992 at the University of Nevada. So there you go.

So Canada's leading the way and we're getting the University of Nevada falling into place. So it was another search engine and it was used for Gopher menus, if that means anything to people now. So it was actually, they say it was an acronym for very easy rodent-oriented net-wide index to computer archives. That's what they say, but cleverly I think people really realized it was from the comic book. But this is where I misspoke, Mr. Speaker, because I thought there was no such search engine as Jughead [Jonzy's universal gopher hierarchy excavation and display], but there was. Jughead is a search engine for the Gopher protocol, so I do apologize to the members opposite that in fact Jughead is a search engine system for the Gopher protocol. But it's distinct from Veronica in that it searches a single server at a time. Now this is its acronym, for the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker: Jonzy's universal gopher hierarchy excavation and display. I don't know if I believe that, but anyways, I just want to set the record straight if people at home are wondering what I was talking about. There, I clarified that.

But I do want to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we are deeply concerned about the agenda here for this government over the next four years and what it means in terms of their financial management and getting this house into shape. And we think it can be done, can be done quite easily, by first of all fixing up and getting rid of the habits of falling into financial fiascos and, you know, whether it's a GTH, whether it's the lean issue, all of these that can be done without the . . . and the necessary overpayments. We are saying very clearly — and this is the message that we want to leave with the people at home and the members opposite — that any of their corrections of the financial situation should not be done on the backs of those who are vulnerable, particularly those who are homeless, those who are living with disabilities.

And we see that, signs being sent out very clearly from the ministers involved with Lighthouse and with SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability]. And with the SAID program they say the changes are on pause. That wasn't the message people wanted to hear. They wanted to hear a clear no, it won't go forward.

And I know this government takes a lot of pride in SAID, and when it was first introduced we were supportive. We thought it was due, and we supported it right from the beginning. We saw it as a grassroots solution to making sure people could live with dignity when they had disabilities. But we are concerned now that we're moving the opposite way.

And frankly, when you consider the amount of money that they spent on the land deal versus what they might save on cutbacks on SAID, it just doesn't make any sense. It just doesn't make any sense. And so we have some real concerns about those signals, and the same with the Lighthouse, where you see facilities already created, all ready for people. And we have people sleeping at the door of Lighthouse. They can't get in, you know, as we get ready for winter. It is a shame. It's a crying shame. And this really speaks volumes: the pictures in the

paper, when you see those pictures of people right up against the glass door, and they can see inside, it's just not right. It's absolutely just not right.

And so this is the kind of thing that causes us a lot of concerns when you have, as I say, Bill No. 1. And it looks straightforward, and it's only one line, but it is a Trojan Horse. And we've seen that it has spawned Bill No. 40 down the road, where all of a sudden they feel obligated to define privatization.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite, when we were in government and we brought forward the bill about Crown ownership, they voted with us. They did not say, hey we don't understand the terms. And now 10 years later they've said . . . now 10 years later it's a problem. It's a problem. Where were they for 10 years? Maybe, you know, they should've been saying all along they were going to fix it. But it's because nine of those years, things were going well. Eight of those years, things were going well, and they didn't really, really care.

[19:15]

But I do have to say, it's like a double-edged sword though because part of it is mismanagement but part of it is philosophy. They truly believe that we don't need the Crowns. I worry. I worry that that's their belief, that they truly, at the end of the day, don't support Crowns in our province.

And that is worrisome because, you know, SaskPower, SaskEnergy, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], SaskTel, STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], SaskWater provided for us, because we know that many others, especially the large multinational corporations, would turn away from a province like ours because they would not see the profits easily. You know, I mean all our companies do well. Now I know with STC they need support, but in many ways I feel that . . . well I do believe completely that it's a company that provides basic services in our province that we just need to have.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm concerned that at the heart of this, this is where their soul is at in terms of what they really would like to see move along and help solve their financial matters. And we are worried about that — worried, worried.

You know, during the election we called for a budget before the election, but none was forthcoming. We knew they were working on this because you start to work on the budget in September, October. They're well into the way, and this is probably why Bill 40 came out just at the end of last week. It's because somebody had come up with the idea, we're going to need more money. We're going to need more money. And how can we get it? Because they've been busy at the treasury board, and it's just . . .

But you know, they have to stop their mismanagement. That's what people want to see right off the bat. And we know GTH is a big, big example. And while they can say that they're going to do the recommendations, the Premier is often quoted as saying past behaviour indicates future performance. There you go. I mean, you can just see, and that's why people get worried about this, because the wheels are coming off. And to throw these kind of bills up there is problematic.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I've provided enough of a summary for people about what I feel about Bill No. 1, *An Act to amend The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act*. I have severe, severe grave concerns about this, not only in the discussion, and we've had the discussion about the liquor stores, but also what it can lead to further on. And so there will be many, many questions, I know, in committee on this and how it lines up with the other privatization tools that this government is bringing forward.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that we adjourn Bill No. 1, *An Act to amend The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act*. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 1, *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 32

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 32 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Benefits) Amendment Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour today to stand up and talk about Bill No. 32, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act*. This was presented by the previous Deputy Premier and Minister Responsible for SGI in the spring session. And when reviewing this Act, the amendments to this Act, it's quite lengthy. There's a lot of changes that are being made with regards to this Act, and so it's kind of hard to go through all the information. And so I think this will be lengthy in committees because they'll have to have a lot of discussion with regards to how this is going to impact some of the budgets that they're talking about, the financial changes within the Act and the language they're changing and some of the impacts that it might have on residents of Saskatchewan.

So I know there'll probably be a lot of discussion with stakeholders with regards to some of these changes. And that would be rightfully so because, it's like I said before, it's very lengthy. The Act itself is very lengthy, but all the amendments are as well. And like a lot of the other bills, a lot of the amendments are with regards to language and changing some of the format. But this one, it's a lot of substance of information that's being changed here.

And so I really hope, when this is discussed in length in committee, that all members think about people who may be impacted by this and ensure that they're being treated fairly and appropriately because we all know that people do make mistakes. I think every member in the House here probably knows of people who have made some mistakes, and some of

them they suffered some severe consequences from, and some of them they might have lucked out and not have to face those severe consequences. But in fact we've got to realize that we're human, and we don't want to make sure that people are given too harsh of consequences.

And we also have to take into account that there could be a lot of reasons why people might end up in these situations, like with regards to addictions. People might have addictions issues that might lead them to these negative situations. And we also have a requirement of ensuring that they get the help and support that they need.

And also with some mental health, like I look at a lot of things with the lens of my background from mental health, and when I read about a lot of these amendments, I think of people that could have suffered great consequences with some of the changes that are being suggested here with regards to some people who might have psychoses. They don't realize that they're in a psychosis, and they might end up being in a severe car crash without getting help for their mental health. And oftentimes people don't right away think of that as being an illness or a disorder, and they go through the court process. And until they've been properly diagnosed or that's been acknowledged, they might sit in jails and remand for a long time.

And with some of the changes here, they're talking about SGI payments and the lack of providing the SGI benefits for people who might be deemed as being at fault. But again, like I said, some people sit in remand for months and months due to our lengthy court processes. And so I worry that people might be sitting in jail cells with some severe physical illnesses from these car accidents. And like I said before, oftentimes it's not till they hit the whole process of the court system that maybe these mental health illnesses are addressed or looked into.

And so that could be months of sitting with, you know, needing chiropractic services or having broken bones. And so who becomes that responsibility of providing that care? So we always go on the assumption that you're innocent until proven guilty. And so what I've been reading on this, it looks a lot like you're guilty as soon as you're confronted. And it's not looking at the process of what about the whole court process, and maybe you aren't guilty. And people might be suffering because they're not getting the services that they should have gotten with their insurance with SGI. And so if you are one of those people in those situations, like who would be responsible to ensure that your care is being provided? Is it going to be the Ministry of Justice? Is it going to be the Ministry of Health? Who is going to fall into that category? Or are these people just going to fall through the cracks?

So I hope that's something that's really considered when they bring this to committee and discussed about. If this becomes law, what's going to happen to these individuals? And so again, like I said I hope . . . Like there's a lot of talk about different pay structures, a lot of talk about how they're going to pay people who need these benefits. There's a lot of discussion on there and, to be honest, it really became complicated.

And so I'm sure the critic is going to have spend a lot of hours looking through this, and I know she will, and also get some

advice from some other stakeholders about how this is going to be different. But in some ways it looks like some people might be getting more benefits and, if that's the case, how many people will this impact on a general basis? And like I said before, what kind of impact will this have on the year-end budget?

So I think all of those have to be taken into account because I hope we don't make decisions now, and then later on — just like my colleague here talked about with the SAID program — years later say, oops we made a mistake, and now we can't provide this benefit to people. And you can't, you can't give with one hand and take with the other. When you make a decision, you have to make it with all of the thoughts process and ensure that you're making the right decision so that people aren't impacted later on.

And so, also financially, we also have to look at people who are in these accidents, that they are getting financially compensated to the degree that they need to be financially compensated. Because I know I was in a car accident at one time, and you still have to provide for all your bills. You have a lot of medical appointments you have to make, and for the most part a lot of that is compensated.

But if your wage isn't fully compensated, what are you going to do? Like most people are making it paycheque to paycheque, and we have to realize that. And after something like a car accident, like you're overwhelmed. You might be hurt. And if you're in the hospital, your family's struggling, the last thing you want on your mind is, how are we going to pay our bills? How are we going to ensure that, you know, we still have a roof over our head and we have food on the table? That's why we pay insurance. That's why we buy the insurance, is so that we know that when accidents happen — and accidents do happen — that we have that ability, that we're going to be able to provide for still our families and not have to worry about that financial, that concern.

So there was a lot of talk about wage classifications and such like that, and if you were a seasonal worker, or if you worked full time, or if you worked part time, or if you were a house care worker or home provider, a lot of talk about all those different classifications. So again I hope people really sit down and talk about it, and is this going to compensate people at the right degree?

Also when I was talking about benefits and who is liable of paying for benefits when someone's hurt and such, if we decide we're not going to provide insurance benefits to people, if we think that they're guilty but then they later are not seen as guilty, could this potentially be a forum for lawsuits? I hope not. And I hope that's considered, because as a government we've got to really look at, are we making laws that are going to make us more vulnerable, or are we making laws that we can sustain? So I hope that's considered.

And again, is it against human rights? We've got to look at the Human Rights Code as well and ensure that people's human rights aren't being taken away, because that's going to put us in a lot of legal difficulties. And we can't afford any legal issues and lawsuits and such because, well taxpayers don't want their money to be going that direction. They want their money to be

going to services that we all need, like education, health care, roads. So we want to be very due diligent on how we manage that.

[19:30]

But I wrote, when I was reading some of this information, it seems like the amendments to this bill will make it easier to sue at-fault drivers and/or their estates. And so is that the direction that we want to go? Or is that what our priorities are at this point? We have people who are sleeping on the streets and such, and right now we want to change legislation so that people can, you know, sue others much more readily? Like I don't know. To me those priorities seem to be a little messed up and so I would like to see priorities placed in other areas. And I can't imagine someone who . . . Like I said, people make mistakes. And so being a wife, and all of a sudden, say your husband makes a horrible mistake and now all of a sudden his estate is being sued because of that. Like that doesn't seem all that fair when I sit and think about the whole family and the family dynamics and who that'll greatly impact. So I hope that's really considered a lot when it's discussed in committees and challenged a little bit.

Also one area that I really feel that I need to talk about . . . and again, like I said, I read a lot of this stuff with my mental health lens. And I was reading about how no benefits are payable to the insured or insured spouse or dependants if the insured commits suicide or attempts to commit suicide with a motorcycle. And that really upsets me because I know, working in the mental health field, we really try to look at suicidality and the rates of suicide, and we feel that the rates of suicide are actually higher than what is being presented in statistics.

But the fact is that a lot of families feel the burden of not disclosing that it could be a potential suicide because of the impacts on insurances. And that is sad because that really makes families be put in a rock and a hard place when they want to, you know, let people know that this is an issue and that they want other family members or people to know that they could get help but they don't want to disclose the method that their loved one used, or potentially used, in fear of not being able to be covered under the insurance. Because again families, they sometimes rely on the loved one, the deceased, on their income. And so the insurance is supposed to supplement that.

So I wish we could have less stigma, removed from suicidality, and have it so that people could talk about it more. Because I think the one way we are going to combat suicide is that we're going to have to feel more comfortable talking about it. Talk with your family; talk with your kids; talk with your loved ones, and make it an open area so that they can communicate about it. And don't be scared or shy to talk about when it might have happened to you. And the more we do that, the less stigma will be placed on it, and hopefully that will make people be able to talk about it more likely. And so I really wish the insurance agencies would reconsider having that as part of their clause with regards to their benefits. That might be wishful thinking, but I really hope that's discussed and considered with regards to committee.

Also I noticed that they're going to be making some changes with regards to the language of specialists, because in the Act it

talks about, you know, different people who could be deemed as specialists. I'm glad that they're going to kind of more generalize that because I think as our health care expands, that we're looking at different health care providers as providing essential service.

So when we limit it . . . I notice even in the terminology previous to this, they have psychologists but they don't have psychiatrists. A psychiatrist could diagnose a person with regards to some kind of disorder with regards to an accident. A psychiatrist is a general practitioner that specializes in mental health. So that was an area that wasn't placed on there. And then there might be some homeopathic practitioners or others. So I'm glad that they're going to make it less specific and more generic so that people aren't limited to who they have to get their services from. So on a positive note, I noticed that and I'm really happy that that's being looked at.

And then, like I said before, like I know there is a lot of changes in this Act. It's huge and it will take a lot of hours of reviewing that and consulting with stakeholders. So like I said, it will probably be something that will be lengthy discussions in committee and needing to review a lot of the terminology in here and some of the . . . There's a lot of new legislation that's being implemented in here where there wasn't some before, and some of this could be good and some of this needs to be reviewed a little bit more with a few different lenses, with more of a financial lens and more of a compassionate lens because, again, I want to really specify about how people really do need to be treated fairly and with respect and appropriately. And I hope any changes that are made will reflect that.

And I know there is going to be a lot of committee work with regards to this, and I'm sure my other colleagues will have a lot to add to this and will want to review this as well and put their lens on here. And I'm glad I was able to share a little bit of my mental health lens with regards to this, the changes to this legislation. And with that, I am going to move to adjourn this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 32, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Benefits) Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 33

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 33** — *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to rise today and speak on this very important bill, Bill No. 33, *An Act to amend The Child and Family Services Act*. You know, it's been a . . . As the former critic for

Social Services over the past eight, nine years, I've been watching this piece of legislation be in . . . [inaudible] . . . and consultations time and time again. And so to see this part out, I'm not sure if this is the last we'll hear from the minister about *The Child and Family Services Act*, and I'll talk briefly about what this piece may mean. I have a lot of questions and of course we'll have questions in committee about it, but I do note how important it is to make sure there is appropriate consultations for this piece of work that the government is responsible, our vulnerable children.

And it's interesting because as we note in the news, at the federal level we've seen a lot of action around First Nations, the funding of First Nations child and family service agencies and the deplorable lack of funding and support from the federal government to the point that the Human Rights Commission at the federal level had to step in after the . . .

Just great work of Cindy Blackstock who did a phenomenal job and was relentless in saying, how can it be in Canada we can have essentially two systems for caring for those who are the most vulnerable in our society? Those children who are at risk through no choice of their own, and often families, no matter who they are, find themselves in difficult, difficult straits and having to make difficult choices, or unfortunately their communities are having to step up and step in and work with families to make sure their children are safe and protected because that's what we all believe in as Canadians, whether you're indigenous or not. And so the funding should be consistent.

So this is a very timely, timely piece of legislation because in many ways this legislation speaks to that relationship that the federal government does in terms of its relationship, in terms of funding First Nations and other Aboriginal family service agencies or groups.

And so I'll talk about some specific points. I want to talk about the minister's comments, but I do want to say how important this piece of legislation is. I just read today that the federal minister responsible for First Nations said she was going to step up and make sure that there is emergency funding.

We think of the challenges our First Nations have in terms of the water, housing, but perhaps most in education. But also what is very, very tragic is the lack of support the federal government has had for funding appropriately the First Nations family service agencies. And so this relates an awful lot to this.

And I found it interesting the minister didn't make comments regarding that relationship, because in many ways she is an agent or a surrogate for the federal government because the money flows through the province, in the province. The Minister of Social Services — who is, at the end of the day, responsible for all children in this province — if the Minister of Social Services is satisfied, then the federal money will flow through to the First Nations. She or he plays a very important role in ensuring that all children are safe in Saskatchewan. So I found it a little odd that the minister at the time, the former minister, didn't speak to that.

I'm sure that when we get into committee, that when we have questions about this piece of legislation, that that will be a big

part of the discussion, because if there is more money flowing, if there is more money flowing from the federal government . . .

And this does concern me because we saw this with several housing agreements, affordable housing agreement. And this was the same minister that we saw that the federal government . . . some \$45 million over five years was supposed to flow to the province. And I'm sure it did but I hope it doesn't, as it appeared to in that case, get hijacked and spent on other things.

And we, as we've talked about the chronic situation of housing throughout the province but perhaps most chronic in the North, particularly when it comes to heating in the winter where they've changed their rules about electrical heat versus oil versus wood heat. But, Mr. Speaker, if this is the same situation where we see child and family service agreements where the federal government now steps up . . . And I hope they do, but again they haven't actually delivered the dollars. But if that money does come forward then it should go to those who are working with the First Nations.

And more often than not, I think there's, I think 10 or 11 agencies in the province that are working — they're First Nations bands or they're tribal councils — and together they have decided that . . . And it's actually, the work they do is phenomenal. And the tragedy is they're doing it with less money than what's happening off-reserve. I think of the Lac La Ronge Band, where they have social workers and they have a phenomenal office and some good people working there. This would apply to them.

[19:45]

And so we've just got to make sure, and we're going to be very vigilant and make sure that if that money does start to flow from the federal government, as it's supposed to, to make sure that every child in Canada is treated the very same way, the very same way. And we're going to be watching that very, very closely. This is one of the issues the Liberal government has to come terms with. And the honeymoon for them is slowly coming to an end, or quickly, as we saw last week as some young people were demonstrating. But education, children at risk, water, and housing — I know the list probably can go on, but those are first four I can think of. And this bill very much speaks to the agreement.

So I'm going to take a minute, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and review the minister's comments and some of the comments that I have about the bill because I think that the government really needs to be prepared. This is a very, very sensitive issue, very sensitive area because in many ways as we recognize that we are all children of the treaty and these agreements are very, very, very special, very sacred, especially when it comes to children, that we can't be roughhousing or pushing our way around with this. And there are ways of making sure that proper consultation happens and everybody is on side because, you know, we all, we all want what's best for our children, and particularly those who are at risk.

And it's a tragedy when we think about . . . and just my time as critic over those past eight years, our former . . . and as Mr. Pringle's hours, he's wrapping up the day. He will be finished today. We start a new Children's Advocate tomorrow. But Mr.

Pringle did a fantastic job of many reports, unfortunately too many reports about kids who've died, who've been in really tough situations. And so we're going to take his reports, his recommendations and take a look at how does it line up to this piece of this legislation because we want to make sure his work was not in vain. He worked tirelessly, as did the former Children's Advocate, Marv Bernstein, just a very strong Children's Advocate, now in Toronto with the United Nations and working with children at that level.

We think this is an important piece of legislation. So right off the bat, I would say that I'm struck by the minister's comments or lack thereof, of who she consulted with.

Usually in a bill, most of the time the minister will say, I've consulted with this group, this group, this group; they're all on board. And for the minister, I don't see any record of her consulting with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] or any tribal councils or any agencies. I hope she did. I actually have a feeling that she has, but they may not be on board. That's why there's the omission. The question mark is, what are they saying about this piece of legislation? And we need to hear from them. That's very, very important.

As well as the office of the children and youth advocate, she doesn't reference that office saying yay or nay with this piece of legislation, that this matches up. That would be a very important endorsement if the Children's Advocate said this is a strong piece of legislation. But again, the minister was silent on that. And of course we'll be asking, what's the situation there, and why not an endorsement?

And I guess the other one that I would say, and you know, there are several things I want to talk about. But she does talk about:

The new provision 74(5.01) will permit the disclosure of confidential family information if necessary without consent or if there is no active Social Services involvement with the family, to enhance the ministry's ability to contribute in an effective, efficient, and meaningful way in integrated case planning and service coordination.

So that's a big deal. You don't have to have . . . And you know, we went through this last year about privacy and how we have to have our agreements all in place and all that. Now we're providing an out for the minister to disclose confidential family information. I really want to hear what the Privacy Commissioner has to say about that. Is the Privacy Commissioner good with that and understanding the parameters around that? And what will be the regulations?

One of the reasons I'm really concerned about that is we have spent, and I don't know if the members opposite . . . Because there's several new members opposite there since Social Services has invested in the Linkin system. That's a computer system for keeping track of the kids who are in foster care, some \$50 million on this system that they brought over from Ireland. It is now sold I believe to Microsoft, so that the ministry is paying a yearly maintenance fee, and fee to Microsoft, which they're no slouch when it comes to signing agreements.

And so, you know, I've heard time and time again big question

marks about how effective that new computer system is, how expensive it is, and just how effective it is. And now when we are giving the minister a blank cheque and she has not checked with our officers of the legislature about whether or not this is a good idea. What are the parameters around this? What could be the situation where she or he would feel obligated to release confidential family information? I'm really curious about that, and so we need to follow up with that for sure.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of the things particularly I just want to talk a bit . . . She talks about section 61 where they can sign ". . . agreements with First Nations Child and Family Service agencies for the purpose of administering services under the Act on behalf of the minister." And then really on behalf of the minister, but really on behalf of the federal government, who's flowing through the minister and providing funds for that, but of course the minister is the final person responsible. And so that's all set out, and we've done some comparing with the old piece of legislation. So that's really relatively straightforward.

But this is the one that does cause us some questions and some concerns, and there will be questions about this:

A new provision, section 62.1, is included which enables a termination-with-notice right of the minister for Aboriginal welfare agreements where in the opinion of the minister it is in the public interest to do so or where existing agreements do not include a fixed contractual termination period, and includes criteria by which Aboriginal child welfare agreements will be developed, reviewed, and terminated. When the minister's authority under the Act is delegated to any agency, it is imperative the entity be accountable to provide services and compliance with the Act.

So I'll read through some of those.

I just have to say and, you know, the word "Aboriginal," I know we're moving away from it. People are in groups are preferring it and I think of FSIN has changed their name to include the word "indigenous." They feel more comfortable with the word "indigenous." So I don't know if we're behind the times and moving up to "Aboriginal," that really we should be using a more progressive term, particularly in these times of truth and reconciliation. Is this a term that First Nations people feel that they could identify with? I know that she talks about the *Constitution Act, 1982* describes Aboriginal as Inuit, Métis, and First Nations, but maybe the *Constitution Act* needs to be amended.

But I want to say these are the questions I've had about if you take a look at 61(1) and 62.1. 61(1) really talks about what, you know, the minister talks about, that:

The minister may, having regard to the aspirations of . . . [indigenous] people to provide services to their communities, enter into an agreement with a band or other legal entity in accordance with the regulations.

Now the Act does define what the word "band" means, meaning, as defined under the *Indian Act* includes the council of the band. So it's pretty straightforward that the council is the

voice of the band. And I appreciate that she talks a bit about the aspirations of Aboriginal people to provide services to their communities. So there is a recognition in the Act about that, some visionary statement to recognize that this is more than just a contract with anybody, but it has some value, some social mandate to it. And that's very, very important.

So it goes on to "in accordance with regulations," and we'll be interested to see the regulations, but it's "for the provision of services or the administration of all or any part of this Act by the band or legal entity as an agency." And of course we know many of them by their names and they've been doing well.

For the exercise by the agency of those powers of the minister pursuant to this Act to the extent to which these powers are specified in the agreement."

And then goes number (2):

An agency that enters into an agreement pursuant to subsection (1) is responsible for the exercise of powers of the minister to the extent to which those powers are specified in the agreement.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the words I am using a lot, you may see or hear, is "agency." The legislation refers to an agency. It talks a bit about a band. It talks about "agency." And agency is described, "means a band or any other legal entity that has entered into an agreement pursuant to section 61." This is what then becomes interesting. Maybe I'm just misreading this or I haven't got it straight. And the minister can come over tomorrow and correct me. But agreement provisions, 62.1(1):

Any agreement mentioned in section 61 that is entered into or renewed on or after the day in which this section comes into force must include provisions that specify all of the following:

(a) the powers, duties and functions pursuant to this Act that are being delegated to the person with whom the agreement is being entered into.

So all of a sudden we've switched from the word "agency," which is defined, to "person." Now interestingly the word "person" is not defined, you know, and maybe we have a sense of what . . . Well actually we have "parent" defined, we have "person of sufficient interest," but we don't have "person." But we all have in our mind, you know, that there's such an idea as a corporate person, that type of thing. But it seems odd that in section 61 they refer to agencies and having agreement with agencies. But all of a sudden in section 62, it switches to this language of a "person." And "(b) the expected outcomes to be achieved by the person with whom the agreement is entered into." So it switches from the ministry having agreement with an agency to the ministry having agreement with a person.

So I don't know why that is? And the minister didn't talk about that, and I'm not sure if the First Nations or the indigenous people would feel comfortable with that being rolled into one "person" or would they feel better that it would be referred to the band as it's defined or agency as it's defined? Because both of those are already defined. You don't have to re-circle and come back to that as this, you know, what does "person" mean

in this?

And so there are some very specific things that I would say make this very curious and one is:

(d) the requirement that the person with whom the agreement is entered into report to the minister whenever required by the minister and in the manner and within the period directed by the minister.

[20:00]

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that has been a fairly contentious, reporting has been contentious. And it gets back to this Linkin system, computer system. What system are people using to keep track of the children, and is it fully functional? Many of the First Nations agencies I've spoken to feel pretty confident in their system. They feel it's, in fact, a better system than the Linkin system. But as often with this government, they say what we do is a better system than your system; please invest in our system. But of course the Linkin system at some incredible price, incredible price — it's unbelievable — may be just too rich for the First Nations or the agencies to invest in. So I have some questions about that.

And then:

(e) the requirement that the person with whom the agreement is entered into provide the minister, within a period after the end of the year that is specified in the agreement, with an annual report of the person's activities during the year in carrying out the provisions of the agreement.

So really again, I don't know why they use the word "person" and not "agency" or "band." What is the situation there? And so, and it goes on. And I have some real concerns about that.

And section (2) talks about:

any agreement entered into pursuant to section 61 may be terminated only in accordance with the procedures and on the terms prescribed in the regulations.

Again I don't know how they would feel with the termination process isn't laid out in the legislation, that everything else is laid out in the legislation. The one part that isn't in the legislation is the termination process, and we won't get a chance to debate that. We won't get a chance to see that. And I don't know how the Children's Advocate feels about that. I don't know how the First Nations feel about that. And so we have some concerns about that.

And of course then it goes on in section (3), 62 section (3) about:

the minister may terminate any agreement entered into pursuant to that section by providing 90 days' notice in writing if, in the opinion of the minister:

(a) it is in the public interest to terminate the agreement; or

(b) the agreement does not have a fixed term or termination date.

Now what's interesting, of course, the first part may seem to make a lot of sense. If it's in the public interest to terminate the agreement, then that minister has the power and it doesn't give much background to that. But the concern we do have is, the agreement does not have a fixed term or termination date — is that a good idea or bad idea? Again we haven't heard from the First Nations or other groups, the Métis or Inuit on this. We haven't heard from the Children's Advocate about this. We don't know whether this a good idea or not. And it seems to be putting a lot of power into the minister's hands. But I'm not sure if people feel comfortable with that. And that's why we need to hear from these groups.

And so this piece of legislation does have a lot of question marks. And as I've said, I am really interested in hearing from the Privacy Commissioner about section 74(2)(5.01) where the minister or the director or an officer may disclose information with respect to a person mentioned in subsection (1) without written consent of the person to whom the information relates, in accordance to the regulations. That just seems pretty open-ended.

And if we are to have confidence in this government, I think there should have been some comment from the Privacy Commissioner that they feel pretty confident that this will be done in a very rare situation and that, if it is done inadvertently, that there are penalties. You just can't be disclosing private information about those who are most at risk in our province, the children who are vulnerable through no choice of their own. And so we need to make sure that this is looked after in an appropriate manner.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there will be many more people who want to speak on this. This is a critical one, and we know that in fact the minister has had some difficulties with some of the agreements that they have managed or not quite managed well. But the reporting and the privacy piece is key, is really key.

I'm curious about the language, why the minister has referred to person and not agency or band, what would be the logic behind that. And of course we would encourage the government to think about being as current as possible in the choice of language, whether it's appropriate now to be using the word "Aboriginal" versus using the word "indigenous." And this is the time, when the legislation is open before us, that it might be time to reconsider that. But to me this is a very, very important one.

And we do have some questions. And we are concerned about the extreme use of regulations, how some things can be buried in regulations and won't see the light of day, and it would be really unfortunate how this all plays out.

So we'll be following up. We want to hear from groups about how they feel about this because clearly we want to make sure there are no unintended consequences, particularly when it comes to children. And I want to say that I am looking forward to seeing the outcome at the federal level about appropriate funding for our First Nations children on reserve, that they're

getting the appropriate supports in their agencies and that is something that has to happen. I understand the Minister Responsible for First Nations is really raring to go on that, and we look forward to that.

But we do not want to see that money diverted, that when it's meant to flow through the provincial ministry to the First Nations, that it does flow through and that it does hit and work with the children that it's meant to.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am wanting to move adjournment on Bill No. 33, *An Act to amend The Child and Family Services Act*. I do so move. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 33, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 34

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 34** — *The Provincial Lands Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To join in on Bill No. 34, *The Provincial Lands Act, 2016*. Before I get into it I guess and talking about some of the changes that are being proposed here, and I guess taking the Crown Act and actually just taking it and throwing it out and saying we're going to redo it and we're going to have new way of doing business. Before I want to talk about it . . . And it goes back again, our First Nations. It goes back to citizens of our good province, Métis. I don't care what area it will impact — our farmers, our municipalities, whoever is going to be impacted by changes in legislation — this government's track record is not very good when it comes to consulting individuals, people, organizations.

And they can, you know, at the end of the . . . Deputy Speaker, they can say, oh yes, we do great. I can reassure you from the people I talk to, they don't. Letters that have gone from some of the First Nations to ministers asking for them not to do something on their traditional territory and, you know, getting nowhere with them, very frustrated. It's almost to the point where I have seen some of them saying they're just tired of being disrespected.

Like they put in their letters, and they raise their concerns for a reason because as First Nations people, as the protectors of our land, our water, our resources, they have a lot to say, and they have a lot of experience on the land. And they shared that process when settlers came here. For many, you know, they were willing to show them the way of life. But they also said, you know, in the treaties, they would share the resources. They would share the land, and they've done that. They've lived up to their obligation.

And it's sad to see government, whether it's our trappers, our

commercial fishermen, so many times government ministries just doing I guess whatever suits. Whether it's a business, I guess an organization asking them to go on their traditional territory or to impact so dearly, and with no almost . . . But I don't know if it is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It may be the way I feel from them with no respect to them. It's frustrating and they're tired of it, and we're hearing that. It's clear that this government does not . . . And you know, and I even take it a little further. It gets to the point where a government, when you bring forward your concerns, and I know people who have told me that they don't want to bring anything to this government. They're intimidated. Government intimidates people. Why would you do stuff like that? And they do it in certain ways as to get the message across to them not to complain about things.

So changes happen and everyone wants to stand here and say, oh we'll consult and we'll make sure. You know, it just, it goes nowhere with a lot of people. It doesn't. And it doesn't go here well. And when I think about watching what's unfolding, and we're going to see things unfold as more question periods come forward, as more information needs to come out about the GTH land deal and who knew what over there. Who knew what? Now who on that side of the House . . . And maybe the members, the backbenchers, I don't know, were they consulted on the deals that were going on in cabinet? Some of them might be shocked to find out some of the stuff that's going to come out.

I think things are going to come out because it's not going to end. People are asking for answers, and they're frustrated and they're saying, why? So they want some answers, and I think the government owes those answers to the people of our province, to the opposition, and to whoever is asking those questions. And it's going to come to that. It's not going to end until those answers . . . and we know. We've been calling for a judicial inquiry, for the RCMP to investigate. There has been lots being asked to do it, and I'm hoping that they'll do that.

Now I go about talking about consulting, and this bill that talks about that. And again I go back to this because they say they consult so well, the government of the day. Well I can reassure you from the people that I have talked to, they didn't know what they were doing.

You know, and I go back to the legislation they're bringing in, proposing changing our Crowns. They didn't talk about that on the doorsteps. How many people knew that they were actually . . . How many members on that side of the House went to the door saying, oh and by the way as soon as the election is over, and if we have a majority, we're going to sell the Crowns, or we're going to look at a definition of the Crowns. We might be able to sell 49 per cent.

The people that I have talked to have said very clear — and we're hearing more and more people coming out very concerned — this belongs to the people, not to the government. This belongs to the people. You know, our grandparents before us worked hard to keep those Crowns, very proud. It's an asset that pays. It pays for our education; it pays for our roads; it helps. Well who do you think is going to pay at the end when you sell those Crowns and you spend that money that you're going to get that you sell it? It's gone.

There's not going to be much left, and this government is going to say, well you know what? We're going to have to go to the taxpayers. You're going to have to pay. We're already paying, but at least now we get a dividend and it helps cover some of the cost and it lowers the tax, and that's a good thing. It is. It's truly a great thing and people are very proud of that. People are so proud of their Crowns, and I don't even know why they're messing with it. On one hand they say, oh no, we would not do that; we will not do that. And then come later . . .

But this goes to show you about — and I'll go back to the bill — but it's about that consulting and making sure people of this good province have their say and their input. That's what they want. They want to have their say on any legislation that comes along for the South. They want to feel like they have their say, their input, and they're protected.

This government has an obligation to do that. Yes, and I've said that. You've got a big majority won and I've said this earlier in my comments. You know, we get heckled. It's fine. At the end of the day, it is what it is. You know, they've got 51 over here, ha ha, you . . . And that's all right. That's all right. That's going to change. Times are changing. People are seeing when there was record revenue and all kinds of money, government could do no wrong and they would just throw money at it. Well you can't do that; it's not possible to sustain that. There was nothing put away for the rainy day to take care of things.

And now you have legislation coming, land, and we're not sure what exactly . . . this bill comes with land. Are they looking to sell more land? Money? Do they need cash, quick cash? Is that what this is for? Because at one time this bill, I think in 2013 they brought it forward and then they found out people were not happy. So the government for some reason withdrew the bill and it was quiet. It went away. We thought it was going to be quiet. Now all of a sudden they need money and lo and behold this bill comes up that we're going to deal with our Crown land. And I mean we're not just talking about a small . . . We're talking about the Crown land in this province, that there's legislation being introduced for people to do what?

And who do they consult? Well let me very clear on that. They gave people three weeks, I believe, is what it says. And I don't know if that was a phone call to the minister . . . Oh, you could go online, and some people wouldn't have that ability to go online and get that. I mean yes, there's lots of people in our communities and our rural and trappers. Not everyone is, we'll say, has the Internet and has computers and all that. And so what happens with them? Well they could call in.

[20:15]

So it just goes to show how this government is out of touch with what's going on in the province. And they can say what they want, but bringing in legislation like this is concerning because it is . . . Is it about money, some quick cash? Are they looking for a sale? We'll have to ask that in committee. And a lot of questions are going to have to be asked, and I think need to be asked, and the government needs to answer that.

And it's not just about the opposition, it's about the good people of our province wanting these answers. And it's not going to go away. Day after day, questions need to be asked.

Government doesn't like answering. We understand that. They try to spin it any way they can and we've watched how they've spun some of the . . . And I've said this, they've been . . . They're great at spinning, but I think people are tired of the spin. They want answers, and they're going to hold the government to account.

And you know, like I say, cabinet does its job, but the backbenchers have an obligation. You're elected by the people to fight and speak up for the constituents that you're . . . Go back home and find out if your constituents that you represent who sent you here, see if they are so happy that you're looking at selling off their Crowns. Go ahead and ask them, Mr. Speaker, those backbenchers to go back and ask them again if they're so happy that you're selling their Crowns; that you're looking at changing legislation, our land; that you're looking for dollars because you've mismanaged everything so bad.

And it's been said time and time again — the mismanagement, the special deals, all the stuff going on — it's all going to come out. And the people want answers. And those individuals back there that sat there are saying . . . As backbenchers, you have a voice. You've been selected by the people to represent them and serve this province. Do that. Ask the government. Ask them some questions. Put some pressure on. Why do they want to introduce a bill like this? Get the answers. Make sure they understand. Why are they trying to sell off or change the whole legislation for the Crown land?

There's something here, and we need to make sure we get through it. The opposition can't do it alone, but you are very powerful as members on that side as well. You've been selected and asked. Put some questions to your government. Ask. We can do this together. We can make sure that government's being held to account. And it's not just a small group; we can work together and do that.

And I think sometimes the people of this good province are saying that — work together. We've shown where we can work together as opposition and government, but sometimes, you know what? It's going to take members on that side to ask some tough questions of the ministers and cabinet, and hopefully we'll get those answers.

But having said that, again this bill goes to making the changes that I talked about within the Crown lands, and I'm concerned about that. I know we're going to have ask a lot of questions and give this due diligence that it needs in committee but also within our First Nations, our Métis communities, our municipal associations, the school divisions. To me, it's so many of them that need to be asked about their input, what's going on here and the changes, to understand exactly what government's proposing. Not just to let them away: they've changed their legislation, they make changes, and repeal legislation. They don't get it right the first time so they're going to redo it.

Well when you made the mistake like this and you hold back and you repeal or you change your mind . . . And that's good that government will change its mind sometimes; when they're bringing in legislation that is not good for Saskatchewan people, that they'll hold on it. But then to bring it back once . . . later on without doing the consultation that they should have done in the first place, and then again we're always wondering

about the motive.

Because they have no money. This government is so broke, and I think the public's going to see just how broke they are. They're looking for everything. We've seen cuts that the most vulnerable are getting. It doesn't even make sense. So I wonder, with this Crown land, is it just they're trying to sell? You know, why are they? Are they going to sell the land? What are they up to? And there's so many question after question when you see a government that has failed so miserably with the finances. And the good people of this province are going to pay for years.

My grandchildren, my kids will pay for this, but so will those members on that side. If you think that this province is doing well, man oh man, you may have 51 members over there, but your grandkids and kids will all . . . The people of this good province are going to pay a price for years for the debt and everything else.

But having said that, I just wanted to give kind of comparisons to when you don't consult, when you don't talk to people, when you don't go back at the end, what happens. But I just wanted to show that example, and it was nice to have an opportunity to talk and shed a little light on the bill itself.

But at this point, I said we'll have questions that we need to have clarified in committee. And I know the members on this side will do it. I'm hoping the members on that side will ask some tough questions of government at the end of the day. So with that, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 34, *The Provincial Lands Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 35

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 35** — *The Small Claims Act, 2016/Loi de 2016 sur les petites créances* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour for me to stand here today and talk about Bill No. 35, *The Small Claims Act*. This was presented by the Minister of Justice in the spring sitting, and when he brought this forward, he talked about how this Act was to repeal and replace the existing small claims Act. It's supposed to enhance and modernize processes and procedures at the small claims court.

My understanding is the original small claims Act was from 1997, so that's almost 20 years ago. So I can see why there might be some wanting to update that. I don't completely understand, I reviewed the previous Act and I reviewed this

one, and I don't completely understand why the other one needed to be repealed and not just amended like a lot of the other Acts that we have. But nonetheless, I know, like I said, I reviewed both of them and quite of the information in both of the Acts are quite similar.

The Minister of Justice also said that the reasons why they decided to make some adjustments to *The Small Claims Act* was because they were getting requests, and so a lot of the changes were information that came from recommendations from a review.

And so he doesn't go into detail about who and where and exactly which locations, people who participated in this review. Like, how many people participated in it? Was it a wide scale? Was it people who used the system before and had some concerns and questions, or was it from some judges and legal representatives that might have had some issues with regards to that? Was it some of the stakeholders? You know, so it'd be interesting to find out exactly where the recommendations came from for the changes of this Act. But I'm sure that kind of information will be discussed possibly in committee.

And I found it really interesting. I went on . . . I have to admit, I've never been to the small claims court and so I've never had any experience with regards to that. So that's a good thing, I think, isn't it? And so I went online and did some research based on the information that was on the website there. I noticed already online they're saying that the most that you can claim is 30,000. Well this is one of the changes that is on this Act, is to change it from 20,000 to 30,000. So I found it interesting that we haven't even passed this Act but some of the changes are already being implemented.

So that's one of the biggest. Well one of the big changes in this Act is changing from the limit being 20,000 to 30,000. And I think 30,000 seems to be a realistic number with regards to what people might be needing to access the small claims court with regards to.

Also I know that the small claims court is used often and regularly, but it would be interesting to find out who predominantly uses the small claims court. Because I don't come from an affluent background, and I grew up saying, like you solve a problem, you know, by discussing with people and such. And so I'm not quite sure who is using the small claims court mostly; like the stories that I've heard was people who have maybe had some issues with their contractors or stuff like that, you know. And so I get my partner to do all the contract work, so maybe that's why I've avoided small claims court all this time. And so we've learned to do a lot of our own handyman work.

But I really worry about what maybe some of the barriers are, and why. Like are there, are there people who could benefit from the services of the small claims court but there's a lot of barriers that might prevent them from using it? You know, and so I think, like maybe literacy issues. I know when I went online and looked at things, there was a lot of paperwork and things to look at and review. And also within this Act, of course there's a lot of things that it says that you need to put forward.

So, like some people, are they limited on the legal

representation that they can get when they are accessing small claims court? And how many people do that kind of work? I'm not quite sure. So I'm sure that's going to be a lot of the things that are going to be talked about in committee and discussed. And it would be nice to identify some of those barriers and reduce them so that more people can access this service because it is definitely a good service.

From my understanding, it's a way to get issues dealt with in a manner where, like it's cordial and that you don't have to get a whole bunch of legal expenses due to it, you know. And so it's a way that you can get things dealt with.

I also wondered if geography might be an issue with handling issues with the small claims court. When I did look on the website, it looked like there was a lot of courts within the province. So that's good. But you know, we have a big province, and there's a lot of areas to cover here. And so maybe some people can't access the court because of, you know, transportation issues or where it's located.

Yes, so those were some areas that I hope get discussed because it would be nice if we are going to be implementing a new Act and new legislation that maybe, again like I said, some of those barriers are discussed and can be addressed with regards to that.

I also thought that there was a lot of, in the new Act, it seemed like the judge has a lot more control with regards to decisions, more so than the previous Act. And so there doesn't seem to be any exact guidelines on if this is the situation, this is what happens, more so like criminal court where oftentimes when a person presents because of break and entry, then the judge says, okay, like this tends to be what the consequences would be. But it looks like for small claims court, it's free-willy there, and so the judge gets to decide what exactly the consequences or what the decision will end up being. And I worry that that would present a lot of inconsistency with regards to judgments.

So maybe one person presents with one issue that could be quite similar to another, as there are a lot of different case consults with regards to that and decisions made based on the past decisions possibly made. So, like the judge decides on awarding costs. They decide on additional costs, like if they think, oh this person should pay a little bit more. And they also make the decision on lawyer-related costs; so one judge might say, well you have to pay for that person's lawyer. And the other judge might say, well no, you hired the lawyer so you have to pay for it. So again not much consistency there.

And also the judge can decide to adjourn if the person doesn't attend court. He can make that decision. And in this new Act, they added a provision so that the judge could dismiss altogether if a person doesn't attend, whereas in the old Act they didn't have that ability to do that. But so then again, that puts a lot of pressure on the judges and it also gives them a lot of power to decide. And one might be more forgiving than the other, and it won't be very consistent for individuals who are accessing these services.

[20:30]

One of the other changes is the defendants have to file their claim with the court prior to court. So they have to provide all

their information so that the person who is bringing them to court will have that information before they have court. And so that is all good and fine if again, like I said, there aren't any of these barriers that might be presented. And it looks like again the judge could decide. If the defendant didn't file that information, the judge might still say, okay, well if you showed up to court then we'll still go ahead. And the judge might say no, like, you didn't file your information. So a lot of power with regards to that.

So I think it would be good for the person, knowing what the defendant's information is prior to coming to court and vice versa, so that both people are prepared. And then hopefully the court process will go a lot more smoothly if both people are prepared. So that's going to have to be discussed.

Like, a lot of these changes in this Act are going to require a lot of close inspection at the committee level. And I have a lot of faith in our Justice critic here. She is well versed in a lot of this area, and so she will make good decisions with regards to this. And also I think it's really important to consult with the legal community to make sure, like I said, that some of these changes are appropriate and we protect the rights of people, especially people who might have limited access to lawyers.

So I know it'll be really important to talk to the legal community and to review each section and have a lot of discussion about this bill, this Act, and this legislation when it comes to committees. So I'm sure my colleagues will have a lot more to discuss with regards to this, and they'll have a lot more information to add. So with that, I'm going to move to adjourn this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 35, *The Small Claims Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 36

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 36** — *The Small Claims Consequential Amendments Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm honoured today to stand here and talk about Bill No. 36. It's *The Small Claims Consequential Amendments Act, 2016* and this also was brought forward by the Minister of Justice in the spring session. This bill is the bilingual bill with regards to Bill 35 that I just discussed a little bit about, and so it's going to be exactly like Bill 35 but in French. And so a lot of the amendments with regards to this bill are more housekeeping in nature.

So one of the things that I've been noticing is that, because of a

lot of the changes to *The Small Claims Act*, that it's going to change a lot of the citations, the wording in other Acts. Like it's going to change section 36.2 of *The Direct Sellers Act*. It's going to change section 73.1, *The Legal Profession Act, 1990*. It's also going to change a lot of the wording from *The Small Claims Act, 1997*; it now needs to be *The Small Claims Act, 2016*.

And so, like I said before, this is just basically housekeeping in nature. I am glad that we're going to be having this also in French in keeping with our traditions of having it bilingual. And other than that, I'm sure a lot of the changes with regards to it will be made because of the changes to Bill 35. So I'm sure my colleagues will have a lot more to add about this, so with this, I'm going to move to adjourn this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 36. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 37

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 37** — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and as always it's my honour to be able to rise in this Assembly to speak to the bills that the government is putting forward. A bit of a heavy heart today though, Mr. Speaker, considering what we hear happening in the tragedies in the North, and it's just hard to sometimes reconcile that with some of the more mundane tasks that we have to do here. But nonetheless, the debates will continue and so I will, with honour, attempt to enter into the debate on the Act to amend *The Traffic Safety Act*.

So there's a few things this bill is attempting to do, and it's particularly going after people who don't pay their bills. So as you can imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a number of individuals who come in conflict with the Act in various ways are fined and if they can't pay those fines or don't pay those fines, sometimes under the existing bill, they could still continue to have a registration or a driver's licence which is paid for. And this bill goes quite a bit further now and allows the cancellation of pretty much anything that they have registered under *The Traffic Safety Act*.

So the minister indicated that what this change will do is allow SGI to cancel these if they have outstanding debt in their account and they're not working with SGI to establish a payment plan. And I know that for many people those payments are significant. I think fines for losing your licence for drinking and driving are very significant. And quite often . . . And this is the case for a young woman that I know who unfortunately had an issue with alcohol and was caught and fined. She now can't

afford to drive at all, because not so much her, she's done her . . . She's been found guilty and has accepted that and has actually changed her life, but she can't afford to have a driver's licence anymore because the fines are very substantial. And I understand that, Mr. Speaker.

I just think for the consequences for people who are less fortunate when it comes to income or available resources, sometimes the fines aren't exactly equal to those people who have a considerable amount of money and can pay them off right away. So there's those kinds of inequities that we find in laws like this. But the universality of the fine is what it is, and that's just the price that people have to pay when they break the law. So these debts would be owing on different charges, and now what the amendments will do, will allow SGI to cancel pretty much everything if there is a debt that isn't being repaid.

The second thing is also now further to cancelling driver's licences and registrations. They can also, SGI will now be able to impound vehicles and this would be . . . What he's saying here, the minister said:

This change will enable vehicle impoundment fees to be recovered from the person operating the vehicle at the time it was impounded. This way the person caught driving the vehicle will be penalized, rather than the last known owner of the vehicle.

And I'll get to that change in a minute, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure it actually is exactly what the minister said here, but it's along those lines.

And then finally is some changes to the use of three-wheeled vehicles and children, and there's going to be some prohibitions there as well.

So just going straight to the bill itself, the first change that we see is in clause 41(q) of the current Act, and in that sense this is expanding the . . . It's much broader than it was previously. Section 41 is the section that relates to who is not eligible for a driver's licence, and there's a whole bunch of people or clauses here that you're not eligible for a driver's licence. But right now if you go to apply for your driver's licence and you owe some fees with respect to driving a vehicle, you can't get a driver's licence. This proposal, the amendment would actually make it broader than that. And it's not just with respect to the driving of the vehicle, but it's ". . . with respect to any fees, administrative charges or interest fees payable pursuant to this Act or the regulations and that payment has been dishonoured." So you can see there's quite a bit of a broadening out of that particular definition.

The next changes we find are to section 48, and this is division 3 of the Act dealing with the suspension, cancellation, and refusal of a driver's licence. This deals with a driver's licence. And they're broadening when the administrator shall suspend, cancel, or refuse to issue the driver's licence. And it includes now . . . These are the new adds to who cannot get a licence for driving, and that's if they're indebted for any fees under *The Automobile Accident Insurance Act* or regulations or else had made a payment and the payment has been dishonoured. So if someone comes in, gives a cheque for \$300 to pay off their fine and then that cheque is bounced, then automatically that

driver's licence that had been issued would be cancelled or ineffective. So that's the change there.

Clause 75 is also being amended, and that clause is in relation to the refusal, suspension, and cancellation of certificates and permits. And so in this case, this is basically for registration, where they can refuse to issue a registration permit. And this is for in the event that you owe money under *The Automobile Accident Insurance Act* or that payment has been dishonoured, so that's the basic change to clause 75(1)(b.1).

I am interested in what the explanatory notes say on this particular change because they are indicating in the explanation there is a second part to this amendment, and actually, Mr. Speaker, for the life of me I can't see it. So I don't know whether this is just an oversight, or perhaps we'll have to ask maybe more questions in committee. Because the explanatory note says that this change is also updating the cross-reference for the denial of a certificate of registration as a result of a change in a carrier's operating authority, but there is nothing in the bill itself that speaks to that. So I do think there is something missing here, and perhaps the minister will be able to explain that. And I suppose a person could ask through a letter or something, but I'm going to make sure that we ask that question in committee, because the explanatory note seems to suggest that there's more to this amended clause than I actually see here. So I'm curious about that.

Section 150 is also being amended, and 150.2 is — I'm just going to look at that clause as well — 150.2 is in regards to impoundment or immobilization of a motor vehicle. And in this case, this is what I talked about earlier where it's not just the owner. If the owner is not found, we are now adding a change to that clause which suggests that "if the administrator is unable to determine who is the owner of the vehicle, the unauthorized driver" would then be responsible for the impoundment payment, and that's a debt for the unauthorized driver. And the minister referred to that as being a problem. It's hard to understand how you couldn't know who the owner of a vehicle is unless it was unregistered. So I suppose that's the circumstance that this clause, this amendment, is trying to deal with.

[20:45]

The next one is the regards . . . And the minister didn't mention this directly in his comments, but this is about people riding motorcycles and where they're allowed to ride them. So section 247(2), there's some additions being added here. In particular, you're no longer allowed to ride sidesaddle. I'm not really sure what that means, but you're not allowed to do it anymore. So the subsection reads as follows: "No person shall drive or ride a motorcycle on a highway in a position commonly known as side saddle." I know in horses it makes sense, sidesaddle, where you have both legs on one side. So I'm not exactly sure and there's no definition here, but you're not allowed to do it anymore. So that's the change that's being made.

In addition to sidesaddle, you are no longer allowed to ride in front of the driver on the motorcycle. If it's designed for two people or a pillion seat is provided, that's fine. You can ride there, but the passenger has to be "capable of reaching and using a separate set of standard footrests." Very prescribed

activities here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and often you find these kinds of things in the regulations. So this is a weird case where the actual prescribed behaviour is being put right there in the Act itself. Also passengers can't "ride in a side car with another person." So I know we've all seen motorcycles with side cars, but according to this you can't put two people in a side car; you can only put one. So these are very prescriptive changes that are being made to section 247(4) I believe, adding sub (3) and sub (4).

And finally it was the three-wheeler clause that the minister referred to. This changes to subsection 248(7). Well actually we're adding a new subsection 248(8), and this is where, if you are driving a three-wheeled vehicle on a highway, your passenger cannot be under seven years of age, cannot weigh less than 36 kilograms, and cannot be shorter than 145 centimetres tall. Once again, very prescriptive description, very prescriptive behaviour that normally you would find these things in the regulations. But I guess in this case with traffic safety, maybe it's to make sure that this information is more easily available to the public because it's way easier to find stuff in legislation than in regulations generally, although good old Internet is pretty good with regulations these days too.

And then there's another change to subsection 280(7), and this again is when a vehicle may be seized and impounded. So it's in relation to the previous clause where we talked about impoundment. So I'm not sure why they're so far apart in the bill, but that's from section 161 all the way now to section 280.

And what it does is it amends subsection (7) to refer to section 161, and what it's saying here is it's not only . . . 161 applies to a sale of a vehicle, the application and proceeds of sale, the disposition of any surplus monies from the sale, and the recovery of any amounts pursuant to section 161. And so what that says is that a peace officer may seize and impound a vehicle now, even if you owe money under section 161, which is the impoundment clause. So if you had a vehicle that was impounded and you owe money on it and then you're in another vehicle, that vehicle can also be impounded I think is the net result of this change.

So in the whole scheme of things, Mr. Speaker, you know, these are administrative changes. They're tightening up the rules. I think one of the questions that will bother me is, what happens if 49 per cent of SGI is sold and these fees and the collection of these fees is now tied up in *The Traffic Safety Act*?

So it boggles my mind actually, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm trying to sort through some of the implications of Bill 40 that was introduced last week during the civic election day and just trying to figure out how . . . because SGI is so intricately intertwined with public policy here in Saskatchewan. And when you start selling off 49 per cent of a company to private shareholders, what happens to the public policy considerations? And I really am struggling with this.

And I think it's going to impact any number of bills, particularly in relation to traffic and traffic safety and drinking and driving and all of those things that we passed today in relation to drinking and driving. What is the tie between SGI and these laws when SGI would be 49 per cent privately owned and the shareholders would have then a say in how the company

is run, although it wouldn't be a majority share? But it's those kinds of public policy considerations I think are going to be very puzzling. And we'll have to see how that happens if and when the government decides to not privatize SGI — of course that's now a new defined term — but sell off 49 per cent of it, which is not privatization according to the new definition. And that boggles the mind too. But that is a topic for that bill if and when I am able to rise on the floor to debate it.

So as far as *The Traffic Safety Act* goes and the amendments to the Act that are being proposed here, they appear to have a public policy that seems laudable. And we didn't get a lot of explanation from the minister when the bill was introduced in terms of why these, you know, the weight restrictions and the age restrictions are of such consideration that they need to be mentioned, actually formalized and put into a bill like this, but that's all we got from the minister at the time. This was introduced on June 20th and so the former minister, he was making these explanations. But now we have a new minister so we'll have to raise the questions with the new minister in committee, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess the final comment is, I really am curious about the explanatory notes in relation to clause 75 because they're implying that there's a change there that says it's updating the cross-reference for the denial of a certificate of registration as a result of a change in a carrier's operating authority. And I don't see that housekeeping change here, but I'm sure the new minister will be able to point that out in committee as we go forward.

So at this point, that would be the extent of my comments on this particular bill, and I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 37, *An Act to amend The Traffic Safety Act*.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 37, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 2

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 2 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Crown Corporations' Fiscal Year End Standardization) Amendment Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to rise this evening to add my comments to the second reading debate for Bill No. 2, *An Act to amend certain Statutes to Standardize Provisions respecting the Fiscal Year End of certain Crown Corporations*. Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's a bit of a mouthful for the title of a bill.

From what I understand, the purpose of this bill is to allow the government to harmonize Crown corporations' fiscal years with

the fiscal year for the Government of Saskatchewan. I think some of the Crown corporations were a little bit easier to harmonize just because they were able to do it through order in council. However, the legislation requires some of that work to be done via a legislative change. So that's I guess what was done here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now I understand that the Crown corporations that we're talking about in this bill are the Saskatchewan Gaming Corporation, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation, the Saskatchewan Telecommunications Holding Corporation — you often don't see the full name of SaskTel — and the Saskatchewan Water Corporation.

Now it's possible that harmonizing these fiscal years could make sense. We're not entirely sure what that's going to look like yet. We want to make sure that the purpose of it is a true one and an honourable one. And I know we've had some problems in terms of getting financial accountability and fiscal responsibility from this government. So I hope that this is going to result in more transparency. I know our Crowns are quite good at that sort of thing, but I am always a little bit concerned when it comes to this government and handling financial statements frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So this legislation, I'm going to walk through it a little bit. Clause 2 of the legislation makes the Crown Investments Corporation present its annual report 120 days after the end of the year instead of April 30th.

Clause 3 allows cabinet to set the fiscal year for the Sask Gaming Corporation, instead of having it set as January 1, to December 31st, so that I guess we'll see what cabinet decides probably through order in council what they want that year-end to look like. I'm hoping that they will consult with both the stakeholders in Sask Gaming and Sask Gaming itself, make sure what makes the most sense for those who work within that Crown corporation, makes sense for those who have to decide budgets for not just Sask Gaming, but those who receive dividends and monies through Sask Gaming. I know there's a lot of money that's given to really great organizations, really great community-based organizations from the profits that are realized through Sask Gaming.

And I'm hoping that with the change to the privatization legislation, that the privatization definition, that that's not going to result in perhaps something to happen to Sask Gaming, for example, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And with that could result in, you know, up to 49 per cent potentially less dividends being realized to not only just the people of Saskatchewan but also to these great community-based organizations that receive money that flow out of our Crown corporations like Sask Gaming, for example, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Clause 4 allows cabinet to set the fiscal year for SGI again, instead of having it set as January 1 to December 31st. So again I guess that's something we'll wait for on bated breath to see what cabinet decides to have that set and what that order in council will look like.

Also similarly clause 5 will allow cabinet to set the fiscal year for the Saskatchewan Opportunities Corporation instead of

having it set as January 1. So theoretically I suppose we're kind of working on a theory in terms of this legislation because we don't really know what cabinet's going to decide and what the order in council's going to look like. Theoretically these are all going to match with the government's fiscal year-end. I think that would make probably logical sense, but sometimes this government doesn't always do things that are logical. So I'm not going to make any assumptions and I'm going to wait and see what that decision actually looks like. For now, you know, we can only work with what the legislation has, the bill says that's been provided to us at this point in time. We're still left a little bit wondering.

Similarly clause 6 will allow cabinet to set the fiscal year for SaskTel instead of having it set as January 1.

Similarly it's very important to make sure that we have a good accounting for both the revenues and the expenditures that are occurring in our Crown corporations. It's very important that we have complete financial transparency and accountability. And when we're talking about Crown corporations and what an incredibly vital resource they are in many different ways to our province, it's important for us to know exactly how much money is being expended and how much money, how much revenue is being generated in these Crown corporations so that when we're having this discussion and when we're having these debates and when the public is being called on — hopefully the public is being called on — to consider some very important questions potentially in the future with respect to these Crown corporations, that we have a really good fiscal picture to work off of, that there is nothing being hidden, and that there are no funny games being played in terms of these year-ends and releasing of financial statements and financial reports, SaskTel being one of them.

Similarly for SaskWater, clause 7 will again allow cabinet to set that fiscal year.

And then there was also a transitional period, which makes sense, in clause 8 which sees January 2015 to March 2016 as one fiscal year for the listed Crown corporations, which is kind of funny, Mr. Speaker, because I think we're way past that at this point.

Sometimes I forget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, where we're at. You feel like you're sort of in limbo when you're in here some days, but I'm pretty sure that we're well past March of 2016, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So you know, I'm hoping that these changes that are being made are being done with honourable intentions and to insure full transparency and accountability in terms of revenue and expenditures in these Crown corporations. I hope that this government's not trying to do something to portray a smaller deficit than they in fact actually have.

[21:00]

I know we've been asking for accountability in terms of the quarter, first quarter report. Our Finance critic has asked for that and we have yet to see that. The government's been doing a fairly good — unfortunately good — job of dodging these really important financial questions and these really important questions with respect to the budget.

So I guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's why when I see, when I see legislation like this that looks fairly innocuous at first glance, I'm a little bit concerned about what this actually means for the province and for the people of Saskatchewan and for financial accountability for this government. So that is a concern of ours and that's a concern of mine, and I'm hoping that we'll have the opportunity to ask some of those questions when we're at committee now.

From what I can see, our Finance critic, luckily for me, has already stepped into this discussion. So I'm going to bring up some of her concerns again because I think they're very important, and she has a better understanding of these financial statements and the necessity for financial accountability in our Crowns and in our government ultimately than I think anybody else does. One of the concerns she raised when she spoke to this bill is the difficulty in being able to understand financial statements and the hope that this change ultimately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, will result in easier to understand financial statements.

Financial statements that don't . . . Theoretically, this will result in a situation where the financial statements will be a bit easier to read and understand because everybody's working off of the same fiscal year-end, which I know is a very important thing in terms of being able to actually have a good picture of what the revenues and the expenditures look like when you're trying to cross-reference all sorts of different financial statements depending on what you're looking at the General Revenue Fund or you're looking at the Crown financial statements, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So it's really important that that's very clear and that's very easy to ready because it's important that not only the people in this Legislative Assembly can understand them, but also the good people of Saskatchewan that we're all here to represent can understand them as well so that we're able to have a transparent discussion on what's actually going on and what the picture actually is in terms of the financial state of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Another concern that the Finance critic raised that I think is really important is a concern she had about the length of time it takes to get annual reports right now from Crown corporations. Right now it's a bit difficult. I know we often receive our annual reports, you know, in June, Julyish. I think that's about right, something like that. I've only been through the first cycle this summer, but I'm pretty sure that's pretty accurate.

So there's concern now about those being pushed back now that potentially — theoretically of course, because we're waiting for the order in council to decide whenever the fiscal year-end is going to be — but theoretically if it changes to match the government's fiscal year-end, then that could result in the annual reports being pushed back.

And already we feel like they're coming in quite late, they're coming in sort of in the dead of summer, which can be a bit frustrating. Hopefully maybe they'll get pushed back to when we're sitting in the fall. I don't actually know; again we're operating on quite a few theoreticals right now because this bill is a bit sparse and we have to wait for the order in councils to actually lay out what it's going to be.

But I think it's really important, as I've said many times, for us to have full transparency and accountability that we also have

annual reports that come to us in a timely matter and give us an opportunity to actually really comb through them, ask the questions that we think deserve to be asked, and get the answers that are needed.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, she also raised a concern, and I'm just going to quote her. She said, and I quote:

The alignment of budget years according to the minister, the former minister, would also provide Finance with more current information on Crown earning expectations and their impact to the provincial budget.

So she raised a concern because she wasn't entirely sure how that actually meant that better numbers are actually being received and why there is an issue with respect to getting good numbers from our Crown corporations right now, and exactly whether or not this is actually going to alleviate the concern that the former minister had raised when tabling this legislation.

So I suppose that will be left to be determined, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But these are very important concerns that I think are important that we're raising them. And at committee we'll be probably asking these questions as well. And we'll be monitoring this as well because, as I've said, a lot of the devil is in the details in terms of this legislation in that most of the important decisions are going to be left to cabinet to decide and for an order in council.

So we'll be watching closely when this legislation passes to ensure that the goals are actually being met and our goals of transparency and accountability in our finances in the province, both within the government and within the Crowns, are fulfilled and respected. Because I can tell you we've been having quite a few problems with that for quite a while, I was going to say since the April election, but I think it's probably stemmed away longer than that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with that, I think there will be other colleagues of mine who will want to join in this debate, so at that I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 2.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Regina Douglas Park has moved to adjourn debate on *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Crown Corporations' Fiscal Year End Standardization) Amendment Act, 2016*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 4

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 4 — *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur la Cour du Banc de la Reine*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise tonight and enter into the debate on Bill

No. 4, *An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act, 1998 and to make related amendments to The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012*.

Now as we've been talking tonight about our different experiences, I've not had too much experience with the Queen's Bench court either. We're making confessions here. But it is an important part of our system, and so it's always interesting to enter into the debate of this because clearly that is our job. Our job is to have the discussion, to think out loud about what are the potential pitfalls? What are the unintended consequences? What's the logic; why is this being brought forward? And so we take our job very seriously, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because things can go off the rails pretty quickly if we didn't have that careful, fulsome discussion and questions about what are the intentions of the government, and why this piece of legislation, and why do we need to do this in these certain ways.

And of course this is one of those bills where we have to think carefully. You know, the relationship between the legislative branch and the judicial branch is one that is, it's pretty sacred. It's one of those, you know, we talked about the three branches of governance: the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the judicial branch. And so when we set up *The Queen's Bench Act*, it's one that we shouldn't go back too many times, constantly tinkering with it. And so the questions we'll ask tonight and into committee are very, very important.

So to start with, I will take a minute and think about some of the things that the minister made when he brought this forward — one of the first bills; it is No. 4 — that they brought forward. And so it's interesting that this was one of their priority pieces. So he talked about the:

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

And he goes on to say:

Amendments to the Act will be made to allow awards to be made by dispute resolution panels under trade agreements to be enforced as if they were civil judgments of the court, and allow awards to be enforced against persons other than the Crown.

So this is an interesting piece, and of course this is very much in the news. We've been watching closely the CETA [Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement], the Canada-European trade agreement, and what's been happening in Europe, particularly one of the states, I believe, in Belgium and their concerns particularly around this piece of that agreement about the ability to corporations to bring forward their concerns and actions against individuals and have them enforced.

And so this is not a small thing that we should take lightly. It's an important piece. Of course when we sign trade agreements, it's hugely important that we honour them, and we think in many ways, trade agreements can be beneficial for economic

development. But there are a lot of questions, and one of them is around respecting the sovereignty of nations and protecting unique internal economic incentives, whether they be boards of different kinds . . . And so this does kind of open up that can of worms, and of course the New West Partnership Trade Agreement is one that's a domestic agreement.

And so I'm not sure. You know, if I look in the Act, it does talk about domestic trade agreements. And so what the minister . . . And he doesn't — I don't know whether he's being clever in this or just not as clear as he might be — doesn't talk about the fact that he is taking the word away, the word "domestic" and just leaving it as "trade agreements." So really what that means then, we're really opening up to international trade agreements. And that's the intent of international trade agreements.

And so I don't know why he would use the cover of the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, which is a domestic agreement, and would fit under the existing legislation. I could be wrong. I'm not a lawyer. But the common sense reading that I bring to the table says everything seems to be okay. Why are we getting rid of the word "domestic"? And then the minister is talking about the New West Trade Agreement.

So if I'm missing something, I'm very happy to hear the clarification, but he isn't clear in his speaking notes. The explanatory notes are not clear either. They just reference that they could be a broader interpretation. I tell you that's the kind of language that leads to more questions. What does that mean? What does broader agreements mean? Well of course it means international agreements because the New West is a domestic agreement.

So I think in many ways we should be calling a spade a spade and saying, this is what we're really wanting to do. And then that can be straightforward and everybody knows. There is no sort of shell game here, or try to get something done under the cover of saying something else. We need to be straightforward, and I think many times people get nervous about any kind of agreement, any kind of agreement when people are not being straightforward and using clear language and saying what they mean and meaning what they say. When they start to cloud the issues and then saying, well we want to make this legitimate under the current piece of legislation by taking out the word "domestic," but they don't really say that, that's a concern. That's a concern. It only leads to loss of confidence because people are not being straight up.

[21:15]

And the question is, why? Why? Is it just laziness? Is it just because people think they're all on the same page? Or is there more to it? And people wonder why people are suspicious of legislation, are suspicious of agreements when they don't . . . people when they talk about them don't say what they mean and don't mean what they say. And this is a question that we'll have for sure. We'll have a question about that.

And as well the minister goes on. And he talks about, in addition, related amendments to *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012* will be made for the appointment of an administrator for purposes of managing the court-appointed lawyer process, setting out rules and process for the appointment of

court-appointed lawyers from a list of approved lawyers. And it goes on; the lawyers are to be paid at a fee rate set by the administrator, and provide that any lawyers appointed outside this process are not entitled to payment by the government. So that's pretty straightforward.

Interestingly, this is a new requirement. I don't know what's been the past practice for years, many years I would assume, that there probably . . . You know, if there wasn't a list, were people bringing in their own ideas of who they'd like to be represented and then paid for by the government? Has that been the past practice? I'm not sure. We need to know more about that. After all these years, you'd think we'd have a pretty consistent, pretty standard process for doing this. In 2016, after all these years, it seems to be a problem. So we need a little bit of history here.

You know, I think I referred to the Minister of Agriculture's thorough and fulsome speaking notes about the horned cattle, and he gave a real clear history, back to the '30s and '40s, about why we need to move on the way we do. That makes sense. Those kind of speaking notes, somebody like me can understand. But here when we're doing this, I go, I need a little bit more information, a little more history. And I know you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you're a bit of a history buff. And clearly when we talk about the courts in Saskatchewan, they have a long, long history. And I think they go back, you know, decades and decades. And so when we're talking about changing things up here, creating a list of lawyers that are appropriate, who's in and who's out, that's an interesting thing.

And then the other interesting twist to this is now he doesn't really talk about how we remove lawyers from that list, but the way that they remove lawyers here is kind of odd because it goes . . . This is what it is. And I'll just read the section here for the people at home. I know they'd be interested. Removal of a lawyer from the list, and I mean that's kind of an interesting term: the list. You get on the list or you're not on the list. What list? You'd think that they'd have a longer title than just the list, but maybe that has some special meaning in the world of law. But:

“Removal of lawyer

15.5(1) The administrator shall remove a lawyer from the list if, at any time during the preceding five-year . . . [panel], the lawyer has been removed from the panel of solicitors maintained by The Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission pursuant to *The Legal Aid Act*.

(2) The administrator may remove a lawyer from the list for just cause by giving the lawyer . . . his or her removal and setting out the reasons for the removal.

(3) A lawyer may, within 30 days [of receiving notice can] . . . apply to the Court of Queen's Bench to set aside the administrator's decision.

I appreciate that because it's setting out an appeal process and it's in the legislation. And we can debate it and we can have questions about that. And:

(4) On an application made pursuant to subsection (3), the court may order the reinstatement of the lawyer on the list

or dismiss the application.”.

So that makes sense, but section (1), if I can review that again, it talks about the lawyer being removed from the panel of solicitors maintained by the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission. So I find that an interesting, interesting twist. Why is that being brought into this now if it's not part of the process of putting a name on the list but it's part of the process for taking the name off the list?

I would think if you're good enough to be on that list from the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission, if you're good enough to have your name put on and we want . . . We have two sets of lists here. And what is the purpose of having two lists? You have the one and it's just called simply, the list. And then you have this other group of names that has been from a panel of solicitors maintained by the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission. So I guess that list goes by the name, the panel of solicitors maintained by the Legal Aid Commission. Pretty straightforward. So I find this all very intriguing and I think that the minister will have questions in committee about this.

The two real parts, one is the question marks around the lists and the implications. And I know that some of my colleagues have raised the question about how many lawyers are out there and able to act upon being appointed by the court. Is there a shortage? Is there a need for this? And has there been a practice of people coming in and saying that they need the court to appoint a lawyer for them? And they happen to have somebody in mind, you know, which seems to be kind of odd because if they had somebody in mind but couldn't afford them but would want the government to pay, is this a common practice? Is this a thing that happens quite often? I don't know because, as I said, I'm not privy to that information. So there's questions about this.

And of course, as I said, there will be questions around the implications of removing the word “domestic” when really they were after an ability for the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, which is not international but a domestic agreement among the Western provinces . . . And so domestic, including the word “domestic” does not create a problem for that. It might be more clear if it was interprovincial. But to me in my language, I understand domestic to mean in Canada and not just . . . And maybe I'm, you know . . . If domestic means within the province, but I would be surprised if that's the case. I don't know if that's in the definitions. It may be in the definitions of what domestic means, but I would be surprised. It's not in the definitions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so I think a common usage of language. Domestic means that it is within Canada, so why the need for that change?

And that's a bit of an odd thing, that they should be using one agreement to get something bigger done, you know. And as I said, you should call a spade a spade. If that's what you mean, fair enough. If it's because of CETA or TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership] that we're creating this, taking away this, but don't use the New West Trade Agreement because I mean that's foolish.

And that's why people lose faith in governments because, as I said, it's really important for governments, particularly when they're setting up, you know, the laws, that you say what you

mean and mean what you say and don't do doublespeak. Don't be talking about TPP and CETA under the guise of talking about the New West Trade Agreement. That's where frustration comes in and that's where people have big questions about what do you really mean. What do you really mean?

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is important that we have faith in our courts, and we do. It would be interesting to have the discussion about the Queen's Bench and how they're doing vis-à-vis . . . I know one of the things I'm interested in, vis-à-vis the human rights changes we made a few years ago, has that been a good thing or a bad thing for, vis-à-vis the Queen's Bench, and how are things going?

This is interesting that the minister did not say this was part of the new justice initiatives that we talked about. Other pieces of legislation regarding different courts didn't refer to that. So this is an interesting piece before us.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know we have lots of work tonight to do and if we're going to get through them all, we have to speed this up a bit I suppose . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, I just wanted to double-check. Well I think that I've run my course because, as I've said, there's two or three concerns here we have about the list of lawyers, what that means, how they get approved and who makes that decision, how they get removed, the inconsistencies between using the Legal Aid Commission and their list, and the implications of only using it to remove lawyers and not to put lawyers in, and of course the trade agreements. As I say, people are for economic development and they see agreements . . . We are an exporting province. It's important that we do well in the international world. But as I say, you've got to mean what you say and say what you mean. That's pretty common sense and that's what has served us well.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be moving adjournment of Bill No. 4, *An Act to amend The Queen's Bench Act, 1998 and to make related amendments to The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012*. I do so move. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 4, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 5

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 5 — *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in the debate on *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*. Before I get into talking about the bill and what the bill proposes to change, I would like to start out

with . . . I always show an example, you know, and using some of the things that government's not done. And I don't know who's requested this, and obviously government doesn't like consulting anyone, as we know that. They like just doing whatever they want and they move along doing whatever they would like to do. It doesn't matter what people, you know, have to say. This government just says, we know what's best and we're just going to do what we want to do. And they've shown that. Because they got such a big majority, 51, they say they can do whatever they want. You know, they got a big majority but at the end of the day — I've said this before — the people, the people of this good province are going to hold those members to account, you know. But you know, they'll say what they want and that's all right.

But having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to go back to saying the issues that many of our constituents face, and the issue is this government's, the dialogue that they have . . . They say they have the dialogue that they have. There is no dialogue with a lot of groups and people. This government goes on deaf ears, and I've said that.

People come in, whether it's the NORTEP [northern teacher education program], that we see the cuts coming to this program. The government doesn't consult anyone. They just go out and send out these letters and say, well you're going to be cut. They've done that in so many different situations.

[21:30]

And I talked about how they bully people, how they're mean-spirited, and the things that they do to people. People are scared. They're intimidated, you know. And we've seen what's happened to some of the school boards, those that speak out against this government, you know.

At the end of the day, I think people are starting to say it doesn't matter anymore and they're going to start holding this government to account. They're not going to be scared anymore. They're going to speak what's on their mind. And I commend those school divisions, those individuals that are speaking up saying, enough's enough. Enough's enough of the mismanagement.

We look at so many things. Day after day we ask questions in this House about the GTH land deal, about the mismanagement of money. And we're going to get there because we're not going to let up on them. I've talked about that. The people are asking and demanding that those questions be answered. And we're going to keep answering them.

But it just shows back, you know. I don't want to lose sight of where we are on this legislation and this bill. So I want to make sure we come back to make sure that we're talking about the bill, what matters. But again I go back to this. We don't know who's asked for this bill to be brought forward. And there might be good reason. Maybe it's the real estate company in there. We'll look at that. Maybe it's some of the banks.

And you know, when you think about, you think about the changes, to me it sounds like they're going from a paper process, that they'll be able to go to electronic. And I don't know if that's going to matter, whether it's the signatures you'll

be able to . . . on mortgages, if they're looking at that. And I mean some of those mortgage documents that you sign, I think the banks and the real estate, I think they're, you know, it must be about 100 pages. So maybe this makes it where now it's electronic and they don't have to provide the paper, and it saves on paper.

But having said that, you know what's interesting? I was sitting here thinking, well that's kind of good. We're saving on paper and stuff like that. And technology is moving where it is. You want to make sure it's protected. You want to make sure that those electronic documents are protected, that nobody has access to them that shouldn't have access, just like a paper would be in the bank and locked up in their safe. So there's those issues. I know that'll have to be . . . [inaudible].

But you know what's interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I was thinking about this. It's too bad. And maybe this would have helped the Finance minister. The Finance minister, instead of being able to provide us with paper with the first quarter report, he could have done it electronically to make it easier for him. Or the mid-report he could do it. Or even how about a budget that he never presented to the people before the . . . He could have done it electronically.

And instead of, you know, here we have it going where, you know, it's so much work they couldn't get it together, you know. They didn't have enough members to deal with it. They didn't have enough staff. Like it's amazing to watch.

But there would have been an opportunity for them to use this. This electronic documents would have been great. So it would have helped them. So maybe this definition, maybe this'll be a definition in here later that'll say . . . Like we see with the bill that they're proposing, we want to make sure the definition of what privatization is. Well maybe the definition in here, it could be used for the Finance minister, again as I said, Mr. Deputy, to give some reports that the people of this province deserved to see the finances, to see exactly the mess that this government has made. There would have been an opportunity. But having said that, there's a provision for that government and maybe they can do that.

But the point that I wanted to make, it's going back. It's like any changes that this government wants to do. We're not sure where it's coming from. People are a little concerned. They're worried, and I don't blame them. They should be worried. They should be very cautious. And we're going to do the work that we're supposed to do. And government doesn't like consulting. They like doing whatever it is that they figure the plan is and that this is what's best for you. And the people, the good people of this province know better. They do. And I think at the end of the day, they, you know, things . . . The tide will turn, as they say it. Times will change.

You know, they had record revenue as we talked about. They could've done so much. And I think about back home in our communities, the challenges we're facing in northern Saskatchewan on many of our First Nations, Métis community, lots of areas where the challenges we are faced with. The record revenue for years that they could've dealt with. And the members can talk about one project. That's great. There's been so many cuts in other areas. But having said that, you know, at

the end of the day, the good people back home knew that and back home they knew that. So guess what? They didn't send their candidate here. So let's be clear. The people back home know and they see the hardships, and it's been going for a long time.

So when I say that it is challenging for many, and I give . . . Challenges, you know, are there for a reason sometimes. Sometimes we challenge our leaders back home. But our leaders are going to start challenging hopefully this government to do better, whether it's our First Nations, Métis, our municipal leaders. And maybe they'll make sure that they're consulted on changes that this government's going to enact, the bills, legislation, or when there's programs that are going to be cut. When the most vulnerable programs, whether it's the SAID program, whether it's addictions, mental health, housing, roads, whatever it may be, before this government just moves along with what they want to do, they'll consult more with the people of this good province, which they should be doing, but they lack that.

But having said that, I'm not sure at this point who requested it. But like I said, it might have been the real estate companies. It could've been the banks about the changes that are being proposed here. It doesn't sound like there's a lot of changes. But I know in committee, we'll get to ask them tough questions, and we'll work through that. And we'll do what we need to do and consult with those individuals. And maybe some of my colleagues have heard from them, and that's fine. I'm not aware of it but maybe they have and maybe those individuals will say this is a good piece of legislation, we're supporting it, go ahead. And that makes sense. Sometimes we do that, sometimes we work together.

But sometimes, Mr. Speaker, we're totally opposed to what this government is trying to change. And when I see . . . You know my colleague from Athabasca talked with compassion about this government secretly trying to privatize our Crowns before the election. They didn't talk about that, but now all of a sudden . . . Nobody knocked on the doors and said, you know what, we're going to go out and we're going to privatize after the election. They didn't say that. I bet you none of them did. But now we see what's coming, so there's a hidden agenda.

Some will say, you know, let's hold the government account . . . And people are saying from all over, it doesn't matter where I go, where my colleagues go, they're hearing it from people saying, this is owned by our people — they are very proud of our Crowns — they should not be touched. And people are getting angry and I think they're going to actually send a very clear, strong message by the petitions, by I think writing to their MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] — MLAs on that side of the House, MLAs on this side of the House — to make sure that our Crowns should stay protected and part of the province of Saskatchewan, very proud.

So with that, I don't want to take any more time on this bill because I know my colleagues will have more questions. And like I said, in committee they will ask some tough questions and get clarification on it from the minister and officials when it goes before committee. So at that time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No 5.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 6

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 6** — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pleased to rise in my chair to speak to the bill this evening. This is a very straightforward housekeeping bill. There's not a lot that is actually happening here other than a number of spelling changes and word changes that reflect the minister's desire to update the language in the bill. It makes, actually it makes amendments to 24 different Acts to update language and correct grammatical and reference errors.

So some of the things that we see under all these different bills that are being amended, the word "department" is being changed to "ministry." We've seen many bills come forward in the past few years making those changes. Obviously this is part of that ongoing cleanup. The reference to "provincial magistrate" now becomes "judge," which is a modernized language. *Ex parte* applications are now just becoming "applications without notice," which is anglicizing the Latin. "Substitutional" is being changed to the word "substituted." Tortfeasor as two words is now being treated as one word "tortfeasor," and the same for extraprovincial. And the change to the name of the Pharmacy Association of Saskatchewan, which is the new name.

So as the minister indicated, there's about 24 bills or Acts that have these updates to have the grammatical corrections done to them. There's three Acts where we're changing from provincial magistrate to provincial court judge. Substitutional services is now substituted service to be consistent with the Queen's Bench rules, and different spellings, as I indicated.

So this is very much a classic housekeeping bill and, as far as that goes, I don't really have much to add.

So at this point I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 6, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 7

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 7** — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016 (No. 2)/Loi n° 2 de 2016 modifiant le droit législatif* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Once again thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Bill No. 7 is closely related to Bill No. 6 inasmuch as it's dealing with the same kind of changes. However because some of these bills are actually, that are being corrected, are bilingual bills, it had to be done as a separate bill. So in this case there's some changes to *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act*, *The Evidence Act*, and *The Family Maintenance Act*. And those three are bilingual bills.

So the changes being dealt with here, just a correction to the reference of the order, the Queen's Bench rules, and then repealing section 68 of *The Evidence Act* and striking out the word "substitutional" and substituting "substituted," which is not that easy to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So that's the only changes that are happening here. And as such, these are housekeeping, and I would have no further comment or debate to enter into. So I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 7, *An Act to amend the Statute Law (No. 2)*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 8

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 8** — *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a pleasure to stand and enter into this debate. It seems to be a night of full disclosure — who's been to what court and who's got what ticket and that type of thing. It's interesting when I read the minister's comments and he says, and I quote:

The amendments that I'm proposing are aimed at reducing court volumes and improving court efficiency. These amendments were developed in response to the significant increase in traffic tickets resulting from the automated speed enforcement photo laser project which is currently running on a two-year pilot basis in Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw."

Now what's interesting is while I never got a speeding ticket, I have had some experience, one limited experience, with a photo ticket in my own hometown of Saskatoon, and so I have lots of comments about this. And it'd be interesting in committee to hear what kind of letters the minister has got about this new use of photo justice. It would be very interesting to hear what the minister has to say about that.

From my own experience, it was turning right on a red on 33rd and Idylwyld. And if you know the corner, Mr. Speaker, there's an advance green. And the ticket I got was issued . . . the photo was taken sometime in August. I didn't receive the ticket until sometime in November, and I was wondering how many more tickets, how many more tickets was I going to get in the meantime. So it ended up just one, and I'm glad to see that I must have been following the rules all those intervening months.

But you know, there was a news story in the *StarPhoenix* about one company just down the street on 33rd where they use 33rd an awful lot, and the company got four tickets in one day about turning right on a red because everybody knows there's an advance green to go onto 33rd. And those are bad habits.

But the problem is with this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's interesting that the minister is more interested in making things a little easier in the courts and that process, and that's fair enough. We can all understand that, when things get clogged that's a problem. But the real issue here in many ways is, the reason we have laws is to improve safety and make sure that we reduce the number of accidents. And in this case when there's a delay, when there's a delay . . . And I was thinking, man there's three months between, three or four months between the actual photo being taken and the ticket being received in the mail, that's not justice. That's not helping somebody understand the issue around safety.

[21:45]

If you got the ticket on the day you did it, or right away like in the good old days where you had the police officer issuing the ticket, right away you understood you did something wrong. Right away you thought, okay, I'm going to change my ways. But to go three or four months later, you just think something's wrong with this picture here. If they can't do it quicker than that, then maybe the ticket should be dropped. Because the whole point of improving safety has the moment of learning — and I'm a teacher — the moment of learning has come and gone big time, big time. And there's a lot of anger and frustration. And I would really like to see what kind of letters and comments the Minister of Justice has got around the whole justice-by-photo movement we see now.

I mean I understand that technology's there and it's a good thing and we can use it. But what's interesting is how you can use that instantaneous method of photography and slow it down to a snail's pace of months to get the ticket out. Now I understand there's intervening processes where somebody has to review the photo and all of that. It does take time.

But to me, as I say, the whole issue is about safety. And it's not about making a lot of money, and that's what we're told over and over again. This is not a cash grab by the Government of

Saskatchewan to help them balance a budget because of financial mismanagement and scandals like the GTH. It's not about that. It's not about that at all. It's about, it's about safety.

Well I have a hard time believing that when I see how slow this process can go. And I see businesses and individuals raise those concerns. And they understand everybody's on the side of making sure safety is happening and that people follow the rules. But the one thing we don't want to see is people taking shortcuts through residential streets — and I've heard of this — particularly to get around the cameras on 33rd, or people going down Avenue B to turn on to Idylwyld just to avoid the camera. And that's not the way it's supposed to be. That's not the purpose. And so when we get to committee and the minister comes forward, we'll have those questions.

And I find these bills tonight very interesting because, you know, we're here to serve the public, the greater good, and sometimes I see these bills coming forward, and I'm wondering who are they really out to serve better. Is it the bureaucracy behind the system or is it the people? And I feel really, in this case . . . I know there's been letters written. There have been articles in the newspapers about justice by photography. And I think that we have to have a good, good discussion about this, and so I will be very interested in hearing the minister's comments about how this can work.

I mean I think there's some really simple ways we can change this up. If the tickets can't be issued within one or two days of the infraction happening, then the ticket should be a warning because these tickets are fairly expensive. But if it goes on that it's going to be past more than three months or 90 days, then the whole thing should get dropped because it's just, the path, the time has really passed. You know — what's the saying? — justice delayed is justice denied. And here's a case of, you know, it may be turning right on a red light, but you know, that's important. That's important. There's a variety of reasons why because of the design of the traffic. But 90 days, 120 days later, and they cannot get their act together to get the ticket out the door, there's just no excuse for that.

And if there is a reason that things have been delayed for whatever reason, then it's really up to the government to say: you know what? We'll take this. We'll eat this because this is too . . . it's not meaningful any more. But as I said, to delay the tickets and then have people continue the behaviour for up to three or four months without them knowing that they've done something wrong, and they continue to do it daily, this is a real problem. But I do understand many of these things have been ironed out, but I hope they have been. But if this is the reason for the people going to court . . .

And you know, it's interesting because he talks about this, and I quote:

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

who need to attend court.

So why are we seeing so many more people in this process of having to pay greater amounts of fines? Are the fines that much higher? Are they getting that many more tickets?

You know, as I said, that one company that got four tickets in one day without knowing that he had actually broken the law, I mean that is . . . And then to wait weeks to hear about it, that's just not right. That doesn't make any sense at all. And is that why our courts are being plugged up because of this increased number of tickets? And people are saying, I've got 1,000, 2,000, maybe \$5,000 worth of tickets that all of a sudden they happen to have got?

Now nobody is saying that you should be speeding. Nobody is saying you should be turning right on a red light when the sign is up for that. But we are saying there needs to be a process that's fair to everyone involved and that means the drivers, and that means the people involved. So that's why we'll have questions, and I will be very curious to know about this.

I mean, part of this is the SGI process too. They seem to be really involved in this whole thing. But of course, the courts are as well. So he also talks about the bill incorporating for the Criminal Code provision that authorizes the swearing of information by means of telecommunications and making that provision related to provincial offences. And that makes sense too. So some of this will be straightforward. Now he talks about telecommunications such as by fax. Of course as we speak, faxes are even becoming more obsolete. And whether it's by PDF [portable document format] or scanned documents and not by fax, we'll have lots of questions about this one, Mr. Speaker. I know I will be. It will be my opportunity to get off my shoulders some grudges I've had about that ticket from a few years ago.

But I do think it represents a basic unfairness of "justice delayed is justice denied." And while I was happy to amend my ways and to pay the ticket, I'm thinking, I wonder how many other people are in the same circumstance that I am and feel pretty, pretty, pretty . . . they feel pretty treated unfairly about the whole process.

Now with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that I know many others will want to speak on this Bill No. 8. I know that it's an important one. And of course when we think about our own life experiences with the court system, it gives you different insight, gives you a different perspective on what it's like to get a ticket, when you get one, and you think this isn't quite right. So with that, I would move adjournment of Bill No. 8, *An Act to amend The Summary Offences Procedure Act, 1990*. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 9

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 9 — *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur l'exécution des jugements canadiens*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm honoured today to stand here and talk about Bill No. 9, *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016*. This was an amendment Act that was brought forward by the Minister of Justice in the spring session that we had, and boy, the Minister of Justice has been busy because a lot of these amended Acts come from his portfolio. So they're going to have some really active committees, and our critic for Justice is going to be very busy with a lot of these committee dates. But it's good that we review these Acts and look at this.

So basically, the purpose of the amendments for this Act is so that it allows for easier enforcement of tax judgments made by the Canadian courts outside of Saskatchewan by removing an administrative process. So I'm happy to see that this government is wanting to co-operate with federal legislation. And also, when the Minister of Justice was bringing this forward, he talked about how Manitoba just recently made these amendments. So they're following the Manitoba lead. And so hopefully this doesn't mean that they're going to follow in their lead for other things like selling our telecommunication company. Because we know that if that's in fact the case, the NDP will be right behind here and we'll stop it. And we'll be standing behind our Crown corporations and ensuring that there's no privatization happening there.

So with the amendments of this Act, I think it makes sense that we have the legislation that requires people to be obligated for their tax obligations, so even made by courts outside of Saskatchewan, and ensuring that we enforce this. People should still have to pay their taxes regardless of where they live.

One of the things that is mentioned here is how it's retroactive. So I have a lot of questions, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And so I know these questions will be discussed in committee but like, how long? How long, when we say retroactive, how long do we mean? Like do we mean five years? Ten years? Fifty years? I don't know. Like how long do they stay in the system? Or maybe people don't even realize they have these retroactive tax judgments, you know. So I think it's important that we outline how long this is going to take or how far back we're going to go.

And any outstanding tax judgments? Like is that meaning even if it's businesses that are owing taxes? Is that going to be included in that? Or is this just personal taxes, or what is the description of this? And how many people will be impacted by this? Are we talking about lots of people that are owing back taxes that we're not enforcing, or is this just a few people? Is this something that's going to be cumbersome and require some extra staffing or is this something that, you know, we can implement quite easily? So I think that's another question that

needs to be asked.

And does this include businesses that, again, like I said, that owe back taxes? So how are we going to determine that? And like, if a business, say, owes taxes in another province but operates here, are we going to ensure that they're paying that tax?

[22:00]

So there's a lot of questions in here and I think we definitely need to talk to potential stakeholders. Possibly even consulting with the Manitoba government and seeing, you know, since they've implemented their amendments to their Act, what kind of changes have they seen? Like have they realized that this was more than they thought it would be? Or is it easy to maintain? So I think that would be something that would be really good to consult with them. And besides, like if we're implementing decisions made by the Canadian courts, like will we get some federal money for that? I don't know.

Like this isn't an area that is my expertise. And like I said, when I read this I have more questions than I have at times answers. And I think we definitely need to consult with the people that will be impacted by that and exactly how far-reaching this is going to be. So I am sure my colleagues will have a lot more to add about this and in future questions, you know. And so I don't have much more to add to this discussion, so with that I move to adjourn this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 9, *The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 10

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cox that **Bill No. 10** — *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to rise this evening to speak to Bill No. 10, *An Act to amend The Forest Resources Management Act*. Now this is a bit of one of the lengthier Acts, much lengthier than the other legislation I've spoken to this evening. So I'm going to go into it in quite a bit of detail, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I think it's very important that we go through this legislation in detail.

From what I understand, the bill “. . . expands on the minister's authority to enter into agreements with [certain] clients for the purpose of developing, improving, maintaining, closing, reclaiming and managing new and existing roads, road allowances, and rights of way” rather than just the location,

clearing, closure and reclamation of roads.

It also provides “The authority to enter into agreements with others to use, maintain and reclaim the abandoned roads and trails . . .” which I believe will . . . Its intention is to help reduce the ecological impacts and public safety issues created by these abandoned roads, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So that's a pretty important thing to make sure that we're staying focused on and that we're monitoring and implementing.

So I'm really hoping . . . I like to see this change or this authority being granted or this stronger authority being granted to the government, but I do hope that it doesn't fall victim to other environmental regulations and environmental provisions that we see in other legislation that essentially are starved of resources. So you say one thing in an Act and then you don't provide the resources that are necessary to actually enforce those environmental desires.

And it's important. Our resource industry is extremely important to our province, forestry being one of them. And we need to make sure that we're conducting all of our actions in our natural resource sector with the goal that we can continue to do so for generations to come, Mr. Speaker.

It also, this Act . . . or this bill, sorry, removes the sections related to the paying of dues. From what I understand the dues system is established in regulation, and the transitional provisions and setting of dues rates by licence are no longer applicable. So the purpose of this amendment is to align the Act with the provincial dues system that came into force back in July 2014 and is now applicable to all licences, including forest management agreements. So I suppose what I would add is I'm not too sure what took this so long, frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why the provincial dues system came into force in July 2014 and it took over two years for this government to catch up to its own legislative change in terms of updating *The Forest Resources Management Act* to reflect this current reality.

The bill also acknowledges that a licence may indicate the fees owed and the manner in which they must be paid. From what I understand, it's:

Setting the amount in the licence is suited to area based term supply licenses who have renewal obligations and who are seeking a more streamlined and timelier process to adjust forest management fee rates so that they are in keeping with the actual reforestation costs.

So this makes sense, Mr. Speaker, for us to make sure that we're sort of keeping up with the times in terms of actual reforestation costs. And it provides for a little bit more fluidity for the groups essentially that are working in this area to keep up with the times, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and frankly that makes sense to me.

I'm not too sure what took that change so long to implement, why the delay. And it's really important that we are making sure that we are staying up to date in terms of enforcing reforestation costs. Again it goes back to my earlier comments that we want to make sure that we have these resources for generations to come. And part of that goal or part of that process means making sure that we are looking and we are

staying current with the actual reforestation costs and how they are applicable today.

Now the bill also acknowledges that licensees must submit a forest management plan if this requirement is specified in a forest management agreement. The change removes a deterrent for existing term supply licence holders wanting to move to forest management agreements, and new companies, as a company is required to obtain the approval of a forest management plan prior to commencing operations. And it takes approximately two years to complete a forest management plan and involves a considerable investment of financial and human resources.

Now this looks like a fairly complicated requirement. I'll be interested to know and I'm hoping at committee we learn about what sort of consultation has been done with respect to this legislation. Exactly who have they talked to? Is this in line with other jurisdictions? Is this in line with other provinces that have forestry as an industry and as a resource? And I know that our critic for this area is going to be talking with stakeholders and will likely be asking these really important questions during committee, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I also understand that this bill modernizes language by transitioning from "prior to commencing" to "before commencing." Again we're seeing legislation — most of this, I'd say, legislation this session, with the strong exception of a few actually quite concerning bills — are quite grammatical in terms of their changes and are simply either updating legislation or making minor grammatical changes. So with the exception of a few bills, I would say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's actually a pretty weak legislative agenda that we're working with this session.

Although we are talking about very important things in these bills, I don't want that to shortchange the fact that a lot of these bills are just minor changes and somewhat inconsequential. So this isn't some sort of beefed-up, hearty legislative agenda that has a lot of really important changes. A lot of these bills are quite minor and inconsequential, with, as I said, the exception of some really, really concerning bills which I know colleagues have already spoken to and will continue to speak to, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I understand that this bill also acknowledges that following the second renewal of a term supply licence, the licensee must submit a forest management plan for the full renewal term of the licence:

The amendment will address situations where proponents are negotiating for multiple renewals of a 5 year licence essentially circumventing the requirement to prepare a forest management plan.

Now it's good, I suppose, to see that it appears that government is trying to close a loophole that existed in terms of the ability to get licences without having to prepare a forest management plan, which is again, as I had said, is really important that we are making sure that our industry and our natural resources are respected and we're doing what we need to do ecologically to ensure that these resources are in existence for generations to come, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So it's good to see that they've

closed this loophole, but again I would like to see what sort of consultation has been done with respect to the specific change and whether this was a highlight highlighted by industry or whether this was highlighted by the ministry. I'm not entirely sure, but those are hopefully important discussions that will happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at committee.

[It also] . . . establishes the authority for the minister to prohibit a person from obtaining a licence for a period up to 3 years for offences including failing to comply with the Act, regulations or code; failing to comply with an officer's or minister's order; and the unauthorized treatment, removal, storage, transport or utilization of infected materials.

I'm a little bit surprised, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this provision didn't exist before. I'm happy to see that there's now some teeth that ministry officials can now use if they notice that there is an issue with complying with the Act if they've had issues with certain groups who haven't followed the Act. And I'd be interested to know if this change was made because of an issue that's occurred in the past and, if so, what maybe had been done at that time in terms of trying to maintain the enforcement of the Act and protect our important and valuable natural resources, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I am glad to see that it looks like apparently a loophole is being closed here, but I'm not entirely sure . . . or not a loophole, sorry, but that some teeth is being given to this legislation. Ministry officials are going to be given the opportunity to actually have an enforcement tool that they can use, and they can essentially ban people from getting licences for up to three years if they're contravening this Act and not respecting our natural resources.

It also does give the authority for a judge to prohibit a person from obtaining a licence for a period of up to five years. Now I'm assuming that's if there's some sort of very extenuating circumstances, that it's determined at that point that three years is simply insufficient, that we need to ban this organization for five years.

From what I understand, when that prohibition does occur, the bill will require that written notice of the prohibition must be produced as soon as possible to the person convicted of the offence, which makes sense, likely means that it allows for the ability for this individual or group to appeal a conviction if they're not satisfied that it was done appropriately or they have some sort of dispute with that particular conviction, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So it just makes logical sense for there to be the requirement for written notice of the conviction and that it be provided to the accused — I guess it would be a sentenced accused at that point — as soon as possible so there is that ability and there is that knowledge.

[22:15]

The bill also allows for a judge to prohibit someone from doing any act or engaging in any activity that could result in the continuation or repetition of the offence, which again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, likely makes sense. If you're going to have a regulation and you're going to have an offence, you have to be able to enforce that. And you have to be able to provide

provisions and legislation for the enforcement of that penalty.

So you know, if there's an issue with a group or a person in terms of following the legislation, then we should be able to allow, and the legislation in this bill will allow, for a judge to be able to essentially add teeth to any sort of conviction, I suppose would be the right word in this respect.

Again, it adds contractor as a person with vicarious liability and clarifies that licence holders are responsible for the actions of their contractors and is consistent with the provisions in *The Wildfire Act* which . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm assuming again it's a bit of a, it sounds like a bit of a loophole closure that they're trying to do there, just making sure that when an organization contracts out their responsibility or their duties under this Act to contractors, that those contractors, not only those contractors are responsible, but the licence holders are responsible for the actions of their contractors, which is good to see. Hopefully, it will allow for, or it'll require licence holders to be diligent in, first of all the contractors that they hire, making sure that those contractors are following this bill and following the requirements. And again, hopefully with the end goal of being to preserve our natural resources and making sure that they are available not just for my generation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but many, many generations to come.

So it seems like the aim of some of these legislative changes is to protect more of the forest through the required approval of forest management plans. So that's good to see. It'll be interesting to see how these requirements come out in reality, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I had said before, some of the problems we've seen with respect to environmental protection, you really don't have to look much further than some of the recommendations in auditors' reports, that while there may be some environmental regulations and some requirements with the goal of trying to protect our natural resources, oftentimes there's no staff or there's no money available for enforcing these really important environmental protections. So that's going to be the interesting thing here, is to make sure that there's enough staff, ministry staff to look at these forest management plans, to review them, to approve them, and that there's not an issue with respect to that. Because that's something that I know we've seen in the past.

As I said, a lot of the changes in this legislation is simply just modernizing the language. But there are some important amendments here that are outlining for greater accountability for forest companies operating in publicly owned forests. Like I said time and time again, it's really important that these companies that are given essentially the opportunity and the allowance to extract essentially a very important, very vital natural resource, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we're doing this in a way that's . . . Essentially, they're given this opportunity. It's a . . . what is it? It's a privilege but not a . . . Anyways, I can't really remember how that works. They're given this opportunity. It's a privilege, but it's not something that . . . It's not a right. So we need to make sure that we have strong protection in our forest industry.

It's really important that we have a strong forest industry, especially for employment in our northern communities. I do hope that these companies that are working in the forest industry in the North are employing local people from the

North, that it's also sustainable, and that it's also done so in an environmentally friendly way so that not only are these resources available now, that they're going to be available for generations to come, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with that, I think that's all I have to say with respect to this legislation. So I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 10.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Douglas Park has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 11

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cox that **Bill No. 11** — *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to rise this evening to speak to I guess the second forestry-related Act I'm going to speak to this evening. It's Bill No. 11, *An Act to amend The Forestry Professions Act*. Now this bill is relatively short but I think there are some really important points worth noting, so I'm definitely going to be going through those in absolute detail, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This bill amends *The Forestry Professions Act*, and what it does is it amends section 40 and section 41 which are the portions of the legislation in *The Forestry Professions Act* that, I believe, there are penalties . . . Yes, they talk a little bit about offence and penalties and some limitations on the prosecution. So what it does is it expands what can be penalized, essentially, in this Act. So right now it's only section 23 that's subject to these offence and penalty sections, but this will expand it to section 23 or section 23.01. So what that, as I said, will do, will expand some of this in the legislation.

So I'd be interested to know where this came from in terms of who called for this, if this was an issue that was found in the ministry that they felt that more penalties were needed because they were having issues, if this was called on by those within the forestry profession, if they felt that they were having some issues in terms of, for example, individuals who were . . . Now where is it? Section 23. Section 40. Now I'm just trying to find it. My apologies, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yes, for example those who were saying that they were registered with the association as a professional forester but they weren't in fact a practising member. Essentially they were pretending to be one thing but they didn't in fact have the credentials.

So I'm wondering if there was an issue with this that they've discovered that's been happening in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they were having problems enforcing it, or if it's just something that they noticed in the legislation that they thought maybe should be changed. Because it seems like the

way the Act was created, there was some requirements in terms of those who are exempt. For example, a professional forest technologist or a registered forest technologist or a registered forester, there's certain rules under abbreviations in their title that they're allowed to use, essentially just making sure that there's no confusion over who has what sort of designation, and making sure that people aren't coming and saying that they have a certain designation when in fact they don't. But unfortunately, for some reason when the Act was originally drafted, although those provisions and the provisions in section 23 were subject to fairly strong teeth in terms of liability and convictions and exactly what they would be subject to, it looks like just the general provisions for a summary conviction, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The original drafters of the legislation didn't include section 23.01 in that section, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So some of the things that will be now subject to section 40, which, like I said, essentially lays out that anyone who contravenes these provisions of the Act will be guilty of an offence and liable on a summary conviction, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that will now include anyone who engages in the professional practice of forestry who states that they are, for example, registered with the association as a professional forest technologist or a professional forester, when in fact they actually aren't. So again making sure that people who are working within this very important industry are being accurate as to the designations that they say they have and the level of professional expertise and designations that they say they have.

Essentially from what it looks like, it allows for a little bit of . . . It allows for some more teeth. Similar to the last legislation that I was talking about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's really important. It's good for us to have this legislation, and it's good for us to have these rules making sure that the extraction of our natural resources like forestry are being done in a sustainable way, that when we put in these provisions to make sure that those who are doing this work aren't contravening any legislation, that we actually have people in place to be monitoring this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Because we can have all the legislation in the world, but if we don't have anybody on staff, if we don't have enough ministry officials actually going in and making sure that these are enforced, then there's really no point. We're kind of all wasting our time and frankly we're wasting paper that, you know . . . It's important that we're being sustainable. Then let's make sure that when we're printing paper, like in legislation, that we're actually getting some staff and getting some ministry officials to make sure that we are being able to actually enforce the legislation that we're trying to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Right. As my colleague just noted, it's really important to make sure that we're protecting the trappers up north as well. These are traditional lands that we're talking about and traditional territories that we're talking about, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So it's really important. Not only are we talking about maintaining our environment and protecting our natural resources for generations to come, but these are really important territories. These are cultural lands. These are traditional trapping territories. And we need to make sure that any work that's being done by any companies are both doing well and done right and that those who are working in this industry actually have the credentials that they say they do, and not only

that but the government is actually putting money into the Ministry of Environment to ensure that these are enforced.

Because that's what we've seen time and time again, Mr. Speaker, especially with this last budget, is slashing and cutting in the Ministry of Environment. And then when things happen like the Husky oil spill, they just look at each other like they have no idea what happened. But this is what happens when you don't have regulation and you don't have regulation that you can enforce and you don't have staff, appropriate staff, to be able to enforce these important environmental regulations, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with that, although I have much more I would love to say about this bill, I think at this time I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 11.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Douglas Park has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Being that it's past the hour of 10:30, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 22:30.]

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