



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

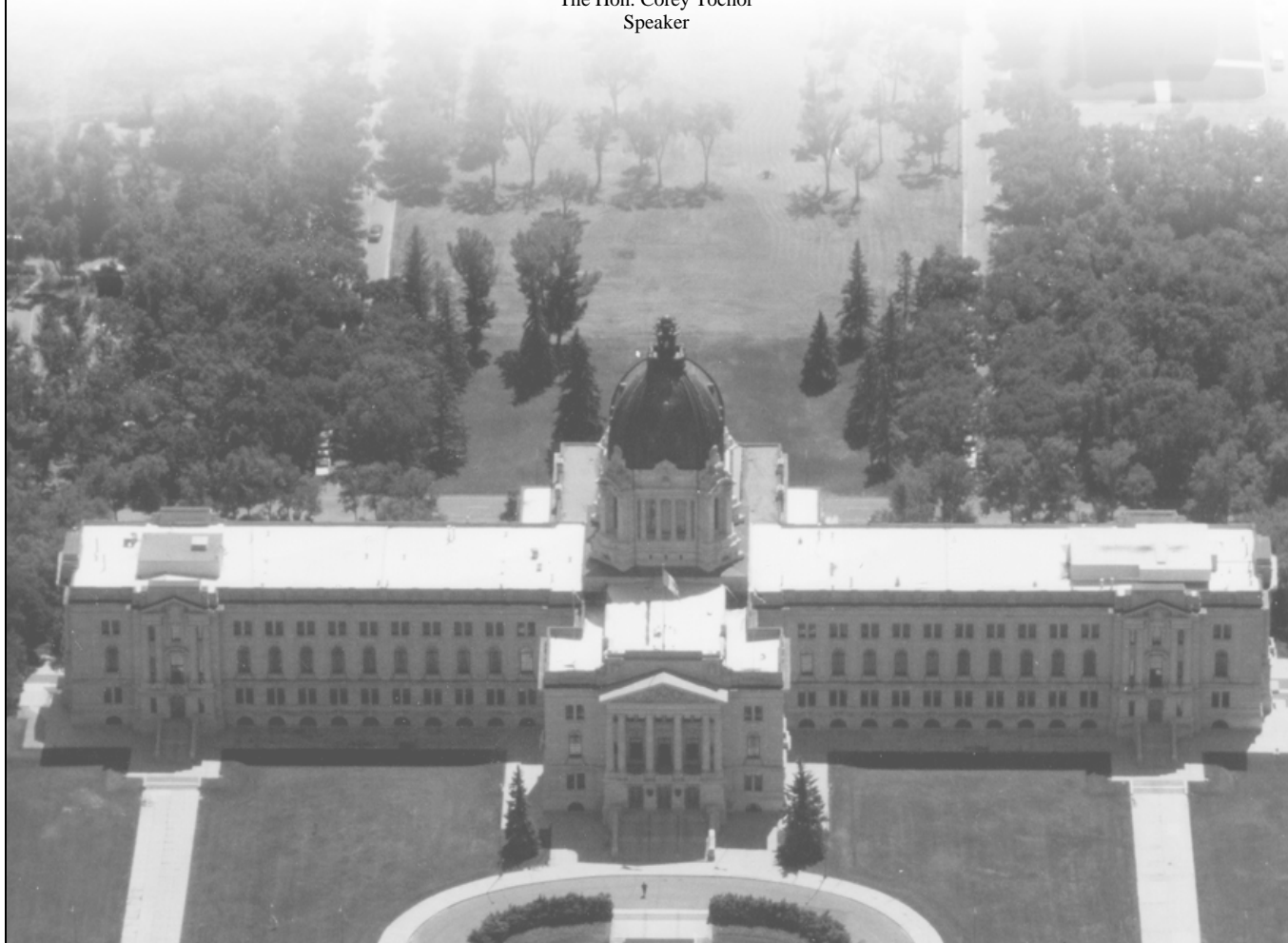
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



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

Speaker — Hon. Corey Tochor

Premier — Hon. Brad Wall

Leader of the Opposition — Trent Wotherspoon

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Wilson, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 50; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 10; Independent (Ind.) — 1

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — To all members, I've got a special introduction today. We're lucky, or I'm lucky to have in my gallery, my mother-in-law, Zoria. If you would give a quick wave. Zoria and Bernie have been great supporters of me throughout my endeavours in politics, and I'm very appreciative of the support and love. Without them, I couldn't do this job, especially now with our two young sons at home. Zoria has been a huge help in making that possible for me to serve down here in the Assembly, and I'm so appreciative of her support and care for our two boys, Jacob and James, that affectionately call her nana. And we'll be showing Jacob and James the proceedings here soon enough. So I would like to thank her for coming down.

And also with Zoria are a couple of her brothers and sisters. Melvin Moroz, give us a wave. We got to know Melvin a couple of years ago when he had a little bit of a fall and he spent some time at Zoria's house recovering. And very appreciative, it was right around Christmastime and it was a special time of year to see him recover. And I'm very grateful for Melvin to be here today.

Also with us is Leonard Moroz and Donna Moroz, and then Gordon Wolitski and Janice Klisowsky. They were lucky enough to join us today; they did a quick tour of the Assembly. And I'm very honoured for them to be here in their Assembly. So would all members please join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a request of the House and of the Speaker to move a motion.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked leave to introduce a special motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

MOTIONS

Motion to Authorize Interpretation From the Chamber Floor

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker:

By leave of the Assembly

That members be authorized to address the Syrian refugee guests in the gallery and simultaneously be permitted, and

that language interpretation be permitted on the floor of the Chamber to speak for the interpretation for our Syrian guests [Mr. Speaker].

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has made a special motion. We'll take it as read. To the members: all those in favour?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Bring in our guest please, Sergeant.

[Mr. Ziad Al-Husseini took his place on the floor of the Chamber to provide interpretation services.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

[Mr. Al-Husseini provided interpretation in Arabic throughout the following remarks.]

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very, very much, Mr. Speaker, to members for leave for this special occasion. And may I make the first introduction be of our translator, Ziad. Welcome here and thank you for the services you will provide the members and our guests in the gallery. I think he deserves an advanced warm congratulations.

I'm going to be mindful of consecutive translation, to be fair to the translator, and also so that our guests may understand how warmly they are welcomed here today.

Mr. Speaker, joining us today in your gallery are 90 newcomers to Saskatchewan from Syria. They are accompanied today by representatives from the Regina Open Door Society and the Regina Adult Campus. Other groups that we need to acknowledge who've been a part of the settlement include the Saskatoon Open Door Society, Global Gathering Place, Moose Jaw multicultural centre — these are universal words, Mr. Speaker — and the Prince Albert YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association].

Mr. Speaker, we are so very, very grateful for our guests today. We're very, very grateful for all of those who have worked in these agencies to make the settlement a success and our guests, our newcomers, feel welcome.

Saskatchewan originally committed to take our per capita share of the newcomers to Canada, which would have been roughly 850. But these 90 newcomers and guests to our Assembly — to their Assembly — are representative of actually 1,236 Syrian refugees that have been welcomed in the province of Saskatchewan over the last year.

Mr. Speaker, 5 million people have fled Syria. The world's response to this crisis has been imperfect but still generous. Today we acknowledge those that have made it happen with respect to the government refugees, but also to non-government agencies and churches across Saskatchewan who have also been a part of the effort.

I would say to our newcomers . . . And I notice one newcomer, I believe, has a Saskatchewan Roughrider shirt on, so the settlement is happening smoothly. Mr. Speaker, unless we stand here today in this Assembly as a First Nation or someone of Aboriginal descent, then we are all newcomers. We are all the sons or the grandsons or the great-granddaughters of immigrants.

These last few years have been terribly traumatic for our guests, especially these last few months of great change. They need to know that others have gone before them and faced similar challenges. And our province is richer for it, and so are those that came anew to the province.

The motto of our province is “from many peoples, strength.” It is on full display today, not just with the newcomers to Saskatchewan but with those big-hearted Saskatchewan people who have made their arrival and their settlement such a success.

Later on we’ll have a reception and some cake and some fun activities for the kids. But may I just say now on behalf of members on this side, you’re very, very welcome in this, your Assembly. I’d ask all members to join me in welcoming these newcomers, new Saskatchewan citizens, to their Legislative Assembly today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

[Mr. Al-Husseini provided interpretation in Arabic throughout the following remarks.]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to Ziad, our translator here today.

It’s my honour to join with the Premier, as the Leader of the Official Opposition Saskatchewan New Democrats, to welcome this incredible group of Syrian refugees to their Legislative Assembly here today.

The circumstances that have brought you to Saskatchewan have been shared with me by many new Syrian refugees. The crisis and stress that you have endured as refugees is barely imaginable to most of us here in Saskatchewan. The very strength that brought you here, the perseverance, the fact that you’re here and building your life in Saskatchewan speaks to the strength of you as individuals, overcoming such crisis, such hurt, such loss, such violence, and such insecurity.

As you continue to build your life in Saskatchewan and Canada, we wish and want to work with you to ensure peace and security and opportunity for each and every one of you and your families.

As referenced by our Premier, our motto is “from many peoples, strength.” Certainly those that are in this gallery here today on Treaty 4 territory demonstrate that, and it’s on full display, including those that are providing supports to these newcomers that are building lives here in Saskatchewan.

[13:45]

It’s a pleasure to welcome Regina’s Open Door Society, an organization that has provided so much support to so many and

so many of these families, as well as the adult campus here today. And I see Gisele Carlson here today. It’s a pleasure to welcome Gisele, as well as Bonnie Sorensen.

I’m also thankful to the other organizations that are with us today and that have supported so many: the Global Gathering Place, The Moose Jaw multicultural centre, Prince Albert YWCA, Saskatoon Open Door, along with the families, the churches, the individuals all across our province that have extended that Saskatchewan care and compassion at a time where families needed it most.

I’ve had the privilege of meeting many families of Syrian refugees. I’ve had the privilege of gathering for community dinners and have learned much already from these Syrian refugees who are building their life here in Saskatchewan. To these families, to these Syrian refugees I say, we’re all in this together. We will work together to build and strengthen Saskatchewan, and each and every one of you and your families are a vital part of that. And for that I say, thank you.

And as one final note, the official opposition would believe that these translation supports will greatly assist the clarity during question period here today.

On behalf of a grateful official opposition, most importantly a grateful province, I say welcome and thank you for building your lives here in Saskatchewan to help shape and define the bright future for all of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

[Mr. Al-Husseini provided interpretation in Arabic throughout the following remarks.]

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to welcome our Syrian guests. And the point that I wish to make is that our leader made reference to Treaty 4 territory. And I just want to point out that I am one part of the original peoples of this land, and we welcome you to our beautiful province.

And that the people should know, throughout your travels you’ll hear the phrase “First Nations” and that is meant to respect the original inhabitants of this land, which are the Aboriginal people. And I will say in one of the original languages of our land, after I’m done my comments, a welcome to you. So bear with me as I explain to you in our own language, an original language of this land, a welcome to you.

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

And in the original language of this land, I say I am glad you are here. I welcome you. I look forward to your contributions and I’m glad that you all came here as a family and there is plenty of room in the First Nations lands.

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

[Mr. Al-Husseini provided interpretation in Arabic throughout the following remarks.]

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to join along with the members opposite and welcome the Syrians. Being the only First Nation member of this Chamber, I would like to welcome them.

As an indigenous woman, and our role in our societies, I would like to extend a sincere welcome. Along with being a member from Saskatoon Fairview, I am a member of Treaty 4 territory. Welcome.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You stole a bit of my thunder earlier but, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce Leonard and Donna Moroz, Melvin Moroz, and Gordon Wolitski, all from the great community of Wishart in my constituency. And I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

[Mr. Al-Husseini provided interpretation in Arabic throughout the following remarks.]

The Speaker: — Before we carry on for further introductions of the day, I'd like to first thank our interpreter for coming today on short notice. Much appreciated. And for the opposition and government House leaders for making this a possibility of having him on the floor, and the Sergeant-at-Arms and the Clerks, and for Hansard on how to figure out how we're going to . . . [inaudible] . . . all of this. Thank you very much.

Before our interpreter goes, just one more remark, two remarks to our audience. Thank you for being here in your Assembly. We're happy that you are here, but please remember not to take part in the debate. And that includes applause.

Sergeant-at-Arms, would you please escort our interpreter out. Thank you, sir. I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with you in welcoming your special guests, and one in particular, a constituent of mine, Janice Klisowsky from Dysart. Janice is giving us a wave. The Klisowsky family has been residents of Dysart for quite some time. And one of her sons, Nathan was my youngest granddaughter's soccer coach and did a fine job, kept her in line, kept her focused, and they did well. And so I'd like to ask all members to welcome Janice to her Legislative Assembly.

If I could, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I would just like to also welcome our special guests from Syria. And the reason that I'd like to do that, Mr. Speaker, is because my wife Marlene was not born in Canada, came at the age of five with her family to Canada, not knowing the language, and faced many challenges. Certainly did not experience the trauma that I'm sure many of our special guests have experienced before they got here, but at least it gives me a little bit of an understanding of some of the challenges that they are currently going through.

And I know my in-laws, they learned from their children — my

wife and her brothers — the language, and the young people help their parents navigate their new settings. And so with that, I would like to extend a very special welcome to our Syrian guests on behalf of myself and especially on behalf of my wife, Marlene. Thank you.

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

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome the grade 7 class from Gull Lake, Saskatchewan, my hometown; their teacher, Ms. Calli Illerbrun; accompanied by Ms. Tammy Murray, Ms. Cindy Girodat, the education assistants; plus parent chaperones, Ms. Joanne Zanidean and Mr. Rob Myers. I'd like to welcome you to your Assembly. Thank you.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also welcome to the Assembly Mr. Tim Geiger, a long-time friend from the Leader, Saskatchewan area. Tim has been an active councillor and reeve in the RM [rural municipality] of Happyland for 25 years. So would you all help me welcome him here today. Thank you so much.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce Ms. Fallon Prince and 16 grade 12 students of the Langenburg Central School seated in the west gallery. This grade 12 class that you have before you will be the first graduating class from the brand new school built in Langenburg, the Education minister, myself, and former members Ken Krawetz and Bob Bjornerud got the privilege to help open on September 2nd this year.

I look forward to having a great discussion with these bright young students and with Ms. Prince, who is an innovative teacher, was a great neighbour to us on the farm, is an accomplished musician, and is a new mom. So please help me in welcoming the Langenburg grade 12 students and teachers to the Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce two gentlemen in the west gallery. They are Kyle Moffatt and Adam Kletchko, Mr. Speaker. They joined us earlier this morning to raise the Mover flag out front of the Assembly with some of the members of the Regina Fire & Protective Services, Mr. Speaker. We'll learn more about what they're here for in members' statements soon to come. I just ask all members to help me welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to welcome these folks, Kyle and Adam, as well. I do know that our side is willing to step up. We've got Team Jack happening.

And Team Jack has a proud, proud history in Canada, and we're alive and well here.

And as a survivor of prostate cancer, I have to tell you this is a very important issue for me as well, and our whole side and our Legislative Assembly. We have huge support for men and mental health and prostate care, cancer or care, here. So thank you so much.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the great citizens of Kelvington, Foam Lake, Rose Valley, Wadena, Weekes, Prairie River, Porcupine Plain, and Kindersley. I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition to reverse the cuts to the Lighthouse program. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that the Minister of Social Services, in 2014, said the Lighthouse in Saskatoon would "... take pressure off existing detox facilities, hospitals, and police cells, while keeping people safe, especially in our brutally cold winters." The petitioners also point out that the Minister of Health said that "We want to ensure that individuals with mental health and addictions issues have a safe place to stay."

[14:00]

I think it's quite relevant, true to say, Mr. Speaker, that the pressure that the Saskatoon Health Region is experiencing in their hospitals in the last few weeks could be also attributed to the cuts at the Lighthouse, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure once again to rise to present a petition for a second bridge in Prince Albert. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

That they respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan ask the Sask Party government to quit stalling, hiding behind rhetoric, and refusing to listen to the people calling for action, and to begin immediately to plan and then quickly commence the construction of a second bridge for Prince Albert using federal and provincial dollars.

And the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout the province of Saskatchewan. We've presented page after page, Mr. Speaker, and the pages that we have here that I wish to submit are people that have signed from Spruce Home and from White City, Yorkton. And I so present, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition regarding wetlands in our province. Wetlands serve a very vital function in our ecosystem. They take the form of marshes, bogs, fens, swamps, and open water. Wetlands are home to wildlife, including waterfowl. They clean the water running off of agricultural fields. They protect us from flooding and drought, and they are a playground where families can explore and play. In the worst cases, such as some areas on the prairies, as much as 90 per cent of our wetlands have disappeared. As they continue to disappear, so too do the many benefits they provide.

Sound wetland policy will allow Saskatchewan to provide sustainable development for all sectors of business in the province. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the petition that reads as follows, respectfully request the Government of Saskatchewan to:

Increase funding to do the proper inventory work, putting Saskatchewan in a better position to manage the water resource;

Speed up the evaluation of high-risk watersheds where there is significant damage annually from flooding. This evaluation must include a recognition of drainage works that could be closed or restored that will alleviate some of the issues downstream with respect to flooding and nutrient loading;

Create a sound and transparent mitigation process that adequately addresses sustainable development. The sequence should first focus on avoiding the environmental harm whenever possible, before a secondary focus on minimizing the harm with compensation being sought only

when the development is deemed essential and the first two stages cannot be met.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by individuals from Denzil, Regina, Wadena, Rose Valley. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of Wakamow Valley Authority in Moose Jaw. And we know that as a result of the passage of *The Wakamow Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2016* on June 30th, the Wakamow Valley Authority lost its statutory funding of \$127,000 from the Saskatchewan government, in addition to the \$30,000 in supplementary funding, and this loss of annual funding negatively affected the ability of Wakamow to maintain its lands and repair its facilities and provide services to the Moose Jaw area.

This funding cut resulted in a layoff of one-third of the park staff, and included two summer students, two regular employees. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Saskatoon, Buffalo Narrows, Lloydminster, Regina, and of course Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present to you a petition condemning the Sask Party's cuts to the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program. After nearly a decade of wasting the economic boom and blowing through the savings, the government is now forcing the province's most vulnerable people to pay for the Sask Party mismanagement.

The Sask Party's latest cold-hearted cut will take money away from people who are unable to work due to a disability; that many of these people being hurt by the Sask Party's cuts live with serious illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, autism, and many other illnesses; and that contrary to the Minister of Social Services's claims, the government underfunds clients in regards to shelter allowance, and that shelter allowance should be reflective of the current rental costs. I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to stop their plan to cut the SAID

funding and immediately restore funding for those living with a disability; that shelter allowance is reflective of the current rental costs; and that the Saskatchewan Party government implement the recommendations of the advisory group on poverty reduction.

The residents that signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Saskatoon, La Ronge, Stanley Mission, Air Ronge. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition regarding child care in Saskatchewan. The undersigned of this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: across Saskatchewan, licensed non-profit child care centres are taxed inconsistently. Many of our licensed non-profit child care centres pay commercial taxes, and this is not done in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, B.C. [British Columbia], or New Brunswick.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, we've been receiving hundreds of these petitions. The ones that I will submit today are signed by citizens of Pense and Regina. I do so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition from citizens calling for a stop to the Sask Party sell-off of SaskTel. The petitioners point out that in the recent election campaign and, I might add, other previous campaigns, Mr. Speaker, the Premier and the Sask Party promised that they would not privatize SaskTel. The petitioners are calling that instead of looking at their own waste and scandal, the Sask Party is now talking about breaking their promise and looking to sell off SaskTel to make a quick dollar, and the petitioners also point out that once SaskTel is gone there's no getting it back and no telling what else the Sask Party will sell. Mr. Speaker:

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

people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this particular batch of petitions is signed by citizens from Saskatoon, Warman, Lanigan, Grandora, and Churchbridge. I so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to once again present a petition calling on the government to reverse its short-sighted cuts to the Aboriginal court worker program. The Government of Saskatchewan cut the budget for the Aboriginal court worker program in the 2016-2017 provincial budget, and as those on this side of the House know, Aboriginal court workers play an important role, helping Aboriginal people in criminal and child apprehension cases. Aboriginal peoples are disproportionately represented in Saskatchewan's correctional centres, and Aboriginal court workers successfully help to make our communities safer through reduced recidivism rates.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan reverse its short-sighted and counterproductive cuts to the Aboriginal court worker program.

And those people signing the petition today are from the Regina and Moose Jaw area. I do so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to stop the redirection of funding of the Northern Teacher Education Program Council, Inc. A recent report showed that 94 per cent of NORTEP [northern teacher education program] grads found employment in the North. NORTEP has improved teacher retention in northern Saskatchewan. NORTEP has a positive economic impact in northern Saskatchewan. NORTEP provides high quality face-to-face instructional services to students. The province's financial deficit cannot be fixed by cutting indigenous education in the North and a program that has served the North for over 40 years. And the prayer reads:

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

It is signed by hundreds and hundreds of people in northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Disc Golf Gains Popularity in Regina

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to

speaking about a local gem located within the constituency of Douglas Park. My constituency is home to Regina's only disc golf course, a free 18-hole course in Douglas Park, with Wascana Lake posing a serious hazard on some holes. The course is relatively new, Mr. Speaker, and it wasn't without a handful of community partnerships and grants that the Regina Disc Golf Association was able to have a quality and permanent location for the sport.

Aside from Douglas Park, courses have sprung up in Saskatoon, Martensville, Prince Albert, North Battleford, Humboldt, Vanscoy, Lumsden, Yorkton, Manitou Beach, and Waskesiu.

I had the chance to watch disc golf for the first time on Saturday, September 17th in Douglas Park for the annual Tommy Douglas Open. Tommy Douglas Open is the new name, and rather appropriate, I might add, Mr. Speaker, for the Regina Disc Golf Association's annual year-end tournament.

Disc golf is gaining popularity across the province, and disc golf communities are getting larger and larger, with this year's tournament attracting over 50 competitors.

I need to thank Stacy Martin for giving me a quick tutorial that day. I'm sure I'm not the first beginner to need some of his guidance. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in congratulating the Regina Disc Golf Association for hosting a wonderful event and for a great season of disc golf in Douglas Park.

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

Welcome to Syrian Refugees

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Salaam alaikum to our guests today.

Last December I had the honour of representing the province at the Regina Airport as we welcomed our city's first Syrian refugees, the Al-Bardan family. In total, Mr. Speaker, our province has welcomed 1,236 Syrian refugees to date as part of the federal government's initiative to settle 25,000 government-assisted refugees by the end of 2016. This could not have been accomplished without the tireless work of staff and volunteers at the five refugee settlement agencies across the province.

I'd also like to thank the Regina Open Door Society, the Saskatoon Open Door Society, the Global Gathering Place in Saskatoon, the Moose Jaw Multicultural Council, the YWCA Prince Albert for the amazing work they've done to help settle Saskatchewan's newest residents. I'd also like to thank other immigrant and integration agencies across our province, in addition to hundreds of community volunteers for all that they've done over the past year.

Since 2007, Mr. Speaker, more than 77,000 immigrants have settled in over 400 communities across Saskatchewan. Our provincial motto, "from many peoples, strength," could not be more true today. Together our province is stronger.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming Syrian refugees to

our province and in thanking all those who have been instrumental in helping to ensure that refugees feel at home in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Prince Albert Powwow Contributes to Inclusive Community

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to attend the 18th annual Northern Lights Casino Thanksgiving Powwow, and I was honoured to take part in three of the grand march entrances throughout the weekend.

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, this annual powwow is a major event within the city of Prince Albert, and is a wonderful way to get involved in the community and experience culture that has been shaped by thousands of years of living on the prairies.

More than 500 dancers from across Canada, the United States, and South America competed in this powwow, and approximately 2,600 came through the doors on each of the two days of the event.

The Northern Lights Casino Thanksgiving Powwow has a huge impact on Prince Albert's economy, filling our hotels, restaurants, and stores with visitors. More importantly it provides a unique opportunity for First Nations children and non-First Nations people to learn more about First Nations customs and traditions in a very inclusive environment. In fact, Mr. Speaker, organizers of the event reminded us that the reason this powwow was started 18 years ago was to build a bridge between First Nations and non-First Nations people. Prince Albert continuously strives to become a more inclusive community, and the Prince Albert Thanksgiving powwow contributes greatly to this endeavour.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating the board and staff of the Northern Lights Casino and the organizers of this event on yet another successful Thanksgiving powwow and to join me in acknowledging the powwow's 18 years of providing our community with great cultural education and advocacy.

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

Funding Requirements for Refugee Students

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the past year our provincial schools welcomed 534 new students from Syrian families. While we are always excited to welcome new students to our province as they make Saskatchewan more culturally rich and diverse, adding this many students at the same time is not without challenges. Our school divisions are reporting that many of these children are behind grade level and have only been taught in Arabic. School divisions and educators are working hard to provide supports like literacy and language work, counselling, cultural integration, and work with parents to assist them as they send their children to school each day. Our

goal is to ensure that these children succeed and integrate effectively. We commend our schools across this province for the outstanding work they have done in welcoming and supporting these students.

This year we provided 5.4 million in funding to divisions specifically to support Syrian students. However, at a projected cost of 10 to 13,000 per student, without additional support our divisions will face significant pressure. Mr. Speaker, the federal government made a promise to support these families. Therefore I ask all members to join me in calling on the federal government to fulfill their promise and provide financial support for Saskatchewan's education sector to ensure that all of our children reach their full potential. Thank you.

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

Children's Hospital Radiothon

Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to inform the Assembly that today and tomorrow the 14th Annual Children's Hospital Radiothon is broadcasting live across southern Saskatchewan from Hill Centre Tower II in downtown Regina. Harvard Broadcasting is hosting the radiothon on three of its local radio stations, 620 CKRM, MY92.1, and 104.9 the WOLF.

Over the course of the two-day broadcast event, we will likely hear courageous stories of Saskatchewan families who have faced tough battles with infant and childhood illnesses, and the medical professionals who treat them. I'm sure these stories will help to inspire the generous people of our province, which they are always very accustomed to doing, to donate to help raise funds to purchase urgent pediatric medical equipment for the new children's hospital of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the ground was broken on construction of this important facility in September of 2014 and the project is now nearly 30 per cent complete and remains on schedule to open in 2019. The work of the Children's Hospital Foundation and its donors will ensure that the hospital will have the necessary equipment and furnishings so that children can stay with their families close to home while receiving the best treatment possible.

I ask all members to join me in wishing Harvard Broadcasting and the Children's Hospital Foundation success once again with this year's radiothon. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

November

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the passing of the 1st of November, something very familiar starts to happen. That something shows up as a shadow on men's faces, a little extra insulation for the increasingly cool days of the Saskatchewan winter, and for some, the one month of the year that you can sleep in an extra five minutes.

Mr. Speaker, it is Movember, a month dedicated to men's health and the finest facial hair possible. It was great to be

involved in the flag raising earlier today where we were joined by the provincial Movember organizers who were introduced earlier. This month is dedicated to improving the health of men, young and old. With all the moustaches around, we need to make sure we have conversations about men's health issues such as prostate cancer, testicular cancer, poor mental health, and physical inactivity. Too often men are reluctant to take action on our health, but we have the power to change that.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honour once again to participate in this great cause. And I will also be joined by the Minister of Agriculture, Rural and Remote Health, and of Highways. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in thanking the organizers for helping make Movember happen, and to join me in growing a mo to save a bro. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Protecting Saskatchewan Jobs

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP never miss an opportunity to miss an opportunity, an opportunity to put partisan politics aside and stand up for Saskatchewan jobs. Yesterday the Premier sent a letter to federal Minister Goodale, asking him to be a voice of reason at the federal cabinet table and stand up for Saskatchewan jobs against a national carbon tax.

We know that no economic impact assessment has been done of what this new tax means for Saskatchewan jobs. We know that the federal government claims this tax can be revenue neutral, but it is not sector neutral and will hit the energy, mining, and agriculture industries hard.

But the people should also know that originally there was a second signature line on that letter, an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to sign that letter as well and stand up for Saskatchewan people. He refused, Mr. Speaker. For the second time in a week, he refused to stand with us against this carbon tax. He's standing with the federal NDP [New Democratic Party] whose main concern that the tax isn't high enough. He's standing with his Finance critic who thinks we need to shut down coal, shut down oil, and adopt the Leap Manifesto. He's taking ideology over Saskatchewan families.

Will he stand up today and join us in protecting Saskatchewan workers? Mr. Speaker, we are about to find out.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Auditor's Report and Details of Land Transaction

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, back to the phone call that everyone but the Sask Party wants to learn the facts about. Let me take you back. The former scandal-plagued minister had just gotten the go-ahead to buy the 204 acres of land for the GTH [Global Transportation Hub]. Then he got a phone call from someone who just so happened to have the very same 204 acres available. Mr. Speaker, imagine, imagine the coincidence. But according to the version of the story from the minister, he took

the call and wrote down nothing. Not the name of the lawyer. Not the name of the company. And, Mr. Speaker, he developed no follow-up plan, and he didn't even note it enough to remember who the caller was.

Mr. Speaker, has the Premier not sat down with that former minister and pushed him to remember?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, at the first hint of some interest in the particular transaction, that former member went to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the independent officer of the legislature, and the Conflict of Interest Commissioner indicated that he was not in conflict.

Well here again they're heckling, Mr. Speaker. They don't like the answers. They don't like the fact that that was the answer from the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. They don't like the fact that the Provincial Auditor . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well there again, the Deputy Leader of the NDP is trying to shout down the answer to the question, and the reason is, is that they've asked the same question over and over again, ignoring the fact that all of this has been canvassed and available to be canvassed by the Provincial Auditor's review, something which they requested.

And so the Provincial Auditor looked at all of these things, had access to the email that references the call, Mr. Speaker, went on to point out that there were important improvements needed to be made on the government side, which we agree with, also in the press release that accompanied the report said unequivocally that there was no evidence of fraud or wrongdoing or a conflict of interest by the board of directors, which includes the minister. And as to the call, the auditor noted it in the timeline section of the report and never mentions or comments on it again. She later identified in the report that the call was not germane to the audit.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So no answer from the Premier. It's sort of strange for him to say there's no politics when he couldn't figure out who owned the land, and the minister won't share who actually called them. This is a multi-million dollar deal that wasted millions of dollars. How is it honestly possible that the Premier hasn't pushed for an answer from that minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, there was no follow-up on the call. There was no follow-up on the call. That's why the auditor notes the call in the . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, this is the auditor's findings. The auditor notes the call and indicates that, in the timeline section, indicates the call was not germane to the audit, an audit that looked at all of these issues.

Every single issue he's raised breathlessly in this legislature this week, all of it was available to the Provincial Auditor. Every single question that he's asked, every one, was available to be canvassed by the auditor. The auditor did a full and complete review. The Government of Saskatchewan said to the auditor, you can have any cabinet document you want because we know

exactly what this is and what this isn't, Mr. Speaker. So we made available every document to the auditor. The auditor did a report, made recommendations about a lack of communication between arms of the government, some other challenges with respect to acquiring land, which we're dealing with.

But as to the question and the inference that we hear day after day from the Leader of the Opposition, the press release that accompanied the audit said unequivocally — and I ask him, does he agree with this or not? — when the auditor said she found no evidence of wrongdoing, fraud, or conflict of interest by the board of directors. And the board of directors includes the former minister, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I'd ask members to respect the other member that is going to be answering the question and asking. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Not an answer again from the Premier. I think it's time that the Premier stopped hiding behind an audit that was scathing and exonerated no one, Mr. Speaker. You know, that minister should have been booted a long time ago, but when he did go, instead the Premier and the members of cabinet heaped praise on him. So this is on the Premier and the whole cabinet. How is it acceptable to believe that the minister took that call and had no record of it?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition said, hiding behind the audit. The auditor had access to literally thousands of documents, Mr. Speaker, had access to cabinet documents, had access to individuals involved in the transaction. The auditor's conclusion — after having gone through thousands of documents, hundreds and thousands of emails, interviewing all of those involved in the transaction — her conclusion at the end of that was that there was no wrongdoing, there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest. How the Leader of the Opposition can say that we're hiding behind the audit, somehow impugning the work that the auditor did, that's the inference that he's making.

The auditor did outstanding work. The auditor did what she was asked to do by both the cabinet and by the Public Accounts Committee and what was demanded by the opposition, Mr. Speaker. Her conclusion was that. Just because the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like that conclusion doesn't mean he shouldn't accept it.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The question was to the Premier. No answer again. A simple phone call, but phone records exist. Phone records actually exist. And I don't know how many phones the minister had at the time. I don't know if he had one to do his deals with his farm, including the land that he rented from the land speculator; if he had one to do his SaskPower deals; or if he had another one to do his GTH deals, but those phone records exist and they could be checked by this Premier. So I guess my question to the Premier, to answer to this GTH scandal, has he gotten those phone records yet?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The accusations the Leader of the Opposition is making in this House, shielded by privilege, I would really encourage him to go out into the rotunda after question period and make that same accusation of the former member, the former minister, Mr. Speaker. I would really encourage him to show the courage of his convictions and make that same accusation outside of the House.

[14:30]

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor had access to all of these records, to all of these documents — thousands and thousands of documents. She fully canvassed all of these. Her conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Her conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, that there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest. And just because the Leader of the Opposition doesn't like that conclusion, Mr. Speaker, doesn't mean he shouldn't accept it.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — That minister can point his little finger at me all he wants and try to threaten me about what will be said out there. Well we'll fight for Saskatchewan people every day of the week and to get to the bottom of this scandal and this basic phone call.

How can the Premier, how can the Premier pretend that there was no conflict when this call has never even been investigated? How can he say that there's no issue when he hasn't even looked into it?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Speaking of standing up for Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, this is a Leader of the Opposition that wouldn't even sign a letter defending this province against a massive new carbon tax, wouldn't even sign a letter to which we offered to work with him on the wording. A categorical no from the Leader of the Opposition in standing up for Saskatchewan — that's their record, Mr. Speaker.

As far as this matter, we have fully canvassed this on the floor of the Assembly. We fully canvassed this in the rotunda of the Assembly as well. The auditor has fully canvassed this with access to all of the documents to which she asked for access — thousands and thousands of documents, of emails, of access to all of the individuals who are involved in the transaction.

Her conclusion was unequivocal in the press release, Mr. Speaker, accompanying the report. That conclusion was that there was no wrongdoing, there was no conflict of interest, and

there was no fraud. And she subsequently said there were no red flags, Mr. Speaker, that required further follow-up.

Does the Leader of the Opposition accept that report? Yes or no?

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So they've got one thing right. I'm not going to be signing on to a letter with a Premier with no credibility, on a torqued-up letter that the Premier's off in all directions. We'll stand up for Saskatchewan people, not for . . . I would sign a letter though any day of the week to call for a judicial inquiry into the GTH . . . [inaudible] . . . in Saskatchewan.

And as the Minister of Justice has shared, you can't find a conflict if you don't know who you're buying from or if you don't know who the minister was speaking with. How does the Premier not get this?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Just to address the preamble to this, Mr. Speaker. A torqued-up letter? The Premier wrote a letter to Minister Goodale laying out Saskatchewan's position in opposition to a carbon tax which will disproportionately harm the economy of this province. The Leader of the Opposition refused to sign on to that, Mr. Speaker. I think we know why. I think we know why.

The Leader of the Opposition has admitted that he supports carbon pricing. He's admitted that, Mr. Speaker. We know what carbon pricing means. That means a carbon tax. And we know, Mr. Speaker, I think everybody, I think everybody in this province knows that if they were in government right now, this province would have a carbon tax. I think everybody knows that, Mr. Speaker.

Remember, look, look to our west. Did Rachel Notley campaign on a carbon tax? No, she didn't, Mr. Speaker. She did it though after she was elected. We know that they would do the exact same thing.

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

Donations to Saskatchewan Party

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Either they don't get it or they hope the people of Saskatchewan won't notice. Saskatchewan's campaign finance laws are the weakest in the country and often are described as the wild, wild west when it comes to campaign donations.

The Premier says our campaign finance laws are completely fine, and it's no surprise. He's raked in, for example, over \$2 million in out-of-province corporate donations alone, the majority of which came from Alberta — \$2 million, Mr. Speaker. That might explain why he's always so quick to weigh in on Alberta's issues. Mr. Speaker, they are the ones financing his election campaigns.

There's really nobody he won't accept a cheque from, Mr. Speaker. And by his own admission, his party average corporate donation is 10 times larger than their average individual one. Will the Sask Party commit to working with us to get corporate, union, and out-of-province donations out of Saskatchewan politics and put a cap on individual contributions?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the past 10 years, the Saskatchewan Party has received nearly \$30 million in donations, and we're grateful for that support. I can share with members of the House that about 10 per cent of that comes from corporations whose headquarters is outside the province.

And we ought not to be surprised by the fact that a lot of companies from outside Saskatchewan and other parts of Canada, not only in Alberta — who are invested here, who are creating and sustaining jobs here — would have a real interest in public policy, and yes, even elections in the province of Saskatchewan. Some of them, for example in the resource sector, would have grave concerns about the potential of the people of the province electing a government whose Finance critic supports the Leap Manifesto that wants to stop pipelines and stop natural resource development in the province.

I think the people in the . . . Perhaps those who are invested in the province, creating jobs here, would want to indicate support or a lack of support in this case for a leader that for example won't even stand up on the issue of the carbon tax, won't sign a simple letter to Ralph Goodale. I expect that they're going to want to be involved.

Mr. Speaker, average corporate donation's \$1,000. A hundred dollars is the individual average donation to the party. In the meantime, we've brought in the lobbyist registry so there is greater transparency in the system, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward to the next question.

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

Provisions of *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2016*

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday in the rotunda and here in the Chamber, the Minister of Finance refused to acknowledge that selling off any more of 10 per cent of our Crowns would result in Ottawa being able to take 15 per cent of their revenue. He claims this isn't even being contemplated by the government. But the truth is, the Premier and the Attorney General have made it clear that the Sask Party wants to open up the Crowns to outside investment. For now let's call it whatever they want, but it still ends up with provincial dollars going into federal coffers.

When it comes to our Crowns, details matter. And the detail that this minister doesn't want to talk about, or maybe missed entirely, is that the federal corporate tax rate is 15 per cent. What analysis has the Finance minister done to determine how much the Saskatchewan people stand to lose under their plan to have Ottawa tax our Crowns?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, one of the things you learn in basic media training is you never answer a hypothetical. And the fact of the matter is, is that the opposition is trying to chase us down a rabbit hole, Mr. Speaker, with some fantastical hypothetical with respect to some scenario they dreamed up over here to try to fearmonger amongst the people of Saskatchewan.

What we've done in the legislation, Mr. Speaker, is introduced a bill to amend *The Interpretation Act* to define privatization. Now the NDP want to chase everybody down a rabbit hole in the hopes, in the hopes, Mr. Speaker, of scaring the people of the province of Saskatchewan when we're trying to manage a very difficult economy right now, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're focused on.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's quite a surprise to find out that the *Income Tax Act* is a fairy tale. I just didn't know that. This government loves to make it look like they are defenders of Saskatchewan against the federal government. Well that certainly wasn't true when it was the Conservative government, and it's not true now. Instead of protecting our Crowns from being taxed or closing the door to the Ottawa carbon tax, the Sask Party's way of protecting Saskatchewan from Ottawa looks a lot like leaving the door wide open and throwing a temper tantrum when the Liberals let themselves in.

My question is for the Finance minister or perhaps the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, the Premier. When Bill 40 was at the cabinet table, did he raise the issue of federal taxes? Did he have any economic analysis done? Or is the government just making it up as they go along?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Finance would do some analysis on an offer that came forward if there was an offer brought forward, Mr. Speaker. There's been no offer brought forward.

If, in the event in the future, there was ever an offer brought forward to invest equity into one of our Crown corporations, of course the Ministry of Finance and the Government of Saskatchewan would do its due diligence and its analysis as to what the impact might be on the province's finances, Mr. Speaker, on the individual taxpayer here in the province of Saskatchewan, what it would mean for that corporation should they expand beyond the boundaries of the province of Saskatchewan to compete in the rest of the country of Canada, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely we'd do that kind of analysis.

Right now we're not going to follow the NDP down a rabbit hole, Mr. Speaker, on some fantastical hypothetical they want to use to fearmonger in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Funding for Lighthouse Emergency Shelter

Ms. Rancourt: — The mismanagement goes so far. Mr. Speaker, the consequences of their cuts to the Lighthouse in Saskatoon are being felt across the city.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Lighthouse was recently proven to be a money saver for the government. A study of the Lighthouse program estimated that for every dollar invested, at least \$2.18 was saved. Mr. Speaker, there was 24 per cent reduction in emergency department visits from Lighthouse clients, a 57 per cent decrease in ambulance visits to the Lighthouse, a 10 per cent reduction in intoxicated individuals staying in police cells, and a 47 per cent decrease in complications from poor medication used by clients living in complex mental health beds.

We know that the health region didn't support the cuts. In fact they weren't even consulted. So why would Social Services cut funding to a program that is saving lives and money?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is the member opposite referenced Saskatoon Health Region. The Saskatoon Health Region continues to fund the Lighthouse, Mr. Speaker, to the tune of \$620,000 last year and \$620,000 this year, Mr. Speaker. They also continue to fund some employees that work in the stabilization unit.

Mr. Speaker, the issue that the member is referring to is simply a matter of Social Services enforcing a contract that was in place. They fund the first night, not consecutive nights. Mr. Speaker, the member should get her facts straight before she stands in the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Provision of Long-Term Care

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, government waste and scandal take funding away from health care. They take money away from long-term care. Mr. Speaker, instead of cleaning up its act, the Sask Party is once again leaning further and cutting more. This government is cutting staff, cutting so deep they know they'll be short-staffed. Instead of keeping more front-line workers, they're using John Black lean forms which outline exactly what can be cut when there are too few caregivers. That's right — tens of millions of dollars spent on how to provide less service with fewer people instead of spending that money to actually hire enough people to provide the care needed.

Cuts to front-line care impact patient care, and with almost 100 fewer workers on the front line, basic services get cut, services like getting seniors to the bathroom, Mr. Speaker. Will this government finally admit that their mismanagement means people in long-term care have to go without the care they need?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, just simply the whole

premise of that question is just wrong. Mr. Speaker, the member refers to the John Black contract which was finished months ago.

Mr. Speaker, long-term care has been a significant priority for this government. Mr. Speaker, we have many more workers in long-term care than the members did opposite. The members' legacy for health care is less long-term care beds. It's 52 hospital closures.

Mr. Speaker, this government, 13 new long-term care facilities built. Mr. Speaker, this government, a brand new hospital in Moose Jaw, a new hospital in North Battleford. Mr. Speaker, we will take no . . . Do we have more work to do? Absolutely we do. But we will take no lessons from the members opposite on this topic. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, let's take a look at these how-to lean forms. They make it clear there's no need for adequate staff. Residents should just stay in bed. Baths should be cancelled altogether because once a week is too many anyway. The hydration cart should be parked . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The former Health minister is chirping from his seat, Mr. Speaker, and that is exactly what it says. All bowel care, Mr. Speaker, bowel care, Mr. Speaker, apparently that should be stopped too. I'd like to ask this Health minister to stop with bowel care and see how that works for him.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, the question is, what do the forms say the staff can do? Well when they are short two care aids, the "focus is on feeding." This is the Sask Party way — waste tens of millions of dollars running the remaining care aids off their feet, and tell them to leave seniors in bed all day without baths or bowel care and just make sure they get fed. What about this makes the Sask Party think that care is not compromised?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, we take long-term care, we take all health care very seriously, Mr. Speaker. We've made it the priority of this government. But, Mr. Speaker, if the member would stop and think about what she's saying, she's talking about being short-staffed in long-term care. There's 780 more employees in long-term care than there was when those members were in government. If that's the case, what was the situation then? Mr. Speaker, this is just absolutely ludicrous. We've made health care a priority.

Mr. Speaker, she talks about cuts. The NDP used to like to talk about where did the money go. Let me tell her where the money went: a \$1.7 billion increase to health care since 2007; \$1.2 billion on new major health care projects, capital projects, Mr. Speaker. There's nearly 650 more new doctors. There's over 3,000 more nurses. Mr. Speaker, the list goes on and on.

Mr. Speaker, these members, as I mentioned the other day in the House, they just can't get it through their head that somehow they don't own the whole health care system

anymore. Mr. Speaker, we've been innovative; we're going to continue to be. We realize we have more work to do, but we're going to do it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to just point to the work standard form, John Black and Associates licensed materials. So if working two continuing care aids short: no bathing, personal care to clients and diaper changes. No bowel care; focus is on feeding, personal care, changing and repositioning. This is a government that is, instead of funding front-line care workers, instead of ensuring there are enough people on the front lines to deliver service, they're planning for not having enough service on the front line, Mr. Speaker.

This government has had ample opportunity to put in place minimum quality of care standards. Two opportunities they've had with a private member's bill before them, and they've voted that down, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the one tool we have to keep this government accountable when it comes to long-term care are the CEO [chief executive officer] tour reports. I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, we've been waiting and waiting for the most recent CEO tour reports that hit his desk at the end of September. Can that minister table those reports today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I would again point to our record on long-term care. Thirteen new long-term care facilities built in this province, Mr. Speaker. Those CEO tours she's referring to were initiated under this government, and she'll see the results of that in due course, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, to stand here and be lectured by the members opposite on how we treat our seniors in this province when those members cut long-term care beds and we built new projects, Mr. Speaker, it's just a little much to take.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to make our seniors a priority, as this government always has. We'll continue to make health care a priority, as this government always has. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 127 through 137.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled responses to questions 127 to 137.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 41 — *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*. *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016* will repeal legislative requirements under section 20 of *The Coroners Act, 1999* to hold mandatory inquests related to in-custody deaths.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to assure members of the public and members of this Assembly that in-custody deaths will continue to be thoroughly investigated by the coroner, who will have the opportunity to develop relevant and practical recommendations in relation to prevention. I'd also like to note that the chief coroner will retain the authority under section 19 of the Act to conduct inquests where he or she is of the opinion that an inquest is necessary. This is entirely in his or her discretion on a case-by-case basis. Mr. Speaker, as a matter of policy, we've reached an understanding with the chief coroner that inquests will be held for those in-custody deaths that have already occurred as of the date of Royal Assent.

Mr. Speaker, this change will provide the discretion to the office of the chief coroner to determine when an inquest into an in-custody death would add value. Prevention will remain the focus of the office, but this goal may now be pursued in whatever manner the office views as most appropriate in the circumstances.

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

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 41, *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to offer our initial comments as the official opposition around this particular bill, Bill No. 41, *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*.

Now what I want to tell the people that may be watching the proceedings, Mr. Speaker, is that the thrust of the bill — which is really important for those that are involved with our legal system, those that really want to understand what the coroner's office is all about and what the rules and regulations around when the coroner's empowered to do investigations, Mr. Speaker — what is happening is this bill in its purest translation for the average person, which includes myself, Mr. Speaker, because I don't have any legal background, it's important, as a everyday common person, that I want to understand this as well. So we have people that research these bills and give us the one-liners that really explain what the bill is actually about. And quite frankly, Bill 41, *The Coroners Amendment Act*, what it is, is this bill removes the requirement for a coroner's inquest when a person dies in custody.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we often speak about is that — the Justice critic made reference of it yesterday — when someone dies in custody, then it's important that we take the proper steps to understand how this individual died and the circumstances in which this person died and what could be done

in the future to prevent such death if the death is not deemed of natural causes.

This is a really important point that I would want to raise in some of our discussions around this particular bill, Mr. Speaker. It is really, really important to note that if there is a suspicious death, it's important that the government put in standards when people are in custody, to make sure that there's a full inquest with a number of people being involved with the coroner to ensure that there is this transparency and certainly accountable practice in place to understand how and why this individual may have passed.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think I would point out that there are a number of things that people in Saskatchewan should understand. And I think what I want to do, if I can, is kind of walk down the history as to the duty to notify and the role of a coroner when it comes to a death, Mr. Speaker. And people out there all have an obligation that if you were to have the unfortunate encounter of finding someone that may be deceased, what does an individual do? What does a police officer do? What does the average public person do? Like a lot of people don't know the exact ramifications of what *The Coroners Act* entails, and certainly what the role and responsibility of an average citizen is when they have this unfortunate encounter, Mr. Speaker.

Now I want to point out to the general public, there are general duties that one must undertake. And I want to read from the Act itself. And the reason why I'm going to the Act, Mr. Speaker, is because people have to know what the coroners do, what the average citizen do, what the police do. This is very important for the premise of my argument later on as to why this bill needs to really be properly vetted to ensure that there is the notion of accountability and transparency no matter how the individual dies, or in this case, where the individual dies if she or he are in custody. And that's really, really important.

Now I want to point out at the start of my argument, Mr. Speaker, as it refers to this particular bill, the fact of the matter is that those that are in charge of creating laws, those that are in charge of upholding laws, those that are in charge of enacting laws, it's really, really important to point out that they hold the standard. Because in our society in general, they have to have a higher standard of how they perform their duties when it comes to the delivering of just circumstances to the people of Saskatchewan.

Now I'm trying my darndest to try and sound like the layperson that I am when it comes to the legal proceedings. And there's obviously . . . And certainly the legal terminology, there's obviously people within my caucus that are much more astute at this process than I, so I know they'll have a lot to say on this particular bill as we begin to dissect the bill and certainly offer the opposition's perspective on this particular bill.

But in general, Mr. Speaker, people should know that when you are approached by a police officer, that they're there as a member of the justice system, and that the whole premise is that justice must be blind, justice must be accountable, justice must be neutral. When I say blind, I'm talking about dealing with people of different background, that they can't simply decide not to deal with an individual based on the colour of their skin

or their financial circumstance nor their religious beliefs, Mr. Speaker.

In that sense, justice needs to be neutral. It needs to be blind not to predetermine whether a crime has been committed against a person or by a person based on any of the conditions that I made reference to here a few seconds ago. That being said, Mr. Speaker, the important premise is that those that enforce our laws must be held to a higher standard of abiding by those laws than the general public. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because if they don't do that, if they don't do that, then there goes the base of our justice system in a sense that people will have less confidence as we're seeing evidence of that . . . [inaudible] . . . across the country, less confidence in the justice system based on some of the issues that I am speaking about or have spoken about earlier.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that *The Coroners Amendment Act* and the role of the coroner, and that's why I'm going to get through that whole process here so people that are out within the province and listening to this debate, they will know, Mr. Speaker, the role of the coroner, who notifies the coroner. And what this bill does, I think it weakens the transparency and accountability around the whole notion of examining how people die in custody.

We need to make sure that the people of Saskatchewan know that this kind of activity doesn't happen on a daily basis within our institutions, whether they're in remand or whether they're in a correctional centre or the penitentiary, Mr. Speaker. We have to know that people that are inmates, certainly their families in the event of a death, they have a right to know how that individual died if it is not deemed of natural causes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this bill weakens that process. And this is why it's important that we look through the bills, understand the bills, and try and educate the public as much as we can, as much as we can as legislators, so that they know exactly what we're trying to deal with. And thus a well-informed public can certainly participate and give us their opinions and views. And this is the reason why we have this process through our Legislative Assembly where the opposition certainly has their opportunity to challenge bills and to point out the weaknesses and encourage participation by the general public or those organizations and people impacted by the bill that we're speaking about today.

So I would encourage the people that are listening to take advantage of that, to look at that role that they could play, and to certainly point out that advice is something that we need on every single bill and we would open the door to that particular invitation on Bill No. 41, *The Coroners Amendment Act*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to go to page 5 of the bill itself. And this is what's really important on this particular bill. And I'm going to quote from the bill, part III. It's when you have the notion of everyone's duty to notify the coroner of a death, and this is people out there that may have the unfortunate encounter of finding a dead individual, whether it's family or not. What does that person do?

[15:00]

Well, Mr. Speaker, one of the general duties to notify a coroner is:

7(1) [where it says] Every person shall immediately notify a coroner or a peace officer of any death that the person knows or has reason to believe:

(a) occurred as a result of an accident or violence or was self-inflicted;

So everybody needs to contact a coroner or a peace officer if they believe, have reason to believe or certainly knows of a person that may have died as a result of an accident.

The second section where the coroner should be advised as well, Mr. Speaker, by anybody in the public is, "occurred from a cause other than disease or sickness."

Now, Mr. Speaker, obviously that's a straightforward, common sense issue and that's why it's important to know what does the public do. So if you're the public that's involved with this, that you have a responsibility to immediately notify a coroner or a peace officer if you have a belief that someone has deceased:

. . . as a result of an accident or violence or was self-inflicted;

occurred from a cause other than disease or sickness;

occurred as a result of negligence, misconduct or malpractice on the part of others.

That's a really important point to also stress, Mr. Speaker, "occurred suddenly and unexpectedly when the deceased appeared to be in good health."

That's another condition in which a coroner or the peace officers have got to be involved. And certainly, Mr. Speaker:

occurred in Saskatchewan under circumstances in which the body's not available because:

(i) the body or part of the body has been destroyed;

(ii) the body is in a place from which it cannot be recovered; or

(iii) the body cannot be located.

The other item, Mr. Speaker, is "(f) was a stillbirth that occurred without the presence of a duly qualified medical practitioner." If people have evidence of that, then their duty is to contact the coroner or police officer, Mr. Speaker.

"Occurred as a direct or immediate consequences of the deceased being engaged in employment, an occupation or a business" — that's another circumstance where John Q. Public has to notify the coroner.

And finally, Mr. Speaker:

Every peace officer who is notified of a death pursuant to subsection (1) [the section I just read into record, Mr. Speaker] shall immediately notify a coroner of the death.

So, Mr. Speaker, it is important that the public know that under those circumstances that you have an obligation or a duty to report a death, as I've identified, to a coroner or to a peace officer.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we were talking about institutions in which people that are . . . Again, the bill talks about that: when a person dies in custody, what happens in that instance? And I want to go back to section 8, Mr. Speaker, when we talk specifically about the duty of the institutions to notify a coroner. And here are the rules around the institutions that have this responsibility. 8(1) where it says:

Where an inmate of a jail, military guardroom, remand centre, penitentiary, lock-up or place where the person is held under a warrant of a judge or a correctional facility [that's defined] . . . dies, the person in charge of that place shall immediately notify a coroner of the death.

So, Mr. Speaker, this has to be an immediate response by the official on any facility. Because sometimes you can have a facility that may not be a jail. It may be a remand centre. It may be an institution, Mr. Speaker. If they are held in custody, then upon their death they are to be immediately . . . they are to immediately notify the coroner of that death.

The second section of this Act, Mr. Speaker, says:

Where a person dies while in a custody facility as defined in *The Youth Justice Administration Act*, the person in charge of that facility shall immediately notify a coroner of the death.

And what that section is saying, Mr. Speaker, that under *The Youth Justice Administration Act*, youth facilities are also included in the definition of those held in custody.

And, Mr. Speaker, the third part for this is important, is:

Where a minor dies while a resident of a foster home, group home or place of safety within the meaning of *The Child and Family Services Act*, the person in charge of that place shall immediately notify a coroner of the death.

So when we say custody, Mr. Speaker, we're not just talking about those in jail. We're talking about people that may be in jail. Obviously the initial thought that people, when you talk about people that are in custody, we think about those that are in jail. And yes, the Act involves them, but it also involves the youth justice centres or the youth centres that we have throughout the province where young kids are kept in custody.

And, Mr. Speaker, we're also talking about residents of a foster home or a group home or a place of safety that the child and family services department of Social Services places these young kids.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's also a fourth section when we talk about the issue of custody and it says, "Where an involuntary patient admitted pursuant to section 23 or 24, or detained pursuant to section 24.1, of *The Mental Health Services Act* to an inpatient facility within the meaning of that Act dies, the person in charge of that facility shall immediately notify a

coroner of the death."

So I just want to recap. Those that are in custody, Mr. Speaker, do not just mean those that are in jail, Mr. Speaker. Yes, jail is part of it. A military guardroom is part of it. A remand centre is part of it. A penitentiary lock-up is part of it. A place where a person is held under warrant by a judge, that's part of it, Mr. Speaker.

But it's also involving the youth facilities in our province, so the youth are also involved when we talk about custody. And we also talk about a minor dying in a foster home. Well that's also considered custody under the Act, Mr. Speaker.

And it also talks about an involuntary patient, those that may have mental challenges, Mr. Speaker. *The Mental Health Services Act*. . . Cognitive disabilities, Mr. Speaker, is the proper phrase. But those under *The Mental Health Services Act* are also involved because they're considered to be in custody as well.

And so the duty mentioned in all of these particular explanations of custody, the duty mentioned in this section applies whether or not the person died on the premises or in actual custody or the person was an inmate, resident, or patient at the time of death, the death was caused at that place.

And, Mr. Speaker, where a person dies while in a hospital to which that person was transferred from a place mentioned in this section, the person in charge of the hospital shall immediately notify the coroner of the death. So as they transfer from these facilities and they arrive at the hospital deceased, Mr. Speaker, then a coroner has got to be advised of this as immediately as possible.

So I want to tell the people out there that may be confused as to the role of the coroner and who does what, when. Now obviously when you come across, as I mentioned, a deceased person, then you have an obligation. Or you have a belief that there's been deceased person somewhere, you have an obligation to notify the peace officer or the coroner. That is everybody's obligation.

And a second thing is when we talk about the Act specifically. When does the coroner become involved? Well this becomes very complex, Mr. Speaker, because we're not just simply dealing with those that are inmates in our jails because sometimes we tend to think that way.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a bit wider ranging than that, and that's why we have to have a good cross-section of opinions and consultation with different groups, Mr. Speaker. And that's kind of what I think the purpose of the opposition is, is to hold the government to account, to point out that there are errors and there are omissions and there are mistakes in some of the bills they bring forward. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatchewan Party is quite prone to a lot of errors. And we've seen that most recently in the last several years, and we're going to continue paying the price for the errors over the next several years, Mr. Speaker.

So what the important thing is, that when you have people in custody, yes, it is jails, those that are in jail but, Mr. Speaker,

it's also those held in youth facilities. It's also those that are . . . a minor that dies in, a resident of a foster home, a group home. It also involves involuntary patients that are admitted to the mental health services facilities that we have throughout the province. So it's wide—ranging. It is wide—ranging.

That's why this Act is so bloody important, that we pay attention to what's going on. It is significantly important, Mr. Speaker, because there are a wide range of institutions involved. It's not just the jails, as we mentioned. There are a myriad of possibilities of wrongful deaths, and certainly this is the reason why we have to be very accountable and very, very transparent in how all of these deaths in all of these places of custody are important that we monitor.

Now, Mr. Speaker, of course a police officer while in the course of his duty or “. . . while detained by or in the custody of a peace officer, the peace officer shall immediately notify a coroner of the death.” So it goes both ways. To the public, they have a duty. To the peace officer, they obviously also have an added responsibility as these placements of some people in custody are wide-ranging and certainly in a number of locations throughout the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, other people that have to notify the coroner in the case of a death . . . This is really interesting, a very interesting bill because so many people are paying attention to this because it is something we need to pay a lot of close scrutiny of the details of some of the rules and regulations.

Now a social worker also has a duty. And under section 10 it says:

Where a minor dies while under the care, custody or supervision of the Minister of Community Resources and Employment, officers or employees of the Department of Community Resources and Employment or its designates or an agency that has entered into an agreement with the Minister of Community Resources . . . pursuant to section 61 . . . an officer or employee of the Department of Community Resources and Employment, its designate or the agency who has knowledge of the death shall immediately notify a coroner of the death.

So that's also another important moving part, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that there are a number of institutions throughout our province that are also involved with the custody of minors. And I go back to the section . . . You have officers. You have different departments, Mr. Speaker. You have different agencies like the First Nations Child and Family Services. They also have a role to play, Mr. Speaker, in the deliberation, and certainly the delivery of the responsibility of ensuring that all deaths are properly reported. And I would certainly surmise, Mr. Speaker, with great confidence, that all the agencies that may have to . . . or the individuals or the officers or the groups that may come across this unfortunate circumstance in their life, well I think they will rise up to the occasion, as defined by law, that they have this obligation to report this, you know, to the coroner, especially a suspicious death.

So they would assume that after they've done their legal duty, the next section is that they also have to make sure that the cause of death is known. I don't want to say they don't have to

make sure, Mr. Speaker, but I think they would want to know that this cause of death is being investigated properly and that the proper family members are advised. And more so, all these agencies that are involved with this, I think, they want to learn from this.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's really, really important to point out that they want to be able to find out exactly how this individual died and what can we do to prevent it in the future and that the family knows what's going on. Those are the three fundamental points that I would make as a result of this bill. It is really, really important that people focus on those three points. Number one is we have to know how the individual died; and number two, that we prevent that kind of death in the future; and number three, that the family is also advised so that they could have their closure on a very tragic event in their lifetime, Mr. Speaker.

So to recap what I think is important, I've identified who has the responsibility to report a death or a suspicion of a death and what the responsibilities are, what the explanations are. I've also been very specific to the bill, Mr. Speaker, Bill 41, as to when the coroner's office is engaged and who's all involved with that, Mr. Speaker. Who has that responsibility more so than others? I've identified social workers have . . . Peace officers have that greater degree of responsibility.

And, Mr. Speaker, we also talked about and identified what is meant by “in custody.” And I go back to my point. It's not just the jails we're talking about. We're talking about foster homes. We're talking about facilities that are identified under *The Mental Health Services Act*. We're also talking about group homes, youth facilities, Mr. Speaker. There are a wide number of organizations and different facilities that are considered under the title of “in custody.” So when the bill talks about those in custody, Mr. Speaker, it's important that people note it is not just for those that are incarcerated in jails or remand centres.

[15:15]

Now, Mr. Speaker, the part that's really important is under section 4 where it talks about the investigations of the coroner. So this is the part that the bill really touches home, and here are some of the points that we want to make, Mr. Speaker. The coroner . . . And I want to read the bill in its entirety so people know out there exactly what the bill says because a lot of folks have a difficult time accessing this information. But I want to do just two sections of the bill that's important, Mr. Speaker.

Under Investigations, the part 4, under section 11.1:

11(1) Where a coroner receives information that there has been a death in an area where the coroner ordinarily exercises his or her responsibilities and he or she has reason to believe that the death occurred under circumstances that require a coroner to be notified, he or she: [this is the coroner]

(a) may issue a warrant in the prescribed form to take possession of the body, if the body is in Saskatchewan; and

(b) shall conduct any investigation that he or she considers necessary.

And the second part of the Act, Mr. Speaker:

(2) Where a coroner has begun an investigation pursuant to subsection (1), no other coroner shall become involved in the investigation unless otherwise directed by the chief coroner.

Now, Mr. Speaker, those are some of the things that the coroner, the roles or the responsibility that the coroner has. Now the coroner has a lot of authority, Mr. Speaker, and has a lot of power that is certainly prescribed. And one of the things that they can do is that, “A coroner, for the purpose of any investigation [in a suspicious death, can] cordon off the area, for a period not exceeding 48 hours.” And I’m assuming, Mr. Speaker, that as you cordon off an area, that’s certainly to look for any particular evidence of foul play and to examine the body. And they have 48 hours in which the coroner would be able to secure an area, Mr. Speaker.

Now the other thing that’s really important is that the coroner can also “prohibit the removal of objects from an area that’s cordoned off,” and they can also “place peace officers in charge of the area to prevent disturbance of the area until the coroner has made . . . examination” of that area.

Now those two parts are really important, Mr. Speaker. You see how the process works. The fact that the coroner becomes engaged. They have the power to cordon off land. The police officers have cordoned off areas that could be a facility or a piece of land, and the police officers could be requisitioned to guard that area and not have anything touch. And that’s all really important as part of the investigation for evidence, Mr. Speaker, against any particular party in the event that the coroner figures there is some particular disturbing evidence of foul play.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, there are some other areas that the coroner can certainly exercise their rights and responsibilities under the Act. They can, as I said, they can cordon off certain areas and they “may enter and inspect any place where a dead body is and any place in which the coroner has reasonable grounds for believing the body was removed.” They:

may examine . . . any records relating to the deceased or his or her circumstances where the coroner believes on reasonable grounds that it is necessary to do so for the purposes of the investigation;

[They] shall take charge of objects . . . or might be items of personal property of the deceased and are found . . . near [or at] the body of the deceased or in an area where the body of the deceased is found.

And what that’s basically saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the coroner certainly has a lot of leeway in making sure that they can access records, that they can look for evidence, personal belongings included. And they can do a lot of the necessary investigative work on any area, and it’s fairly prescribed as to what they can do. Now:

with the approval of the chief coroner, [they] may remove objects from the area that is cordoned off . . . whether or not the objects are items of personal property of the deceased [or not. They may also] seize bodily fluids obtained from the deceased before death.

So these are some of the things that are really crucial in the discovery of how this particular individual may have passed away.

Now I want to point that the section I think . . . or this particular section, why it’s so important to this bill. When we on the opposition talk about accountability and transparency, Mr. Speaker, that’s exactly the whole notion behind the premise on the justice system, that it’s got to be neutral. It’s got to be thorough. It’s got to be professional, Mr. Speaker. And we’ve got to hold those that are enforcing the law to a higher standard. And we cannot simply have the process where you’re going to trust everything that is being done within the justice system. It has to be constantly monitored, Mr. Speaker, and you have to have that oversight. And that’s why this Act is troubling because it removes the requirement for the coroner to do an inquest when a person dies in custody.

You have all these factors out there, Mr. Speaker. It’s a complex process. The coroner’s job is not easy. And I think what’s happening here, Mr. Speaker, is that there’s just going to be a lot less oversight as to how people are passing away in custody. And we’re not just talking about inmates. We’re talking about children in foster homes, people that may be in mental health institutions, you know, for reasons of their mental health. And these are the people that we’re talking about in dealing with this in this bill, Mr. Speaker.

The coroner has a lot of responsibility. They have a lot of tools their way, and they certainly have a great degree of co-operation from the public, and it’s identified in the Act, and certainly from the police themselves.

So I go back to my point is why it’s important we have oversight. It’s simply and primarily because you have all these complex challenges of knowing how a person has passed away in custody. The Act identifies the many rules and regulations that the public have to follow, that the police have to follow, that the coroner has to follow. And you throw on top of that the pressures and demands that the family want to know how this individual may have passed away in custody, whether it’s a child or a youth in a youth centre or an adult in our correctional system, whether it be provincial or federal. So it’s really, really important to note that these are the issues that many people in the province are quite concerned about when you talk about this particular bill. We have no idea why this bill is removing the requirement for a coroner’s inquest. Is it about saving money?

Well, Mr. Speaker, I go back to my earlier point, is that quite obviously the justice system has got to be thorough. As they collect evidence as identified in what the role of the coroner and the rules the coroner may have, as they collect those evidence, we expect them to be thorough. We expect them to be professional. We expect them to have the authority to conduct a review in how that death has occurred.

And why? I go back to my earlier statements, Mr. Speaker, is

that (a) the family needs to have that closure as to how this individual died. Secondly, we have to make sure that we don't allow that to occur again. And the most important lesson, Mr. Speaker, it's an integral part of our justice system where we hold police officers and coroners to a higher standard in ensuring that the public knows how an individual may have died in custody. That work has got to be done thoroughly and has involved as many people and organizations as possible to ensure that we show the people of Saskatchewan that this is how we treat all people, even those that are in custody, to make sure that standards of law are upheld.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when a coroner gets involved with finding a dead body, a body of a deceased, they have a section under section 14. It's titled "**Post-mortem examination**," and I want to briefly explain to the people what happens when a deceased person is found, that:

A coroner may, at any time during an investigation or inquest, issue a warrant for a post-mortem examination of the body, an analysis of the blood, urine or contents of the stomach or intestines or any other examination or analysis of the body that the coroner considers necessary.

So again, they can do a lot of . . . They have a lot of power to do a number of post-mortem examinations on a body. Mr. Speaker:

A post-mortem examination is to be performed by a pathologist approved by the chief coroner.

So the pathologist of course has to look for a number of issues within the deceased's body to make sure that, you know, there is as much information received, as much information received as to how this individual may have passed.

So I'll go back to my earlier point. If we're making the effort and we are spending the resources and the time to get qualified medical people to find out exactly how this person died, we're going through a stringent process of rules and regulation, then why compromise on the accountability and transparency piece later on in the Act by saying that the coroner doesn't have to have a public disclosure process?

We don't think that it fits. We think that you've got to be thorough all throughout the bill. It should be thorough. And why be thorough in certain parts of the Act and not be completely thorough at the start of the Act in which we need to have a public inquiry? That really, I think, is the thrust of what my arguments are.

Now, Mr. Speaker:

The pathologist who performs a post-mortem examination may remove . . . [or] retain any part of the body or object found in the body for the purpose of establishing the cause and manner of death.

So you see the incredible power and authority that the pathologist would have and the coroner would have, and the role and responsibility of the public. So you have all those pieces that fit and that make sense. You've also identified, Mr. Speaker, what we mean by custody, being in custody. So you look at the moving parts of all this. And the public out there

deserve to know that our justice system, when dealing with a deceased loved one, whether that person is in a youth centre or in a jail or a foster home, they have to know that the rules are spelled out vigorously for the pathologist, that the process allowed to the coroner to do his job is thorough.

But now the minister, for some odd reason, has not agreed to have this become a process where an inquest will not be held as to how that person died. And I think that is not the proper process to undertake, Mr. Speaker, because again, number one, I think it'd compromise the integrity of the justice system by just having one individual as opposed to an inquest where a number of individuals are there to ask a myriad of questions.

Number two, Mr. Speaker, I want to make sure it never happens again, which is quite, that's quite crucial, that we learn from that death so it doesn't happen again.

And third, the most important part of this, Mr. Speaker, I believe, is that it gives closure to the family that may have lost a loved one in custody, whether it's a child in a foster home or a youth . . . somebody in the youth detention centre, or somebody in one of our mental health institutions throughout the province, as well as those that are in jail.

And finally I would say, Mr. Speaker, on the role of the chief coroner, they can provide any . . . They can request any assistance in their investigation. Obviously the police have to be part of that process. And they can also ask for a body to be, to use a phrase, that they can also ask the body to be . . . may order the disinterment of a body, which means that they can actually recover a body that has been laid to rest already to do further tests, Mr. Speaker. A coroner certainly has that responsibility or has the authority to do that if he or she feels that there is some evidence that they need to retrieve from a person that's been buried a number of days, if not months earlier.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that's important that the coroner may do is that they can exercise their right and responsibilities. They can issue a warrant. They can conduct any investigation that he or she feels necessary. And they can also, Mr. Speaker, as indicated, they can also cordon off certain areas.

[15:30]

Now I want to go to the section that's quite important here as well, Mr. Speaker, is that around the section of inquests. Like when do you have an inquest? And this is the whole thrust of the bill. And I go back to the point that the bill removes the requirement for a coroner's inquest when a person dies in custody. And I want to go to the section. So we've identified in this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, (a) what the role of the public is. We've identified what the coroner does. We spoke about the role of the pathologist. We've enhanced the role of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] or peace officers, what their role is. We've argued legitimately why that this bill is really a deterrent to the accountability and transparency required of our justice system to the public and to the families.

And we also are going to point out that, you know, the three premises attached to that is: we need to make sure death won't happen again; that we learn from this; and, Mr. Speaker, more

importantly, it gives closure to the family.

So when does a coroner actually begin the process to have an inquest? And I'll go to where section 19 of the Act is, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

A coroner, with the approval of the chief coroner, shall hold an inquest where, after conducting an investigation, the chief coroner is of the opinion that an inquest is necessary to:

- (a) ascertain the identity of the deceased and determine how, when, where and by what means he or she died;
- (b) inform the public of the circumstances surrounding a death;
- (c) bring dangerous practices or conditions to light and facilitate the making of recommendations to avoid preventable deaths . . . [and finally]
- (d) educate the public about dangerous practices or conditions to avoid preventable deaths, [Mr. Speaker].

So this is where I've identified when the coroner becomes engaged, as to when . . . These are some of the issues in which they would, you know, ask for an inquest.

Now when a coroner dies, section 20 of the Act covers that particular aspect of it. Now don't forget, inmate makes reference to those that are in jail cells, and whether they're in remand or sentenced already, Mr. Speaker, but also involves a number of people that are in custody.

A coroner shall hold an inquest into the death of a person who dies while an inmate in a place mentioned in subsection 8(1) . . . [and also section] (2), unless the coroner is satisfied that the person's death was entirely due to natural causes and was not preventable.

So, Mr. Speaker, a coroner has that authority to hold an inquest. But this bill says that they don't have to do that anymore. And we think it's one of the fundamental principles behind the integrity of the law, is that you've got to have that transparency; you've got to have that accountability. And you can't simply leave it in the hands of one particular Act or one individual to make that determination. We think that this is a good guiding principle to ensure that no matter which life is lost, that there's thoroughness: and that's determine the cause of death; who may have caused that death; and how we can avoid that into the future. So that's one of the things that's also important.

But not just the coroner, Mr. Speaker, not just the coroner can direct an inquest. The minister, the Attorney General of Saskatchewan also have that opportunity to do so because quite frankly, being the Minister of Justice, you are in a sense the main individual in charge of caretaking our justice system overall. So, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that we are having a lot of issues around that particular aspect, and this is where I think it's really important that people in Saskatchewan pay attention.

So just to wrap up, Mr. Speaker, we understand the role of the

public. We understand the role of the coroner. We understand the role of the police officer. We understand that "in custody" has a wide variety of definitions. It's not just those that are incarcerated. We understand that the coroner has certain powers and responsibilities and rights to secure areas or do examinations of the body. They can disinter bodies overall and recover them from their burial sites if they so wish.

We also know that there's a myriad of agencies involved, whether it's the department of community social services or whether it's a foster parents organization or whether it's the First Nations Child And Family Services agency. You can see the complexity to this particular file, Mr. Speaker. So my point being that if it's a complex issue, why weaken the transparency and accountable component of this Act by simply putting in the condition under Bill 41 in which they remove the requirement for a coroner's inquest when a person dies in custody.

Now, Mr. Speaker, my final two comments I want to make, and I want to read this into the record. There are two things that I want to point out, Mr. Speaker. This is a newspaper article, and I'll read this from the *Regina Leader-Post*. So these are all quotes, Mr. Speaker. I understand the rules around names, but these are quotes from an article of the *Regina Leader-Post*, 31 October, 2016. And I quote:

The Saskatchewan government's decision to allow the coroner's office to decide whether or not to hold an inquest into the death of anyone held in custody is surprising and disappointing.

We believe that removing the legal obligation for inquests into in-custody deaths will undermine public confidence in the justice system and likely lead to more families demanding answers when a loved one dies while serving a sentence, being held on remand or even in police cells.

If Justice Minister Gord Wyant doesn't want to spend the next four years having to defend decisions on why an inquest was held into the death of Prisoner A but not Prisoner B, we suggest he [should] shelve the idea.

We take the point that sometimes the circumstances don't warrant a public inquest — for example when one inmate is murdered by another, resulting in a police investigation and trial of the alleged perpetrator. In such cases where there's a thorough public airing of the circumstances, the coroner's office would be justified in passing on the obvious duplication of an inquest.

There's an argument, too, for allowing the coroner's office to pass on an inquest when an inmate dies of natural causes — so long as a thorough public report is made available and the families are satisfied with the result.

However, for the government to suggest the coroner's office also have the final word on whether there's an inquest for those who die from "self-harm" while in custody is a step too far. A suicide could follow bullying and intimidation from other inmates or occur if staff neglect their duty to monitor vulnerable prisoners.

We believe the circumstances behind all such deaths

should be examined by a six-person inquest jury. Such inquests in the past have resulted in changes to custody procedures based on jury recommendations.

Ironically, the proposed change to inquest requirements follows a review of the coroner's office in the wake of a tragedy that had nothing to do with an in-custody death.

The family of a Regina woman who died after falling 10 storeys down a laundry chute in 2015 questioned the investigation process and the coroner's finding of accidental death.

That prompted Wyant to announce in June that an independent inquest would be held and a review launched into the coroner's office. "I'm concerned that the confidence in the coroner's office and the confidence in the administration of justice has been put into question."

We agree.

So let's ensure an inquest examining the deaths of those who are in custody is the norm, not the exception.

And I'm going to end my point on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, on what the minister has said. And I'm using his quote: "I'm concerned that the confidence in the coroner's office and the confidence in the administration of justice has been put into question."

So why then, Mr. Speaker, are we having this bill come forward? Why are we then, Mr. Speaker, having this debate in this Assembly?

As I pointed out, my learned colleagues will have their say on this particular bill. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 41, *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*. I so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 41, *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 26

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 26** — *The Patient Choice Medical Imaging Act* 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 pleased to stand today and talk about Bill No. 26. It's *The*

Patient Choice Medical Imaging Act. And this was put forward by the minister, the previous minister of Health in our spring session, and now we get the opportunity to discuss a little bit of the things about what's in this bill.

And this is a new legislation because it's kind of incorporating some other legislation from what I understand, and making this new one, this new piece of legislation. And this is a really important legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because health care in our provinces is important. And I think all residents in our province would believe that, and they would want to make sure that we really review this in all aspects.

Personally, I've been fortunate enough that I always had publicly funded health care since I was born, so I don't know anything different, you know. And I just hear stories about what it was like before and so I hear that, you know, people in Saskatchewan, some people couldn't afford to pay for a doctor or go to the hospital and they relied on charity, or sometimes they went without care.

And sometimes people, they would have to, you know, remortgage their house, sacrifice their homes, and use all their life savings in order to get the medical attention that they needed . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . That was previous. The members across are wondering what I'm talking about, but this was previous to having publicly funded health care. And so people would have to go without health care and they would oftentimes, you know, end up spending all their savings. And so I'm really happy that we do in Canada have publicly funded health care. And so we know that that's not the case in some places like the United States, but here we really value that, you know, and I appreciate that.

And like I said previous to that, I have never experienced that and I'm grateful for that and for my family. My family doesn't come from much finances. We didn't come from a lot of money. And so if we didn't have publicly funded health care, I can't imagine where we might be today. There's things like ambulance fees. I come from a small town and my dad would always say to me, if I need an ambulance, don't you dare call one; you throw me in the car and we get to the hospital. Because he didn't want to have to pay for that bill. And so, thank God, we were able to get to the hospital and have fees covered there.

And also as a previous health care worker, I know a lot of people who would come for our services who wouldn't be able to afford private services. And there's a lot of private counsellors that provide counselling services, but I was really grateful to work with the health region and be able to provide counselling to people who wouldn't be able to afford that. So I think that's really important when we're talking about health care and we're talking about issues with regards to this bill. And so I would like people to keep that in mind, and about the priorities of the residents in Saskatchewan.

And a lot of people will say the reason why we might not completely support this legislation is because members on this side of the House don't support privately owned businesses. And that's not the case at all, Mr. Speaker. We definitely support privately owned businesses. And actually when I sit and think about health care in our province, a lot of the health care

that is provided to us are actually from privately owned businesses.

Doctor's offices. My doctor has his own private clinic, but it doesn't cost me one penny to go see him because it's billed to our health care. But it's his private business. There's walk-in clinics that we could go use now, and we walk in, we get whatever services we need with our health card, and that's not costing us one cent.

[15:45]

And even I've gone for X-rays or CAT [computerized axial tomography] . . . not CAT scans, but other medical imaging services, and that was provided by private owned businesses but that was billed to our health. So I think that's really important that these things are covered by our health care and that we keep it that way. And that's why this does really concern me.

First in 2015, there was legislation brought forward with regards to privatizing MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] services, and now this is with regards to CT [computerized tomography] scans. But this legislation makes it open to have all medical imaging services allowed, you know, to have as privatized services. And so I really am concerned that the language in this legislation is a bit too broad, and so I hope that's discussed at committee and I'm sure that discussion will be had there.

So I want to talk about some key factors with the *Canada Health Act*. There's five main principles, Mr. Speaker, with regards to the *Canada Health Act*, and the first one is public administration. So all administration of provincial health insurance must be carried out by a public authority on a non-profit basis. So that's the first one.

The second key principle is comprehensiveness. So all necessary health services, including hospitals, physicians, and surgical dentists must be insured. Universality is all insured residents are entitled to the same level of health care. And portability, that's a resident that moves to a different province or territory is entitled to coverage from their home province during a minimum waiting period. And that's also if you leave the country. And accessibility, all insured persons have reasonable access to health care facilities.

And so this is under the Canadian health act, and I hope this is discussed further in committees as well because it's really important, especially under the provision of, all insured residents are entitled to the same level of health care. And I think that is really brought into effect here.

Saskatchewan people, they place a high value on equitable access to high-quality health care, and they want it delivered on the basis of need and not the ability to pay. And I think when you talk to the majority of residents, they will say that. They believe that if a person needs the care, they should have it first. And I've seen this myself in walk-in clinics, and you're waiting and someone comes in and you know they are in much worse need than you are. And I've seen it first-hand and I was actually . . . I had my two-year-old daughter and she was really . . . she broke her leg, and people said, go ahead. They saw how much pain she was in. And we're just very good people in

Saskatchewan and we believe that, you know, people who need the services should have that, not the ability to pay for services.

And I feel that this legislation will create a two-tiered kind of system, Mr. Speaker, a two-tiered health care system. And so the problem with that is that you create winners and losers. And so the winners in a two-tiered system are the private investors and the insurance industry and the people who are the most wealthy and can buy their way to the front of the line. And the people who are the losers are people who will have to wait longer because other people are jumping the queue to get things like surgeries and such, and also having deteriorating standards. And I'll explain that a little bit, Mr. Speaker, the deteriorating standards.

Basically when you have a private system and a public system conflicting with each other, that they're parallel, that oftentimes the private system will take a lot of human resources from the public system. And so then the public system, that we see already in our public system, that we're struggling to find enough health care providers in our system. But when we have the private conflicting with that, they're fighting for the same resources. And oftentimes private can pay a little bit more than what our public system can, or offer more for employees. So that provides an issue and could result in deteriorating standards of our health care.

Also another issue is that when you have the private and the public parallel, that it also decreases the pressure from political influences. Because oftentimes the people who do come and speak forward about the issues that we have in our public health system are the more privileged residents in our province, because they have the means and resources and the ability to speak out about the issues that are happening. And so when the most privileged are getting private services, oftentimes we don't hear what the issues are in our public system. And so I think that's important to also look into when we're talking about the two-tiered health care system.

Also, Mr. Speaker, this causes a backlog for services, and does not help nor support the fact that we need to address . . . The actual issue here is we need to address surgical wait times in our province here. And I know the members across said that that was a priority for them, and they haven't reached the levels that they promised to us, and I think this isn't the way to go about that. This is just going to cause more extreme wait times and we need to still work on reducing that wait time. So this does not solve the problem in our province, and it just simply allows people who have the financial resources to receive health care services ahead of the most marginalized individuals in our province. And, again, I don't believe, I truly don't believe that's what Saskatchewan residents want.

So I'm going to quote here from my colleague, and this was when they were discussing Bill No. 179, *The MRI Facilities Licensing Act*. And the member that I'm going to quote here is the member for Saskatoon Riversdale and she's the critic for Health. So when she was talking about the issues with regards to that bill, she said, like, are the things in this legislation?

Is this evidence-based policy? I would argue that the evidence isn't there. We can look at other jurisdictions. Or is this purely political in motive? And if it is purely

political in motive, that is not the way public policy should be made, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is not the way public policy should be made.

And that was my fellow colleague, the critic for Health, and she said that on October 21, 2015 when we were talking about that bill. And she is so very right. Like we should be making policies that are evidence-based, not just based on what we think is going to win us the next election. And I wonder what the motives are with regards to this legislation, and I truly hope that the motives are pure in heart, you know. And I don't believe they are because again, like I said, of all of the things that I find out about issues with parallel systems, I find that the evidence is not proving that.

And when I do some research on how to reduce these wait times a lot of the things that I hear, you know, what could help is reducing the multiple tests that are required when you are seeing a lot of medical professionals. When I was door knocking, like all of us did around election time, I heard time and time again from people that they said that when they had a medical issue, they went and saw one doctor. They had to get their blood test; they had to get an X-ray; they had to do this. And then when they saw the specialist they had to get a blood test; they had to get the X-rays; they had to do this. And it could be even a matter of weeks, there was nothing that changed. They still had gallstones. Like nothing was different, you know, and so a lot of people question, why are we always getting these multiple tests? Maybe we need to make the health care system a little bit easier and make more sense. Maybe we need to look at some other options.

And the members here like to bring back to when we were in power. Well that was well over eight years, and I like to, you know, solve problems that are happening today. That's not an excuse to not solve problems that are happening today. And we know there's an issue; let's go solve it. You've got the mandate. Let's go and talk to the front-line workers. Let's go do some evidence-based research and find out what will help reduce wait times.

And so with that, you know, Mr. Speaker, I know I have great faith in the critic of Health on our team here, and I know she'll do her research with regards to this. This is near and dear to her heart and a lot of ours. And I know my colleagues have a lot more to add to this particular issue because this is one that I don't think is being done with regards to doing all the research behind it. And so I really hope there's more research — some evidence-based research — being provided and that discussion is being made in committees.

So I'm sure my colleagues will have more information to add with regards to this discussion so, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to adjourn this debate. I'll move to adjourn this debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 26, *The Patient Choice Medical Imaging Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 28

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 28** — *The Extension of Compassionate Care Act, 2016* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And as I always like to say, I am honoured to be able to get up in this Assembly and enter into the debate on the bills as they're being presented.

And this bill is a little bit of an interesting bill, and I think there's a couple really serious problems with it right off the hop. First of all, the name is completely misleading. And I think this is a government that's trying to show clarity in its legislation, but this is another example of where they've completely missed the mark. Because although it's called *The Extension of Compassionate Care Act, 2016*, that is really one small part of what this Act is doing.

And it's misleading in a number of ways because what the second problem with this bill is, is that it's fixing the massive employment Act that they introduced a couple years ago, full of mistakes, the one that we started off by going to the Supreme Court on, and now we're back at it again. So once again, it's another example of these guys coming back to the drawing board because there were mistakes made in the drafting in the first place, and instructions weren't clear to the drafters, so all of a sudden here we are back at it again.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's a habit with this government. We keep revisiting bills, and I suppose in some ways it at least keeps us a little bit busy because then we actually have bills on the legislative agenda. And if it weren't for a lot of these correcting bills and revisiting bills, you know . . . There's a small handful that I think we really have to pay a lot of attention to, Mr. Speaker. But this is another one where we see there's an oops, and I did it again, Mr. Speaker. And so we're back at it and revisiting a bill that was before us in the Assembly previously.

So first of all, the name is wrong. For a government that's trying to put clarity in, that's what we have is the wrong name, Mr. Speaker. Of course we're making fun of politicians south of the border now, but in this case there is no clarity.

And if you look at the name of this bill, it's called *The Extension of Compassionate Care Act*, and yet here we are selecting the adjudicators to hear an appeal rather than going through the Labour Relations Board. So somehow I don't know how you can get from there with the title.

And I think one of the problems we're worried about here is, has the minister done his homework? Has he actually even talked to people in the labour community? Because we're hearing that he hasn't. You know, he's formed this labour advisory committee and talks a lot about being able to consult with them and to be in touch with what's going on with people in the labour movement and the workers of this province. But we're worried that he hasn't even brought this up with them,

and you have to wonder why. Why is it being named with such a weird name, and why hasn't he consulted with the folks over in Labour about this? Because this is a big change. They're giving much greater authority to the registrar of the Labour Relations Board, and they're taking away that authority from the board itself.

[16:00]

Now the excuse the minister gave in his second reading comments was that when *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* was drafted, these provisions were not included, and it has resulted in some confusion. Hello, Mr. Speaker, here we are again. Confusion reigns and yet there's always this claim that they're trying to seek clarity. We see that with Bill 40 and *The Interpretation Act* where a weird definition of privatization is being inserted into *The Interpretation Act*, which is the wrong place for that kind of bill. But they don't have the courage to actually come out and be bold and upfront with the people of Saskatchewan because they know how that worked for them in 2003. So they're hiding behind their privatization agenda and sliding it in in bills like Bill 40.

So no clarity, and again with this bill you've got to wonder why it's being called *The Extension of Compassionate Care Act* when it really does more than that. And it is changing the way adjudications are done with the Labour Relations Board. So one can only speculate, Mr. Speaker, on the thinking that went behind this. Now fair enough, and I will say that there are changes being made to the compassionate care, and that's one of the changes in this bill, so I guess that is the justification for naming it thusly. But I think it's a misleading name because that's only part of it and there are some very disparate things going on here.

And maybe it should've been an Act to fix *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* because we didn't fix it in the first place. That might be a better name for this bill. Maybe it's a bit too long, Mr. Speaker, and could be confusing, you know, when we know this government is keen to be clear on everything that it does and to the extent that it actually changes what the definitions are and makes them their own.

We just heard about the medical imaging Act, and we keep hearing from this government, well that's not privatization of the medical system. But, Mr. Speaker, we know indeed it is a form of privatization, and it's clearly indicated in all the literature that relates to privatization. So that's clarity from the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. That's their forte, I guess. And I see it again in this bill. At any rate, Mr. Speaker, those are the two main changes to this bill. And I think, you know, in terms of extending the compassionate care, that's in relation to changes made to federal legislation. So this was a necessary change, and as the minister noted, there are a lot of challenges.

I have aging parents myself, and my dad's going to be 90 in a few months and still living in his own home. But we know that, you know, as people age, compassionate care becomes a bigger and bigger issue. And we know families are important. So as far as compassionate care goes and extending it, I think that, you know, as long as we support the employers as they are responsible for these initiatives, that's very helpful.

But I think in terms of the changes to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* to allow the registrar to select adjudicators for an appeal rather than the board, those are questions that need to be put to the labour community. I understand that hasn't happened and that this minister is not keeping up his promise to consult. He talks big about it. He's very good at that. But he's not putting his money where his mouth is. And I think it's important for him to continue those lines of communication with the people that this affects, and he needs to do his consultation. He needs to do his homework.

So at that note, Mr. Speaker, I will . . . I think that's the extent of my comments on this bill, so I would like to move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 28, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Employment Act or The Extension of Compassionate Care Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana, if I heard correctly, is adjourning debate on Bill No. 28, *The Extension of Compassionate Care Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 29

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 29 — *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur les juges de paix*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A pleasure to join debate this afternoon on Bill No. 29, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2016* and of course the accompanying legislation in French, *Loi modificative de 2016 sur les juges de paix*.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting watching what's going on in the justice system these days, and certainly the developments keep rolling in even on this very day in terms of different stresses and problems that this government is imposing and posing for the system, Mr. Speaker. And you know, so we sit here today debating *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act* and you know, there's trouble raging all around.

But in terms of this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, it's about creating a regime, an extrajudicial regime, interestingly enough, where traffic safety issues can be resolved without engaging the courts.

The bill itself allows for the creation of an assistant supervising Justice of the Peace who will be able to take over for the supervising Justice of the Peace in his or her absence and assist him or her with his or her duties. And it also creates a new category for justices of the peace, senior justices of the peace, senior justices of the peace being able to impose fines or order a driver to take driver's training for traffic offences, and also provisions around the payment of senior justices of the peace.

So, Mr. Speaker, this bill would seem to build out the capacity as regards the justices of the peace component of our justice system, and again that's fair enough in and of itself. The minister in his second reading speech states that "The Saskatchewan Justice of the Peace Association has been consulted on an ongoing basis during the development of this bill and is supportive of these amendments," to quote from June 14th's *Hansard*, page 522. And again, Mr. Speaker, we'll take him at his word on that, but certainly we'll do our own due diligence on this piece of legislation to ensure that those things which are proclaimed are what they are proclaimed to be.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I don't know that there's much more to add on this particular piece of legislation. I know that other of my colleagues, and certainly my learned colleagues, will have I think a more informed perspective to bring to bear in this debate, and I certainly await that with interest. But for the time being, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 29, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 29, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the . . . Order. The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 29, *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 30

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 30 — *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again good to join debate this afternoon on Bill No. 30, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*. In the minister's second reading speech on June 14th of this year, a number of things were talked about, certainly the way that this is a companion piece with the bill updating the freedom of information and protection of privacy, and also the local authority piece of legislation which I believe my colleague from Prince Albert will be speaking to in the not too distant future, Mr. Speaker.

But certainly changes to the freedom of information regime in the province of Saskatchewan, there's a lot of work that has been done over the years by different information and privacy commissioners. Certainly we are well served in the province by the good work of the Privacy Commissioner Kruzeniski, and certainly there were some individuals that preceded in that role that have set out some definite calls for improvements to the freedom of information and privacy landscape in Saskatchewan.

When various of these pieces of legislation were introduced in the early 1990s, Mr. Speaker, they led the nation. That was of course then; this is of course now. And it's I think fair comment

that Saskatchewan has fallen behind in terms of the adequacy of its freedom of information and protection of privacy legislation. So we've had calls from people such as the Information and Privacy Commissioner over years now for updates to the information, the freedom of information and protection of privacy regime in this province.

So one of the landmark works in that regard, Mr. Speaker, was the Information and Privacy Commissioner's 2015 report, *It's Time to Update*, calling for a number of changes to information and privacy protection in Saskatchewan. And certainly this bill contains certain of those measures that were called for, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the creation of a new offence for snooping on a person's personal information, again, Mr. Speaker, in this age of connectivity and this age of a lot of information that is sensitive to individuals being accessible, rightly or not, in a variety of ways, this is an offence that is long overdue in fact.

And again it goes to that trust relationship, that people who are charged with the oversight of these records, that that need be enforced, that it shouldn't be left to the honour system, Mr. Speaker, because we've seen too many examples of that trust being abused and that responsibility not being shouldered by people that are in a position to take advantage of personal information that ought not be traded or trafficked in. And then certainly, Mr. Speaker, the . . . So we welcome those changes.

We're also interested to see how the impact of the extension of the rules for personal information protection to MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] offices and cabinet ministers' offices, how that works out, Mr. Speaker. Certainly the work that has been done around the release forms in terms of people being able to bring cases forward, I know certainly the kind of advocacy work that goes on in the office in Regina Elphinstone-Centre and the great work that Tim, who I have the privilege of working with, and the role that making sure that the information is being properly accessed, that it's properly authorized, that has been an interesting adjustment in the office, Mr. Speaker. And certainly we'll be interested to see how that is further impacted by the change in the legislation and how this work goes.

[16:15]

And again, Mr. Speaker, as we seek to provide greater freedom of information and as well greater protection of private information, that should not, it ought not result in a situation where process is used as an excuse or as a dodge not to help people, Mr. Speaker. But certainly that balance must be undertaken where people are authorizing access to their information and that is made clear and that is respected. But it ought not be used as an excuse for not helping people when they come forward asking for that help at their MLA office or in contact with different of the cabinet offices or indeed with the Premier's office, Mr. Speaker. But it also provides that protection against that information being used inappropriately. And again we'll be interested to see how that carries forward.

One thing, or a couple of things that the bill does not include, there was certainly other recommendations that await action that came from the Information and Privacy Commissioner. I'm

talking about the change of a maximum time for a response from 30 days to 20 days. That is something that as yet has not been acted upon by this government.

And in terms of an automatic update that should be included in terms of freedom of information and privacy protection legislation, there's a good recommendation made by the Information and Privacy Commissioner that an automatic update be undertaken, an automatic review be undertaken every five years. And certainly that would keep it up to date, and it would keep it at the cutting edge. And again, Mr. Speaker, in the grander scheme of things, where Saskatchewan went from leading in Canada in terms of its freedom of information and privacy protection regime in the early '90s to now where significant action must be undertaken to get to the middle of the pack, that five-year update provision would guard against that.

I know that other of my colleagues will have, I'd imagine, much more informed and thoughtful interventions on this score than myself, and I look forward to that, Mr. Speaker. But for the time being, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 30, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 30, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 31

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 31 — *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand here today to discuss Bill No. 31, *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*. This was presented by the Minister of Justice in the spring session and so now we're having some time to discuss it and review it.

It appears that a lot of the information that's in here, the changes that are being made were based on recommendations from the Information and Privacy Commissioner in his report from 2015, *It's Time To Update*. And so it's nice to see that the information that he's brought forward, that some of that's being discussed and being implemented into changes to this bill.

I know a lot of the changes are quite parallel to changes being made to *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*, Bill No. 30, and so there'll be some of the same changes within the two bills. But some of the changes that are going to be reflective of this bill, the Minister of Justice said, like that based on some of the recommendations from the

commissioner that:

These [will] include: a duty to assist applicants for information, a duty to protect personal information, extension of the definition of the local authority to include police services, and creation of a new offence for snooping.

And so definitely we've been hearing, especially in the media, that there's been more and more documentations of people who are accessing files that they shouldn't, information that they shouldn't. I think with technology that it's been more accessible to get information and people, like they're so used to having all the information at their fingertips that it really is tempting for people to look for information that they shouldn't. And so I'm glad that the Privacy Commissioner is looking into this, you know, and trying to find ways that we can stop any further breaches of this.

So one of the recommendations that they have here is that they want to make sure that there is a "mandatory breach notification when personal information has been leaked that places an individual at serious personal risk." And that's what the Minister of Justice says when he presented this bill.

And so they also want to increase the penalties for offences. And we know that's really important, that when information is breached like this, and especially when it ... Like, any information that's breached is troubling, but people want to ensure that all of our personal information is protected. And so if people are compromising that, there should be the penalties in place for that.

So another big change with regards to this bill is that it's including police forces under *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act* so that police forces can now be subject to freedom of information requests. And so this will be an important amendment with regards to this bill.

And so I think it will require a lot of discussion, and I know the critic for Justice will work hard at scrutinizing this. I think there will be a lot of discussion in committee with regards to this because there are some of the recommendations that was in the Information and Privacy Commissioner's report in 2015 that aren't being implemented in this Act. And they're simple recommendations, so I don't understand why they're not included in there. And I'm hoping that there will be some discussion at committee with regards to that.

But one of them is changing the maximum time for response from 30 days to 20 days. So it seems like the Privacy Commissioner believes that, you know, it's important to ensure that things are reported within 20 days. And that seems like a reasonable request and should be discussed at committee.

And another information that the Privacy Commissioner indicated was that *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act* include a requirement that it's updated every five years to respond to the modern technology. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I think that's really reasonable.

When we sit and think about what has maybe advanced in the past five years with regards to technology and just all the changes that happen, like, so I think having to review these on a regular basis, five years seems to be a reasonable time frame to have this reviewed and ensure that it meets the technology of the times. So I think that's a reasonable request, and so I think that could be something that's considered to be added to this legislation. And hopefully that's again discussed at committee, and the critic I'm sure will have that discussion.

So I know my colleagues will have more information that they will want to add with regards to this discussion, and so at this time, I'm going to move to adjourn this debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has adjourned debate on Bill No. 31, *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As always, it's a pleasure to rise in the Assembly and wade into the discussion on the bills before us. Today I have an opportunity to speak to Bill No. 1, *An Act to amend The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act*.

I think though a few things to note here just in broad-brush strokes, Mr. Speaker, that Bill No. 1, this particular bill removes Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority from *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act* and allows the government to sell 40 liquor stores.

Obviously that was something that came up before the election and was obviously something that the government laid bare and made clear what they were going to do around these 40 liquor stores. But what this bill does, it also takes all of SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] stores out of *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act* — which was not part of this government's election conversation, Mr. Speaker, with the people of Saskatchewan — which will mean that there is no protection for every other SLGA store in Saskatchewan.

I just want to point . . . I had an opportunity, I guess it was in the spring, everybody . . . that the Crown Investments Corporation had some committee action. Our new member from Saskatoon Lakeview sits on that committee and had the opportunity to hear from many stakeholders, many who were supportive of this change and others who weren't, Mr. Speaker.

It was interesting sitting in my office listening to all the different perspectives. I was watching it on live-stream. It's always good to be able to watch the legislative channels and hear what exactly is going on. And I took with great interest what many citizens were saying, Mr. Speaker. There were business people. There were a good variety of people who were speaking, Mr. Speaker, to that public input is really important when it comes to shaping legislation.

I actually want to focus a little bit on what my colleague from Regina Lakeview — I think I may have said Saskatoon Lakeview earlier, Mr. Speaker — from Regina Lakeview who has already waded into this discussion. She makes some very good points. I think one of the things . . . I'll talk a little bit about what she had to say, but I do know one of the concerns that she flagged that:

In communities of less than 2,000 people, as was noted with some of the submissions [that came before that particular committee], new private retailers will be allowed to sell liquor from existing businesses, and this can be done with the staff that they already have.

So she pointed out that there's concern about the potential for job growth or job losses. We also heard about the potential impacts, she goes on to say, “. . . to employment for those under 19 who are currently working in establishments that might opt to sell liquor in the future.”

I had an opportunity just a short while ago, I ran into a constituent of mine whose partner actually owns some small rural hotels with off-sales. And he actually was very concerned about this bill and what this will mean to some of his own business within his community that his family's been running, frankly for many, many years. He's a second generation business person running some of these hotels, Mr. Speaker. So I think that was an issue that was flagged loud and clear to me from a constituent of mine.

I think another issue that always comes up is training and support for people who are selling liquor, Mr. Speaker. And I know I've never worked in a liquor store, but I have worked as a waitress. And I can tell you, working as a waitress, that I've worked in many different establishments, and one of the opportunities I had was working at Louis' at the campus pub. And one of the things that Louis' did very well was make sure that staff had the proper training, had server training to ensure that we knew how to identify people who were underage. We knew how to ensure that people weren't over-imbibing, how to talk to people about their over-consumption of alcohol, and how to cut them off if need be, Mr. Speaker.

That training was incredibly important, and I know that that's been flagged as a concern too, that just making sure that . . . I know SLGA workers have the training and support and are very good at ensuring that people under age are not accessing alcohol. And I think it's important to ensure that any new retailers that open up, we need to ensure that the appropriate supports are in place to ensure that those who are purchasing alcohol are in fact of age, Mr. Speaker.

[16:30]

I know the member from Saskatoon . . . pardon me, Regina Lakeview. I want, pardon me, I want the member to move to Saskatoon, I think, from my comments here. I know that she also pointed out that during the presentations, there were some serious concerns expressed over . . . that this move would be revenue neutral. And the member from Regina Lakeview points out that there were some presentations that saw that that wasn't the case, that people didn't necessarily believe that to be true, that the money that flows, obviously the money that flows into the General Revenue Fund from Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming stores helps fund schools and helps fund health care and highways — all those kinds of things that we count on, Mr. Speaker.

I know the members opposite, there's a liquor store in my community actually which is closing, and I know members opposite have said that this isn't necessarily about . . . Sorry, Mr. Speaker, it's a little bit late in a Wednesday afternoon. The liquor store in Riversdale that's closing, Mr. Speaker, there is some concerns that there will be an ability for a new permit in Riversdale.

And the businesses in Riversdale, my community has undergone some serious revitalization in the last years. There's been many people committed to that revitalization for many years, businesses very committed who, even when things were tough in Riversdale, they stuck by that community and knew that good things could happen. And obviously gentrification is an issue, and always striking that balance between ensuring that those who've lived in the community for a very long time have an opportunity to stay there, but that others can move in and help foster growth and jobs and new housing as well.

But one of the challenges in Riversdale, Mr. Speaker, is there was a liquor store on 20th Street, and it's one of the ones slated for closure. That liquor store . . . Some of the most positive things to happen have been off-sales, Mr. Speaker, moving from our community. Unfortunately when off-sales move, they've moved into other neighbourhoods, not in Riversdale. And that hasn't gotten rid of overconsumption; it's just moved it actually. Mr. Speaker, that consumption that used to happen on 20th Street at hotels like The Albany and The Barry has gone from those particular establishments but has moved down the road on 22nd Street or down 33rd Street.

So that's, I think, I know from conversations with the Riversdale BID [business improvement district] that there's big concerns around private retailers opening up, and they actually have some requests in front of the government around permits and what that should look like, Mr. Speaker.

So I do know that, again it's important to point out that, yes the government did bring the privatization of 40 liquor stores to the people of Saskatchewan. And obviously they won a very strong mandate, Mr. Speaker, but the big piece to remember is that this removes all SLGA stores out of *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Act*, which is not something the government talked about. There's actually lots of things that the government didn't talk about before the election that have now come to fruition in the months to follow, Mr. Speaker.

We're still waiting for straight talk actually around the budget and the first quarter report, Mr. Speaker, finding out exactly

where we are financially. There were many things that this government didn't talk about before the election that they are doing now, Mr. Speaker. But again this should have been something that they brought for people to judge on its merits, Mr. Speaker, and I think that there are still many people who appreciate that SLGA returns many dividends to Saskatchewan people who fund important services and these will be lost, Mr. Speaker.

But with that, I know I have other colleagues who will be wading into the debate on Bill No. 1, *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Amendment Act*, and I know there'll be further questions as well when this bill eventually makes it to committee. So with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to rise to enter into the debate on this Bill No. 32, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Benefits) Amendment Act, 2016*. This was introduced in June from the former minister for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], and he indicated that there were a number of changes being introduced here, more than 30, Mr. Speaker. And I certainly don't intend to speak to all of those changes here today. I know that we can have a very close look at all of them when this bill is eventually moved into the committee debate.

I think one of the interesting changes we see here is the impact on a bereaved family when one of their family members is an impaired driver and ends up being killed in an accident. And now there's an ability for the family, who are victims of that accident as much as the driver, even though they will now sue the estate of their own loved one, but they will be able to have an opportunity to do that, for pain and suffering and bereavement damages. And he indicates that the list of offences that trigger the ability for an innocent party to sue has also been expanded to cover criminal negligence causing death or bodily harm, criminal negligence causing bodily injury, flight from a peace officer, and dangerous operation while street racing.

And I just want to raise one issue on this bill, Mr. Speaker, and it's how we, in a car culture, sometimes overlook other innocent victims of crime. And I'm always reminded of a young man named Kutler, who was viciously beaten and an innocent victim

in a fight in a home in Saskatoon quite a few years ago now. Kutler — his mom is Sharlene Lange — and Kutler Lange was actually hiding from these assailants. He had no personal connection with them whatsoever; he just happened to be at the wrong house at the wrong time. And these gentlemen came in and — well they weren't gentlemen; they were thugs — and they came in and beat him so badly that he was in a coma for a while and suffered extensive brain damage. And so it changed his life forever. It changed his mother's life forever. Sharlene has had to stop working to look after Kutler.

And under *The Victims of Crime Act* — and I've talked about this with the Minister of Justice — there is no provision beyond the immediate \$25,000 that deals with the initial round of going through court. But if you are injured by an impaired driver, you can sue and get up to \$6 million through the government insurance program for automobiles.

And one of the things Sharlene did was she worked with a sociologist who indicated that for people in the victims of crime sphere, it's often people that are at the beginning of their lives, young people. So Kutler was still in high school. He was just getting ready to commence his life in the workforce. And that was all taken away from him — having a family, all those things have been taken away from him.

The guy who beat him up, the thug who beat him up, went to court. He was found guilty, and he actually did some time in the correctional system. But he was released, and he has now taken over his dad's business. He has a wife and kids — I see them on Facebook — and he's living a really good life right now. And certainly he did time for his crime, but Kutler remains permanently damaged by this. And there's no coverage. There's no ability . . . And there's a number of legal reasons why he wasn't able to sue at the time, but mostly because his mom didn't have the resources to be able to carry out the legal fight. So there's nothing for victims of crime like that.

But in this kind of bill where we see extensions for people hurt in a dangerous operation while street racing, that these people are able to access the provisions of *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Benefits) Amendment Act*, and that's part of the problem, is that accidents and automobiles get a lot more attention in our society because we are such an automobile-based society. And that's been borne out by sociological studies. So I always want to take the opportunity to remind this legislature and this Assembly that the people that are victims of crime who aren't injured by automobiles but by somebody's boot get much different treatment in our society. And I think it's considerably unfair. And Sharlene has taken this to the federal government. She's taken it to this government in every which way she can. And I really want to commend her for her courage and the work that she does.

She just posted a picture on Facebook the other day of when Kutler was in the hospital in a coma. I think it's 10 years ago, I think she said, and it has changed their life forever. And it's really unfortunate that we can't extend the same kind of ability for people that are victims in that way than people that are victims of street racing or flight from a peace officer or all of the other things that are being expanded here in this particular bill.

As I said earlier, there's 30 different changes. Obviously the minister got up and said he wasn't able to introduce all of the changes that have been asked for. I suspect because of the desperate state of finances that this government finds themselves in, and as you know, Mr. Speaker, they blew through the rainy day fund in the best years this government ever had. They have increased our debt to beyond the amount it was 10 years ago, and again in the most incredibly prosperous times through our resource revenue sector that we've ever, ever had. And now they aren't able to implement programs like this because of the shortfall in their budgetary management.

So this is unfortunate, and I know the minister seemed disappointed that he wasn't able to bring on the changes for living expenses in the CPP [Canadian Pension Plan] benefits. And he seemed to be genuinely wanting to be able to do that, but given the fact that we're in the financial mess that we're in right now, these kinds of programs are suffering. And of course as we've raised many times here in the House, there are a number of other programs that are being cut or people are suffering because of that.

So at any rate, Mr. Speaker, I know other of my colleagues are going to want to weigh in on this and I would move at this point that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 32, *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Benefits) Amendment Act, 2016*.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's me again and I am going to speak now to Bill No. 33. Extensive changes are being proposed for child welfare provisions. As you know, Mr. Speaker, much of the work that's done with child welfare agreements is through the First Nations arrangements that are entered into with First Nations Child and Family Services. These have been around for decades, Mr. Speaker. And I know there's a constant back and forth between the different regulatory authorities in terms of the children that fall under these agreements.

The minister is saying part of the transformation strategy of this government is to renew the province's child welfare legislation, and this is this province's attempt at doing just that.

I know that relationships with First Nations are paramount as we move forward in our province, and I would really encourage

the government to consider how this fits into the recommendations in the truth and reconciliation committee, the good work that was done there. And we know that that work is critical to us moving forward. When we see the tragedies that we see happening in the North when young girls are taking their lives, Mr. Speaker, in desperation and hopelessness and how . . . One of my colleagues is going to a wake tonight and a funeral tomorrow for another young girl who's taken her life.

So the importance of getting this right, of making this better with the First Nations, our partners in this province . . . And I think the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] recommendations go a long way to sort of righting the ship which has been listing for decades, indeed, since the treaty relationship was entered into and perhaps even before that, Mr. Speaker.

If you look at some of the history of this province and the colonial dominance, I guess, in terms of all the strength of the settler communities, in terms of our laws and our abilities to take over, I guess that's what colonialism is. So these relationships with First Nations in terms of the welfare of children and families is critical. And it's important that we get it right.

So I know again we have some very talented critics here on this side. And I know that they're consulting with the communities to make sure that these bills, that people have been properly consulted with, that the bill achieves what it sets out to achieve, and that First Nations have been, definitely in this case, First Nations have been properly consulted with.

[16:45]

So the minister gave some indications to some of the changes. And there's different things about information sharing and regulation making and how they're trying to align the Act with amendments being proposed for other provincial information-sharing legislation. So it's a constant process, and I anticipate that the attempt here will hopefully make some changes to increasing and enhancing the relationship with the First Nations Child and Family Services agencies.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I don't have a lot more to add to the debate, and I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 33, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2016*.

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

Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and speak to this piece of legislation, Bill No. 34, *The Provincial Lands Act of 2016*.

Mr. Speaker, this is a proposed . . . entirely a new piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, that would replace the previous provincial lands Act with this new bill in that it is repealing that legislation. There weren't a lot of . . . Well there weren't any explanatory notes, Mr. Speaker, provided. But I do have some comments to make while I'm up to speak to this legislation.

The Provincial Lands Act, it deals with the over 160 million acres in this province that make up a large portion of the vast and beautiful province that is Saskatchewan. Of the 160 million acres, rather, Mr. Speaker, that is Saskatchewan, over 100 million of those acres are held as Crown lands or held by the Ministry of Environment. So that's a huge portion, Mr. Speaker, well over half of the land in Saskatchewan. And so any time we are proposing to deal with those lands, I think it does certainly justify some careful attention when we're looking at anything that will impact those lands.

As was noted through much of the press releases and the reporting out on this piece of legislation, that substantively the Act hasn't been changed since the 1970s, the late 1970s. However, it got misrepresented somewhere along the way, I think a little bit of a whisper campaign. We all played that game in school where you whisper in the next ear, Mr. Speaker. There have been actually a number of updates to this legislation, in '78, '80, '83, '84, quite a list, going right up to 2015, Mr. Speaker. So there have been some changes, but what this proposes to do is replace the whole piece of legislation with new legislation.

The minister asserted that this is an Act to modernize, Mr. Speaker. And certainly modernizing is important but it's one of those words that can obscure other intentions or can be used as a broad cloak when there may be other objectives in the legislation. In his remarks, Mr. Speaker, the minister noted that by modernizing this legislation, we will allow the province to benefit from certainly an improved investment climate, was one of the things he mentioned, but also proposed that it would help things like wind farms and potash mining.

Mr. Speaker, interestingly, I was speaking last night to a SaskPower bill, talking about in that case the need for a 2 billion increase in borrowing capacity was to enable investment also in wind power. So there's a lot of talk about wind power over there, Mr. Speaker, and I hope that we do soon see a bit of a plan to actually ensure that some of those projects go forward.

Some of the other impacts of this legislation would increase the potential term of some of the leases. It would also allow for breaking up of parcels of land, Mr. Speaker, and enabling, for example, a portion of the land to be used for purposes such as camping or quadding is one of the . . . I believe quadding and snowmobile rallies, Mr. Speaker, and also proposes to share that with the caribou which I . . . I'm not an environmentalist or a quadder, Mr. Speaker, but I think it would be interesting to see how the caribou would react to the quadding and that kind of activity. So I think that certainly requires a little bit of further

thought and input from others.

I know that there were some concerns expressed about the level of consultation around this legislation. There were some consultations back in 2013. There were three meetings held across the province, as well as meetings with First Nations groups, Mr. Speaker. I don't have a list of all of those who were consulted. I understand there were about 3,000 individuals or groups. So that certainly does sound like there were a number of people interested but I don't have any information about what was said. And so I think my colleague from Nutana will have some questions, certainly, in this legislature and perhaps in committee about that.

It did note that the subject of this legislation did trigger the obligation to meet with First Nations and Métis groups. I'm not sure what the substance of those consultations were, Mr. Speaker, but I do hope that they were robust.

I know a lot of the reporting talked about the stock growers, Chad MacPherson with the stock growers and their . . . They had expressed some concern back in 2013 but it was difficult to find information about just what those other consultations had expressed.

So I do know that my colleague will want to speak further and perhaps learn more about what exactly happened in those consultations, and ensure that we do have this piece of legislation right when we're talking about such a huge portion of the land mass in Saskatchewan. But I think with that I will conclude my comments and move a motion to adjourn debate on Bill No. 34.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Good to join debate this fine afternoon on Bill No. 35, *The Small Claims Act, 2016* and of course the accompanying legislation in the French language.

This is an interesting bill, Mr. Speaker, inasmuch as it both repeals and replaces the existing small claims legislation and makes a number of changes to enhance and modernize processes and procedures at the small claims court.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, wherein the minister refers to a review that was conducted by the Ministry of Justice and the

work that has come forward. Certainly the first recommendation of note is that the regulatory amendments in this past February increased the small claims monetary limit from \$20,000 to \$30,000. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, it would be interesting to note when the last time the amount limit was increased and thoughts around the adequacy on the 30,000, the new 30,000 limit.

The further change enables the court's abilities or will expand on the court's authority to award costs to be paid from one party to another, awarding costs where a party fails to attend or purposely delays any step in the proceedings — again, Mr. Speaker, keeping up with the practice.

And there are certainly a number of other changes around the authority of the small claims courts and around the awarding of default judgments and as well with the ability to cite certain individuals for contempt where situations warrant.

Otherwise there are other housekeeping amendments that are in keeping with this kind of legislation. But again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of both repealing and replacing all in the same go, we'll be interested to hear more from our colleagues with the kind of legal expertise and the experience with the system.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 35, *The Small Claims Act, 2016*.

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

Mr. McCall: — Again, Mr. Speaker, as per the remarks previous, these are flowing from the changes made in Bill No. 35 and need not much more consideration at this time. But again they are consequential to the changes brought forward in Bill No. 35. And with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 36.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 36, *The Small Claims Consequential Amendments Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And certainly in terms of the context, this bill has come forward with a significant amount of attention paid to what's happening in the world of traffic safety. I've got some more extensive comments to make on this piece of legislation. And certainly this comes as part of a suite of legislation that we've seen just this very week be passed in an expedited fashion in terms of updating the traffic safety legislation in this province.

And I will look to reserve my opportunity to participate in further debate on *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*, but for the moment, Mr. Speaker, noting the hour of the day, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 37, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2016*.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 37, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. It now being 5 p.m., this Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker	1085
Wall	1085
Wotherspoon	1086
Belanger	1086
Campeau	1087
Nerlien	1087
Hart	1087
Steele	1087
Kaeding	1087
Ottenbreit	1087
Forbes	1087

MOTIONS

Motion to Authorize Interpretation From the Chamber Floor

Merriman	1085
----------------	------

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Nerlien	1088
Chartier	1088
Belanger	1088
Sproule	1088
Forbes	1089
Rancourt	1089
Beck	1089
McCall	1089
Sarauer	1090
Vermette	1090

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Disc Golf Gains Popularity in Regina

Sarauer	1090
---------------	------

Welcome to Syrian Refugees

Docherty	1090
----------------	------

Prince Albert Powwow Contributes to Inclusive Community

Rancourt	1091
----------------	------

Funding Requirements for Refugee Students

Lambert	1091
---------------	------

Children’s Hospital Radiothon

Makowsky	1091
----------------	------

Movember

Lawrence	1091
----------------	------

Protecting Saskatchewan Jobs

Bradshaw	1092
----------------	------

QUESTION PERIOD

Auditor’s Report and Details of Land Transaction

Wotherspoon	1092
Wall	1092
Harrison	1093

Donations to Saskatchewan Party

Forbes	1094
Wall	1094

Provisions of *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2016*

Sproule	1094
Doherty	1095

Funding for Lighthouse Emergency Shelter

Rancourt	1095
Reiter	1095

Provision of Long-Term Care

Chartier	1095
Reiter	1095

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Lawrence	1096
----------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 41 — *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2016*

Wyant.....	1097
Belanger.....	1097

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 26 — *The Patient Choice Medical Imaging Act*

Rancourt.....	1104
---------------	------

Bill No. 28 — *The Extension of Compassionate Care Act, 2016*

Sproule.....	1106
--------------	------

Bill No. 29 — *The Justices of the Peace Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur les juges de paix*

McCall.....	1107
-------------	------

Bill No. 30 — *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*

McCall.....	1108
-------------	------

Bill No. 31 — *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act, 2016*

Rancourt.....	1109
---------------	------

Bill No. 1 — *The Crown Corporations Public Ownership Amendment Act, 2016*

Chartier.....	1110
---------------	------

Bill No. 32 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance (Benefits) Amendment Act, 2016*

Sproule.....	1111
--------------	------

Bill No. 33 — *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2016*

Sproule.....	1112
--------------	------

Bill No. 34 — *The Provincial Lands Act, 2016*

Beck.....	1113
-----------	------

Bill No. 35 — *The Small Claims Act, 2016/Loi de 2016 sur les petites créances*

McCall.....	1114
-------------	------

Bill No. 36 — *The Small Claims Consequential Amendments Act, 2016*

McCall.....	1114
-------------	------

Bill No. 37 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2016*

McCall.....	1115
-------------	------

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