



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

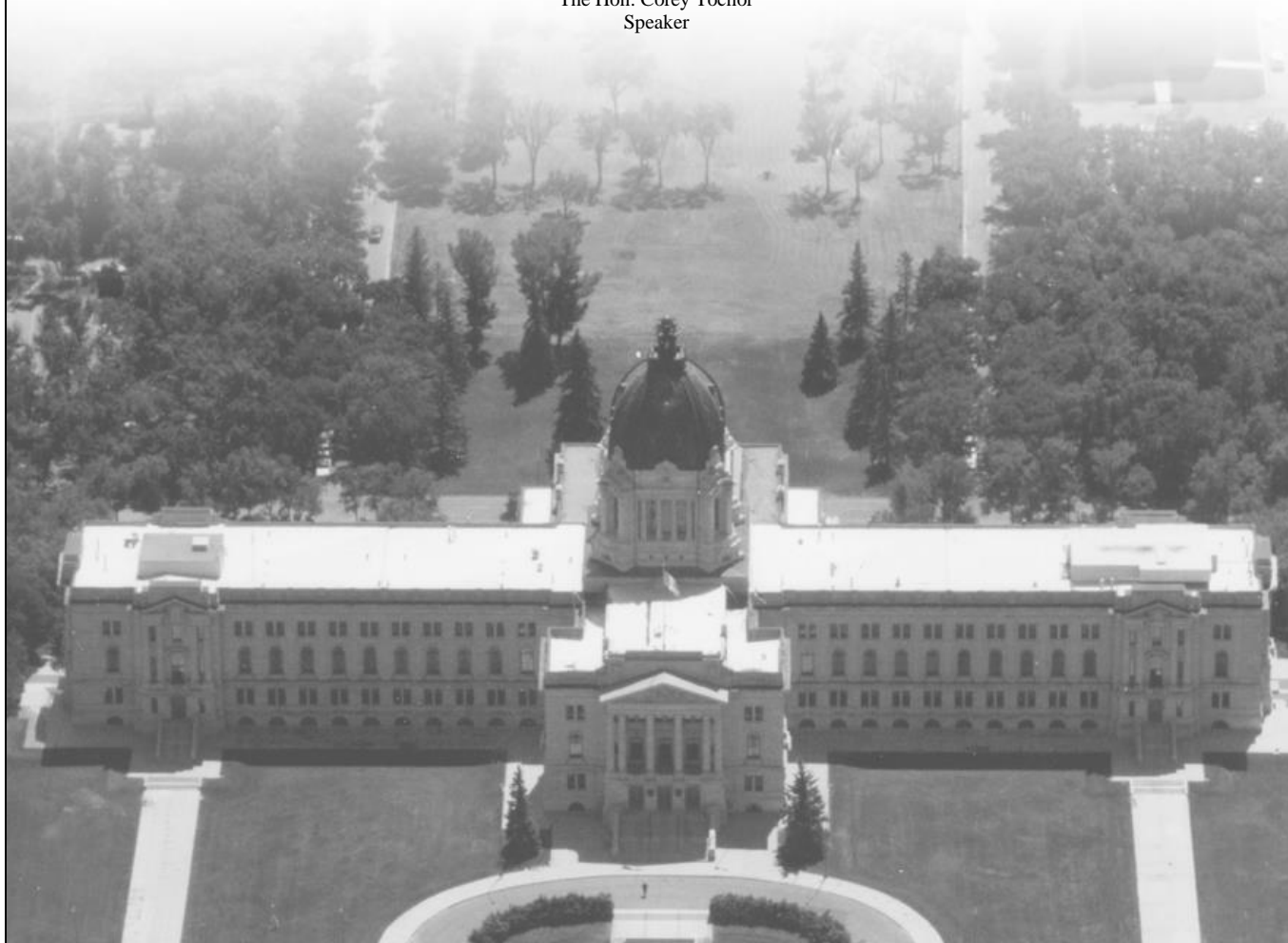
of the

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

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

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Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Wall, Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)

Weekes, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, it's my honour to introduce a number of leaders from northern Saskatchewan that are seated in your gallery. If they could give a wave as I say their names.

First we have Chief Lawrence McIntyre of the English River First Nation. We have Chief Coreen Sayazie from Black Lake Denesuline First Nation. We have Chief Rudy Adam from Fond du Lac Denesuline First Nation. We have Mayor Mike Natomagan from the northern village of Pinehouse. We have Geoff Gay, who is the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Athabasca Basin Development; Anne Robillard, Chair of the board for the Athabasca Basin Development; Vice-chief Joe Tsannie Jr. of the Prince Albert Grand Council; Victor Fern, chairperson of the Six Rivers Fund; Jeff Hryhoriw, director of government relations for Cameco; Jonathon Huntington, director of community investment and corporate responsibility for Cameco; and Darrel Burnouf, manager of corporate responsibility in Cameco.

Mr. Speaker, I had the great pleasure of having lunch with these great leaders here today and was able to hear some of their concerns and also about some of the good work that is happening in northern Saskatchewan. These leaders have done great work in partnering with industry, and industries like Cameco have equally been great partners for northern Saskatchewan.

I certainly want to thank them for travelling here today, and hope they had great meetings because they had the opportunity to meet with a number of cabinet ministers. So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I want to join with the minister across and welcome everybody to the Assembly here, all the chiefs, all the northern leaders, and Cameco. It's really great that you guys were all able to attend today. Look forward to meeting with everybody.

I really look forward to meeting with FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] Chief Bobby Cameron. And I've worked with Vice-chief Tsannie; we've had some meetings together. Geoff's wife, Lori, works with my partner, Darren, at Prince Albert Grand Council, and I look forward to officially working with you also. So thank you and welcome to you

Assembly. And if everybody could join me in welcoming them. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the minister and the member in welcoming this delegation to their Legislative Assembly today and thank them, Mr. Speaker, for their leadership, not just in northern Saskatchewan but province wide.

And I think we should also introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I believe Chief Bobby Cameron from the FSIN is also here, as well as Vice-chief Heather Bear from the FSIN, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank, on the record, Chief Cameron for his leadership and work with respect to the tragedies that have unfolded in the North. I look forward to travelling this week and having Chief Cameron participating and leading in the work that we're going to be doing there.

But, Mr. Speaker, he is a stalwart leader for our First Nations and indeed a Saskatchewan leader, and I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Chief Bobby Cameron to his Legislative Assembly today.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my honour to join with the Premier to welcome certainly all these northern leaders to their Assembly here today, but specifically Chief Bobby Cameron of the FSIN. It's an honour to have you here in your Assembly, Chief.

And the official opposition is grateful for your leadership and your efforts, as is the province of Saskatchewan on so many fronts: currently your engagement and leadership on youth suicides and the tragedy that we must resolve and deal with; but as well, matters of pipelines, for which you've been focused on being constructive in finding security and better oversight and management; and as well just all those efforts focusing in on education and our economy for First Nations people across Saskatchewan, ensuring that we're building hope, opportunity, and strength for the long term. So it's my honour to welcome Chief Bobby Cameron to his Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today, along with the member from Cannington, I had the privilege of honouring 15 of this year's Scholarship of Honour recipients. And this scholarship provides returning soldiers or family members of

injured or fallen soldiers with funding to pursue post-secondary education.

And I would like to welcome in their legislature, in the west gallery, Corporal Jody Salway — if you can give a wave — and his wife, Carole; Master Corporal Jordan Donohue and his dad, Chris; and Melanie Rustenburg, the spouse of Retired Corporal Joseph Rustenburg. Also in attendance is Joseph's service dog, Vixen, if you can catch him there.

Mr. Speaker, as it happens, Melanie and Joseph Rustenburg were featured in a *Globe and Mail* piece over the weekend. And Melanie was credited by her husband for helping him deal with post-traumatic stress, an injury following his three deployments to Afghanistan. He calls Melanie his rock. She kept me alive, he says, when I gave up on life. I am so immensely thankful.

I understand that Melanie wants to become a police officer, and I cannot think of a better candidate. The same goes for all the other recipients, Mr. Speaker. We wish them all the best in their post-secondary studies. It was an honour to spend time with these great people this morning, and I would like to thank them again for their service and sacrifice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister opposite in welcoming and congratulating the 15 winners of the Scholarship of Honour. Thank you to all the service people for your service, and also we know that when soldiers serve, their families also sacrifice. So I welcome all of those soldiers and their families here today. Thank you for your service, and congratulations on winning this scholarship. And I would join all members in joining me in those sentiments. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I want to join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming Chief Bobby Cameron to this Legislative Assembly. As well, we have Vice-chief Heather Bear from Ochapowace, and we have Rory MacLean, Mr. Speaker, from the communications with the FSIN.

As well, I do want to acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, Mark Dietz and Kevin Schoepp, who are conservation officers that joined with us here today to witness a memorandum of understanding, an agreement that Chief Cameron and I signed with respect to access for our conservation officers into First Nations communities. And, Mr. Speaker, we'll hear more about that from the member, I believe, from North Battleford in a member statement.

But I want all members here today to welcome Chief Cameron, Vice-chief Bear to their Assembly and thank them for the effort that they make on so many files and their engagement with the provincial government.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the

members that have welcomed the leadership from northern Saskatchewan and those chiefs that are from the South FSIN. I just want to acknowledge Chief Bart Tsannie — welcome to your Legislative Assembly — and the great work you're doing on behalf of your people and your nation. To Vice-chief Smy Tsannie, I just want to say welcome. Welcome to you to the Legislative Assembly, and keep up the good work.

I know that you have many obstacles as First Nations, and I hope someday you can deal with governments nation-to-nation and do the true meaning of the spirit for our people back home that need the help and the great work that you guys do to try to partnership. So I want to say, continue your partnerships and continue the work you are doing. We are there to support you. And I know both sides of this Legislative Assembly will have no choice but to one day deal with you in the true meaning of nation-to-nation. So with that, I honour you to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and through the Legislative Assembly, up on the west gallery I'd like to introduce long-time friends from my hometown of Canora, Saskatchewan. Nine-year-old Lila Wilson, give a wave. She was one of my biggest fans when I was mayor of the town of Canora, and then she was very excited when I decided to jump into politics provincially. And then earlier this spring through my campaign in Canora here, we had the Premier come through our town and meet with our people and do a little campaigning. It was then when little Lila met the Premier, Brad Wall, and questioned and interviewed her. From then on, I was the second favourite politician in that group.

With her today is her father Terry, mother Alissa, brother Jackson, Abby and Aubrey. It's their first time here, and I'd like to welcome them to our legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming Joe and Melanie to their Assembly here today. I had the distinct pleasure of sitting with them and spending some time with them on Saturday night at the Wounded Warriors fundraiser in North Battleford. And they did an excellent job of recounting Joe's trip and Melanie's work that they've done to get back to where they are today. I think they did an awesome job that night, and I know it wasn't easy for them. And it certainly was my pleasure to meet with them. Welcome to your Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the House, a special guest up in your gallery, a young man by the name of Austin MacNally. He is a strong New Democrat, a Young New Democrat who helps an awful lot on the west side in Saskatoon. And he's here to observe the proceedings, and I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming him to his gallery. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to this Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce a number of people, representatives from the Alzheimer Society, in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker.

We have with us today, from their board of directors, Ian Rea, president. We'll just get you to give us a wave. Van Isman, vice-president; Jennifer St. Onge, board member; and board members Donna Milbrandt; Charlene Callander; and Gary Mearns. We also have some staff members with us, Mr. Speaker. We have Joanne Bracken, CEO. We have Joanne Michael, director of programs and operations. We have Leslie Quennell, communications and marketing manager; and Harry Huebner, a family caregiver.

Mr. Speaker, my colleague the Minister of Rural and Remote Health and I had the privilege earlier today of meeting with Ian and Joanne to discuss a number of issues, appreciated that meeting very much. And the society is having a reception later today in the building for all members of the Assembly on both sides, and we're looking to that very much as well, Mr. Speaker.

And I'd ask all members to please give these great representatives from the Alzheimer Society a warm welcome to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the minister opposite in welcoming these folks from the Alzheimer Society of Saskatchewan. I want to thank you for all that you do, the direct support you provide to families, to caregivers, and those living with Alzheimer's and other dementia. I want to thank you for your willingness, the advocacy that you do in helping us understand issues so much better.

[13:45]

I had an opportunity last week, or a week and a half ago, Mr. Speaker, to hear some of the work at a dementia summit in Saskatoon. There's some wonderful research and projects going on here in Saskatchewan. So thank you for your involvement with all of that. And to Joanne Bracken and Joanne Michael, thank you for the time that you've taken to share the work that you do, the challenges that you experience as an organization in how we could do things better, but also the successes that you're having. Those are always wonderful to hear.

As a daughter of someone who is living with dementia, this has always been an important issue I think for my constituents, but in the last couple years as a family we're grappling with those issues as well. So I'm extra grateful for all the work that you do. So I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming these guests to their legislature.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with my members opposite and on this side of the House in welcoming the northern leaders, but specifically I wanted to point out Mayor Mike Natomagan. Congratulations on being re-elected to mayor of Pinehouse Lake.

As most of you know, Pinehouse is where my family members live, and we're so proud of the leadership of both Mike and that whole community, that they have just stepped outside of the box. They've led the northern communities in all sorts of really adventuresome ideas in business planning but also in social programs and in educational programs. They really are not afraid to step off the sidelines and become real leaders. So congratulations to Pinehouse and that whole community. Their elders complex that they are building by local construction workers is just a testament to the work and the dedication that that whole community has in making lives better for each and every person who resides within that community.

So congratulations to Mike and to all of the leaders in Pinehouse Lake for being such a role model for each and every member of your community. So thank you very much for making the long trip down here today and sharing your time and energy with the members of this House. So thank you very much, Mike.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the 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 citizens of Yorkton and Foam Lake. I do so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present a petition to reverse the cuts to the Lighthouse program in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. The petitioners point out that in April 2014 the Minister of Social Services 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." That same day, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that the Minister of Health said, "We want to ensure that individuals with mental health and addictions issues have a safe place to stay."

The petitioners point out that this government has repeatedly

indicated that the Lighthouse stabilization unit keeps individuals out of hospital emergency rooms and jail cells. And this should be extra relevant these days, Mr. Speaker, as the Saskatoon Health Region has reached record over-capacity levels in our hospitals, Mr. Speaker. And clearly the stabilization unit isn't the whole issue, but making these cuts certainly doesn't help. 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 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 today is signed by citizens of Regina, Dalmeny, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition regarding the Sask Party sell-off of SaskTel. The residents want to bring our attention to the following: that after nearly a decade of wasting the economic boom and blowing through the savings, the government is now forcing Saskatchewan people to pay for Sask Party mismanagement; that in the recent election campaign, the Sask Party promised they would not privatize SaskTel, and 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 — but SaskTel is owned by all of us and was built with Saskatchewan hard work, innovation, and pride; that SaskTel creates thousands of good jobs, enables service to parts of the province that other providers ignore, and offers the lowest mobile phone rates in Canada.

I'd like to 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 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 is signed by citizens from the cities of Moose Jaw and Regina. 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. 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. 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 community. This funding cut resulted in the layoff of one-third of the park staff which included two summer students and two regular employees.

But, Mr. Speaker, on June 21st, 2016, the provincial government voted in favour of this bill, resulting in the cuts to Wakamow and subsequent job losses. 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 the city of Moose Jaw. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud 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; the people who are being hurt by this Sask Party cut live with serious illnesses such as multiple sclerosis, cancer, autism, among other illnesses; and that contrary to the Minister of Social Services' 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 Saskatchewan Party government to stop their plan to cut the SAID funding and immediately restore funding for those living with a disability; that shelter allowance should be reflective of the current rental costs; and that the Saskatchewan Party government implement the recommendations of the advisory group on poverty reduction.

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a

petition in support of child care centres in Saskatchewan. Those signing 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 property tax, and this is not done in Alberta, Ontario, B.C. [British Columbia], or New Brunswick.

Child care is essential to our economy, yet most centres struggle just 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 outcomes and yields high rates of economic return. Child care centres are institutions of early learning and childhood development, and it's appropriate that they have the same tax treatment as schools. 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 Saskatchewan education Act and exempt all licensed non-profit child care centres in Saskatchewan from property tax through changes through appropriate legislation.

Mr. Speaker, those citizens signing this petition today reside in Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Spruce Home, and Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present another petition calling on the government to reverse the 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 those on this side of the House know that 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.

Those signing the petition today are from Regina. And I do so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

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

services to students. The province's financial deficit cannot be fixed by cutting indigenous education in the North and 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 to fund NORTEP-NORPAC programs in La Ronge.

It is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Prince Albert Receives Saskatchewan Municipal Award

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to stand today to congratulate my city, Prince Albert, on receiving the Saskatchewan Municipal Award for innovation for its actions during the oil spill crisis this summer that tragically caused the city's water to become contaminated. This award recognizes the efforts of municipal staff in responding to this crisis swiftly, calmly, professionally, and efficiently. Jim Toye, city manager for Prince Albert, points out that the success of the response was due to quick enactment of the emergency operations centre. Because of their collaborative work, the municipal staff was able to assess the situation, make a plan of action, and mobilize hundreds of people to implement it.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Prince Albert's municipal staff held daily briefings and I sat in on most of them. There are no words to express the gratitude that I and the residents of Prince Albert felt as our mayor, council, and staff ensured that we were kept informed of the process being made.

On behalf of my constituents, I wish to wholeheartedly thank Jim Toye and his staff for their dedication and their many, many hours of work. I know that a great deal of staff members postponed holidays and gave up precious time with their families to deal with this crisis. I'm so thrilled that they are being acknowledged with this award.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating the city of Prince Albert on receiving the Saskatchewan Municipal Award for innovation for its work during the oil spill crisis.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Scholarship of Honour Recipients

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was my pleasure earlier today to emcee the Scholarship of Honour event that recognizes the brave individuals who have laid their lives on the line to protect our country and our freedom, a scholarship which I had the honour to propose. This scholarship was announced in 2009, was created to honour the sacrifices

made by members of the Canadian Armed Forces. It gives returning soldiers and family members of injured or fallen individuals a chance to pursue post-secondary studies. The scholarship is \$5,000 and is available to all eligible candidates who apply. Saskatchewan is the only province to offer this type of scholarship.

Mr. Speaker, there have been 162 Scholarship of Honour recipients to date. Today we celebrate 15 of those heroes. Three of them are in the House today. Mr. Speaker, I believe I can speak for all of us here in saying that we are eternally grateful for the sacrifices our men and women in uniform have made for our country daily. I ask all members to join me in thanking the Scholarship of Honour recipients who are here today and in wishing them the best of luck in their studies. Thank you.

[14:00]

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

Paramedic Association Donates to Food Bank

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, members of the Saskatoon Paramedic Association IAFF [International Association of Fire Fighters] Local 3270 include paramedics, emergency medical dispatchers, mechanics, and ambulance technicians providing emergency services to Saskatoon and area residents. Their goal is to provide a strong voice for members in discussion with MD Ambulance, the Saskatchewan Health ministry, the federal government, and other emergency services colleagues. And when their busy workdays are done, they continue to contribute to the well-being of their community.

The Saskatoon Paramedic Association members are strong supporters of various organizations in Saskatoon, committed to serving their community through service and charitable work. For several years, the Saskatoon Paramedic Association and MD Ambulance have worked together to encourage local businesses, schools, and citizens to fill a city bus with donated food items for clients of the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre. The annual food drive continues to result in significant donations to the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre.

This year the Saskatoon Paramedic Association decided to focus their charitable support to make it as meaningful as possible, so they purchased the food bank a much needed new delivery truck. They presented keys for the truck to the food bank at a barbecue and Stuff the Truck event at the 8th Street Saskatoon Co-op in October. The delivery of the truck was perfect timing, said the food bank's executive director, Laurie O'Connor, as their much used old truck had broken down just a few days earlier.

I ask all members to join me in thanking the Saskatoon Paramedic Association, including president Paul Hills, for its long-standing dedication and service to community, and for its support of the Saskatoon Food Bank who fills a tremendous but unfortunately growing need in our city. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Mosque Opens in Lloydminster

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I had the pleasure of attending and speaking at the inaugural reception of Baitul Amaan Mosque which opened on Saturday in Lloydminster.

Also in attendance was His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad; The Respectable Lal Khan Malik, national president of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at; Jason Kenney, former MP [Member of Parliament] for Calgary Midnapore; Gerald Aalbers, mayor-elect for the city of Lloydminster; Ian Hamilton, former mayor of North Battleford; and John Gormley, NewsTalk host.

It was an honour to have the Caliph in Lloydminster for the opening of the new mosque while on his six-week tour across Canada to celebrate the 50-year anniversary of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this event was a wonderful opportunity to bring together people from the world of faith, politics, and civic society. We can see and feel in our province how the Ahmadiyya Muslims are engaged in our communities and are working to help educate people about their religion.

I have had the opportunity to attend two of these educational workshops: Je Suis Hijabi, which was a nationwide campaign to remove the misconstrued notions surrounding Muslim women's identities; as well as Stop the CRISIS, a campaign to counter the rise of youth radicalization.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at for the invitation and congratulate them on the wonderfully successful event. Thank you.

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

Support Our Troops Gala

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This Saturday, I, along with the Premier, the military liaison, the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Humboldt-Watrous, MLA from Regina Northwest, and the MLA from Saskatoon Northwest, had the pleasure of attending the national Support Our Troops Gala.

Held at the Queensbury Centre in Regina, this gala helps raise funds for organizations that support military personnel and their families. Mr. Speaker, the Military Families Fund and the Soldier On program are the beneficiaries of the funds raised at this event. These organizations provide funding and program supports to veterans with serious physical and mental injuries, the families of these veterans, and the families of fallen Canadian Armed Forces members.

Canadian Armed Forces members in attendance included the Chief of Defence Staff, General Jonathan H. Vance; 2 Canadian Air Division Commander Brigadier-General D.B. Cochrane; and command team members from HMCS [Her Majesty's Canadian Ship] *Regina*: Commander Colin Matthews, Lieutenant-Commander Andrew Graham, and Chief Petty Officer 1st Class Dexter Goulding.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Support Our Troops Gala organization on such a successful event, and in thanking all the brave men and women who have served and continue to serve. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Joint Agreement Regarding Conservation Officers and First Nations

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to inform members about a joint agreement signed today between the Government of Saskatchewan and the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations. This agreement relates to entry onto First Nations reserves by our conservation officers. The agreement formalizes guidelines already in place between the ministry and a number of First Nations, and outlines a process for conservation officers following when accessing First Nations reserves to conduct law enforcement duties.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement will result in several outcomes, including enhanced communication and co-operation between First Nations and the Ministry of Environment, as well as shared support for the conservation of renewable resources and the environment. Mr. Speaker, our government respects First Nations treaty rights to hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering.

The guidelines in this agreement speak to a shared commitment to protecting and respecting our natural resources and to the committed co-operation between First Nations and government. By sharing information, working together, and respecting the authority of each other's jurisdiction, we will ensure the ongoing success of this relationship.

Mr. Speaker, our government appreciates our good working relationship with the FSIN, and we are looking forward to continuing to work together. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Firm Moves Head Office to Moose Jaw

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I had the great privilege of attending an exciting announcement made by the Premier and some directors of Agrocorp Processing. Mr. Speaker, it's official: Agrocorp will be moving its headquarters from Vancouver to Moose Jaw in 2017.

Our government has made it a priority to create an environment where business can prosper, and as a result we are seeing business from around the world come to invest in Saskatchewan. Managing Director Colin Topham has this to say about their company's decision, and I quote, "Agrocorp is proud to be moving its headquarters to this growing province."

Mr. Speaker, since Agrocorp Processing's inception in 2009, it has expanded to four processing plants and 50 employees Canada wide. They already have a major investment in Moose Jaw. It is a state-of-the-art, \$20 million, high-speed, gentle-handling pulse facility that opened in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, as the transition to Moose Jaw takes place over the next three years, 20 new employees will be calling my city home.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in thanking everyone who has worked hard in seeing this happen and thank Agrocorp for being a part of keeping Saskatchewan strong. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Rulings on Points of Order

The Speaker: — On Thursday, November 3rd, 2016, two points of orders were raised by the Government House Leader and one further point of order was raised by the Opposition House Leader. I will address each point of order in separate rulings.

On the first point of order that was raised by the Government House Leader, he alleged that the member from Saskatoon Nutana used the phrase "making stuff up." In response, the Opposition House Leader indicated there is no list of words or phrases that are not able to be said, rather a question around what motive is imputed with the phrase itself.

I have reviewed *Hansard* and on page 1124 the member from Saskatoon Nutana stated and I quote, "they're making it up as they go along." Language similar to this has been found to be unparliamentarian on numerous occasions in recent years.

This comment is part of what I think has been a steady erosion of decorum in recent days because of inflammatory and provocative comments hurled across the floor, both on and off the record. I've asked to review the record and, in doing so, I am sorry to say I found many instances of language that are of concern. On Thursday, I found that members have accused each other of misrepresentation and mischaracterization. Members have come very close to questioning the truthfulness or the forthrightness of each member. On the very point the Government House Leader raised with respect to language of the member of Nutana in question period, a government member accused an opposition member and I quote, "... they're making this up in their pretended mind ..." during the 75-minute debate.

Members, this has to stop. I am asking all members to tone it down. The member for Nutana isn't the only member who has contributed to the erosion in decorum, so on this occasion I will not single her out to withdraw and apologize.

I would strongly urge members to choose their words wisely as it is possible to effectively debate opposing positions, criticize statements made by members as being contrary to the facts, or offering alternative versions of the facts. This can be done without calling into question the integrity of other members.

Further, I would also like to bring attention to all members that in recent days members are not following the rules of debate as outlined in rule 51(c) which states that members should be referred to by title, position, or constituency name. An example, on Thursday, members referred to other members as "scandal-plagued former minister" or the "junior minister from

Meadow Lake” and the “old grim reaper.” Members should not follow their own rules.

In the second point of order, the Government House Leader raised the issue that questions asked during question period relating to the Saskatchewan Party political donations should be found out of order. To support this point of order, the Government House Leader quoted rule 20(2), which states:

Questions relating to any matter with the administrative competence of the government or on matters related to the individual ministerial responsibility may be asked of the Minister of the Crown. Questions on issues not officially connected with the government, of a private nature, related to Board of Internal Economy, caucus, party or political responsibilities are prohibited.

The Opposition House Leader indicated that questions relating to electoral finance laws are a matter of responsibility and competence for the Government of Saskatchewan and should be found in order.

I have considered the matter and reviewed the record. The exchange in question can be found on page 1125 of *Hansard* where the member asked the question about political funding, and in turn a response was given relating to political campaign expenses. Everything the Opposition House Leader said is true, but the problem is the member did not directly connect his question to electoral finance law or any other matter within the government responsibility. The previous day the member asked a similar question, but on that occasion he did connect it to campaign finance laws.

I find that the question on Thursday was out of order. Members need to directly connect the question of administration of government in accordance with rule 20(2). I find that the point of order is well taken.

Final point of order. The third point of order raised in the Assembly on November 3, 2016 was made by the Opposition House Leader. He stated, and I quote:

... at the start of question period, the Minister of Economy, while the Premier was speaking, shouted over that, quote, “That’s an absolute lie.”

The Government House Leader responded that he did not think there was anything on record and that he did not hear the comment. When the Speaker must consult with both the written and video recording before a matter is addressed, it illustrates the difficulty caused by excessive noise and members shouting across the floor. It also prevents me from dealing promptly with questionable language.

I’ve reviewed *Hansard* and listened to the video recording closely. I did not find nor did I hear comments alleged to have been said by the minister. Accordingly I am not able to rule on this particular instance. However I’d like to clarify that the unparliamentarian remarks are out of order, whether they are recorded or not. This is consistent with the ruling made by Speaker Kowalsky on April 11th, 2007 when he stated, I quote:

I wish to conclude by cautioning all members to be

temperate in their remarks, both while recognized to speak and while speaking from their seat. Many of these unofficial comments or heckles are intentionally provocative and inflammatory. The course of last Thursday’s debate is illustrative of how such remarks are unhelpful. The fact that Hansard may not be able to attribute them to a particular member does not make them acceptable language.

As Doreen would say, you’ve been told. So let’s respect each other.

[14:15]

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Role of the Global Transportation Hub in Land Acquisitions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, today marks the ninth anniversary of that government.

[Applause]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — They can cheer all they want, but so much has changed. Years pretending and telling Saskatchewan people — get this — that they’ll be the most open and transparent government in Canada. And meanwhile their mismanagement has been piling up, and they were plotting in backrooms to push through their GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal. Now they won’t even answer the simplest and most straightforward of questions.

So on this anniversary: why did the Premier allow this bad deal to go through the GTH instead of having Highways acquire the land, as they were planning to do and which would have saved millions of dollars?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his question. It has been nine years since our government had the good fortune, the humbling honour to serve in government in the province of Saskatchewan, and much has changed in Saskatchewan. There are now over 100,000 more people than were here in 2007, and we’ve had \$6 billion worth of tax reductions for Saskatchewan people. We’ve made \$8 billion in additional infrastructure investments, including the GTH. We have paid off the operating debt of the province to the tune of over 35 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And we have sought to grow the economy. Part of our plan to grow the economy was to do what members opposite failed to do, and that was to help create and facilitate the Global Transportation Hub in and near the capital city. And, Mr. Speaker, since then we’ve seen millions of square feet constructed in terms of logistics and warehousing and hundreds of jobs created, thousands in the construction, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the land acquisition, I repeat again: the Provincial Auditor was given full licence to look at any matter related to the transaction including cabinet documents. She

highlighted that there was a problem with respect to communications between the Ministry of Highways and the Global Transportation Hub, and a number of other very significant recommendations made by the auditor which we accept fully. She also, in the press release that accompanied the report, indicated clearly that there was not fraud; neither was there a conflict of interest nor wrongdoing on the part of the board which included at the time the minister responsible.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Not a single answer again from the Premier here today. A bit of a brag-fest that Saskatchewan people have grown to be accustomed. You would think that the Premier would be just a bit contrite about the 20-some million dollars wasted in this GTH scandal. And of course he knows it wasn't a forensic audit, and in fact the audit that was there was scathing and exonerated no one.

We know that Highways wanted to buy the land all the way along. We know that the GTH and Highways were working under that assumption and that plan. So a simple straightforward question to the Premier: what changed? Why did he use the GTH to pay way too much for that land?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges identified in the auditor's report is that the assembly, the acquisition of the land was occurring at a time of rapidly escalating land costs, Mr. Speaker, and those rapidly escalating land costs led to the final price tag.

But I fundamentally disagree with the preamble to my hon. friend's question. No money has been lost in this project. In fact acres of land have been sold at a higher price than the price purchased . . . than the purchase price of the land in question in this debate. That's the bottom line.

And do you know what's happening, Mr. Speaker? People are wanting to invest in the Global Transportation Hub at those higher prices. Even when you account for servicing those lots, Mr. Speaker, the price is higher than the government paid. They are investing in those lots. They are locating businesses there. I think we're going to have more good news actually at the Global Transportation Hub in the months ahead in terms of being a premier and preferred place to be on the prairies for industries involved in logistics, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward then at that point to the full support of the Hon. Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Only this Premier can think that somehow wasting tens of millions of dollars is somehow a good deal for Saskatchewan taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. I guess it's the same Premier that's added \$7 billion of debt in seven years, Mr. Speaker.

We know that this issue was discussed at cabinet at least twice. The first time the Minister of Justice told his colleagues that it was a bad deal; it had a concealed identity of course. A year later it came back again. This time the land was even more

expensive. \$25 million had conveniently arrived from SaskPower and the former minister that had been plagued by scandals, and a Sask Party supporter's name was now attached to the land. And the cabinet okayed the deal. To the Premier: why, and what changed?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well of course, Mr. Speaker, the preamble is wrong again from the Leader of the Opposition. The money was not wasted; in fact, we've sold land at the GTH for more than which we purchased it in the transaction in question.

You know, as far as the auditor's report, the auditor had full authority to canvass all matters related to this transaction. She had access to all of the documents and all of the individuals to which she wanted.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the context of the audit that was done, the auditor identified a number of challenges. She made 10 recommendations, eight of which related to the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, two of which related to the Global Transportation Hub Authority.

We've fully accepted those recommendations. We're working diligently on the implementation of those recommendations. And I know the auditor is going to have the opportunity to address the recommendations tomorrow at committee.

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

Public Accounts Committee Meeting

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Refusing to give answers day after day is offensive to Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker.

And so the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee has called a meeting, as has been referenced, to get to the bottom of this. That PAC [Public Accounts Committee] is of course chaired by the opposition, and its role is to review the actions of government. But we can't call witnesses like the DM [deputy minister] of the Minister of the Economy without the support of the Sask Party Deputy Chair and the Sask Party majority.

So will the Premier instruct his members on the committee to support being fully open . . . or to fully open and transparent committee hearings starting tomorrow into issues arising from the auditor's report, so we can get the answers that we can't get here on the floor of this Assembly?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition referenced getting to the bottom. The Provincial Auditor got to the bottom of the matter and her conclusion was that . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh they're heckling, Mr.

Speaker, so they don't agree with the Provincial Auditor's conclusion. They clearly don't. We know that they don't. They profess support for the work that the Provincial Auditor has done and then they constantly, constantly stand up and question the conclusion that she came to which there was no wrongdoing, there was no conflict of interest, and that there was no fraud.

As far as the Public Accounts Committee, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition should know that executive government does not direct what members of a legislative committee do. That's a question of privilege, Mr. Speaker, and the Leader of the Opposition should be aware of that. If he isn't aware of it, I know that the Opposition House Leader most definitely is aware of that.

So the committee will do their work, Mr. Speaker. The Provincial Auditor will have the opportunity to discuss her report, present her recommendations. I know those recommendations will be dealt with very seriously by the Public Accounts Committee, as they've been dealt with very seriously by the Government of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, on both fronts, what an outrageous and weak response from that government. The question was to the Premier. The minister can yell all he wants, or he could try to answer a question here too.

The DM to the Minister of the Economy is identified throughout the auditor's report as a key player in the deal that led to the scandal. In the report he is unnamed, but it's clear who it is. He's still responsible to the Minister of the Economy. So will the Premier do all he can to ensure that he shows up and testifies to that committee?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Just to be clear, what the Leader of the Opposition is encouraging the government, asking the government to breach the privileges of members of the House. That's what the Leader of the Opposition is . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And he thinks it's funny, but that is what the Leader of the Opposition is doing.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, you well know, as does the Opposition House Leader and others in this Assembly, that committees have the ability to determine their own, well their own rules for one thing, but also they have the ability to determine questions of process. The executive branch of government does not direct committees to do things or members of committees to do things. That is a breach of privilege, and that's exactly what the Leader of the Opposition is counselling.

At the Public Accounts Committee tomorrow though, the Provincial Auditor will have the opportunity to discuss the recommendations that were made in her report. And I'm sure her conclusion, which she indicated when that report was issued, was that there was no wrongdoing, there was no fraud, and there was no conflict of interest.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the question was to the Premier. Not only has he hidden from providing answers on the floor of this Assembly, now he's hiding witnesses who are key to this very land scandal. And you know, we also look forward to speaking to all three of the CEOs of the GTH who are involved in this deal.

Of course there was the long-serving public servant that was booted right before the Sask Party's bid to buy the land was brought to cabinet. Of course we know he questioned this, and we know that he was recommending that Highways be the one to proceed to save millions. Then there's the long-time Sask Party operative who was around as this deal was brought forward to cabinet the first time and right there up until the second pitch. And of course we should also have the current CEO there as well.

Again, will the Premier instruct his members to ensure these witnesses come before the committee as soon as they are available? Or will he simply play political games and hide from answering questions? Will he delay substantive witnesses?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well who'd know you'd go to question period, Mr. Speaker, and a debate on committee procedure would break out? But let me explain it again to the Leader of the Opposition. The executive branch of government does not direct committee members or committees to do things. That is up to the committee. I'm happy to go through that again, Mr. Speaker, but the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the Opposition clearly didn't listen to the response. He's got a very clear response which is that the committee can determine how it wishes to proceed. And frankly it would be a breach of members' privileges if the executive branch were to direct the committee to proceed in a particular manner.

But we know that the Provincial Auditor is going to have the opportunity tomorrow to present her recommendations to that committee. We know the committee will deal with those recommendations seriously, as the government has taken those recommendations very seriously. And that's been our focus on implementing those recommendations — eight recommendations to the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, two recommendations to the Global Transportation Hub. We're going to continue to move forward on implementing those recommendations, and we look forward to the Provincial Auditor's report tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Employment and Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — This is a weak . . . The question was to the Premier. No, no answers from that Premier, not even a willingness to ensure the proper witnesses to committee.

But if we can't get a question answered there, what about the terrible job losses that keep mounting under this government?

4,200 jobs were lost in the last month alone; almost all those were full-time jobs. Mr. Speaker, 11,000 fewer Saskatchewan people are working now than a year ago. Unemployment is almost seven per cent. Month after month the Sask Party has tried to spin this as good news. Through nearly a decade of record revenue, the Sask Party never missed an opportunity to boast and claim credit for everything, almost including the sun rising in the east, Mr. Speaker. But on Friday the silence on that side of the House was deafening.

We need to take action right now before this situation gets any worse. Will the Premier admit that he wasted a historic opportunity for Saskatchewan people? Will he now take action and implement a strategy to create jobs for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the job numbers show what we have known for some time, and that is that the record low commodity prices, at least in contemporary history, have cost jobs for Saskatchewan people, for Saskatchewan families. They have cost investment into this economy, Mr. Speaker. That's why two budgets ago we introduced new-growth tax incentives for processing jobs to be created, for corporate office jobs to be created, Mr. Speaker. I note that just this day a company that was previously headquartered in Vancouver has announced their intention to move to Moose Jaw, in part to take advantage of the policies of the government.

I would also point out this to my hon. friend: Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the challenges today, even with these current numbers included, it's fair to say that between now and nine years ago when the Saskatchewan Party government was elected, since then, even including these latest numbers, Saskatchewan has the second-best job creation record in the country. Mr. Speaker, in fact, if you take a look at that, 60,000 more jobs today, even with these latest numbers, than when we were first elected, Mr. Speaker. We've created jobs at double the national rate of job creation.

Mr. Speaker, it wasn't very long ago when members opposite were presiding over some pretty healthy times from a commodity price perspective, and their job creation record in the country, while they were in office during good times, was dead last, Mr. Speaker.

We'll continue to implement the growth plan of this province, to continue to diversify the economy, and create opportunities in the face of difficult commodity prices, Mr. Speaker. That was what we campaigned on, Mr. Speaker, and we will carry through with that plan.

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

SaskTel Call Centre

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we've just heard of an additional 21 jobs being cut in Moose Jaw, this time at SaskTel. So while the Sask Party is celebrating announcements, well they're kicking even more workers out of work in the same city. These jobs are being cut from a call centre, and that means that Moose Jaw is

losing these jobs at a time that they can ill afford the loss.

Are more workers in other rural locations going to lose their jobs as well? These jobs provide an essential service and benefit local economies, and this is especially important in tough economic times. Mr. Speaker, is this the beginning of mass SaskTel job cuts out of rural Saskatchewan communities? And if the minister won't answer my question about these jobs, can he tell us this: why the members from Moose Jaw did not stand up for their own community again.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources and SaskTel.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, these decisions are never easy ones to make. What SaskTel is doing is ensuring that they are reducing their costs so that they can, in fact, increase their efficiencies to remain competitive in a very competitive environment.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear. There are no job losses associated with this. Mr. Speaker, there are no layoffs associated with this decision. The reality is, is that this is a call centre. Call centres are seeing reduced volume, about a 5 per cent reduction in calls on a yearly basis as people are engaging with SaskTel in other means — online and in other ways, Mr. Speaker — and so this is a way for SaskTel to ensure that they can remain competitive well into the future.

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

Health Services for Northern and Rural Communities

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, this weekend we heard from the president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association, who spoke out on the lack of funding and services in our northern communities. After talking to northern health care providers, Dr. Pillay, president of the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association], said:

We were saddened to learn of the lack of services that exist in terms of an adequate number of counsellors . . . Mental health services are lacking. They do have specialists who provide care, but . . . [it is] on a sporadic basis.

Mr. Speaker, the SMA, like the rest of us, are shocked at the lack of services, especially in light of recent events in La Loche and the ongoing epidemic of youth suicides. We see time and time again that the Sask Party does not prioritize services in the North. Does the minister agree with the SMA president, or does he deny there is a lack of services in the North?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, the member referenced some of the recent tragedies in the North, and of course as any parent or grandparent would feel the pain of loss, especially the loss of a child, Mr. Speaker.

But I would like to point out to our record. We have been paying close attention to the North prior to even these local events. She referenced La Loche, Mr. Speaker. I was actually at La Loche three days before the tragic events of last January, listening to the community to hear what some of the input that they had to say, some of the challenges they were facing, Mr. Speaker. And in light of that, there had been, even prior to that, continuing increases to the North in response to some of the challenge they do have, Mr. Speaker.

She had referenced some of the medical professionals. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to physicians, we know that under our government we've increased 62 per cent in investment to northern medical services which is the provider for the majority of doctors in the North. And I'd be happy to speak more in depth of our record and some of the other supports in place in the ensuing questions.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, it's not just mental health services that are lacking in the North. It's medical care in general. And it has been made clear that the lack of services is due to a lack of funds. Allow me to quote the SMA president again: "... they don't have a budget to support more sessions at that particular clinic." Mr. Speaker, he went on to say that, "Dillon is just one example. Ile-a-la-Crosse and La Loche could do with another physician they don't have funding for." Mr. Speaker, the lack of services in the North are a direct result of this government's mismanagement, scandal, and waste.

Now the Minister of Health and the other Health minister will say they are focused on the North, but doctors and patients tell us that simply is not the reality. So, Mr. Speaker, why is the Sask Party refusing to provide adequate health care in the North?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, as with any other region, through our Ministry of Health, we've increased funding to all regions by approximately 50 per cent to our health care budget. We're investing heavily not only in physicians but nurses and other practitioners, Mr. Speaker. In fact, we've been training them in more northern, remote, and rural areas to make sure that they get that experience, that we're more likely to retain them and attract them to those areas, Mr. Speaker.

But in response particularly to Dillon, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to get jurisdiction in the way of serving those in our northern areas around the province, our citizens. But, Mr. Speaker, we have to remember that Dillon is a First Nations community. But we do rely heavily on the federal government and the First Nations communities to help us in delivering health care to these communities, Mr. Speaker.

Northern medical services to Ile-a-la-Crosse support six resident physicians, five administrative staff, and also serves the communities of Dillon and surrounding, Mr. Speaker. Keewatin Yatthé Health Region also has one mental health worker that

sees clients from time to time. Meadow Lake Tribal Council also supports services, Mr. Speaker.

But I would also point to Dillon in particular. Aside from the one physician that they do have, they have three nurses, one of which is a practitioner that offers appointments and community programs five days a week, two community health representatives, a TB [tuberculosis] worker, and other supports I'd love to talk about in ensuing questions.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan children are losing their lives. It does not matter in which community they call home. This is a minister whose only job is to handle rural and remote health. That is all he is responsible for, but we have no idea what he does. He certainly isn't improving rural and remote health. Mr. Speaker, as in most things, the Sask Party is going in the wrong direction, including in health. A doctor in the North said, "Our services seem to be getting cut rather than enhanced." To the Minister of Rural and Remote Health, a simple question: when will this change?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, again I'll point out to the member, we do support medical services in surrounding areas off-reserve, but she's speaking about on-reserve. But, Mr. Speaker, we still invest, through northern medical services, all those practitioners that do practise on-reserve which is normally, or is a federal responsibility. But again, Mr. Speaker, we have increased funding to northern medical services by 62 per cent since the members opposite were looking after it, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also point again to the many other services and supports we have put in place when it comes particularly to the recruitment and retention of professionals, whether it's physicians, which now we see training in rural areas which previously weren't. We have 60 more positions, almost double the positions of medical training in the province for physicians, Mr. Speaker. We've increased residency positions, many of those in rural areas. We're training nurses for the North, Mr. Speaker, as far north as Ile-a-la-Crosse and as far south in rural areas as Yorkton, to serve our rural and remote populations, Mr. Speaker.

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

Donations to Political Parties

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The numbers speak for themselves. A recent poll of Saskatchewan residents found that nearly 70 per cent of Saskatchewan people think that out-of-province companies should not be able to donate to political parties. And polls from earlier this year have shown that a majority of Saskatchewan people think that corporate and union donations should be banned altogether. Mr. Speaker, we agree. But still the Premier chooses not to listen. He says that Alberta companies are Saskatchewan people too, and that it's

just fine for his party to rely on corporate donations so they can top up his salary every year.

But, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan democracy is for Saskatchewan people. So will the Premier take the people's advice and work with us to pass legislation to get big money out of Saskatchewan's politics?

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite says Saskatchewan democracy is for Saskatchewan people, and we agree with that, Mr. Speaker. The majority of donations that come in from out-of-province companies come from companies that have substantial interests in this province, both by way of employment, Mr. Speaker, and by way of investment. So, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, we have Saskatchewan companies that have interest, Mr. Speaker, they have an interest in moving forward with having some position with respect to public policy, Mr. Speaker, for the very reason that there's a number of those people, those companies, Mr. Speaker, that have substantial investments in the province, employing substantial people, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Well not perfect today, but improving. I think . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Would the member from Saskatoon Centre come to order. I was in the process of saying not perfect, but improving. But unfortunately, I think at the end we went a little sideways. Let's try again tomorrow to do a better job in respecting each other. I recognize the Premier.

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Well Completion Program

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to be seeking leave and consensus of the House to move a motion under rule 61 which sets out the cause for a debate in a motion presented to the House on an urgent matter, Mr. Speaker.

In question period today, the Leader of the Opposition quite rightly pointed to the recent job numbers as of serious concern, as they have been for some period of time. Mr. Speaker, the motion that I'm about to read would ask the Assembly to provide unanimous consent and unanimous support for our plan to call on the federal government for a well completion program that would immediately put . . . well almost immediately put 1,000 energy workers back to work if we could get federal support for this program.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be moving this motion, and I would ask for unanimous consent for the debate:

That this House supports a call to the Government of Canada to implement a national well completion program that could put over 1,000 energy workers back to work.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The opposition has not granted leave. The motion will not move forward.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 6

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour to finally rise today to speak to Bill No. 6, *The Statute Law Amendment Act*. Being critic for this bill, I've heard the discussion from the minister opposite as well as my colleagues. With respect to this bill, from what I understand, the gist of it is to make a number of grammatical and spelling changes to various Acts, including, for example, changing "department" to "ministry."

I understand that I'll have the opportunity to speak about this bill and ask questions to the minister at committee. I think at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, we're prepared to let this bill go to committee. So at that I'll conclude my comments.

The Speaker: — The member has moved the bill to committee. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

[14:45]

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed to? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to designate that Bill No. 6, the statute amendment Act be sent to Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has assigned Bill No. 6 to Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 7

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure and honour again to rise today to speak to Bill No. 7, *The Statute Law Amendment Act (No. 2)*. I've had the pleasure of hearing my colleagues' thoughts on this bill in adjourned debates as well as the comments from the minister opposite.

I understand, based on my reading of the bill and comments from the minister, that this bill, similar to Bill No. 6, is largely grammatical changes and things of that nature. I have the opportunity, I believe, to speak about this bill and ask questions about it in committee, so I think at this moment I have no other comments other than to move this bill to committee at this time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall the bill be moved to? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 7 be committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that Bill No. 7 be committed to the Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 10

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

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince

Albert Northcote.

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased today to stand and talk about Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016*. This legislation was brought forward by the previous Minister of Environment in the spring sitting. And so I've had some time to review this bill, and from my understanding some of the things that are going to be going on with this bill would be that this bill will expand "... the minister's authority to enter into agreements with clients for the purpose of developing, improving, maintaining, closing, reclaiming, and managing new and existing roads, road allowances and rights of way" rather than just the location, clearing, closure and reclamation of roads. So that's really important to review that.

And I think it's also going to be very important that we look into some of the potential amendments to this Act with some of the stakeholders that might have issue with regards to this. So they were saying, the Minister of Environment was saying that the purpose of this is so that we could reduce the ecological impacts and the public safety issues created by the lack of maintenance of these roads, which I think those are two important factors. We have to consider that when we're reviewing this. And so I'm looking forward to having a lot more discussion in committee with regards to what was maybe some previous issues with the roads and why this came about and how they plan on making these changes and having this follow-through.

So again, you know, it's about talking with some of the stakeholders and also talking within committee with the ministry to see what their plan is going forward. It would be good to ask some questions with regards to that.

Another section here talks about paying of dues:

The dues system is established in regulation. The transitional provisions and the setting of dues rates by licence are no longer applicable.

So it seems like this is going to be an amendment to align with the Act, with the provincial dues system that came into force July 2014. And so this would apply to all licences with regards to the forest management agreement. So again it's really important if we have previous legislation, that our current legislation kind of aligns with that as well. So I plan on taking some time to review that also.

It also talks about ensuring that fees owed are paid. So apparently there's been some history with regards to collecting some of the fees that might be owed. So some of the changes in here is supposed to streamline and make it a timelier process to have the forest management fees rates implemented and ensuring that people are enforced with regards to that.

Again I have more questions on how that's going to look and who's going to do that process. And we could put it in the legislation but is it going to be followed through? And so I plan on asking more questions with regards to that in committee as well.

This bill also acknowledges that people who want a licence, that

they be required to submit a forest management plan. And I think that's very important as well because we want to know exactly what the contractor's plans are with regards to where they're going to be going and such. And the forest management plan is a really important part of that. And my understanding is that the forest management plans often take a couple of years. It could take a long time to implement because it's quite a lengthy process but a very important one, and so it involves considerable investment and financial and human resources. So we want to ensure that that plan, like I said before, is very important and that it's implemented, and that people who are going for licences, that they have that plan established. We need to make sure that we have the proper legislation so that we can enforce that as well.

Again I'm going to talk to some of the stakeholders with regards to what their view of this particular amendment is and also have that discussion in committee with the ministry. And I think it's important that we have that discussion on why these changes are coming forward and what they'd like to see progress in the future with regards to them. A lot of the language has been changed in this bill, and it's more so for just to modernize the language. We've been seeing that in a lot of the other bills, and that's again important. I think we need to take the time to review a lot of the legislation that we have and ensure that the language is appropriate for, you know, the times right now. I'm sure we won't spend a lot of time discussing those language changes, but again I do believe that they're very important to recognize that we've made those changes going forward.

This bill also acknowledges that following the second renewal of a term supply licence, the licensee must submit a forest management plan for the full renewal term of the licence. So again, when they originally apply for the licence, they're going to need to have the forest management plan. And it looks like with this legislation they're wanting to also have it so that if you're going for a renewal term, that also your forest management plan reflects that and any changes that might be in there. So this amendment will:

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

So again, if we're providing these licences to individuals, we need to ensure that they have a plan that correlates what our plan is with our forestry. So that's very important as well. It establishes:

... the authority for the minister to prohibit a person from obtaining a licence for a period ... [of] 3 years for offences including failing to comply with the Act.

I think this is a really important aspect to draw attention to. If this is passed, this amendment will allow the minister to have the authority to prohibit people from obtaining licences if they have breached any of their contracts. So again it will be something that we need to discuss in committee on, you know, if there's some history with regards to this and the purpose of why they are implementing this.

Also there's some more language about having ... if a judge can prohibit a person from obtaining a licence up to a period of five years. And it also has some language in here too saying that if for some reason a person happens to get a licence but they were prohibited in some other form, that it is no longer valid. So I think this is better enforcement of our forest management.

So I'd like to learn a little bit more about what the history of this was and some of the rationale for this. And it'll be interesting to talk to some of the individuals in the ministry with regards to that, and some of the stakeholders too, and how they see this being implemented.

Also this also has some ... They changed the language in here so they can add "contractor" also, so that a person deemed as a contractor would also have some liability with regards to if there's any infractions. So licence holders are responsible for the actions of their contractors, and that has to be ... It sounds like this is going to be consistent with the provisions of *The Wildfire Act*. And so again this seems like it's taking another piece of legislation and ensuring that it relates with this piece of legislation. So that's important when the two legislations kind of correlate.

So again I want to talk about when this might be an issue and talk to the stakeholders that might be involved. So I think again we're going to be really concentrating on the forest management plans. That's very important to ensure that those are created and approved because again that's the aim to protect our forests, and that's very important. And so some of the things that I think are going to be really highlighted with regards to this bill will be: better enforcement of the rules and regulations that we have, clearer guidelines so that people who are applying for licences know exactly what's expected of them — the minister has exact expectations as well — and it seems like there's higher expectations, which I think in some ways can be a good thing because these are our forests and they are very important to us; increases to the minister's authority, so ensuring that the minister's office is able to have that authority of people to breach that; and modernize the language.

So again I'm going to take some time to consult with stakeholders, ensure that this legislation respects the First Nations treaty rights, and talk to people who might be invested and interested with regards to this, and have that discussion within committee, and I'm looking forward to that.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Act*, 2016 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

[15:00]

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 10, *The Forest Resources Management Amendment Act, 2016* be designated to the committee on the Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — The bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 11

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm proud to stand here and talk about Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016*. This was brought forward in the spring session by the previous Minister of Environment. This legislation, I've been having some time to review it, and my understanding that it really relates to having financial penalties for people who unlawfully engage in the professional practice of forestry without registering as a forestry professional. And so as we know that the forestry professionals, they are educated in Canada and they are educated at accredited forestry programs. So that is their background, and it's very important that we respect their profession. I think it's really important that we look into this and see how we can keep the integrity of the professional practice of forestry.

But also we have to take into account of talking to our stakeholders and people who might be impacted by some changes within this legislation. It's important that before we make any serious considerations on changing language in legislation that could result in individuals getting some fines, who will this impact? And are they aware that this legislation might be going through? And so I think it'll be important for me to contact some of the stakeholders, and I hope the ministry has also.

And I think also it's important to look into how this respects the First Nations treaty rights and also that all people are aware that this will be going through, and so they can have whatever concerns that they may have or even if they have some really positive feelings about this legislation, that they are able to send that information in before we finalize things.

So I know I'm going to have a lot of questions within committee with the ministry with regards to the reasons and what they plan on doing with the changes with this legislation. And so I look forward to having that discussion in committee.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 11, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2016* be committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 14

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 14 — *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As always it's my honour to rise in the Assembly to enter into debate on the Legislative Assembly. And this is an interesting bill. The minister actually gave fairly considered comments on the history of this particular legislation here in Saskatchewan, and certainly it's not unique to Saskatchewan, as he pointed out. This legislation is in place across the Western Prairie provinces, and I would assume also in the United States as well, because the history of the Texas Longhorn is an interesting one and an extensive one, Mr. Speaker. And in fact as the minister indicated, there's still around 17,000 head of cattle in Saskatchewan that are being penalized for their horns at \$2 a head. And we're not clear how many of those, how many others there would be if they weren't dehorned or debudded prior to entering the marketplace, Mr. Speaker.

But just for a little bit of background here, and this is a very interesting breed of cattle. I'm not sure how many people know that the Texas Longhorn really came across to the New World from Christopher Columbus and the Spanish colonists. That's where the Texas Longhorns were introduced in the New World, in North America. And one of the features of this cattle is that they have a high drought stress tolerance. So as you can imagine, in the plains of Texas when these cattle first started being bred in larger numbers — this would be a very useful attribute — is the fact that they were a high-drought-stress-tolerance cattle. Also what's very interesting is that they have very diverse colours, and there's all kinds of different colours, blue or any mix of colours. But as the Wikipedia article that I'm quoting from points out that dark red and white are the most dominant colours right now. There's different registries for these cattle, and they're still currently in place at Texas Longhorn Breeders Association of America, amongst others.

And so the genetic analysis shows that they came from an Iberian hybrid of two ancient cattle lineages, which I find very interesting: taurine which came into domestication from the wild aurochs in the Middle East, and indicine, which descended from the domestication of the aurochs in India. So they were

kind of bred from the Middle East and from India. And that's the history of the longhorn cattle.

The Texas ones are direct descendants of the first cattle in the New World, and they were brought over probably around 1493, starting off in the Caribbean island of Hispaniola. And then they started bringing other cattle and different . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — There are a number of conversations taking place in the Assembly, particularly on the government side. I would ask that those members perhaps go behind the bar or perhaps outside. I'm having a great deal of difficulty hearing the member from Nutana. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know that . . . I appreciate your attention as I raise these comments here in the House. This is a very interesting, hearty form of cattle breed and certainly has a very relevant and interesting history in terms of cattle in North America.

So the Texas Longhorn eventually moved north as the Spanish moved their forces north as well. And many of them . . . This is interesting. The cattle, some of them escaped and “. . . were turned loose on the open range . . . [and] they remained mostly feral for the next two centuries.” So for 200 years many of these cattle were running wild in the Plains of North America. It's pretty scary when you . . . I wouldn't want to come across a herd in the middle of the night, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure that would be kind of a dangerous thing for a number of reasons.

But anyways these feral cattle were then obtained by US [United States] settlers, so they started domesticating them again in the borderland between Texas and Mexico. And the result was a rough, rangy animal with long legs and long horns, horns that could extend up to 7 feet, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And if you can imagine the span of that, that's a very large span. Anyways they also . . . these descendants, you know, as the years went by, they became the high-feed and drought-stress-tolerant cattle that they were well known for.

Now what happened to the breed? Eventually as Texas became more settled and the frontier gave way to established farms and ranchlands . . . One other interesting fact about the longhorn, they were much leaner than other cattle, and so they weren't as attractive in an area where tallow was highly prized. And as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, tallow was used for all sorts of things, but particularly lamps, for the lighting of lamps before electricity came along. And also they could survive on the very poor vegetation that was in the open range. So that was no longer as much of an issue as the fences went up and the pastures started being developed and irrigated. Also other breeds demonstrated traits that were more highly valued by the modern ranchers, such as the ability to gain weight quickly. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, that's still something that's very highly valued by modern and current cattle breeders.

So it was actually almost extinct in 1927, but a number of enthusiasts continued to breed the cattle and so they have survived extinction. So this is just some of the background of the Texas Longhorn.

There's also a Longhorn Cattle Society in England. And in this

case, the horns of these cattle actually curve inwards. They don't actually point out as we think of when we think of the Texas Longhorn, but they actually curve and point inwards. These are cows that are known very much for their qualities of milk, calving ease, longevity, docility, length, and the leanness of their bodies, unrivalled in any other breeds. So this is a very active society in England that is choosing these longhorns. As I say, the horns curve inwards, so it's a different, different kind of cattle, but milking qualities, calving ease, longevity, docility, and the length, and leanness. So these are another breed of longhorns that are being currently bred today.

Now one of the things you wonder, Mr. Speaker, is when you drive by . . . The member from Carrot River refers to us as only driving along the highway between Saskatoon and Regina. When we do drive down that highway, we actually see cattle, and you don't see a lot of cattle with horns. So you have to ask yourself, for us urban dwellers, why don't we see a lot of cows with horns or where are these 17,000 head that were being penalized?

So what happens, Mr. Speaker, is either they're using other breeds and then . . . And this is a term that maybe a lot of people in the cities don't know, but they're described as polled livestock. So polled livestock are livestock without horns in species which are normally horned. The term refers to both breeds or strains which are naturally polled through select breeding and also to naturally horned animals which have been dehorned.

Natural polling occurs in cattle, yaks, and water buffalo, and goats, which is interesting. And in those breeds, it affects both sexes equally. But in sheep, both sexes may be horned, both polled, or only the females polled. And the history of dehorning, Mr. Speaker, starts about 6,000 years BC [before Christ]. So this has been going on for a very, very, very, long time — longer than many of us could probably imagine.

So we know that there's either polled cattle which have been bred . . . There's a specific gene. They call it an allele, which is the gene that is dominant to that for horns. So this is something that I know cattlemen have been doing, as I indicated, for probably eight or nine centuries at least, pardon me, millennia; eight or nine millennia. So 8 or 9,000 years where cattle have been selectively bred for this.

Now just going to a little bit of what the minister had to say, and I find this very interesting. There's a few comments of his that I find very interesting. First of all, he says that Saskatchewan's not the only province to repeal horned cattle legislation. Both Alberta and Manitoba have repealed the legislation several years ago, and British Columbia is the only other province with horned cattle legislation at this time.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm just thinking maybe the Minister of Agriculture might want to talk to the Minister of Justice because, if we're following suit of other provinces, it would be interesting to know why this Minister of Justice is changing the definition of “privatization” in *The Interpretation Act* when no one in the modern world has ever, ever done that kind of change. And it's . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'm really pleased to know that the member from Martensville is actually listening today and has complimented me on my segue. I'm

honoured by that, Mr. Speaker.

So that's the first question. And I know this government has a habit of changing definitions such as "double-dipping" which is what they were referring to the cuts for the people in the Lighthouse and all kinds of creative use of language. But in this case, this minister is actually following suit from what Alberta and Manitoba have done in indicating that it's time to repeal this legislation here in Saskatchewan.

[15:15]

The other thing I think that is very interesting is the consultation process that the minister referred to in his comments, and in particular he indicated that some of the industry stakeholders, when this bill was looked at just before the 2003 election, actually supported amending the Act and not repealing it. So the amendments in that case were to raise the fee from \$2 to \$10, and it was supported particularly by the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association. But then the minister goes on to suggest that because the government-created Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association has some different views on this, that he's actually following their views rather than that of the stock growers.

So these are questions I think that we need to ask of the industry and just to sort of follow up with the minister to see why he would rely on the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association primarily, when we know that that was a government-created body. And certainly there are a number of issues with that organization in relation to its governance and, you know, some of the affairs of the Cattlemen's Association here in Saskatchewan.

So I think it's important for us to be able to ask these questions in committee and get some very clear understanding of the consultation process. For example he said in his comments on May 30th that "The first step in modernizing means repealing the existing legislation." That may be so. I think there are other options, and certainly amending is one of those options, Mr. Speaker.

And he did indicate in the same comments that there were concerns about repealing the legislation, so I think those concerns are ones that need to be heard, and we need to understand why the minister is choosing a different path when individuals in the cattle industry are concerned about the repeal of this legislation. And you know, I think there's a general agreement that the existing legislation is outdated. That seems to be very clear from the minister's comments in terms of what consultation he did do. It's also clear that it was up for amendment in 2003.

And a large part of the question is the fee itself for these horned cattle. It's only \$2. It was \$1 in 1939, and then it was doubled in 1949 but hadn't been increased since. And as you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, the whole process just for collecting the fees, doing inspections and all that, actually requires some money.

So you know, the question is whether or not this kind of protection for producers needs to be within legislation. The minister seems to indicate that it really would be more appropriate outside of legislation, but we don't see anything yet from the minister in terms of the industry-led consultations.

What will be the substitute for this regime that we find in this piece of legislation? So I think there's a few open-ended questions here that raise legitimate concerns on the part of the industry.

And certainly we know that the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association is prepared to be the professional organization to lead the industry discussions around penalizing horned cattle. Again I'm not sure about the full confidence in the Cattlemen's Association to be able to do that kind of work. And there are questions about the democratic processes in that particular agency. But if this is where the minister feels it needs to be, I hope that producers will take full advantage of that.

And for those who are impacted by the change in the bill, you know, the question is: how much are they going to have to pay? It's not like these fees are going away, Mr. Speaker, and when we have it fixed in legislation at least the industry knows what the deal is. But here we are creating a void because once the legislation is repealed then we don't know. And producers who actually have these cattle and will be liable for the penalties won't know what the fees are going to be. So I think there's a bit of a cow before the cart, if you allow me to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and perhaps that we need some more information from the minister. And I guess if the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association is going to be leading this that there should be more information available. And certainly that's something that we'll want to quiz the minister about when we get into the committee process.

So again a very storied history, a very interesting part of agriculture and cattle producing here in Saskatchewan, a long and proud history. And you know, as we go through we see the ingenuity of breeders, cattle breeders, to produce animals that meet the needs of the modern market. And that certainly hasn't stopped in the last 8,000 years, Mr. Speaker, and I would suggest it will continue in full force here in the future. But as we go through these changes, we need to make sure that the appropriate regulations are in place, the appropriate legislation's in place, the appropriate oversights are in place, and the appropriate market conditions are made available to the producers.

So at this point, I think we'll certainly have a number of questions for the minister when we get into the committee stage. And that would be the extent of my comments today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 14, *The Horned Cattle Purchases Repeal Act, 2016* be committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 40

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 40 — *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2016/Loi modificative de 2016 sur l'interprétation*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 40, *An Act to amend The Interpretation Act, 1995*. And it's been an interesting journey this bill has taken in the few short days it's been with us.

But I find it very interesting, you know, what the members opposite have tried to minimize the importance of this by saying they just want to get a definition out there; they want to clarify it. And I'll have some more to say about that.

But I found it passing strange that as well, that the bill gets into section 30, amending the following subsections:

If the reigning sovereign is a Queen, a reference to any enactment to 'the King', the King's', 'His Majesty', 'His Majesty's', 'the Court of King's Bench' . . . [and so on and so forth, that] unless the context otherwise requires, is to be interpreted to mean . . . [respectfully] 'the Queen', 'the Queen's', 'Her Majesty', 'Her Majesty's', 'the Court of Queen's Bench' or '*The Queen's Bench Act*'.

And it goes on with this kind of thing. And then section 37 is repealed:

In the English version of an Act, the enacting clause may be in the following form to indicate the authority by virtue of which the Act is passed:

if the reigning sovereign is a Queen:
'Her Majesty, by and with the advice . . .

It sets it out it like that. And I find it very interesting after some 63 years and a few months that the Queen has been with us, and in fact the longest reigning sovereign since the Queen Victoria, that this all of a sudden becomes an issue, that this needs to be straightened up right away. And clearly you know, as we know that the Queen . . . And we wish her long life, and I don't want to speak ill or, you know, go down some sort of path that suggests that she might pass away very soon, but we are all mortal, and it looks like the successor will be a male that it just seems like in the passing months that we're getting caught up with that part of the legislation. That is passing strange, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I just want to comment on that. Of course I think we should be prepared for both the situation. If reigning over the Dominion of Canada is a king or a queen or a prince or

a princess, we should be prepared for all those circumstances. But I think we have seen to have been able to make do with the legislation as it exists. So on that count it doesn't seem to be a pressing necessity to have that piece before us.

But what does seem to be a pressing necessity that these folks across the way have put forward is the idea around a definition. And they will say that is for clarity. And this is the reason, for clarity's sake, and so that is that they want to amend section 27. I'll read it for the folks at home because this is a very, very important piece of legislation. And as we debate this back and forth, it is so clear that we understand, that we consider all the possible consequences and whether they be positive or negative, unintended or fully intended, that we really understand what's before us today.

And I would think that many of the members as we've asked questions . . . And I do want to take a moment to recognize the good speech of my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana last week that really laid out the case. But even more forcefully was in question period, when she raised the issue about the fact that as far as the federal government is concerned, that is if a Crown corporation has 10 per cent or more ownership is private, then it's considered to be a private entity and will be taxed accordingly.

And when that question happened in the House, it was amazing to look across the way and see the folks over there very surprised as if they had never considered this. And clearly you can tell, often by body language, when something comes up how they respond, how they respond. And clearly that had not been discussed amongst many of the members opposite who really were quite surprised by this turn of events.

But I want to read into the record what Section 27 says. And it says:

Section 27 amended

3(1) Subsection 27(1) is amended by adding the following definition in alphabetical order:

“ ‘privatize’ means, with respect to a Crown corporation, the transfer to the private sector of all or substantially all of the assets of the Crown corporation, the controlling interest of the Crown corporation or the operational control of the Crown corporation through one or more transactions that use one or more of the following methods:

- (a) a public share offering;
- (b) a sale of shares through a negotiated or competitive bid;
- (c) sale of the assets and business of the Crown corporation as a going concern;
- (d) a management or employee buyout of the Crown corporation;
- (e) a lease or management contract;
- (f) any other method prescribed in the regulations;

but does not include a winding-up and dissolution of the Crown corporation or other restructuring of the Crown corporation . . .”

Now what's interesting about this, and today we had in question period . . . We noted the anniversary of the election of the Sask Party to government. And we noted that one of their key tenets when they were first elected was an open and accountable government. Now right away that seemed to be one of the first things they jettisoned. We know that was the case because many, many times and we can go through example after example of the times they did not consult and how very, very difficult it is to get a straight answer from this government. And to this point we have asked when . . . The minister who brought this forward, the Minister of Justice, he says quite simply that it's a World Bank definition and he's quite proud of that. He's quite proud of that. But we've asked that they table that definition because we can't seem to find it anywhere. Now maybe they have it somewhere, and if we can't find it we're not looking in the right place. Fair enough. And we're okay to admit that we didn't see it, but we sure would like to see that definition. We sure would like to see it in black and white.

Because it's one thing for that Minister of Justice to stand up and make this claim when we know that he's had to retract on many times a statement that he meant one thing and said another thing. And even the newspapers will say that this minister is confused about some of the information that he has. We think in many ways he has a lot of skills, a lot of talent. But one thing, it seems clear that he doesn't get the briefing notes as quickly or as to the point that he might. In fact, I think last week he blamed himself on briefing himself on the wrong . . . [inaudible] . . . because he didn't quite understand what the point he was making in terms of the coroner's report, reporting out.

[15:30]

But here is a situation that is very important, that people across the province are hearing one thing where we have a minister of the Crown saying that he is quite comfortable with this definition, because it's a World Bank definition that is very common and is out there, except for we can't seem to find it. We can't seem to find it. And where is it? And you know, it should be quite easily found with a Google search or online if it's that common, but we do challenge the government to come clean on this, to table this and not just read it into the record.

We know we've seen this government get up with a lot of hoopla and say, oh we'll table this. We'll table this. And in fact they read it; they do not table their documents. They're very slow and hesitant about doing that. If this is just a photocopied piece of paper out of an index or the back of the book, we're fine with that. We're fine with that. But we need to see this definition, and I think the people of Saskatchewan need to see the definition from the World Bank. They could run out right now and grab it. I mean, maybe it's on the minister's desk, and if that's the case, then fine. That would add to this debate in a big, big way, because clearly we're not seeing it. And so this is the question before us.

Now we've seen, and I have to thank the member from . . . [inaudible] . . . Nutana . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, just the definition. Just the definition. That's all, you know.

And I assume it's no longer, no shorter than the definition that is before us in this Act. It shouldn't be if it's the same

definition. It'll be just a short paragraph talking about the 49 per cent. But this is really, this is something that we do need to see. And so, Mr. Speaker, we need to see it out there, because clearly when we come to this bill before us, you know . . . The government, when they heard about the 10 per cent number, it was amazing to look across the way and to see the surprise on the looks of the ministers and the backbenchers who clearly weren't sure what were the implications. Because here we have in Saskatchewan a situation where the Crowns provide an outstanding service for the people, but also for the province in terms of dividends that do come forward for the many years that they have been able to operate and they . . .

For example, in 2015-16, the Crown corporations returned some \$297 million in dividends. And of course we know that that pays for schools. That pays for roads. That pays for hospitals. And so it's very, very significant. But if then all of a sudden you bring into the picture the obligation to pay corporate tax to the federal government, then that changes the picture. Then that changes the picture. That's a lot of money out the door to the federal government. And we don't think that's right. We don't think that should be the way it should be operating here in Saskatchewan.

And if it's because of a lack of foresight, a lack of fore-thinking and projecting by this government, then we have some grave concerns. Because here is what we do here, and that is think about unintended consequences. And clearly this would be one of the worst unintended consequences for a simple Act like this, and not thinking it through.

Now, Mr. Speaker, you know, and the minister who's been put in responsible for the examination of whether SaskTel is up for sale or not has often said, no, no it's not. No it's not, but if there's a really good deal we'll look for it. And I was thinking, it's sort of like I have in my mind this image of, you know, it's like when you're painting a for sale sign or getting a for sale sign ready in the front porch of your house. And all your friends are coming over and they say, it looks like your house is for sale. Looks like your house is for sale. You've got this for sale sign in the front porch. And you keep saying, no, no, no. It's only there, you know, just in case, just in case somebody makes me an offer.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it doesn't quite work that way. You're giving all the signals. You're giving all the signals. And maybe that for sale sign isn't out on the lawn but it's in the window, and anybody walking by or driving by can see that sign. They go, well looks like they're thinking about selling their house. Maybe it's not on the front lawn, but it sure looks like it. And they're sending all the signals to investors and large corporations around North America and throughout the world that they probably would consider selling the Crowns. Now they say, if the price is right. But we know that this government has a funny way, you know; when they clarify things, they say one thing but they mean the opposite. They mean exactly the opposite, and they're not really thinking about the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan right upfront.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think that you will remember this. You will remember when the women's team, the Canadian women's hockey team won the gold medal in Salt

Lake City in the Olympics. And one of the things they did, they went . . . And it was really, I thought this was absolutely wonderful. What they did is they spent a weekend up in a retreat and they thought of all the things that could go wrong, all the things that their competitors would throw at them. And they made a list. No matter how bizarre, how silly, how small the challenge might be, they said, we've got to get it all out there even if it seems not important, not big enough. We've got to get it all out there so we can plan, so we can plan for being the best that there is.

And this is what this government should be doing. It should be making a plan. But instead we have the Finance minister saying, oh we don't want to go down that rabbit hole, I think is his expression. And then I think, well what does the Finance minister do but deal in scenarios?

Now he may consider scenarios rabbit holes, but that's what he does. What is a budget? What is a budget if not a series of scenarios, looking forward? But this is what's been the problem with this government, is it's not been able to look forward and anticipate, anticipate what might happen. I mean we all know what we would like to happen. And I think of the minister opposite, one of his favourite sayings is, he loves shouting over to us, oh that's rich. That's rich. And then I'm thinking, you know what? I bet he goes back to his office and says, if only I was rich. If only we were rich.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, you have to think of all scenarios. You have to think of all scenarios. And this is what's the problem with this bill before us. Clearly they have not thought through all their scenarios, except they're into this issue of deny, deny, deny, deny. That they are not up . . . They are not going to sell. They are not going to privatize. They are just going to clarify. They are just going to clarify. And that has a whole lot of problems with it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I just want to keep going back, as I look at this Finance minister who talks about rabbit holes and I think about . . . And this is maybe why we're in a problem today, is he doesn't know the difference between a rabbit hole and a scenario, you know. And this is an issue, because this is why . . . And I know the folks in Finance, they do great work. But their issues are to look at the price of potash, look at the price of uranium, look at the price of oil, natural gas, look at what's happening in Saskatchewan, and they build possible scenarios. That's not a bad thing. That's forecasting. That's what they do. That's what they do so we all can plan, so the government can make plans and then they can anticipate.

And that's really what the issue here . . . [inaudible] . . . You have to anticipate and you have to think about what might happen, what might happen. And here for them to suggest that if 10 per cent of a Crown corporation were to be sold that it might become privatized in the eyes of the federal government, and therefore pay corporate taxes, is outlandish. There's no possible way . . . It's giving money away. That there's no basis in fact, is outlandish. That's not going down a rabbit hole; that's a realistic scenario that these folks over here must have considered.

They must have considered the range between when they privatize or sell, because they need cash. They are looking for

cash. They are looking for cash. They are working hard in treasury board as we speak, and we know that they are, and they're desperate for money. And they're looking for as much of it as they can possibly get, that maybe 10 per cent just won't cut it. They really do want to get into the 40, 45, 48 per cent. And that will be a problem, because then it's like cutting off your nose to spite your face because you haven't anticipated.

And I would think somebody must have told somebody over there about the 10 per cent rule. Somebody must have said something to somebody over there. But as we've . . . and this is what . . . you know, Mr. Speaker, it is such a sad tale of what we see, you know, when we ask questions about the GTH, the Global Transportation Hub scandal, and how nobody seems to know anything about anything over there. And they can't answer any questions, and yet they say it's all been answered.

Well then, tell us the answers. Tell us the answers. Stand up and be forthwith and upfront with the people of Saskatchewan. But they answer no questions. They answer no questions in this House about it. And I think it's just, I think it's just the way these folks do business. They were planning to be transparent and accountable, but they're anything but. They're anything but. And this is what this bill is, very much the way it is when we see a situation where we've put forward a very reasonable scenario and the Minister of Finance calls it a rabbit hole. Unbelievable. Unbelievable.

You know in sports, in sports they have this thing called evidence-based thinking, evidence-based thinking. You know where you use evidence? To base your thinking on. It's not very complicated. And it's gone a long way to improve performance of athletes. And I think it might go a long way to improve the performance of this government if they started using some evidence to base their thinking on, their planning on, but they call it rabbit holes. They call that rabbit holes. And I cannot believe it when you have a Finance minister who . . . and of course we don't have much to judge him on. I mean we saw what happened in the election where he delayed and delayed a budget until he finally had to get one out. We'll see what happens next spring.

And we're waiting for the first quarter report, and he said, not to see here, not much to see here. And yet we're seeing dribs and drabs come out about the mid-term report, so they must have it. They must have it because of some of the claims he's making, he must know what's going on. So at any point we assume that we will be seeing it, but in my experience with this government, we won't see it until November 30th in the afternoon after we've risen for the Christmas break. That's when we'll see it. And that's what the evidence has been with this government — to leave it until we are not in the House. I mean if it gets out in the morning that day, you know, it will be a one-day question period, unfortunately, unfortunately, on that.

So this is the problem: when we have this interpretation Act before us, when they say, clarify, I think they need to have a definition of what clarify means because this is not clearing up the waters at all. This is muddying the waters, and when we challenge them on this, it doesn't help at all. It doesn't help at all.

[15:45]

And as I said, you know, if the minister were to simply table his definition from the World Bank, it would go a long way. I have a lot of respect for the minister, and I know when he is quoting from a source that has some merit . . . But clearly we actually need to say that we can't find it. We don't know if it exists. We absolutely don't know if it exists, and he went to great length and continues to go to great length to say that it exists.

Now we don't know. We don't know if he's actually seen it. I mean, he hasn't said it. He hasn't said . . . And I'm reading from page 451 of the World Bank's report 2016. He's not quoting. He's not quoting; he's referring to. So that would give me the impression, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that he's not got a page or a document in front of him that he's quoting from, but he's just got a reference, an uncited reference other than the source, but not when the source . . . Was it a book? Was it a speech? Was it an interview? Was it speculation? Was it a wish maybe that the actual quote is that someone at a World Bank conference wished that the definition was this, or thought it should be this, or in no way should it be this? We need to see this page. We need to see the context from which the minister speaks of because, as we've been trying to determine, it just doesn't seem to be in existence. But as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if the members want to challenge us and get up and do a point of order, we'd be very happy to say, you know, fair enough. We need to make sure that it exists.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, you know, we go on and we go on, and I do think about this evidence-based thinking and the gift of anticipation. You know, I remember in evidence-based thinking . . . I just remember I heard the member from Carrot River speaking earlier and talking about some of his great predictions. And one of the best predictions the member from Carrot River ever did . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You said it. It's just a gold quote: "The best budget in the universe." The best budget in the universe, back in 2008 or 2009, and they ended up paying back a couple of hundred million dollars to the Potash Corporation. I'm sure the member from Carrot River didn't have to pay.

But my point is, here we have a government who doesn't believe in evidence-based thinking, doesn't believe in anticipation. They just seem to be willing to go into a situation full steam, full steam, thinking, you know . . . They're broke. They need money. We've seen the situation.

And we go through the scandals, the \$25 million that we don't know, we need to know more about in terms of the GTH. Where did all that money . . . Well we know where it went. We have a really good idea where it went, but where it should be going, where it should be going. And we're seeing the cuts, we're seeing, you know . . . As I've myself raised petitions after petitions, how this government has been so mean-spirited, whether it's the heritage language schools, some \$230,000, \$230,000 a year, teaching over 60 heritage languages in volunteer situations, but no, that had to go. That had to go. But paying 25 million for land, that's a deal. And we heard that, we heard that from the Premier today, you know, and I just am amazed at how he can put things in a different light, if I can say it that way, how that was a steal of a deal for that land at 25 million, how that was just a really good deal, a really good deal.

And you know, we have a situation — and of course I'm

currently presenting petitions about the issue of Wakamow Valley Authority — where we had both members from Moose Jaw vote in favour of job cuts in their city, just over the amounts of money. That's just over a couple of hundred thousand dollars a year. But instead what did we get? Buying land for some \$25 million. And we need to know more about that. We need to know more about that.

But again it's this evidence-based thinking that I think is a problem. It's a real problem here. Nobody over there seems to be able to, or will own up to what is the real game plan. As I said, when you've got the for sale sign in your front porch and everybody can see it as they're driving by or walking by — and you're telling your neighbours no, no, no, our house isn't for sale, isn't for sale — it sure looks like it's for sale. It sure looks like it's for sale. And you're setting up all the details and the agreements just clarifying, just clarifying as if I were to sell my house, but I'm not really going to sell my house. Yes, I think you really are going to sell your house. And this is the issue that's before us today, is why are we debating this bill leading up to a budget that we know these folks over here have a lot, a lot of problems. A lot, a lot of problems.

And so, Mr. Speaker, when we think about the Crowns, you know, I want to say my colleague from Nutana really made the case, both quoting from Allan Blakeney but also from the Manning Centre in terms of the follies of going ahead with privatization and some of the pitfalls, but has really clearly identified, laid out how this government here has set up a situation, set up a situation where clearly it looks like they're lining it all up.

The parallels that are so common between now and what happened in the '80s, that many, many, many people in Saskatchewan . . . And this is what we heard over the weekend. What we heard this weekend, you know, it was amazing, Mr. Speaker — whether it was a funeral or whether it was a medical appointment or a dinner — people were all talking about, yes what's happening to the Crowns. We've got to keep them. We've got to keep them, especially in these tough times we find ourselves in because of mismanagement. This is not the time. This is not the time to be selling our communications company. This is not the time. You know, if there's . . . I mean I would suggest there's not a time to.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's so short sighted for these folks to be putting our best companies in so many ways on the block, on the auction block. And they'd say, well we're just having some clarification. We have some real, real concerns about that — whether it's SaskTel or SaskPower or SaskEnergy; the bus company, STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]; and SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] — and you go down the list.

Clearly you know, the deal that they're hoping to get some quick cash are really going to put a lot of people in some tough times, as we know that the Crowns have served so well to deliver services. And whether that's to keep our homes warm; whether it's to keep the lights on in our farms, in our homes, our businesses; drive the machinery in our industry; and whether it's SGI in making sure that we have a way of protecting ourselves from injury, and when those injuries do happen that we can have some security — these are things that

are so critically important. Once we start seeing them leave the province, they aren't going to come back.

And so we have been innovators. These Crowns have been innovators, and they've been with us for many, many years, many decades. And it would be so incredibly short sighted for us to be going down this road, to be going down this road. And so, Mr. Speaker, as I said, that when we have a government that doesn't, you know, doesn't seem to believe in evidence-based thinking or the gift of anticipation or working with scenarios, this is why they get caught up in the situation that they are.

And clearly when we have a situation here where they are talking about, oh they're anticipating that they're going to need to clarify what does it mean to privatize, I have to say that there's all sorts of red flags that go up to say, yes you're thinking an awful lot. You're thinking an awful lot about some things that are up for sale. And, Mr. Speaker, that's just not right.

And I know that some of the folks here who are just joining us here on TV, you know, I've been talking a bit about how the folks over there seem to be caught off guard, caught off guard when we raise the issue about when a Crown corporation is put up for sale and 10 per cent of it becomes sold to a private corporation, therefore they're liable for corporate taxes from the federal point of view. And you know, in the federal point of view, they have to be fair. They have to say, you know what the rules are; everybody knows what the rules are. And they can't be playing favourites.

And I know this Premier loves to get in a good tussle with the federal government. But the problem is, he hasn't been able to have the stamina to really fight it through. And we saw that with the equalization issues back in 2006 and '07 and '08 where he was standing with us, and we were so proud to have him alongside when he was in opposition, saying that he would continue that good fight. He would continue that good fight with the federal government. But as soon as they were elected, they were soon talked out of that. They were soon talked out of that, and he backed away from it. And so here we have a situation where we could tell that these folks were caught off guard.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know, I do have to say that, you know, there is a reason for us to be deeply, deeply concerned about this kind of move by this government. You know because, as my colleague said, these are all the signs they were giving in the '80s about privatization and all the kind of work they did, all the kind of signals that they were sending, both to their base within the province and how they were sending signals that maybe was time that the Crowns weren't meeting their need, that we could sell. And it sure sounds like the . . .

An Hon. Member: — Fired 31 people today.

Mr. Forbes: — Yes, and you know, we see that kind of work that they're doing, moving people around, layoffs that are happening. The situation in Moose Jaw is drastic. But we aren't really talking about, we aren't really talking about the social good of the Crowns here in Saskatchewan. And here we have a situation where we saw layoffs in Moose Jaw for our Crown. And the word may be rightsizing or amalgamating or whatever.

But here we have a situation . . . The wonderful thing about Crowns in terms of the social good that they mete out throughout the province is they're delivering services consistently at an affordable price to everyone in this province. And that's what we need to have in a province like ours where we have such a widespread population that, in many ways, wouldn't make sense for a completely profit-driven corporation, you know.

And SaskTel or Telecommunications company would be a perfect example of a company that would look at Saskatchewan and say, you know, it really doesn't make a lot of sense. Maybe that Moose Jaw-Regina-Saskatoon-Prince Albert corridor might make some sense, but really the challenges would be meeting the needs of people in rural Saskatchewan.

And here you have them already starting to line it up to say, well we're going to start moving some of these folks around, and we're going to start laying off some folks. We're going to start rightsizing this thing even though we know that this is how we deliver good, consistent services right across the province. And amazingly we can do it well, and we can deliver a dividend. We can deliver a dividend, some almost \$300 million last year.

[16:00]

And if we lose that either by an outright sale or by paying federal taxes, then that's a huge hit. That's a huge hit. And if these folks haven't anticipated this, if they haven't thought this through, if they haven't thought this through . . . And we've seen it when they haven't really thought things through like the GTH where you have Highways, who usually does the appropriation for land, who usually . . . And they have the skills. And everybody in the province knows Highways does that kind of thing and they do it fairly and they have a process that's been tried throughout Saskatchewan. Then all of a sudden another corporation gets involved and they say, well we have to act quickly. Mr. Speaker, that's just not good government at work. That's not good government at work. And that's why want to get to the bottom of that.

But here if we have that same process applied to the privatization process in Saskatchewan, I think people do have a right to be worried, have a right to be really worried about what's going to happen. What's going to happen to the big Crowns? We've seen it. We've seen it already happening with the liquor board stores where we've argued, you could modernize and make it attractive and be able to meet the needs of customers. But they went ahead and they said they were going to sell some 40 stores. Now we'll see over the next four years whether it stays at 40 or whether it's more. And they say that it's revenue neutral, that in fact this is an ideological thing, that they just believe in good competition. We'll see if that's the case. We'll see if that's the case, and throughout the province whether people are getting equal access to a wide variety of brands and types of liquor.

And also are people following the rules? We've seen this issue. In fact we've gone through this with the bill that was passed last week in terms of driving while impaired. And both sides moved very quickly even though we . . . And I do have to say that the members who were on that committee some three years ago

worked really hard to convince the government that it was short-sighted not to include the recommendations at the time. They didn't. So here we are again, some more unintended consequences.

But this is what happens when you become too ideologically driven, and we worry about this over here with these folks because they're clearly not listening to some of the things they should be. And we have a Finance minister who talks often about rabbit holes and he should be really talking about scenarios and really thinking through what are the unintended consequences that may be happening there.

So did the Minister of Justice, as he has been shown to do once or twice before — but not consistently though, that's the problem, at least according to the auditor — warn his colleagues of the unintended consequences? And this has been an issue and so this has been a real problem, Mr. Speaker. So we worry about this, and we worry about the impression that people might be seeing across Canada.

And as I said, that when you start talking and everybody knows the financial situation in Saskatchewan, and I mean they get the signs. They see when you don't deliver the first quarter budget, or first quarter report, that in fact people start to wonder what's up in your house. What's up? How come you aren't doing the work that you should be doing? It's something that we have a good standing tradition here in Saskatchewan, for many years, and it should be continued and shouldn't be dismissed by simply saying, by simply saying that there's nothing to see here. Nothing to see here. This is just not good enough, Mr. Speaker.

And so on top of that we have a situation where we have a government that really — and they've shown this to be the case — don't think an awful lot of Crowns, aren't really impressed by Crowns. And I talk about the social good that Crowns can have in our province, and interestingly when we brought this forward a few years ago, the Crown protection Act, they were all there. Now not many of them spoke to it and some of them who were in the House at the time in opposition had the opportunity to speak in favour and give their own impression about why they thought Crowns were so important chose not to, but did in fact vote in favour of protecting them.

But here we are these years later, 10 years later, and they've chosen to take another go at Crowns in a couple of different bills here that are before us. And you know, of course, the bill that we're debating is Bill No. 40, *An Act to amend The Interpretation Act, 1995* — a relatively new bill, just a few days old. I don't know why at this time of the legislative agenda that they felt that, oops, they've forgotten about this. And for the folks at home or in the gallery, would be interested to know that they're also changing the references from kings to queens. Now interestingly now, we're now in the 63rd year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and nobody has felt that pressure to change the legislation in those 63 years . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Right. And so, Mr. Speaker, it's rather striking odd that we are in this situation that we have before us.

But you know, as I said, we have a Finance minister who doesn't want to talk about scenarios. And you know this is a situation that we find ourselves really in an interesting circumstance, and whether it's Lighthouse, cutting funding for

Lighthouse and knowing the implications of when you cut funding for the Lighthouse project in Saskatoon, you're going to see emergency costs go up. You're going to see all sorts of costs go up, you know.

And then I wonder, Mr. Speaker, how they feel about firefighting in the summer. Is that going down a rabbit hole? Is that going down a rabbit hole when the Minister of Environment says we should be talking about firefighting, preparing for that? Is that going down a rabbit hole, or is that a scenario that we should be talking about?

Now I know, I know that in some ways climate change is throwing a wrench into this whole thing. I know that's . . . You can't completely predict that. But you cannot say we're going to turn completely away from evidence-based thinking, such as that if you sell more than 10 per cent . . . We know, we know if you sell more than 10 per cent — and they can all join in with me if they want. I'd get this fact straight — if you sell more than 10 per cent of your Crown corporation, then you could be paying corporate federal taxes, federal corporate taxes. They know . . . They should know that by now.

And if I'm repeating myself, Mr. Speaker, it's only because some people say you have to say it not once, not twice, not three times, not four times — up to seven times you have to say something before some people get it, before some people get it. And I'm going to say it again. I think these folks haven't thought it through. They have not thought it through at all about the unintended consequences of *The Interpretation Act*.

And I think that the people of Saskatchewan expect better, expect better from the government of the day. They expect them to think it through, to think it through, to use evidence-based thinking, evidence-based thinking like they . . . And you know, we've seen several, whether it's corporations or athletes or others, achieve great results. Not so much these folks, not so much these folks, but others have. When they've used evidence such as the corporate tax laws, the corporate tax laws, they can achieve great things.

But this type of thing where we have seen them flippantly dismiss, flippantly dismiss people because it doesn't fit into their narrative, into their narrative . . . They would like this to be simple and straightforward, but it doesn't fit into their line of thinking. And this is, this is an issue for them, Mr. Speaker, because this is our job. We challenge them and we do research.

Now as I've said — and I don't know if the minister is looking for that document from the World Bank — we have yet to see, we have yet to see the actual definition of privatization that he is so fondly, so fondly quoting in the House. Now maybe we are missing it, and if that's the case, we're fine with that but we would like to have it tabled in the House. This government has often said that they table stuff, they table things. They like to do that, but not so much, actually. They'll get it onto *Hansard*, but will they actually deliver the paper to the table is a question. And we've seen that with written questions, the appalling rate of answers to written questions.

You know, as we've said, this is a government that was elected to be accountable and transparent except for written questions, except for question period, except for committees. And we'll

see tomorrow; we'll see what happens in PAC whether or not . . . And the members over there say, oh it's hands off, and we can see the members from PAC, they'll be able to decide on their own, on their own, who they can call. That's going to be very interesting to see what happens in PAC tomorrow morning. We sure hope that they can decide on their own and make sure we do get some answers to GTH and what's really happening there. And if this government has the courage to actually do that, then they'll have gone a long way.

But you know, Mr. Speaker, it's a bit of past actions are often an indicator of future behaviour, and I have some things to worry about. And this is why, this is why Bill 40 before us is such a big question mark. It may be only a couple of pages and it may be talking about translations into French, and it may be talking about the fact that we want to have clarity around when a king is a king then it's a king, and when it's a queen it's a queen. It's a queen. Even though for the past 60 some years we've been fine, we've been fine with Queen Elizabeth and . . . Now I don't want to get into that debate about the monarchy. That's another debate for another time, but the fact of the matter is we've been fine. We've been fine. And so why all of a sudden this rush to get this bill in here?

And so again, as I've talked about, this government often loves to use Trojan horses, loves to use Trojan horses. And here we see a bill come in all, you know . . . I am surprised. I am surprised. I would have thought the queen's part and the king's part should have been further up the amendments than towards the back because, you know, in terms of a Trojan horse, this doesn't quite work out the way . . .

But, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot, a lot of questions about this. But I do want to say that, you know, if this really is the issue before us, that this government is bent on privatization and quick bucks over the winter so they can have some money in hand for the budget. Then we have some real concerns. We have some real concerns.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we saw today the situation that happened in SaskTel in Moose Jaw. We had, on one hand, the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow is celebrating the fact that they created some new jobs, and we can all get behind that, especially when we had the news — and you would have seen the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*, the headlines on their front page, "Over 10,000 jobs lost," "Over 10,000 jobs lost." And only the Premier can turn that around to say, yes, but look at all the other things, look . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . yes, yes, he really does want us to look at all the other things. He really does want us to look at all the other things. We have some real concerns.

But the same day as those 20 get announced, then we hear about some 20-plus being laid off in Moose Jaw and the members from Moose Jaw are silent on that, silent on that. And ironically, one of them is a former Unifor member and who should be really raising the charge or leading the charge to say this is not right; this is not right. Moose Jaw needs all the jobs they can get, not just 20 jobs. It needs all the jobs.

[16:15]

We see Meewasin, Wakamow. We saw the loss in . . . Now we're seeing these jobs moving. We're seeing them move. And

while the minister responsible says they're not, they're not cuts. They're not layoffs. But to the people in Moose Jaw, they sure look like they are. They sure look like they are. So, Mr. Speaker, yes, there's been 10,000 jobs lost in this province. And I appreciate the members opposite, you know, who are finally waking up to the fact that we have had job losses in this province.

But you know, the Crowns really can deliver on head offices. They can deliver on good solid careers. It's not only the clients and the consumers, the customers who are well served, are well served by the Crown corporations, but it's also our kids. And now, I mean, like many of them have retired out, for sure. I think some of my colleagues' parents have retired out of SaskEnergy, you know. These are good solid jobs.

When we can have a win-win-win situation with Crowns being competitive in costs, delivering dividends, and people paying fair rates for their communications, their cellphones, their services. And yet we get almost \$300 million in dividends. It does seem like something you don't want to mess with. And it's that old saying: if it ain't broke, then don't fix it. Simply move away from it. Move away from it. Let it work. Let it work.

And you know, the government, to its credit, at least went to an election up front about the 40 Liquor Board stores. Now it will be interesting to see how much further . . . Yes, it will be interesting to see how far down the road we go because they didn't take that out of . . . they did take it out of the Crown protection legislation. And so we need to see where they will end up with this.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I've said, and I am really amazed at some of the ministers over there when one can't produce a document, can't produce a document about a definition and probably won't, probably won't. I mean we know there are . . . You know, it'll be interesting to see what they do. And then we have another who, the Finance minister, doesn't believe in scenarios. He calls them rabbit holes. And I don't know what a budget is if not a series of scenarios, if it's not a series of scenarios that professional people work with.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is really alarming when we have a Finance minister so dismissive, so, so dismissive, dismissive, so dismissive of evidence-based thinking, so dismissive of that and so dismissive of his responsibilities. And so you know, Mr. Speaker, clearly I've hit a nerve with the Finance minister because he really clearly needs to get a handle on what his job is, what his job is. You know, we have someone who is taking, putting at risk so much of what we hold near and dear here in Saskatchewan. And he can be simply flippant, flippant about the whole thing, flippant. And so, Mr. Speaker, I have some real concerns about this, real concerns. And they're hiding behind this interpretation Act, this interpretation Act, and clarification, clarification.

You know, Mr. Speaker, this is really rich coming from those folks over there, those folks over there who clearly haven't done their homework and are going to lead us down a very dangerous path, not thinking through all the unintended consequences. And as we've said, this simple one that just is mind-boggling that the Finance minister clearly hadn't thought about, the federal corporate taxes. He calls that a rabbit hole, a

rabbit hole. I don't know if that's what he thinks about federal corporate tax law, a series of rabbit holes. I find that appalling. I find that appalling.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a bill I know that many people will want to speak to. Many people will want to speak to this legislation. Many people will want to really ask the minister responsible: can he produce that simple page, that simple definition about where they got this definition from that he seems so keen on? And if he can table it, if he can table it — we've been calling for it for a couple of days now — if he can table it then that's great. That is really excellent. But the page, the citation . . .

But I know many people will want to speak to this bill and speak to other bills before us tonight. So I want to make sure though that, you know, when I see this image in my mind's eye of a house with a for sale sign in the front porch and the owner says it's not really for sale, but walking by you see the sign. And the people say, it's not for sale; I'm just checking out the language. I think it really is for sale.

And these guys are desperate. You can hear it. You can hear it right now, very desperate for cash. They're in their treasury board meetings, and they're all wondering where they're going to get their money from. And this is what they're looking for. This is what they're looking for. So, Mr. Speaker, with that I would move adjournment on Bill No. 40, *An Act to amend the Interpretation Act, 1995*.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 40, *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2016*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 2

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise of course today to speak to Bill No. 2 . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I don't think I have quite that voice, so thank you. Some technical difficulties over here, Mr. Speaker.

For those that missed it, Bill No. 2 is *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Crown Corporations' Fiscal Year End Standardization) Amendment Act, 2016*. Mr. Speaker, certainly those members in this Legislative Assembly and many of those at home will have some recollection of this bill. Of course prior to the bill being formally announced in this Legislative Assembly earlier this spring, there was an announcement in

November indicating that the fiscal year-ends of the Crown corporations would be extended, Mr. Speaker, for an additional three months, so 15 months, Mr. Speaker, 15 months of reporting of . . .

The Speaker: — Why is the member from Saskatoon Centre on his feet?

Mr. Forbes: — Leave to introduce a guest.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, it's not about finishing my speech or anything I forgot to say. But I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House, a guest in the west gallery, Brittney Senger, from Saskatoon. She's actually very active on Saskatoon's east side, very active in the civic election, in the past civic election. She is a political science student at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan]. I would ask all members to welcome her to her legislature. Thank you.

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

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This has been a bumpy start to this, my comments today.

So going back to my previous comments, of course this . . . We got a first indication of this legislation back in November when the Finance minister did release the mid-year financials at that point, so we know that that is possible, Mr. Speaker. At that time, he was also . . . had to admit that we were looking at a two point . . . or \$262 million deficit at that time, Mr. Speaker, so that we did get a bit of an update at that time and of course did not get a budget ahead of the most recent election, Mr. Speaker. So that adds, I think, some context to this bill that we see before us today.

When the minister did rise in May to speak to this bill, he noted that Crown corporations of course are formed by separate legislation and some didn't have a specific date, a fiscal year-end date. So there is some reason I suppose, Mr. Speaker, in having those year-end dates align. Certainly this government today, as we know, has been in power in this province for nine years. So I do find the timing of these changes before a provincial election, where the books maybe could use a little

sprucing up, Mr. Speaker, to be very interesting, very interesting timing indeed.

And of course those . . . To refresh memories, we did not see a budget ahead of that provincial election, which has since proven to be a bit of a misfortune, Mr. Speaker. Because although I'm not sure exactly the extent that it would have changed the results, I think a lot of people would have liked to have had that information before casting their vote. But of course they didn't.

So what this bill does propose again is changing the fiscal year-end from March the 1st . . . from the calendar year-end to the fiscal year-end, from April 1st to March 1st, Mr. Speaker, which is a reasonable practice. But again I think when you're looking at any changes, not only do you look at the decisions to make the changes, but you look at timing. You look at context. You look at, why wasn't this done in the previous number of years where it could have been? And why did this happen right before a provincial election, an election again where we did not see the true state of the books ahead of that election, Mr. Speaker?

So I think that is a valid question. Certainly was a question I was asked and a number of people were asked on the campaign trail, and certainly have a lot of people wishing that they would've seen those books ahead of the election, Mr. Speaker. And it didn't come without consequence of course either. So this would be a new practice for the Crown corporations and would . . . involved a little uncertainty about exactly how they were going to be reporting those additional three months. And I know that all of the Crowns in the end did an admirable job of ensuring that they had those reports on time and in front of the people of Saskatchewan. And I think that, yes, there certainly is some lessons to be learned by others, Mr. Speaker, about getting your reports in on time and having that public scrutiny that is so deserved by the people of Saskatchewan.

When I was preparing for my comments today, Mr. Speaker, I was just going back and having a look at some of those annual reports that were tabled by the Crown corporations. And I'm going to read a little bit from the SaskPower annual report. SaskPower, of course, is our provincial power corporation that has one of the largest power grids in Canada, Mr. Speaker — one of the largest power grids with one of the lowest consumer densities, Mr. Speaker. And that's really important in a province like Saskatchewan where we do have a dispersed population where, if you look at a map, a provincial map of Saskatchewan, that fully half of the geographic land mass in Saskatchewan is north of Waskesiu.

It provides some interesting challenges, and that of course, Mr. Speaker, is why the Crowns were created in the first place. The Crowns ensured rural electrification, ensured that we had service to the North. And they continue, very admirably, Mr. Speaker, to fulfill that role today.

[16:30]

And you know, when we're looking at transforming, when we're looking at providing not only just power but we're looking at providing health care and education and economic opportunities in rural and remote communities, Mr. Speaker, it is essential that we have those Crown corporations, and that we

don't do anything to hamper their ability to provide not only those economic dividends, Mr. Speaker — \$300 million a year — but the social dividends to the people of Saskatchewan. And that is a unique mandate amongst Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. They don't report to shareholders; they report to all people in Saskatchewan. And I think that's very, very important.

In their preamble to their annual report of SaskPower, which was of course established in 1929, they note that they're defined by their “. . . commitment to support economic growth and enhance quality of life in our province.” Mr. Speaker, and I think that that is very important — almost 3,200 full-time jobs, an economic and a social commitment.

And I rise today to speak to this legislation, but also at a time when those jobs and those services and that social commitment to the people of this province are being threatened, being threatened by legislation that appears not to be particularly well thought out, and certainly legislation that doesn't seem to take into account the full context and the full scope of potential consequences, Mr. Speaker.

And I think that that is something that we have seen time and time again from this government, I think. If I may, you know, when you're bringing in legislations, be it, you know, pulling the ability of school boards to set their own mill rates, it's really important that you have a plan for where you're going to go from there. And that is not something that we have seen, and in fact we've seen the opposite, time, time, and time again, Mr. Speaker.

We want to ensure that, you know, in addition to having this extra accounting piece at the end of this year . . . And again, as I mentioned, the Crowns did do admirably in making sure that they had had their reporting. I remember in estimates they were able to account for their fiscal year-end. Again, we are yet to see that from the Finance minister, that kind of update from him. But I know that people again are waiting to see that.

And again, they have good reason to be concerned, Mr. Speaker, given that just shortly after the election we finally did see a budget and a Throne Speech and there was some surprises in there, Mr. Speaker. There were some surprises in terms of increased drug costs for seniors, cuts to Buffalo Narrows penitentiary — correctional facility, rather, Mr. Speaker. Now we've got cuts to the SAID program, increased cuts to school boards, NORTEP, not paying for teacher salaries, clawing back WCB [Workers' Compensation Board].

So people in this province have good reason to want to pay attention and want those updates and that clarity from this government. Certainly this legislation is cloaked in the guise of providing clarity and some streamlining of processes, which on the surface is admirable, but it's always I think important to question deeper motives or to point out where maybe some of the unintended consequences have not been fully thought out.

And I mention again, Mr. Speaker, that people of this province are being reasonable, and members on this side certainly being reasonable in questioning this state of not only the Crown corporations and the increasing debt that they're being asked to hold onto, but you know, the finances overall in this province

— \$7 billion added to the debt in seven years, Mr. Speaker. We're talking some of the highest years of revenue in the history of the province, so that's certainly concerning. Failing an audit, Mr. Speaker, the first time in Canadian history, you know. And was this change a way to prop up the books ahead of that election? I mean, I don't know. Certainly that's a one-year deal if that is the case, because now they'll all be aligned. But I think, given the full context, I think there's some reasonable questions around that, Mr. Speaker.

And we're seeing, you know, increasingly desperate measures. Again as I mentioned, once the fiscal years align, that on-the-surface boost to revenues, that's a one-time deal. So we're seeing government that's getting more and more desperate to divert the attention of the people of this province away from the true state of the books. Well we don't know the true state of course, Mr. Speaker, because we haven't seen those financial updates.

But desperate, really desperate measures like proposing selling off 49 per cent or making it easier to sell off 49 per cent of our Crown corporations, which will have economic impact certainly for those in those jobs but as well as the dividends that are paid to all people in Saskatchewan, as well as service. And as I mentioned before, our ability to provide education and health care and business opportunities across this province, Mr. Speaker. And that's increasingly important.

And I certainly do have a number of additional questions that I would like to ask about this legislation and to check in with stakeholders to see if they have any additional comments, Mr. Speaker. It's not only the announced and the intended consequences that we have to pay attention to when we're looking at legislation. It is all of those unexamined consequences, obscured consequences, and consequences that will be realized in the long term, Mr. Speaker.

So as I noted, on the surface, aligning the fiscal year-ends for Crown corporations does seem a reasonable measure, although a little less reasonable or a little more questionable, given the context when this legislation was first talked about and was first proposed, Mr. Speaker.

I think that committee will provide a good opportunity to put a little more of a spotlight on this legislation and ensure that there are no hidden consequences negative towards our Crowns because, Mr. Speaker, we all know that our Crown corporations are certainly under a lot of stress and a lot of scrutiny. And there's a lot of fear out there, Mr. Speaker, and legitimate concern about what exactly is in the future for those very important corporations in our province and the good work that they do.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to propose, I would like to move Bill No. 2 . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I would like to sit down.

The Speaker: — The member would like to move . . . Adjourn debate?

An Hon. Member: — No.

The Speaker: — All right . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk Assistant: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which bill shall this be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 2, the miscellaneous statute amendment Act, 2016 be moved to the committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved Bill No. 2 to Crown and Central Agencies.

Bill No. 4

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

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter the debate on Bill No. 4, *The Queen's Bench Amendment Act, 2016*. Mr. Speaker, this bill does a few things before us, and I'd just like to refer to the minister's second reading speech to talk a little bit about this. He points out, Mr. Speaker, that:

. . . amendments to the Act are required to fulfill . . . [our] obligations as a signatory to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement, which will allow existing or future awards made by dispute resolution panels to be enforced against any party as if they were civil judgments of the court. Amendments to the Act will [also the minister had gone on to say that] be made to allow awards to be made by dispute resolution panels under trade agreements to be enforced as if they were civil judgments of the court, and allow awards . . . enforced against persons other than the Crown.

So the other thing, there are a few other things that this particular Bill No. 4 does, Mr. Speaker. It also amends the reference to the size of the court from a Chief Justice of 31 other judges, to a Chief Justice and 32 other judges to reflect the actual size of the court today, Mr. Speaker. That's more than a reasonable amendment.

One of the other things this bill does, Mr. Speaker, it includes a notice requirement specific to the appointment of court-appointed legal counsel. The minister had gone on to explain in his second reading speech that:

. . . the lack of a statutory basis for the administration of the court-appointed legal counsel program has [in fact] resulted in inconsistencies in when and how such counsel are appointed.

And he points out that:

Providing for a notice requirement specifically designed for court-appointed counsel and introducing those rules in *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012* will enhance the ability to address these matters in the Act, and [as he says] improve certainty.

Mr. Speaker, so this particular bill, I'll just summarize here. This bill makes it easier to enforce decisions made by the dispute resolution panels under free trade agreements. It allows the minister to keep a list of lawyers who can be appointed as court-appointed lawyers, regulating their compensation, and update the process for people applying to get a court-appointed lawyer.

I'd just like to walk you through — so that's in summary of what the bill does, Mr. Speaker — I'd just like to walk you through the changes to the bill here. So in subsection 4(1), it's amended to provide for 32 other Queen's Bench judges rather than 31. And this amendment reflects the existing size of the court and does not represent an expansion, Mr. Speaker.

So with respect, there's a new section, section 4, that:

... establishes a requirement for the appointment of court appointed legal counsel to proceed only when the court is satisfied that the application and notice of requirements of part III.1 of *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012* have been met.

And as it says in the explanatory notes:

This requirement will not be necessary where, under section 33.1, a different process is to be followed with respect to the appointment of counsel for children in child protection matters.

Another change . . . This is one of the changes that is repeated throughout the Act, Mr. Speaker, is, "The reference to domestic is removed to allow for trade agreements to have a broader application."

Again, so in definition 89.1, those definitions are amended to remove the reference to "domestic" trade agreement. So the definition of "award" and "certified copy" in the past, Mr. Speaker, in the previous legislation, referred to "domestic," and so that will be removed.

In subsection 89.2, it will be:

... amended to remove the reference to "domestic" [again] and to remove the restriction of enforcement of the order to an order against the Crown.

And in subsection 89.2(2), it ". . . provides the ability to enforce an award whether the award was made on or after the section comes into force."

Just like to take you down to subsection 109(1), it's amended to remove the reference, once again, to "domestic" trade agreements, in keeping with our commitment to the New West Partnership. And in section 4, the reference in (c) is updated to 31 judges, again in accordance with the change made to subsection 4(1) of the Act.

In subsection 9(1) it provides for related amendments to *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012*. And in subsection 2, the long title's amended to include reference to amendments to provide for the appointment of court-appointed counsel.

In subsection 9(3), it:

... introduces the new section 12.1 to provide that the notice requirement of Part III of *The Constitutional Questions Act, 2012* do not apply to matters for which an application for court appointed counsel is being made pursuant to Part III.1.

Just want to take you down to subsection (4) of the bill that provides for the new Part III.1 to address court-appointed lawyers, as I had mentioned in the summary, Mr. Speaker. Section 15.1 sets out definitions for the new Part III.1. And the "administrator" is defined for the purposes of this part and "court" means the Court of Queen's Bench or the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan. A "list" means the list of lawyers maintained by the administrator. The "minister" means the minister responsible for the Act, and "prescribed" means prescribed in the regulations. So that gives you some sense of the definitions, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

Subsection 15.3(1) provides that any person who seeks to have a lawyer appointed to represent him in a legal matter may make an application to the court.

Subsection 15.3(2) provides that an application pursuant to subsection (1) is to be made in the manner and form as provided in the regulations and is to be accompanied by any additional information that the administrator may require.

Subsection 15.3(3) establishes that notice must be provided 14 days before a hearing for an application for a court appointed lawyer. Notice is to be provided to the administrator, the chief executive officer of Legal Aid, the federal Attorney General where it is a federal prosecution, the provincial Attorney General, and any other prescribed person set out in the regulations.

Clause (b) [of this subsection] provides that such notice is to be filed with the court with proof of service.

Subsection 15.3(4) provides that the matters set out in clauses (a), (b) and (c) are exempt from the notice requirements in subsection (3).

Subsection 15.3(5) provides that with the consent of the administrator, the court may order that the 14 day notice may be shortened.

So in 15.4(1):

Where the court orders the applicant to be represented by a lawyer, the court shall refer the applicant to the administrator and the administrator shall appoint a lawyer to represent the applicant for the purposes of that matter.

In 15.4(2), after a lawyer is appointed “. . . in accordance with clause(1)(b) the administrator shall file a notice in the court advising the name of the lawyer that has been appointed.”

And in 15.4(3):

For the purpose of appointing a lawyer in accordance with clause (1)(b), the administrator may establish a list of lawyers that may be appointed in accordance with this part and enter into contracts with those lawyers and law firms regarding the provisions of legal services for these purposes.

[And] Clause (b) provides that the administrator may also establish a flat fee for matters to be payable to the lawyers appointed in accordance with this Part.

And 15.4(4) of Bill No. 4: “Where a lawyer is appointed in a matter not in accordance with this Part, no fee will be payable to the administrator.”

Mr. Speaker, so 15.5(1):

An administrator shall remove a lawyer from the list if that lawyer has been removed from the panel of solicitors maintained by the Saskatchewan Legal Aid Commission.

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

Subsection (3) A lawyer who has been removed from the list has 30 days to apply to the Court of Queen’s Bench to appeal that decision.

[And then (4)] On application, a court may order reinstatement of the lawyer on the list or dismiss the application to be reinstated.

[And then] Subsection 9(5) of the Bill introduces a new subsection 17(3) providing that a notice to any other person is to be served in the prescribed manner.

And finally, Mr. Speaker:

Subsection 9(6) of the Bill introduces a new section 17.1 to provide for new regulatory authority for the purposes of this [particular] Part.

This includes powers to prescribe the manner and form in which an application for legal representation is to be made; prescribing any other persons to whom notice is to be served and prescribing accepted manners of service.

Mr. Speaker, again, so just in conclusion, this bill is designed in part to fulfill our obligations, this province’s obligations as a signatory to the New West Partnership Trade Agreement. Mr. Speaker, and these all seem like fair and reasonable amendments and changes. I know though eventually when this bill gets to committee, there will be further questions asked about this particular bill. But with that, for now I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 4.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 5

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’m pleased today to stand and talk about Bill No. 5, *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act, 2016*. This was presented by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General in the previous session, in the spring session of this year. And so when he brought this forward, he talked about how this bill is based on the recommendations from other departments such as the credit unions and real estate agents who would like to be able to provide information electronically to people.

In this day and age, Mr. Speaker, we’re going into more of an electronic-based society, that we do a lot of things through email, and so that seems to be a process that we are going to. So I could see why this might be brought forward by them. And it seems like this bill is also supported by some of the chamber of commerce in Saskatchewan and SaskCentral and, like I said before, the realtors’ association. And so I could see how this could make things a little bit easier. We tend to always be busy and hustle and bustle of life, and sometimes the only way we can communicate is through these different means of electronics, so email and such.

But one of the areas that I do get concerned about when we do things electronically is that could bring us to be presented at having some breaches of confidential information. And so I believe, I know the Minister of Justice . . . And our critic of Justice, I have great confidence in her ability to review this file and determine the realities of it and so to make recommendations based on some of the amendments that are being presented here. And I know she’ll do a good job with regards to that and questioning at committee about some of these potential confidentiality breaches that could happen. And we want to ensure that people’s confidential information is maintained and so that definitely . . . especially when you’re talking about some sensitive things like, that could be financial matters.

So I know, I myself use a lot of my . . . I keep a lot of electronic data for myself and more and more people are going towards that route with keeping files on their computer and such. But again, that kind of stuff can fail. And so where will those hard copies be? And what will people do? And where will those avenues be? So those are a lot of good questions that are going to need to be asked when this is presented to committee and

discussed between the Minister of Justice and our critic in Justice as well. They both have law degrees and I'm sure they've looked at a lot of documents such as these and they'll be able to determine what is kind of due process at this point, you know.

We are going towards these directions in our society, and I'm sure it's going to be progressing even more, more, more. And so when I look, the last time this Act was amended was in 2002 and this particular Act was implemented in 2000. And so, I would say, like in the past 14 years there's been a lot of changes and a lot of progress with regards to how we do business and how much our technology has advanced. I've probably gone through about five different phones in the past 14 years. I think I had a flip phone at that time in 2002. So now we're in the day and age where we have the smart technology of our phones. But again, it does bring me to be concerned about confidentiality and how we're going to maintain that and keeping that information safe.

Another thing that's being addressed with regards to this amendment to these Acts is there's a lot of housekeeping with language change in here. And so they're changing things from "the department" to "the ministry," which I would consider that to be somewhat of a non-issue. It seems like a lot of the legislation that we're going through at this point, there's a lot of changes to that language. And I believe it's really important to keep language consistent between all of the legislation because people get used to saying something, and so we are all on the same page when we're talking about the different ministries. So there's a lot of that housekeeping aspect that are being implemented.

And we also know that there's some wording with regards to the transfer of interest in land and third parties. And so I think that'll need to be reviewed and looked into again by our critic. And I'm sure she'll address a lot of that when she's talking in committee with the ministry. So that will be dealt with.

I wonder too with regards to some of the changes to this, is this going to be based on when clients are recommending it or is it going to be kind of status quo of ensuring that the documents are being transferred electronically? Because we want to ensure that people have their options of which way they would prefer. I know sometimes when I've been doing some work with different companies and banks and such, they'll send me an email with regards to my documentation, but then they'll also send me a hard copy. So I don't know if this is going to duplicate some of this information or if people are going to be able to have a chance to choose which option they're going to want. And so I think those are things that are going to need to be discussed.

And I know the business communities were really asking for this, but I think it's important to talk to other people in the community with regards to what is their opinion of these changes. It's going to impact them. It's going to impact just everybody that's, you know, looking into selling their homes, or they're looking into purchasing a home. So I think that's really important that we look and we consult with the general population and so, you know, Mr. . . .

The Speaker: — Why is the Minister of Justice and Attorney

General on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the minister.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, thanks very much. Mr. Speaker, in your gallery who's come to visit us — and I know it's a late hour so I won't take too much time — my son, Jeremy.

Jeremy's just on his way to Winnipeg. He's got a new position. He's just graduated from geology at the University of Saskatchewan so we're awfully proud of the fact that he's going to work, Mr. Speaker. He's still living in our basement, but we're hoping that that's going to change sometime soon. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to introduce Jeremy to the House and ask that all members welcome him to his legislature.

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

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was just kind of concluding my remarks with regards to Bill No. 5, *The Electronic Information and Documents Amendment Act*. And I know my fellow colleagues will have a lot more they would like to add to this discussion. So with regards to that, I move to adjourn this debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

It now being 5 p.m., this Assembly is recessed until 7 p.m.

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

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