



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

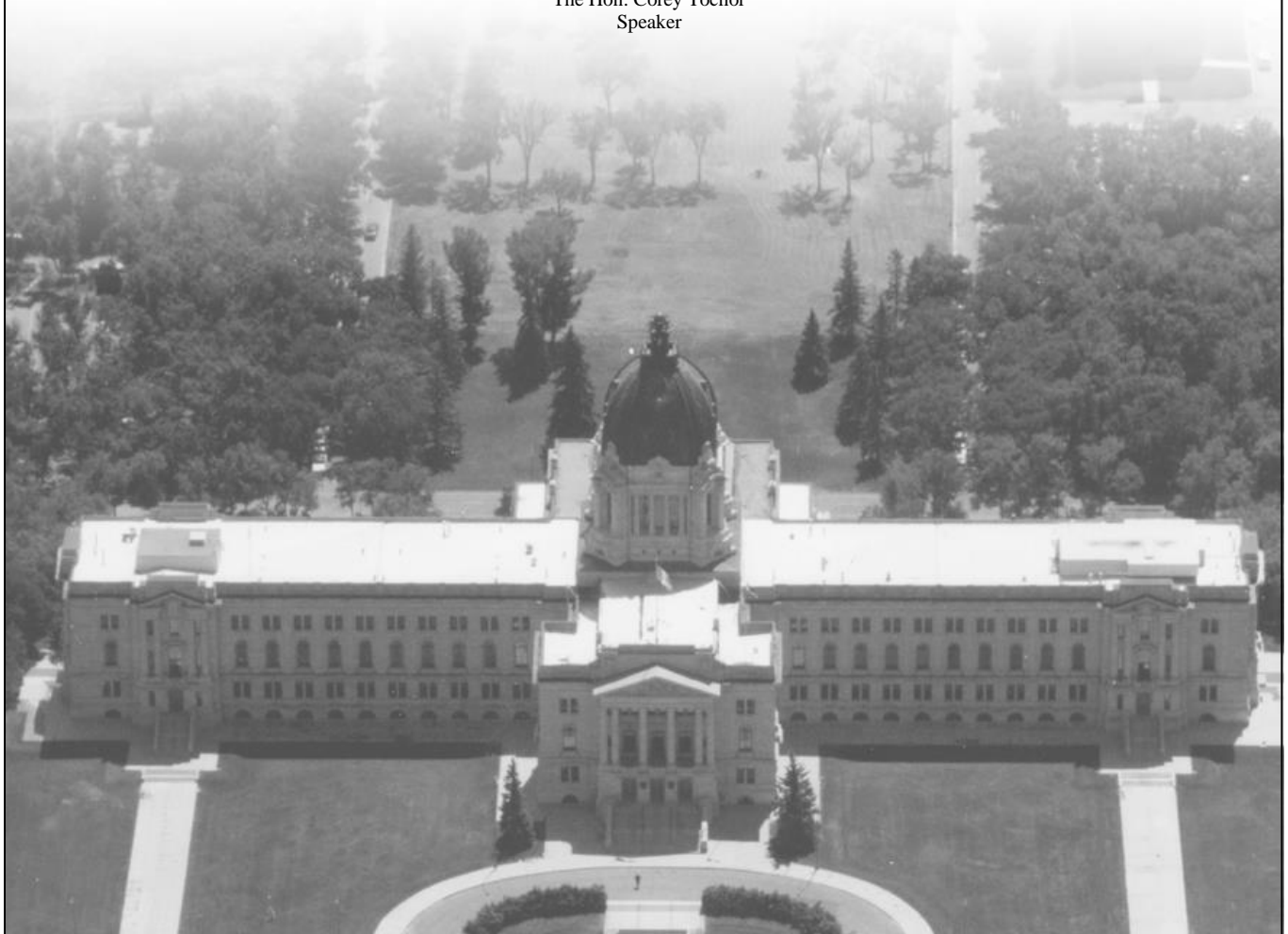
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)  
Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Corey Tochor  
Speaker



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

**Speaker** — Hon. Corey Tochor

**Premier** — Hon. Brad Wall

**Leader of the Opposition** — Trent Wotherspoon

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

**Beck**, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

**Belanger**, Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)

**Bonk**, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

**Boyd**, Bill — Kindersley (SP)

**Bradshaw**, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)

**Brkich**, Greg — Arm River (SP)

**Buckingham**, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

**Campeau**, Jennifer — Saskatoon Fairview (SP)

**Carr**, Lori — Estevan (SP)

**Chartier**, Danielle — Saskatoon Riversdale (NDP)

**Cheveldayoff**, Hon. Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

**Cox**, Herb — The Battlefords (SP)

**D'Autremont**, Dan — Cannington (SP)

**Dennis**, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)

**Docherty**, Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)

**Doherty**, Hon. Kevin — Regina Northeast (SP)

**Doke**, Larry — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)

**Duncan**, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

**Eyre**, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

**Fiaz**, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

**Forbes**, David — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

**Hargrave**, Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

**Harpauer**, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)

**Harrison**, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)

**Hart**, Glen — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

**Heppner**, Nancy — Martensville-Warman (SP)

**Kaeding**, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

**Kirsch**, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

**Lambert**, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

**Lawrence**, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

**Makowsky**, Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

**Marit**, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

**McCall**, Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

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

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

**Michelson**, Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)

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

**Morgan**, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

**Nerlien**, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

**Olauson**, Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)

**Ottenbreit**, Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)

**Parent**, Roger — Saskatoon Meewasin (SP)

**Phillips**, Kevin — Melfort (SP)

**Rancourt**, Nicole — Prince Albert Northcote (NDP)

**Reiter**, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

**Ross**, Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

**Sarauer**, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

**Sproule**, Cathy — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

**Steele**, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

**Steinley**, Warren — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)

**Stewart**, Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

**Tell**, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

**Tochor**, Hon. Corey — Saskatoon Eastview (SP)

**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)

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

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

**Principal Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyak

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

**Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce two groups of people in the Assembly today. One group of two brothers, there's Jason and Joseph Sliva from Yorkton. They're up in the west gallery. They're here for the Holodomor memorial this afternoon, also good friends of mine. Jason is a commercial pilot instructor, works at Yorkton Aircraft Service. And Joseph is a grade 11 student, and we're talking a lot about government and parliamentary procedures this morning. So I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, some special guests up in your gallery, the very top centre, is three very special people from Yorkton. One is Corporal Kim Stewart. She's been a member of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] for 14 years, has served all over the province. She recently transferred to the integrated organized crime south, proceeds of crime unit, from Yorkton. She's going to be missed in Yorkton, Mr. Speaker. She's also married to a member, has three kids, very hard working. And again she's visiting us in her Assembly this morning or this afternoon.

With them also is Corporal Terry Hyggen. Terry is a 14-year RCMP member. Another person that has served north, south, east, and west, I think, in the province including Saskatoon major crimes unit, currently serving in Yorkton. He actually served for a time recently when we were short of a staff sergeant, looking to fill that position. Terry stepped up as a corporal, filled that position for quite a length of time very capably, and we really do appreciate his hard work in the service.

The only thing that's kind of a downside of him, he likes Harleys. But he also drives a black Dodge truck, so we kind of, we debate over that. But a very appreciated member of our community and our RCMP, and great to have him — a very close friend of mine — too here, Mr. Speaker.

With them is my CA [constituency assistant], Ms Lauretta Ritchie-McInnes. She has been a CA for 21 years I think now: 12 years in Melville-Saltcoats, nine years in Yorkton. Very capable of many gifts in her life, a lot of professional designations as well. She serves us very well in Yorkton.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly and say thanks to RCMP members.

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again, it's time to celebrate Saskatchewan Multicultural Week. We'll hear more about it in a member's statement in a few minutes. But today I would like to introduce to you and through you, seated in the Speaker's gallery, the executive director of the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan, Rhonda Rosenberg. Rhonda, give us a wave. With Rhonda today is Neeraj Saroj and he's vice-president of the council. Bruno Kossmann, Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan past president, also joins us with his wife, Sharon.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan Multicultural Week kicked off this past Saturday. We have had a number of honours and awards presented today. Joining us in the House is Jellyn Ayudan who is the recipient of the Multicultural Youth Leadership Award, and we have Faeza Moolla as the recipient of the Betty Szuchewycz Award for outstanding contributions to multiculturalism in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to help me in welcoming these fine individuals to their Legislative Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce an important individual from the broomball community in Saskatchewan. Seated in your gallery is Mr. Don Black, Saskatchewan Broomball Association president. Joining Don today, his wife, Tracy Davies.

Don was instrumental in bringing the 2016 World Broomball Championships to Regina which was held at the beginning of November. I had a chance to speak to the audience. There was some 800 people there. It was a happening event with, indeed, people from around the world. Don has made a significant contribution to the sports sector and our province.

So I'd ask all members to please help me in welcoming Don to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the minister in welcoming certainly the folks from the multicultural association of Saskatchewan, 42 years young, and to join them in the celebration of Multicultural Week. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, incidents in the city and indeed around the world remind us of what a tremendous good fortune we have here in Saskatchewan, but also the challenge that we have here in Saskatchewan in terms of living up to the best of those multicultural ideals, the values of respect for diversity and, you know, that we're all better when we're working together and in respect and in peace and in celebration.

So it's really great to see everyone here from the multicultural

association of Saskatchewan, and it might be just, you know, carrying on from the great events of Saturday on through the whole week.

And if I might while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say a quick hello and a quick congratulations to Don Black and to Tracy Davies. And these are two individuals that give not just to the broomball community, Mr. Speaker, but to the province as a whole. The world's a better place for the work of Don Black and Tracy Davies, and it's good to see them here today at their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in the west gallery are 45 grade 7 and 8 students from Ethel Milliken Elementary School. They are accompanied by their teachers: Mr. Kristopher Jan and Ms. Janice Hiebert and Ms. Brooklyn Leibel and Mr. Jonathan Stadler.

Mr. Speaker, they're here to observe the proceedings this morning, and later this afternoon I'm going to meet them out there and probably going to be more of a question-answer session. I would like to ask members to welcome them to their Assembly.

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

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all members of the Legislative Assembly, we have a group of teachers here. But we have one very special teacher from Whitewood, Saskatchewan, and that is our daughter Gina Kodman. And she's come down here to find out what her old man does. So I would like to welcome her to her Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Well what his old man does is scoop the Speaker on his introductions, apparently. Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my honour today to introduce to you a group of teachers who are here in the legislature to attend the 18th annual Saskatchewan Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy. The institute began on Saturday and will conclude on Wednesday, November 23rd.

This group has already met with a number of people, including members of the judiciary and representatives of the Chief Electoral office. Earlier today they met with caucus staff from both sides of the House, the Clerks, and the Legislative Library. Over the next two days, they are scheduled to meet with caucus Chairs, caucus Whips, several MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly], cabinet ministers, and the Ministry of Education.

I would ask the teachers and guests to give us a wave as I introduce them: Blair Beck, Angela Fielding, Walter Fielding, Scott Wallis, Crystal Schindel, Gillian Strange, Kelly Walker, Dawn Helmeczi, Lauren Johnston, Christopher Garner, Perry Ostapowich, Gina Kodman, Kyle Clark, Trenton Johnston, Lane Gray, Jennifer Herrod, Courtney Bisson, Kevin Dyck, Amy Klassen, Colin Knight, Dorothy Asapace, Jane Robertson, Marie-Chantal Poulin, Vicki Coghill, Caitlin Gammel, Chris Schmidt-Watt.

I'd like to make a special mention of our steering committee comprised of four teachers who have attended past institutes, as well as an official from the Ministry of Education. From the ministry we have Stephenie Leitao Csada, consultant for francophone education; steering committee, Doug Panko, Laurel LaBar, Terry Leibel, Karen Blackwell Jones, and Larry Mikulcik.

I ask all members to welcome this group to the Saskatchewan legislature.

I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with you in welcoming these individuals to their Assembly. This is an exciting and interesting program. It's gone on for a number of years, and I think gives a chance for citizens of our province to develop an understanding of what takes place in the legislature and gives them the opportunity to share that with their students.

I went to the windup supper last year and I sat with a teacher and I said, how was this? Did this compare with what your expectations were? And he said, I started out with very low expectations and it certainly did not exceed them. In any event, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all MLAs join in welcoming these people.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a few introductions to make and would like to join in other members in welcoming a number of individuals and groups to their Legislative Assembly.

First, the teachers who are present with us for the Saskatchewan Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy, I want to welcome you to your Legislative Assembly and thank you for taking time away from your communities and your families and your classrooms to be here today and to participate in what I hope is a very useful exercise to not only learn more about our democracy but also share ideas about how to teach and impart what you learned here to your classrooms, and hopefully excite an interest with your students in the Legislative Assembly and how it impacts them, their lives, and their learning. So thank you to each of you for being here.

I also want to join in with both the member opposite and my colleague in welcoming Don and Tracy here today to their Legislative Assembly.

It was my pleasure a couple of weeks ago to do a member's statement congratulating Don on his good work in bringing the

broomball championships to Regina, and I understand it was a very successful event. And I want to welcome both of you. It's great to see you here.

The Speaker will note that I didn't scoop him on the introduction, but I want to make special welcome to my brother Blair who is here from Carnduff, Saskatchewan. Blair was quite excited about coming and seeing what it is I do and yes, I really do have a seat here. And Blair and his wife, Tara, are very involved members of their community in Carnduff, Saskatchewan. And although I probably kid him more than I should, I'm proud of the work that he does in his classroom and in his community. And I hope that this is a worthwhile experience for you and for all of your colleagues here today. So I'd invite all members to join me in welcoming all of these important guests to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cannington.

[13:45]

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce delegates from the Midwestern Legislative Conference exchange that are visiting us. If they would stand when I call their name: Representative Joan Ballweg of Wisconsin; Mike McCabe from the MLC [Midwestern Legislative Conference], and Ileen Grossman as well, staff members with the MLC. Accompanying them is Sheila Sterling — I had to check and make sure she was still sitting there — from the Speaker's office. I would ask members to welcome them to our Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the member from Cannington in welcoming the delegation from the Midwestern Legislative Conference to our Legislative Assembly, and certainly Saskatchewan is a proud member of the MLC. Always good to have that interaction, and certainly good to join with other Bowhay Institute for Legislative Leadership Development graduates over lunch to get caught up quickly with folks. But certainly Representative Ballweg, Ileen Grossman, Mike McCabe, people that do a lot of great work for a great institution that Saskatchewan's very proud to play a role in. So on behalf of the official opposition, welcome very much to the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to also join with the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport in acknowledging Faeza Moolla to our Legislative Assembly.

Last week I had the opportunity of attending the National Philanthropy Day awards luncheon and my good friend Faeza was awarded the Outstanding Individual Volunteer of the Year Award. So I'd like everyone here to acknowledge and show the appreciation of someone who has given of her time and energy to our fine city and our community. So thank you very much for joining us today.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

The petitioners also point out that since then, this government has repeatedly indicated that the Lighthouse stabilization unit keeps individuals out of hospital emergency rooms and jail cells. And we just need to look to the Saskatoon Health Region, Mr. Speaker, where there's been record over capacity in our emergency rooms there, and obviously the cut to the Lighthouse isn't the whole part of the problem, but it certainly is a contributing factor and 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 2015 which forced the Lighthouse to cut back its hours of essential services in February of 2016, and take immediate steps to ensure that homeless people in Saskatchewan have emergency shelter, clothing, and food available to them before more lives are lost.

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by citizens from Saskatoon, Carrot River, and Prince Albert. I so submit.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Wood River.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Assiniboia, Mossbank, Gravelbourg, Tugaske, McCord, Bengough, Shamrock, Glentworth, Wymark, Swift Current, Lafleche, Avonlea, Rockglen, Willow Bunch, Coronach, Moose Jaw, Weyburn, Limerick, Scout Lake, Flintoft, Crane Valley, Woodrow, Fife Lake, Wood Mountain, Estevan, Regina, Congress, Killdeer, and Palmer. I do so present, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too am proud to rise in my place to present a petition in reference to a second bridge desperately needed for Prince Albert.

And, Mr. Speaker, part of the prayer reads that the Saskatchewan Party government refuses to stand up for Prince Albert and this critical infrastructure issue, and that the need for a second bridge for Prince Albert has never been clearer than it is today. Prince Albert, communities north of Prince Albert, and businesses that send people and products through Prince Albert require a solution.

In the prayer that reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Ask that the Sask Party government stop stalling, hiding behind rhetoric, and refusing to listen to the people calling for action, and to begin immediately to plan and then quickly commence the construction of a second bridge from Prince Albert, using federal and provincial dollars.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from the Prince Albert area, as many other pages from all throughout Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I proudly submit this petition for a second bridge in Prince Albert.

**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 renewing funding for heritage languages here in Saskatchewan. And we know that after 25 years the Government of Saskatchewan has discontinued all support for heritage language learning in Saskatchewan. Since 1991, heritage language schools have depended on this modest funding from the Ministry of Education to help sustain their programs, but as a result of the announcement by the Ministry of Education, many of these non-profit heritage language schools are facing the difficult decision of whether or not they can continue to operate.

And we know that in addition to providing language and cultural classes, these schools offer a welcoming environment and crucial support for newcomers who are searching for a way to feel at home in their new surroundings here in Saskatchewan. The heritage language schools contribute to the retention of immigrants in Saskatchewan by helping people to maintain their culture, identities, and traditions while at the same time learning about Canadian ways of life. Furthermore, studying additional language offers many benefits for all Canadians, especially in today's growing international markets. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the cities of Regina and Saskatoon. I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and present a petition in support of child care centres in the province. Those who signed this petition wish to bring our attention to the following: across Saskatchewan, licensed non-profit child care centres are taxed inconsistently. Many of our licensed non-profit centres pay commercial property tax and this is not done in Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, BC [British Columbia], or New Brunswick.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, citizens signing this petition reside in Regina, Edenwold, and Saskatoon. I do so submit.

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

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

The petitioners draw attention to the following points: that in the recent election campaign, the Sask Party promised that they would not privatize SaskTel. The petitioners call for: that instead of looking at their own waste and scandal, the Sask Party is now talking about breaking their promise and looking to sell off SaskTel to make a quick dollar.

The petitioners point out that SaskTel is owned by all of us, and it was built with Saskatchewan hard work, innovation, and pride. And also, Mr. Speaker, they point out that SaskTel creates thousands of good jobs, ensures service to parts of the province that other providers ignore, and offers the lowest mobile phone rates in all of Canada.

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

the hands of the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition was signed by good citizens from Craven and Moose Jaw. I so present.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition calling on the government to reverse the cuts to the Aboriginal court worker program. The Government of Saskatchewan senselessly cut the budget for the Aboriginal court worker program in the 2016-2017 provincial budget, resulting in layoffs of Aboriginal court workers throughout the province.

Despite this decision, 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.

And those signing the petition today come from Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Fort Qu'Appelle, Dysart, and Regina. 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 the North. NORTEP has a positive economic impact in northern Saskatchewan. NORTEP provides a high-quality, face-to-face instructional and services to students. The province financial deficit cannot be fixed by cutting indigenous education in the North in a program that has served the North for over 40 years. The prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately restore their five-year agreement to fund the northern education program council, inc. and to continue funding NORTEP-NORPAC programs in La Ronge.

And it's signed by hundreds and hundreds of people in northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Canadian Western Agribition

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise in the House to celebrate the start of an important week for producers, the city of Regina, and our province: Agribition.

For nearly 50 years, the Canadian Western Agribition has been a fixture in the calendars of people across Saskatchewan and around the world. It's time for producers and innovators in our great province to show the world our excellence in agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, the show is anchored by beef cattle and features also horses, bison, sheep, goats, and an extensive agribusiness trade show. Canadian Western Agribition is a blend of agriculture, First Nations, and festive entertainment, featuring rides, music, shopping, and food. Agribition also hosts evening pro rodeo performances for action-packed entertainment. The event is an international hub of agricultural excellence, hosting over 800 international guests from over 70 countries.

Mr. Speaker, people are already excited about the new International Trade Centre that's currently under construction. That project will mean a few changes to Agribition 2016, but it's still business as usual and Agribition will again will be the world-class event exhibitors and guests have grown to expect.

Mr. Speaker, our province has a long history of success in agriculture, and I know that our producers will continue to lead the world in technology, crop science, and stock breeding for many years to come. I hope that all members will join me in congratulating CEO [chief executive officer] Chris Lane, the board of directors, and all the organizers and volunteers on what will surely be another successful Agribition. Agribition is where the world meets, and this year is no different. It's business as usual. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Holodomor

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today we joined together, many members in the rotunda today, to remember those who perished during the Ukrainian genocide of the 1930s. The genocide is referred to as Holodomor, which means extermination by hunger.

Despite record grain harvests during 1932 and 1933, the Soviets confiscated crops and refused to allow Ukrainians to store any food. Those caught with grain were sentenced to death and often immediately executed. Up to 10 million Ukrainians perished. I'll put that into a little context, Mr. Speaker. That's roughly 17 people every single minute were systematically starved. We cannot imagine the extent of the devastation wrought on Ukrainians during this time. However, despite how difficult it is to hear about such pain, it's our responsibility to listen and to learn. We must remember their suffering so that such atrocities may never happen again.

[14:00]

In 2015 a permanent reminder of Holodomor was dedicated. It's a statue to the east of the Legislative Building called *Bitter*

*Memories of Childhood.* I'd urge all members to go and pay their respects. This monument serves as a lasting reminder of the famine's devastation and impact on children. Sadly, one-third of those who lost their lives were children, needlessly cut too short.

In 2006 the Ukrainian parliament deemed Holodomor a genocide. And two years later, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan became the first jurisdiction in North America to recognize the genocide and to acknowledge the suffering inflicted on Ukrainians. We remember the past to mourn what was lost and to acknowledge the incredible resilience of the Ukrainian people. Memory eternal. Thank you.

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

### Transgender Day of Remembrance

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize the passing of a very solemn day, the Transgender Day of Remembrance. Mr. Speaker, the Transgender Day of Remembrance is an annual observance on November 20th that honours the memory of those who have been murdered through acts of anti-transgender violence. I was honoured to attend an event Saturday evening put on by TransSask and held at the Unitarian Fellowship Centre in Regina.

Stephanie Cox, a transgender woman and board Co-Chair, served as a speaker and MC [master of ceremonies] for the event. She spoke of her own personal experience and talked about the harassment she faces while going about her day in Regina. We lit candles and Stephanie read the names of the 259 people who have died around the world due to transphobia in the last year. My colleague from Prince Albert Northcote also attended a similar ceremony in her constituency yesterday.

Here in Saskatchewan, transgendered people are among the most disenfranchised. Trans people are often pushed to the fringes of our society and face many barriers. Trans people face homelessness, depression, and inner personal violence at rates greater than that in the general population. Although this annual event is a sobering one, it is always highlighted by the community of love and compassion that gathers together each year.

I hope that, in the spirit of Transgender Day of Remembrance, all members will keep the violence against transgendered people close to their hearts. Together we can build a better world, one without the evils of transphobia and homophobia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Canadian Western Agribition Week

**Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in this Assembly today to announce that the 46th Canadian Western Agribition kicked off this morning at Evraz Place. From November 21st to 26th, Regina will once again be hosting Canada's biggest livestock show.

Mr. Speaker, each year Agribition attracts more than 130,000 visitors, including 800 international guests from more than 70 countries, and generates more than \$56 million in economic activity. This prestigious event happens over six days, showcasing more than 4,500 head of North America's finest livestock, agricultural equipment, and an impressive trade show that has 400 vendors from around the world. Along with the livestock shows, there's the Agri-Ed program for school children, ThinkAG Career Expo, the Indigenous Ag Summit, Grain Expo, and the food pavilion presented by Mosaic.

There's truly something for everyone at this year's event, as Agribition also features more family and entertainment events. These include the high school rodeo competition; the international stock dog competition; full-contact jousting; and for the first time, Running with the Bulls, a number of brave souls that will test their luck in the arena against nine bulls for a chance to win \$1,500.

This year also marks the return of the Agribition Pro Rodeo, where top rodeo athletes from around the world will compete over four nights for \$100,000 in prize money. Mr. Speaker, I invite all of my colleagues to take the time out of their busy schedules to check out this world-class event hosted right here in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

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

### Housewarming for Long-Term Care Facility

**Mr. Steele:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Poet James Montgomery wrote that home is:

. . . a spot of earth supremely blest,  
A dearer, sweeter spot than all the rest.

On Friday this rang true for more than 200 long-term care residents of The Meadows in Swift Current. The Rural and Remote Health minister joined families and staff at a housewarming party, and a housewarming party is certainly the right term.

Home to 225 people, the facility is really a connection of small houses of only 10 or so residents. Each 10 have their own entrance, patio, spa, and lounges. Each resident has a private bathroom and windows that open for fresh air. The residents can even cook dinners for their neighbours, or garden. This all is because residents took part in the design process.

So although the traditional gift for a housewarming is a casserole, the minister instead presented residents with a silver award for infrastructure from the Canadian Council for P3s [public-private partnerships]. The Meadows is a recent winner of the national award, with the panel praising its home-like home atmosphere.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud to be part of a project that means so much to so many. I ask the members to join me in congratulating The Meadows, the residents, of their P3 award-winning and, most of all, of their new home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.



### Reeve Retires After 47 Years of Municipal Service

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to rise today and recognize a distinguished citizen of the Rosetown-Elrose constituency, Mr. Colin Ahrens, reeve of the rural municipality of Marriott, No. 317. This Friday Colin will celebrate his retirement after a remarkable 47 years of municipal service.

Colin began his municipal career in 1969, serving as councillor for division 3. His service as reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Marriott began in 1996, where he served until his retirement this year. During his years on council, Colin also represented the municipality on numerous committees.

Friday's event is important to me personally as I spent my municipal career with the RM of Marriott. While Colin started out as my boss, we quickly became friends and remain friends to this day. Among the highlights of Colin's career that come to mind for me is attendance at many conventions of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, including a special one in the early '90s when Colin and I along with councillors Jerry Spence and Mike Longworth were fortunate enough to win the provincial RM curling playdowns.

Mr. Speaker, our community is a better place today than it was 47 years ago because of Colin's contributions. I ask all members to join me in congratulating Reeve Colin Ahrens on an outstanding career in municipal governance and to thank him for his years of commitment and service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Multicultural Honours Awards

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday I had the privilege of attending the annual Multicultural Honours Awards presented by the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan. This wonderful awards ceremony was the kickoff to Multicultural Week here in Saskatchewan. It was held at Government House and was co-hosted by the council and our Lieutenant Governor.

Mr. Speaker, Jellyn Ayudan was the recipient of the Multicultural Youth Leadership Award. Still in high school, Jellyn is already active in multicultural work. She arrived in Canada in October of 2009 from the Philippines and now dedicates her life to empowering other new immigrants and refugees to achieve their fullest potential.

Faeza Moolla is the recipient of the Betty Szuchewycz Award for outstanding contributions to multiculturalism in Saskatchewan. Faeza immigrated to Regina from South Africa 18 years ago. Growing up in a country rife with apartheid restrictions, she now uses that experience to engage in multiculturalism within and outside the Muslim community. Faeza is committed to addressing racism and discrimination and to building bridges across different cultures and faiths.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Jellyn and Faeza on their awards and thanking them for their

contributions to our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Auditor's Report and Details of Land Transactions

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, last week the brother of one of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions joined us in our office and at the legislature and had some questions for the Premier on the Sask Party's GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal. And of course his sister and the nuns received \$11,000 per acre with the threat of expropriation, and well-connected businessmen ended up receiving \$103,000 per acre.

Now the Premier hasn't been answering questions, sadly, in this Assembly, but I'm hoping that he'll answer this question from Mr. Dunne and for the sisters. Why did the sisters get one price from the Ministry of Highways, but the two well-connected businessmen who ended up walking away with \$11 million of profit from Saskatchewan people's hard-earned money get another price — millions more, a sweetheart deal from the Sask Party?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I just reject the premise of the member's question, especially his last statements that he made there. Mr. Speaker, at the request of myself and Executive Council, and frankly also at the request of the NDP [New Democratic Party], we asked the Provincial Auditor if the auditor would use her good offices to investigate the transactions involved in the assembly of land for the Global Transportation Hub, Mr. Speaker. And she went about that work I think professionally, and credit members opposite, have acknowledged the fact — the critic in particular — that it's been done, the audit was done well and the auditor has performed her part in all of this.

And, Mr. Speaker, the auditor did point out that there were problems in terms of how government proceeded with land assembly. The situation was unique in terms of the nature of escalating land prices. The situation was not optimal, as she had pointed out, because communication between Global Transportation Hub and Highways should have been better. She's made specific recommendations in this regard. We will implement all of those recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

But she did look at some of the other matters that had been raised by members of the opposition and other members in the community with respect to some of what we just heard in his last question. And I would just say this, Mr. Speaker, and this is a quote from the auditor's press release, June 30, 2016, and I quote, "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors," one of which would have been the minister responsible.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are

getting sick and tired of these non-answers and the yarn that's being spun. So the Premier actually did say, though, that he rejected the premise of the question. It was a pretty simple question. It alluded to the \$11,000 per acre that that government paid the nuns, and the \$103,000 per acre that they paid to the well-connected business people. What does the Premier reject about that premise? What does he have to say to the nuns?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think if my hon. friend would check the record of *Hansard*, it would note that I took exception with the premise of his question as represented in the last part of his preamble where he attributed, where he attributed motives with respect to members of the community or members of the government that would clearly be a conflict of interest, that would clearly be inappropriate, Mr. Speaker.

What the hon. member has alleged is that there was a conflict of interest on the part of the minister. That's what he has consistently alleged. He has inferred that there was some behaviour that would not be appropriate for members of cabinet, never mind members of this House, in terms of dealing with others who are . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, do the members opposite want to hear the answer to the question? Mr. Speaker, or the relationship between members on this side of the House and business people, Mr. Speaker, to which we have taken exception.

And moreover, and again I quote from the press release of the Provincial Auditor, the press release that accompanied the audit that the members opposite asked for, that we asked for, of the whole land assembly matter. Here's what the independent officer of the Legislative Assembly said, the Provincial Auditor, and I quote: "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors." And that includes the minister responsible.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, if the Premier has nothing to hide, you'd think he would be willing to come clean with very simple, straightforward questions to him. I guess one of the questions that hasn't been answered by the Premier — strangely that he can't answer this — is that we've learned there's a concealed identity in this whole deal, the first time it was brought to cabinet. Of course we've learned that the concealed identity was actually the landlord for the minister responsible, that Sask Party-supporting Alberta land baron.

This is a very simple, straightforward question to the Premier that he failed to answer last week, and Saskatchewan people deserve an answer. When did he find out that the concealed identity was the landlord of the minister?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

[14:15]

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I would want to offer this to my hon. friend and to members of the House: the matter that he just raised wasn't discovered by members opposite; it was

referenced in the auditor's report because the auditor was going to look at all of these transactions.

The auditor actually pointed out . . . and I don't have the quote in front of me and I want to be respectful of the auditor's office and not put words that were not in the report. But certainly you could paraphrase her look into this particular issue as saying that the government acted correctly in not going ahead with an offer, with a transaction with someone who was not identified to the cabinet. In fact, that's why the matter was not dealt with. The auditor says that is the appropriate approach in an instance like that, or that was the appropriate thing to do. I'm paraphrasing, but I think that's a fair summary, Mr. Speaker.

But all of . . . This matter included every issue the members raised on that side of the House. The so-called leaked cabinet document, the auditor has indicated in testimony to the Public Accounts Committee that there was no leaked cabinet document. The phone calls, the phone call that they've raised breathlessly as part of some conspiracy that didn't exist was dealt with by the auditor in testimony and in committee.

She had access to every cabinet document; we made sure of that. She had access to everyone involved in the situation. And she said in the press release that accompanied the audit report, to members: "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors." And that included the minister responsible.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Another day, another simple straightforward question not answered by the Premier. And it's strange, awfully strange that he can't answer that question. You know, they can characterize our questions however they want, but Saskatchewan people deserve answers, and people like Mr. Dunne and the sisters deserve nothing less. And we'll keep pushing on this front. Actually maybe the Premier should reference Mr. Dunne's letter to the editor this weekend. It might be an interesting read that he could dig into.

Instead of using, you know, the Premier simply using more and more excuses, and bragging about . . . He used to brag about an appraisal that he claimed vindicated him and his party. Mr. Speaker, of course the Premier ignored all the government's appraisals that were way lower, way lower, many times lower, and clung to that one that was never intended for the buyer to see. We know now it wasn't even used in negotiations and apparently was never even reviewed by that government. But it was the Premier's lifeline. It's what he clung to time and time again to justify the exorbitant price he paid to these business people.

So, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier, and finally now, admit that the appraisal he clung to for so long was actually irrelevant, that it blew his weak defence apart, or is he going to stick to the tired political lines?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Leader

of the Opposition references getting to the bottom of the matter. You know who got to the bottom of the matter, Mr. Speaker? The Provincial Auditor and her team of experts got to the bottom of the matter. She had full authority to conduct whatever sort of audit that she wished to conduct. She had access to all of the documents, all of the documents . . . Members opposite can heckle and dismiss that work all they want, Mr. Speaker. But the fact is the Provincial Auditor did a very thorough job by her own testimony just recently at the Public Accounts Committee.

She looked through thousands of documents. She had access to all of the individuals involved in the transaction being referenced, Mr. Speaker, and she came to a conclusion at the end of the . . . Well the chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee can dismiss that work from her seat. The fact is, though, the Provincial Auditor . . . The fact is the Provincial Auditor came to a conclusion, Mr. Speaker, and it was in her press release of June 30, 2016, and I'll quote that directly. These are the words of the Provincial Auditor: "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors." Those are the words of the Provincial Auditor and that was her conclusion.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, of course that wasn't a forensic audit. It was scathing. It laid in plain light incredibly concerning dealings of this government, and it certainly requires us to do our job. The auditor's done hers. Now it's our time.

I guess my question was straightforward to the Premier and I'm looking for an answer on this. Why did he time and time again, did he cling to this appraisal, the seller's appraisal, that was irrelevant? Why did he cling to that as his defence when his government hadn't even reviewed it?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — I would agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the Provincial Auditor did her job, which was to get to the bottom of the matter, which she did. And her conclusion, Mr. Speaker, was very clear. She said that "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors." That was the conclusion of the Provincial Auditor.

And the Leader of the Opposition has raised this matter of a forensic audit. Let me quote the Provincial Auditor who had this question put directly to her, directly to her by the member for Nutana just very recently at the Public Accounts Committee. And I'll quote her response, from the Provincial Auditor, "Frankly, if we did a forensic audit, there would . . . [have been] a lot of matters that we included within our report that would not have been provided to the committee."

Those are the words of the Provincial Auditor on a forensic audit versus the audit that she did. She had full authority. She had full authority to determine whatever sort of audit she wished to do. This was what she felt would be the most thorough audit, and she came to a conclusion, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite clearly don't like the conclusion. They clearly . . . They dismiss the conclusion. That's what they're doing, Mr. Speaker. Every day they're dismissing the conclusion, whether it be from their seat or whether it be from their feet. Her conclusion, from the Provincial Auditor: "The audit did not find evidence of conflicts of interest, or indications of fraud or wrongdoing by the GTH management or Board of Directors."

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

### State of Provincial Economy

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Not answered. A weak and pathetic display by that government in this Assembly again, a Premier who won't even stand up and answer simple, straightforward questions when we're talking about millions of dollars that have been wasted, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is though that the Sask Party has been failing on many fronts. This government's mismanagement, scandal, and waste are growing and so too are their deficits and their debt, Mr. Speaker. They've added billions of dollars, in fact a billion dollars . . . billions of dollars year after year, \$7 billion in just 7 years to the debt. They blew through the rainy day fund, blew through the surplus, blew through record revenues, didn't save a dime. They hid their budget, denied the real number, and refused to release a financial first quarter report and stood by as 11,000 more Saskatchewan workers are looking for work than just last year.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: instead of investing in diversifying the economy, creating jobs and cutting back on the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste, why is he cutting deep into our classrooms and to health care to make Saskatchewan people pay for Sask Party mismanagement?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, what the hon. member, what the NDP characterized as lost to the public in terms of investments . . . Well the member, the Deputy Leader of the NDP, as he's wont to do from his seat — rarely from his feet — wants to enter the debate. He has, Mr. Speaker, he has, Mr. Speaker, supported the Leader of the Opposition.

They asked this rhetorical question: where did the money go? Mr. Speaker, taxes have been cut in this province in the last nine years by \$6 billion. That's where the money went. Mr. Speaker, we made 8 billion more in infrastructure investment than members did when they had the chance over the same period of time. That's where the money went, Mr. Speaker. I would point out to members opposite that between a third and 40 per cent of the operating debt of this province has been eliminated by members on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

A growth plan supported by infrastructure and tax relief has left this for Saskatchewan people to consider: there are now 1.14 million people living in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. There are 60,000 more jobs in Saskatchewan today than when members opposite were in power. We will meet the financial challenges of today and we will do so respecting a growth agenda that is attracting people and keeping this

economy strong, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Day after day the Sask Party members refuse to take responsibility for the financial mess that their government has created. We saw a fine demonstration of that by our Premier. Times were good as they strutted into office. Population was on the rise. There was a surplus. Revenues were at record levels, but that was a decade ago. Since then they start running deficit after deficit and added billions of dollars to the provincial debt. Mr. Speaker, they've even authorized themselves the ability to borrow another unprecedented \$6 billion. And when asked about it last week the minister said, "We need to take full advantage of debt financing."

Well that would be a whole lot easier to swallow if they were investing in diversifying the economy or creating jobs. Instead, what are they doing? They're investing more into their own mismanagement and their \$1.5 billion job-killing carbon capture tax. Mr. Speaker, debt is debt is debt. So will the minister finally quit with the excuses and admit that they're making Saskatchewan pay for Sask Party mismanagement, scandal, and waste?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, 1.15 million people living in the province of Saskatchewan today, the most ever before in the history of the province living in this province here today, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite talks about debt with respect to our provincial debt here in the province, that we have borrowed money to invest in infrastructure, into new schools, into new health care facilities, and to highways and infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. Assets that we can look to and it's going to contribute to . . . we can look to for the next 30 to 40 years in this province, is going to contribute to quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, under this government, at the end of this fiscal year, our debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product] ratio will be about 19 to 20 per cent. Under the NDP, in the height of the NDP days, debt-to-GDP was at 65 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Under the height of the NDP, interest on the public debt was some \$900 million a year, Mr. Speaker. Today it's below \$300 million a year, Mr. Speaker.

We are investing in new schools, in new health care facilities. We are putting in place opportunities for young people to come back to this province, when under the NDP, thousands upon thousands of our young people left the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We're not going back to the dark days of the NDP.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, I understand that the Finance minister is under a lot of stress, but his comments just now were not an answer to the question. And I know it's hard to make excuses for this government's total mismanagement, their

scandals, and their waste.

Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned because the financial mess that he has created for the people of Saskatchewan is starting to get to him, and it's keeping him up at night. Mr. Speaker, if the minister was burning the midnight oil trying to get out of the financial mess that he and the Sask Party created, that would be understandable. But, Mr. Speaker, he's not up at night working on the books; he's trolling Facebook. Last Thursday night, until well past 4 in the morning, the current Minister of Finance was up arguing with two former ministers on one of their Facebook pages.

Mr. Speaker, social media is here, and having cabinet ministers engaged informally is to be commended. But this goes well beyond. He is the person entrusted with our province's finances, but my guess is that there are members of the Premier's office staff who no longer think he should be entrusted with a Facebook password.

Will the Finance minister commit today to stop with the fighting, the spinning, and the name calling, and finally do his job?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the matters of state are so important that we need to bring in some inane diatribe on Facebook by the left wing in this province going after . . . when they gather around because we make one comment with respect to a former mayor, a one-term mayor in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the province's finances. I can assure the member she's factually incorrect. I was not up till 4 o'clock in the morning on Thursday night. I can tell you that, Mr. Speaker. But fair enough. If that's the issues of importance today in question period, we'll debate that all day long, Mr. Speaker.

What I find more interesting, what I find more interesting, Mr. Speaker, last week when that Finance critic, when that Finance critic was asked in the scrum by the media, well what would you do differently when faced with a \$1.2 billion loss of revenues, loss of revenues here in the province of Saskatchewan because the resource revenue sector, the downturn in the commodity sector of the last couple of years, what did this member say, Mr. Speaker? And I quote, "First of all, we said the technology fund." Mr. Speaker, she went on to say, so certainly more diversification in a green economy.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what the technology fund is? That's a euphemism for a carbon tax here in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

That's the same member, that's the same member who will not stand in her place here and defend the Leap Manifesto but will go off to Edmonton to a national NDP convention and stand there with her colleagues from the national NDP and defend the Leap Manifesto, Mr. Speaker. Then she comes back here and she stands in the rotunda and says, well we believe in a more diversified economy by a technology fund. That's a carbon tax.

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

### Support for Adoptive Parents

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Mr. Speaker, all too often, it's Saskatchewan's most vulnerable who are being targeted by the Sask Party to pay the price for their mismanagement, scandals, and waste. Adoptive families are finding it increasingly difficult to receive the supports that government had promised them, particularly adoptive parents of children with special or complex needs.

Jalyn Zborowski is here today. She is the adoptive parent of two young girls who require special complex needs programming. Parents like Jalyn enter the adoption process knowing full well the extra love and support these children often require. Mr. Speaker, they do so with understanding that the government will have their back and follow through on their commitments as well.

To the minister: why is this government not following through on assisting adopted children with complex needs?

[14:30]

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy to meet with this family at any point that they would like to meet. I am concerned about what I've heard here today and I look forward to meeting with them. I'm sure, as you're aware, I cannot discuss any specifics of this case without consent from that family and will endeavour to do so. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Mr. Speaker, these families deserve to have an answer of why this ministry is making the decisions that they're making and what their commitment is going to be for these adoptive parents.

Jalyn is not the only parent concerned about having to fight with government when it comes to supporting adopted children. Kara Thorpe is also a mother of two children in Prince Albert. In recent months, Kara has found it very difficult to get the services this government owes to her children. Kara committed to loving and caring for these children. She is doing that, Mr. Speaker — that, and much more. But the Sask Party is failing in their commitment to assist her and other adoptive families and children with complex needs.

Will the minister commit to reaching out to these parents and assure that they get the supports their children deserve?

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question and I believe I just did offer the opportunity to sit down with these families and talk further about what supports they may not be accessing that they could be accessing.

Again I can't speak to the specifics of this case because I don't

believe we have a consent form in process, but I'm happy to speak and sit down with these families at any time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Consultant Review of Education System

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to be in a big rush to implement big changes in education. We know that changes are coming to our children's classrooms across this province, but the Sask Party is sending just a single consultant on a whirlwind tour of the province and allowing him just four weeks — four weeks to consult with parents, teachers, school divisions, and other key stakeholders. Even school boards readily admit that they have no idea how or when these consultations are taking place. They have many questions, Mr. Speaker.

Rural school divisions are particularly concerned about what amalgamation will mean for them. They are already stretched too thin. Mr. Speaker, rural school divisions are worried that their voice will be lost if amalgamations make them even larger. So will the minister put the minds of rural educators at ease and commit that local voices will not be lost with further amalgamations of rural school divisions?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, the most important thing for us is the children of our province and to make sure that they have a good learning environment, that we provide the necessary supports for our schools and for our teachers and for the students that are in them.

Mr. Speaker, I realize that any time there's change contemplated, it's sometimes difficult for people to accept and understand as they work through it. But, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure all the trustees, all the superintendents, that that's our goal is to have the children first. We want to ensure student success, but we also want to strengthen accountability and create efficient operational structures.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, and I quote from her August 25, stated ". . . she's not surprised the government is looking at amalgamation and she's fine with the idea where it makes sense." Mr. Speaker, that was August 25th from the *StarPhoenix*. Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite has changed her position on amalgamation, I'll let her stand up and change her position on amalgamation. But, Mr. Speaker, we're going to approach things with an open mind and do what's best for the kids in our province.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — This isn't about fear of change, and no one is buying that this is about improving classrooms for our kids. I went to school in rural Saskatchewan and I know how important these schools are to their communities. And it's essential for rural communities to have a voice in the way that their children's classrooms are run.

Last week the newly elected SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] president, himself from rural Saskatchewan, put it best when he said, “It’s very difficult for people out here to believe the decisions in the best interests of someone from Mankota are going to be made from Regina.” [The Assembly adjourned at 14:38.]

Mr. Speaker, rural schools don’t want decisions being made on their behalf by someone sitting at a desk in a city hundreds of kilometres away. They know that the decisions made by their locally elected trustees are made with the best interests of their own communities in mind. So will the minister assure rural school divisions that his government will keep education in their communities and commit today to keep locally elected school board trustees?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, our goal will be on the children in our province and the students and what they need to learn.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite closed 176 schools. I wonder where the consultation was on that. In the city of Calgary, in the city of Edmonton, Mr. Speaker, in their term in office, 32,000 students left our province. So much for their idea of consultation.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to stand by the students in our province. We’re going to stand by the teachers in our province. And we’re going to try and have the most efficient operating system that we can so that we can do the very best for our kids, unlike those people that are dealing with the kids that are now adults in Calgary.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 188 through 194.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled the responses to questions 188 to 194. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To facilitate the work of committees, I move that this House be now adjourned.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30.

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# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

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**Premier**

**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

**Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor**  
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Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

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Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

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Minister of Finance

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**  
Minister of Energy and Resources  
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Telecommunications

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Minister of Advanced Education

**Hon. Joe Hargrave**  
Minister of Crown Investments  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Transportation Company

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Minister of Government Relations  
Minister Responsible for First Nations,  
Métis and Northern Affairs

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Liquor and Gaming Authority  
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Transportation Hub Authority  
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water  
Security Agency  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Water Corporation

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Deputy Premier  
Minister of Education  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan  
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**Hon. Jim Reiter**  
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**Hon. Lyle Stewart**  
Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop  
Insurance Corporation

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Minister Responsible for the Provincial  
Capital Commission  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Gaming Corporation

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**  
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Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Power Corporation