



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

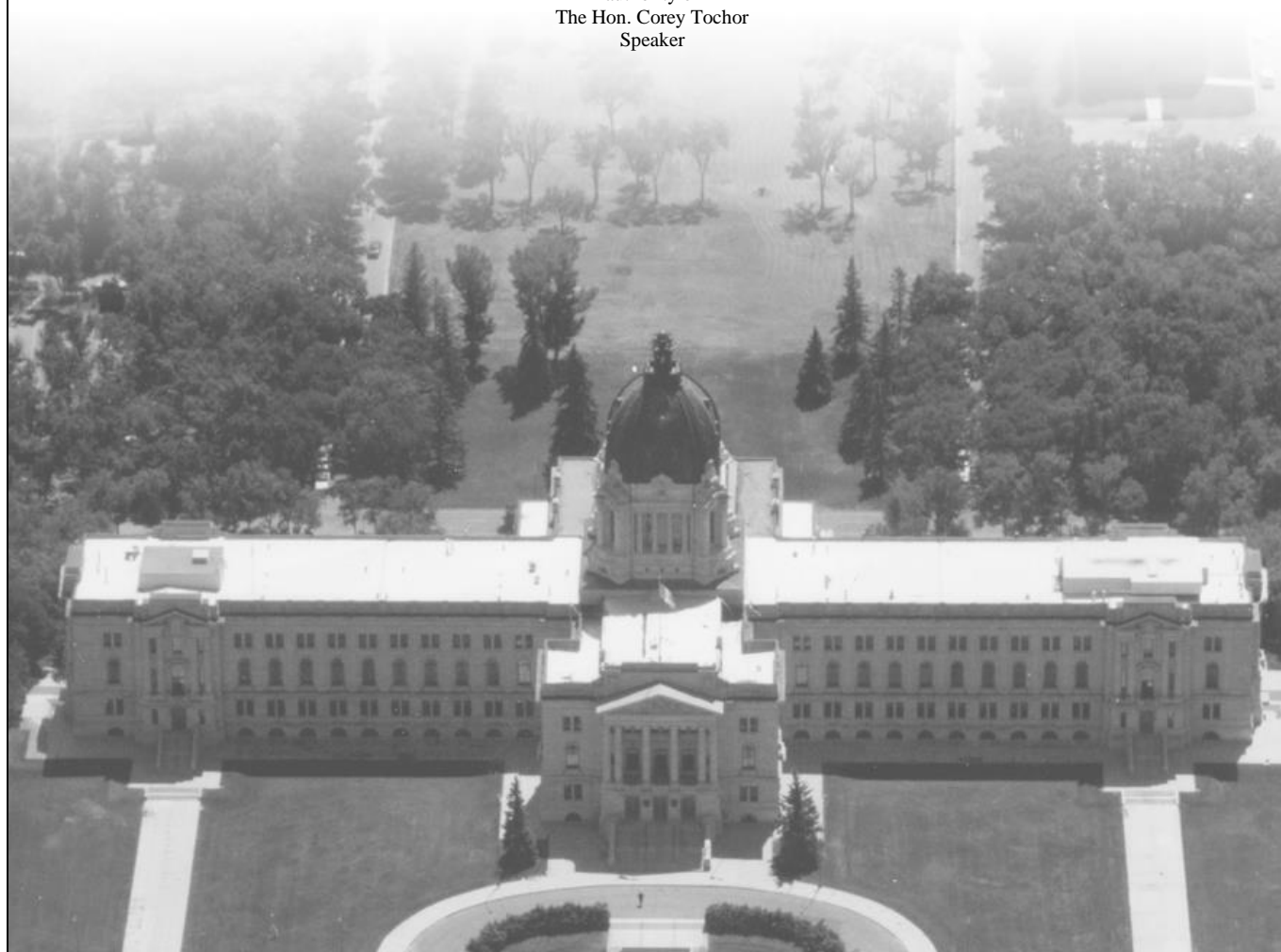
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



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

Speaker — Hon. Corey Tochor

Premier — Hon. Brad Wall

Leader of the Opposition — Trent Wotherspoon

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

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 (SP)

Meili, Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

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)

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)

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 50; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 11

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

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

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Buriandyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the
Legislative Assembly are available
within hours after each sitting.

<http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/legislative-business/legislative-calendar>

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

Clerk: — I wish to inform members that Mr. Speaker is not present to open today's sitting.

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. And to you and through you, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce three people, four people in the gallery: Ms. Bronwyn Heerspink and her grandparents, Ms. Dorothy White and Hank and Darlene Heerspink. The Heerspink family are friends of mine and deserve recognition on their own, but today I wanted to particularly welcome Bronwyn.

Recently Bronwyn attended the Forum for Young Canadians in our nation's capital. Forum is a program for high school students across Canada who are interested in government or the Canadian political process. During her time at Forum, Bronwyn was able to learn from government insiders and experts about what goes on at Parliament Hill, as well as meet Speaker Geoff Regan. She also represented our great province during a first ministers' conference simulation, among many other mind-challenging experiences on the trip. Bronwyn encourages all 15- to 19-year-olds in Saskatchewan to apply for the Forum for Young Canadians, as it is a great experience to learn about our country's parliamentary system.

I ask all members to join me in welcoming Bronwyn and her grandparents to this honourable Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased again today to present a petition opposing the Sask Party's cuts to spiritual care. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that they don't believe that this government knows what spiritual care is actually about, nor do they think the government knows the impact that it really has in our health care setting.

They point out that in this budget the Sask Party's eliminated funding for spiritual care services which provided spiritual care within Saskatchewan's health facilities. They point out that Saskatchewan will be the only province within Canada to not fund this support for patients, residents, and their families seeking wellness. They point out that the Sask Party hid their plan to scrap funding for spiritual care within the health region facilities during the 2016 election, just a year ago, and that spiritual care responds to the spiritual and emotional needs of patients and residents and provides a compassionate listening presence in times of crisis.

They point out that spiritual care supports families, patients, and residents in making important and difficult decisions, and that spiritual care can provide support for all families, patients, and residents, regardless of faith or belief, in obtaining comfort and support.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan immediately reinstate the funding for pastoral care services in this province's health regions.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Biggar-Sask Valley.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. I'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. Deputy Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Cando, Landis, Wilkie, Biggar, Perdue. I do so present.

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

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. The people who have signed this petition are opposed to the Sask Party's plan to scrap and sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. They would like us all to know that STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] provides a vital service to many seniors, workers, and families throughout the province, and that by scrapping STC out of the blue without asking permission of the owners, the Saskatchewan people, the Sask Party is sending a clear sign about how little they care about protecting our Crowns like SaskTel. And that STC helps to drive the economy with its parcel service that services farms and other businesses.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately stop the plans to scrap and sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, and to resume transportation services to the people of Saskatchewan.

It is supported and signed by many good people of the province. I so present.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from

Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I stand in my place and answer the call, under the direction of the member from Prince Albert Northcote, for anyone in the Assembly to help her in her battle for a second bridge for Prince Albert. I stand in my place to offer that support to her because she does need someone to stand with her. So, Mr. Speaker, the petition is a reference to a need for a second bridge for Prince Albert. It's never been clearer than it is today; Prince Albert and communities north of Prince Albert and businesses that the people and products that go through the Prince Albert area and through the bridge require a solution.

So the prayer reads as follows:

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition, as we stand up in our place day after day and present page after page, are from all throughout Saskatchewan. And on this particular page the people that have signed this petition are from Meadow Lake, Air Ronge, and Regina. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in my place today to present a petition opposed to Bill 40 and a potential 49 per cent Crown corporation sell-off. The people who have signed this petition would like to bring to our attention the following: the Sask Party's Bill 40 creates a brand new definition for privatization that allows this government to wind down, dissolve, or sell up to 49 per cent of the shares of a Crown corporation without holding a referendum. And, Mr. Speaker, this definition is not found anywhere in the Commonwealth to date.

In 2015-16 alone, our Crown corporations gave \$3 billion in dividends to pay for schools, roads, and hospitals . . . or 300 million, and over 3 billion over the last 10 years. Our Crown corporation employ thousands of Saskatchewan people across the province; and under section 149 of the *Income Tax Act* of Canada, Crown corporations are exempt from corporate income tax, provided not less than 90 per cent of the shares are held by a government or province. The Sask Party's proposal would allow up to 49 per cent of a Crown to be sold without being considered privatized. This short-sighted legislation risks sending millions of Crown dividends to Ottawa rather than to the people of Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately stop the passage of Bill 40, *The Interpretation Amendment Act*, and start protecting jobs and Crown corporations instead of selling them off to pay for Sask Party mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed the petition today are from Saskatoon and Martensville. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to present a petition concerning pay equity here in Saskatchewan. And the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan want to bring to our attention the following: that the citizens of this province believe in an economy that's powered by transparency, accountability, security, and equity; and that all women should be paid equitably; and that women are powerful drivers of economic growth and their economic empowerment benefits us all.

And we know that the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives found that in Saskatoon in 2016, women earned on average 63 cents for every dollar that a man makes, and in Regina, women earned on average 73 cents for every dollar a man makes. According to most recent StatsCan data, the national gender wage gap for full-time workers is 72 cents for every dollar a man makes.

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 eliminate the wage gap between women and men across all sectors where the Government of Saskatchewan has jurisdiction, provide a framework under which this can be done within the term of this Assembly, and that the Saskatchewan government call upon workplaces within Saskatchewan within the private sector to eliminate the wage gap between women and men.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Saskatoon and the city of Martensville. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to present a petition to increase the funding to Prince Albert mobile crisis. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know that mobile crisis, the services they provide, fill a gap that's in our communities. They oftentimes go to situations that other ministries don't necessarily cover the services. So they're trained to be able to provide those services, and it's very necessary in communities such as Prince Albert. And due to some financial cuts, the Prince Albert mobile crisis unit had to close its doors during the daytime hours, resulting in a loss of resource for the people in distress in the community.

The daytime closure of Prince Albert mobile has put stress on the Prince Albert Police Service, Victoria Hospital, and other agencies, like I said before, who may not be trained and/or qualified to provide the counselling and intervention services that are necessary for these clients. I'll 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 increase funding to Prince Albert mobile crisis unit so they may once again offer 24-hour emergency crisis service.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the individuals signing this particular petition are from the communities of Birch Hills and Prince Albert. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to present a petition to restore library funding in the province. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: whereas the Saskatchewan government has cut funding for regional libraries by more than half and eliminated funding for libraries in Regina and Saskatoon, this drastic funding cut will have a devastating impact on libraries, especially regional libraries and the many people who depend on them.

Whereas libraries are a vital part of communities right across Saskatchewan and the services they provide enrich the lives of many, this drastic cut imposed on libraries will lead to branch closures, program cuts, and reductions in hours as we've already seen, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Whereas libraries are about more than just borrowing books; meeting rooms are used by community groups; library staff host educational programs and clubs; and the publicly accessible computer terminals are essential to many.

Whereas these cuts have a disproportionate impact on rural communities where libraries are vital community spaces, potential closures or reductions in service will severely impact our communities. I'll read the prayer:

Therefore in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan renew its commitment to the invaluable programming, educational opportunities, and public spaces our libraries provide across the province and restore the \$4.8 million in funding for public libraries that was cut in the 2017-2018 budget.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, these petitions again are coming in from all over the province. The particular petitions that I have before me today are signed by citizens of North Battleford, Saskatoon, and Hague. I do so present.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling on the government to restore funding for post-secondary education. Mr. Speaker, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that the Sask Party is making students and their families pay for Sask Party financial mismanagement.

They point out that Saskatchewan students already pay the second-highest tuition fees in Canada. They point out that this

budget cuts \$36.8 million from post-secondary education. They further point out that this budget cuts \$6.4 million from technical institutions, and they point out that funding for the Saskatchewan Student Aid Fund and scholarships have been cut by \$8.2 million. Finally, Mr. Speaker, they point out that the Saskatchewan Party has broken a 2016 election promise by cancelling their first home plan.

In the prayer that reads as follows, Mr. Speaker, the petitioners respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately restore funding to Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions and stop the damaging cuts to students.

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by citizens from the good city of Saskatoon. I so present.

[10:15]

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for critical supports for victims of domestic violence. Saskatchewan has the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of domestic violence amongst the provinces. Victims of domestic violence should be able to end rental agreements in order to leave dangerous situations. Employers should be obligated to reasonably accommodate victims of domestic violence in the workplace. As well, employees who are victims of domestic violence should be able to take a leave of absence from their employment without penalty. And Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, must do more to protect women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan call on the Legislative Assembly to pass legislation providing critical supports for victims of domestic violence.

Individuals signing this petition today come from the Moose Jaw area. I do so submit.

The Deputy Speaker: — Why is the Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Speaker, I'd request leave of the House for an extended introduction.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First, seated in the west gallery I'd like to introduce to you the family of

Courtney Schaefer. Courtney was a tow truck operator who tragically lost his life while helping others in a blizzard near Gerald, Saskatchewan on March the 7th. We are joined today by Courtney's wife, Kim, and their daughter Tarren. And with them are Courtney's brother Corey and his wife, Brittany. Thank you for being here today during what must be an incredibly difficult time.

On behalf of all the members of this Assembly, I offer our sincere condolences to you for your loss. No one should have to worry that they might be hurt, or worse, as a result of simply doing their job. We are grateful that you could join us as we introduce new legislation that could potentially prevent other families from experiencing such a devastating loss. I ask all members to join me in welcoming the Schaefer family to their legislature.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to introduce Harv Britton, vice-president of the Roadside Responders Association of Saskatchewan. Mr. Britton is also a tow truck operator and the owner of Harv's Autobody and Towing. In addition to helping motorists on the side of the road, he is also helping to advocate for his fellow tow truck drivers in his role as vice-president of the Roadside Responders Association of Saskatchewan. The RRAS has been a strong voice in calling for increased safety, and we are pleased to have their support of legislation that we will be introducing later this morning.

Members of the Assembly may recall the procession of tow trucks and other emergency vehicles that were held a few weeks ago to draw attention to safety concerns. Mr. Britton is joined in the gallery by a number of other tow truck operators: Jamie Kemp from Rosetown Towing, Mel Leveque from Eagle Towing in Melfort, Dallas Baillie from Baillie Boys Towing in Yorkton, Shon Crumley and Austin MacKimmie from Dakota Towing in Rouleau, Geoff Roller from Astro Towing in Saskatoon, and Tyler Temple from TRK Towing in Lumsden. And lastly, we have Scott McIntyre with us. He is the vice-president of CAA [Canadian Automobile Association] Saskatchewan.

We are pleased that they could also be on hand to honour Courtney and to support a new initiative that we hope will prevent future traffic fatalities. I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I just wanted to take a minute to join with my colleague, the minister, and welcome all of our guests to our gallery today. And thank you to all of the operators and the folks from CAA for all of the work that you do, responding to people in their times of distress and need on our highways, and all too often putting yourselves in danger in the process, and I want to thank you for that.

But I want to make special mention of the family of Mr. Courtney Schaefer, and welcome you to this Assembly today. I know that you are still struggling with the loss of your partner, and your dad, and your brother, and brother-in-law, and I want

to welcome you here and express our deepest sympathies on behalf of the official opposition and all members here on your loss, and hope that you know that our thoughts have been with you many times over the past month or so here. And I invite all members of this Assembly to join with me in welcoming and thanking all of these guests today.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Vimy Ridge 100th Anniversary

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise in the House today and to recognize the sacrifice that our Canadian and Saskatchewan veterans made 100 years ago in the capturing of Vimy Ridge. On April 9th, 1917, the Canadian Corps braved sleet, snow, and machine-gun fire to scale the steep slope in Vimy, France. The ridge was a critical position in the heavily armed German defence, who were bunkered down in barbed-wire trenches.

Thanks to their valour, on April 12th our troops had taken full control of the ridge. This military victory is known as a turning point in our nation's history, and it came at a heavy price. The corps suffered nearly 4,000 fatalities in the Battle of Vimy Ridge, with just over 400 of those soldiers coming from Saskatchewan.

To pay tribute to these heroes, this Sunday, April 9th, the Government of Saskatchewan will host an outdoor ceremony, a reception, and an exhibit at the Legislative Building. Earlier in the day the Royal Canadian Legion will be holding a ceremony at the Victoria Park Cenotaph.

We are proud to recognize this historic feat, express our gratitude and sorrow for those who sacrificed their lives to achieve it, and on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, I would like to thank all our veterans for keeping our country true, strong, and free. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This Sunday marks the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge. Though it has been a full century since that day, the legacy of those courageous Canadians in the Battle of Vimy Ridge lives on.

It is important to recognize that the Canadian regiments from across Canada who stood together in triumph helped create a stronger sense of the Canadian identity. For many, it was on those harsh April days when Canada came of age as a country.

This accomplishment was not without loss, Mr. Speaker. The battle lost 10,000 casualties, with 3,598 Canadian soldiers lost in action. We must remember those Canadians whose bravery contributed to the quality of life and the freedoms we enjoy today.

And as we turn our minds to the 100th anniversary of this

watershed battle, I would also like to recognize the important work of the Saskatchewan First Nations Veterans Association, who raised funds for 20 women and men to tour First and Second World War sites in France during these centennial events. Saskatchewan First Nations and Métis veterans played a vital role in Canadian conflicts and they have earned their place in the special gatherings, ceremonies, and tributes planned to mark this centennial. I call on all members to join me in recognizing the courage and the determination of all our Canadian troops who paid the ultimate price for our freedom and for our Canada. We will not forget.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Campaign

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Canadian Cancer Society's daffodil month. The daffodil became the symbol of the Canadian Cancer Society after a group of volunteers during a cancer fundraising event decorated a table with daffodils in order to convey a cheery, hopeful atmosphere.

Throughout the month of April the Canadian Cancer Society will once again be selling fresh daffodils and daffodil pins to raise funds for cancer research. This is to support people living with cancer, celebrate those in remission, and to honour all those who have lost their battle with the terrible disease.

Since the inception of daffodil month in 1957 smoking rates in Canada have gone from 50 per cent to 18 per cent, survival rates have gone from 35 per cent to over 60 per cent, and the Canadian Cancer Society has raised 1.4 billion for cancer research. Our government understands the challenges faced by cancer patients and so we are providing the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency with funding of over 170 million this year, an increase of 3.3 million year over year.

I encourage all members to join me in thanking the Cancer Society for their ongoing contributions to cancer research and in supporting daffodil month by buying a fresh daffodil or pin. Thank you.

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

World Health Day

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow, April 7th, marks World Health Day. This is the day sponsored by the World Health Organization and is used as an opportunity to draw worldwide attention to a subject of major importance to global health each year.

The theme for this year's World Health Day is Depression: Let's Talk. It is the high point of a year-long campaign with a goal of ensuring people with depression both seek and are able to receive the help that they need.

Mr. Speaker, depression is the leading cause of ill health and disability worldwide. According to the latest estimates from the World Health Organization more than 300 million people are

now living with depression. Depression is a condition that can be treated with relatively cost-efficient and effective care, but despite this about 50 per cent of cases of major depression still go untreated. Lack of support for people with mental disorders, along with fear of stigma, prevent many from accessing the treatment they need to live healthy, productive lives.

And depression just doesn't affect those who suffer from it. There's a high social and economic cost as well. Low levels of recognition and access to care for depression and other common mental disorders results in devastating economic losses each year. These losses are felt by households, employers, and governments alike.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me today in recognizing the World Health Organization's year-long Depression: Let's Talk campaign, and to commit to doing everything in our power to end the stigma and provide adequate mental health resources for those people living with depression in our own province. Thank you.

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

Parkland College Scholarships

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was honoured to bring greetings to the Parkland College's 2017 internal scholarship presentation in Yorkton on March 17th. This year the college recognized 78 students who received the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarships, worth over \$100,000. Receiving this scholarship was truly a testimony to the hard work and dedication that these students have modelled in their education.

Mr. Speaker, the programs that were awarded this scholarship included various university programs, trades, skills training, and HR [human resources] management postgrad. This scholarship program was developed six years ago, focusing on Parkland's strategic plan which includes indigenization initiatives, areas that are important to local employers and the local community. Since the program was implemented, Parkland College has awarded over 460 scholarships.

Mr. Speaker, this investment into our education programs is an investment into the future of Saskatchewan. I encouraged the students to stay in Saskatchewan, as we all know it is such a great place to live, work, and raise a family. Mr. Speaker, with programs such as this and the graduate retention program available for students who choose to work in Saskatchewan, we are providing tremendous opportunities to keep our young people here at home.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the recipients of the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship, and the board members and leaders of Parkland College on their dedication to the future of Saskatchewan.

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

Proposed Commercial Development in Saskatoon

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to announce the Canwest Commercial and Land Corporation is planning to start work on its proposed World Trade Center Saskatoon project this summer. This Saskatoon-based commercial real estate developer is planning for the new 50 million, eight- or nine-storey office to be located in the heart of the city's downtown core.

[10:30]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Canwest said that it was recently granted an option to seek membership in the World Trade Centers Association, which is a business network active in 98 countries around the world. CanWest is currently working with WTCA [World Trade Centers Association] to meet the needed requirements for approval. The membership would allow tenants to take advantage of a global network of business connections.

Saskatoon's former mayor, Don Atchison, who is now a senior consultant for Canwest said that:

What we need is a 'one-stop shop' whether it's our own companies selling to the world, or the world coming here. In every sense of the word, it will be about 'serving Saskatchewan.'

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a very exciting project and a great opportunity for the city of Saskatoon. I ask all members to join me in congratulating CanWest Commercial and Land Corporation for being granted the option to seek membership in the World Trade Centers Association, and we wish them the best as they move forward with this project. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville-Warman.

New Schools for Warman

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased once again to talk about this government's record investment in our education system and the construction of two more new schools in my constituency.

Prairie Spirit's Traditions and Saskatoon Catholic's Holy Trinity are the two new schools being built in Warman. These two new schools are part of a joint-use P3 [public-private partnership] school, which means they will be built faster, remain in like-new condition for 30 years, and will save taxpayers \$100 million.

The over 600 students who will be in these schools in September will have access to flexible learning spaces, student commons, technology environments, and outdoor learning spaces. The new schools will also include 90 child care spaces, community support services, multi-purpose and fitness areas, and other common space that will be available to the entire community.

Constructing these new schools is also creating jobs for the people of Warman and Saskatchewan, along with

Saskatchewan-based businesses that are building and designing these schools.

Mr. Speaker, I think our dedication to education is clear in my riding. In the last nine years, five new schools have been built and a major renovation of Martensville's high school. Mr. Speaker, our government is making Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and raise a family. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Details of Land Transactions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday we asked a direct question about documents related to the Sask Party's GTH [Global Transportation Hub] scandal that they're refusing to release. The Privacy Commissioner has twice called for them to be released. But instead of releasing them, we heard pretty much the same old, tired talking points that the minister has been asked to recite each and every day, except for the fact that he claimed that they're supposedly co-operating with the Privacy Commissioner.

After QP [question period] though, the Minister of Highways went out to speak with reporters. He admitted that even though we ask about this issue every day, and even though he's been the minister for eight months, and even though there's an RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] investigation and that millions of dollars have been wasted, he hasn't yet read the documents. He said he'd leave that to the ministry officials, but he also said, "I'm not disagreeing with the Privacy Commissioner."

Well, Mr. Speaker, to the Deputy Premier: if they're co-operating, so-called co-operating with the Privacy Commissioner, if they're not disagreeing with him, will they simply release those documents and start to come clean with Saskatchewan people today?

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And of course freedom of information requests are handled by professional civil servants in a clear and a well-understood process, a process that the members opposite should be familiar with. It was the same process that was in place when they were in government, Mr. Speaker.

Of course ministers are not directly involved in the process. It's handled by professional civil servants who make determinations in terms of what should be released. There are, as members opposite are also very well aware of, provisions with regard to commercial confidentiality. We will continue to co-operate and work with the Privacy Commissioner on these matters, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward. Thank you very much.

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

Support for Education

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, making a mockery of accountability. This is, of course, as we had a retired civil servant who has spoken out and said that there's been political interference in this GTH scandal — a scandal that of course has wasted \$11 million of taxpayers' money that was handed over to two Sask Party supporters, and millions of dollars more that'll be wasted on artificially inflated land. But the Sask Party of course refuses to take this seriously.

And while they ignored their own mismanagement, scandal, and waste, they've targeted our kids for more cuts. Mr. Speaker, with this budget, the Sask Party is giving at least \$674 less in funding for each and every student across Saskatchewan, attacking our kids' already strained classrooms.

School boards are being forced to make deep cuts. They're being told to put everything on the table, and the results are coming in. Daily kindergarten is being cut. Busing for four-year-olds is being cut. And so are programs for those who have experienced severe trauma, for those with hearing problems, for those with autism, for those with intensive needs. These disgraceful cuts to our education system must be stopped. How can the minister stand there and defend these heartless cuts to Saskatchewan's most vulnerable children?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had met with and I had talked to the Chair of Regina Public School Division at the time the budget came out, saying we will work with you to try and deal with the challenges that you might face. Those discussions are ongoing. But, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the members in the House, we will not see and approve a budget that does not have those programs included in them. So to the families of those that will be benefiting from those programs, those programs will be there and those programs, Mr. Speaker, will continue.

Mr. Speaker, we feel that the small decrease in funding to division operating can be managed by the divisions. Division operating funding has increased by 32 per cent since we have formed government. The vast majority of reduction in education is due to the completion of capital projects. Mr. Speaker, we have continued the projects that are under way. We've added new projects this year, and we will work with the divisions to make sure that services are delivered to our students in the most effective, appropriate manner.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, there's a thing called ministerial responsibility. It's past time, it's past time that minister show some, Mr. Speaker, and take some. They are making Saskatchewan people pay more in school taxes, but kids in classrooms are getting less. And those cuts are Sask Party cuts, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Sask Party, school boards are hamstrung. And that minister is offering nothing more than threats and more cuts.

In face of all that, the minister is pushing through a bill that

takes Sask Party arrogance to a whole new level, Mr. Speaker. A bill that would change the law, that would silence and get rid of the role of democratically elected trustees, Mr. Speaker, local voices in education who run our schools, and consolidate all of that out of the minister's office — a disgraceful takeover of education by that Sask Party minister.

Mr. Speaker, the minister's cuts will hit the classrooms of all kids. The minister's cuts will most hurt our most vulnerable. Mr. Speaker, does the minister seriously not understand why parents are so angry? With all the cutting he has done, does he blame them for not trusting them with their kids' education? Will the minister finally do the right thing and reverse the disgraceful attack on our province's education system?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wants to talk about governance and the changes that are coming in *The Education Act*. Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina Lakeview, the critic for this, did not submit any kind of a proposal on behalf of herself or on behalf of the party. But, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite that has a lot to say today — and I believe that she believes in education — belongs to a group called RealRenewal. She was a co-founder and former spokesperson of RealRenewal, a Regina-based advocacy group. Do you know what they asked for, Mr. Speaker? They made a submission. They asked for changes to education governance. They asked for a review of trustee remuneration, less administration, trustee term limits. They also suggested there are savings to be found and we should look at joint busing and purchasing. They called divisions top-heavy, and there should be fewer superintendents and division office staff.

Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite themselves couldn't see fit to submit any kind of a submission on governance, at least their groups did. And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the things we're going to look at very carefully, and I thank her for her submission.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That minister can try to wiggle his way out of responsibility, but the people of Saskatchewan are watching. These are his cuts. These are Sask Party cuts, and they're being felt all across this province as board after board and division after division grapples with what that Sask Party and that minister have done.

Let's look at Chinook. They had to lay off 15 people who worked in our schools, 15 people who worked every day to give our kids supports, like psychologists, counsellors, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and educational assistants. These are not the cuts that the school board wanted to make. It wasn't their choice. That Sask Party minister is the one who is holding the axe.

School divisions told the minister he couldn't get blood from a stone. They warned him that more cuts would hurt our kids, but he cut anyway. And now, thanks to him and that Sask Party cut, students who are struggling with mental illness and students who have special needs won't get the supports that they need.

Mr. Speaker, is the minister still going to stand there and suggest that he didn't see this coming when he said that everything is on the table?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we know that we're going through challenging economic times. I would ask the members opposite how much they are willing to raise taxes and how much their position would be for funding going forward. How much are they willing to do those things? Mr. Speaker, the members opposite sit there . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — We heard the question being asked. You might want to listen to the answer. I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have no appetite to take over and run school boards. But we do have a strong desire, Mr. Speaker, to try and make sure that the boards are effective and efficient and financially accountable. And, Mr. Speaker, that's something the boards have asked for as well. I have some quotes that I'd like to read.

Lloydminster Public: "We would welcome changes to legislation and regulations that would give greater clarity regarding ministry standards and expected . . ."

Northwest School Division: "Strategic direction and accountability, changes in legislation, setting outcomes and standards — do it."

Ile-a-la-Crosse School Division: "Simply reducing the number of boards will not produce enough savings to make the turmoil it will cause worth the effort. Governance costs . . . [should] be lowered in other ways, some of which might be set at the provincial level."

Mr. Speaker, I have more that I can read in, that came directly from the school divisions who want to work with us to find savings. Why? Because they want to do what's right for the students in this province. And we will support those divisions all the way in spite of what the members opposite might say.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wish that that minister loved the facts as much as he loved his lists. Even after these cuts, the Chinook School Division has a shortfall of \$3.3 million. So, Mr. Speaker, even more cuts are coming.

And Chinook is not alone. Across this province, these cuts are hurting our kids and the shortfalls are simply staggering. Regina Public has a \$9.5 million shortfall. Regina Catholic, \$1 million. Saskatoon Catholic, \$9.6 million, and Saskatoon public, \$11 million. Mr. Speaker, an \$11 million shortfall means that they are short \$460 for each of their students. That is not the school division's fault, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's not the fault of the people who work in our schools, and certainly is not the fault of our children, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The minister is already gutting our educational system with massive cuts. So how does he possibly justify passing a law that would give him almost full control over our classrooms?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I just got a text message from Liam Choo-Foo, the director of education at Chinook, who says they are going to be able to work within their budget and not have any cuts in the classroom. Mr. Speaker, that's since I've been standing here.

[10:45]

Mr. Speaker, I have another quote I'd like to read from Donna Ziegler, chairperson of Regina Catholic, and this is what it says:

"Nobody gets a pink slip," board . . . [Chair] Donna Ziegler said Monday, but they will be "reallocating individuals back to the front lines."

This will include a superintendent, a number of consultants and co-ordinators and coaches, taking those through the attrition and moving them back into the classroom where resources belong and should be, Mr. Speaker. That's what's going to happen with this side of the House. We're going to work with the divisions. We're going to support the divisions. We're going to let them run the schools and the divisions and we're going to make sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the resources stay in the classroom for the benefit of our students.

[10:45]

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

Funding for Libraries

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, that minister has a profound misunderstanding about the reality in our classrooms today. That minister once stood as a school board Chair, and now he's gutting everything he claimed to stand for. And he's even doing more to our provincial libraries.

The Sask Party slashed library funding by 58 per cent, and 100 per cent to our two largest cities. And they said that everything was on the table. Now he's pretending to be surprised that interlibrary loans are on the chopping block. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the loan system relies on STC to ship books. But somehow the minister claims that libraries can simply send materials through the mail at the cost of a buck per book.

Mr. Speaker, last year almost 700,000 items were shipped between libraries in the province by STC at no cost. The minister's new plan would increase costs by nearly \$1.4 million. For the minister to even make this suggestion after slashing millions from our libraries is simply . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member may continue.

Ms. Beck: — Simply ridiculous, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Will the

minister admit that he has no plan and no clue to save the interlibrary loan service, and that his reckless cuts are threatening the very future of our public libraries?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have over 90 communities in the province that have a library that also have a library in their school. Mr. Speaker, why can't we share those resources? Mr. Speaker, why can't we look at some better savings and some cost efficiencies? Why don't we realize, Mr. Speaker, that there is but one taxpayer in the province, and if you pay for that at a municipal level, why should you pay for it again at a provincial level? Mr. Speaker, if you drive between Martensville and Langham you will pass five libraries. Between Saltcoats and Langenburg you will pass four libraries. Between Indian Head and Regina you will pass four libraries.

Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan we have a total of 306 libraries serving a population base of 1.2 million people. Alberta understandably has more libraries than we do. They have 307, one more than we do, but serving a population base of over 4 million people. Manitoba has only 128 libraries serving a population base of 1.3 million people. Mr. Speaker, we have a per-person ratio in our province of 4,000 per library. Alberta, 14,000. Manitoba, 10,000. Mr. Speaker, we want to work with the library system to make sure that the good interlibrary system we have can continue so that it serves the citizens of our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Closing of Saskatchewan Transportation Company

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, STC supports all kinds of services. It's not just books. Our health system uses it to help cancer patients get to treatment, and blood shipment across the province. Mr. Speaker, STC ties us all together — job seekers, students, seniors, the list goes on.

Who will pick up the slack, Mr. Speaker? This cut will hurt other ministries. It will hurt our economy and it will hurt our people. When will they get it right and cancel the sell-off?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The STC . . . I just should remind the member opposite about in 1993 and 1994, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP [New Democratic Party] cut 13 routes when the subsidy was \$2.18 per, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we've looked at that and we found that the ridership has declined and the number of rides per year has declined 35 per cent — 35 per cent, Mr. Speaker — since 2012, Mr. Speaker. Eighteen thousand rides in just the past year, Mr. Speaker. That subsidy has gone from \$24 or \$25 per ride, Mr. Speaker, all the way up to \$94 per ride, Mr. Speaker. Now that's 85 to \$100 million over the next five years, Mr. Speaker.

They keep talking about, we need more funds for social services. We need more funds for education. We need more funds for health care. Well, Mr. Speaker, I think that 85 to \$100

million could well be used in those other needs and those other priorities of the government, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Financial Support for Municipalities

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's just more cutting without planning, and downloading without accepting responsibility. In so many cases it's municipalities who will be left to pick up the tab. It's our cities and towns who will have to cover the Sask Party's library cuts, and our cities and towns who will have to make up for the cuts to the grants-in-lieu. And it's our cities and towns who will have to find new funding for community rinks and for parks, jewels like Meewasin Valley and Wascana Centre, and community parks and playgrounds for the Sask Party's P3 schools.

Cities and towns are up against a wall. They either have to impose huge Sask Party tax hikes or Sask Party cuts. And all of this while the Sask Party has already raised education property taxes. Given that many of our cities and towns have already finished their budget, will the minister at least admit they should have consulted with municipal leaders before making these huge cuts?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, there was a number of forums as well as meetings that we had with municipal leaders, and it was very clear that everything was on the table for this budget, that it was going to be a very difficult budget, and we were going to be looking at all programs.

One thing that the municipal leaders said very loud and very clear is they wanted us to keep municipal revenue sharing. Mr. Speaker, that's a program of course that's predictable for our municipalities, as well as, since we have formed government, it has increased funding by over 100 per cent. Our municipal partners have been supported more than any other sector by this government.

The second request is to keep funding for infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. We've made record investment in infrastructure, and many of them are with the shared programs with our municipalities. And they appreciate being able to add those upgrades to their water sewer systems.

Mr. Speaker, there was difficult decisions beyond a doubt. And there will be challenges for our municipal sector in this particular budget, but we have more than supported them. In nine or eight consecutive budgets, Mr. Speaker, they have seen increase over increase over increase, year over year over year. This is the first time that this government has asked for a reduction.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the city of Prince

Albert is luckier than others. The ministry did back down and help out a little for this year. But the minister is still giving no help to the other 100 communities, and no clarity for anyone.

As Mayor Dionne said, “It seems like every time I wake up it has changed direction and going a different way.” Mr. Deputy Speaker, he expects that the city will be cut \$3.5 million next year, and he wants clarity from the government. He wants a plan: “But now we have the next four to five months to talk about where we go from here. This was a three-year plan going into 2018 and 2019.”

Mr. Deputy Speaker, will the minister provide some clarity? Will she reverse the cuts for this year and sit down with municipal leaders to lay out a plan for the coming years?

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is well aware that the Minister of Finance has been to P.A. [Prince Albert] since the budget was introduced and the government’s plan was laid out, as well as there was a forum in which case questions could be asked. And in fact he said he sat right beside the mayor. They had the conversation. The mayor of Prince Albert knows that I’m available at any time that he requests any conversations, as does every mayor.

It was interesting. At the beginning of her question, she said that hundreds of communities were affected. So it goes to show that yet again she doesn’t understand her file. What this affects is 108. It was a very strange program that only a select number of municipalities received the funding. It was unfair. It was not transparent. It was not understood, even by the municipal leaders. We have one town that gets it. The town next to it may not. We can go down the road a few more and they may or may not get it.

So we need to address the inequities and the unfairness. You would think the members opposite would be supportive of directing . . . or looking and reviewing a program that simply wasn’t fair, transparent, predictable, or explainable.

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

Carbon Capture and Storage Test Facility

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, municipalities are being punished for Sask Party’s mismanagement, scandal, and waste. And they spent, of that waste, \$1.5 billion on CCS [carbon capture and storage]. And for what, Mr. Speaker? They can’t even show us that it works.

Emails from the CEO [chief executive officer] of SaskPower say: “I’m getting somewhat concerned about the accuracy of our statements around the ability to produce 1 million tonnes of CO₂ a year.” And then after some redactions in the email, he goes on to say we need to “begin signalling to others what our real max achievable capacity is.” Clearly there are issues. Mr. Speaker, in response to the impending federal regulations, SaskPower has said, “December of 2016, we may be shutting that plant off much more often in the future for sure.”

Mr. Speaker, if they aren’t even sure that we can use their \$1.5 billion boondoggle, how does it make any sense for the people of Saskatchewan to pay for it?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, this is the cleanest fossil fuel plant in the country, and that’s something that this government and the people on this side of the House are very, very proud of, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the facility’s been operating at a very good capacity — 1.4 million tonnes of CO₂ as of January 31st, 2017, Mr. Speaker. That’s the equivalent of taking . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member’s asked the question. They may want to listen to the answer. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, taking 350,000 cars off the road.

Mr. Speaker, you know, the answer . . . one of the answers with respect to carbon, Mr. Speaker, is research and technology. And we’re very, very proud of the work that’s been done at Boundary dam and the people at SaskPower, Mr. Speaker. We’ll continue to work on this facility, Mr. Speaker. We’ll continue to work on it. But to suggest that the facility doesn’t have to be shut down for regular maintenance is ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. It’s like any other commercial facility, Mr. Speaker. It will be shut down for regular maintenance. These are scheduled maintenance, Mr. Speaker. And it’s performing to the capacity which we had expected.

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. We’re moving on.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 65 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] has requested leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* immediately. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Leave has been granted. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister

Responsible for SGI that Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for SGI may proceed to move second reading of this bill. I recognize the minister.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 65 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*. In a moment I'll outline what this amendment will do, but first I'd like to say a few words about a man named Courtney Schaefer.

Courtney was a husband, a father, a brother, and a friend to many. He was also a tow truck operator who helped people in need night and day, in all kinds of weather, on the roads and highways in the Esterhazy area.

[11:00]

Mr. Speaker, I did not have the pleasure of knowing Courtney personally, but his friends and colleagues describe him as a man who would never leave someone stranded. Last year, Mr. Speaker, Courtney won the Roadside Assistance Award of Excellence from CAA Saskatchewan. His job was to help people, and he was good at it.

Tomorrow will be one month since Courtney went to work, responding to a call near Gerald, Saskatchewan in the middle of a blizzard. In the midst of whiteout conditions, there was a four-vehicle collision, and one of those vehicles was a semi. Courtney died while doing his job, trying to help someone in need.

His story is a tragic example of the dangers that tow truck drivers often face on the sides of roads and highways in this province. We've heard from tow truck operators about how they risk their lives daily responding to motorists in distress, simply because other drivers may not be aware and slow down. If you talk to a tow truck driver and ask them about close calls, they'll tell you about being brushed by the mirrors of vehicles speeding by. They'll tell you about their road markers being run over. They'll tell you of motorists who simply ignore the flashing amber lights on top of their trucks.

Currently the regulations under *The Traffic Safety Act* only permit amber lights for tow trucks. In the wake of Courtney's passing, we have heard the calls from his fellow roadside responders, and the addition of a different colour would make their trucks stand out more. They say a different colour would remind motorists that they are required by law to slow to 60

kilometres per hour when passing a tow truck on the side of the road.

We have heard those calls, and we have taken action. *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* permits blue lights to be used in conjunction with amber lights on tow trucks. Saskatchewan is the first jurisdiction in Canada to allow a two-colour lighting combination for tow trucks. Tow truck operators will also be able to strategically install lights to the tow truck and trailer, provided there is at least one amber light on top of the truck that can be seen 360 degrees around the unit.

We believe and our friends in the towing industry believe that adding blue lights will increase visibility and heighten awareness. No one should fear for their life while they are doing their job. It is our hope that this will make our roads safer for tow truck operators out there doing their jobs and putting their lives on the line every day.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the members opposite as well for their co-operation on this very important legislation. Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for SGI has moved second reading of Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I rise to add some comments to the minister's statement. And of course we are, as the official opposition, fully support this bill and the changes that would increase safety on our highways for those people, those tow truck drivers who are out there providing service and care to people in often very desperate situations on the side of our roads all across this province.

We fully support this bill, and I thank the minister for the briefing about this legislation prior to. I know that there have been consultations with, not only the tow truck drivers and the RCMP and SGI, as well as the families that have been so tragically impacted by accidents on our roads.

And I do also welcome the accompanying public campaign to make all drivers in this province aware. I mean it's important, these lights will be important, but it really will be incumbent upon all who drive on our highways to slow down, to respect those who are working on the sides of our highways. They're putting their lives on the line, and it really is incumbent upon all drivers to ensure that they do their part to respect them and to ensure their safety.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to just thank the minister, and confirm our commitment and our support of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Minister Responsible for SGI that Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* 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.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — I designate that Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* be committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills and that said bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills immediately.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands committed to Committee of the Whole on Bills.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Committee of the Whole on Bills.

The Deputy Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 65 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — The item before the committee is Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — Carried.

[Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive agreed to.]

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*.

I now recognize the Minister for SGI.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — I move that the committee report the bill without amendment.

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — Carried. I recognize the Minister Responsible for SGI.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Mr. Chair, I move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for SGI that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Acting Chair (Mr. D'Autremont): — Carried.

[The Deputy Speaker resumed the Chair.]

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*, without amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for SGI may proceed to third reading. I recognize the minister.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 65 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — I move that this bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*, be now read the third time and passed under its title. 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.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Third reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — Next sitting.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 57, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and that the bill be now read the third time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 57, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2017*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister may proceed to third reading. I recognize the minister.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 57 — *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2017*

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 57, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2017* be now read for the third time and passed under its title. 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.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Third reading of this bill.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies to report Bill No. 58, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill and that the bill be now read the third time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 58, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2017* and that the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 58 — *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2017*

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 58, *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a third time and passed under its title. 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.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Third reading of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to answer the questions 288 through 325.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled answers to questions 288 to 325.

[11:15]

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Funding for Libraries

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my honour today to stand and speak to the 75-minute debate, this motion that's before us:

That this Assembly condemns the government for their senseless budget cuts to libraries across the province, and for crippling these vital community hubs that provide essential services and programming for children, seniors, and all Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as noted, this is a 75-minute debate, but really if I were to just go into the comments and the emails that

I've had to my office over the last week, I think we could do probably a 75-day debate on this, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This is certainly an issue that has really caught the attention of a lot of people in the province because it was a devastating cut that was introduced in this most recent budget. We heard from . . . I've been around the province talking to folks who work in our libraries and people who support our libraries, and this is some of the context of where we find ourselves today.

The day of the budget, directors were brought into Regina into an embargo, and about 1 o'clock they found out that they were going to lose 58 per cent of their funding, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Last year the funding in estimates for our provincial library system was \$12.7 million; with passage of the budget that number will be reduced to 7.9 million. So as you can imagine, on its own a 58 per cent cut to library funding is absolutely devastating. But when you take into account that libraries run their budgets on a calendar year, so from January to December, that means that a quarter of their budget has already been spent this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is absolutely devastating to the system.

And it has become apparent, I'm afraid, in subsequent days that there is a fundamental misunderstanding about how libraries run in this province and how much they are valued by people across the whole province. A 58 per cent cut has already led to layoffs, substantial layoffs in regional library headquarters around the province. We've seen that in Parkland. We've seen cuts up in Lakeland. We've seen cuts in Chinook. We've seen cuts at Palliser. These are already having a huge impact. And of course to the interlibrary loan system, which has been suspended across the province, and really to devastating effect.

There is, of course, one of those unintended consequences that I find myself often talking about, was the fact that STC was also cut in this budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is how most of the interlibrary loan items, about 700,000 items a year, get around this province. And there doesn't seem to be any understanding of that fact, nor does there seem to be any plan for how we are going to move those items around. But I guess in part that's a moot point at this point, because due to the cuts, that program has been suspended.

I'm going to freely admit that I know more about the provincial library system today than I did a week ago. And I really want to thank all of those people out there who are working so diligently to raise awareness, to rally people to make sure that their voices are heard, and ultimately to try to reverse this really senseless cut.

We're talking about, in terms of the provincial budget, a fairly small cut in terms of dollars, but decimating our whole provincial library system, a system that really has been the envy of the whole country for the past number of years is . . . I have to question the logic in that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It would appear that this was a decision made by looking at a spreadsheet and looking at some numbers and really not understanding what it is exactly that is behind those numbers and how much value there is. You know sometimes you can look at a cut and understand that is a cost, but what is often hidden from those cuts is how much it would cost without that

service, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We are a province that unfortunately struggles with low rates of literacy in many communities, and this, the library system — as I think one would expect — is one way that we can promote literacy in the province. One of the problems that many school divisions find is lower rates of literacy, or the summer slide in literacy rates because children don't have access to books. They're not in classrooms, and library programming, in particular the summer reading programs, are one of the ways that libraries help support that literacy of our children.

And of course they're not just for children, Mr. Deputy Speaker. People of all ages value and use our libraries. And we've certainly heard from people from almost every community in the province and people of all ages who really are concerned about these cuts and the impacts that are going to be felt.

One piece of information, I think, that is fundamental to this decision — and I'm not sure that it's well understood by members opposite or even the minister — is just exactly what the provincial funding pays for and what it doesn't pay for. The minister has talked about getting out of the bricks and mortar business but I'm afraid that the province doesn't fund the bricks and mortar in our libraries. That's funded by the municipalities.

So what the province does pay for is new materials; the van delivery, so actually getting the books around the province; the e-resources that the minister has spoken of frequently, that is actually what's being cut here, so services like Hoopla; the payroll system, people do need to be paid, Mr. Deputy Speaker; the headquarters staff. So this is where we've really seen those drastic cuts. We had six employees here from Palliser who had 80 years of combined service who all, again, with a stroke of pen with this budget, lost their jobs. And including — ironically when we have a minister talking about the importance of electronic items — including their IT [information technology] director, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This money also pays for the computers in our libraries. It is the case that not every community in this province has access to high-speed Internet, and often the library is the place where people can go to access that service. And we've certainly heard that from people building their resumes. We've heard that from elderly people who are on a fixed income who perhaps don't have the money that it would cost to have Internet service at home, but it's a way that they can keep in touch with their families and maybe stay in their communities longer.

People who want to apply for jobs, I know we were in Weyburn recently and there were people at the computers who were accessing job services. I know communities that have been hard hit by the downturn in oil. There are a number of people obviously who would be looking for jobs, and that service is in jeopardy at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know that, I think the number is about 60 per cent of employers only accept resumes online, and if you don't have a computer at home or high-speed Internet or that service, that becomes a real problem.

Other things that the provincial funding pays for: the vehicles, the gas, the insurance, the maintenance, and replacement of those vehicles. And provincial program coordination such as the

summer reading club, literacy kits, the very things that we should be bolstering, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But we're not. We've dealt this devastating blow to this system.

I want to go back a few years. I know we should probably avoid looking backwards, but there was a lot of excitement in 2009 when this provincial system was brought in. There was . . . I'm looking at an article from *The Western Producer* from 2009: "Saskatchewan adopts a single integrated library system." I'm just going to just pull some quotes from this document.

"Saskatchewan's public libraries, which serve more than 500,000 active cardholders, are on different computer systems depending on which of the 11 public library systems they use." So that was the case prior to this in 2009. "What it will actually do is increase services for rural areas because some libraries might not have had the seed money for upgraded computer systems."

So this was actually, at that point back in 2009, about a \$5 million investment over several years to upgrade this system. And once fully implemented, this became the envy of the country really, in terms of a provincial library system. This is what's at stake here. They used this ". . . grant to install the new Millennium software, which will be the largest implementation of a single system [anywhere] in Canada." That's what's at stake here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Patrons will be getting more of everything — more access to more resources, an increased . . . [availability] to reserve materials from other libraries [that's what's been cut this week] and access to any library's services with just one card.

So this is a real benefit to those smaller libraries in smaller centres where they perhaps don't have a large catalogue themselves but they're able to access from the cities and other collections, which really has been just a brilliant and well-used system.

The minister has talked a lot about stats on a spreadsheet, and again it's . . . You really ought not to make decisions that way. You ought to look at the full context. There has been some reduction, I understand, with the number of cardholders and the physical checking out of books. But the electronic borrowing of items and the attendance at programming, that has really skyrocketed. And that is what a modern library looks like, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's what we're in danger of losing here if we don't get a reversal on this decision which really, really ought to happen.

There's so many places I want to go with this. I continue to be inundated at the office; I believe we're up to about over 2,000 emails at our office alone with people just very, very distraught about this cut. And I know that other MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] on both sides of the House are hearing from people as well. This is not . . . This can't be understated how devastating this 58 per cent cut retroactive to January 1st really is to this system.

I'm just going to read a few of the comments here, if I may, because I think that they ought to be read into the record. One from a 15-year-old boy:

I'm 15 years old and I've been constantly using the one card, one province program for my whole life. I actually have books that are in e-transit right now from libraries across the province. The Sask Party has now ruined my chance to keep on reading and learning.

So that's a perception from a 15-year-old child, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we're hearing those comments from people of all ages, and people who really would like the minister to come out and actually understand what's being done here. It's one thing to look at a spreadsheet and make a cut. It's a very other thing to go out and look at people who are impacted by these decisions.

The province, as I mentioned, you know . . . Some of the misinformation that's been passed around on this getting out of the bricks and mortar business, the province didn't ever fund the bricks and mortar business. What this allowed was municipal libraries to have access to this large system across the province. That's a fundamental misunderstanding and, I think, one that the minister needs to correct, and the impact to rural communities in particular. These communities often have no other access point for the Internet, as I mentioned, and the isolation there. This is something that allows people to remain in communities longer when they have access to those types of computers.

Just mindful of the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I sincerely could go on and on. I would invite members opposite to go look through the comments section, to read the emails that are coming into their offices and understand that you don't want to be in front of this decision, a decision that takes the best interlibrary system in the whole country and wipes it out without really understanding what the consequences are, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So again I will hopefully get some more points in the debate here but, before my time is up, I'd like to read this motion:

That the Assembly condemns the government for their senseless budget cuts to libraries across the province, and for crippling these vital community hubs that provide essential services and programming for children, seniors, and all Saskatchewan families.

[11:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Regina Lakeview:

That this Assembly condemns the government for their senseless budget cuts to libraries across the province, and for crippling these vital community hubs that provide essential services, programming for children, seniors, and all Saskatchewan families.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The budget released on March 22nd was a budget with some tough choices, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this government does not take these decisions lightly. Ever since our province was

created, we've had to deal with change and difficult circumstances, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and libraries are not immune from this.

Today with so many different types of electronics on the market such as e-readers, laptops, and iPads, technology has made it much easier to access information. Understandably not everyone uses an electronic device when reading, and we are not advocating for closing libraries. Unfortunately in this difficult financial situation the province is in, difficult financial decisions had to be made. Many services governments provide, including libraries, experienced a reduction in funding.

Regional libraries, the two city libraries, and the northern library system have seen a reduction in the number of registered borrowers, as well as a reduction in the number of items checked out. That is not to say that people do not use libraries, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but when we are faced with a reduction in resource revenues, a decline in the usage of any service, we should always look and have it evaluated. And while it was a difficult decision for government, it was not one made lightly.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will support the tough decisions made by this government, and we must all do our part in order to fight the provincial deficit. This government recognizes the importance of making sure that our finances are kept in check. It is not a coincidence that this province has a AAA credit rating and has the second-lowest debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product] for provinces in Canada. If we were to borrow money like our NDP neighbours to the west, it would only be a matter of time before we would see our credit rating slip, costing government and everyone more. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this and the need to eventually pay back the money borrowed would result in having less taxpayer dollars to spend on much-needed social programs that Saskatchewan people rely on.

With resource revenue much lower than anyone would have expected over these last three years, our government knew it had to look at different ways of finding a stable revenue source, which we see in our shift towards consumption taxes. Further, to help combat the deficit sooner rather than later, this government had to couple that with a reduction in spending.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government, since being elected in 2007, has been committed to finding ways to better use taxpayers' money. I think it is also important to point out that although we have reduced library funding, there are other ways that communities can fund libraries using revenue sharing. Since forming government in 2007, revenue sharing has been a solid source of revenues for communities right across this province. Revenue sharing is an unconditional and predictable grant given to communities and rural municipalities to do with as they see fit.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we look at funding for the Saskatoon Public Library, which also includes the Mayfair Branch Library in my constituency of Saskatoon Westview, the total amount of funding for libraries from all sources is \$23.7 million. The amount that was reduced from this year's budget for libraries in Saskatoon is \$658,000. That amount represents 2.75 per cent of their total budget. This reduction in spending is smaller than many other government ministries and agencies that have been asked for a reduction in spending. And as I said

before, the city could backfill this amount using money from the revenue sharing the city receives from the province.

Another way the city of Saskatoon could fund their libraries is by using some of its reserves. The city of Saskatoon has reserves of over \$140 million and, although they are reluctant to use it, one of the reasons they increased the reserve funding was in case of rainy days. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said before, the province has had reduced resource revenue income of over a billion dollars for three years, and I think that would probably qualify as a rainy day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, some would say that we should have put away more money into a rainy day fund. The reality was that, with the massive infrastructure deficit created by the previous NDP government, municipalities were at our doorstep looking for money for projects which had been underfunded. Revenue sharing was significantly less during the NDP and was not a stable revenue due to that government not being committed to municipalities.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since forming government in 2007, we have provided a predictable amount of revenue sharing that municipalities could count on right up to this day, revenue sharing that could be used to fund any projects that they deemed to be important. We were clear and concise during the budget process that everything was on the table, so it should be no surprise that adjustments were going to be made on how we would spend taxpayers' dollars.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for municipalities to think that we would not be looking for reductions from the cities that received the most infrastructure dollars while resource revenue was high would be difficult to understand. Considering the massive projects completed and under way in and around the cities of Regina and Saskatoon, you would think they would be more responsive to the needs during these shortfalls in resource revenue.

This government is investing \$1.8 billion in Regina on the bypass alone which has created countless jobs during this significant time of growth in our province. And when I think of the schools under construction and all those man-hours that have been created. Regina has a new stadium with some funding from the province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatoon has had significant infrastructure dollars invested in bridges and also construction of the children's hospital and capital works at the University of Saskatchewan in the amount of half a billion dollars. Saskatoon, like Regina, has also benefited with new schools which are set to open this fall, one of them in my constituency.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, right across this province, we have seen record investments in roads, hospitals, and schools. And all of these projects are needed to provide as a solid foundation for the future of the province, a future, Mr. Speaker, that this government is committed to. But equally important is the financial health of the province. This province cannot afford to go back to the old days of closing schools as a rate of one a month. Nor can we afford to ignore needed infrastructure to maintain highways or keep motorists safe.

We need to do all we can also to attract investment in our

province and further diversify our economy. This is exactly why, the reason why we will be reducing the corporate tax by one-half per cent this year and one-half per cent in 2019. There are strong signs that our economy is gaining strength with the thousands of jobs being created this year already, and it's an indicator of the confidence our economy has by the business sector.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we all work together, we can come through this stronger than we were before. But it will take compromise and co-operation to achieve our goals, not just the goals of the province but the goals of all our communities, large and small.

This budget encompasses almost everyone in the province, and it was meant to be that way, and I mean that sincerely, Mr. Speaker. We all benefited from the decade of significant growth in our province, and now that we need to tighten our belts it will require effort from everyone. That is why I completely support this government and the difficult but balanced approach to addressing the budget deficit.

Libraries are important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but so are the hundreds of other programs and services this government delivers. We will persevere and remain strong as we move past the challenging revenue shortfalls.

I cannot support the motion put forward by the member from Regina Lakeview. Reductions to libraries are a part of this government's efforts to fight the provincial deficit. And while challenges still remain, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government is meeting the challenge. We will work hard to ensure that taxpayers' dollars are used in the best possible manner. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is a pleasure to enter into this debate because I think that my colleague has hit the mark right on when it comes to this motion:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its senseless budget cuts to libraries across the province . . .

And it really is senseless, that we don't have the foresight of what it really means, these libraries and literacy and the joy of learning. And this is a short-sighted action by this government. And the motion goes on:

and for crippling those vital community hubs that provide essential services and programs for children, seniors, and all Saskatchewan families.

I think this just hits the mark. And this is really unfortunate that this government has decided to target libraries across this province for this kind of senseless cut that really will have unintended consequences, and the impacts will be felt for generations.

Now it's interesting, on budget day, it was kind of ironic. I made a member's statement that day about the renaming of the

library in Pleasant Hill area of Saskatoon to the Freda Ahenakew Library. Here was a woman with, I think, 12 children, who devoted her life to knowledge in all sorts of really tough circumstances, but in the end got her Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy], was recognized throughout Canada for outstanding academic work when it came to literacy. And the library felt that it was an important gesture as Truth and Reconciliation, one of the calls to action, that we should recognize literacy as an important tool in overcoming racism, poverty, many of the things that we find in our society that holds us back.

So this is a short-sighted, mean, mean-spirited cut that, while the member can stand on his feet and say they had to do some things, we will, at the end, talk about how they gave a tax cut to the wealthiest that cost \$38 million, but they would prefer to do that tax cut to the wealthiest. And what do they do to help pay for that? They cut the library programs right across this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a period of time I was fortunate to live in Makwa, Saskatchewan. And at that period of time when I was teaching at the school, I was also on the local library board. So I got to know and appreciate the local library, just a small room in the municipal office. They had a little area in the back, and it was pretty special for the kids to come down and borrow books from the library. They felt, in many ways, their community was a rich community because we did have two libraries. We one had at the municipal office, a small room in the back; and we had a library at the school, another small room. But, you know, we felt pretty rich because we had two libraries in that small hamlet, and we could talk about that.

And I remember a pretty special occasion when we had a guest author come up from Saskatoon, Geoffrey Bilson, who has now passed away, but did a reading to this very small group of kids. And I think these are the important events in a student's life when they get to see authors come out from the cities or travel around and talk to each other. So this is a very, very important thing that we're going to lose. We're really going to lose that.

[11:45]

I'm also worried about the impact on newcomers to this province. You know, this government particularly will celebrate the fact that our population has gone up, and that is a wonderful thing. That is a very wonderful thing. But libraries are the place where people go to learn the new culture. They go to learn it from the books, the videos, what's being presented there, the special events. Those things will be really scaled back now, and the richness of our culture will not be showcased in our libraries to the degree it once was. In fact it will be really scaled back.

And I think this will be a real problem because, you know, when we have newcomers come from all over the world, and they come here, and whether they're learning English as an additional language or they're looking for books that will help them learn the language or kids' books to read to their own children to help them familiarize themselves with the customs and cultures of Canada, that will now be a little bit more difficult, and particularly when it comes from the interlibrary loans. So this is really a challenge that will be out there, and so this is why it's so important that this government reconsider its drastic cuts to the library system.

We also are really worried about the situation about the ending of the one province, one card sharing program. And this is something that we really held as something we could be really proud of in Saskatchewan, really proud of this one card, one province card that meant you could borrow books anywhere in this province and it would be delivered to you. And this was a really innovative thing, and now we're taking two steps back — and actually now compounded with the cuts to STC — many steps back because how can anybody really afford this? And it is rich for the minister to stand up where he gives such a drastic cut to the libraries, but on the other hand commands, demands from the libraries that they continue certain programs when he is unwilling, unwilling to foot the bill for it.

And it's a minor bill that we could . . . because of the choices they have made, and the choices they've made to foot the tax cut for the wealthiest in the province, as I have said, that costs \$38 million a year. They have chosen as a priority over there, every one of those members have chosen and have stood on their feet to say yes to tax cuts to the wealthiest and cuts to the regional libraries. This is not going to be a positive sign for our province at all. It fails our families, and I think this is a real problem, Mr. Speaker. I want to also talk a little bit about families.

You know, it's interesting that the member from Westview stood on his feet and he mentioned Mayfair Branch Library in Saskatoon, which I am very familiar with. It's on 33rd Street. I live on 29th Street. My granddaughter goes to that library, and now I'll have services cut there because there won't be the interbranch library. She likes some books in French which are hard for her grandfather to read, but her family does like to be bilingual. So this is a reduction in services.

Now I don't know if the member's family from Westview uses the Mayfair Branch. I'm not sure if they do. But our family does, and I know the Mayfair area. Mayfair area is in one of the core neighbourhoods in Saskatoon. It's not a wealthy neighbourhood, it's not a wealthy neighbourhood at all. They value their library.

If you go to their library, it's a relatively new library, you would see a library that is well used because of the nature of the community that feels safe in the library. There are books there for them to read, a wide selection of books. And it's from the children right up to grandparents who are looking for knowledge, for the joy that books share with you, but also the Internet that they can get resources, knowledge from that, but also just a sense of community.

And so these cuts will have an impact. And I think it's really rich and it really shows the member's not understanding how the city works where he talks about . . . Just really, here it is downloading to the city, demanding that the city just pick up the pieces. And I think this is really, really unfortunate. I think that the folks in Mayfair area would be very interested to know the feelings of their member towards the Mayfair Branch Library and that he's not really that supportive of it, Mr. Speaker.

I think this Education minister has not really been fully briefed on this. He's making comments in the question period which really shows. Yesterday he talked about Canada Post delivering

books for \$1. We know that program no longer exists. He should have had, he should have had better research.

But, Mr. Speaker, I want to end with this one quote that I've adapted. I think the minister will soon find out that hell hath no fury like a librarian scorned, and he will see that tomorrow afternoon at the demonstrations across this province on Friday. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First of all I would like to clarify the perception has been created by members opposite. They have been saying that we are closing down libraries and are not investing in our province. I assure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we are not doing as the NDP and as the motion is debating today.

In the last decade while we had the privilege of forming government, we have invested record amounts in education, in infrastructure, in social programs, and we have developed the municipal sharing formula that has provided sustainable funding for municipalities to invest in communities. Mr. Speaker, our government actions are for the betterment of people of Saskatchewan, better education, and better education-related programs.

This is still the case, even though we have been forced to make some tough decisions to make sure that our budget gets back to balance. We have always been working for a better future of Saskatchewan people and will continue to do so. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to our responsibility as a government, we need to think about the big picture and have a visionary, long-lasting plan which is the best for the public interest, economic growth, and not leaving unnecessary debt behind to be paid by the next generation. Mr. Speaker, in this contemporary situation in our province, our government action is one of the excellent examples of managing the public money.

This has led to us having to make some tough decisions, but when you look at the province we are doing what's the best. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are not arbitrarily closing libraries like the NDP suggested. This is unlike the NDP, where they closed hospitals and schools. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also like to remind the Assembly that the NDP closed nearly one school a month during their time in office. That's their record, and I can only imagine the number of libraries that was closed with all those schools closing.

Mr. Speaker, it is true that our government had to make difficult decisions, but it is a part of our plan to make sure that our budget gets back to balance in the next three years. Sound fiscal management is important, and we take that very seriously, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to share a quote from Dominion Bond Rating Service when they were talking about our budget:

In presenting this plan, the Province has acknowledged the longer-term consequences of lower commodity prices and has demonstrated its willingness to make difficult, but necessary, decisions to address the deteriorating budget

outlook. The plan introduces modest pro-growth tax reform, rationalizes government services and maintains a focus on core government priorities such as health care, education and social services. While DBRS recognizes that the plan is ambitious and savings may not accrue quickly as expected, DBRS does view the plan as credible because of the extent and immediacy of the proposed measures.

Mr. Speaker, in order to meet the fiscal challenges, we do like to reduce expenses. The NDP like to reduce hospitals and schools and MLAs. I believe every school usually has a library, so out of 176 schools, how many schools had a library that was closed by NDP?

Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon Public Library is mostly funded by the municipality through the property tax. Their building, books belongs to the city and implies being paid by the city. The provincial grant was 3 per cent and was not granted in the budget in 2017-18.

The same is the case with Regina Public Library owned and being operated by the municipal government, and the previous grant was 2.75 per cent and was not granted in last budget.

There are significant changes in the source in acquiring knowledge, and it is the reality that the use of paper in any form such as books, newspapers, and magazines has been reduced. People use many other means such as the Internet, for e-books, e-readers, online newspaper, magazine, and movies.

Mr. Speaker, with everything that is available on Internet — fiction, science, recent research, social media — that is why the use of library materials has dropped. That does not mean that they are not important, but with the changing time, it is a time to evaluate how things are being done. The number of items checked out of public libraries has dropped by 1.6 million since 2007. Also the number of registered library users has dropped by 175,000 since 2007.

I talked about tough decisions that had to be made earlier in my speech, and when it comes to which services to reduce funding, we have to look at the numbers. The reduction in demand demonstrated that there would be a smaller impact along with understanding the libraries would be able to absorb a change in funding. We believe that with the last decade of record investment in libraries, municipalities, and school divisions, that there are enough resources to meet the existing demand for library services.

Over 90 Saskatchewan communities with a library also have a library in their school. We're also still supporting and will keep supporting regional libraries outside of the two major cities. The changes in funding, however, are an opportunity to find efficiencies in the library system.

Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Education has pointed out that if you drive between Martensville and Langham, you will see past five libraries; Saltcoats and Langenburg, four libraries; Indian Head and Regina, four libraries. And we are not closing them, and we are not telling libraries what specifically they should do, but we are suggesting that there may be efficiencies that can be found. One of the suggestions that has been made is that for small communities that have multiple libraries, it may be worth

considering consolidating those libraries to improve services at a lower cost. We also will continue to support our libraries in public schools, and we encourage communities to look for the ways to support their community libraries.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP record is one of the closed schools and people being forced to leave the province in search of jobs. Our government record is very different. Our population continued to grow. Key economic indicators are pointing in the right direction. We have a plan to get our budget to back to balance, and we have overseen a decade of record in investment in all sectors of our province.

Mr. Speaker, our government has been working and has worked to reconstruct the damage that was done to our educational system before 2007. And we acknowledge that we have made the tough decisions, but with our record, the people of Saskatchewan can trust that we are doing everything we can do to make sure our province is a great place to live, work, and raise a family.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I will not be supporting the motion put forward by the member from Regina Lakeview. Thank you.

[12:00]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll keep my opening remarks short. I will be supporting my colleague from Regina Lakeview, her condemnation of these cuts to our libraries, Mr. Speaker. I have a lot to say and 10 minutes is not nearly enough, Mr. Speaker.

The fact is the Sask Party government — without consultation, without talking to anybody — has cut our provincial libraries by \$4.8 million, including 100 per cent cut to the funding in libraries in Saskatoon and Regina of the provincial money, and 58 per cent cut to regional libraries, Mr. Speaker. That is a cut to the almost half a million people — that is half our population here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — who are registered library users. That is a huge cut. It was obvious, Mr. Speaker, that this government was oblivious to the impact that this would have on people and communities.

Mr. Speaker, libraries are about people, and they are people who are part of a community. And libraries offer them that opportunity to feel that connection to the community when they visit their local library. And libraries are for everyone. They're for children who get their first library card and start with little board books and work their way up to graphic novels in their teens, those kinds of things.

They are for children who've taken the programming at Winnie the Pooh Corner in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, or children who get tutoring or have an opportunity to do research for school, the summer reading challenge that happens when kids are on school break, Mr. Speaker.

They're about seniors, their access to large-print books or audio books. About community programming, they're about seniors being able to come out and gather and hear interesting speakers

or meet friends.

They're about newcomers improving their English as an additional language; about connecting with family across the world; about being able to apply for jobs or put together resumes. They're about our most vulnerable individuals, people who don't have money for expensive outings, but they provide an opportunity to do job searches; librarians who help with resumés; access to things like newspapers or magazines, books; a quiet, soft, safe place to spend some worthwhile time.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to tell you about my experience with libraries because the personal is political, and I know very well that my experience as a mom with young kids is the experience of many families across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I know that because of the many, many email and communications I've had with families just like mine, Mr. Speaker.

So I'd like to acknowledge that my perspective is that of someone who lives in a city, who has a large choice of libraries in neighbourhoods not far from mine that I can visit, and my family and I do visit. But I think it's important to emphasize that I live in a city that has public transit and biking and walking paths that can get me easily to those libraries if I don't have a vehicle, Mr. Speaker. And that isn't the case in rural communities for everybody, Mr. Speaker, if you don't have access to a car. This 100 per cent . . . This cut is a big deal in our two largest cities, the 100 per cent cut, but it has a huge impact in rural Saskatchewan.

So my experience as a mom, I started out on maternity and parental leave, Mr. Speaker, and chose to be an at-home mom. My husband and I, at that point, decided that I would be an at-home mom with Hennessey when she was little. We made a decision to live on one income so I could be with my daughter. Libraries again are important for everyone, all parents, but I can tell you that our libraries in Saskatoon were a lifeline for me as an at-home parent.

I loved being home with both my kids when I had an opportunity to do that, but a very real consequence of being on a leave from work or opting out of paid labour, whether you're a mom or a dad, is social isolation. That is a very real consequence. It's a wonderful experience, but it can be lonely. It can create fear. Am I the only mom who sometimes feels like this is the most difficult job in the world? It can lead to depression, all those kinds of things, Mr. Speaker.

Libraries were a lifeline to me, and I know they are to many other people. And they still are, Mr. Speaker. I'll find myself on a Sunday afternoon when I don't have work commitments and Ophelia and I are hanging out, and it is the place we go to connect. But I think about Hennessey when she was little. Mayfair was one of our libraries we visited. It's not too far from our home. It had shorter hours, but the smaller, semi-enclosed children's area was cozy and had a really nice feel. We'd sometimes go to Alice Turner, which had just opened up, and it's on the exact opposite corner of the city, Mr. Speaker, but it's such a bright and sunny place to visit. The Cliff Wright branch, Mr. Speaker, we'd usually visit after a swim at Lakeview pool. We'd go swimming and make a stop on our way out at the library. That was the perfect way to end a day,

Mr. Speaker, where we could go and curl up with our giant stack of books at home after a busy day of swimming.

Carlyle King branch, which is not too far from my place either, Mr. Speaker. It was much the same as our visit. We could go skating and go to the library. And always, always there were so many families and many users of these libraries. Dr. Freda Ahenakew, formerly the branch on 20th Street, is the closest library to me but it opened just in recent years, Mr. Speaker.

But our two favourite branches were Frances Morrison and the Rusty MacDonald branch. Frances Morrison, Pooh Corner on a Saturday morning is always packed. And it's set up in such a way that you could pick out books for your preschooler and your preschooler could play and you could keep your eye on them. And you could curl up on one of the loungey mats up on the windowsill overlooking city hall and read some of the books that you picked before you took your giant bags of books home. There were always two carts at Frances Morrison library, one with brand new books which was always exciting, opening up those brand new books and feeling them. But there was also a librarian selection and those were always really fun books to take home too, Mr. Speaker.

The Rusty MacDonald branch we spent tons of time at because they have a play kitchen. We didn't have a play kitchen in our house. So surrounded by the books, there was a play kitchen and tons of puzzles. So Hennessey, and Ophelia now, but Hennessey would play in the kitchen, and I'd talk to other parents. And much to my kids' chagrin, I will talk to anybody. And in those moments of isolation and loneliness, I would strike up a conversation and if they responded, we'd have great conversations, Mr. Speaker. Hennessey would make friends at the library and play with other kids. That was a really important time in our lives, Mr. Speaker.

I think about how it fostered . . . We had one income and it wasn't a big income because my husband was at the start of his career at that point. So it was a cheap and enriching and fun outing for us to go to the library. We were there at least two times a week, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes we'd plan to go with friends, but usually it was a spur of the moment. The library was the place to go. It fostered a love of literacy in my kids.

From the early days, we used the CDs [compact disc] and I'd make tapes, back in the day when you'd make tapes, of lullabies for my kids to listen to. Books on tape, Hennessey didn't watch a lot of TV but I'd put a book on tape and she would play quite happily. Two of our favourites were *Chuck and Danielle*, about a whippet and a girl — we used to have a whippet — and *Matilda*, Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. We'd take out VHS [Video Home System] tapes. *Sesame Street* and *Put Down the Duckie* were one of our favourites, Mr. Speaker. The summer reading program was a really important part . . . well it was an important part of my life when I was little. It was an important part of Hennessey's life and it is still an important part of Ophelia's life. The thrill of the librarian coming to the school at the start of September bringing your certificate was a huge thrill. The experiences, those social connections were so important, but those books and those materials also had such a huge impact.

Magic School Bus, Mr. Speaker, books and videos, I partially

credit to Ms. Frizzle and her crew to inspiring my oldest daughter to be a science major, Mr. Speaker. Kevin Hinkes' *Lily's Plastic Purse* and *Chrysanthemum* were fun books for us. Thank goodness Ophelia wasn't born in November because she would've been chrysanthemum. That's the flower for the month of November, and my oldest daughter Hennessey loved that book so much that she thought that Ophelia should've been chrysanthemum, Mr. Speaker. Amber Brown who is a character in a book whose parents were going through a divorce. It was a wonderful opportunity for me to have those kinds of discussions.

And I could go on and on about the kinds of books — the kids' books, the cookbooks, the parenting books. The library was a lifeline. The materials were a lifeline, Mr. Speaker. I think about how lucky my family is, and has been, to access those materials. And I worry about people in rural Saskatchewan who won't have access to those materials because of the loss of the interlibrary, the one-province, one-library loan.

Libraries for my kids have such a huge part of their lives and had such a huge impact. It has carried on a love of reading and a love of learning for them. And I know this is the case, not just for my family, but families across the province, Mr. Speaker. The personal is political and my experience is not unique, Mr. Speaker. Libraries make the world a better place, and our government needs to properly support them, whether they are in our larger centres or our smallest communities across our province. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to join this debate about our library systems and regional libraries and the public libraries. First off I'd like to thank the member from Lakeview for directing some people to her office to talk about the library systems because we had some phone calls in our office. And we know that these decisions that we made during the budget, we didn't take lightly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I wish there was a magic money tree that we could fund everything, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but we had to make some difficult decisions in this budget, and one of the decisions we made was to reduce spending to regional libraries, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We want to work with our libraries to adjust how they deliver their services within the available funding levels. Our focus is on supporting things like the electronic resources, interlibrary loan, and CommunityNet. It is our hope that local libraries will work with their municipalities and school divisions to find new ways of delivering these services, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have three kids, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And my wife has met people at the library and used some of the services that they offer, and they're good. And they see families there from around Regina, and her friends go there and they could get together. And like the member from Saskatoon Riversdale say, it's a place where people can gather.

Those spaces are still going to be there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Let's not think that every library in the province is going to shut down due to these decisions that we've made. I don't think that it's right to put that view out there in the public. I think it's a little bit of fearmongering, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We know that these are tough decisions, and because we have a \$1.2 billion hole in our budget, we had to make some of these decisions. I think about words our former Finance minister, Mr. Gantefer, said. And he said when we're talking about budgets and the government goes over caucus finalization and cabinet finalization, these aren't decisions made between good and bad ideas. The government has to make decisions between good ideas and good ideas. And sometimes you can't fund every good idea, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that's something we're going through right now in our fiscal situation where we have a \$1.2 billion revenue shortfall, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we've seen what our priorities are in this budget. Our priorities are health care, education, and social services, and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 75 cents of every dollar goes into that. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I hear the member from Saskatoon Centre heckling over here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And to the member from Saskatoon Centre, in my budget speech — I don't know if you heard it — I quoted him and I said, when he was the minister he said we had to make hard decisions when they were in government. And I gave him credit for that. He said we had to make hard decisions. And one of those decisions when he was a minister was they had to lay off 500 people.

And I give him credit. He said that was a very tough decision because they were in tough financial times. And I said sometimes these decisions . . . I know he didn't want to make those choices; I know that. I think he's a good guy. I know he didn't want to have to make those decisions. And sometimes when you're in government you have to make tough choices, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this budget was full of those decisions that we didn't want to make, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Tough choices that we looked forward, we looked at the people of the province of Saskatchewan. We had our priorities: health care, education, social services — 75 cents of every dollar.

And then we continued our commitments of building two new schools in Weyburn and Rosthern. And you can see our priorities of building new schools, spending money for two new schools. Forty new schools over the last 10 years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Twenty-one new schools are opening in this province this year, this fall. And the members opposite fearmonger again and say, well those schools aren't going to have desks or teachers. Mr. Deputy Speaker, why would you open new schools and not have desks and teachers? That's just more hyperbole coming from the side opposite.

[12:15]

And when they had to make tough decisions in the '90s, they made some really interesting choices. We decided to try and work with our partners. Yes, we reduced some funding to libraries. We reduced funding in Regina, in Saskatoon. And, Mr. Speaker, those numbers in Regina and Saskatoon: Regina Public Library budget is \$21.499 million. Their municipal grant is \$19.699 million. The municipal grant is 92 per cent of their funding.

Our provincial grant is \$597,000. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the provincial portion of funding for Regina Public Library is 2.75 per cent. And I know we are asking our partners to find that shortfall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I know that those are tough decisions they're going to have to make, and they're going to have to look at some efficiencies within that system. But we're asking them to find 2.75 per cent.

Our Finance minister had to find 10 per cent of revenue shortfall across the province in a provincial budget. Those are where those tough choices come from. And our Social Services minister has to make some of these decisions on her budget. And there's going to be some increased utilization, and we're going to have to try some efficiencies in those budgets as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think we've proven very good partners with our third party entities over the last 10 years. When the funds were there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the funds were there, we were there for our partners and we increased revenue sharing across Saskatchewan. In our city of Regina we increased revenue sharing by 157 per cent. When we had the funds there, we were there with our partners, and now we're asking, when we have a shortfall, we're asking for them to help find some efficiencies as well.

And I think that is fair. And I think when . . . We've been good partners when we've had the opportunity and we've had the revenue. And I think when times are good we shared in revenue, and when times are bad we're going to have to share in some reductions and share in finding some efficiencies, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But on to priorities. The members across the way like to heckle and yell about our priorities, and this budget sure does show their priorities, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well it does. We do show our priorities. And I used a quote from Mr. Biden. He said, don't tell me your priorities; show me your budget and I'll tell you yours. And we've done that with health care, education, and social services.

And the members can heckle across, and the member from Lakeview, who recently found her rural Saskatchewan stripes and she'd been to Fox Valley once in 27 years, thinks she can come across and tell us all about rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well here's some things in rural Saskatchewan that her party did — it was quite amazing — back when they had to make tough choices. And the member from Saskatoon Centre was there. The member from Elphinstone was there.

There's tough choices they made as a government, and their choices included closing 176 schools, Mr. Deputy Speaker: Neville School; Admiral School; Piapot School; Lang School; Earl Grey School; Saar Elementary School; Grey Elementary School; Wilcox Public School; Francis School; Odessa School; Glenavon School; École Ross School, Moose Jaw; Willow Bunch School; Briercree School; Crane Valley School; Limerick School; MacDowall School; Prince Charles School; Smeaton School; Sylvania School; Broadway Elementary School; Camsell Portage School; Isaac School; Griffin School; Golden Prairie School; Windthorst School; Lintlaw Okla School; Endeavour School; Pleasantdale School, central; Denzil Sacred Heart; Sonningdale School; Centennial Park Education

Centre; Alida School; Gainsborough School; Willowbrook School; St. James School; Dore Lake School; St. John School; Benson School; Margaret Mcclumb School; Simpson School; Radisson School; Dodsland School. I might run out of time here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'll just jump forwards a few more: Cadillac School, Brock Elementary School, Buffalo Hills School, Minto School, Langbank School, Bredenbury School. I think there's still people in Bredenbury. Spalding School, Sheho School. Actually my brother-in-law and my wife went to Sheho School for a bit until it was closed. Tramping Lake School, Neville School. Tramping Lake, I think the minister . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes. Biggar Elementary.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a lot of names on this list of schools that were closed, and I'm guessing, I'm not sure but I'm guessing there was libraries in those schools. And I'm guessing — to get back to the debate, Mr. Speaker — their priority was to close 176 schools young people wanted to go to, with libraries. That's their priorities. We've seen that in their budgets when it was tough times. We're opening schools, and we've asked our partners, and actually on a . . . with libraries.

And I listened on a call-in show. There's a lady from White City. There's a school being built there and she said . . . She was a school board trustee, and she said, "I think we should co-locate in this school and have some efficiencies." And she was a board member out there, and she was talking on a call-in show and saying, "There's efficiencies that you can find there." Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think when it comes down to it when we talk with our partners and we're asking to find some efficiencies because we're in tougher times.

We want to work together with our third parties. We want to ask them, co-operate with them to see if they can find some savings and be a little more efficient so that we can meet the targets and make sure that we can balance our budget, because like I said, I have three kids. And I want to make sure that we're paying for the services that we can have right now and our kids don't have to pay for those services in 20 years and kick the can down the road, so we have to put more and more debt on the back of our next generation. Other provinces are doing that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's what we decided not to do in this budget. It was a budget for the future, and we're going to meet the challenges, and we look forward to working with our third party partners to meet those challenges, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I will not be supporting the motion put forward by the member from Lakeview.

The Deputy Speaker: — Time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When confronted with unprecedented and sustained global commodity price declines, our government has had to make some very difficult decisions. And we're rising to that challenge premised on a rational approach to prudent management of debt, efficient delivery of services, and a focus on core government services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would ask the member from Saskatoon Centre to comment specifically on the choices they made as government when they closed 176 schools. Did they also close

176 school libraries? And what was the impact on those communities?

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

[Interjections]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I find it interesting because here we have a member, and not one rural member over there stood to speak on this; they had their urban members speak on this. And then you have a situation where the minister has alluded at least twice in the House that we have too many, too many libraries. We're debating libraries today, and they talk about us closing libraries. But I have not heard the minister, the minister when he was in Saskatoon, talk about us opening Silverspring, silence over there, or Tommy Douglas High. What about that? What about Bethlehem? Just three that I can name off the top of my head, so I would ask the member to do a little more research. Thank you.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As I noted before I didn't get a chance to read out all the comments, but I do want to read this one into the record. Yesterday I was at the George Bothwell Library at the RPL [Regina Public Library] and was sad to hear a staff member explain patiently to a young boy that, no, he wouldn't get the book on interlibrary loans that he had requested about dinosaurs. The boy left and said he really didn't understand and seemed very disappointed. I also feel sorry for the staff who have to do all of this negative explaining. To the member from Walsh Acres: how do you explain those type of cuts to those children?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I have said in my speech before that we are looking for efficiencies with our third party partners, and we know that we have made some difficult decisions.

And to the young boy who wants his book regarding dinosaurs, my son loves dinosaurs as well. Nickson loves dinosaurs, and I know that he'd be disappointed as well. But then we'd actually go and we'd find some different alternatives of what we'd have to do. And one of those alternatives is Canada Post offers a delivery service of books for \$1.24 return trip, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we're asking, we're asking our partners in Regina library and libraries across the province to look at other options for book delivery, for service delivery. And we're going to work with our partners to make sure that we can have the best possible service across Regina library, Saskatoon library, and our regional libraries, and continue to look forward for better solutions, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Olauson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As this government has already stated, we had to make very tough decisions in this budget. We have committed to working with libraries to support their resources, interlibrary loans, and CommunityNet. The purpose of this budget is to grow and strengthen their relationship with their municipalities and school divisions so that we can find better and efficient ways to deliver these resources.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the member from Regina Lakeview: during this difficult economic time, what is your alternative to saving money for this province?

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would love to talk about priorities in this budget, and I thank the member opposite for the question. This is a \$3.5 million cut to the regional library system. This is something that would be well covered by the \$38 million in tax breaks to the wealthiest in this province. This is something that would be well covered by the \$9.5 million in this budget going to maintain brand new P3 schools, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I would suggest that this is about priorities, and they have got it wrong with this decision.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the . . . [inaudible].

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've heard the minister, ill-informed as he is on this topic, clearly that way, at least twice in this House allude to too many libraries. He's talked about around Martensville, there's five in a certain area and saying, there's too many libraries, too many libraries. To the member from Walsh Acres: does he agree that there's too many libraries and some should be cut in this province?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our colleagues from across the way are getting quite used to misquoting the Minister for Education, but I think what the minister is trying to say is that we are going to have options to be able to co-locate libraries in schools and that they're going to be . . . We're going to work with our partners to make sure that they have the best services available. I think the minister has reached out and talked to our partners to make sure that we have a plan moving forward. And I'd just say that I definitely know that the NDP thought there was too many libraries across Saskatchewan when they closed those 176 schools with libraries in them. So I think we don't have to take lessons from them about respecting rural Saskatchewan, respecting schools and libraries across our province.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. On this side of the House we take seriously every decision we have

made, and we acknowledge that this budget required us to make some especially tough decisions to ensure our grandchildren aren't burdened with outrageous debt. Unlike the members opposite, we are up to the challenge.

My question is to the member from Saskatoon Centre. We made the tough decisions to help get our budget back to balance in three years, and they have criticized. I ask, however, what would they do to fill the \$1.2 billion hole in revenue due to reduced resource revenues? Thank you.

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

Mr. Forbes: — I tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is really rich, them congratulating themselves on a budget well managed. Here we have a government that's in disarray, disarray. Eight of our best years, eight of our best years, and here we are today. They talk about their grandchildren, our grandchildren. I tell you, this is shameful. Today we're talking about libraries that our grandkids won't be able to go to, because they're giving tax cuts to the very rich in this province of \$38 million. How can they look at themselves in the morning in the mirror? They're saying, you can't go to the library, but my good friend over here is getting a good tax cut. Shame on all of you.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, there's been many comments on Facebook and questions asked about this cut. There's one person who points out that at a rural library there's an elderly woman who doesn't own a computer. She can't afford Internet fees. She comes into the library on a regular basis to pay her bills. The poster points out that one thing most people don't realize is not everyone in rural Saskatchewan has access to high-speed services and most are still on dial-up. One of the . . . this poster wants to know from the member of Walsh Acres and members across the way is, what does he say to the elderly lady that comes into the library in tears, worried that she could lose her Internet services that her library provides?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

[12:30]

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I want to take the time to inform the member from Riversdale that not most people in rural Saskatchewan are on dial-up. Actually, because of our government's investment in SaskTel, we have better Internet service they've ever had before in the province.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wanted to take this time to say once again that these were difficult decisions, and we understand that there's tough choices to be made in this budget. And we take it very seriously, these decisions we made, and we're going to continue to work with our third party partners, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And when it comes to usage of the library, I just want to say

about the priorities we have on this side of this House, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When we made the budget we looked at health, education, and social services, a 75 per cent . . . 75 cents on every dollar, that's where our priorities lie, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we're going to continue to work hard with our third party partners to ensure that we have a way forward and ensure they have the best service possible for all the libraries.

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

Mr. Docherty: — These are challenging economic times and difficult decisions have been made. And finding efficiencies is not a bad thing. There will be 15,200 child care spaces in September, a 62 per cent increase since 2007. Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question for the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: would you rather that our government have to reduce funding to regularly used programs like child care instead?

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 3 — Mining Investment in Saskatchewan

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Ms. Carr.]

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

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to support the motion put forward by the member from Estevan. I believe the Minister for Energy and Resources summarizes it very well when he says:

We are gifted with a variety of resources, and as a government we are doing our share to encourage the industry and to make sure we are competitive and friendly to investment. We have maintained a stable royalty structure over the last number of years, supported by clear government policies that have helped Saskatchewan remain a destination of choice for investors and business.

He also stated:

Aside from having high-quality geoscience information, we place a high priority on collaboration with our stakeholders in the industry to . . . reduce red tape wherever possible.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, making it easy to do business provides an investment and opportunity for residents of Saskatchewan, and we'll dive into the value of opportunity in a minute. However we must also note that poor policy has resulted in reduced opportunities. Unfortunately our fellow province to the west has seen their mining attractiveness rating become severely

downgraded after their politics changed. They were once listed at 14th on the index and have slid significantly downward, placing 47th overall on the attractiveness index, placing them with Russia, Guyana, Colorado, Burkina Faso, and California, based on difficulties companies have existing and attempting to develop new projects. Mr. Deputy Speaker, policy matters.

Towns and villages across the province have seen their populations increase since we've taken over in 2007. Mr. Speaker, my town, Churchbridge, in the heart of potash country, has grown an astounding 20 per cent from the 2011 census. We both have residents moving back to the province and new . . . and people moving back into the province.

One of my neighbours in town has moved in from Ontario. He's an engineer at Mosaic. His wife, a peds nurse in Yorkton. My other neighbour comes from Manitoba. He's an employee at Mosaic. His wife works for the Ministry of Justice. Residents down the street from the Philippines, he's an engineer at Mosaic. His wife, a nurse.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our school has grown from over 150 students in 2011 to well over 200 now in 2016, a 33 per cent increase. The average age of our community has actually decreased with the incredible influx of young people back to our community.

Compare that growth to the 10 years from 1996 to 2006 when the NDP were in power, when Saskatchewan's population actually decreased — decreased by 22,000. That's a sharp difference, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Gone are the days when Saskatchewan's greatest export was the people who called Saskatchewan home. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am proud of this government, and I am encouraged by what it's done for our communities in Melville-Saltcoats and the communities of this province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to spend a little time just to provide some examples of what the resource sector means exactly to our constituency, the constituency of Melville-Saltcoats. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm extremely proud of Mosaic Company, especially their Esterhazy division. Just a few days ago I had the pleasure of standing in this legislature to brag a little of our latest achievement — K3, Mosaic K3, a \$3 billion expansion to the potash industry in Melville-Saltcoats. This is the first new production shaft built in this province in 40 years. This multi-billion-dollar expansion solidifies Mosaic's position as one of the largest potash mining facilities in the world. This development will have an expected lifespan of over 50 years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since Mosaic has been in my backyard, since 1961, they have employed thousands of employees. At this time, Mosaic Esterhazy has approximately 1,250 employees plus 300 contract workers working on the K3 expansion. At its peak a couple of years ago there were over 1,200 contractors working on the K3 project in addition to the 1,200 Mosaic employees. In total, the expansion alone, Mosaic has invested over \$3 billion into the facility as well as investing hundreds of millions with local vendors since the project began a few years ago.

Fun fact: there are now 18 known third-generation families

working at the Mosaic Esterhazy facility. They have employees living in 35 communities within 80 kilometres of the mine, and another in 15 communities up to 150 kilometres away. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the fiscal contributions that Mosaic potash and PCS [Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.] Rocanville, also in my backyard, are absolutely astounding on a year-to-year basis.

In 2016 the municipal taxes from the municipal potash tax levy provided the RMs [rural municipality] in our constituency just over \$4.5 million. Communities in Melville-Saltcoats were provided just under 600,000 in 2016 from the municipal potash sharing agreement. Mosaic Esterhazy has been a significant philanthropic benefactor to the Esterhazy area. In the last 10 years they have contributed \$1.5 million to the St. Anthony's Hospital in Esterhazy; \$1.2 million to the Parkland College Trades and Technology Centre in Yorkton; \$300,000 to the P.J. Gillen Elementary School in Esterhazy; \$250,000 to the new Langenburg school; and countless millions to the many communities in the area to help support senior wellness, help build new swimming pools, water parks, refurbish skating rinks and curling rinks, etc., etc.

They are like your most dependable friend, always there in the good times and the bad times. And I can confirm that Mosaic helped save countless farms within the trading area. They provided employment, that off-farm job for so many ag producers who were struggling to keep the crops sprayed or the cows fed in the '90s and early 2000s. I know I had to personally arrange my business hours to accommodate shift changes and days off for hundreds of Mosaic employees as they came to pick up their farm supplies.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier has indicated on numerous occasions that part of this province's growth plan is to keep this province open for business. Even in the midst of a difficult budget and lower than expected resource revenues, the policies of our government are keeping our province open for business and making Saskatchewan a great place to live, work, and invest. These are effective taxes, a plan to get a balanced budget, and to keep and build highways, schools, and hospitals. We will continue to encourage new investment and new jobs by lowering small business taxes and creating new growth tax incentives. We need to ensure that we have an investment environment that will continue to give us that top grade where it matters the most, and that's to our mining partners. Our record speaks for itself. Companies, employees, and families want to be here, unlike the days of the opposition, where their record was full of empty pages and of success.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to be on record as to supporting the motion put forward by the member from Estevan.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Doke: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to partake in this debate. I think first of all though, I was thinking about when I was growing up and how my parents, if I was acting up or something like that, they would say, you be careful or you'll end up in the salt mines. So at this point in time, I think decorum in this House has sometimes gone astray or whatever, and I would offer up that I have a salt mine in Unity,

and I think we should start sending people there.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward in the future here to debate this a little bit further, but at this time I would adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cut Knife-Turtleford has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that the Assembly adjourns. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:41 p.m.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Stewart.....	2155
Hargrave.....	2157
Beck.....	2158

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Chartier	2155
Weekes	2155
Vermette	2155
Belanger	2156
Sproule	2156
Forbes	2156
Rancourt.....	2156
Beck.....	2157
McCall	2157
Sarauer	2157

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Vimy Ridge 100th Anniversary	
Lawrence	2158
Belanger	2158
Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Campaign	
Wilson	2159
World Health Day	
Chartier	2159
Parkland College Scholarships	
Kaeding.....	2159
Proposed Commercial Development in Saskatoon	
Lambert	2160
New Schools for Warman	
Heppner	2160

QUESTION PERIOD

Details of Land Transactions	
Wotherspoon	2160
Harrison.....	2160
Support for Education	
Wotherspoon	2161
Morgan	2161
Beck.....	2161
Funding for Libraries	
Beck.....	2162
Morgan	2163
Closing of Saskatchewan Transportation Company	
Vermette	2163
Hargrave.....	2163
Financial Support for Municipalities	
Rancourt.....	2163
Harpauer	2163
Carbon Capture and Storage Test Facility	
Sproule.....	2164
Wyant.....	2164

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 65 — <i>The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017</i>	
Hargrave.....	2164

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 65 — <i>The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017</i>	
Hargrave.....	2165
Beck.....	2165

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 65 — <i>The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017</i>	2166
--	------

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 65 — <i>The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017</i>	
Hargrave.....	2166

Bill No. 57 — <i>The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2017</i>	
Doherty	2167
Bill No. 58 — <i>The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2017</i>	
Doherty	2167
PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES	
Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies	
Young	2166
ORDERS OF THE DAY	
WRITTEN QUESTIONS	
Lawrence	2167
SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE	
Funding for Libraries	
Beck	2167, 2177
Buckingham	2169
Forbes	2171, 2177
Fiaz	2172
Chartier	2173, 2178
Steinley	2175, 2177
Nerlien	2176
Olauson	2177
Wilson	2177
Docherty	2178
PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS	
ADJOURNED DEBATES	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS	
Motion No. 3 — Mining Investment in Saskatchewan	
Kaeding	2178
Doke	2179

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

Hon. Kevin Doherty
Minister of Finance

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

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Advanced Education

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

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations,
Métis and Northern Affairs

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Liquor and Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

Hon. Scott Moe
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water
Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Don Morgan
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Greg Ottenbreit
Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Health

Hon. Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation