



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

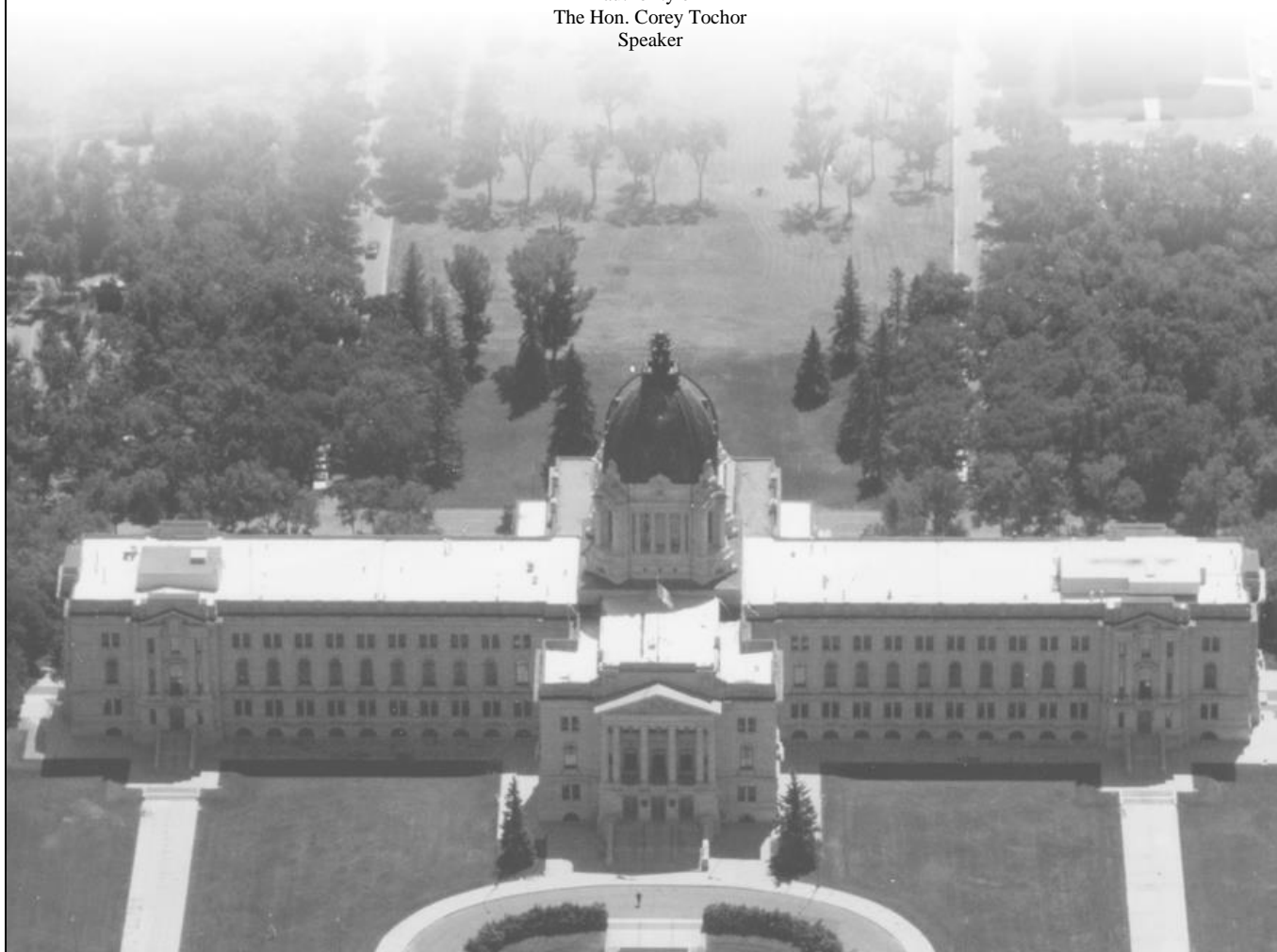
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Corey Tochor  
Speaker



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

**Speaker** — Hon. Corey Tochor

**Premier** — Hon. Brad Wall

**Leader of the Opposition** — Trent Wotherspoon

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

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

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

**Bonk**, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

**Boyd**, Bill — Kindersley (SP)

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

**Brkich**, Greg — Arm River (SP)

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

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

**Carr**, Lori — Estevan (SP)

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

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**Dennis**, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)

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

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

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**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)

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**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)

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

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

**Phillips**, Kevin — Melfort (SP)

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

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

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

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

**Steele**, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

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

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

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

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

**Vermette**, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

**Wall**, Hon. Brad — Swift Current (SP)

**Weekes**, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

**Wilson**, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)

**Wotherspoon**, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

**Wyant**, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

**Young**, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thanks a lot, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure once again to introduce a group of grade 12 students from F.W. Johnson Collegiate. There's 38 of them here this morning watching routine proceedings. Glad to have them here. And once again their teacher is Mr. Scott McKillop, and the educational assistant along with them this morning is Denise Neel. I look forward to having a meeting with them after question period. I ask all members to help me welcome them here this morning.

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

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you and to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce the whole Steinley clan has joined us here today at their Legislative Assembly: our newest addition, Jameson Steinley, and there's Claire Steinley up there, and Nickson Steinley who came to visit Dad at work today. So Dad will be on his best behaviour.

And I'd be remiss if I did not forget the glue that holds the Steinley family together, which is my wife, Larissa. She is an amazing mother. She is also taking her M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration] full time, taking her M.B.A. And she's on mat leave right now, but she is an amazing woman and helped me to the position I'm in. And I think we all realize that our spouses are our major supporter, and I just want to say thank you very much. Thanks for coming to your Assembly, and I love you all very much.

**The Speaker:** — I'm not sure if I can top that as an intro, but probably now is a fitting time to introduce my loving wife, Danielle, who is also up there with the member's spouse. I am so grateful that the support that I receive through her. I, and all members, we could not do our work without the support of loved ones. And luckily today she's joined with my two sons, Jacob and James, and my father-in-law, Bernie Broughton, who has been a great help when I'm down in Regina. And he steps in and helps out a fair bit when I'm down here, so I'm very appreciative of that support. Please everyone welcome them to their Assembly.

I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce a number of individuals that are seated in your gallery. With us today, Andrea Belloli who is from Milan, Italy. Also accompanying him is Riccardo Macchi from Milan as well. Bruce Thompson is from Calgary and Roxanne Kaminski from Saskatoon.

Roxanne is known to many people on this side of the House.

Mr. Speaker, they are representing Amec Foster Wheeler, which is an international engineering company. They're here to meet some individuals at SaskPower to provide and share some information with regard to some clean energy projects, cogen facilities, carbon capture projects, which I know is near and dear to my good friend across the way. They are a member of the First Nations Power Authority and currently in discussions with some First Nations groups in Saskatchewan regarding some clean energy projects, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to specifically mention Roxanne who's joined us today. I've known Roxanne for a very long time. She was my legal assistant at the McKercher firm when I was practising. She had the good sense to leave though, Mr. Speaker. She went on to get her finance degree from the University of Saskatchewan. She has been very, very supportive of me throughout my political career, having organized campaigns at city council, school board, and city council, and lastly my Co-Chair for my last campaign here to come to the legislature, Mr. Speaker. So I want to thank her for all her support and her friendship over many, many years, Mr. Speaker.

So I'd like to, if I could, ask members of the Assembly to help me welcome all these individuals to the Assembly today, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And thanks to the member opposite for introducing the gentlemen from Italy, very pleased to welcome you to Saskatchewan and wish you all the best in your endeavours to find out more about what's going on here.

Certainly we know that reducing carbon emissions is a very important thing in this global world that we live in, and it's a responsibility of all of us to make best efforts to do that, to find efficient and the most inexpensive ways to reduce our global carbon emissions. So I think you'll have an interesting visit and wish you well on all that.

Roxanne, welcome as well. And you know, it must have been hard working for the Minister of Justice but you survived, so welcome to your Legislative Assembly. And would all members please welcome these guests.

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I see in your gallery a friend of mine, an individual who had worked in the House business and research office, Tom Richards. We lost him to the University of Saskatchewan College of Law, but I understand things are going well. So I want to welcome Tom to his Legislative Assembly.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Biggar-Sask

Valley.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. 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. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Maymont. I so do present.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition. The people that have signed this petition are opposed to the Sask Party plan to scrap and sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. They would like all of us to know that STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] provides a vital service to seniors, to workers, to families all throughout the province; and that by scrapping STC out of the blue and without asking permission of the owners, the Saskatchewan people, the Saskatchewan Party is sending a clear sign about how little they care about protecting our Crowns like SaskTel; and that STC helps drive the economy with its parcel service that serves 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 plan to scrap and sell off the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, and to resume transportation services to the people of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, the page I am presenting today is signed by people primarily from Saskatoon. And as we do each and every day, we present page after page after page of petition to help defend and protect the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. And on this particular page, as I mentioned, they're primarily from Saskatoon, but however this petition is signed by many good people from all throughout our province. I so present.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition opposed to Bill 40 and the potential 49 per cent Crown corporation sell-off. The people who have signed this petition would like to bring to our attention the following: Sask Party's Bill 40 creates a brand new definition for privatization that would allow this government to wind down, dissolve, and sell up to 49 per cent of the shares of a Crown corporation without holding a referendum, as they're required to do under the Crown corporation protection Act.

In 2015-16 alone, Saskatchewan's Crown corporations returned almost \$300 million in dividends to pay for schools, roads, and

hospitals. And we know those dividends should go to the people of Saskatchewan. We know also, Mr. Speaker, our Crown corporations employ thousands of Saskatchewan people across the province, good mortgage-paying jobs, Mr. Speaker, and that under section 149 of the *Income Tax Act* of Canada, Crown corporations would be exempt from corporate income tax as long as less than 90 per cent of the shares are held by the government.

Now this proposal would allow up to 49 per cent of a Crown to be sold without being considered privatized. So we know that 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 protection jobs and our Crown corporations instead of selling them off to pay for Sask Party mismanagement.

And, Mr. Speaker, the citizens who have signed this petition today come from the city of Moose Jaw and the town of Craik. I so present.

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

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

And we know that the Centre of Policy Alternatives found that in Saskatoon in 2016, women earned on average 63 cents for every dollar 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 this Saskatchewan government call upon workplaces within Saskatchewan within the private sector to eliminate the wage gap between women and men.

Mr. Speaker, people signing this petition come from Saskatoon and Warman. I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition to reverse cuts to Saskatchewan libraries. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: to the fact that the Saskatchewan government has cut funding for regional libraries in half, or by 3.5 million, and eliminated funding for libraries in Regina and Saskatoon. This drastic funding cut will have a devastating impact on libraries, especially regional libraries where many people depend upon them.

They also point out that libraries are a vital part of communities across Saskatchewan and that they provide services that enrich the lives of many. They also point out that libraries are about more than just borrowing books. Meeting rooms are used by community groups. Library staff host educational programs and clubs, and publically accessible computer terminals are essential to many. They also point out that these cuts will have a disproportionate impact on rural communities where libraries are vital community spaces, and that potential closures or reductions in services will severely impact our communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, these petitions have been signed by thousands of people from across the province. The pages that I present today are signed by people from Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling on the government to restore funding to post-secondary education institutions.

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 Saskatchewan Party financial mismanagement. They point out that Saskatchewan students already pay the second-highest tuition fees in Canada, Mr. Speaker, something that comes to us by way of Statistics Canada; that this budget cuts \$36.8 million from post-secondary education; that this budget cuts \$6.4 million from technical institutions; that funding for the Saskatchewan Student Aid Fund and scholarships has been cut by \$8.2 million. And it also points out, Mr. Speaker, that the Sask Party has broken a 2016 election promise by cancelling their first home plan.

Mr. Speaker:

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

Mr. Speaker, this particular petition is signed by individuals

from Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to ensure job security for victims of domestic violence. Saskatchewan has the very dubious distinction of having the highest rate of domestic violence by intimate partners amongst all Canadian provinces.

[10:15]

One in three Canadian workers have been impacted by domestic violence, and for many of them the violence follows them to work. Employers lose \$77.9 million annually due to the direct and indirect impacts of domestic violence. Employers are responsible for providing safe workplaces. Mr. Speaker, Manitoba has already enacted legislation, and Ontario is on its way to enacting legislation that ensures job security for victims of domestic violence. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enact legislation that requires all employers to provide a minimum of five paid workdays and a minimum of 17 weeks unpaid work leave with the assurance of job security upon return for all victims of domestic violence in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today come from Regina and Saskatoon. I do so present.

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

## Easter and Passover Greetings

**Hon. Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to acknowledge Easter and Passover. The message of Easter is a powerful one, a message that speaks of the ultimate sacrifice made for everyone, coupled with the hope of all humanity that comes with Christ's resurrection.

Tomorrow churches of countless traditions will join together in recognizing Good Friday, the day that two millennia ago saw the trial and death of Jesus Christ. Yet, Mr. Speaker, on Sunday morning, churches will once again be filled as we celebrate the hope of life that came with the resurrection of Jesus. This hope is one that fills hearts with new life and joy, knowing that even though despair may come, the hope that Sunday morning is coming. I would wish Christians across the province and around the world a very Happy Easter.

Further I would also like to acknowledge that this week is Passover, a holy week for people of the Jewish faith around the world to gather with loved ones and commemorate the exodus of the Israelites from slavery in ancient Egypt. I would like to extend my best wishes to the Jewish community during the special time of Passover.

Mr. Speaker, as we all go home for the weekend and Easter

break, I ask all members to join me in celebrating the renewal that comes with spring and the opportunity to spend time with all our loved ones. Thank you.

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

### **Brainsport Receives Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence Award**

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in the House today to recognize Brainsport, a local business within my constituency and this year's SABEX [Saskatoon Achievement in Business Excellence] Awards winner for community involvement.

Mr. Speaker, Brainsport truly exemplifies business excellence. Founded in July of 1991 by Brian Michasiw, Brainsport was opened with the goal of becoming the best running store in Canada. Through dedication, the support of family and friends, and over 25 years of operation in the city, Brainsport has grown into a staple of the Saskatoon running community, known city wide for providing quality products and outstanding customer service.

But, Mr. Speaker, this is not all that Brainsport has to offer. One of the pillars of the Brainsport philosophy is their commitment to supporting their community. Brainsport is dedicated to creating a positive environment for people to express their enjoyment for running. They host a variety of clubs and organize multiple running-related events throughout Saskatoon. They have a shoe donation program which delivers gently used shoes to Kenya, Mozambique, Peru, and to northern communities in Saskatchewan. And they have also created the community room, a space offered to community groups looking for a place to hold meetings free of charge.

Mr. Speaker, this award for community involvement is definitely well deserved, and I would like to ask all members to join me in congratulating Brainsport for receiving this year's SABEX Award for community involvement, and in thanking this valuable local business for their contributions to Nutana and throughout Saskatoon. Thank you.

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

### **Victoria Hospital Holds Second Annual Doctor's Gala**

**Hon. Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Victoria Hospital Foundation in Prince Albert successfully raised \$45,000 at their 2017 second annual Doctor's Gala this past Saturday. Dr. David Stevens, a practising ENT [ear, nose, and throat] doctor and member of the Victoria Hospital Foundation, and a friend of mine, was this year's deserving honouree.

The foundation is focused on enhancing and enriching the quality of health care that is provided through the Victoria Hospital by fundraising for new equipment that will advance the services and treatments for its community. This foundation plays a major role in the community and provides supports so that the current needs of the hospital are met and future

upgrades carefully planned. Our government has made record investments in hospitals across the province and we value our partnership with foundations which involve communities in fundraising and awareness.

Mr. Speaker, this year's gala was excellent and brought together both staff and the community to share a night of celebration of its accomplishments, enjoy some live entertainment, and fundraise so that this hospital can continue to serve its community.

Mr. Speaker I ask all members to join me in congratulating Dr. Stevens and the Victoria Hospital Foundation on a successful event, and thank their hard-working staff and volunteers for giving their time so selflessly to a deserving cause. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Drop Everything and Read Protests**

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Friday, thousands of people across Saskatchewan dropped everything and went to their local MLA's [Member of the Legislative Assembly] office and read over the noon hour. All over the province, over 5,800 participants in 89 communities from every corner of the province, from Swift Current to Prince Albert, Carnduff to North Battleford, people took their frustrations directly to their elected leader's doorstep. Mr. Speaker, it was an epic protest, and I was pleased to participate alongside my NDP [New Democratic Party] colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are upset. The Sask Party budget eliminates the entire funding for libraries in Regina and Saskatoon, and regional libraries across the province are taking a \$3.5 million hit or 58 per cent of their funding.

Mr. Speaker, citizens of Saskatchewan have taken to social media and put pen to paper to voice their outrage. This protest had not one but two top-trending hashtags on Twitter. In addition to 10,000 signatures on a petition out about this cruel Sask Party cut, there have also been thousands of emails and handwritten letters arriving in MLAs' offices daily.

I was especially fond of the event in Swift Current, Mr. Speaker, where children read to a donkey. We all know that donkeys can be stubborn, but that didn't stop people from trying to educate one.

Mr. Speaker, this government has inflicted devastating and completely unexpected cuts to the provincial library system, a system that up until budget was the envy of Canada. I invite all members to join me and thank the organizers and participants of this sustained and growing protest.

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

### **2017 Paragon Awards**

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, April

7th was a day to recognize great businesses here in Regina with the 18th annual Paragon Awards ceremony hosted by the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce at the Queensbury centre.

The Paragon Awards represents the recognition of members of the local business community that have demonstrated exceptional performance in a number of specific areas. These companies have worked hard to grow their business but also make the community a better place to live and work.

The categories and award recipients for this year are: young entrepreneur, Three Farmers; community involvement, St. John Ambulance; marketing and promotional achievement, Dutch Growers Home & Garden; export achievement, O & T Farms Ltd.; customer service excellence, Viterra Inc.; environmental excellence, Namerind Housing Corporation; diversity, Miller Thomson LLP; new business venture, Rosie the Flower Truck, Wascana Flower Shoppe; community alliance, Deveraux Developments, Street Culture Project. And the business of the year award went to Conex Credit Union.

Congratulations to the nominees and recipients for their hard work in innovation. Their commitment to business excellence serves to strengthen not only Regina but all of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce and all the deserving recipients of the 2017 Paragon Awards. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Mâdawêyatitân Centre Nears Completion**

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thanks a lot, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to highlight this government's commitment to education in our province with funding for the brand new Scott Collegiate in North Central Regina, in the member for Elphinstone's constituency. Many in Regina will be familiar with the school, myself included. I spent many days there when I was employed by Regina Public. Built in 1924, Scott Collegiate is the oldest surviving high school in Regina and it's been a fixture of the community for nearly a century. As beautiful and as the old building is, it's showing its age and it's definitely in need of replacement. Talk of building a replacement facility began in 2003 when the members opposite were in government. However, it's often too often the case; it was all talk.

I'm pleased to say that progress is nearing completion on a new facility that will house a high school, a child care facility, a city recreation complex, a public library, and a community policing centre. The Mâdawêyatitân Centre is the name that was chosen. It's meant in the Cree language, we all come together. This new facility will be a centrepiece for the North Central community and our government is very pleased that this much-needed facility will be open in the fall and will benefit the city of Regina.

While the NDP just talk, on this side of the House we're getting it done. Thank you.

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

#### **International Companies Participate in Mining Technology Explore Program**

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Four international technology companies have travelled across the globe to Saskatoon to showcase their mining technologies and innovations as part of Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority's mining technology Explore program. This event was held for technology start-ups looking for opportunities to seek business ventures in the Saskatoon region.

The four winning companies who were selected for the 2017 Explore program came from the United States, Ontario, Australia, and Chile. And these companies, along with industry leaders, attended the Saskatchewan Mining Supply Chain Forum, a networking opportunity from April 3rd to 5th. Most importantly, local industries were given the opportunity to network and collaborate with new innovators. Applicants were reviewed by the Explore selection committee, consisting of representatives from Saskatchewan mining organizations and the Ministry of the Economy, and they were extremely impressed by both the quality and scope of this year's participants. We are committed to welcoming new innovators to this province and encourage international and local collaboration.

Our government's efforts are paying off. The latest manufacturing numbers for February were released today and manufacturing shipments were up by 22.7 per cent from last year, seasonally adjusted. Saskatchewan ranks second in percentage growth among the provinces and saw a point four per cent increase month over month.

Mr. Speaker, organizations like SREDA [Saskatchewan Regional Economic Development Authority] are doing their part to attract business to our province, and our government is making sure that we have an investment climate that allows innovators to flourish and investments to grow. Thank you.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Details of Land Transactions**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's budget has broken trust with Saskatchewan people. Damaging, broken promise after broken promise, and a Premier that won't be straight with Saskatchewan people on issue after issue, day after day.

Mr. Speaker, your word still matters in Saskatchewan. To the Premier, as it relates to the . . . his GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land scandal, he once told . . . claimed that he had an appraisal that justified the exorbitant, wasteful price paid to his supporter. Why did he say that, and why won't he come clean with Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the individual in question isn't his or hers or anyone's supporter. It was someone who made a transaction, Mr. Speaker, that's been well canvassed by the Provincial Auditor at our request.

Mr. Speaker, moreover, I'd invite the hon. leader to consider the fact that he doesn't have to worry about an appraisal for the land; he can consider an actual sale. There has been a sale of this land at the GTH that highlights . . . about \$256,000 per acre. Mr. Speaker, given that the land in question, the price was just over \$100,000, even when you add the servicing costs, the taxpayers, the taxpayers are making money. The taxpayers are making money on this land transaction. Members opposite will stand up and say, well, talk about the money that's lost. Well, Mr. Speaker, this actual sale is evidence that there's money being made at the GTH on land sold.

And, Mr. Speaker, moreover, yesterday we produced evidence with NDP documents from before 2007's election that highlight clearly that they had approved \$33 million worth of investment into the GTH. I think it was the right move on their part. They didn't get that job done either, the GTH project, but they approved \$33 million. Since then it has moved forward. It has attracted new businesses to the city of Regina and the province of Saskatchewan. There are hundreds of new jobs out there, Mr. Speaker, and now the GTH is selling land at a higher value than the original purchase cost plus the servicing.

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

[10:30]

### Provincial Economy and Job Numbers

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, of course he dodged the answer. And secondly, with nonsense like that and with math like that, it's pretty clear why we're in this mess in the first place, Mr. Speaker. You know, in this budget, and answers like that, we have a Sask Party that's flailing and failing. But it's Saskatchewan people who are being forced to pay the price, Mr. Speaker.

They might try to laugh it off or to heckle, and they even brag about poor job numbers, Mr. Speaker. But let's look past their spin. Between February and March, thousands of people lost their jobs. The Sask Party will cherry-pick statistics and try to torque the numbers, but what good does that spin do for the 5,100 more Saskatchewan people looking for work, Mr. Speaker? What good does it do for those working at STC, or those working in our libraries, those working in our classrooms, those working in the front lines of health care or in seniors' care, Mr. Speaker? Or the thousands of public servants, Mr. Speaker, who are threatened day after day by minister after minister with their livelihoods, Mr. Speaker?

This budget attacks jobs, Mr. Speaker, and it hurts our economy. Can the Premier explain how do massive layoffs, threats, and hiking taxes on small businesses help the 40,000 Saskatchewan people looking for work?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I am more than happy to talk

about job creation in the province of Saskatchewan and the record of this side of the House versus members opposite when they had the chance to visit their economic damage on the province and the people of Saskatchewan.

But first let me just say this. He had a math question earlier on related to the land transaction. And I want to be very clear. The land's purchase at 103,000 an acre, 80,000 to service it — maximum, but let's say 80,000 to service it — and we're selling it for 256,000. That's a profit for the taxpayers. And if somebody wants to talk a little bit about math, he might want to begin at home.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to jobs, here are the job stats from the province of Saskatchewan the last two months. Two months in a row posted of year-over-year growth, Mr. Speaker, including two months ago where Saskatchewan led the country. And we did this, Mr. Speaker, coming out of a time, in the midst of a time of low commodity prices. Weekly earnings in the province of Saskatchewan are up. Drilling for oil is doubled, Mr. Speaker, the number of wells drilled now doubled at this point.

And, Mr. Speaker, today, as the member has mentioned, the manufacturing stats are out. And, Mr. Speaker, we've been working hard to create the right environment for a diversified economy. In fact the budget he refers to will leave us with the lowest manufacturing income tax rate in Canada. But, Mr. Speaker, even in advance of that, we have been seeing a diversification in the economy.

And I'm happy to report to the House that our manufacturing exports are up 23 per cent. That's second-best in Canada in the face of trying times, Mr. Speaker, contributing to what has been the second-best job creation record since we were elected on this side of the House versus under the NDP, dead last in the country.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, that Premier has doubled the number of unemployed people in Saskatchewan. He can huff and puff, and he can spin all he wants. But here are a few other facts, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan is one of only three provinces which lost jobs in March. Off-reserve unemployment for Saskatchewan First Nations climbed over 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And the construction industry was one of the hardest hit sectors with 1,800 jobs lost month to month, 4,600 jobs year to year. And to make this problem worse, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party is hiking taxes on construction — the epitome of a job-killing tax — at a time where we need jobs, Mr. Speaker.

The Saskatchewan Construction Association calls it "a tax on growth." Absolutely expect to see construction jobs lost at ". . . an even more concerning pace." In fact, just released is that 92 per cent of Saskatchewan construction companies are saying that this budget hurts our economy and hurts business.

So, Mr. Speaker, at a time where we need jobs, how can this Premier stand there, brag, and spin this budget at a time where the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] says it has just made it tougher for businesses to grow in Saskatchewan?



**The Speaker:** — I would like to commend members that we have respectfully listened to the question. Now let's be respectful and listen to the answer. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, foundational to our growth plan, Mr. Speaker, has been competitive taxes, has been an aggressive approach to infrastructure investment, and has been fiscal probity.

And, Mr. Speaker, in this budget we laid out a three-year plan to get this province back to balance. That's fundamental to long-term and sustained growth in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's fundamental to keeping taxes low — taxes for families, taxes for businesses. And in fact in this budget, as a result of the three-year plan, when it's fully implemented we will have the lowest income tax rates in the country, Mr. Speaker. We'll have the lowest rates for job-creating businesses, and we'll have the lowest manufacturing rate, by far, in the country.

Mr. Speaker, we have just come through some historically low commodity prices and even, given that, this economy is creating jobs, Mr. Speaker. The last jobs report was out just on Friday. Two thousand jobs created year over year. We've lost a few part-time. Six thousand new full-time jobs, year over year. The month before that, 8,000 more jobs created in the province of Saskatchewan than a year ago, in the midst of this commodity challenge. We see manufacturing numbers like we saw out today — 23 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker, second-best in the country. We see weekly earnings on the rise, Mr. Speaker. And I would just make this point. We will see in the months ahead what's going to happen in the economy of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I invite members to stay tuned for I think what will be a very positive economic year in the province, building on current success, some important announcements right around here in Regina. And when those happen, Mr. Speaker, I'll look forward to the support and encouragement by my hon. friend.

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

#### Support for Health Care

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, smart management of our economy can strengthen the government without job-killing taxes and without job-killing cuts. But after a decade of blowing through the good times, the Sask Party still doesn't seem to get it. They're slashing everywhere without a clear plan. They just went searching for money and didn't think of the jobs or services that people rely on that would be lost.

The most recent cut we're hearing about is 10 per cent from the funding that Health gives to community-based organizations. Mr. Speaker, we're talking about the Canadian Mental Health Association; the Lighthouse in Saskatoon; Hope's Home in Regina, a place that provides much needed care for children with complex medical needs; the Autism Treatment Services in Saskatchewan. After all of the other Sask Party cuts, how can they be cutting this last line of defence, these crucial organizations?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's no secret that this was a very difficult budget. Health is approximately 40 per cent of the budget. There's no way that we can get the financial affairs in order without it having some impact on Health.

Mr. Speaker, many of the organizations the member opposite spoke of do very good work. Our officials are diligently working through where the appropriate places are to save money. Mr. Speaker, we don't take any of these cuts lightly, but it's important that we focus on the core services in health, Mr. Speaker. That's why you see some program cuts, some funding cuts, Mr. Speaker. But we're going to ensure that, moving into the future, that the core services in health care in this province are protected and continued. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, they're giving directions for cuts in this budget that will hurt the most vulnerable people in our communities. And when health regions requested clarification from the ministry, the ministry said that they had none to give and that they should wait until they could get further clarification. It sounds like the Minister of Health has been taking notes from the Minister of Education: shoot first, aim later.

Mr. Speaker, these cuts are very serious. People's lives are being affected. Will the minister admit they rammed through this budget with no plan for implementation? And at the very least, can he and his colleagues commit to holding off on their cuts until they can get themselves and a plan together?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll gladly take advice from my colleague, the Minister of Education, Deputy Premier, who does an outstanding job on his file, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the situation is simply this. The health regions in this province have until June the 1st to file their budgets. Mr. Speaker, much of that funding comes from the health regions. Once those budgets are filed . . . They have broad targets that they need to meet in order to keep our spending in check, Mr. Speaker. But once their budgets are filed on June the 1st, the ministry officials will go through them. Nothing has been approved yet. We will consider line by line the expenditures and, Mr. Speaker, we're going to be very cautious about how we deal with programs. We recognize that many of those CBOs [community-based organization] provide outstanding service. But again, Mr. Speaker, as I said, Health is about 40 per cent of the budget. If you're going to get the spending in order for the government, Mr. Speaker, there will be an impact on Health. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Funding for Education

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, the lack of clarity from this government is astounding. They throw down heavy-fisted cuts

and demands, but they have no idea how they'll implement them, or what they are doing. And they've taken no time to measure what the impacts might be. The Education minister admitted that he doesn't know how much of the \$250 million cut to the public service will come from Education. He said this is "... one of the reasons we need to seek some more clarity before we go back to our employer partners."

Mr. Speaker, they are clearly not putting our kids first; they aren't even a consideration. They've decided to cut and that's it. They don't care that it's our kids that are being forced to pay for their mismanagement, scandal, and waste. So can the Education minister tell us today if he has taken the time during the last couple of days to speak with the Finance minister and get some clarity? Exactly how much of the quarter-billion-dollar cut to workers will the education system take?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, in the education sector there are 28 school divisions. There are in effect 28 different employers. We owe it to them to give them some detailed specifics, some clarity in what we're asking them to try and achieve. And, Mr. Speaker, we need to give them a path forward. We indicated that we wanted to do that, and in the next few days we'll be communicating with the school divisions to make sure that we're able to give them appropriate guidance and direction. And, Mr. Speaker, the divisions I'm sure will want to work with us to try and achieve that.

The goal of all of this is to try and make sure that the resources that we have will remain committed to the classrooms so that we can do the very best for the children in our province. And that should be the goal of all of the members in this House on both sides.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — So the answer is no, Mr. Speaker. The Finance minister sits right over there; this shouldn't be that difficult. And he sits with him in cabinet. Mr. Speaker, this answer to this question certainly shouldn't have waited until after the budget was done.

These Sask Party cuts will mean job losses and fewer resources in our kids' classrooms — teaching assistants, teachers, counsellors, psychologists, speech and language pathologists — people who support our kids in the classroom. They'll be kicked out the door. The least that this government making the cuts should be able to do is give them a number, and they should have been able to provide that clarity from the start.

The Education minister committed to this, and I quote: "I don't wish to see anyone go into the bargaining table without a clear set of directions, a clear mandate, and some options that are available." Mr. Speaker, can this minister update us and let us know if he has followed up with his employee groups and has let them know what exactly is on the table?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we of course want to work with the divisions to give them specifics of how they approach bargaining. We've always done that through the public sector bargaining commission. We do those things, matter of course every ... [inaudible] ... But if the member opposite wants to know the details of it, she can find them at page 46 of the budget where it says the target for this is 3.5 per cent, or \$250 million spread across all of compensation for employment across government, Mr. Speaker. That's the simple answer. We will work to try and achieve those savings all the way across.

And, Mr. Speaker, the goal of this is once again to make sure that we commit resources to the classroom to help and educate our children so that they can do the best in life, so that we're not shipping them off to Alberta once again.

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

### Funding for Libraries

**Ms. Beck:** — Again it's clear they don't have a plan, Mr. Speaker. And it's the same with their cuts to library funding, and it's hurting communities across this province. People are speaking out, and the minister is acting like he's shocked by how communities are reacting. The minister was surprised when the interlibrary loan program was cancelled. How is that surprising? He's cutting the funding, Mr. Speaker, and he's saying that he's surprised that libraries just don't simply go about replacing the Sask Party cut with money from their municipalities. Is he serious, Mr. Speaker?

They cut funding to our cities, towns, and villages, and all of the ministers are careful not to say that they are for more tax increases. But the Minister of Government Relations last night actually said, "You won't get me on the record." But, Mr. Speaker, some municipalities are increasing their taxes to save their libraries. So will the minister admit these cuts are Sask Party cuts and that these tax hikes are Sask Party tax hikes?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, in this budget there are two and a half million dollars for regional libraries, \$975,000 for northern libraries, \$2.4 million for CommunityNet, \$100,000 for multitype database, \$100,000 for out-of-province interlibrary loan, one and a half million dollars in literacy initiatives including family literacy programs, community literacy, and summer literacy camps.

[10:45]

Mr. Speaker, we've heard from the people in this province the importance of the interlibrary loan system. We know in a smaller library that's something very important. We are having ongoing discussions with the library system. I have some meetings later today on that. And, Mr. Speaker, we understand and appreciate that that is an important program, and we'll want to do what we can to try and maintain that program, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Regulation Changes Regarding Status of Villages

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, that minister sure loves lists, but the list that people who live in Saskatchewan villages want is the list of villages that the Sask Party will be shutting down. Some villages — and we don't know how many yet — will lose their title and rights as a village and will be forced to amalgamate into their local RM [rural municipality].

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has changed regulations. Notice of the cuts have been sent out. But last night when the Minister of Government Relations was asked about any changes of this kind, she said she knew nothing about it. In fact she directly said this directive was not coming from her ministry.

Mr. Speaker, what's going on over there? We have a copy of the notice that went out. It's public information. So why did the minister not have the information last night? Can she tell us today how many villages will be affected by this cut? How many Saskatchewan families will be affected? And how much does the Saskatchewan government hope to gain from this cut to our hometowns?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, one of their members asked this question in committee last night; it is true. I had a number of officials with me. None of the officials know what they're talking about. So if he wants to give one of those letters, I would like to take it to the officials because they said they didn't issue any letters from Government Relations.

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

### Funding for Education in the North

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, when the minister came up north to meet with NORTEP-NORPAC [northern teacher education program-Northern Professional Access College] stakeholders, she said she had a positive experience. But after that, students, teachers, and others came here to protest her visit. Now she says she doesn't want to get involved with the so-called transition because it needs to get its legs. And she says that process is positive.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the facts aren't clear, but students are worried. And in my community, when the minister says things are positive, you can understand why people get worried. So can the minister commit to northern students and their families that she will ensure that all of her and Northlands' commitment about programs and access will be kept?

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

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Mr. Speaker, as we know, this decision was made a month ago, and I understand the emotion around it. I suppose every transition has some kinks, but it's important to stay positive and work together on this process and not feed division, Mr. Speaker, in the best interest of students. Because what we see from Northlands is a very positive attempt to

welcome students, new and returning, and it has said, and I quote, "remaining students will be automatically accepted."

The college is getting information out about enrolments in the new program, taking out radio ads to get the word out to students, and just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, it met with our two universities. We have every faith that the advisory committee and all the parties involved, including NORTEP [northern teacher education program], through this transition process, Mr. Speaker, will work together in the best interest of students in the North. Thank you.

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

### Labour Code Provisions and Saskatchewan Transportation Employees

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, last year at about this time, that government was getting ready to celebrate 40 years of NORTEP, Mr. Speaker, only to sign a deal for five more years with NORTEP that they were reneging on months later. And I guess that's not forgotten, Mr. Speaker, nor will it be. So if the minister wants to talk about kinks, that is not going to be forgotten by northern people.

Another group of men and women that are not going to forget the broken promises of this government, Mr. Speaker, are the 224 men and women that work for the Saskatchewan Transportation Company. The Sask Party, heartlessly and without warning, took away their livelihood.

These are dedicated workers who have questions, and the government promised to provide staff with more information. The Sask Party promised that a meeting would be called to provide staff with an update, "no later than April 13th." Mr. Speaker, let me help that government out — that's today. The STC employees have heard nothing, and they don't know about their severance. They don't even know about their last day of work, Mr. Speaker. And I hear some laughing over there, which again speaks volumes of the approach of this government on too many fronts.

Can the minister admit that his sell-off is damaging to Saskatchewan people, and will he at least have the decency to give STC employees straight answers to the questions that they have?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said before, Mr. Speaker, I mean it was a very difficult decision as it affected the 223 employees of STC, Mr. Speaker, and they were very hard-working employees.

Mr. Speaker, we've spoken with our legal counsel, again I'll remind the members opposite, the legal counsel for STC, and they assure us that we're following the Canadian Labour Code and that the employees of STC will be advised appropriately as to the outcome, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, winding down STC has been very difficult, Mr. Speaker, but we're very happy to see that other people, other

businesses out there, other organizations out there are stepping up and looking to fill that need that is coming for some of these people, Mr. Speaker, with several announcements in the past week, one out of Saskatoon, out of Warman-Martensville, and one out of Yorkton, Mr. Speaker. And so we're optimistic that we'll see additional groups step up and take advantage of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that — before and after the election, I might add — called STC an essential service, said that it was almost like a utility, Mr. Speaker, said that it filled a need that Saskatchewan people valued and the work that STC was doing.

But again we see that promise broken. And again we see here today that even when it comes to getting the word to the employees of that corporation, the 224 hard-working men and women of STC, Mr. Speaker, they can't even keep their promise when it comes to getting the word by today. So, Mr. Speaker, I know that they've consulted with legal counsel and I'm sure they've got a bunch of arguments as to how this is not another broken promise. But can he at least keep his promise to the workers to tell them what's going to happen with their future as of today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Hargrave:** — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I'll mention to the members opposite it was a very difficult decision. Those 223 employees of STC, they were hard-working employees. And, Mr. Speaker, our legal counsel advises that we are following the steps of the Labour Code and that those employees will be notified appropriately of their severance and other circumstances, Mr. Speaker.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it was nice to see that other organizations are stepping up to fill the void, to fill the void, Mr. Speaker, for those people, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the question to the member opposite and I'm sure that the employees will hear appropriately. Thank you.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 69 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2017*

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

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 69, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 69, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### Bill No. 604 — *The Saskatchewan Employment (Support for Victims of Domestic Violence) Amendment Act*

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 604, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Support for Victims of Domestic Violence) Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Regina Douglas Park that Bill No. 604 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Next sitting, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

I've been informed that Her Honour is here for Royal Assent.

## ROYAL ASSENT

[At 10:56 Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took her seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following bills.]

**Her Honour:** — Pray be seated.

**The Speaker:** — May it please Your Honour, this Legislative Assembly in its present session has passed several bills which in the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour, to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's consent.

**Clerk:** — Your Honour, the bills are as follows:

Bill No. 47 - *An Act to Reduce Salaries of Members of the Legislative Assembly, 2017/Loi de 2017 réduisant les traitements à verser aux membres de l'Assemblée législative*

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

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

- Bill No. 58 - *The Corporation Capital Tax Amendment Act, 2017*  
 Bill No. 66 - *The Victims of Crime Amendment Act, 2017/Loi modificative de 2017 sur les victimes d'actes criminels*  
 Bill No. 67 - *The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Amendment Act, 2017*

**Her Honour:** — In Her Majesty's name, I assent to these bills.

[Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 10:58.]

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

[11:00]

#### Initiatives for Safe Highways

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to read into the record the motion that we will be discussing today in our 75-minute debate:

That this Assembly recognize the actions taken by this government to make Saskatchewan highways safer for everyone through initiatives such as adding blue lights to tow trucks, introducing tougher impaired driving laws, and investing in infrastructure projects such as the Regina bypass.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is a motion that I can see each and every person within this House being in support of. It talks about safety. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to start my discussion with the reasons why we come here, the reasons why each and every one of us as elected representatives put our name on the ballot. Mr. Speaker, the reason why most of us, and probably each and every one of us, do is because we want to serve. We feel that we have something to offer the residents of Saskatchewan, and so that is why we put our name on a ballot. We work hard to become elected, and we serve in the House.

Each and every one of us want what's best for our province. We want to create an environment that is safe to ensure that each and every one can live to their full potential, to be able to enjoy the fruits of their labour, to make sure that our children have safe environments to become educated in, to live, work, and play.

Mr. Speaker, our government has worked hard to ensure that our highways are safe. This coming weekend is a very holy time in Saskatchewan and across the world. For members and individuals of the Christian faith, it is what is considered probably, besides Christmas, one of the most holy times. It is when Jesus rose. And it's with that, that people gather together to spend time with their families. And the members of the Jewish faith gather together in Seder in Passover to spend time reflecting within their communities and with their families the importance of this time of year. And for the members of the Sikh community, they celebrate tomorrow Vaisakhi, which is

spring, which is a time of renewal, of planting, and optimism.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is a time in our province when people will be going and spending time with their families, travelling through different communities. And so the motion is in fact very timely because we want to make sure that people realize as a government we have moved forward to ensure that our highways can be as safe as possible.

One of the things that was very moving earlier in this session was a piece of legislation that in fact it was quite remarkable. Within one day, legislation was introduced and moved through, and that was the changing of the lights, the colours of the lights on tow trucks, to both amber and blue, because roadside safety on our highways is so important for our tow truck drivers who go out to help people.

So it was, like I said, I think each and every one of us can take great pride in ensuring that this legislation was brought forward, but also too that we sent a message. We sent a message across Canada that in fact we value people who put their . . . You know, you wouldn't think that a tow truck driver would be putting themselves in harm's way, but in fact they are when they go out to a community or to the roadside to be able to help someone, and a lot of times that will be in a storm and so visibility is poor. And so we fully believe that changing of the lights on the tow trucks will signify that there is someone here, someone is working on the side of the road, and please take care.

But also too something that we have done . . . And it's not that we only enact legislation when someone is injured or maybe have lost their lives, but it does send a message to all of us. It wasn't that long ago that young 18-year-old Ashley Richards lost her life. She was a flag person killed while working on a highway construction site.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is why it's important as legislators, as members who have come together, to have the ability to make changes to make people's lives better and safer and to make their workplaces safer. So in fact that was one of the reasons why the orange zone was implemented on construction sites along the highways, to ensure that people pay attention when they're hurrying. And a good example is this weekend when someone is going to visit family, spend time with family over this Easter weekend, that if they encounter construction sites, that in fact they do pay attention.

So it's considered the orange zone on the highways, but also with that there is also the 60-kilometre, triple-fine zone, where workers are employed right on the site. So, Mr. Speaker, our government has been paying attention. We want to ensure that Saskatchewan employees are respected when they are working on a work site. So I think that some of the work that has been undertaken has been really significant.

A good example is the Regina bypass. The Regina bypass has been called for, for numerous years, way before our government formed office because most people, when they come through that area east of the city of Regina, when they're travelling down that highway, I think they absolutely must shudder because the amount of traffic that is on that section of road is incredible. So it was incumbent upon us to move forward with

this project.

And so I know that some of the members opposite have not been in support of the Regina bypass, but in fact the purpose of the Regina bypass is to save lives, and that is the whole . . . It is an intrinsic part of this motion. It's creating safer highways for our residents and our visitors in this province, and so the Regina bypass will in fact be able to accommodate this. It's the largest infrastructure project that has ever been undertaken by this province, and the amount of employees that have had the opportunity to work on this project is incredible.

We've also undertaken twinning a highway within that area. But also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our Ministry of Highways has also undertaken to ensure that there's passing lanes constructed on very heavily trafficked highways, high-traffic highways. Mr. Speaker, on a twin highway, the amount of accidents is reduced by 45 per cent. On a high-traffic highway that has numerous passing lanes, accidents are reduced by 35 per cent, but the cost of utilizing passing lanes is 15 per cent of the cost. So I think that we should be very pleased and proud that our government has chosen to ensure that our highways are made safe by having passing lanes be constructed.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that our government has undertaken to ensure that not just on our highways but traffic in general is done in a safe manner, is to ensure that cell phone usage and texting is illegal when a person is driving a vehicle. And the amount of accidents that occur because someone has their phone up to their ear, or is busy looking down texting, it's incredible.

I can share an interesting story with you in that a friend of mine was . . . He drives a fairly nice car, and he was parked at a . . . stopped at a red light, not parked, but stopped at a red light. And there was a horrendous crash into the rear end of his car, and he was jolted and the whole . . . And so he got out, and here was this young woman who jumped out of her car, and she had just slammed into the back of his car, and she says, "I was so busy trying to take a picture of your cool car, I forgot to stop." Now you may think that that's kind of . . . But you know, that gentleman had some neck injuries and back injuries based on this accident. But also the difficult part was that this young woman didn't feel that she had been in the wrong. She says, "I was trying to take a picture."

So you know, I think it's so important that . . . I know that our government is implementing an information with public service announcements and advertisements on the importance of safe driving, and not texting and driving, and not using your cell phone held in your hand to your ear. So I think that, like I said, sometimes people feel that, really, are those that important? But in fact they are, because enacting this kind of legislation, in fact, saves lives and it creates a safer environment for all of us.

Another thing that our government has brought forward is stiffer impairment fines. Drinking and driving in Saskatchewan, it's absolutely . . . It's a record that we should all be ashamed of because the high record of drinking and driving in this province is . . . it's staggering. So I think that, I know that a lot of time and energy was spent on saying, how do we address this? How do we create safer driving conditions by enforcing stronger impairment fines? So that is what our government has

undertaken.

I know that it hasn't been always looked upon maybe in the brightest of lights because there's some industries that feel that harsher drinking and driving laws are going to in fact be detrimental to their business. But, Mr. Speaker, lives matter and so that's why it was so important that we enact this kind of legislation to say that in fact drinking and driving is not tolerated in this province. Being impaired is not acceptable.

I just saw yesterday, in fact, or maybe it was this morning that an organization at Regina Beach has now a van and they've got . . . So that in fact if people have the opportunity to go to that facility, to the Yacht Club, have a glass of wine or two with dinner, they don't even consider getting behind the wheel and driving home, but in fact they have been offered a ride home. So I think that's, you know . . . There's a proactive way of ensuring that people be respectful.

And also, Mr. Speaker, if we want to talk about safety on our highways and thinking of people in Saskatchewan, creating an environment where we know that if accidents do happen, our province has brought STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] to Saskatchewan. Because, Mr. Speaker, when you attend an event where you realize that STARS is there to help people, that's where we realize that we are making Saskatchewan a safer place to be.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I have read the motion into the record and I am moving the motion. But do I have to move it and read it again? Okay, I'll do it:

That this Assembly recognizes the actions taken by this government to make Saskatchewan highways safer for everyone through initiatives such as adding blue lights to tow trucks, introducing tougher impairment driving laws, investing in infrastructure projects such as the Regina bypass.

I so move.

[11:15]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Rochdale has moved:

That the Assembly recognize the actions taken by this government to make Saskatchewan highways safer for everyone through initiatives such as adding blue lights to tow trucks, introducing tougher impaired-driving laws, and investing in infrastructure projects such as the Regina bypass.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's fair to say that in Saskatchewan one thing we've got no shortage of, Mr. Speaker, are highways and byways and the many roads that take the people across this great province.

And as the member opposite pointed out, this is the time of year, Mr. Speaker, when folks are coming down those roads to

get home, to be with family, to be with loved ones. And it's a time when we're reminded, too painfully, that when it comes to safety on those roads, when it comes to things like drunk driving, when it comes to things like general traffic safety, Mr. Speaker, that we face a challenge in Saskatchewan that is in too many ways worse than even in the rest of Canada.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know that as different of the McCalls make their way home and get to those tables, that there is always . . . I think of the prayer that my father often gives at these times when there are those that can't make it in and . . . the prayer for safety, Mr. Speaker, for the travelling. And I guess I am mindful of those things as we approach this debate.

And I'm also mindful of some things, that the member who has moved this motion knows about loss that can happen in a life. Because, Mr. Speaker, as I'm of an age where I know something of the story that the member wasn't talking about, so I'll not get into it. But I'm of an age where I know that story very well. And so when the member talks about safety on the highways and our wish for folks to make it home in good health and safe and sound, I know that she's saying that from a place that few of us can imagine, Mr. Speaker, let alone know. So I just want to say that off the top, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what is very much at the heart of the matter in a debate like this.

It was a week ago right at this time, Mr. Speaker, when we gathered to pass the amendment to *The Traffic Safety Act* in terms of enabling tow truck drivers to use the amber and blue lights on their vehicles, and the kind of safety that we hope that will afford them. And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, as a member of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, that when the government puts forward something that makes sense, that we think is productive, that we think is helpful, that will improve life for Saskatchewan people, that we will do our best to support that. And so, Mr. Speaker, it's not an everyday occurrence where you have expedited passage of a bill, or where you see that bill then again today be given Royal Assent and moved forward and hopefully have that positive impact on people's lives. It's a good day.

And we've seen that in different circumstances around other measures in the history of this House, Mr. Speaker, where opposition members have participated in the Traffic Safety Committee. And you know, certainly there were measures brought forward at that time that were supported. There were measures that came forward in a minority opinion. There are times when we've seen the, again the orange zone. And now former members of this Assembly, then minister of Highways, Wayne Elhard, and the then member from Coronation Park, Kim Trew, were able to come together for families who had experienced the loss north of the city here, Mr. Speaker; for highway workers, to try and put as many safeguards in place as is possible to ensure that going to work should mean that you're coming home at the end of the day, that great risk to your life shouldn't be an everyday occurrence.

So when we see measures like that, Mr. Speaker, come forward, we're very happy to do what we can to come in alongside and to make those changes that will hopefully provide greater safety, provide greater peace of mind for all those moms and dads out there that are waiting for their loved ones to come home, and those husbands and wives. And that, you know, God

willing, some of these measures will see us to a place where folks aren't getting that call late at night with terrible news about what has happened to a loved one.

And we approach that in earnest, Mr. Speaker. And there's a fair amount of this resolution that we're in agreement with and that we're, you know . . . I think the record will show where we've been able to work co-operatively and in support, we have done so, Mr. Speaker, with that goal of greater safety for Saskatchewan people firmly in mind.

There are some aspects of this motion, Mr. Speaker, as regards infrastructure or decisions that have been made by the government, or not made, Mr. Speaker, where there are some things there that we do not support, where we will be jealous of our ability to ask questions to ensure that public dollars are being spent as efficiently and as effectively as is possible; that when a government makes a promise about something, that you can count on it and it not get, you know . . . If a project's going to cost be it \$400 million or \$1.2 billion, that there should be some assurance that that is the end of imposition on the public purse and that the price tag should not be . . . Going forward, that these infrastructure deals should be done in the light of day and should be transparent and accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

And indeed, Mr. Speaker, you need drive no further than various highways in this province where the Ministry of Highways has seen fit to put up signs alongside the road saying, you know, X number of kilometres, X amount of expenditure, Ministry of Highways, Government of Saskatchewan. And you know, that's as it should be. Folks should know what they're paying for, know what they're getting in return.

That's not the case in too many ways with the Regina bypass, Mr. Speaker, where the price tag continues to climb, where it's a bit of a black box in terms of the accountability. And commercial sensitivity is proclaimed on a 30-year deal as part of its P3 [public-private partnership] conditions. And in that regard, Mr. Speaker, we retain the right of any good opposition to ask questions and to hold that government to account.

But again I return to where I started, Mr. Speaker. This is an all too common experience for the people of Saskatchewan — to experience loss, to experience death on our highways — and far too many families know what it's like to get that call about the fate of a loved one. And where there are measures that we as legislators can come together to make changes, to provide leadership, Mr. Speaker, we'll be there.

But where there are questions around choices being made, where there are questions around the proper expenditure of public dollars, we'll be there to ask those questions as well. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. If I might, I'd like to give you five numbers: 53, 60, 43, 72, and 67. Those five numbers represent the people that have died as a result of drunk driving in this province in the last five years — shocking numbers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we should have to

remember that many people on this day for something that is absolutely within our control.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, aside from those people, there are five other numbers I'll give you: 660, 756, 613, 560, 578. These are the people that were injured as a result of impaired driving accidents. Mr. Speaker, these are not just numbers; these are real live people. They're friends. They're family. They're mothers. They're fathers. They're sons. They're daughters. They are people that are important in our lives every day.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the end of my comments I will absolutely be endorsing and supporting the motion by the member from Regina Rochdale:

That this Assembly recognizes the actions taken by this government to make Saskatchewan highways safer for everyone through initiatives such as adding blue lights to tow trucks, introducing tougher impaired driving laws, and investing in infrastructure projects such as the Regina bypass.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2014, 33 per cent of fatal collisions involved drinking drivers. It's surprising to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . no, I guess it isn't. When we took the action this year on impaired driving laws, the calls that we received, the feedback that we received, many obviously were very, very supportive. But I think we probably all heard from people that were questioning to a certain extent where we were going with that. And the member across or a member earlier mentioned that somehow this might affect someone's business or whatever.

But the reality is, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to give you a specific personal example, I received a call from a gentleman that I've known for quite a number of years, who is probably my age, give or take. And he was commenting that it's very common in his environment to go to curling, was the example he used, and after a game to have two or three or four beer and then drive home because it was just on a grid road and just a few miles. I wonder how many of those accidents, how many of these people that we've lost were just on a grid road and just within a few miles. I think statistically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so many people have died on our roads and highways within just a few miles of home.

[11:30]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do have a terrible record for drinking and driving in this province. And I would be surprised if some, if not all of us, have in our lives been engaged in one way or another in a drinking and driving experience, whether we were the party in question that was doing it or we were in a vehicle where we allowed it to happen.

And yet it's interesting. We all know people who have died or been injured in drinking and driving accidents, and we do it. We've done it ourselves. We've been engaged in that activity either as the driver or as the passenger. We need to be asking the question why. Why are we still doing this, Mr. Deputy Speaker? I was looking across this morning at the young people that were up in the gallery, and it's interesting to me that the young people today understand this issue much better than

people of my vintage. They understand the importance of a designated driver, and we don't. We don't.

We need to be thinking and talking about that this weekend in our family gatherings when we're probably going to have a glass of wine or two and we might have a drink or two, and we need to be talking about who is going to drive home. And that person needs to be congratulated and recognized for saving lives.

I wonder about those students. How many of them will have to deal with a death in their family or amongst their friends from drinking and driving? The Speaker and my colleague had their young families in the House today. We don't want those small children to face a future without a parent, without a brother, a sister, an aunt, an uncle.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that is a huge challenge in this province. I wanted to talk briefly about the other issues that are mentioned in this motion, how important the tow truck driver legislation is. And I congratulate the Minister Responsible for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] on the initiatives that he's brought forward this year.

And I need to remind people: things like the orange zone — the member opposite mentioned the orange zone — think about it. The difference of one or two or three minutes in your travels, that's what we're talking about when you slow down for an orange zone or have to make that stop. You know, we think about the No. 1 Highway coming into the city. Two, three, four, five minutes in your lifetime is all we're talking about when you're slowing down for an orange zone. Is that so difficult to do?

The Minister of Highways is continuing our efforts on construction and improvement of our highways, and that is so important to safety. The Regina bypass is mentioned specifically, but we're also making significant investments across the province through the MREP [municipal roads for the economy program] program and many others, a quarter of a billion dollars over the last 10 years. I won't get lost in the statistics, but they're all out there for us to see.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this motion is about people. It's about people's lives. As I said earlier, it's about fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters. We need to change the culture in this province around safety on our highways. We need to be thinking about that every day. And I'm as guilty as everybody else is, I am sure, on each and every one of these issues of not being that good driver that we should be.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I say again, I fully support and endorse the motion made by the member from Regina Rochdale. Thank you very much.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my honour to rise and join in this debate today. I want to thank all of the members who've had the opportunity to speak so far on this matter. You can tell the tone is a little bit different today than what you normally see at a 75-minute debate because this



is a serious, serious issue, one that I think has affected all of us at some point, and I commend everybody for taking this matter as serious as it deserves. And I want to thank, as I said, all of the members for their discussion, in particular the member who just sat down, the member from Kelvington-Wadena, who gave a very moving speech and spoke to the challenges we have around the culture of safety in driving, in particular in our province. So thank you for that.

The timing to have this discussion, as has been discussed before, is very apt. We're moving into a long weekend, Easter weekend, which is, as is Saskatchewan tradition, the time when we travel to or people travel to us. Family members are moving about the province to spend time with loved ones. And this is the time when it gives us the opportunity to stop and be reflective of the things that matter the most: family, loved ones. And sometimes we can often get distracted by things that are going on in our lives and feel rushed to go to the next event or the next commitment we have and forget to actually take a moment to enjoy the time we have with our families and with our loved ones. So I appreciate that this is the topic of the 75-minute debate today, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I have family that's on the road to Canmore right now to visit my sister, and I know my partner and I will be driving to Indian Head this weekend to visit his family, so I know I'm no exception to the movement that we all seem to do during long weekends to go to visit loved ones. So this is a particularly apt time to have this discussion, and it gives me the opportunity as well to pause and send out good thoughts for my loved ones that they reach their destinations safely during this long weekend.

As an opposition member, when we have the opportunity to work with government, it's not often, but it has happened on a few occasions recently, and as the member from Regina Elphinstone had already said, it's a nice, it's a good day in the legislature when we can stand up and endorse and consent to legislation that's important for the people of Saskatchewan, and allow for its expedited passage.

One particular one that we actually saw receive a Royal Assent before entering into this debate was Bill 65, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*, which allowed for the inclusion of amber lights for tow trucks, red lights for tow trucks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We stood in the House, I believe it was last week, when family members of the individual who passed away, the tow truck driver who passed away, came into the House and watched that legislation go through.

It's unfortunate that this legislation and legislation like it is usually sparked over the death, the tragic death of somebody in this province, and unfortunately it's tragedies that tend to spark change. We're sad for the reason why we had to pass the legislation, but we were honoured to join in with the government members to pass that legislation.

And similarly, with the legislation around increased penalties for impaired driving and distracted driving that was passed the last time we sat, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we were happy to see it come through. It was actually . . . A portion of it was called on by members on this side previously, after a traffic safety committee that I think issued its report prior to my election. But

there was a dissenting minority opinion that my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale penned that well endorsed, I believe, the committee report, felt like it needed to go a few steps further in terms of making sure that we are protecting everybody and we're doing all we can. I believe one portion of that, dealing with the three-day vehicle impoundment, is now in fruition in the new legislation. So as I said, we were quite happy to see that happen and to consent to that.

I think we all can stand up in the House and speak to . . . This is a small province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so impaired driving has affected, in some ways, everybody in this House through one way or another, and the damages that it can have on those who are left behind are quite devastating, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I also wanted to mention that not only, as the member for Kelvington-Wadena had mentioned, not only does it seem like there's a bit of a generational change that is happening, and I hope to happen. And I come from a younger generation than his, but there is still . . . but I don't think my generation is any more, is any more . . . My generation still struggles with it as well, is what I'm trying to say. And I hope that the generation that was sitting behind me this morning learns from the mistakes of my generation as well.

But there are some . . . As the member had mentioned, this is a societal change that also needs to happen. And there have been some bright lights in recent memory, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I do want to mention. The member from Regina Rochdale spoke about a program that occurs in Regina Beach.

The Leo's group of businesses, the Leopold's group of businesses, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who operate several restaurants and bars in Regina and now Saskatoon — and I believe they're expanding out of province actually — had a very impressive program that occurred in December. They operate Leopold's restaurants and Vic's Tavern that is downtown. And they were offering free rides, a free shuttle service for anybody who was utilizing their establishment on the weekends during the month of December. It might have started even earlier actually, but over the holiday season, I would say.

And their entrepreneurial spirit actually spearheaded other bars in Regina to take up that challenge and other bars started to do the same things. I know there was a bar in particular in the east end, whose name escapes me at the moment, who also did a similar thing. And I know there's some desire or motivation to see if this is something that can be done on a more regular basis than occurs now.

[11:45]

So this is, it's heartening to see that even restaurants and bars are seeing the tragedy that impaired driving has on our society and are looking towards ways of creating a better, a more safer environment for everybody.

So I did want to give kudos to Vic's and Leo's group of business for doing those kinds of things. And I did not know about the program that was operating at Regina Beach, so I was happy to see that as well. And I do hope that this will spur more discussion around the need for a societal change as well as more

opportunity for businesses to also recognize that things need to change in our community. As that I see my time is up, so I will leave it at that.

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

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour and pleasure to represent the good folks of Gardiner Park and also join with my colleagues from Rochdale and Kelvington-Wadena and across the floor who have given excellent speeches about this very serious matter, this very serious part of our province. Certainly there are challenges remaining, as has been canvassed by my colleagues.

In Saskatchewan we have, we're obviously a very large land mass. We have a lot of exports in Saskatchewan, of course, and a lot of the ways we get them to market is on our highways. And we have the most kilometres of highways anywhere in Canada, relatively small population to pay for it. Of course we have more and more Saskatchewanians every day, it seems. But we have very difficult winters, and that causes dangerous situations in terms of folks having to travel in those conditions, and also in construction season. It's quite short, and of course you can't pave streets and roads at minus 30, so there is that short construction season. And so those are the challenges we've had.

We've overcome a lot over the years from not only this side but, as mentioned earlier, by the previous government. And of course there's always more work to do. I think of my colleagues here. I'm very fortunate, being a Regina MLA. It just takes me about 10 or 15 minutes, depending on traffic of course, to get home. But I know several of my colleagues, when they leave here this afternoon they're travelling many, many hours just to get back to their home. And we always think about their safety and their ability to get home safely, so that's always certainly top of mind.

And I think safety . . . As we mentioned some of the things our government's done in the last few years, it's certainly spent a lot of money on some of the things that already have been talked about and directly mentioned in the motion by the member from Rochdale. Of course the Regina bypass; I usually talk about that project in my speeches. I usually get up during the budget debate and talk about that, how important that is, and right at the top of it is of course safety, and that's primary.

I've been to . . . don't go out to White City quite that often or to Balgonie, but I know a lot of folks do. A lot of my friends commute that way. And particularly coming back into Regina, for years as the population's increased, it is quite a dangerous scenario as turning left, going back west on Highway No. 1, there's always a long lineup even in non-peak times. And just timing it to get across . . . I know there's been some improvements there, but of course the ultimate improvement is overpasses, which are coming — thankfully, finally — at Balgonie, White City, with long merge lanes. And so that answer's finally coming after long last, and I'm sure we'll see many fewer accidents and on top of that fatalities on some of that.

We have seen . . . Certainly a very devastating thing to lose

somebody for any reason, of course, but when you expect them to be home and they're not able to come home because of an accident. Just yesterday on Ring Road here in Regina, it was closed off because — I don't know a lot of the details, I admit — but somebody passed on the highway just yesterday on the Ring Road.

And you know obviously it's tough on the family and the person, but if it's a one-person accident as I believe this one was, that can be pretty devastating, I think, on the driver of the vehicle that survived, and, you know, the thoughts that they go through. And so it affects a lot of people, as was mentioned by my colleagues. It's been mentioned several times before that probably everybody in here has been touched by some sort of death on our Saskatchewan highways.

A few of the things we've been able to do: passing lanes, divided highways along No. 1, and the interchange at south Lewvan — all those things. Rather than having a stop, traffic lights allows traffic to move more freely, but most importantly more safely. Excuse my . . . if that English was not quite proper, Mr. Speaker.

I know one thing I was interested in finding out, so I did a little research and I'd heard that the photo radar pilot that had gone on in the major cities, along Ring Road, Circle Drive, on the turnoff in Moose Jaw, there has been some success in that area. So legislation that allowed that pilot project to go ahead is certainly good to see. And from the information I saw there was a decrease of speeds, which I think . . .

And anecdotally as well, my wife takes Ring Road every day to get to work, Ring Road north, and of course everybody in Regina or anybody passing through Regina will know, and I think anecdotally, and the numbers I have here show that there has been a decrease in speed. You always see, once in a while, somebody trying out their new sports car on the Ring Road. But I've seen that, and of course that helps safety, those reasonable speeds on high-traffic areas.

And so those have been a success and particularly in school zones, I know that there has been good work in the photo radar, in the schools. People are accepting of it. According to SGI they want to see more of that, more photo radar. And the numbers have shown that speeds have decreased. People are getting the message in those zones. There are signs everywhere.

And the proceeds from the folks that do speed through those zones, they get ticketed of course, and that money has gone towards paying for the program. I believe that it just became net positive in revenue just late in 2016, but 25 per cent in the municipal location, 25 per cent of it goes to administrative costs and three-quarters goes to the municipality and hopefully those municipalities will use that money to in turn increase safety, particularly in those school zones.

I know that some of the schools in my area, the one particularly on Dewdney Avenue, Ferguson, they narrowed the road actually. They sort of expanded the sidewalks. Dewdney east is a fairly busy road and so I understand that helps students get across. It's not as far for them to get across. Motorists might realize that, you know, that this is a little bit of a different profile of the road and things like that.

Of course traffic lights, pedestrian lights, those are other things that I've seen gone in, and removing impediments so folks can see.

One thing that used to kind of get me a little hot under the collar, Mr. Speaker — it still does — but when my kids started going to school and I'd go with them for a while and watch them, and they're waiting to cross the street, and a car wouldn't stop for young kids to cross the street. I was, you know . . . So there is more work to do, more education that needs to get out to folks that are motorists.

And I know, the driver training, that's a rigorous program SGI puts on. And of course that's something . . . And of course, Mr. Speaker, we never want to have somebody speeding through a school zone, particularly around those dismissal times, at noon — and of course in the morning, 9 o'clock — and afternoon, Mr. Speaker. So SGI again, as I mentioned, has done good work in that area in terms of the fines from the photo radar pilot.

The automated licence plate reader, that's an interesting program. Very, very cool technology, I'd say. A traffic officer can go to any, can go to any parking lot, for example, and automatically read all those licence plates to see if somebody's been convicted of a DUI [driving under the influence] or is driving without a licence, and they can arrest that person or suspend their licence or whatever's appropriate. So \$800,000 for that.

Five hundred thousand dollars more for increased checkstops in our province, 60 more officers, particularly, to look at this area. The RID program, report impaired drivers, there's information that is on signs and on bottles of liquor that's been purchased, a number you can call if you see an impaired driver. Public service announcements, those happen all the time, and those are very important, Mr. Speaker. The police officers do good work in our province.

So I think our government has moved significantly on improving road safety in our province. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is my pleasure to rise and enter into the 75-minute debate that has been noted doesn't feel much like a debate. I think there's a lot of agreement from both sides of the Assembly about the importance of safety on our highways and taking measures to promote safety.

As the SGI critic, it has been my pleasure to work with the minister on a couple of occasions and gain the support of this side of the Assembly for a couple of the motions that we have noted here today: most recently of course, the addition of blue and amber lights to tow trucks in the province. And that was a measure that saw no debate from our side of the Assembly, and certainly was something that we were willing to support. And again express our sympathies to the family of Courtney Schaefer, but also to all of those who have been injured or lost their lives or had near-misses on our highways. Tow truck drivers for sure, but all of those who are out on our highways ensuring safety.

I think of snowplow operators as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and first responders, both volunteer and paid first responders. And I know that they attend to some very horrific scenes on our highways, and anything that we can do to ensure that that is a less frequent occurrence is certainly something that I think we can all agree upon.

One of the other recent points that we were able to agree to expedite legislation was around the increased measures around drinking and driving and distracted driving in the province. And certainly that was something that members on this side had called for, for a long time. It predates my time here in the Assembly.

I know back in 2013 there was a report, the Special Committee on Traffic Safety final report which came out back in August 30th of 2013, agreeing with a number of those measures. In fact my colleague, as has been mentioned, my colleagues from Cumberland and Riversdale had presented a minority report at that time calling on some increased measures on top of that which was recommended officially in this report, specifically around the impounding of vehicles.

[12:00]

I'm just going to move back to that here. And for a very good reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they had noted that policies that had been implemented in British Columbia and Alberta had, at that point already, had a very dramatic effect on fatalities. There were some changes, but three-day impoundment was found to reduce fatalities in BC [British Columbia] by 50 per cent and 46 per cent in Alberta in a fairly short period of time. So that was something that we were certainly in agreement with and happy to work to expedite passage of that bill. But again the report came out in 2013, and we didn't see that bill until quite recently, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I will leave that there.

In terms of our agreement, it has been mentioned that many of us, our colleagues, will be on the highways probably pretty soon heading back to our families and to our friends. And I would like to wish everyone safe travels, and not only to members here but to people across this province.

I know I have family coming in from, I believe tomorrow, from Carnduff. My other family around the province will be travelling in. And it's something you think of when you know that your family is on the highway, as has been mentioned, you know, with commuters.

My mom commuted along No. 6 and 39 for many years, and there were a lot of close calls. And unfortunately I have friends whose parents didn't make that trip safely, and family members. And so I know I'm in no way special there. There are people, unfortunately, probably in every chair of this Assembly who have been impacted by injury or death on our highways.

And I think it really is the role of all members here to do what we can to ensure that those numbers are as low as possibly we can make them. And that requires working together. That requires evidence. That requires good drafting of policy. That requires consultation and all of those things that go into crafting quality legislation and policy in the province, such as we saw proposed back in 2013, such as we saw with the addition of the

blue and amber lights on emergency vehicles.

Legislation is part of it, but there's also the responsibility of each of us and each person in this province to behave in a way on our highways that is safe. It has been mentioned reducing speed in the 60 zones. That is incumbent upon every person who gets on that highway to be aware of it.

The drinking and driving, that you will get no disagreement from members, I'm sure, in any seat that the drinking and driving in this province is a problem. It's a long-standing problem. It is a problem that some people don't even see as a problem, I'm afraid, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I think that it's past time that we change that perception.

And I think that there has been some hope. I know my colleague from Douglas Park — I'm not quite of the same generation, but maybe the one above — there was a start of a recognition, you know, talking about designated drivers and talking about impaired driving in a way that my father's generation, that simply wasn't of the same consideration. And as a parent of a very reluctant driver on one hand, and one who starts driver's ed next week, this is something that is certainly on my mind. And you know, measures to ensure their safety on the highways, and all children, is of course something that we would encourage.

So with that, I'm noting that 10 minutes has flown by, and I will conclude my remarks.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Regina Coronation Park.

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government is doing the right thing investing in highways, and this year's budget includes \$1.1 billion to build, operate, and maintain highways in our province, including the Regina bypass.

To the member from the youngest generation, Regina Douglas Park: do you support and acknowledge the Regina bypass initiative as a worthwhile investment?

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Part of our job as legislators is to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan's tax dollars, which we're all entrusted with, their hard-earned money, are done so economically and efficiently. And we won't apologize on the opposition side for asking questions about whether or not tax dollars are being used economically and efficiently, and frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we won't stop.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In this time where the commission for the Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women is getting their work underway, one of the things that is brought to the . . . that is part of that conversation is the way that indigenous women are able to

move safely about a place like Saskatchewan.

And there have been those in the decision to wrap up, privatize the Saskatchewan Transportation Company who have brought forward questions about what is there to be learned from the circumstance on the Highway of Tears outside Prince George, where women hitchhiking who had no other choices around transportation would disappear. So to the member from Rochdale, what consideration was made of that aspect of public safety in terms of the decision around STC?

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

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. That was a very . . . Thank you for that question. Safety is always foremost in our mind, and ensuring that safety on our highways is something that our government takes very, very seriously. And the motion that was brought forward to this debate talked about the importance of what we're doing for tow truck drivers, what we are doing to implement laws for impaired driving, and investing in the infrastructure of the Regina bypass. So I'm more than pleased to enter into a discussion in regards to those aspects of this debate, but the STC debate could be held at another day. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Buckingham:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. One of the legacies of the members opposite is the billion-dollar pothole they left when they were voted out in 2007. I was a professional driver on those roads during that time, so I experienced the terrible state and neglect of our highways. You can't build an economy, Mr. Speaker, without investing in highways.

Our government is committed to investing in highways. Including this year's budget, we will have invested \$7.4 billion since 2007. Those improved roads also mean improved safety for drivers. My question is for the member from Regina Lakeview. How did your party think it was possible to build Saskatchewan's economy without investing in highway infrastructure?

**An Hon. Member:** — Good question.

**Mr. Buckingham:** — Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that there are a couple of measures here that I would like to respond with.

First of all, there's the amount of money spent, but that doesn't necessarily translate into quality or quantity. When you're spending \$2 billion on one project alone, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and at a cost of 10 times what it costs to pave any other kilometre of road, I think that that bears consideration and is something that certainly people around this province . . . Well the former minister has something to say about that, Mr.

Speaker, but these are questions that people around this province want to know.

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

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The independent Information and Privacy Commissioner has ruled twice that the Sask Party should release the documents related to the GTH-CP [Canadian Pacific] land deal right beside the Regina bypass, but the Sask Party continues to flout his rulings. How can the member for Regina Gardiner Park justify this lack of transparency?

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

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The GTH isn't mentioned in the motion, but of course the bypass is. And this is the same policy as the NDP had, Mr. Speaker, to deal with commercially sensitive information, Mr. Speaker. That's a long-standing policy. If you release it without permission from other third parties, the province risks getting sued for that. That would only be good for other members of her profession, Mr. Speaker. So this is the same policy that's been at the top of the province of Saskatchewan. It's been like that for many years, and I'm sure it will continue. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The municipal governments of the White Butte region have provided their full support of the Regina bypass. They have been actively involved in the review of alternatives, both on location and design, as this bypass will significantly affect and make great improvements to the safety of the people living in and travelling through their communities. They strongly argue that any delay in this project will result in more loss of life, as well as added expenses to taxpayers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is for the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Do you agree that these bypasses will help our highways stay safe and that ... [inaudible] ... Saskatchewan people?

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

**Mr. McCall:** — I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear the end of the member's question, but certainly in terms of, what is a bypass generally, you know, that's something that's been called for, for a very long time by the communities in question, Mr. Speaker.

Where we get into questions, Mr. Speaker, is how that bypass is being built, how it's being implemented, how that project is being moved forward, Mr. Speaker. And the way that we've seen the scope change, Mr. Speaker, the way that we've seen the price tag change, and I guess I find it interesting.

I hear the member from Regina Walsh Acres yelling from his chair. And, you know, I guess I would refer individuals to his

website so they can check his defence of the Regina bypass out, Mr. Speaker. And once they do that, maybe they'll find out why that member wasn't participating in this debate.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The Sask Party's own documents show that the average cost to twin, grade, and pave Highway No. 16 was no more than \$1.3 million per kilometre. The minister's own documents show that the average per kilometre for the Estevan bypass was \$1.2 million per kilometre. The Sask Party's P3 bypass project is costing Saskatchewan taxpayers more than 10 times those amounts. How can the member from Kelvington-Wadena explain any of this?

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

**Mr. Nerlien:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and thank you for the question. I think anyone who has had the experience of driving around the bypass project in the last few months would easily recognize how complicated that particular project is. There are 12 overpasses, 40 kilometres of new four-lane highway, 20 kilometres of resurfaced four-lane highway, 55 kilometres of new service roads, twinning of about 5 kilometres of Highway 6, and I could go on and on statistically about the Regina bypass project.

But anyone who has looked at that project at all would understand the scope of it, the amount of work — 8,200 employees working at that project, 95 Saskatchewan companies working at that project — and it's about safety. Thank you.

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

[12:15]

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 602

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Wotherspoon that **Bill No. 602 — *The Election (Fairness and Accountability) Amendment Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise into the House and enter into this debate on Bill No. 602, *An Act to amend The Election Act, 1996 to provide fairness and accountability in election fundraising*.

And this is a very important bill to be discussing. We've raised the issue. It's been raised many times over the last few years.

And I will refer to our leader's, official Leader of the Opposition's comments made just prior to the budget on March 16th. But even more so now, post-budget, is this bill before us. And it's one that we have invited the government to join with us and take a look at how we can make our election fundraising, funding much more appropriate, much more transparent, much more accountable. But they have not sought to do that. In fact they've decided to defend the status quo, and I'll talk a little bit about that a little later on.

But we see a budget before us that was passed where clearly many people had a lot of questions about who the master is of this government. On one hand you have tax cuts to corporations that cost \$38 million, tax cuts to the wealthiest in this province that cost \$38 million. And the question to many people in this province is, who are the people that that government is listening to? And if you look at the fundraising they do and what's been reported in the media, you sure have a lot of questions.

And I think this is one that many people will reflect over in this break that we're coming into, that maybe we should make ourselves more accountable to the people of Saskatchewan and not to the large corporations, not to the large unions. Let's get them out of election funding and make it more appropriate to what really the rest of the country is doing, because there's just too many questions.

And as I say, with the budget that we have before us, where people ask questions about STC, they ask questions about libraries, they ask questions about funding to municipalities and schools, our health care system, Meewasin, Wascana Park — all of those things, the question really is, who is this government really listening to? Who is this government really listening to? And so I just want to just review quickly to the folks at home what Bill 602 does.

It says, and I'll read the preamble because, you know, we do this every two or three weeks and people may not know:

WHEREAS Saskatchewan's election financing laws currently allow for unlimited contributions from corporations and unions;

AND WHEREAS Saskatchewan election financing laws currently allow for unlimited contributions from out-of-province donors;

AND WHEREAS the federal government and the governments of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec and Nova Scotia have already banned corporate and union donations to political parties;

AND WHEREAS Saskatchewan people deserve a democratic system that is free from the influence of corporate, union, and out-of-province donations;

THEREFORE HER MAJESTY . . . [enact the following.]

And what we talk about is we define the contribution as a:

. . . gift, loan, advance, deposit or other form of assistance, but does not include a loan from a chartered bank, trust company, or credit union where the loan is to be repaid in

full with interest.

But we talk about:

### **Section 239 is repealed and the following substituted:**

#### **“Eligible contributions and Form of Contributions**

**239.1(1)** No person shall make a contribution to a registered political party, a candidate, or a constituency association unless that person is a:

- (a) individual who is a resident of the province of Saskatchewan,
- (b) registered political party; or
- (c) constituency association.

It goes on to say that:

(2) In one calendar year, an individual's total combined contribution to registered political parties, candidates, and constituency associations shall not exceed \$1,275.

(3) No person shall make a contribution to a registered political party unless the contribution paid out of moneys to which that person is beneficially entitled.

(4) No person shall make a payment by or on behalf of a registered political party unless it is by or through the chief official agent of that party.

(5) No person shall make a contribution to a candidate unless the contribution is paid out of moneys to which that person is beneficially entitled.

(6) No person shall make a payment by or on behalf of a candidate unless it is by or through the candidate's business manager.

And then it goes on to:

(7) Subsections (4) to (6) do not apply to any payments made by any person if:

- (i) the liability of the person is was lawfully incurred by that person; and
- (ii) no part of that payment is repayable to that person.

Section 242 is repealed and what that really is, section 242, I'll just take a minute to explain, is that:

No business manager and no chief official agent of . . . [any] registered political party shall accept a contribution from a contributor who resides outside Canada, unless that contributor is a Canadian citizen.

And so what we're really saying is people have to live in the province, and their donations are limited to \$1,275 and that no contributions from corporations or unions would be accepted.

Now this is really critical because I said that people really are asking, who are the political masters of the Sask Party? And I just want to take a reference back to . . . One of the news stories

that really shone a light on this was back in November 1st, 2016, by CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news. And the headline was “Saskatchewan the ‘wild west’ for campaign finance laws, says Alberta group.” And I’m going to quote from this. It’s from a story by Adam Hunter on November 1st, 2016:

Since 2006, the Saskatchewan Party has accepted more than \$3 million in out-of-province corporate donations, with more than \$2 million coming from Alberta companies alone, according to a new database.

And this is a quote from Duncan Kinney, executive director of Progress Alberta. I don’t think anybody . . . And I quote:

I don’t think . . . [anybody] would be cool with a Calgary Stampeder putting on a Roughrider jersey, showing up in the huddle and then participating in the plays . . .

He said he was motivated to look into the donations to the Sask Party coming from Alberta after a speech the Premier of Saskatchewan had made at the Calgary Petroleum Club in June. That would have been June 2016. He says, and I quote: “I think people who live in Saskatchewan should know that millions of dollars of out-of-province money have flowed into their politics since 2006.”

And there is a list, there is a significant list of who is behind the donations. Here we go. Kinney said the major contributions come from oil and gas, bank, and construction companies. And here’s a sample of that list that’s on that database that is in the public domain: Crescent Point, \$126,924; PCL, \$88,817; Penn West, \$83,348; Cenovus, \$68,108; Encana, \$50,557. And he points out in 2000 alone, Canadian Western Bank donated \$200,000 to the Saskatchewan Party.

So there’s lots of questions. And those are the numbers that are real, and that’s what they’ve taken. That’s what they’ve used to finance their elections. And so when we see some of the initiatives in this current budget — the tax cuts to the corporations, the tax cuts to the wealthiest — there is probably a connection here, and we say we can fix that. We can draw away that veil that this government tends to like to pull back. Don’t look over here, but there are things to look at.

And this is what some of the people are saying. Kinney goes on to say:

Saskatchewan is the wild west when comes to campaign finance laws. It has the worst campaign finance laws in the country and it beats out British Columbia by a nose, simply by the fact that Saskatchewan allows registered charities to donate and B.C. does not.

But this is somebody, I think, that it’s worthwhile taking a listen to. Duff Conacher, the founder of Democracy Watch agreed. And I’ll just read this, agrees with Kinney’s assessment that Saskatchewan is the wild west when it comes to party donations because of its limited laws. He says and I quote:

“Saskatchewan is one of the worst — if not the worst — in Canada for political finance system.”

Under the current rules, Conacher said there is nothing

stopping a foreign-owned company based in Canada from paying for political influence . . .

“They don’t have the same interests as people who live in the province,” he said.

“It amounts to the best government money can buy instead of the best government that voters want.”

He pointed to Quebec as having the world’s best party donation laws, as it allows individual donations to a maximum of \$100.

So I think we really need to take a look at this. We need to have this debate. We need to act on this bill. We can make this bill happen. And I think, as I said, particularly post-budget where people are asking, who are the masters of these folks over here when they take in this kind of money? When they take in this kind of money and they give goodies while other people . . . the tax cuts to the wealthiest and the corporations, and while they take away from the libraries, the schools, health care, the hearing aid program, STC, all of that. And you wonder what’s really gone over there.

They use the two arguments. The Minister of Justice has used two arguments. He talks about the lobbyist registry, fair enough. But you know, it’s interesting how long that lobbyist registry . . . We came back after the election in 2011, had to get going on that, had to get that done, had to get that done. And they sat on that for five years, five long years they sat on that until they were shamed, publicly shamed into enacting it. They didn’t hurry into that at all.

And then they used the other one, that corporations from out of province are very welcome to . . . [inaudible] . . . because they’re actually acting on behalf of their workers in the province, which I think is very, very naive. I think if the workers in the province would say, would you like . . . Do you think that corporations should have a 1 per cent tax cut that results in 30-some million this year? I think the employees would say no. I think we’d rather have the hearing aid plan. We’d rather have the libraries. We’d rather have STC.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is a naive attempt by this government to defend their coffers and the system that has been rated in Canada as one of the worst, one of the worst. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our leader says this is really about democracy. And it really, truly is, truly is about democracy, and we try to make it better all the time. And it’s like how we stepped up to work with them on the lobbyist registry, but all of a sudden it stalled. We don’t know why it stalled for five years.

But again, I am very happy to support this bill. I think it’s the right bill that we need to act on before the end of this session. And I hope we can have a vote really quickly on this further on. Today I would like to adjourn the debate on Bill 602. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 602. 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 this House adjourns. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This House stands adjourned until Monday, April 24th at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:29.]





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