



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

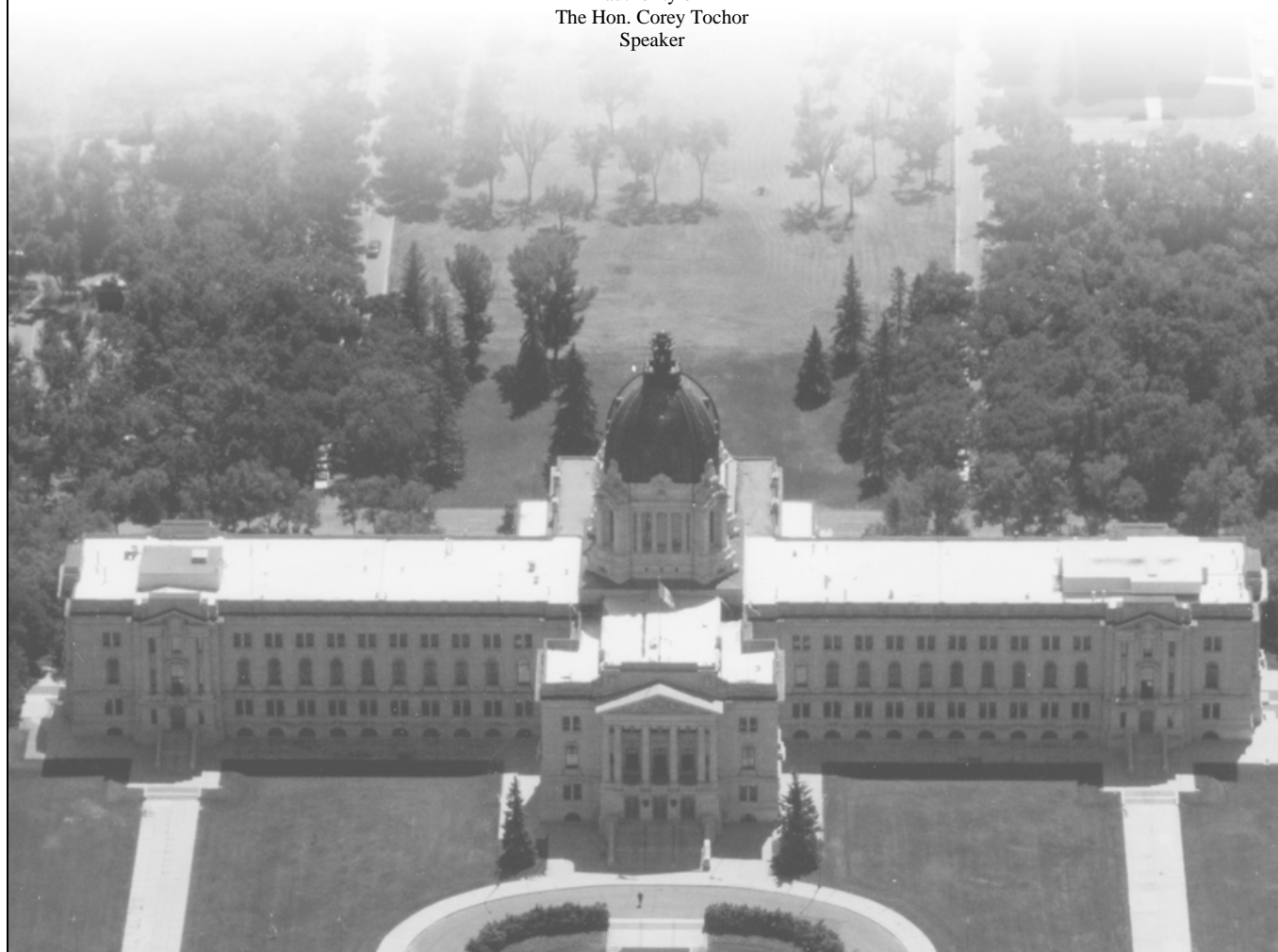
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
2nd Session — 28th Legislature

Speaker — Hon. Corey Tochor
Premier — Hon. Brad Wall
Leader of the Opposition — Nicole Sarauer

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Marit , Hon. David — Wood River (SP)	Vacant — Kindersley

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Vacant — 1

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

Clerk: — I wish to advise the Assembly that Mr. Speaker is not present to open today's sitting.

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do again request leave of members for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Premier may proceed.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure for me to be able to introduce to members of the Assembly, and to you as well, Ms. Galit Baram, the consul general of Israel for Toronto and Western Canada, who is in your gallery, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Ms. Baram is an experienced diplomat whose posts have included Washington, Cairo, and Moscow. This is her first official visit, though, to the province of Saskatchewan since being appointed in August of 2016. We're very pleased that she is here, that she is visiting Saskatchewan. We want to welcome her warmly. Mother nature's provided a bright, sunny day, maybe a little bit on the cool side for November.

But we know that she has a busy day ahead, and has already had meetings this morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She's met with the Provincial Secretary and, during her visit to the province, the consul general will also meet with the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Advanced Education, the Minister of the Economy. She and I will meet later this day, Mr. Speaker, and there will be other meetings that she'll have with representatives from the University of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, and Sask Polytechnic, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan and Israel have enjoyed a mutually beneficial trade relationship now for many years. Two decades ago, Israel was the first country outside the western hemisphere to negotiate a free trade agreement with Canada. That agreement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, cut Israeli tariffs on agriculture and manufactured goods and cleared the path for Saskatchewan producers to partner with those in Israel in exporting lentils, canola seed, and flax seed among those exports to Israel.

Saskatchewan and Israel are also in the forefront of using technology to boost crop production. And this is very interesting and compelling, I would suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Last year an international team of researchers,

including scientists from the University of Saskatchewan and Tel Aviv University, used technology developed by an Israeli company to crack the wheat genome code. So, Mr. Speaker, clearly that work is crucial in enabling the development of more wheat varieties. It's going to be crucial in terms of feeding the world.

In addition to being trading partners, Canada and Israel, Saskatchewan and Israel are strong allies and good friends. Canada played a part, as we all know, in the creation of Israel, voted for Israel's membership in the United Nations, contributed peacekeeping efforts in the Middle East that helped stabilize the region. And, Mr. Speaker, we know there are many Canadians that will be celebrating this year the centenary of the Balfour Declaration. That was Great Britain's public pledge to create a national homeland for the Jewish people, Mr. Speaker.

There is no question about the importance of Israel, not just in terms of the relationship with Canada but in the world, and specifically in the region, the only democratic nation in that region, the only nation that is recognizing under democracy the rule of law. And so on that measure anyway, notwithstanding the controversies that exist in the region, on that count there is no equivalent, there is no moral equivalency, and Canada and Saskatchewan support and stand with Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of the Assembly to welcome the consul general to the province of Saskatchewan and wish her well in her meetings and deliberations here.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming Ms. Baram to this Legislative Assembly. I had the opportunity to meet with her this morning and welcome her to our great province. We spoke about many things, including the importance of trade in both of our respective economies as well as the importance of technology in agriculture as well as environmental sustainability. Ms. Baram, shalom aleichem, and I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming her to this Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I ask leave for an extended introduction.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member may proceed.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To you and through you and to all my fellow members, I'd like to introduce some very special guests to the Legislative Assembly today. Joining us today in the west gallery is Brigadier-General Trevor Cadieu, commander of the 3rd Canadian Division,

Edmonton. Accompanying the brigadier-general today are his aide, Captain Lee; Chief Warrant Officer Stevens, detachment commander, Saskatchewan, domestic operations — long title; Captain Wiltshire; and Lieutenant-Colonel Grubb, CO [commanding officer] of the Royal Regina Rifles.

The brigadier-general has a long, distinguished military career that includes commanding an assault troop, a brigade reconnaissance troop, a regimental reconnaissance troop during his first tour of regimental duty back in 1995. In addition to deploying to Bosnia in '97, the brigadier-general served in Kandahar, Afghanistan in '02 and again in '06-07.

He has served alongside soldiers from every unit in one Canadian mechanized brigade group over the past two decades, both in training and in operations at home and abroad, and became commander of 3rd Canadian Division just this past summer. And if you remember two summers ago, he was deployed here in Saskatchewan fighting fires up north with a bunch of folks from around here.

I was delighted and privileged to be able to meet with the brigadier-general and our other distinguished guests just prior to the House sitting this afternoon. And with our annual Remembrance Day observations coming up this Saturday, I would say that their presence here today is a special treat for all members of our House.

I invite you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and all my colleagues to join me not only welcoming them to the Chamber today, but in thanking them for their selfless service to our country and the people of Saskatchewan and Canada.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow in welcoming our esteemed guests today, Brigadier-General Cadieu, Captain Lee, Chief Warrant Officer Stevens, Captain Wiltshire, and Lieutenant-Colonel Grubb. I'm sorry I can't look at you while I'm talking, but welcome.

I would especially like to welcome them in light of Veterans' Week this week and thank them for their service to our country. And I would like to ask all the other members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to this Assembly, it's my privilege to introduce two guests in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. The first one needs no introduction, but I'm going to introduce him anyway. Mr. Speaker, it's the former member for Canora-Pelly: the former minister of Education, the former minister of Finance, and of course the former deputy premier.

Mr. Speaker, there's a couple of reasons I'm introducing him today, and I'll get to that in just a second. But since Ken Krawetz is in the gallery today and only members are allowed to speak on the floor, there's a couple of things that he wanted me to inform the Legislative Assembly of. The first one, Mr.

Speaker, is that he wanted everyone to be aware that he is no longer going to be a Toronto Maple Leafs fan, and he will be cheering for the Boston Bruins. Oh man, I'm going to pay for that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the second one is more serious. He has a guest with him that I would like to introduce, who is a good friend of mine. Jeri Romaniuk from Edmonton, Alberta is in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. I got to know Jeri a number of years ago. She has an accomplished career in public service. At the time, she was the chief of staff to the minister of Transportation in Alberta. She has since moved on and has an accomplished career in the private sector, currently working with Colas Canada. And, Mr. Speaker, most important to Ken, she's his cousin.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome obviously Ken and also Jeri to our Legislative Assembly and wish them well. Thank you very much.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the House, well I'd like to welcome Mr. Krawetz back to his Legislative Assembly of course, but I would also point to the Speaker's gallery right behind him. Today we have Ms. Arden Fiala, and she's been a strong advocate. She's the president of SaskFEAT [Saskatchewan Families for Effective Autism Treatment] and advocates very strongly for families who have individuals living with autism spectrum disorder. She also sits on the national board. She's been a strong voice for her own daughter Elene, but for all families across the province to make sure that they have access to evidence-based treatments and supports, Mr. Speaker.

But with Arden today she has brought with her Dawnette and Bella Brett, who I had the opportunity to meet with a few weeks ago. Actually, we sat down for a couple hours and had a very good chat about their experiences.

Dawnette is a teacher here in Saskatchewan and is the mother of three daughters, two of them living with autism spectrum disorder. But Bella here today, it was a real treat to sit down and chat with Bella. She is an advocate for those who have siblings with autism spectrum disorder. As everybody knows, a disability or a difficulty isn't just experienced by the individual but by the whole family. So she's been really great at, I think, sharing with legislators — particularly me in this case — her experience, but also advocating for her sisters as well and the things that she knows that they need.

So I'd ask all members of the Legislature to join with me today in welcoming these special guests to their Assembly.

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

Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce you to 35 students from Campbell Collegiate who are sitting up in the west gallery with their teacher, Ms. Jill Labas and Mr. Holcolm. This is a school in my constituency I have some familiarity with. I'd like to

congratulate them while I have the opportunity on beating the Leboldus Suns football dynasty last Friday. They're heading to the provincials coming up here soon.

They have an incredible business club who we've had here visiting us as well. And we have many times appreciated the music of the choir also from Campbell Collegiate. I have the opportunity to meet with them later today. I assure you it will be the highlight of this day. I ask you all to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you in your gallery, I'd like to introduce a group of reeves and councillors from the Southwest. They are here for the mid-term convention and I'd like to welcome them to the Chamber. And we won't tell Ray you're here and not over there. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to join with all the members to welcome the folks who have joined us, especially the councillors from southwest Saskatchewan.

But while I was on my feet earlier, I should have acknowledged the presence in the west gallery of someone who's no stranger to many members in the House and to many businesses around the province. His name is John Schmeiser. John is the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Western Equipment Dealers Association, agricultural equipment dealers association, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

He's originally from Bruno, Saskatchewan. He still comes here for a lot of the summer but he and Leandra and Rachel live in Calgary right now. I can report to members of the House that he has been leading an expansion of that particular organization to include . . . well through mergers, many dealers across western North America, and has done a great job of representing agricultural equipment dealers here in our province, but really across the West and much of Western North America.

[13:45]

Additionally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll say — full disclosure — he's a great friend. And it's always good to see John when he's back in the province though he's typically asking for something on behalf of those for whom he works, which is his job and we appreciate that. But I would ask members to join me in welcoming John Schmeiser to the Legislative Assembly today.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I want to join with the member across and also welcome the reeves and councillors that are here today. I had the opportunity to go to the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] mid-term this morning and listen to the speeches. And I was really impressed with the fact that your SARM delegates are really working hard building relationships with all leaders

within this province. And the important work that you do is so important with building this strong province that we have here, and we appreciate everything you do. And I want to ask everybody here to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to rise in my place to present yet another page of a petition on behalf of the people of Balgonie. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Take the necessary steps and actions to leave the west-in, west-out driving access for vehicles into and out of Balgonie at the intersection of Highway No. 1 and Main Street.

We also respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan put up a locked gate on the apron between the eastbound lanes and westbound lanes of Highway No. 1 and Balgonie's Main Street intersection. This gate would allow emergency services access to the eastbound lanes on Highway No. 1 at the Main Street, Balgonie intersection, but it would not allow the public access to cross east- and westbound lanes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, after attending that very important public meeting in Balgonie, a petition was started, and many hundreds of people from the Balgonie area signed these petitions. We will stand in our place every single day to present these petitions. And the people that have signed this particular page, on this many, many-page document called a petition, are from Grenfell. They're from Qu'Appelle. They're from Grayson. They're from Lemberg. They're from Abernethy. They're from Neudorf, Saskatchewan and all from throughout Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the people of the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this would bring in excess of 1,000 signatures just from my constituency with this petition here today, thousands more from across the province. And I think it's incumbent, Mr. Speaker, on all members of this legislature, both in government and opposition, to remain relevant and represent Saskatchewan people to ensure that Saskatchewan families are not subject to this ill-advised federal government policy that has not been proven to work in any jurisdiction in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

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

province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Holbein, from Shellbrook, from Saskatoon, from Canwood, from Big River, from Leask, from Spruce Home. I do so present.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to restore funding to post-secondary institutions. These citizens wish to bring to your attention that the Sask Party is making students and their families pay for Sask Party financial mismanagement; that Saskatchewan students already pay the second-highest tuition fees in 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 have been cut by 8.2 million; and that the Sask Party has broken a 2016 election promise by cancelling their first home plan. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by individuals from Assiniboia, Outlook, and Saskatoon. I do so present.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader and the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling for the reopening of the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners, in addition to other things, call for the attention of the House to the fact that the closure of BNCC [Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre] took inmates far away from their families, making visitation difficult or non-existent at all. They point out that the closure of the correctional centre took away from the ability to get treatment and to obtain training tickets which of course, Mr. Speaker, is one of the main defences against reoffending. And they point out that the closure hurt families, elders, and the community in general in terms of the impact of this unheralded and unexpected decision.

In the prayer that reads as follows [Mr. Deputy Speaker], the petitioners respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan immediately reopen the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre to better our community for future generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, as you might expect, though the support is certainly not limited to this, this particular petition is signed by citizens from the good community of Buffalo Narrows. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

Physician Recruitment and Retention in Saskatchewan

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it wasn't too many years ago that the *Leader-Post* and many papers around the province read, "Doctor shortage on the rise." In fact, doctor shortage even today in the House, I see again. Eighty-four vacancies in the province, Mr. Speaker, back in 2007. The article went on to say, "The suspension of hospital services in the town of Spiritwood for nearly six months because of the inability to fill an opening for a doctor . . ."

Mr. Speaker, years ago it pitted community against community on bidding wars for the few doctors that there were in this province under the NDP [New Democratic Party]. Our government started a new program called the Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment program. Mr. Speaker, since SIPPA began in 2007, over 200 new family physicians have completed the assessment and are currently practising in the province . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, they seem to be upset.

Mr. Speaker, the people in communities all over Saskatchewan have better access to physician services because of this program. Today we have about 750 more doctors practising in this province than we did 10 years ago. Mr. Speaker, our first priority is to recruit medical graduates from the University of Saskatchewan, but we do depend on internationally educated doctors to help the needs of our health care system throughout the province. Mr. Speaker, I ask all my colleagues to join me in welcoming these new physicians to Saskatchewan. They're valuable partners, and we want to thank them for their commitment to high-quality and patient-centred care.

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

Poet and Photographer a Future 40 Winner

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to rise today to acknowledge the accomplishments of Tenille Campbell who is one of the 2017 CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] Future 40 winners. Tenille is the daughter of my very good friends Isidore and Ornella Campbell.

Tenille was raised and born in Beauval, which is situated in my constituency, and she is a Dene/Métis woman from the English River First Nation. Tenille is a Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] student at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], focusing on indigenous literature. She is an accomplished author and photographer. She is the author of *#IndianLovePoems*, a collection of her poetry which was released this past summer. As well she operates a successful business called Sweetmoon Photography, through which her specialty is the photography of indigenous peoples. And, Mr. Speaker, if that isn't enough, she's the co-creator of the blog Tea and Bannock. The blog features photographs and stories of indigenous women photographers throughout all of Canada.

This talented young woman is an accomplished speaker, speaking at events and on panels throughout Canada. She is well known for her sense of Dene humour, a trait she no doubt inherited from her father, Isidore.

I am extremely proud of this daughter of northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I ask that all members of the Assembly join with me in congratulating Tenille Campbell on being selected a 2017 Future 40 winner and to commend Isidore and Ornella Campbell on raising such an amazing young woman. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Donation Supports the Conventus Citizenship Education Foundation

Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I stand here today to recognize and thank Elaine and Sherwood Sharfe. Each born in a different small Saskatchewan town, the Sharfes have made Saskatoon their home. They've raised a wonderful family, grew very many successful businesses, and committed themselves to a lifetime of community support as volunteers and benefactors.

Mr. Speaker, on October 30th, the Sharfes announced a cornerstone donation of \$1 million to the Conventus Citizenship Education Foundation. This foundation began in 2010 with financial support from the ministries of Education and Justice, and the Law Foundation of Saskatchewan. Since that time, it's developed learning resources for students in all levels of primary school to educate and empower citizenship. The foundation works to push the understanding of rights, responsibilities, and respect as part of a student's learning career. They also preach participation and commitment to justice in our multicultural society.

Mr. Speaker, this area of education is obviously very important and cannot be overlooked. The generous donation of Elaine and Sherwood Sharfe allow the foundation to continue their mission to develop these resources and make them available to every teacher in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in thanking Elaine and Sherwood Sharfe for their gracious donation, and in thanking the Conventus Citizenship Education Foundation for all the exceptional work they do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Launch of Taxi Area Council

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, on October 24th, I was honoured to join with colleagues at the municipal and federal levels to attend a celebration in Saskatoon to commemorate the creation of the Taxi Area Council launched by District 3 of the United Steelworkers.

In particular, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Mr. Malik Umar Draz, the new president of the Taxi Area Council for his leadership and advocacy for taxi drivers in Saskatoon and across this province.

Malik is the president of USW [United Steelworkers] 2014, a United Steelworkers cab union that formed a few years ago

under the guidance of steelworkers rep Mr. Mike Pulak.

Malik has quickly emerged as a leader in the union as their first president. In that time, I have gotten to know him and his family and friends quite well, and I have seen how he is a tremendous asset to our community in Saskatoon Fairview and beyond.

Malik puts in countless hours to represent taxi drivers in this province. He's a voice for taxi drivers who have been victims of physical and verbal abuse, and he provides advocacy for them in a respectful and inspiring way. I can't imagine going to work every night in a profession where I felt unsafe. As a cab driver himself, Malik has given voice to these issues and given support to drivers who have fell victim to violence in the workplace.

I call on all members to join me in honouring the achievements of Malik Umar Draz and the United Steelworkers who are helping to make life better for working people in our province.

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

No Stone Left Alone Ceremony Held in Moose Jaw

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Yesterday I had the great honour of attending No Stone Left Alone remembrance ceremony at the Rosedale Cemetery in Moose Jaw.

In attendance were students and staff from École St. Margaret, Lindale School, and St. Agnes School, as well as men and women from 15 Wing, the Legion, and the ANAVETs [Army, Navy & Air Force Veterans in Canada].

Mr. Speaker, the memorial foundation works to honour our fallen military, and to educate students of the sacrifice our veterans made, by gathering together and placing poppies at their headstones every November.

No Stone Left Alone was launched in 2011 in recognition of the sacrifice Canadian men and women who have lost their lives fighting for our peace and security, both at home and abroad. Yesterday the students were able to participate alongside men and women from 15 Wing, making it an unforgettable experience.

In 2017, 7,787 students will participate in a hundred ceremonies honouring 51,827 Canadian Armed Forces members. It was a sombre day, and an opportunity to reflect on the brave young men and women who answered the call for their country. And I hope the valuable lessons that each student in attendance learned yesterday will continue to resonate with them.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members, please join me in thanking the No Stone Left Alone Memorial Foundation, 15 Wing Moose Jaw for their fly-past, staff and students for attending this ceremony. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Joint-Use School Opens in Saskatoon

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand in the House today to celebrate the opening of Chief Whitecap School and St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic school in Saskatoon. They are two of the 18 new joint-use schools built with a P3 [public-private partnership] model, saving taxpayers \$100 million. The co-operation and teamwork that went into building these schools is a historic achievement. They are a welcoming space for staff and students, providing them with the tools and resources they need to become the leaders of tomorrow.

Chief Whitecap School serves an important role in the alliance between Saskatoon public schools and the Whitecap Dakota First Nation. Chief Whitecap School's principal, Harold Robertson, said and I quote, "Our school is unlike any other in the province as we bring together the communities of Stonebridge and Whitecap Dakota First Nation in this innovative learning facility."

Mr. Speaker, the school will share space with St. Kateri Tekakwitha Catholic school. Naming the school after St. Kateri Tekakwitha is an example of reconciliation and will serve as an inspiring learning space for the whole community.

Under the NDP we watched a generation flee to opportunities outside our province. These schools are a generational investment inside our province in our education system and our students. We will not let history repeat itself. We will continue to build and keep Saskatchewan strong. Thank you.

[14:00]

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

Standing Up for Saskatchewan's Interests

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the city of Burnaby, BC [British Columbia] demanded the Minister of Justice apologize for his comments regarding Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. I stand here today to follow the Premier's lead. We will not apologize for standing up for the people of Saskatchewan and the voters of Cannington. We will not apologize for supporting a \$7.4 billion project that will generate revenues for the quality of life in this province. No, we won't apologize for applying for intervenor status. We won't stand by while another project of national importance is killed by the vocal minority that continue to drive their cars, live in plastic-filled houses, and wearing oil-based clothing.

Yesterday NDP Premier Rachel Notley said the new NDP federal leader's opposition to the Trans Mountain pipeline was, and I quote, "dead wrong" and "irrelevant." Mr. Speaker, I have to disagree. Anyone seeking to be Prime Minister of this country — no matter how small the chance — standing against a project of national importance, that's very relevant.

Did any of the members opposite tell him as much a couple of weeks ago when Mr. Singh was here? We know money and election resources have transferred between the members opposite and the BC NDP. Has anyone picked up the phone?

Members on this side of the House will keep standing up for Saskatchewan's interests. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Usage of Private Email Accounts

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, yesterday the Premier laughed and mocked at my questions, but he couldn't find it in himself to actually answer them. So I'll put it as simply for him as I can. First the Premier was caught using the partisan email with the server housed at the Sask Party office for government business. Specifically it was to discuss a trade visit to the United States. Then the Premier promised he would stop using that email for government business. Then in September he used it again, this time to try and kill a story that was coming out about the Sask Party GTH [Global Transportation Hub] scandal. Then a senior staff member in the Premier's office said he used the email because his government email was broken for two weeks. But Central Services has no records of the Premier's email being down, and Executive Council has no records of the Premier's email being down, no record at all.

Mr. Speaker, why did the Premier's office say his email was down when it wasn't?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I have said I have undertaken to use the government email, Mr. Speaker, so long as it's working. And sometimes inadvertently, if a thread has been occurring that is my non-government email, I respond on that account. The important part is that members have access to those in a freedom of information request that's valid, and they have had access to those. They've made a freedom of information request. They know that sometimes I use this non-government email because they have a copy of one. We handed it over, and moreover we're going to ensure they're collected and handed over to the Archives.

Again I'd point out there's about eight former NDP ministers . . . Well, the Deputy Leader just wants to yell from his seat because he doesn't like the answer. He doesn't like the fact that eight of his former cabinet colleagues, Mr. Speaker, have yet to turn over their files from their basement to the Archives, to the people of Saskatchewan who own them in the first place.

One of those ministers that is hiding his documents from the people of the province, keeping them in his basement, is Eldon Lautermilch. Now what was Eldon Lautermilch famous for? SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] for example, Mr. Speaker. There are documents from the former minister of Finance, for the former minister of Justice, that are being hidden in the basements, private basements of the NDP. They refuse to hand them over. Will she demand that they change their positions?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, let me clear something up that the Premier keeps getting wrong. We learned of his email not because it's accessible through FOI [freedom of information]. We learned of his email from two ways: (1) a staff person who was accessible through FOI included it in an email thread, and (2) a senior staff person accidentally emailed it to a journalist.

Mr. Speaker, accidents happen, sure. From time to time you click the wrong button, whatever. But, Mr. Speaker, this question is about trust. It may seem less and less obvious to the government, but the people of Saskatchewan deserve a government that they can actually trust. Mr. Speaker, the Premier said he would stop using the email on the Sask Party server for government business. He did not. A statement from his office said his government email was down. It was not.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier come clean about his use of the Sask Party email server or, like the Finance minister, is he hoping that his email will deteriorate before they're ever made public?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, my hon. friend is factually incorrect. The reason that they're aware of the non-government email that I've used from time to time, which is subject to FOI and will be turned over to the Archives, is because the former leader raised it in estimates this last spring, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's how the NDP found out that I used this non-government email. It's because we gave them the non-government email as we would make it available in the FOI, Mr. Speaker.

In the meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition wants to champion the email issue for the province of Saskatchewan. It's interesting. I would probably choose a different tact. If I was the Leader of the Opposition, I might turn to the Energy critic, the member from Saskatoon Nutana, who before question period was heckling the Attorney General for standing up for Saskatchewan in terms of the city of Burnaby's efforts to stop the Trans Mountain railroad, which hurts the people of this province and hurts our energy sector. She was yelling from her chair at the Attorney General, that it was embarrassing that he would stand up for Saskatchewan people.

This is why they are so disconnected from the people of the province. What the people of Saskatchewan expect is less talk about non-government emails or government emails, and more standing up for the province of Saskatchewan.

The Deputy Speaker: — I would ask the opposition members, we do hear the question, but we don't hear all of the answers. I would ask the opposition members to respect the ministers when they have the floor. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, 10 years ago, that Premier was elected on a promise to be better and more transparent as a government. They seem to have forgotten that, though, because they have the ability to "I know you are, but what am I" and "Oh, my dog ate my homework."

These questions are about trust and transparency. His refusal to answer them is why all of those people running to replace him right now keep hearing questions about the GTH. The Premier says he was both there through the whole process — he knew what was intended, and what was not — and he had no involvement in any of the negotiations. Mr. Speaker, Schrödingers cat would be pretty impressed. All we're asking is for the Premier to open the box, and shed some light on the situation.

Will he admit that, just because he may not have been at the table for the deals, if he was there through the whole process, he was obviously involved in the negotiations in some way?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this question happens over and over again in the House. I've answered it every single time. Of course, the cabinet was involved in providing a mandate. That issue was canvassed by the Provincial Auditor, and in terms of, Mr. Speaker, the allegation that the government has somehow tried to avoid answering questions, we opened up the entire issue to the Provincial Auditor.

For folks who are watching who don't know the relationship between the auditor and the legislature, know that the Provincial Auditor is independent of all members of the Assembly. And that report was concluded, and she said publicly she saw no signs of conflict of interest, or breach of trust, Mr. Speaker, or fraud. Now, it's with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and everyone's cooperating with that. We wait to see the results.

I mean, the Leader of the Opposition is quite right to note that this is the 10th anniversary of the day that we had the great honour of serving the people of the province in government. We were elected for the first time. It's also a day that people are remembering what it was like before that day, Mr. Speaker. Before that day, we said goodbye to a generation of young people. We gave them luggage for graduation presents. Now there are 160,000 more people living in the province of Saskatchewan. We used to have the dead-last, dead-worst job creation record in all of Canada under the NDP, and over the last 10 years, it's been the second-best job creation record, Mr. Speaker.

I look forward to more questions about what it was like under the NDP in those dark days 11 years ago and beyond, as compared to what it's been like over these last 10 years, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, he can rant. He can scoff. He can make all the noise he wants, but these are the questions that Saskatchewan people are asking of that Premier, a Premier who fails to answer these questions day after day after day. Even those that are running to be the next premier are hearing these very questions of this Premier in his handling of the GTH scandal.

Take for example the member for Regina University who says

that this GTH scandal is dragging the Sask Party down, and she's calling for a full public inquiry. So is the member for Saskatoon Northwest, who was also of course the Attorney General. And then there's the member for Saskatoon Willowgrove who says, quote, that the GTH is so bad, I quote, that he "... would immediately begin action to sell the GTH." And then of course there was that short cameo appearance by the member from Meadow Lake who said he would have fired Bill Boyd and Mr. Pushor, had he been the premier.

Mr. Speaker, after looking at the auditor's report, the RCMP found that it warranted a full investigation. So, Mr. Speaker, why won't the Premier answer basic questions in this House? And will he at least tell us what he told the RCMP as part of the interview as sitting Premier of Saskatchewan into the GTH scandal?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment and Minister Responsible for the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As usual, so much wrong with the preamble of that member's question. That's typical that we expect though on this side of the House from the member from Regina Rosemont, Mr. Speaker. I'm frankly surprised that he asked the question and then doesn't get up and retract the question because we're never sure where he is on any given day, whether he's in or whether he's out, whether he's going to ask the question, whether he's not going to ask the question.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, to the member's question, Mr. Speaker, the government has fully co-operated with the Provincial Auditor, Mr. Speaker. The government provided the Provincial Auditor with full access to any cabinet documents, Mr. Speaker, unlike what happened with the members opposite, for example, with SPUDCO. I wonder if the ... Well no, actually, the Provincial Auditor didn't actually ...

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — The opposition members will have an opportunity to ask another question. Currently the minister has the floor, and I would ask the opposition members to respect the minister's right to reply to the question. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, you know, we wonder whether or not the deputy minister to the premier, then Premier Lorne Calvert, had a chance to look at Eldon Lautermilch's files. Well we'll never know because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there wasn't an open and transparent process that was followed by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to do all that we can to work with the board and the management and the staff of the Global Transportation Hub to see that we don't just stop at 860 full-time jobs created at the Global Transportation Hub, we don't just stop at \$450 million in private investment. We're going to go above and beyond that and see this be a successful project, a generational project for the people of this province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, of course we have the Premier dodging the question again what he told the RCMP as part of this investigation as sitting Premier of Saskatchewan. But we also know that Bill Boyd, Laurie Pushor, and the Premier's former chief of staff worked together on the deals at the centre of the Sask Party's GTH scandal. In an email chain that included all of them, Mr. Pushor brought up the appraisal that the Premier used as his lifeline during the last election, his failed defence, Mr. Speaker. He said, "... it does mean that we have some information that makes a case for our position."

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, we already know that the appraisal didn't affect the negotiations and that it was never intended for the buyer to see. But now, with this email released by the media, it's further proof that it was a retroactive justification for a deal that they had already cooked up.

So, Mr. Speaker, will the Premier now finally admit that the appraisal he clung to for so long as his failed defence was completely irrelevant?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, first and foremost the Provincial Auditor had access to that record, had access to all the records that were looked at by the government. And in fact I don't believe she even referenced that in the very full report that she issued for the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, that members opposite have access to.

Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite perhaps doesn't know this, but should know this, that when a minister advances an item at cabinet, that is the position of the ministry. That is the position of that minister and, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that should be a surprise to anybody.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government has fully co-operated with the Provincial Auditor, provided all that information — including what the member opposite references, including the email that the member opposite references — which is a stark contrast to how members opposite dealt with an issue that I think was a challenge for that government, in explaining the matters around SPUDCO where they didn't open up cabinet documents to the Provincial Auditor, didn't even invite the Provincial Auditor to look at the matter. They simply had the deputy minister to the premier of the time, Lorne Calvert, do a report. Eldon Lautermilch was moved to a different area, and they thought that was the end of the story, Mr. Speaker.

That's not the way we operate on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and we will not be taking lessons from the NDP when it comes to being accountable to the people.

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

Carbon Capture and Storage and Federal Carbon Tax

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste matter because it's the people of Saskatchewan that the Sask Party are forcing to pay

the price. Let's look at CCS [carbon capture and storage] at BD3 [Boundary dam 3]. The Sask Party dumped \$1.5 billion into building it and millions more into running it. And as people open their power bills, Saskatchewan people are seeing the true impact of the Sask Party's \$1.5 billion carbon capture tax.

Mr. Speaker, while CCS gets shut down over and over again, and when the costs of it go up and up, and while SaskPower's CEO says it's time to admit that CCS should not be expanded, this minister stands in the House, arrogantly reads quotes from years gone by, and shows no concern — absolutely no concern — for the families, for the seniors, and for the most vulnerable in our province who are struggling to pay their bills.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when will the minister admit that their failures at BD3 are having a profound impact on the pocketbooks of Saskatchewan people?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment and the Minister Responsible for SaskPower.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to addressing the question that was asked by the member opposite. But I think the member from Saskatoon Nutana should perhaps clarify, on the record, what she was saying across the way before question period started.

Does she believe it's her position and the position of the NDP that the Government of Saskatchewan should not have intervened on the matter with the city of Burnaby with respect to the NEB [National Energy Board]? The member opposite heckled that across the way, chastising the Attorney General for intervening on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan and the people of this province. If that's her position, I think she should put that on the record, Mr. Speaker.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the member's question on Boundary dam 3, Mr. Speaker, we are going through a process and evaluating whether or not that is technology that would be applicable and be applied to the next phase of coal generation. BD4 and 5 are the next new . . . for decisions to be made.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would also remind the member of what her position was just a couple of days ago in the newspaper, when she said, well we can't mothball it. We'd have to keep it running if the NDP were the government, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, she has seemingly a couple of different positions on this very issue. Would they keep BD3 going? Would they continue to capture carbon and sequester it for enhanced oil operations, or would they shut the whole thing down?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That arrogance is what is hurting Saskatchewan people. They laud their experiment, and they shake their fists against the federal carbon tax. But bragging about CCS doesn't make it work any better, and shaking their fists doesn't protect us from the federal carbon tax either.

Yesterday the Manitoba environment minister said that we,

along with every other province, have been saying all along: to truly protect ourselves from the federal carbon tax, we need a made-at-home solution. Now, Mr. Speaker, they may doubt that, but as the Conservative minister from Manitoba said yesterday, "If we say no, we get Trudeau." If the Sask Party doesn't change their tune, Saskatchewan will be the only province forced to pay the federal carbon tax.

So, Mr. Speaker, what is their plan? Will they guarantee protections for families, small businesses, indigenous communities, and our trade-exposed industries? And will they at least consider their own greentech fund and make the biggest polluters pay for the pollution they cause?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, this is unbelievable. This is unbelievable. The NDP Environment critic stands up demanding that the Government of Saskatchewan introduce and adopt a technology fund for businesses in this province to invest in technology. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the members opposite voted against that. When it was brought up, Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago and introduced and passed in this Assembly, the members opposite voted against it. This is unbelievable.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would only refer the member opposite, when it comes to a made-in-Saskatchewan plan, when it comes to protecting our trade-exposed industries in this province for competitive matters, when it comes to ensuring that there is a flexible ability for companies and industries in this province to, yes, ensure that they are being responsible citizens, corporate citizens but also ensuring that their businesses survive in this province and continue to grow, we will have a made-in-Saskatchewan plan. We referenced it in the Throne Speech. The members opposite voted against it. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm looking forward to the time when that plan is produced to see that member support it.

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

Support for Agricultural Producers Following Fire

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Sask Party announced their budget, they included a \$300 million contingency fund that was supposed to be used in case of emergency. But they've already spent half of it because they suddenly realized that no matter how hard they try, they can't make collective agreements just go away, and they can't just cut people's pay at a whim.

Mr. Speaker, they also included funding for the provincial disaster relief fund. The Agriculture minister has stated that the rules mean that this money isn't available to producers who lost so much in recent wildfires. Mr. Speaker, at budget time the then minister of Finance said, and I quote, "Every now and then you're going to have a . . . situation like we had in La Ronge a couple of years ago."

Mr. Speaker, of course he was speaking about fires. He said that this money was available for exactly this kind of circumstance.

So between PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] and the contingency fund, Mr. Speaker, why can't the government find the money to help these producers out?

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

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for her question. She cites the PDAP program, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we've encouraged the use of the PDAP program in many cases where it applies, and the PDAP program unfortunately does not apply to the loss of insurable assets. For the most part, the losses experienced in the very unfortunate wildfires in southwestern Saskatchewan last month were . . . the bulk of the losses were insurable losses.

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, last week alone the Education minister managed to publicly single out and question the methods of a specific teacher, denied the important role that classrooms can play in taking us towards reconciliation, and continued with her education funding shell game.

But, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the people of Saskatchewan are not fooled. They know the facts when they see them. Will the minister finally come clean and recognize the simple math? Education property taxes went up by \$67 million, but \$54 million was cut from transfers to our kids' classrooms. Will she finally let go of the witchcraft reasoning, drop the magical thinking, and just admit what the rest of us already know?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to reference the fact that I show up at school openings. And I would just like to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you bet the P3 model I do.

It was referenced today by the member for Wildwood. Can you believe that the NDP in its convention manifesto actually said it's opposed to P3 schools, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Really, they would turn back the clock and not undertake the largest infrastructure project in Saskatchewan history; not build 18 joint-use schools that opened on time, on budget, and saved taxpayers \$100 million; not adopt a model that's making headlines, Mr. Speaker, and catching fire across the country. Manitoba's Minister of Education recently said, "If the Saskatchewan Premier . . . thinks the program works, it's worth a look here," Mr. Speaker.

The member opposite likes to talk about resources, but these schools are technologically completely equipped for 21st century education. They have reading nooks and presentation stairs and outdoor learning spaces and libraries without walls, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite called the newly renovated École Connaught School beautiful just a few short weeks ago and was full of thanks for it. She showed up at the opening.

Where does she stand now, Mr. Speaker?

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. An interesting diversion, but still no answer to the question. So I'll try it again, and this isn't a complicated math equation. Education property taxes went up by \$67 million, and that means that the people of Saskatchewan chipped in an additional \$67 million. But the total government transfer was \$54 million less than the year before. So that's actually \$121 million less that the government made available from the GRF [General Revenue Fund] for our kids' classrooms.

Teachers, parents, EAs [educational assistants], even students see this cut every day. They're the ones who are having to do more with less. Mr. Speaker, what message does she think she's sending? What should our kids be learning from an Education minister who day after day sticks to her tired talking points instead of admitting these simple facts?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm not going to go there on the talking, the tired talking points, Mr. Speaker. Broken record doesn't begin on this one. I know the member opposite wants to go back, back to the good old days of tax revolts on the steps of this legislature because of the through-the-roof education property tax, Mr. Speaker. We will never go back.

It's quite clear that when you have a \$1.9 billion budget, every dollar of a \$750 million education property tax goes back into education. In fact we're actually spending two and a half times more than we are collecting.

Under the NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker, property taxes paid for 60 per cent of school divisions' operating budgets. We committed in '08-09 to funding education at a 60/40 split, with 60 per cent coming from government grants and 40 per cent coming from property tax. We actually went well beyond that, Mr. Speaker, and the split was for a number of years, 65 per cent GRF, 35 per cent EPT [education property tax]. In fact the EPT amount for both '07 and '17 was almost identical at 750 million.

We have provided record investments in our education system and at the same time been committed to the taxpayers of this province. We know that. She knows it too, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 87 — *The Data Matching Agreements Act*

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

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. With the incredible support of my colleagues, I am pleased to move that Bill No. 87, *The Data Matching Agreements Act*, 2017 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 87, *The Data Matching Agreements Act* be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

[14:30]

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Next time, Mr. Speaker, next sitting.

The Deputy Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 88 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Crown Investments has moved that Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read for the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall the bill be read again? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

The Deputy Speaker: — Next sitting.

Orders of the day. I recognize the Opposition Deputy House Leader.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise on a point of order.

The Deputy Speaker: — I'd ask the member to make her point of order succinctly.

POINT OF ORDER

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I refer to the *Rules and Procedures* of this Assembly. Rule 51(b) states that

“... no Member shall reflect on the absence of another Member.” Mr. Deputy Speaker, in his member's statement, the member from Indian Head-Milestone did clearly and precisely do just that, and I call on that member to apologize and withdraw the statement.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would refer to that rule, and I think the member quoted the provision, “reflect on.” I think that's the operative word, “reflect.” The member didn't reflect on the absence of the member from Meewasin. The member didn't even specifically refer to the member from Meewasin being away today, and yesterday, and last week — presumably to campaign, but we don't know why the member has been away, Mr. Speaker. So the member didn't actually reflect on the absence of that member and his repeated absences. So I would put it to you, Mr. Speaker, that the operative provision, being “reflect,” was not met.

The Deputy Speaker: — I find in this and the two points of order that we have a difference of interpretation, but I would also caution the member from Meadow Lake from being too descriptive in his position. What I will do is I'll take it under advisement and bring a ruling back.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 84 — *The Income Tax (Business Income) Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Income Tax (Business Income) Amendment Act, 2017*. This legislation will implement business income tax initiatives that were announced in the October 24th, 2017 Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, small business is so vital to the health of the economy that our government has decided to further enhance the Saskatchewan advantage. As a result, effective January 1st, 2018 we will raise the provincial small business income threshold from 500,000 to 600,000 — the highest threshold in Canada. This is the amount of income up to which small businesses pay tax at a much lower 2 per cent small business tax rate. Increasing this threshold will provide Saskatchewan small businesses with an incentive to hire more workers, and invest in new capital right here in our province.

Yesterday in the rotunda Marilyn Braun-Pollon, CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] vice-president, Prairie and agri-business said, and I quote:

This decision is going to send the right signal to hard-working small business owners. They're now going to have the most competitive small business tax structure in the country, the highest threshold, and I think that sends

the signal that will begin to restore small business confidence across the province.

Our government couldn't agree with her more. Meanwhile rates for personal income tax in Saskatchewan continue to be reduced, which also helps create jobs in small businesses. This legislation will also return Saskatchewan's general corporate income tax rate to 12 per cent, the same as other Western provinces. Specifically, this legislation will increase Saskatchewan's general corporate income tax rate by half a point, effective January 1st, 2018, from 11.5 to 12 per cent, and will repeal the legislated tax rate reduction, from 11.5 to 11 per cent, that was scheduled to take effect on July 1st, 2019. Once implemented, Saskatchewan's 12 per cent general corporate income tax rate will continue to be competitive and among the lowest in the country, maintaining our province's advantages when attracting new investments and jobs.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move the second reading of *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Finance has moved that Bill No. 84, the income tax business taxation amendment Act, 2017 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Obviously as the opposition, we want to look through the bill itself and begin to make the necessary network connection to talk to the small-business community and many other organizations like the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to see the intended impact, Mr. Speaker, of this particular bill being proposed by the Minister of Finance.

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that it is with a bit of trepidation that the opposition listens and responds to some of the bills being proposed by the government, or the Saskatchewan Party government, because what we've seen over the last several months, Mr. Speaker, is really a bunch of surprises for our small businesses, and a bunch of tax increases.

The level of debt that we now will be inheriting from the Saskatchewan Party is really a deterrent for many people to come to Saskatchewan and to invest in Saskatchewan. And for us to recognize the small and medium-sized businesses that play a crucial and critical role in not only forming the economy province-wide but more specific, providing services and job opportunities to the local people in many communities, small and large, throughout our province.

I want to say at the outset that the small-business sector in our province of Saskatchewan have phenomenal benefits overall for the province. As the opposition, we always make an effort to recognize the small and medium-sized businesses as well as making sure that we recognize the large corporate players as well.

Mr. Speaker, there's no question from our perspective that when it comes to the economy, we are all partners in this economy and that it's important for governments to be able to provide supports and to attract investment by way of consult. And certainly bringing forward incentives, and certainly bringing forward programs that would encourage more and

more of these small businesses to continue to thrive and certainly continue to stay here, and to attract many others as well. So there's no question we understand the importance of the role of government in trying to create a stable and certainly an encouraging, thriving environment for them to not only invest in other businesses, but to keep current businesses going.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the important thing that I want to share is that we certainly are encouraged by the words of the CFIB on some of the changes being proposed in Bill No. 84. I think as a lobby group, and certainly as a group that represents the independent small businesses of our province, that there's certainly a lot of merit to some of the points that they raised. And obviously as an opposition, if those are some of the issues that they are encouraged by, we would certainly take their word over that of the Saskatchewan Party Finance minister any day of the week, Mr. Speaker.

And here's the reason why. We know that on some fronts it's important to recognize the small-business community in the province, but when you have, Mr. Speaker, a billion-dollar tax hike in one given year because of mismanagement, that certainly acts as a deterrent and discourages small businesses from expanding, Mr. Speaker. And when you have the level of debt that Saskatchewan is currently under, 23 billion by 2020, Mr. Speaker, you begin to wonder how is the community going to sustain that kind of debt over the many years that we have to repay that debt. And those are some of the questions that the Sask Party have to answer for.

And finally I would say this, Mr. Speaker. When you speak about the P3, the P3 models, whether it's the Regina bypass, or whether it's the schools that are being built, or the bridges, Mr. Speaker, I think, as a customer — the customer being the Saskatchewan people — that we ought to know what these P3 deals are all about. We ought to know how much we're expected to pay for these P3 deals. So while many companies look at the P3 deals as a means to create employment and certainly to provide opportunities for their business, Mr. Speaker, we as the taxpayers and we as a government should have the obligation and the duty to make sure we know what the true costs of the P3s are, not only in interest, Mr. Speaker, but over the duration of time. How much it will cost us, the Saskatchewan taxpayers, for the term of that agreement?

So, Mr. Speaker, what the NDP are obviously asking is accountability on the P3 front. Obviously when you hear the example that was shared with us as a result of the school opening, a lot of people in the province of Saskatchewan know that the P3 model is probably a more expensive model, but we should have the right to know what that expense is, Mr. Speaker. There's also questions about whether there's enough resources in those schools to actually provide good education and supports for our students. Those are the questions that we were asked today.

So as you look at the final point, Mr. Speaker, which is really hitting home on some of these fronts when we talk about financial integrity is the fact that many of these P3 schools are assets owned by some company, most of them out of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, if not all of them. And they are the ones that decide whether you hang a picture or whether you open a window or whether you make any alterations. And in

fact, Mr. Speaker, the control of that particular school is totally within the P3 owner until we finish paying that off, in the sense that even community groups and organizations can't hold events in that school unless and until they get express written permission by the owner who is the P3 proponent for that school.

So the point that we're trying to raise in the opposition, and certainly the point that we're trying to raise as it pertains to the economy, is that in any business we have to know what the costs are over the long term for any particular product or any particular venture that the business community gets into. So, Mr. Speaker, if the Government of Saskatchewan operate their business the same manner in which our small-business community does, Mr. Speaker, we'd be in much better shape. Because how would it feel to a small business if the government comes along and says, we're going to do this, but we're not going to tell you what the cost is, but you have to cover it? Well a lot of small-business owners would tell the government that that's not how they do business.

So clearly, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of questions around the P3 model. We have to know what it's going to cost us, Mr. Speaker. We have to know that in getting the money upfront that we have to realize that we have to pay those bills down the road. What this government did was they punted that debt down the road — all for the headlines, Mr. Speaker — and what's really making matters worse overall is the fact that, for generations, we'll be paying for that debt.

And this is exactly the reasons why the small-business community themselves need to ask the questions of the Saskatchewan Party government is, what other surprises do they have as a result of their mismanagement, scandal, and waste? And this is the real, real crux of the situation, Mr. Speaker, is that they have a right to know exactly where our finances are heading because as a business community, they need a stable environment. They need a really good human resource supply. They need obviously access to markets and they need stability, Mr. Speaker.

So as a member of the caucus, the opposition caucus, we want to ensure we recognize the people of Saskatchewan, to ensure them that we recognize the success, the role, and the value of the small and medium-sized businesses throughout the province. We obviously want to do all we can to enhance them. And the message we have today, some of these changes in the bill have some positive comments from CFIB. Mr. Speaker, we look at those comments and we're encouraged by that, but we obviously have the obligation, the duty to further look at this bill to see what other impacts that may come along that may be negative to the small and medium-sized business growth in our province. And that's certainly something that we take seriously, Mr. Speaker, so obviously we have a bit of work ahead of us.

What we do know is that the financial incompetence of the Saskatchewan Party government is costing this province dearly for years to come. And one of the sectors that's also hurt by this and really surprised by this is the small-business sector, Mr. Speaker. They know the debt that they're under. And I can tell you there's a lot of business owners throughout our province that are really upset. And they had no idea that our debt was growing, skyrocketing this high under the Sask Party

government, Mr. Speaker, and many of them are very, very angry.

So we have a network of people that we can contact to ask for their opinions, Mr. Speaker. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 84, *The Income Tax (Business Income) Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

[14:45]

Bill No. 72 — *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*. Members of the Assembly will be aware that distributing intimate images of a person without consent has become all too common in the digital world, and revenge porn or cyberbullying with intimate images is an ongoing problem.

This bill will introduce an additional tool for victims of this tragic practice. It will amend *The Privacy Act* to create a new tort for the non-consensual distribution of an intimate image. An intimate image is a virtual image including photos or videos in which a person is nude, partially nude, or engaged in explicit sexual activity, and which was recorded in circumstances that give rise to a reasonable expectation of privacy.

In 2015 amendments were made to the Criminal Code to create a new offence to address distribution of intimate images. Mr. Speaker, we think that more can be done outside the criminal sphere to help victims. To complement the federal initiative and to provide additional avenues for redress for victims, we are proposing additional steps to allow victims to pursue a civil action. The proposed provisions will create a tort for the distribution of an intimate image of someone without consent even if the person consents to the image itself being taken or took that image him- or herself. The proposed provisions also create a reverse onus requiring the distributor to prove that he or she had the consent to actually distribute the image.

Finally the amendments will remove the requirement that an action of *The Privacy Act* proceed only in Court of Queen's Bench. This will permit the plaintiff to choose to use the less expensive and quicker small claims process where the damages claimed are less than or capped at \$30,000. We are working with victim services and with technical experts in the computer field to ensure that adequate supports can be provided to victims of this tort to remove these images and use the legislation in addition to criminal proceedings.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope and intent that these amendments will send a strong message in Saskatchewan that distributing or sharing intimate images without consent is never appropriate,

that it will have consequences, and that the Government of Saskatchewan will stand with the victims of such attacks.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 72, *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm pleased to stand and offer our initial comments on Bill No. 72, *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*. Now, Mr. Speaker, as the minister alluded to, these amendments deal with the sharing of intimate images, often referred to as revenge porn. The Act spells out what options are for someone who has intimate images of themselves shared unwillingly.

There's no question, Mr. Speaker, that the Act talks about the definition of what constitutes an intimate image and a reasonable expectation of the setting of it being recorded. It also details that sharing such an image includes electronic transmission, selling, or advertising that image. It's basically all spelled out in this particular bill, Mr. Speaker.

And obviously someone who has an image of themselves shared and who wants to pursue action may do so and without proof of damage. These are some of the things that people ought to be aware of that are contained in the bill. And it also explains that someone who distributed the image of themselves consensually does not lose their expectation of privacy, and that's really an important point that I want to re-emphasize. That explains that someone who distributed the image of themselves consensually does not lose their expectation of privacy, meaning that if the image was shared that it should not result in the loss of the expectation of privacy. It's so vitally important in this day and age of social media.

Onus of proof. The legislation is unique in that it allows the victim to press charges or action without proof, Mr. Speaker. The accused must establish that they were given permission and consent to produce that image, and that in itself, Mr. Speaker, is certainly I think unique in the country of Canada in the sense that those that share images of people that they're not allowed to share, they must be able to be held accountable for their actions. And the aggrieved party, usually in this case the victims, should not have to find the proof themselves, that the people that are doing this kind of illegal and unagreed-upon activity, that the expectation is that they should provide all the proof. And I think that's certainly something that deserves some discussion and merit.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the other point that the bill also outlines is the actions against those who distribute non-consensual images, ranging from awarding damages to the victim, recovery of any profits made from distribution, and allows this process to occur in small claims court. The Act also allows the courts to prescribe a punishment that they find to be reasonable. Now, Mr. Speaker, we obviously want to know what the punishment is and we want to know what the ranges of damages could be for the victim. These are important figures to try and determine and to ascertain.

So it's quite clear that this is something that we ought not to tolerate in the province of Saskatchewan, in the sense of people distributing intimate pictures through the social media. That is something that many people do have concerns about.

And at the first note, Mr. Speaker, on this particular bill, I'm so pleased that we have a number of lawyers on the opposition benches that are very familiar with a lot of the Criminal Code and some of the privacy challenges that we have in this modern day, Mr. Speaker. So it gives me great confidence that once they have the opportunity to participate in the bill itself, that they'll certainly bring their great legal minds forward and in their comments, and that's something that obviously as a non-lawyer I can't give justice to the point.

But at the outset I would say that this is a very interesting bill, that the opposition certainly has further comment on that. But if it's meant to protect those that may be victims of revenge porn, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly something that we could look at favourably. But we do have questions and we do have comments to make, and those that have greater ability within my caucus will do so at a later time. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 72, *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 72, *The Privacy Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Adjourned.

Bill No. 73 — *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*. Mr. Speaker, this legislation amends *The Insurance Act* to reflect changes to the law on medical assistance in dying, and to make a series of housekeeping and technical improvements to the Act in response to ongoing industry consultation.

Mr. Speaker, *The Insurance Act* was passed in spring of 2015 but has not yet been proclaimed into force. It will replace *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act* and update Saskatchewan's insurance legislation to modernize the regulation of the insurance industry. Ongoing consultations with industry stakeholders have identified some minor technical wording issues and concerns with this Act.

Mr. Speaker, since *The Insurance Act* was passed in 2015, the Supreme Court of Canada issued the Carter decision, and medical assistance in dying provisions were added to the Criminal Code. The amendments will incorporate the definition of "medical assistance in dying" in the Criminal Code into *The Insurance Act* and will confirm that the section in the Act respecting suicide does not apply with respect to a death resulting from medical assistance in dying.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments will also make a series of housekeeping and other improvements to the Act that have been

identified as part of ongoing and extensive consultation with industry representatives. Making these amendments will now address several minor issues with respect to interpretation and application of the Act and will better facilitate the implementation of the Act.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also adds two new sections to the current Act, *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act*. The amendments will add a section to the current Act respecting medical assistance in dying so that this change can be made as soon as possible before the new Act is proclaimed into force. Similarly the amendments will add a section to the current Act respecting recovery by innocent persons so that those provisions can be used by victims of interpersonal violence, and others, as soon as possible before the new Act comes into force.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will support the efficient implementation of *The Insurance Act*. The new Act will provide the superintendent with a full suite of governance powers to ensure compliance with the Act and will also provide the insurance sector with the flexibility to expand and evolve in a rapidly changing environment.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved second reading of Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again it's my honour to stand and give the initial comments on Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*. And obviously for those that are watching, this bill does really have a lot of implications. Obviously the Supreme Court of Canada has had a number of cases before it. There's all ranges of opinions on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker.

It also talks about, the bill itself talks about several housekeeping amendments but primarily it deals with two sections. And one of the sections that I want to talk about is the new section that addresses medical assistance in dying.

Mr. Speaker, obviously that the minister alluded to, if an insured person receives medical assistance in dying, they are assumed to have died from illness or disability for which they have received assistance. Now, Mr. Speaker, as I travel to all of my constituents, I can tell you that often we will find ourselves in a number of situations where we have not only older people that are on their deathbed, Mr. Speaker, but many younger children and middle-aged people that have struggled through whether it be a serious illness such as cancer or heart failure, Mr. Speaker. It's a very traumatic and trying time for the family and certainly for the person suffering from that particular illness.

And we've had the opportunity as a family to speak to our own father who was struggling at the time, and at the age of 81 he had a very tough end of days, so to speak, when he struggled with his heart problem and his cancer problem. And we'd often sit down and chat with him about a number of things that we should take care of because he obviously knew he was dying.

And it was a very difficult, emotional time.

So I have a bit of understanding when families are going through this particular very challenging time for them. We're all taught to really respect life and value life. That is something that is inherent in all of us. It is something taught to us by not only our grandparents but our parents as well, Mr. Speaker. And the value of life is something that we have to keep reminding us of, that it's certainly something that is paramount to how we should think, that we should do all we can to value life and to protect life.

And I look at many of the parents throughout my constituency that have had children that had some severe medical challenges, Mr. Speaker. It just didn't happen 10 years ago; it happened 100 years ago. And yet you see some of the love and the care and the compassion that parents have for their children. And there's amazing stories of how parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters have really cared for a young child or an older person, to really take care of them in their critical and certainly in their dying days.

So when you see a section within the Act itself that talks about medical assistance in dying, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of emotion to it. There's a lot of people that have diverging opinions on this particular matter. But I want to point out, in my experience, Mr. Speaker, that when you . . . I made reference to my father as well; he had made a decision on his own several days before he passed. And I was privy to sitting next to him and he called me up and basically said, you know, get a hold of all the family and, you know, I'm ready to go. And we were successful in getting a hold of all the family members, save one. And, Mr. Speaker, my father died peacefully on his own several days after he gave me that message. And it was a pretty tough day.

[15:00]

As everybody knows, losing a parent is not easy. It's very difficult. But as he'd sat in the hospital for close to three years, as respectful as we should be towards him and how we were raised, our family spent a lot of time with him in the hospital. We were there for him. But we knew his struggles were going on each and every day, and it was only . . . We'd thought it was only a matter of weeks before he'd finally succumb to his illness. But, Mr. Speaker, he was a very strong and motivated man and he lasted for a long time, close to three years in the hospital.

And I can point out that in our discussions I often asked him how he felt about things, wanting to connect with him a bit more, because when I was younger I was just too afraid of him to speak about a lot of things. But when the moment came, I wanted to ask him a bunch of questions and we had a lot of talks. And he explained to me that his quality of life was so poor, that he had a difficult time breathing, that he had a difficult time seeing. And you see a lot of elders going through that in our communities where, despite the incredible challenges they face, many of them are still very stoic about continuing on.

And that's an amazing thing to see, Mr. Speaker, because obviously some of the elders in our community were raised in tougher times, and perhaps I was. There's no question that they

were very strong, emotionally and physically and spiritually — much more stronger than I was. And even despite all that strength, Mr. Speaker, in their last few days I think they spent a lot of time speaking about family, speaking about the quality of life and what to do upon their passing.

So we had those discussions with our father. But, Mr. Speaker, it was very, very hard and difficult on the family to watch him waste away slowly each day. And I can tell you that there's a lot of debate around our community or our supper table around the whole notion of the quality of life our father was suffering from. And certainly when you see bills of this sort come forward — I mean, it talks about medical assistance in dying — it certainly brings back a lot of memories for a lot of families, myself included. And it's something that we need to certainly pay attention to and speak to different groups and organizations out there as to how best, you know, we determine a course of action.

It is a very . . . Like I said, there's a varying amount of opinions on this particular issue. But I can tell you from our experience, the quality of life of some of the people that are suffering from disease that are ravaging their bodies, and certainly as the older you get, the more challenges you have. And despite the people being stoic, there are times when my father would simply whisper to me that, I wish I could go; I wish can go now because the suffering is too much. So it's something that's important.

And some believe that when you speak of those particular cases, it gives you time as a family to prepare. And the only lesson that I learned upon his death was turning to my siblings and my younger sisters, who were all basically very emotional, and I said, well if anything, if you love your father, you'll let him go. Because why would you want a loved one to suffer so much each and every day, stuck in a hospital on a hospital bed and suffering? And that kind of ease of mind for myself certainly helped. And being there for your father in their time, or mother, in their time of illness is very, very important. It's very special. But it also helps you move on.

So when you look at some of these examples of families that have gone through this — there's many, many families that have gone through this — it is something that has got a lot of emotion attached to it. And at least from the Supreme Court of Canada's perspective they understood that there may be some discussions that warrant this whole notion of medical assistance in dying. And it's nice to be able to see that in the insurance aspect of it, as one passes away, that this is recognized as something that they could not be denied insurance for if they have the type of insurance that would help their families upon their death.

So, Mr. Speaker, a lot of issues that could be attached to this particular bill. It's got a lot of emotion attached to it as well. There's a lot of debate to it. We, as legislators in the province of Saskatchewan, must take the time to learn about this. But at the very least, Mr. Speaker, what we should do in assisting the families is not allowing the insurance companies, who we pay insurance to, the option of walking away from their obligation to insure the family against the death of a loved one by saying that he was medically assisted in dying, so therefore he shouldn't get any kind of benefits. We have to be cognizant of

the fact that there's many compelling cases and many arguments that are out there, but at the very least, from the legal perspective, from the insurance perspective, this particular bill addresses some of that. And we'll obviously have much more discussions as we move forward. So this is something I think is really important.

And the other section, as it talks about recovery option for interpersonal violence, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that in this particular bill, that we need a treatment . . . There's no question that as we look at the overall challenges in many of our communities, and coming from an Aboriginal community, we're not immune to some of those challenges. But, Mr. Speaker, an example we would use is the drug trade in our communities that really create a lot of violence in some of our communities. That when the former president of the US [United States] spoke of the war on drugs, what he indicated, that we should have a war on services as well, to reclaim families. So some of the messages I get from some of the older people when they say, try and work with some of the young kids that may be addicted to drugs. We have to get services and programs and treatment for them so that we can reclaim them. We need to have that fight on that front as well.

So as you look at some of the options available, I would say, yes it's important to deal with the potential violence in our communities, but it's also important to try and prevent harm to families and to young people by providing good services, whether it's counselling services or to deal with the drug issue, Mr. Speaker, and also with the alcohol issue. As I mentioned before, I enjoy my beer now and then, so I'm not the person to become hypocritical in this Assembly. But that being said, that there are many services and programs that are required, that are required to strengthen our communities to reclaim the young people that may be caught up in the drug and alcohol trade, in the sense of becoming more and more violent, that we have to have those services to reduce that threat as well. And, Mr. Speaker, that bill doesn't include this, but I would point out that that's part of the process.

I really enjoyed the comments by the former US president when he said, we need to provide services. We need to provide programs, and we must have a war on the lack of services to reclaim our young people by providing the proper programs, proper facilities, and fund them accordingly. So that's something that obviously I think is a great point. Because you do want to reclaim lives. You don't want to prejudge people, and you want to be able to make sure that if there's someone that can be salvaged, we undertake as many of the efforts and options to do so.

So, Mr. Speaker, a lot more valued speakers from the opposition benches will be speaking to this bill as we move it through the introduction and committee stage. So on that note I move that we adjourn Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 74 — *The Evidence Amendment Act, 2017*
Loi modificative de 2017 sur la preuve

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Evidence Amendment Act, 2017*. Mr. Speaker, *The Evidence Act* applies to all matters over which the province has jurisdiction including civil litigation, family law, and provincial offences. The Act includes requirements respecting the preparation of court recordings and transcripts. The *Canada Evidence Act* applies to all criminal proceedings and to other matters over which the Parliament of Canada has jurisdiction.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will improve court processes by streamlining the court recording and court transcription procedures. Mr. Speaker, the amendments will permit any court official to certify a court recording, and will remove the requirement to certify recordings for brief and routine court proceedings such as adjournments. Currently only the court official who's present in court can certify a recording. For transcripts, the requirement for court transcribers to complete an affidavit for each transcript will be changed to a requirement to certify the transcript. Mr. Speaker, the amendments will also authorize electronic certification of recordings and transcripts which will facilitate distribution and increase efficiency.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, this bill will make a series of housekeeping amendments to reflect modern drafting standards with respect to adults in vulnerable circumstances. Reference to "medical capacity" and "mental disability" will be changed to "capacity" and "intellectual disability" throughout the Act.

Mr. Speaker, these amendments will support this government's ongoing commitment to improving court processes and increasing efficiency. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Evidence Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved second reading of Bill No. 74, *The Evidence Amendment Act, 2017*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to point out that there's been a number of changes to Bill 74, and certainly from the opposition perspective, as we look at some of the bills being proposed, Mr. Speaker, is that it's very important to distinguish what the government would like to refer to as modernizing or streamlining some of the Acts. Obviously the opposition is certainly familiar with and is very supportive of the notion of efficient use of dollars, Mr. Speaker. But the worry we have at times, when the government uses that particular language, really it begins to denote the notion that there may be cuts coming along the way. And a perfect example of that, Mr. Speaker, is in northern Saskatchewan as they slashed the court worker program. And you're seeing that that court worker program was highly valued in our northern communities.

So when we talk about the difference between what the

government may interpret as efficiencies, Mr. Speaker, we look at that as glaring cuts to services, Mr. Speaker, that really impede not only the justice system for the benefit of our people, but it also doesn't really help in supporting those that may want to recover as a result of them being engaged with the criminal justice system.

So it's really important to point out that, from the opposition perspective, we do not for one minute sit back and assume that when the government talks about efficiency within the justice system, that that couldn't mean . . . That could translate into cuts to services and obviously support mechanisms, such as the northern court worker program, Mr. Speaker.

This particular bill deals with a handful of language and wording changes, as was alluded to. It also takes some pieces of legislation and moves them into regulations. That's another worry we have, Mr. Speaker. It is often concerning when things are taken from legislation and moved into regulations, because we all value the notion that when you have legislation we get to obviously see what is being proposed. But, Mr. Speaker, the devil in the detail of many of these bills is around the regulations themselves. And what happens is the regulations can change as a result of the minister himself making those changes. So we have to be very, very careful when you have some of the changes being proposed without scrutiny.

So one of the important messages that we have on any bill when it comes to the Justice department is (a) is the efficiency, does that mean that you're cutting services and programs? In our history when dealing with the Saskatchewan Party, that is often the catchphrases for a reduction of services and jobs, Mr. Speaker. And then when you have parts of the bill itself that changes from the legislative agenda when you want to make a rule change, they simply now have the option of doing so.

So on both these fronts the bill itself has some worrying processes attached to it. It's one thing to describe the wording as indicated, changing the language from "facility" to "mental health centre," as an example; changing "mental capacity" to "capacity;" "mental disability" to "intellectual disability." Those are obviously language and wording that need to be changed and modernized.

And we're always looking at more efficient ways to run our justice system. Nobody's arguing that from our perspective. But, Mr. Speaker, given the Sask Party track record and history of slashing important programs such as the court worker program in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, it does have a detrimental effect on the justice system overall because there are less people being supported and less people being reclaimed and less people being rehabilitated through the court worker system. And, Mr. Speaker, those are vital services that are needed and necessary overall to provide the efficient process called our justice system. So we have a number of concerns on this bill as it pertains to some of the language.

[15:15]

When it talks about moving pieces of the legislation into regulations, we need to know what those regulation changes are being proposed and being contemplated. We need to know who has the authority, and we also need to know when the supposed

changes are coming forward.

So we have a lot of questions on this bill. And as I said in the past few bills, that we have an excellent understanding of the justice system, not only from advocates on the caucus side but from lawyers as well. So they'll certainly have a greater view and greater input on this particular bill. So we will certainly undertake to have them study the bill, reach out and network with the impacted groups, and come back with further comments. So on that notion, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 74.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 74. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 75 — *The Electronic Communications Convention Implementation Act/Loi de mise en œuvre de la Convention sur les communications électroniques*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to give second reading of Bill 75, *The Electronic Communications Convention Implementation Act*. This Act will implement in Saskatchewan the United Nations convention on electronic communications for international contracts once Canada accedes to the convention.

The convention was adopted by — and the acronym is U-N-C-I-T-R-A-L or UNCITRAL — the United Nations committee on international trade law, in 2005. It clarifies rules respecting electronic formation of contracts for international parties if those parties desire to use it.

Mr. Speaker, the convention provides for the rules that apply to an international contract if the parties elect to use them, including, where are the parties to the contract? How does one deal with the legal requirement that a document be in writing or signed or in original form? What is the nature of an offer made to the world online? When are electronic messages sent and received?

Mr. Speaker, the Uniform Law Conference of Canada adopted a uniform implementation Act for jurisdictions to use in adopting this convention and recommends its enactment in Canadian jurisdictions. Mr. Speaker, the legislation comes into effect on Royal Assent, but the convention will come into effect in Saskatchewan only when it is acceded to by Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Electronic Communications Convention Implementation Act*.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved second reading of Bill No. 75. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is a very interesting bill, Bill 75. Obviously the convention was

prepared by the UN [United Nations] on international trade law and it was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005. So this whole premise around using electronic communications to actually form and perform a contract between parties has been something that has been worked on for the last 12 years.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of information that needs to be shifted through on this particular bill. And obviously when you look at the bill itself, it makes the United Nations convention on the use of electronic communication in international contract laws in Saskatchewan, which means the "Convention applies to the use of electronic communications in connection with the formation or performance of a contract between parties whose places of business are in different States."

So really, Mr. Speaker, when you talk about international trade law, that a lot of time electronic devices and communications can actually be a valuable tool, and according to some of the information presented in the bill, that now it's being recognized here in Saskatchewan, that it is indeed a valuable tool in that clearly there's been a lot of discussion on this particular bill.

So overall I would say that the use of electronic, in this day and age, of electronic connections, Mr. Speaker, or electronic communications, if you will, that this is something that's been going on for a number of years, and a lot of businesses are using their cellphones to an amazing amount in terms of capacity and what they're able to download and what they're able to communicate with. So social media is certainly here. And certainly when it comes to social media, we could certainly view the electronic communication ability in this modern day as an economic tool as well.

So these are some of the things that are important. As you know, there are many people out there that use electronic means for a variety of purposes in the business community, as indicated by the UN. I think they would probably embrace this particular ability.

But you have to be also careful, Mr. Speaker. You and I know there's all kinds of firewalls in all kinds of businesses and that there is, in the banking industry in particular, that the possibility of being a victim of online messages, Mr. Speaker, those are some of the things that obviously people would worry about. So we have to make sure that the protocols are proper and that there is solid protection and there's solid security around this notion of electronic communication.

So those are some of the issues I think would come immediately to the foresight. Obviously we don't want to do anything that'll hurt business in Saskatchewan. As an opposition, we want business to not only just survive under the Sask Party but really thrive under the NDP.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think these are some of the things that . . . These tools are helpful with the proper safeguards and certainly with the history of some of the people that have been victimized in the past. And with better firewalls and better protection methods when it comes to electronic devices, I'm sure that this could be a very valuable tool and opportunity for businesses to explore and use.

So on that note, we have more discussion on this from a number

of sources that we want to undertake as the official opposition, and we will do so. And we will return to give more distinct and more direct advice as to how we think Bill 75 could do one thing, and that's on the back of all of our minds, is to make Saskatchewan a very highly attractive place to invest and to raise your families, build your businesses, and bring your investment to our province. We think that's a message that we want to share publicly, and we'll continue doing so as the official opposition.

So on that note, it could be a valuable tool, Bill 75. We need to see what the impacts are and certainly need to see the threats as well. So on that note, I will move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 75.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 75. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

**Bill No. 85 — *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites
Amendment Act, 2017***

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise and provide second reading for *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*. This bill will amend *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act* currently in use.

The current Act was approved in 2007 and, as part of its attendant regulations, implemented the institutional control program. The institutional control program, or ICP, manages the transfer of remediated sites back to the provincial custody and manages the long-term monitoring and maintenance of those sites. The ICP helps ensure the protection of the environment and public health and safety long into the future while also giving a mining company closure once they've fulfilled their obligation to remediate a site.

The program has proven valuable and prudent in the time since it was put into force. It has provided Saskatchewan with a practical means of providing environmental stewardship as well as closure to the industry. In this manner it has proven to be an asset for industry and government and also for attracting investment. Saskatchewan remains one of the most preferred jurisdictions in the world for mining investment and we continue to build on this reputation among the global industry.

The original Act requires a mandatory review of its provisions within five years of coming into force. In completing that review, Ministry of Energy and Resources has consulted with stakeholders and as a result is now introducing amendments to the Act to address issues that have been identified in the course of those stakeholder discussions.

Amendments will address the following issues. First, clarification on the statutory authority of the minister to require financial assurances. This simply clarifies that the minister can

ensure that the provincial government's financial risk position is mitigated in the event of an unforeseen site failure. The ICP requires that a site holder post an assurance fund, commonly called a financial assurance, for a remediated site in an amount that reflects the cost of remediating a maximum failure event at that site. The financial assurance may be in the form of cash, cheque, or any other financial instrument or security.

Creating tailing ponds are a common practice to help oil sands operators recycle 80 to 95 per cent of the fresh water used in mining operations, reducing the use of fresh water. Even after these sites are returned to the province from the site holder and enter into the ICP, if something were to happen to these tailing ponds, financial assurances would be used to fund the cost of remediating that failure.

The second amendment is establishing a process for the transfer of rights and ownership for a closed site that has been accepted into the ICP. This means a process is put in place to allow a different company to take responsibility for the land and the liabilities from the province if that company is approved to do so.

Third, contemplation of exemption of liability for the fund advisory committee. This is put in place to strengthen the protection of the committee in the event that the investment advice does not achieve expected results despite following strict rules that guaranteed no loss of that initial investment.

And fourth, inclusion of an ongoing mandatory review process for *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act*, which requires that legislation is regularly reviewed to ensure it is meeting its intended purposes.

I'm pleased to say that this bill has the support of industry, industry organizations, and the federal and provincial regulators involved in our stakeholder consultations. They feel that it addresses concerns they have about the Act and the programs in their current forms. The alternative of maintaining the status quo would not only have a negative impact with these stakeholders; it would also arguably fail to meet our obligations under the existing Act. Such an outcome would not be in keeping with the kind of leadership, responsiveness, and opportunity that the global mining industry has come to expect from Saskatchewan.

This is instead an example for other jurisdictions to follow in terms of clear policies and commitment to environmental stewardship and regulatory responsibility that we are known for. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 85, *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Bill No. 85, *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure that as we move forward in this modern day that we do all we can, as I mentioned at the outset, to attract investment to our province of Saskatchewan. There is no question in our minds in the opposition caucus that we have

to do these things to make Saskatchewan exciting and to also make sure we have good mortgage-paying jobs for many of our residents in the province of Saskatchewan.

I think the people of Saskatchewan want to see an attractive investment climate for business to come and thrive in the province of Saskatchewan. That's one of the primary focuses of many of the citizens across Saskatchewan and we share that belief as well. The second thing they obviously want to do is to derive as many benefits from that said investment, Mr. Speaker, whether it be good jobs or whether it be services to the province and whether it be, Mr. Speaker, investment into our communities. And I think that the third thing that people also look at when they assess some of these opportunities is what they would do to ensure that the environment and the environmental protection is maintained.

Now that's not the priority that people would prioritize their beliefs, Mr. Speaker. It's just pointing out those are some of the issues that I think people would want to ensure that any government of the province of Saskatchewan, that that would be their message.

So from our perspective as the opposition, we certainly see that the attraction of investment is important respecting small business, medium-sized businesses, and the large corporate players that come to Saskatchewan; that yes, their investment and service and their presence is required and needed here. And of course we want to make sure that jobs are maintained and certainly that the environment is protected. These are all bundled in a great package, Mr. Speaker.

And this is part of what we speak about when we talk about the financial assurance, as companies come into Saskatchewan and they invest in, say, an oil field. And then following their extraction of oil and gas, they hire a bunch of people. They pay taxes to the RM [rural municipality]. They pay royalty fees to the province of Saskatchewan. They stimulate local economies, Mr. Speaker. That's all important things to recognize that the private sector does.

But we also want to make sure, as this modern day, that this notion of polluter pays; that if somebody creates an environmental mess, then I think Saskatchewan people want them to clean it up. It is something that is important. And nowadays, right across the country, they have more of these Acts and more of these bills in place in the sense of saying that, look, if you create a mess on any particular site, that it's important that you put money away to reclaim that site. It's a very sensible approach, Mr. Speaker, and many more companies in the province and the country are now recognizing that they have to do this.

[15:30]

So it's really a modern position to take of any government when they're dealing with companies that want to extract resources. So the important point is that we must have neutrality on some of the decisions around when a site is reclaimed to the proper level. Is it the Saskatchewan Party level, where you see on many occasions where they have made many transgressions against environmental protection? And they have also on many occasions weakened things like labour law, Mr. Speaker,

throughout the province that put a lot of people at risk. These are some of the things that we don't really accept nor trust from the Saskatchewan Party.

So when they talk about allowing the minister to appoint a fund advisory committee, who would be in that fund, Mr. Speaker? Who would be in that fund? More than likely Sask Party supporters and people that may not have the province of Saskatchewan totally in the back of their minds. We've seen them do this on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker, where they put their own people, their own people in some of these key positions. And then what happens is that the balance between the economy and the environment gets thrown out of whack. And this is the reason why many, many people in Saskatchewan would be disappointed in some of the actions of the Saskatchewan Party when it comes to fulfilling their duty and obligations to meet that balance between the environment and the economy.

So it's something that we need to address. And I would point out to the people that are listening that from our own experience . . . And I'll go back a number of years ago. When you looked at the Uranium City cleanup, Mr. Speaker, obviously there was a federal Crown corporation called Eldorado Nuclear that was developing uranium mines around Uranium City in the early '50s and '60s, Mr. Speaker. And there was other companies getting into it as well.

What happens is as years pass and the uranium prices went down and as Uranium City properties become less buyable, some of these companies moved on, as the federal Crown corporation did. And they basically walked away from some of the old mines — whether it be Gunnar or Lorado, the two larger operations — and some of these mine sites were left alone. Some of them were not even paid attention to. And, Mr. Speaker, over time that practice was ended in the sense of telling companies, we now have to make sure you have money in place to be able to clean up some of the sites that you'd be operating on. That's a new law nowadays.

And unfortunately at the time, with the Uranium City issue, we had to go back to the federal government. When I say "we," I acted as the minister of the Environment at the time and convinced the federal government, and with the luck and support of our local MP [Member of Parliament], Ralph Goodale, were able to get NR Canada, Natural Resources Canada, and the Government of Saskatchewan to embark on this journey of cleaning up those northern uranium mines.

There was no owners that were held liable. Obviously the federal government through their Crown corporations were liable, but the other companies had basically gone defunct. But through a process of researching and tracking down some of the original owners of the properties, Mr. Speaker, we were also pleased to be able to get one company onside to help clean up that mess around Uranium City, and today the work is continuing and the mess is being cleaned up.

But that's one of the things that you need to avoid in the future, of simply telling mining or any companies that come and set up shop in the province that if there's some environmental challenges to where you want to set up shop, that you should put a contingency fund or a savings fund in place to mitigate

and to reclaim the sites that you're about to impact.

So that's the new norm today, Mr. Speaker, but lessons learned overall about how best to engage the companies, at the same time attract investors, at the same time develop our economy, and more importantly is balance that with the environmental integrity that many people of Saskatchewan demand of their government. And I think we're on the right track to achieve that.

So we have to continue being vigilant. And we also have to make sure that when it comes to environmental protection, that we have independence and that we have quality blue-ribbon people on these panels that can give expert advice. Because if they give you expert advice, neutral advice, it reduces the onus on future governments to be able to be held liable for some of the sites that may not be cleaned up by companies in this day and age. So we have to ensure that that balance is there.

So there's a lot of work to be done on this particular file. We all share the view that we want to attract investment but, as I mentioned, we also must incorporate environmental protection and maximize benefits for Saskatchewan people, for jobs, investment in communities, and royalties and taxes paid by the companies.

So on that note, we have a lot of work to do on this file and I move that we adjourn Bill No. 85, *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has adjourned debate on Bill No. 85, *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 86 — *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you for that, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017* be now read for the second time.

Mr. Speaker, we have taken a phased approach to rewriting the child welfare program legislation, and the amendments in this bill demonstrate our continued progress. Our earlier work saw amended provisions regarding disclosure of information and strengthened provisions governing the ministry's delegation agreements with First Nations Child and Family Services agencies.

The amendments in Bill 86 are generally administrative in nature. They set the stage for us to move forward in a more substantive change in the future that we require additional policy development, stakeholder consultation, and financial analysis prior to introduction.

The administrative amendments in this bill include minor word changing and modernized language that reflects current terminology; revised provisions to conform to current language drafting standards; new definitions: "dispute resolution" replaces "mediation," and in the review panel process, "peace officer" is added to enhance understanding and interpretation of the legislation.

Clarification that publication of any report or any part of a report of a child protection hearing is prohibited. Amendments that speak to the child being represented by a lawyer and the role of the minister for the child in care. Changes to section 52 of the Act to confirm that the minister is not the parent but has the rights and responsibility of a parent, depending on the authority of the child in care.

Repeal the provisions related to family review panels and the Family Services Board, which are not operationalized. Repeal of outdated amendments regarding the transfer of guardianship, transfer of custody, and provisions in the financial assistance that have never been proclaimed.

Removal of references to *The Child Welfare Act* and *The Family Services Act*, as children taken into care under these Acts have now aged out of care. And the time period in which the consent of voluntary committal may be revoked, as it is increased from 14 to 21 days to align with the period of *The Adoption Amendment Act, 2016*, and clarify that written notice of revocation must be given to a director.

The Act acknowledges the importance of First Nations participation in the decision making of matters relating to First Nations children in the delivery of services. Provisions for the family review panels, a family services board, and mediation services were introduced in 1989 in the proclamation of *The Child and Family Services Act*. It was intended that the implementation would be informed through the knowledge and experience gained by plotting these processes.

While the establishment of this out-of-court mechanisms were well intended, they were never operationalized. The premise at the time were the review panel's board would consist of volunteer community members. The plan lacked both infrastructure support and the mechanism to ensure consistent access and applications across the province. The ministry was also unable to support the First Nations community to operationalize these mechanisms.

The 1984 legislative amendments were intended to address the shortcomings of this Act, specifically with regard to the transfer of custody, the transfer of guardianship, and the financial assistance and kinship-in-care arrangements. While accepted and supported by many stakeholders, First Nation leaders and organizations articulated that the provisions were counter to their culture and values. Instead, over time, the ministry has continued to strengthen extended family options through the enhancing of policy and the Person of Sufficient Interest program. This program has been prioritized by the transformational change being considered for the future phase of the ministry's legislative renewal.

The repeal of unused provisions and provisions that have never been proclaimed will demonstrate the government's continued

commitment to work differently with First Nations and Métis authorities and will enable the collection development of a new extended family care framework moving forward.

To bring the CFSA [*The Child and Family Services Act*] into alignment and *The Adoption Amendment Act, 2016* to be proclaimed in late 2017, section 4 is amended to include the spiritual heritage of a child as an important component of his or her upbringing.

The time period in which consent and voluntary committal can be revoked will be increased from 14 to 21 days, and written notice of revocation will be delivered to the director — section 50. Moving to a 21-day revocation period provides both parents additional time to consider the impacts of such a life-changing decision and aligns with Saskatchewan and the majority of Canadian provinces and territory.

The proposed amendments outlined today are a demonstration of the government's commitment to improve the lives of vulnerable families, children, and youth who receive child welfare services in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Social Services has moved second reading on Bill No. 86. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to certainly first of all recommend to the minister that the particular act of the bill that he's made reference to today as it pertains to the First Nations and to the Métis community of the province of Saskatchewan, that they are a vital partner. Obviously when we look at some of the statistics of some of the challenges as it pertains to child and family services across our province, a number of, a good number of the children in care are of Aboriginal ancestry, Mr. Speaker. And so it stands to reason that there's also a great opportunity for a role for the First Nations and Métis people to play.

And I go back to the earlier section made by Bill 86 when we talk about . . . Some of the updates section are referring to the child's best interest. There are changes to the child's physical, mental, and emotional level of development to, and I quote, "the mental, emotional, physical and educational needs of the child and the appropriate care or treatment, or both, to meet those needs." And they also incorporated changes to the child's emotional, cultural, physical, and psychological and spiritual needs to "the child's cultural and spiritual heritage and upbringing."

These are some of the things that are highly valuable in the Aboriginal community because, as I mentioned before, when you reach out to some highly valuable partners such as First Nations and the Métis communities, that you must have corresponding capacity that the government currently enjoys. Being a former minister of this portfolio, it was always important to have the engagement of the ICFS, the Indian Child and Family Services, and the agreements we have across the province.

But when you look at some of the resources afforded to the Aboriginal community and their agencies, that you often find a disparity amongst things such as training, salaries earned by

those working in the ICFS system, and of course also full engagement. We needed to work on those particular aspects of the relationship we have with the First Nations and the Métis communities throughout the province, and it's important that we do this well. It's important that we do this very well because, Mr. Speaker, as legislators in this particular Assembly, we have to figure out how the best interests of the child is paramount in our thinking. But part of the process of what's the best interests of that child is not only just spiritually and making sure that you have educational needs being met, and of course nutrition, safety, security, but there also must also incorporate values such as cultural connection. These are things that are important and have been said by many of the First Nations and Métis leaders over time. And, Mr. Speaker, it's really, really important that we keep the conduit of information between the province of Saskatchewan and our ICFS partners that are out there.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that as we began to embark on this whole journey of how we can forge a new relationship, Mr. Speaker, there's obviously give and take in any relationship. But the paramount reason why we need to make sure that we stay on top of the relationship, to make sure that as the bill indicated, Mr. Speaker, the best interests of that child, what does that mean? From different perspectives, there may be different values placed on what the best interests of that child would mean, but obviously we need full engagement of not only psychologists, not only professional people within the Ministry of Social Services, but we also need elders of the Aboriginal community and leaders and parents and grandparents that play an incredible role, and the extended community that play an incredible role in bringing up children in many of our First Nations communities and Métis communities as well.

[15:45]

So there is a lot of work to do on this particular file. I would certainly point out that as you look at many of the children in care . . . And I travelled to a lot of communities in my particular area. And I can tell you today, Mr. Speaker, as I go to the school in Ile-a-la-Crosse, as I visit the daycare in Beauval, and as I go to a Child First centre in Buffalo Narrows, over the past number of times and the number of years that I've been to different places, and I see the value of our children. They're bright. They're energetic. They're confident. They're well cared for. And it gives me great confidence of the future that when we have that kind of dedication at the community level, that there's no question in my mind that if we were to have the same vision in a relationship between the Department of Social Services and the Indian Child and Family Services agreements we have throughout the provinces, that that's what the ultimate objective is on both sides.

We need to figure out how we achieve that quicker, better. And one of the first things I think we need to do is to ensure that we have the same resources allowed within our Ministry of Social Services and that that ability be transferred to the ICFS agreements. Because again, as I pointed out, the best interest of a child is to make sure that there are good systems of care in both the non-Aboriginal community and the Aboriginal community.

It only stands to reason that these are Saskatchewan children that we have to care for. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that from some of the programs like KidsFirst, some of the kindergarten programs in our schools, and some of the after-school activities in many of our youth centres, that there are some incredibly talented kids in our community. There are some beautiful human beings in our families and in our towns and in our First Nations communities, and when you see that kind of value and that type of children, it really gives you a lot of confidence.

There's no question, often through my travels I tell many people that I speak to that our children always need more heroes, and that's really, really important to point out. And I think one of the things that we ought to do, and certainly from the opposition perspective, we embrace that notion that in order for us to have a robust and very inclusive and very effective child and family services thought and plan in the province of Saskatchewan, that we must have full engagement with the people that we're working with. And if there's 50, 60 per cent of the children in care that are of Aboriginal ancestry, then we must have the corresponding supports afforded to those organizations that provide that service on behalf of First Nations and the Métis communities of our province. We must view them as equal partners, and we must view their input as valuable.

And we must also ensure that the services and the programs we put in place are held in high standard, that they're very effective in their delivery, and they're also very, very focused in their approach, and very accountable. So there's a lot of work to be done on both sides. Don't forget — this is about children. This is not about politics. And the best interests of a child, from my perspective, is to see the value of every child and think how well that child could be or how strong they could become in the future if we be heroes to them when they're small.

Now obviously when you look at our own situation, Mr. Speaker, I've been privy to have three healthy, happy daughters. And an entire community, I think the constituency of Athabasca, are pretty happy they all look like their mother. But more so, I'm happy that their mother cared for them very well. Obviously as an absent father I was always very confident that my wife was looking after my children very well, so it allowed me to work and do what I need to do to be an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]. And if the roles were different, if she had to come and work here, I think I'd be able to do the job, well not as well as she has, but certainly I would support her in that capacity as well. But as a result of that, I see my children are confident. They're fairly aggressive in what they want to do and they certainly owe that to their mom. So every child deserves that kind of supportive and conducive environment, and I credit my wife for that, and thank goodness that we didn't have the intervention that some families have as a result of a variety of cases.

So a child needs a hero, and I think the best way for us to be heroes in this particular Assembly is to approach the First Nations and Métis communities and really have a robust, comprehensive, respectful, effective relationship so that we can get as many children off to a great start in their early years so they can indeed become an important fabric of our province you call Saskatchewan, that we needn't be at odds, we needn't be at

odds in this province, and that we can truly reflect what I've always said, "from many peoples, strength" — the province's motto.

And the First Nations and the Aboriginal people add a lot of value to our province. They'll continue doing so and we could quadruple that value in many ways if we do the strategic investment in our children because, Mr. Speaker, the First Nations and Métis people of our province have proudly supported Saskatchewan in the past and they'll continue doing so in the future. We just need to respect them more, engage them more, and build a Cadillac version of Indian Child and Family Services to get every child that's in care — whether they're First Nations, Métis, or not — to give them the opportunity to be strengthened, and an opportunity to be supported, and an opportunity to be recognized. And, Mr. Speaker, once you do that, I think every child will certainly have a great start in life.

So on that note, I would point out that some of the changes to this bill alludes to the best interests of the child. We have a lot more people that have a lot more comments on this particular bill because there's so many different angles one can take on any aspect of child and family services. It is a very difficult task that the officials within the Department of Social Services undertake. They're professional people. They've been trained to deal with some of the circumstances, but the point is that we must make the system understand that there's got to be a shift in how we think, and that there's got to be a shift in how we deal with children, and there's got to be much more resources put in play so that we're able to have success, and that we don't see the numbers of children in care increase each year as evidenced as we've seen under the Sask Party, that we need to see the number of children in care, youth in care, decrease over time. And we can do that strategically, intelligently, but the first thing we have to do is become good partners with all those impacted.

So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca's moved to adjourn debate on Bill 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 76

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 76 — *The Parks Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a

pleasure indeed to rise and engage in this debate, the second reading debate of Bill No. 76, *The Parks Amendment Act*. It's a very important piece of legislation that we have before us today, and I want to join my colleague, the member from Athabasca, and his words earlier, but also in congratulating the new Minister of Parks and Culture in this work here and a very important portfolio he has of Parks and Culture.

It's one that some might view as small but it sure is mighty in the sense of how people view its importance here in Saskatchewan. He alluded to how many visitors we had in our parks over the past two years — some 4 million. Of course that only speaks a little bit to how people value the cultural activities, the parks activities here in Saskatchewan.

Like the member from Athabasca, I too was a member of parks and I can remember sometimes getting roasted from the other side about certain fees that we had in our parks. I might allude to that later, but somehow we all escaped okay from that. I find it interesting though, if I were to talk just a bit about the firewood fee that we had and how at a time when we were a have-not province, the last year of being a have-not province, this is one of the first things that the Sask Party got rid of. And I believe to date, while they have done many other things to raise taxes, taxes on children's clothing, they have not — or they contemplated people on social services having to pay for their own funerals — they have not considered raising the fees on firewood in the parks. And I find that interesting that all the different things that we could do to help.

In fact they have walked away from urban parks. You know as well as I do, Mr. Speaker, how important that is in Saskatoon with Meewasin. We know Wakamow park in Moose Jaw, there was concerns, people losing jobs. But still, that is one thing that they hold near and dear and no matter what. I think this might be a question for . . . It might be a bit of an acid test actually for the five contenders for the leadership of the Sask Party. I would throw that out there. Would they ever consider charging for firewood in our provincial parks? What would they charge before . . . What would they raise taxes? We know one would make people pay for funerals. Other people would, we know . . . Well they have talked about raising taxes on children's clothing, all of that. So I do have some concerns.

But I want to get back to what my colleague from Athabasca was talking about. And he said, he talked about new parks should be an opportunity to celebrate. Everyone in the province should feel really good about a new park. It's a wonderful thing. It's a wonderful thing. And one of the wonderful things I had, especially in the centennial year of 2005, I had a chance to visit some . . . I think there are some 25, 27 parks. I didn't get to Clearwater but I got to most of our provincial parks. It's a wonderful thing, and don't forget about those other parks.

But when you have a new park it's a wonderful thing. But our member from Athabasca raised . . . And he was very sensitive to what some of the First Nations, the indigenous folks, were feeling in the area, about duty to consult and how that had not been really fully carried out in the spirit of the parks. And how important that is, especially how we want to see . . . And I think it really is. We need to really reflect on this idea.

It's an opportunity to celebrate what makes Saskatchewan so

special and what makes that area of Saskatchewan so special as we invite people, local people, people from across the province, people from across Canada. People from around the world have often come and remarked on how beautiful this province is. And so it is a reason to celebrate and we do not want to leave anyone out of that celebration. We don't want to make people feel like they are being forced along or if they don't join along, if they don't come along they'll be left behind. And this is a real problem.

So this is why we have some concerns and we'll be raising this concern a lot about this particular park. We understand this happened, the last new park, the Great Blue Heron park. It was not fully supported. In fact we understand there were grave concerns raised by some of the local indigenous folks about being left out and not being truly heard.

Mr. Speaker, you know, over the past few years since the release and the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, we've heard about opportunities, opportunities to build new relationships with indigenous folks, both the Métis and the First Nations in Canada. And isn't this a wonderful opportunity? Isn't this the best opportunity, actually, where we could come together and really celebrate truth and reconciliation by having a new park where everyone is fully, fully engaged?

And I look back, and this is a history that we all share in Saskatchewan. We have a history here in Canada of not having the best records of consultation. And right away — and this goes back to my time, when we were in government — people right away reminded me about the National Resources Transfer Agreement of 1930.

[16:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, you may not be aware of it — many members may not be aware of it — but that was part of the deal when we first became a province in 1905. Other provinces, when they came into Confederation, they became owners of the Crown land that was within their boundaries. We were not. That didn't happen until 1930, when the federal government in its wisdom transferred the natural resources to Saskatchewan. This was basically a Crown land transfer, and of course all their mineral resources and all of that that came along with it.

But this was a lost opportunity, and we've not really fully recovered from that transfer, because to many First Nations, we are all part of the treaties. We are all part of the treaties. And they viewed that transfer as a massive mistake in consultation. They look back at that and they look back at how they should have been included in the consultations around that transfer of Crown lands to Saskatchewan.

And part of that, part of that history was the initial set-up of the parks in Saskatchewan. Now, I'm doing my math really quickly. The first parks were set up in the 1950s, and part of that was the utilization of Crown lands that we had here in the province. But of course the First Nations, they're very wise people, as they keep track of the things that have happened. They know the missteps that we've done as brothers and sisters along the journey. And for them, the misstep that we did as a province in the 1930s, we've never really fully recovered from

that area of the NRTA [Natural Resources Transfer Agreement].

And so I think of this, and I think and I urge the government over the side . . . They said they did a nine-step program of fully consulting with the local Métis, the First Nation bands in the area, the hunters, the trappers, the cottagers. And that's a good thing, and it took them six years to get to this stage. But you know, I would urge those folks, make sure you do it right. Make sure you bring people completely along so that there is a celebration, that people do feel good. They don't feel left out; they don't feel forced to come along and if they don't come along, they're going to be left behind. I think this is a real opportunity to do the right thing.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I do have some concerns about the parks and this park that will be known . . . And I guess the minister has said that for the first six months it will be known as Porcupine Hills Area Provincial Park, but it's only a temporary name until they get a further, a final name. But I would really encourage him . . . And what a wonderful thing in the spirit of truth and reconciliation if it could have an indigenous name, because it has such meaning for the local First Nations. This is very, very important that we get it right.

Now often I reflect on what the minister says, and he talks about how they had consulted over the past six years to do the right thing. And he talks about how this park is some four hours from Regina and Saskatoon. And it's good, you know. We live close to Pike Lake Park. It's good to have close parks. Blackstrap is another one. It's good to have the local parks that are close so you can get out really quickly. But it's good to have ones that are a little further away.

He talks about the mixture of open grasslands, mixed aspen, birch, white spruce forest cover in the McBride Lake block. This is very good. It has two campgrounds, three cottage subdivisions, so there's already activity happening out there, very much. But I think this is really important that, as I say, we get it right.

One of the things that I was disappointed in what the minister had failed to say . . . And I'm going to read from *The Parks Act*. This is *The Parks Act* that was passed in 1986 and then has been amended several times since then. But it talks about the establishment of park land, the dedication of park land. I'll read this into the record because it's very important to go back to the basics and understand, what are we trying to do here? What are we trying to do here? So dedication of park land, and I'm reading from page 4. It's section 3(1):

3(1) Park land is dedicated to the people of Saskatchewan and visitors to Saskatchewan for their enjoyment and education.

(2) The natural, prehistoric and historic resources of park land are to be maintained for the benefit of future generations.

So two simple statements, but I think they speak volumes. The first talks about enjoyment and education. The minister did go on at length talking about enjoyment. He talked to how important it was that the people had a place that they could go

and enjoy the natural beauty of the area — they could hunt; they could do various activities — and how important that was.

But, Mr. Speaker, one of the things he didn't talk about . . . And I reread his speech a couple of times, and if I'm wrong I'd be happy to be corrected. But he did not talk about the educational component of this park. This is something that we're seeing more and more lacking. Parks are more than just a place to go camping, more than a place to go hunting. It's a place to learn about nature. And I think we see more and more in our education system those lost opportunities. More and more people are living in urban environments and really . . . And people have talked about an environmental deficit. They aren't learning the environmental hands-on experiences that many of us would have had.

You know, I remember as a teacher in the '80s teaching up by Loon Lake and being able to take my kids over to Loon Lake Provincial Park, and how that was a protected area and they could learn so much dipping in the water, going on nature trails, that type of thing.

And I'm going to come back to this part about jobs, but this is a critical, critical piece and I think that we need to go back and talk to the minister and say, so in your speech — now maybe it was an oversight, maybe it was just something forgotten — but you didn't mention education. This is a big investment and it's a big investment for the people today, the kids today, the parents taking their kids out, but it's also for future generations.

And I think the second part where we talked about the “natural, prehistoric and historic resources are to be maintained for the benefit of future generations,” and of course that is so true. And of course this is the part where the local indigenous people have identified burial grounds, areas for collecting natural medicinal herbs, that type of thing, and that this may be lost. And as my colleague from Athabasca has said, that when you create a park, is it viewed to be welcoming or is it viewed to be a no-trespass zone?

Now what will be happening to those sacred sites? Have they been fully identified? Will they be protected? This is a commitment that I think needs to be made up front and needs to be made in a way that is respectful of tradition and is respectful. And it actually can be done in a very, very positive way if it's done in the matter of truth and reconciliation. And this would be a wonderful, wonderful gesture and I think that this could be something that would speak volumes and speak to the concern my member had — from Athabasca — around celebration and making sure that we are all there together.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think I want to make sure that the minister — and I know these folks read these speeches the odd time — but be prepared to talk about education around the parks because if you're creating a park solely as an amusement or a park, that's a problem. That's a problem.

We saw them walk away from the urban parks saying we have no responsibility here, particularly when they have responsibility, particularly when we have the opportunity for education and learning so close to people in the urban areas. But the government has chosen to walk away from that, and I hope they're not choosing to walk away from the educational

component of their mandate for parks. That would be really, really unfortunate.

I want to also raise a concern. This was a concern that was raised on CBC just after the announcement was made and the minister had spoken on November 1st. And it quotes Vern Friday, the lands manager at Key Lake First Nation. And he said he acknowledges that they were part of the discussion since the beginning. And he notes that people had historically met in the area for traditional ceremonies and other activities. He noted that some people may not be happy because of the influx of tourists but that they came along and he felt it was going to happen anyways.

And I would quote, he says, "It's always been there for them for healing and spiritual help in hunting." But he talks about . . . And if I could put this . . . I think this is important. Vern Friday, and I quote from the CBC article:

Vern Friday said he wants to see jobs within the park for First Nations people.

Parks Minister Gene Makowsky [and I'm quoting here] said jobs aren't likely.

He said the campsites will be "rustic," with no electrified sites, no extensive paving, and no major changes to recreational areas.

So he said jobs aren't likely. That's unfortunate. It's truly unfortunate, you know, and I think . . .

I had the good fortune of seeing the American historic site down in Montana where the Battle of the Little Bighorn was, and it's very interesting to see how many of the employees are First Nations descent. And we need to do more of that and speak of the beauty. And I think it's a wonderful thing when you have local people being able to speak of the beauty of the place, but of the meaning of the place. It's more than just beauty. It's not just . . . You know, we all can appreciate a wonderful fall scene or a beautiful spring scene, but it's more than that. And these places in Saskatchewan have much more deeper meaning.

So I have some real concerns about this, Mr. Speaker. You know as I said, and I really want to reiterate this because I think that we have an opportunity to get it right. We think obviously the concept of a new park is a good concept. It protects the land and it provides an opportunity, as I said, for enjoyment but also for education. This is more than just an amusement park. It has to be much more than that.

So let's hope that the minister as he goes through the next six months — and of course we're going to be talking about this; I know many members on this side will want to talk at length about this — but take the opportunity to fully implement the duty to consult. Make sure people feel that there is an opportunity to celebrate, that everybody is included, nobody is left out, and that they don't have to wonder about should I come on, is there no trespassing here, but it is a welcoming place. And as I said, this should be a wonderful opportunity, a wonderful opportunity for truth and reconciliation here in Saskatchewan and in the Porcupine area. We have a lot of bad

history around how we consult. Let's make this an example of doing it right.

And so, Mr. Speaker, as I said, I know many . . . We want to talk about other bills today, but there will be other people who want to speak to this issue, but I just want to wrap up my comments here again saying, make sure this is an opportunity to celebrate. Make sure we get it right, that no one is left out, and we don't fall back into those old ways that we have seen, that this park is fully . . . has a strong history. And we think about jobs. We think about good jobs, meaningful jobs for people.

And to that effect, Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment on Bill No. 76, *The Parks Amendment Act, 2017*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 76, *The Parks Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[16:15]

Bill No. 77

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 77 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Superannuation Plans) Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to join in on a few comments on Bill No. 77, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Superannuation Plans) Amendment Act, 2017*.

When you look at the overall and some of the notes and some of the information that's been provided, some of the comments from the minister into this, it is now going to change the way it was. It used to be a three-person, I guess, commission that was appointed to sit on a superannuation board, which are Liquor Board employees. And I think if you look at the numbers, there was three appointed; one of them had to be from the employees. But there's been some changes and these amendments are going to change.

And being that there was no new members since 1977, there are no new members, it's been closed for that, to be in that plan. Currently I believe there are two actually active members that are within that plan and there's about 177 that are using the plan right now, are retired. And the plan's continuing to operate to provide them with their pension which they've worked the years. And as we know, pensions are . . . You put in the good years and you have a pension that's supposed to provide you an income. There's different ways that you can do it. Some will give you so many years. Some will, you know, to your life. And then there's a spouse. But we'll get a little bit into that.

But this is kind of just taking it from where you have, like I said, going from a three-person, I guess, commission to look

after the fund to now the minister will have the sole powers, and that's fine. But we also had raised concerns when any time you move out . . . And I don't know who exactly, you know, they consult with, they talk with, and it might make good sense to move it the way they're going. And I know sometimes we want to, through committee and through the House when you talk to individuals, sometimes they are housekeeping items where we get it cleaned up.

But having said that, like I said, there is two active members that are still working. There's 170 that are retired. So we look at this and now the minister will have, I guess he will be the sole member of this commission to look after the plan. Now how that all will lay out, we'll have to ask some questions in committee and get right to the point. I think we'll have an opportunity to talk to those that are maybe impacted and see. And there might be reasons why and good reasons why this has been asked to come forward to make the changes.

We're talking about a retirement plan that didn't have a new member, like I said, since 1977, but any time you give the sole power to the minister on that side of the House and I think for anyone, you want to make sure why that's happening and to make sure we do our due diligence on this side of the House to ask those questions to make sure that, you know, certain powers . . . And some will say, sometimes you give too many powers to one individual taken from, you know, order in council or from a committee that's struck to do the good work that they've been asked to do.

So having said that, like the other part of this process, each year since 1995 this agreement had expired, so every year they'd have to go to order in council to have those in the early retirement option . . . So if there was an option in your plan to take early retirement, that ended in 1995 is my understanding. If I have the facts straight, in 1995 that ended. So each year they would have to go to order in council and ask for it to be extended each year. It was almost like a yearly, I guess, approval. Now from what I get from this, that won't have to happen anymore. That will not have to happen. I think the minister will have the powers to do that, to just go ahead and sign that. If I'm clear on this, Mr. Speaker, he will have that power.

Now I know my colleagues and I will have more questions about this and we'll have more comments that we'll make for the record, but also in committee we will ask some questions. So I don't have a lot more to say about this. Like I said, sometimes they're changes that have been requested and it makes sense, you work together to pass legislation. But here are some of the points I just wanted to put into the record to say that, you know, we have asked. So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 77.

The Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 77. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 78

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 78 — *The Municipal Employees' Pension Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just to join in and make a few comments on Bill No. 78, the municipal employees' pension amendments, 2017.

There's some of the language that's been changed in this, and I think with times and as we move forward, they're just doing some important changes that need to reflect on the legislation. And on one of these, it's just referring to gender neutral and modern language that we use today, and that's kind of the part on this Act. This Act is just going to change some of that. So it provides for those provisions. And maybe back in the day, you know, we referred to "him" maybe in the Act. And I think they're just trying to say it's time that we modernize and change the language in the legislation that's in there so that exists.

The legislation in existence required that, for an example, you had a CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] rep, an employee of the municipal services. Some of those guides that are on there and actually as a guiding to give some direction and guidance.

Part of the provision in there, like I said, is housekeeping. It's just going to allow that to make sure that they have the legislated existing board requirements, who they appoint. And like I said, one employee would have been appointed to serve as a guiding, I guess, a guiding board — give some, whether it be some direction, I guess. I'm not sure. And that's where sometimes we'll have to ask exactly why is this change coming in here. But what it looks like is the guiding, to give some guidance, some ways to look at different things on how this operates. But again it's more of housekeeping, some of this.

There's also a provision in there, the transfers. If you have a pension plan that you belong to and you now are going from one pension plan to a municipal pension, you can actually have that transferred. So if you've got new employment, you're leaving one organization from employment and you're going to another one, this allows you to transfer that into the municipal pension, just to make sure that your pension . . . You're not having two. If it meets the requirements, you can move it into. You'd have to check with the agencies.

And I know we'll have some questions about that again in committee on some of these as to exactly how that happens and who. And we've kind of asked some of these questions, and as I talked to earlier, they are simple housekeeping cleaning that need to be done, and sometimes that happens.

But sometimes you have to be careful too, that we have to do our due diligence. And the government consults with who they need to see. Are there going to be any impacts on somebody? And I think you want to make sure that that happens. So at this point I know I have no further comments on Bill No. 78, and I'm prepared to adjourn and let my colleagues continue on it.

And we'll work, more work on this in the committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member for Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 78. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 79

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 79 — *The Public Employees Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 79, *The Public Employees Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2017*. Bill number ... It deals with the public employees pension plan. Again I say, and it's in here, it's just mainly housekeeping. The bill updates the membership of the commission, noting that back in the day CEP [Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada] were a part of that union, were a part of this committee.

And what's happened is there's been a change some time ago that they've actually taken the opportunity here to change some of this in the Act, and those members that are appointed to the commission and that, now that there's no longer the need to have the CEP members sitting on there because now all CEP members are covered under a union called Unifor. And Unifor now looks after that, so there's no requirement to the ... So again, as I said, it's mainly housekeeping.

The other changes that will be allowed is the board to include members who live out of Saskatchewan, from my understanding, to sit, should they be appointed, to sit on the commission. Let's just to say, if they retire, they moved out of province, my understanding ... And I know we need to ask this in committee to make sure we're clear on this, it's clear, that if they are resident and they move, they still can sit on there. And that's what we're ... We'll have to get clarification on it because we're not sure. I don't think it's specified in there, and it's not clear. So if it's not, I know that we'll do the work and we'll work on it.

The other change in here, Mr. Speaker, should a spouse ... I guess my understanding, if it's a deceased person that was in the plan, they happen to, like I say, pass away, and their spouse is getting the pension, that they wouldn't have to leave the pension. They could opt to stay in.

Or I guess in another side of it, we have heard some of the minister's comments. And I believe that it was some of my colleagues might have made the comment. Later on if it's in a separation and they choose to, two people who, you know, choose to no longer be together and they separate, I believe, my understanding, the spouse then, if I'm clear, has the opportunity to say, you know, half of the pension or the portion that that

spouse is entitled to, they can say, I want that portion, even though if the spouse that's in the pension decides to pull theirs out and leave. Should the spouse of the individual in that pension, that person can choose, my understanding, to stay in the plan. And when it's time to collect a pension or a benefit from the plan, they can do that.

And that's again, I think it was more housekeeping and to making sure that some of these changes help out clarifying exactly how that's to be and how that will be played out. So it changes that legislation and makes those changes in this amendment to that Act.

So at this point I have no further comments on it. I will wait for committee and my colleagues to have some. So I'm prepared to adjourn debate on 79.

The Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 79. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 80

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 80 — *The Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 80, *The Municipal Financing Corporation Amendment Act, 2017*.

Actually there's not a lot in this actually, this Act. But I want to talk a little bit about the good work that municipalities out there do. When we talk about infrastructure and the good work, you know, I know my own mayor and council, they collect our property taxes, which have been going up, school taxes. And you know, there's been more pressure put on municipalities because the government's downloading some of their problems and some of the problems this government has created, you know, with the scandals, the waste, and you know, some of those issues, Mr. Speaker.

So more of that pressure and burden has been put on our taxpayers and our municipal leaders to figure it out and fix some of those challenges. And I give them credit. Some of them are doing a great job in light of the pressure that's been put on them. And sometimes some of the increases, whether it's school taxes, property taxes for sure, you know, it's almost that pressure of, you know, we're expecting citizens ... Well that government on the other side is expecting citizens to pay more and get less services.

And I'm glad our municipalities and the leaders that are there are fighting hard to make sure they're doing what they can do. They're limited, you know, with the resources and with the challenges that this government has been putting on them for,

you know, a number of years, claiming on one hand, you know, they're getting record revenue and all this from them, but in other areas when we see . . . when you think about it, so you see challenges.

But I just wanted to talk, you know, a little bit about the municipalities and the good work that they have done for many of us, and I thank them for their great work. And I think back home in the North and I think in the rural areas and the urban centres, and many of the elected officials do the great work. And sometimes they're asked to do a lot when their, you know, their budgets are being cut, and they're expected to provide the service to Saskatchewan residents when you have a government who's putting that pressure on them. And that needs to sit in the government's lap for that because that's clear. It's their responsibility. And they are putting the challenges out there to many of our municipalities.

[16:30]

But having said that, I just wanted to get into a little bit about the actual, this bill, and what this is asking for. It's an increase. Our municipal finances corporation provides loans for infrastructure for municipalities to continue to do when they make a good plan, and some of our municipalities do a great plan when it comes to infrastructure. They see the needs and they are creative and they find different ways.

But here's a plan where they can apply for some of the dollars to help them do the infrastructure that they need to do. And there used to be a cap, and I believe it was 350 million. And the government is asking for a change for it to go up to \$500 million so that this fund is there for municipalities to continue to do the good work to . . . And I don't know the details of it, but they can access those dollars whether it's on a loan or if it's a . . . And I'm not sure of the details. And I know we'll ask those. And some of my colleagues probably will have the answers on that. But it'll be an opportunity to ask the minister and his officials exactly how this will impact the municipalities and we can find out exactly.

But there isn't a lot more into this bill. So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 80.

The Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 80. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 81

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 81 — *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to

wade into the debate on Bill No. 81, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2017*. I'm no longer the SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] critic and haven't been for several years, but for me drinking and driving, or not just drinking and driving, impaired driving, and doing better here in Saskatchewan, that is still near and dear to my heart, Mr. Speaker.

So in terms of Bill No. 81 . . . And it's interesting. We've had many, many versions of this bill before us in the last few years. It's come back to us in 2014. It was again before us last year. So there's been incremental positive changes made, Mr. Speaker, and there's some good things in this bill, but I will get to that in a moment.

So this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, will ensure that experienced drivers with a blood alcohol content between .04 and .08 or who fail a field sobriety test will face a seven-day administrative driving suspension if they have a child under the age of 16 in the car with them. So instead of getting a three-day licence suspension on the first offence, that would be a seven-day suspension. Instead of a 21-day suspension on a second offence, it'll change to 30 days. And for a third offence, it increases from 90 to 120 days. So that's the licence suspension part.

The length of time a vehicle will be seized is also increasing, Mr. Speaker. Both new and experienced drivers will have their vehicles seized if they have a child under 16, Mr. Speaker, for seven days on the first offence, up from three days. It increases from seven to 30 days on a second offence. On a third offence it increases from 60 days, up from seven days for new drivers, or 14 days for experienced drivers, Mr. Speaker. *The Traffic Safety Act*, this is an Act that also sets out the administrative penalties for drivers charged with impaired driving-related offences under the Criminal Code, Mr. Speaker. And the minister points out that:

Currently if a driver is charged with exceeding the legal limit for alcohol or refusing to comply with the demand by law enforcement, they are subject to an indefinite administrative suspension of their driver's licence pending the court's outcome of the criminal charge. As well their vehicle . . . [gets] seized. The proposed . . . [changes here] will allow law enforcement to issue an indefinite administrative suspension when a driver is charged with impaired driving under the Criminal Code.

It also changes, Mr. Speaker, the look-back period when it comes to looking back at offences and counting towards the one, two, or three offences, Mr. Speaker. It will be extended from five years to 10 years which will allow for tougher penalties for repeat offenders.

It does a few other things, Mr. Speaker. It requires slowing to 60 kilometres. It's now required when snowplows are stopped on the side of the road and when passing other vehicles providing assistance if the prescribed lights are in operation.

So around the piece that I'd like to talk a little bit more about is impaired driving, where we're at here in Saskatchewan. So just a news article from October 29th, 2017, a CBC article points out: "A total of 57 people were killed in Saskatchewan in 2016 in collisions involving alcohol . . ." according to SGI, Mr.

Speaker. That number is up from 54 in 2015. So those are our most recent stats.

I just want to cast your mind back to 2016. We had some really horrific high-profile . . . Well any death on the road, Mr. Speaker, is unacceptable, but there were some pretty horrific and well-publicized fatalities connected to impaired driving. There was an entire family in January who was killed, Mr. Speaker. And we continued to see throughout the year some really, really horrible incidents. There was a man walking on the side of the road here, just outside of Regina. I believe he was walking his dog and he was killed by an impaired driver. As we know, according to these numbers, they're up.

I was very glad to see last fall, the government finally decided to move on the three-day vehicle impoundment and the warning range. So for anybody who isn't sure, so there's the Criminal Code which kicks in at .08. If you have blood alcohol concentration of over .08, that's a criminal conviction. But in the warning range, .04 to .08, you're still considered to be impaired but not at a criminal rate. So it's recognized that your functions, that your ability to react, your judgement are all skewed in that.

And back in 2013 we had seen a spike in death rates, Mr. Speaker, and that was the time that I was the SGI critic. And the government moved on putting in place a Traffic Safety Committee of which my colleague from Cumberland and I had the privilege of serving as the members on the opposition from that. And one of the pieces of information we had heard from experts was around the vehicle impoundment in the warning range — three-day suspension — so before you get to that .08 but losing your car, not just your licence. Because statistically we know many people still drive while their licence is suspended, but it's much harder to hide a vehicle missing from your family home. If you happen to be impaired on a Friday night and have your mom or dad's car or your spouse's car and you lose the vehicle for the weekend, it's a little harder to explain and a little harder to hide.

So BC and Alberta had both moved to this model, BC prior to Alberta, and had some really positive results. And the government just wasn't willing to go there in 2013 despite all the evidence showing that this was a positive move. And my colleague and I from Cumberland had suggested that that's where we were going. So we were very happy last fall, at the end of the very tragic year of increased impaired driving deaths, Mr. Speaker, to go there and see the government make tougher penalties, Mr. Speaker.

That's all very positive, but I think the one thing that still stands out for me around that committee in 2013, and now as the Health critic and someone who's very passionate about mental health and addiction services, when you look at the numbers, Mr. Speaker, on who dies and who gets into more fatalities, it's generally people with higher blood alcohol concentrations, Mr. Speaker.

So if you look at the blood alcohol concentration of dead drinking drivers, Mr. Speaker, in Canada . . . This was back in 2010. I'm just looking at my notes from that committee in 2013. And in Canada the number of dead drinkers with positive blood alcohol concentrations at .01 to .15 were 30 per cent. They were

at 53 per cent of those at . . . or .151, Mr. Speaker.

I just want to cast your mind back to some of the things that we heard in that committee. I'd like to read into the record actually, Doug Beirness. My point here, Mr. Speaker, is that I think that there's a correlation between drinking and driving or impaired driving, Mr. Speaker, and addictions, and not treating those addictions, Mr. Speaker. So Doug Beirness represented the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse which is a non-government organization whose mandate requires the organization to advise parliaments or legislatures on matters of substance abuse. So he told us on June 3rd, 2013 when we were talking about blood alcohol concentration . . . I'd like to read his comments into the record:

If you look at it by blood alcohol concentration — let me just step you through this — the pie [as we were looking at a chart, Mr. Speaker], the circle on the left part there, we're looking at 15,000 cases in total that were tested over that period of time with 61 per cent negative for alcohol and 38 per cent were positive for alcohol. And when you break those out according to the blood alcohol concentration, the thing that stands out most of all is that bottom red bar there. These are drivers who had a blood alcohol concentration of 160 milligrams and over, and they represent over half of all fatally injured drivers.

He goes on to say:

These are not people who've had a couple of drinks after work and died in a crash on the way home. These are people who have had a substantial amount of alcohol. And I would defy any person in this room to reach a BAC of 160 and not either pass out or throw up or both. That's a very high level of alcohol. There is no question about it. If you look at the database and look at the actual blood alcohol levels, you will often see drivers in there who are over 300, over 400 milligrams, which for most people is a level associated with death. These people are not your average social drinker who've had a couple of drinks at a party.

And he points out:

I was able to look at the data for Saskatchewan. I did the same thing, looked at the alcohol-positive and the alcohol-negative group, looked at the positive group by blood alcohol concentration. I'm just going to do a quick flip back to the previous one. You'll notice there's 56 per cent over 160 in Canada as a whole and 64 per cent over 160 in Saskatchewan. Those numbers are a little bit smaller overall, but the proportion over 160 is pretty substantial. We're dealing with a population of people who really do have an alcohol . . . [program]. You don't get to 160 without having practised numerous times. That in and of itself is an indicator of an alcohol problem. So that's . . . the background, the context.

During that same committee, Mr. Speaker, on June 4th, Fay Rorke, who is with . . . at the time she was with the driving without impairment program, which is a program where drivers get referred to, Mr. Speaker, pointed out that . . . So her program:

Its content and structure provides each course participant with the opportunity to examine his or her own attitudes and practices as they relate to drinking, in a . . . [non-life-threatening], positive, and supportive environment. The driving without impairment program is an educational experience. It is not a treatment or a punitive rehabilitation program.

She went on to say that many . . . They were very excited. This was years ago, that people from her program . . . There were some changes made prior to this current government that would see people referred to . . . getting an addictions assessment. But she points out that those addictions assessments at the health region level were breaking down, Mr. Speaker.

She goes on to say:

Again as an example, in our community I know of two individuals who were streamed to driving without impairment who, because I knew them in the community, I knew that they had serious alcohol addiction problems. And they both died as a result of their drinking, not in a drinking-driving offence, but their alcoholism killed them. They should . . . [have not] been in driving without impairment.

So right now, Mr. Speaker, we have three different levels that people get referred to. They get referred to driving without impairment, and then . . . driving without impairment, alcohol and drug education, and the third level is screening for addictions assessment, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would argue the way we're doing things here in Saskatchewan, perhaps we need to look a little bit more closely at . . . When people have a .08, maybe we should be assessing them at that point for addictions, Mr. Speaker.

One of the challenges here in Saskatchewan around mental health and addictions, you might come to the place where you know you need help, and you might go through social detox and recognize that you need help and want to go through a rehab program. But the wait, Mr. Speaker, is months now. So from the time you go from recognizing you have a problem to actually being in a 30-day program can be months, Mr. Speaker.

We have a huge . . . I would argue that these are some positive changes. I'm not sure. I'd like to look at what other jurisdictions are doing. It's always good to look at best practices and what the evidence is telling us about changes and where we should be going, Mr. Speaker. Not to say you shouldn't break ground elsewhere, but there's many places around the world who are doing a much better job than us. But I think we need to look a little bit more closely at our impaired driving rate, Mr. Speaker, and tie it to mental health and addictions and the services that we provide here in our community and how much better we could do.

I just want to point out and give a shout-out to the Lac La Ronge Indian Band, actually, which is looking at creating a wellness centre. And this would not just be for on-reserve folks, but they're looking at supporting Métis people and anyone else in their community who could benefit from some of their services. And they're looking for partners, Mr. Speaker, and

they're looking to the province for a partnership. And that might be a very good place for us to go, Mr. Speaker.

I know the government has thought that Uber and Lyft might be the answer to impaired driving, and I'm not saying that there couldn't be positive things with Uber and Lyft, but obviously when you look at the numbers, we can look at where deaths happen. This last year 29 deaths occurred on provincial highways, 15 on rural roads, and six on First Nations roads. Seven were only . . . not only seven, but seven were on urban streets, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

I'm excited about the idea of finding new ways to ensure people get a safe ride home, but I'd like to get us to the core of the problem, Mr. Speaker, and talk and think a little bit more about addictions, mental health and addictions services. But I know that my time is short here and I have colleagues who will enter into the debate and there will be more questions when we get to committee on this bill.

Mr. Speaker, there are some things that I didn't mention that are in this bill. I concentrated mostly on impaired driving, but I know that I have colleagues who will cover that and the critic responsible will ask many questions in committee. But with that I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 81. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 82

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 82 — *The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into this debate on Bill No. 82, *The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2017*. And of course this is one of our major, major Crowns who provide such an important service to the people of Saskatchewan when it comes . . . And we can particularly relate to it on a day like today when it's kind of chilly out there, and we can think about how important it is that we get our natural gas to our homes and to our workplaces, to make sure that we can do what we need to have done and be at home in a comfortable place.

So this is a very important bill that we have before us. In one way it's sort of a bit of a dry bill, and we may not get too excited about it. I mean, one part talks about outlining that the corporation has a liability in tort but not liability in nuisance actions because of issues around insurance, and when we get into that kind of thing.

But I do want to talk a little bit about distribution of gas, and I want to raise some concerns, you know, from our experience how important TransGas plays a role in all of this. And I do have to say, sometimes, particularly with this minister, it's not what he says; it's about what he doesn't say. And this speech didn't really talk about the role of TransGas and how important it is. And we are aware of that, and we know that it plays an incredible role. So when he talks about making amendments on sections 23 and 60, the exclusive rights for distribution and transportation of natural gas and how we've seen changes, but we don't know what impact that will have in the marketplace, particularly around a very important Crown, TransGas, a utility or a subsidiary of SaskEnergy, and what will be the future for that.

We've seen a minister who, through Bill 40 and what we've seen with STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] and particularly some of the stories we're hearing now that concern us deeply about the impact and how we haven't really done the true audit, a value-for-dollars audit on the study of how important that was . . . And this minister was driven solely in the search of a dollar. And then to that extent, he was even willing to be led or fed some curious numbers about how much the problems were in terms of subsidies with STC. And so again here, we have maybe a pattern here with SaskEnergy.

So we'll have some questions about this one for sure. It's a technical piece of legislation, and so those who are in the know will probably have lots of questions around this, various sections of this bill. But we know right away. Some of our senses go up. Has there been full consultation? Has there been a full study of the impact of some of these things? We always wonder. It's a bit of a Trojan Horse when the minister comes into the Chamber and says, it's just housekeeping, trust me, it has nothing.

We've seen a reversal around Bill 40 or somewhat of a reversal. We don't know yet what the true impact of this will be, but we have lots of questions. And so when we start monkeying around, tinkering around with such a major Crown that's so important to the people of Saskatchewan, SaskEnergy, that you can bet that we will have lots and lots of questions. And we won't let this one just go quietly, because we know the impact it will have on consumers here in Saskatchewan.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will move adjournment of Bill No. 82, *The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2017*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I'd caution the members on how he paraphrased the hon. minister. With that, though, I will move that . . . The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 82, *The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 83

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 83** — *The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act*,

2017 be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today to enter into the adjourned debate on Bill 83, *The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act*.

First I'm concerned that this bill, as it's written, allows the minister to appoint new members to the Saskatchewan Environmental Code advisory committee instead of having them appointed by order in council. Mr. Speaker, yesterday when the minister was delivering second reading of this bill, he provided rationale for this change by stating that, and I directly quote:

. . . members of the Saskatchewan Environmental Code advisory committee change frequently due to changes within organizations and associations. The amendments will transfer powers from the Lieutenant Governor in Council to the minister, allowing for more timely appointments of new and replacement members of the committee.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, the minister was talking about section 4 of the existing environmental management and protection Act, which this bill proposes to repeal and replace. We know that an order in council appointment is made by the Lieutenant Governor on the advice of the cabinet, and as such that appointment lies inherently beyond the scope of just one minister.

I understand that the minister might find it easier to simply be directly responsible for the appointments to this committee, but we should think carefully about this. Do we want to make it easier for the government, any government, to make appointments at will to this committee?

There are a number of key subsections of section 4 that are being removed and replaced. Mr. Speaker, this revision not only removes the order in council appointment of committee members, but it removes other governing regulations related to that committee such as the length of term of committee members, their eligibility for reappointment, what to do in the case of vacancies, and the requirement for the minister to provide any clerical assistance that the committee requires, which is curious. It turns these committee appointments into the wild west, Mr. Speaker. It transfers all the power to the minister, not the Lieutenant Governor, which radically decreases accountability and transparency.

It might seem like a small change, Mr. Speaker, but this is an advisory body of high importance to this province. We face a number of significant environmental challenges, Mr. Speaker. We rely heavily on coal, natural gas, and other fossil fuels, and Saskatchewan has a high greenhouse gas emissions rate. We face some hard times ahead, Mr. Speaker, and we only have one earth to live on. We need to protect our environment, and folks on this committee are entrusted with an important advisory role in this province. If, heaven forbid, this were to turn into a group of yes-men or yes-women, a group of partisan folks who were aligned with the government, that could certainly alter the

course of environmental protection in this province.

To seek ultimate oversight of a committee composition when the minister already chairs this committee raises a number of questions, Mr. Speaker. The role of the committee is to advise the minister on all matters that relate to the Saskatchewan Environmental Code. The Saskatchewan Environmental Code dictates all procedures, criteria, and practices that must be followed. These provisions relate to our water management and protection, including drinking and waste water, natural resource management and environmental protection, forestry, environmentally impacted sites, and air quality. We're talking about how we treat our environment. Why is it that we would want to remove the order in council appointments for this crucially important committee?

Mr. Speaker, I would argue this is a critical time for environmental protection, not a time where we should be affording the Sask Party government more power to make unilateral decisions about the future of this province. We see the Sask Party burying their heads in the sand, in the face of a federal carbon tax that is coming in just a few short months. And rather than coming up with a plan to stand up to the Trudeau Liberals, they are instead proposing to lessen the transparency of a crucial environmental advisory committee in our province.

It is a sad indication of the direction of the government and where their priorities lie. We need to do what's in the best interests of the people of this province, and to protect the air we breathe and the water we drink for future generations. Mr. Speaker, I know that my fellow colleagues will have more to say about Bill 83, but with that I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill 83, *The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act*.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 83. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the member from Meadow Lake.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned till tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:56.]

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