



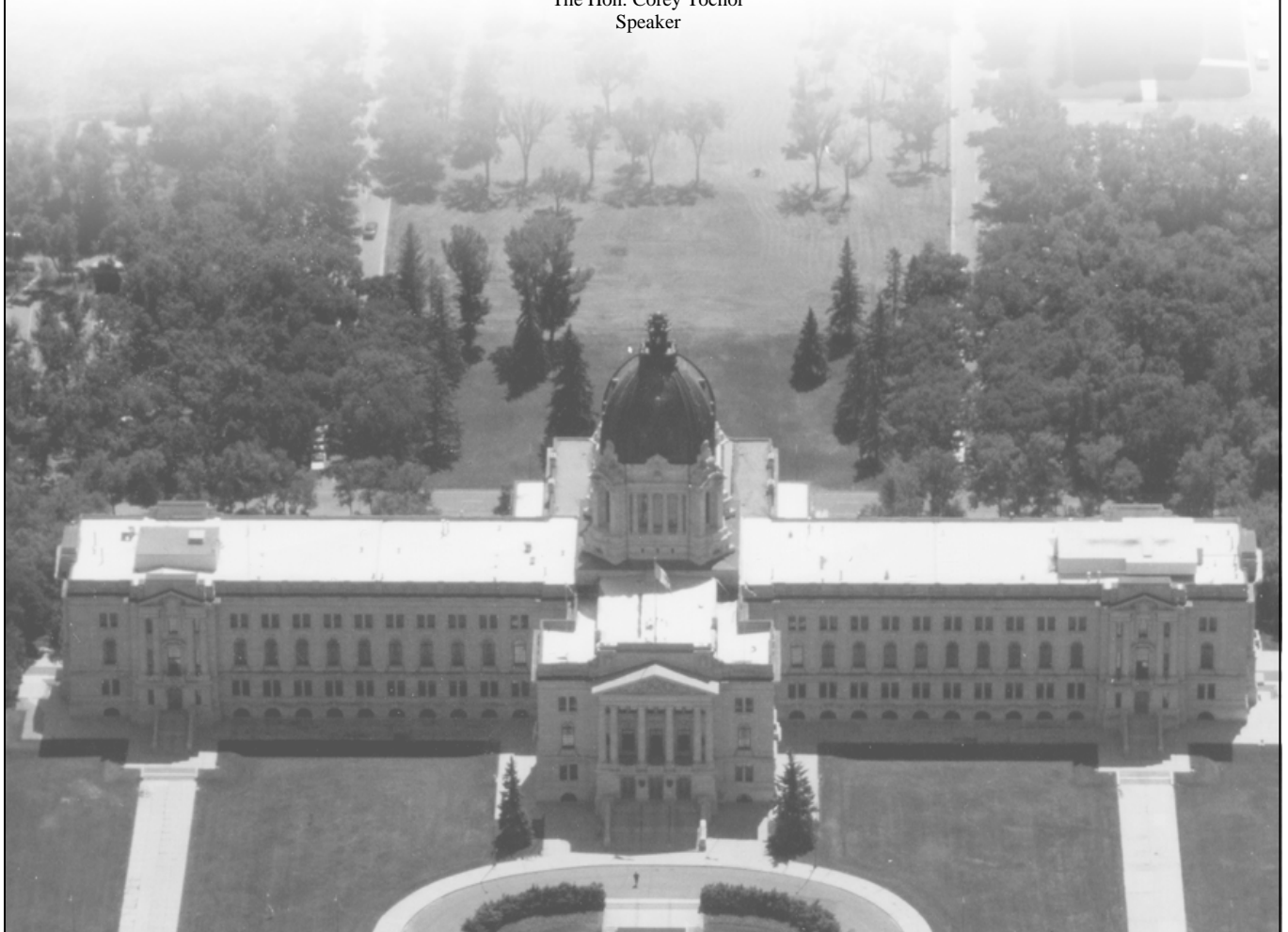
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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

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

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

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 47; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Vacant — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize three individuals who are seated in your gallery today: Elaine McNeil, Sharon Maher, and Jessica Broda. They are joined with some other supporters as well.

Elaine McNeil is a long-time international educational consultant, post-secondary international nursing instructor, and University of Regina international project coordinator. Elaine has worked extensively in the area of human rights with women in Africa and the Caribbean. It is clear, not only from Elaine's dedication to helping others but by her charge in taking initiative, that she is helping to make meaningful changes both locally and internationally.

Sharon Maher is a dedicated lifetime member of Grandmothers 4 Grandmothers Saskatoon or G4G, which is a local group of grandmothers who support the African grandmothers raising children who have been orphaned as a result of HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] and AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome]. Jessica Broda, the executive director for Saskatchewan Status of Women, also joins us today.

Elaine, Jessica, and Sharon join us today in recognition of the United Nations' orange campaign, 16 Days of Activism and in particular Unite to End Violence Against Women and girls. I'd like to thank all of them for being here today and ask all members join in in welcoming them to the legislature today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the Minister of Justice in welcoming Elaine, Sharon, and Jessica to their Legislative Assembly today for the UN [United Nations] orange campaign and the Unite to End Violence against Women. I'm wearing my orange today as well. So I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I would request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This afternoon we see the galleries are quite full today, and that is because we have a special group of people who represented Saskatchewan this past summer in three different summer games, in multi-sport games.

We have the Tony Cote First Nations Summer Games participants, the North American Indigenous Games, and the Canada Summer Games athletes here this afternoon. Earlier today we held a reception to welcome the athletes, coaches, organizers, and their parents and families from these competitions to celebrate success in Saskatchewan sports we had this summer.

It gives me great pleasure to read each of our guest's names and sport into the record, Mr. Speaker. You can give a wave if you so choose when you're introduced real briefly here. I'll start by introducing some of the coaches and athletes from the Cote First Nations Summer Games. We have coach and mentor Chief John McNab, table tennis coach Derek Mercer, lacrosse coach Don Larson, softball and volleyball coach Claudia Goodwill.

Cory Kinequon and Dakota Mistickokat placed fourth overall in the softball team; Juleah Bird Duesing, five gold medals in athletics; Sirainn McNab, bronze medal, softball; Christian McNab, bronze medal, softball; Shawn Longman, bronze medal, softball team again; Elias McNab, silver in mixed doubles canoeing.

Brinn Cote is part of the soccer team; Sky McIvor, silver in archery; Echo Desjarlais, under 18 soccer team. Hunter Bellegarde participated in the under 14 soccer team; Myles Bellegarde, bronze in the 100-kilogram weight division; Rosetta Cyr, gold medallist, under 14 softball; Takoda Morris, gold medallist, softball. And Sirainn, Cory, Dakota, and Julian, also I'll mention they were part of the 2017 1A six-man provincial football champs out of Raymore.

Next I'd like to introduce some of the coaches and athletes from the Saskatchewan delegation to the North American Indigenous Games that took place in Toronto this summer: softball coach Claudia Goodwill; archery coach Matt Bird; long-time lacrosse coach Don Larson; coach Roberta Soo-Oyewaste, lacrosse — sorry if I got that wrong.

Christian McNab, bronze medal at both of the games; Rosetta Cyr, again softball; Elias McNab, silver and bronze in the mixed doubles canoeing; Fearance Francis, silver medal, soccer; Juleah Duesing again, three silver and a gold in the same sport; Julian Geddes, volleyball team; Lillian Pinay, silver medal, wrestling; Myles Bellegarde, gold medal, softball; Nathaniel Poorman, gold medal, volleyball team; Shawn Longman, volleyball; Sistene Yuzicappi, five medals in five categories in athletics; Christian McNab, discus; Sky McIvor, archery again; Takoda Morris, gold medal, softball; Tianna Longman, volleyball team.

Finally I would like to introduce some of the coaches and athletes from the Canada Summer Games: chef de mission Mark Bracken; assistant chef Alison Brown; swimming coach Laura Desautels; baseball, Greg Brons; swimming, Craig Niewstad, the coach there. Alyssa Clairmont, bronze in the

diving event; Becky Dean, bronze in the 1500 metre freestyle; Cassandra Chometa, soccer team; Emma Spence, bronze medal, 200 metre breaststroke; Julie Labach, 800 metre gold medallist, silver in the 1500; Kendall Keller, gold in softball; Michael McGillivray, bronze in the 800 metre swimming; Payne Wylie, three bronze medals in athletics; Penny Mulenga, female soccer team; and last but not least — almost done here — Portia Switzer on the volleyball team.

Mr. Speaker, these athletes represented our province this past summer very well. They made us all very proud. I ask all members to welcome them and say thanks to their efforts, as well as their families. Thank you for coming here this afternoon and letting us share it with you. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, I just want to join with the minister in welcoming these athletes, these coaches, their supporters, the organizers to their Legislative Assembly.

Certainly the Canada Summer Games, the North American Indigenous Games, and the recently renamed Tony Cote First Nations Games, Mr. Speaker, it's a wonderful time for our province in terms of young people being able to get out there, to push their boundaries, to strive to succeed. And as the minister has well pointed out in terms of the roll call for the medals, they've done just that, Mr. Speaker.

So I just want to say, on behalf of the official opposition, that we're very proud of you all. We want to see you continue that success for all of us here in Saskatchewan. And again I just join with the minister and ask all members to join with me in welcoming these very important people to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of this honourable Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce guests today. Please welcome to their legislature, seated in the west gallery is Ms. Kaley Pugh, executive director of Animal Protection Services Saskatchewan. Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan enforces *The Animal Protection Act*. Their dedicated staff applies their knowledge and expertise to the resolution of concerns about animal care across the province.

Mr. Speaker, I've previously introduced Mr. Al Scholz who is here again today, but today he's accompanied by Mr. Blair McClinton who is president of the agrologists' provincial council. The Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists regulates the profession of agrology in Saskatchewan by ensuring its safe, competent, and ethical practice. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in welcoming these guests to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As a tradition of our great province and of course of our great nation of Aboriginal leaders, it's very important that we're honoured

and that we pay tribute to a chief that's in the room. I think it's really important that that tradition continues. And before I go on to introduce or to say hello to some of the athletes, I think it's appropriate that I recognize a First Nations leader in Chief John McNab of the George Gordon First Nation who is here today, and to tell the chief it's an honour to have you amongst us. And he's here of course supporting the athletes as well.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.]

And in my own language, I'm just so proud of all the athletes of Saskatchewan, especially those in the First Nations and indigenous games, as well as the Saskatchewan Games. You make us all very proud.

And you should know that I participated in the North American Indigenous Games in volleyball. And we had such a wonderful time, and we captured gold that one year. So I have a little bit of history in the games. But I also profess to be a hockey player. A lot of people don't know I played 17 games with Boston in the late '80s — Boston Pizza, out of P.A. [Prince Albert].

But to point out that the athletes that are here, to tell you, all of you, you're the best and we're all very proud of you. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's indeed an honour to introduce to you and through you to everyone in the Assembly a class of fabulous students sitting in the west gallery from the Humboldt Collegiate Institute. There's 39 grade 12 students, and they're accompanied by their teacher, who comes each and every year with his students, Mr. David Millette. Along with Mr. Millette is Mr. David Rowe and Mr. Rettger.

Mr. Speaker, I would just make note that Mr. Millette is also the volleyball coach, and this past weekend the senior boys won the gold medal at the 4A boys' provincial volleyball tournament. So congratulations to any of those players that are with this group. Welcome to your Assembly.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it is indeed an honour to have so many special guests with us here today watching the work that we do and being involved in this process.

I'd like to join with the Minister of Agriculture in also welcoming three special guests, as he noted before: Ms. Pugh, as well as Mr. Al Scholz, and Mr. Blair McClinton. It is gratifying when we have stakeholders who are able to be with us and to watch the proceedings here in this Assembly. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these special guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you, through you to all the members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce,

sitting in your gallery, Mr. Zeeshan Goraya and Safeer Ahmed. Zeeshan Goraya is a missionary in charge of Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at, Regina chapter.

And Safeer Ahmed is a very good worker of the community these days. He is working on Canada flag 150 and trying to set a world record to collect 150,000 signatures from coast to coast. And these days the part of that flag, one panel, is in Regina and he is collecting signatures on that one. I ask all the members to join me welcoming them in their own Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Regina Pasqua in welcoming these leaders from the Regina Ahmadiyya community.

Had the opportunity with a few of my colleagues to join you and your larger community over the summer in Saskatoon at your conference. It was a wonderful opportunity to get to know more about your community and have the opportunity to learn a little bit more as well. I'm happy to see you here, as always. Looking forward to maybe checking out that flag that you are collecting signatures on after question period.

So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

[13:45]

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of St. Walburg, Paradise Hill, Frenchman Butte, and Neilburg. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I stand on behalf of the town of Balgonie in my petition today because someone has to. Mr. Speaker, this is in reference to the permanent closure of Main Street access to Highway No. 1 in the town of Balgonie.

And the prayer reads as follows:

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 the Main Street.

They 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 of Highway No. 1 at the Main Street of the Balgonie intersection, but would not allow public access to cross east- and westbound lanes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we do this day in, day out, we have presented page after page of this petition. And on this particular page, Mr. Speaker, they are from the town of Balgonie. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for critical supports for survivors of domestic violence. Those who signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: Saskatchewan has the highest rate of domestic violence amongst provinces in Canada. Employers should be obligated to reasonably accommodate survivors of domestic violence in the workplace. Employees who are survivors of domestic violence should be able to take a leave of absence from their employment without penalty, and Saskatchewan must do much more to protect survivors of domestic violence. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

And, Mr. Speaker, this is exactly what we've asked for in our private member's bill, Bill No. 605, which I'm very hopeful that the Minister of Justice and his colleagues will pass into law very shortly. Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition come from Regina. I do so submit.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I'm rising to present a petition to end the unfair Sask Party tax hikes for Saskatchewan families and businesses. The people who have signed this want to bring to our attention the following: the Sask Party has hiked taxes on Saskatchewan families and businesses by \$1 billion per year, and at the same time they handed over \$100 million in tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy and well-connected.

Because of the Sask Party's PST [provincial sales tax] increase, Saskatchewan has become the only province in the country where people are charged PST on life and health insurance premiums. And for producers, the Sask Party's new tax on crop insurance is a devastating hit. Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party to immediately stop their unfair tax hikes on

Saskatchewan families and businesses.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who have signed the petition today come from the communities of Yellow Grass and Regina. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to stop the cuts to our kids' classrooms. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention the following: that the Sask Party has cut at least \$674 in government funding for every student across Saskatchewan; and then the Sask Party hiked education taxes by 67 million but cut total government funding for education by \$121 million; and even though the Sask Party's making us all pay more, our kids are actually getting less.

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

We, the undersigned, call upon the government to reverse the senseless cuts to our kids' classrooms and to stop making families, teachers, and everyone who works to support our education pay the price for the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste.

I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to present a petition for a second bridge for Prince Albert. The individuals that signed this petition want to draw these following points to your attention: that the Diefenbaker bridge in Prince Albert is the primary link that connects the southern part of the province to the North; and that the need for a second bridge for Prince Albert has never been clearer than it is today.

Prince Albert, communities north of Prince Albert, and businesses that send people and products through Prince Albert require a solution; that local municipal governments have limited resources and require a second bridge to be funded through federal and provincial governments and not a P3 [public-private partnership] model; that the Saskatchewan Party government refuses to stand up for Prince Albert in this critical infrastructure issue.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan ask that the Saskatchewan Party government stop stalling, hiding behind rhetoric and refusing to listen to the people calling for action, and begin immediately to plan and then quickly commence the construction of a second bridge for Prince Albert using federal and provincial dollars.

The individuals that signed this petition come from the community of Prince Albert. I do so present.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, 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 and 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 Regina and Moose Jaw. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's always good to be recognized in this Assembly. I rise to present a petition to reopen the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that the closure of the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre left 15 people out of work and had a financial impact on their families, obviously, and the local economy. They point out that the closure was hurtful to elders within the community who benefited from the help of inmates doing the job, and indeed the inmates benefited from doing that work, Mr. Speaker.

They point out that the closure of Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre hurt the families of the inmates while learning new skills, while working with skilled employees to obtain employment upon release. Mr. Speaker, they point out that the distances involved make visitation from families — that connection that's so critical to successful rehabilitation, Mr. Speaker — is made all the more challenging with this closure, Mr. Speaker. And they point out that the training opportunities for the inmates again to get treatment, to get training, which is so critical to fighting against reoffending, Mr. Speaker — all of those opportunities were made all the fewer, Mr. Speaker, and it's a shame.

In the prayer that reads as follows:

The petitioners respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan immediately reopen the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre to better our community for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from the good community of Buffalo Narrows. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert

Northcote.

Affordable Lunch Program at Prince Albert Campus

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The students at First Nations University, Prince Albert Campus now have the opportunity to buy an affordable hot lunch. This is because of a subsidized program, which is the first of its kind in Saskatchewan. The program kicked off on Wednesday, October 4th, with staff from the Canadian Mental Health Association serving fresh bannock and hot stew for only \$2.50 per student. Mr. Speaker, the program is a partnership between the Canadian Mental Health Association, the University of Regina Students' Union, and the local students' union from First Nations University.

The local students' union saw a real need for hot meals for their fellow students. Many of the students are parents who are worried about feeding their children and often put themselves second. With this program, students have access to a healthy meal at noon and can focus on their studies and their families. Other universities in Saskatchewan only offer for-profit lunches to their students, making this a very unique Prince Albert solution.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in applauding the efforts of and congratulating the Canadian Mental Health Association, the University of Regina Students' Union, and the First Nations University Prince Albert Campus's student union for developing a one-of-a-kind subsidized lunch program for the students of the Prince Albert campus.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Unite Campaign Against Gender-Based Violence

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November 25th is the beginning of the Unite campaign: 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. This campaign was launched in 2008 by the then United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. Its goal is to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls around the world by building upon existing international legal and policy frameworks while raising awareness on the issue through all UN offices and agencies worldwide.

This year's theme is Leave No One Behind. This campaign has received significant support from organizations all across the globe. One such group is the Grandmothers Advocacy Network who are here today. GRAN [Grandmothers Advocacy Network] is a cross-Canada network of volunteers made up of a strong core of older women. Unite calls on all of us to join forces and recognize the significant global issue of violence against women and girls. We all feel the impact of gender violence and we must all be part of the solution. Only through attention and action can we make a difference.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank those with GRAN who advocated for this event. And I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in pledging our support for Unite and the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign. Thank you.

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

Saskatoon Hosts Canadian Ultimate Championship

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was pleased to attend the 2017 final championship game on Sunday, August 27th where Nova Scotia defeated Ontario to win the Canadian Ultimate Championship mixed division final in Saskatoon at Gordie Howe Bowl. This is the first time that Canada's national ultimate flying disc league championships have been held in Saskatoon, and the organizers did themselves proud.

For the first time, Saskatchewan won a gold at the nationals as the Saskatoon Penguin Village, the team of mixed players aged 33 and up, won its Canadian Ultimate Championship master division at home. All told, 26 teams took part with up to 500 people cheering from the sidelines.

"It's growing in popularity in terms of participation," said Aaron Chubb, the event director for the Saskatoon-hosted championships. "Fans are a bit slower to come around. That's one of the reasons we bid to have the Canadian Ultimate Championships — to raise awareness about this incredible sport."

Mr. Speaker, the sport shares elements of football and basketball with players, who cannot run with the disc, attempting to pass it across the scoring line into the opposing team's end zone. But, Mr. Speaker, the most important aspect is that the play is not run by referees but by the players and their respect for each other. The tournament drew more than 600 athletes from across Canada to Saskatoon, and the winner of the tournament will represent Canada at the World Ultimate Club Championships next year.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating the Saskatoon organizers for such a great event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Minister of Agriculture Rides Steer for Fundraiser

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, attendees at Agribition were given a special treat this weekend, and members of this House were given a reason to worry about an emergency cabinet shuffle. On Saturday the Minister of Agriculture participated in a steer-riding competition at Agribition against their CEO [chief executive officer], Chris Lane. The event was held to raise funds for STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] ambulance, although many members thought this could actually cost STARS more money by having to come save the minister.

I was able to attend, and both myself and my grandchildren were thoroughly entertained. It was a successful event. Not only did both riders survive, but over \$2,500 have been raised by the minister's office. This number does not include the amount raised by Agribition and donations continue to pour in.

Mr. Speaker, despite all the amazing attractions at Agribition, this was still one of the most popular moments. A video I posted on Twitter of the minister has been viewed over 2,000

times. Mr. Speaker, the minister may now don a politician's suit and tie rather than a cowboy's hat and spurs, but after Saturday there can be no doubt he is still a cowboy at heart.

[14:00]

On behalf of all the members of this Assembly, I'd like to thank all those who donated to STARS and congratulate the minister on not breaking a leg. Thank you.

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

Knights of Columbus Fundraiser for Children's Hospital

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 21st, the Mount Carmel Knights of Columbus held a very successful fundraiser. The council raised \$23,539 towards the Knights of Columbus Children's Hospital Fund. The event raised funds through a dinner, cash, and silent auction. The event was sold out and had guests attend from the communities of Biggar, Wilkie, Unity, Saskatoon, Macklin, Landis, and Handel.

Guest speakers of the evening were from Saskatoon Knights of Columbus: Wayne Koshman and Shawn Sheer, speaking about the Knights of Columbus Children's Hospital Fund. Mr. Speaker, the Knights of Columbus council would like to thank the sponsors and the community for coming together and making this night such a success for such an important cause.

The Knights of Columbus councils are known for their charitable acts at local, national, and international levels as they work to raise funds and awareness to important causes that deeply impact their families and communities. Mr. Speaker, I would like to especially thank Clarence and Nicole Perlinger for doing a wonderful job with the dinner and organization of the evening.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to please join me in thanking the Mount Carmel Knights of Columbus council on their successful supper and silent auction, as well as their generous donations to the Knights of Columbus Children's Hospital Fund. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Rosetown-Elrose.

Construction Experience Gained Through Dual-Certificate Program

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise and share some of the good work that Great Plains College is doing in the Rosetown-Elrose constituency. Last week Great Plains College announced a brand new, innovative, dual-certificate program at its Rosetown campus. The first of its kind in Saskatchewan, the carpentry and production line welding certificate program will enable students to develop a variety of skills needed for a successful career in the construction industry.

Mr. Speaker, this new and exciting program was made possible thanks to Robinson Residential Design Inc. who have partnered with the college. This will not only foster the success of the

program but also connect students to industry leaders. The partnership will allow students to gain hands-on construction experience by building an energy-efficient tiny home. At the end of their project, students will have nearly 600 hours of trades time.

Mr. Speaker, this is just one example of how our post-secondary sector is responding to the needs of our labour market. I'd like to thank Robinson Residential Design for their work in providing this opportunity to students in the Rosetown-Elrose constituency, and of course I'd like to commend and thank Great Plains College for developing this innovative program. Mr. Speaker, I ask all member to join me in congratulating Great Plains College on the launch of its new program and for bringing practical learning opportunities to Saskatchewan students. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Railway Provides Employment Opportunities

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I am thrilled to announce that CN rail is looking to hire nearly 100 positions in Saskatchewan. CN rail intends to hire 40 new positions in my constituency of Melville-Saltcoats, with another 30 in Saskatoon, 14 in Humboldt, six in North Battleford, and one in Canora. The company is in the process of hiring across Canada with a specific focus in the West. By the end of the year, CN is projecting to hire 3,500 new employees and expects to hire another 2,000 more next year.

Mr. Speaker, Patrick Waldron, the spokesperson for CN rail said, and I quote, "Due to the strong and recovering economy across Canada, new business is coming CN's way, and some of these positions are attributable to very strong economic conditions."

Mr. Speaker, CN rail is mainly looking for conductors. So that means that Melville will have 40 new full-time, permanent, and well-paying jobs. This is a great opportunity for the people of Melville and across Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, CN rail transports approximately \$250 billion worth of goods annually for a wide range of business sectors ranging from resource products to manufactured products to consumer goods. These goods are very important to Saskatchewan's economy.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in celebrating CN rail's announcement to hire nearly 100 new positions in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Federal-Provincial Relations and Power Generation

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 2005 the current Premier said that the Sask Party supported our government, the NDP [New Democratic Party] government's lawsuit with Ottawa over equalization to get more fairness in a

Saskatchewan energy accord. But once they got elected, they dropped it. Now, Mr. Speaker, yet another former minister has come out from under cabinet confidentiality and is telling us what he really thinks. The member for Saskatoon Northwest spent quite some time as the Justice minister, but he's only now saying he wants to open up the lawsuit again.

Mr. Speaker, in 2008 the Premier dropped the lawsuit and said, "I absolutely believe that over the course of time we're going to succeed in this relationship where the previous government failed." Mr. Speaker, he did not. Now his former Justice minister is threatening to take the Liberals to court. Does the Premier admit that he failed to get better results from the federal Conservative government? Does he support his former Justice minister's renewed call? And why did he drop the lawsuit in the first place?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the hon. Leader of the Opposition for her question. And once again, Mr. Speaker, I'll disagree with the premise of the question. The preamble is full of information that needs to be clarified here on the floor of the House.

Mr. Speaker, I would say that upon being elected to government, it was pretty clear from advice we were getting that the lawsuit prepared by the members opposite when they were in government was not going to be successful. And so we had to make a decision to try to negotiate with the federal government on a number of issues and achieve something meaningful for Saskatchewan people.

An Hon. Member: — Where did that get you?

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well happily the Deputy Leader of the NDP has asked, where did that get us? How about the south bridge project in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, how about record, at the time, record investment in housing for the province from the federal government? How about a quarter billion dollars for the carbon capture facility in southeast Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker? If you add up all of those projects . . . and the bypass. Well the list just keeps going on and on.

Mr. Speaker, did we get everything we wanted from the previous federal government, the Harper government? The answer's no, Mr. Speaker. But we were able to make progress on behalf of Saskatchewan people. We were able to attract federal dollars back to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and now, and now, Mr. Speaker, we know that members opposite are a bit conflicted on the most important federal-provincial issue that exists, and that's a federally imposed carbon tax. The would-be leader of the NDP from Meewasin likes a federally imposed carbon tax. This side of the House says that's not right for the province of Saskatchewan. I'm looking to hear from the new Leader of the Opposition as to what she thinks about that carbon tax.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — No issues about equalization, apparently. Mr. Speaker, the lawsuit is just one example of the Sask Party's big talk not matching the facts. Let's look at how they're

mismanaging power generation here in our own province. They promised to get to 50 per cent renewables by 2030, but they have no realistic plan to get there. Their only answer seems to be to blindly brag about CCS [carbon capture and storage], which performed at 85 per cent capacity in October, which is actually a good month for CCS. On average over the last year, it ran at 43 per cent. Mr. Speaker, they spent \$1.5 billion and it works less than half the time. Worse than that, it was just the third time in the last 13 months that the facility worked for the whole month.

Mr. Speaker, in just over a year, because of policies brought in by the Stephen Harper Conservatives, whenever the carbon capture goes down, power generation will also have to be shut down. In the face of the facts and SaskPower's own concerns, how can the Premier even consider expanding CCS, and how does he justify all of the rate hikes they've been forcing on Saskatchewan families and businesses?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, first point is, her question on equalization was answered. The advice was we couldn't win the lawsuit that the NDP started, so we set out to get investment back to this province from the federal government. Witness the bypass. Witness the Circle bridge project in Saskatoon, or the carbon capture facility. That would be approximating, I think, 6 or \$700 million right there that they never managed to get, Mr. Speaker.

You see, when they were in office, they did a lot of talking. They did some threatening. They set up a website. I think they were going to raise a flag for fairness. I think that was another campaign they launched.

On this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we got to work on those files and we secured those dollars back. And, Mr. Speaker, there was some other non-financial issues that we dealt with with the federal government, including the potash takeover. When this province here, the people of Saskatchewan needed the then federal government to listen to our viewpoint, Mr. Speaker, that happened because this federal government made the case against that takeover.

So, Mr. Speaker, I guess we'll welcome more questions on the federal-provincial file. But with respect to Boundary dam 3, I want members to be encouraged — 1.75 million tonnes of CO₂ captured, Mr. Speaker. The kind of technology to fight climate change that's heralded by the United Nations, Mr. Speaker. There was only one project in the preparatory work to the Paris conference, only one Canadian project that was listed by the United Nations, and that was Boundary dam 3.

Later this week, together with governors from a number of US [United States] states at the western governors' meeting, I'm happy to report I'll be signing a brand new MOU [memorandum of understanding], a co-operation agreement with those states, because they like what they've seen from Boundary dam 3 and they want to work together on CCS.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposite House Leader.

Crown Corporations and Intent of Bill 40

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, on October 24th the Premier went live and in colour on Facebook and said they had heard the Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, he said they were going to repeal Bill 40. But then, two days later, he said they would repeal every part except the wind-down section, and he said they would keep that section only long enough to finish the scrapping and selling off of STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company].

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister for SaskEnergy tell us what he thought of the Premier's commitment to repeal Bill 40, even though they're keeping the part that lets them scrap and sell off STC? And since he's still overseeing the sell-off of STC, thanks to that legislation, what assurances can he give Saskatchewan people that they will not use it and the new legislation that they are proposing to sell off SaskEnergy?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we put Bill 40 in place to provide a definition that wasn't there. The people across the way said oh, whoa, there's some hidden agenda. There's something sneaky going on. There's something not right. So we said, right, fine, we're not going to go ahead and do anything without coming back to the people. So we repealed it. We took it out of the legislation. The portion about the definition is gone, so that doesn't exist anymore.

We're in the middle of the windup of STC when this is going on. Why cloud the waters on that? If they want to do something on it afterwards, we're glad to have the discussion with them at some point down the road.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Cloud the waters, Mr. Speaker. There's more flip-flops over there than at any number of beaches this winter, Mr. Speaker.

But last spring the then Justice minister said Bill 40 had nothing to do with the scrapping and selling-off of STC. Then the Premier said they need it for the sell-off. Then the Premier said he was scrapping Bill 40. Then a day after that the Minister Responsible for STC said again they did not need Bill 40 to scrap STC. Then the very next day and again last week the Premier said again that they need to keep that part of Bill 40 to finish selling off STC assets. Mr. Speaker, both sides of this story cannot be correct.

And now the Sask Party is making sure that SaskEnergy's exclusivity is no longer to be protected by law. If their bill passes, it could be signed away with the stroke of a pen behind closed doors. Mr. Speaker, we can't trust them with these things in the light of day, let alone behind closed doors. So after scrapping STC and all the secret meetings to sell off SaskTel and SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], is SaskEnergy next on the Sask Party's chopping block?

The Speaker: — I recognize Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, not very many days ago we had a Speech from the Throne, and I want to read part of that because the members opposite obviously weren't paying attention that day:

Consequently, my government will repeal the provisions of Bill 40 that allow for the sale of a partial equity position of a Crown corporation.

And then it . . . Before that it says:

Over the last few months, my government has heard from many Saskatchewan people concerned about this legislation and the potential sale of even a small stake in a Crown corporation.

Mr. Speaker, we want to give the Saskatchewan people comfort, that that's something that they don't need to worry about, notwithstanding the fact that former Premier Romanow said in April of 2000:

We believe SaskTel must expand its business and look at partnering where it makes sense for the provision of improved services.

And that same premier said:

And in the arrangement of the partnership, some swapping or exchanging of shares was part . . . [and] parcel of the payment process. I'd look at . . . [them].

Mr. Speaker, we're not there. We want to give the people of Saskatchewan some comfort that we're going to protect their Crowns.

[14:15]

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

Government Position on Reproductive Health

Ms. Chartier: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will sleep better knowing that.

Last week in this House, the Premier said that a woman's right to choose was not an issue for the Sask Party. He said that the caucus hadn't even discussed it. But then in the rotunda and in the media we heard not only had the caucus discussed it, they'd even sought legal counsel about how to restrict a woman's access to reproductive health services.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Rural and Remote Health has been uncharacteristically silent on this issue lately. Can he confirm that this is a non-issue for his cabinet? And will he commit to working with the Health minister to ensure improved access to these health services in the province?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, this has nothing to do with access, nothing to do with access to health care. Mr. Speaker,

our government remains absolutely committed to live up to the provisions of the *Canada Health Act*, the provisions that have been laid out in the Supreme Court of Canada. There is no change.

Mr. Speaker, any of our caucus members can bring forward anything at any point in time. We welcome those kind of discussions. If we obtain a legal opinion with regard to those, that's a healthy discussion to type of have. And, Mr. Speaker, we're not changing the ability of our caucus members to bring forward ideas. But I can tell you this, Mr. Speaker: we will look after the reproductive rights of women in our province.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, the public affairs officer for Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights said that provinces don't really have a choice in the matter, and I quote:

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is clear, so is the Canada Health Act, which includes abortion as a medical service and so is international law around non-discrimination and reproductive rights.

Mr. Speaker, even so, that government is failing women by not providing sufficient and equitable access to reproductive health services across the province. And the Saskatoon Sexual Health centre says the closure of the STC is making the situation even worse for women in rural and remote areas.

So again, to the Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health: will he respect the law of the land? Will he take women's health seriously, and will he work to ensure that these health services are not just limited to Saskatoon and Regina?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have respect for the laws of the Government of Canada. We have respect for the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada. We will ensure that those laws are implemented and, Mr. Speaker, nothing will change. That is the current status and, Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the people of our province, we will continue to support and respect the laws of the province, whether they're federal, provincial, or ones that are made by the courts.

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

Land Acquisitions for Regina Bypass Project and Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the minister for any information they had regarding the lawsuits initiated by landowners whose land was expropriated for the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] and the Regina bypass projects. I got no answers. So today I'm going to try it again. We know that there have been over a dozen lawsuits launched against the Sask Party government over their land expropriation practices for the Regina bypass and the Global Transportation Hub, and we know that some of those lawsuits have been settled by the

government for an undisclosed amount. As of September, the total value of those settlements was \$11 million for the GTH alone. Can the minister tell us how much has been added to that total since September?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite raise issues of expropriation and land assembly by the government. Mr. Speaker, over the . . . [inaudible] . . . number of decades the province has assembled land for a variety of different uses, whether it be the Cornwall Centre, whether it be road widening on Highway 11, whether it be a variety of different things. Sometimes they're used for public purposes, sometimes for private purposes, but typically they're used for road widening, that type of thing. And, Mr. Speaker, we try wherever possible, as did the ministers opposite when they were in government, you try and negotiate willing buyer, willing seller. And, Mr. Speaker, nothing has changed on that.

Mr. Speaker, they assembled land for the Cornwall Centre in Regina. It proved to be a good addition for downtown Regina. And, Mr. Speaker, sometimes those things need to be settled in the courts; sometimes they're settled voluntarily and, Mr. Speaker, we want to continue with that type of practice.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's Global Transportation Hub is really a total transparency flub. We're talking about taxpayers' dollars, over \$10 million in tax settlements — settlements alone. And these are simple questions that the minister should be able to answer.

We know that there are 15 lawsuits. We're talking about lawsuits launched against this government due to the way they expropriated lands for the GTH and the Regina bypass. Of those lawsuits, six have already been settled by the government, including one from the landowner whose land the government expropriated and sold . . . well we don't know if it was sold. It could've been given to Loblaw.

Mr. Speaker, if the GTH minister won't give any information on how much the government settled each lawsuit for, will the Minister of Highways at least tell us the total amount of all the settled lawsuits for the bypass? That's your ministry.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the expropriation proceedings that have been used in our province are the same ones that were used when the NDP were in government. Mr. Speaker, we've always been on record as favouring willing buyer, willing seller. They don't always exist.

And, Mr. Speaker, any one of the titles that they want to look at, any one of those titles will, if they look at the top corner of the title, have the value of the land that was paid for that particular piece of land. Mr. Speaker, they're welcome to have a look at that. We've indicated that the number of titles they wanted to

look at for the Regina bypass would cost them about \$1,900 if they wanted to examine every title.

Mr. Speaker, if there is litigation with some of those parties, often those parties require that there's confidentiality on some of those things. And, Mr. Speaker, that process is no different now than what it was when the opposition was in government.

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

Ms. Sproule: — That minister knows that we're not asking for those individual amounts. All we're asking for is the global number of all lawsuits that were settled. You have not even begun to answer that question. Mr. Speaker, this minister needs to provide the people of Saskatchewan answers.

The government claims they're so confident in their expropriation abilities and they want us to believe there's nothing to see here. They say this was normal and it was all done by the book. But if they're so confident, why did they settle so many of those lawsuits, Mr. Speaker? We're not asking for details on individual lawsuits. We simply want to know the total cost to taxpayers of all the lawsuits that the government has settled to date.

Now either the minister will make good on his government's promise . . . one of these ministers will make good on that promise to be open and transparent. Tell us how much you spent settling lawsuits, and why you settled instead of standing by your process and your word.

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Well, Mr. Speaker, last week the questions were all about how much will it cost them to get them information from land titles. How much will it cost them to have to go back to ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan]? And they wanted us to interfere with the independent processes of ISC to save them the \$1,900, Mr. Speaker, even though ISC had voluntarily supplied this.

They didn't ask us, but they'd supplied them with a spreadsheet, an Excel spreadsheet, that listed the title numbers, the amount paid for each one, whether they were done voluntarily, whether they were done by expropriation, with all of the dollar values on it.

So this week they decide oh, well maybe there was some lawsuits involved. So they want us to go back and identify which lawsuits were done where and when. Mr. Speaker, we try and settle those things. We want those things kept out of court. We want people to feel comfortable with the things that have to happen.

Mr. Speaker, if they've got a specific question about a specific parcel or a specific transaction, let them file an FOI [freedom of information] request or a written question and we'll see what we can do.

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

Crime Rates in Saskatchewan

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, almost every night, crime leads the news in this province but this government does little more than one-off announcements. And they've completely ignored the importance of taking a preventative approach to crime, investing in social programs and building safer communities.

The minister doesn't have to take my word for it. Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon's outgoing police chief agrees:

We have to put money into housing. We have to put money into jobs. We have to put money into education.

Mr. Speaker, instead of investment, the Sask Party has cut social services, cut community-based organizations, and cut funding for municipalities. Mr. Speaker, why has the Sask Party ignored the police and created a perfect storm for the situation to get worse, not better?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we've been in government right now for just in excess of 10 years. During that period of time, we have invested in safer communities through a variety of different initiatives to reduce break-ins, vehicle theft, and a number of different crimes that were taking place.

However, Mr. Speaker, during the last few months, things have gotten bad again with regard to use of opioids and fentanyl and a number of other hard drugs, and we have a problem with gangs. We're working with the police to try and address that because, Mr. Speaker, as a result of some of those things in the last while, the homicide rate has gone up, and we're concerned that that's happened in spite of the best efforts of some of the police officers that we have in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to correct something that I'd said last week. I said that we had added 750 RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officers in rural areas. The fact is we have 750 police officers in rural areas. We also have 124 RCMP officers in the First Nations policing program. We've increased funding for policing by . . . RCMP funding up 68 per cent since 2007.

Municipal police grants are up 100 per cent since '07. In '07 the grants were \$6.78 million; in 2017, over \$14 million. We've added 120 municipal police officers, and we've got now 258 officers on the protection and response team that are focused on rural crime. Mr. Speaker, we appreciate the concerns that our citizens have, and we want to be able to address them.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, recently Regina police chief Evan Bray said:

Let's work with addictions, let's work with social services . . . education, health. That improves the health and safety of our community if we can provide a holistic, social justice view of things, rather than always catching the bad guy, locking them up.

Mr. Speaker, police chiefs understand that preventative action through positive programming is how we best fight crime. And municipal leaders are doing all they can with fewer resources. But while the Premier has his foot out the door and the Sask Party caucus is pounding their chest instead of helping to solve the problem, Mr. Speaker, when will the Sask Party start taking these concerns seriously and work with municipalities rather than cutting funding, making one-off announcements, and passing off their responsibility?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the concerns that are being raised by the member opposite. She's from Prince Albert. She will know that former police chief Dale McFee developed and implemented the hub and COR [centre of responsibility] model in Prince Albert. It had significant benefits in reducing usage of social services, usage of emergency services. We liked the things that Dale McFee was doing in Prince Albert, so in fact we hired him to become deputy minister of Corrections and Policing.

So now he's implementing that strategy across the province and, Mr. Speaker, it's showing some effects as we work forward, we work to try and break down the silos between the different ministries so that people could share information. And, Mr. Speaker, the point the member makes about trying to use prevention is something we absolutely agree with. If we can save a young person while they're still a student before they get in trouble with the law, we've done the right thing, Mr. Speaker.

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

Staff Numbers in the Education System

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, day after day the minister's tired old spin and rhetoric doesn't match up with the facts. Again, there are thousands more students in our classrooms and 188 fewer teachers and support staff. She called this a slight decline. Last week looking forward, I asked the minister if she would commit to not reducing the number of teachers and funding even further for our kids' classrooms next year and she refused. So did the Premier.

Mr. Speaker, after everything, how can the minister still suggest that more cuts to education are coming? As the member from Saskatoon Northwest said, "School buildings can't teach our kids." So again, will the minister commit to not reducing the number of teachers and funding again in next year's education budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I've said is that the overall picture is pretty stable. Across the province, we have over 9,000 regular classroom-based, full-time employees which of course includes teachers. And this year, there are 95 fewer through attrition and retirement.

Increases and decreases were in large part related to enrolments,

Mr. Speaker. There were increases in teacher numbers and enrolments at Saskatoon Public, St. Paul's Catholic, Prairie Valley, among others. And some decreases at North East School Division. There are fewer teachers, but the division also has 90 fewer students.

[14:30]

Generally speaking, Mr. Speaker, divisions have risen to the challenge. Last week, I read a headline and story about South East Cornerstone Division. The headline read, "School division shortfall not as severe as expected." This is good news, Mr. Speaker. The chief financial officer said, while they'd originally budgeted a \$5.6 million deficit, they came in at 1.9. And they'd reduced where possible, looked for efficiencies, reduced unnecessary travel as directed by the government. She also said, "All the changes we've made have not resulted in any changes at the classroom level." We thank them for that, Mr. Speaker, and the efforts of all school divisions.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 110 — *The Animal Protection Act, 2017*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 110, the animal protection amendment Act, 2017 be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 110 be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 111 — *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Mr. Doke: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 111, *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Amendment Act, 2017* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 111 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Pursuant to *The Election Act*, I hereby table the report on the 28th general election submitted by the Chief Electoral Officer. I'd also like to table the Saskatchewan Legislative Library annual report ending March 31st, 2017.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 100 — *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will move second reading of *The Agrologists Act, 2017*.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan was a pioneer in 1946 when we became only the second jurisdiction in Canada after Quebec to regulate the profession of agrology. Mr. Speaker, we want to be in the forefront again as we modernize and update the Act. The last significant amendments to the Act occurred in 1994, and much has changed in agriculture and in the profession of agrology since.

As such, the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists, the SIA — which was created by the Act in 1946 — has asked for updated legislation, and the SIA and its members support these proposed changes.

The government, in conjunction with the SIA, undertook significant consultation to ensure there was broad stakeholder support to the legislation. We talked to top employers of agrologists. We talked to the educational institutes that train agrologists. We talked to the institutes of agrology in other provinces. We talked to provincial ministries and agencies, such as Saskatchewan Environment and the Water Security Agency. We also talked with other provinces to ensure there would be no labour mobility problems for agrologists accredited in other provinces.

There was general support for our proposals. Saskatchewan Environment supports the amendments because the proposed new definition of “practise agrology” would allow more qualified persons to deliver services under the Saskatchewan Environmental Code.

Mr. Speaker, let me detail our proposed amendments and the rationale. The proposed changes will broaden the definition of “practise agrology” to reflect the fact that more and more agrologists are working in areas related to bioresources and the environment. The new definition will align with certifications provided through agricultural post-secondary institutions that go beyond training in primary agriculture. The University of Saskatchewan, for example, now offers undergraduate degrees in agriculture, agribusiness, animal bioscience, and renewable resource management. This new definition will also be consistent with most other provinces, thus supporting interprovincial labour mobility.

The bill also broadens the academic requirements necessary to become a certified member of the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists. Previously one needed a university or college degree in agriculture from the University of Saskatchewan or equivalent to become a member of the SIA. The amendment changes the requirements to a four-year university or college degree or equivalent in agriculture or bioresources. This amendment also gives the SIA the discretion to determine on their own what education and training programs they recognize.

It's also proposed to add a new provision to the Act that would allow the SIA to issue a restricted licence to practise to persons with less than a four-year degree, in other words, a college diploma. This supports interprovincial labour mobility as Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario allow diploma graduates in agriculture to practise independently with restrictions.

The bill proposes to increase the number of public appointees to the SIA council from one to two. A second public appointee will help manage the workload and ensure that council and committee work proceeds in a timely fashion.

It's also proposed to remove the deputy minister of Agriculture as an ex officio member of the SIA council. The deputy minister's presence on council is redundant as the SIA regularly reports to the ministry, and the government's public appointee positions also provide oversight.

We also propose to give the dean of the University of Saskatchewan College of Agriculture and Bioresources the option of appointing an official representative on the council. The dean of Agriculture's busy schedule may not allow attendance at every meeting. Instead of not attending, the dean would have the option of appointing a representative to attend on her or his behalf.

Another amendment being proposed is to allow the SIA to enact administrative bylaws for other matters deemed necessary for the effective administration of the institute. The SIA is a long-standing professional body in this province. There is no reason why the provincial legislature needs to be involved in overseeing the administrative changes to its bylaws.

It's also proposed to remove the requirement that professional engineers, geoscientists, and forestry workers be members of the SIA. There are some areas of an agrologist's practice that can overlap the areas of practice of engineers, geoscientists, and forestry workers. The SIA has had discussions with the engineering, geoscience, and forestry professional associations and is happy to exempt these professional groups from the need

for SIA accreditation.

We also want to make it easier for the SIA to serve documents. Accordingly we are proposing another new provision to the Act that would allow SIA to serve documents indirectly via a substitutional service as well as directly through personal service or registered mail.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned at the beginning of this speech, a lot has changed in agriculture, agrolgy, and society since the Act was last amended in 1994. The way people communicate has changed considerably in that time and the language in the existing Act does not accommodate the new world of electronic communication. Currently the Act requires that the SIA conduct all official communication with its members through the mail. Electronic communication is much more efficient and inexpensive. It's time to bring the Act into the digital age. The bill will also enable the SIA to determine via its bylaws how it will communicate with its members.

And finally, it is proposed to replace the term "membership certification" in the legislation with "licence." "Licence" is the term the SIA itself uses. This is also the term used in the model professions Act and by other professional bodies, for example, nursing and engineering.

Mr. Speaker, taken together, these amendments to *The Agrolgists Act* will ensure the Act is relevant to the current practice of agrolgy in Saskatchewan. They will support agrolgists' labour mobility across Canada. They will ensure the public continues to be protected in matters related to agrolgy, and they will improve the internal administration of the SIA. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move that *The Agrolgists Act, 2017* be read a second time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Agriculture has moved second reading of Bill No. 100. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased, on behalf of the official opposition, to make initial comments as it pertains to Bill No. 100, *The Agrolgists Amendment Act, 2017*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the agrolgist profession is a very complex profession, as we look at ways and means in which we not only work with the livestock industry, Mr. Speaker, but more so, the commercial production of any crop. And the agrolgists, as a definition, Mr. Speaker, when we look at some of the challenges that they face in terms of their profession, one of the things that we are privy to, as a northern MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], is the incredible insight of many of our members, both the current caucus members and the past caucus members, on the value of course of the many different players as it pertains to the agricultural sector.

And quickly, very quickly as I became an MLA, Mr. Speaker, we learned a lot about how rural Saskatchewan operates. We were taught a lot about how the agricultural sector benefits the province of Saskatchewan. I can tell you right now that one of the first lessons I learned as a new incoming MLA was the incredible value of agriculture. And some of the players that are

out there, whether it's livestock or whether it's crop production, that the amount of benefit that the province of Saskatchewan receive from the agricultural community, Mr. Speaker, is phenomenal. It is the backbone of our industry overall, or certainly it is the number one industry in the province of Saskatchewan, the backbone of our economy. And these were things that were taught to us at a very early start, you know, as an MLA.

And I think it's really, really important that the message we received when we were in the NDP caucus is to learn as much as you can, not just from what the northern issues are — certainly that's important, Mr. Speaker — but to also learn about other challenges that the province had because once you become an MLA, Mr. Speaker, and a member of government, then you have to govern for all. And that's an important message that we learned early on in our career. And that's why, when there's something that comes up within the agricultural sector, some of the issues that I've learned over the years, it's an opportune time for us to learn more about what is impacting rural Saskatchewan, what is impacting the livestock industry, what is impacting the overall agricultural community. These are things that are important to the opposition, as they are important to me, as we begin to learn and delve into these matters, Mr. Speaker.

So it's really important that absolutely every one of our caucus, and certainly every member from all throughout the province, must learn the value of agriculture, must learn the value of livestock, must learn the value of rural Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, we've had some good teachers over the years, and we continue having those teachings coming forward. And that's why it's important that from the opposition perspective we have a well-rounded view of how important agriculture is in our province.

And yes, we don't have the experience of living and working on a farm, Mr. Speaker, but as you sit back and listen to some of the members on this particular side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, who were raised on the farm and know a lot about the agricultural sector, Mr. Speaker, it really opens up your perspective as to just how valuable and how important the agricultural sector is to our province.

So one of the biggest players, Mr. Speaker, in terms of providing advice, in terms of improving yields, in balancing those yields to meet some of the livestock production, is of course the agrolgists of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And this is something that is important for people to know, that these are very well-trained individuals that have a lot of information as to, as I mentioned, how to certainly have sustainable and good yields and a wide variety of crop production.

And of course some of the crop that are produced are meant to support the livestock industry, Mr. Speaker, so it all works hand in hand. And it's important that not only do we learn off some of the more senior farmers who have some great ideas and great concepts, Mr. Speaker, but the agrolgists come along and they have a lot of teaching and training. And certainly over the years, Mr. Speaker, you see the agrolgists' role gradually evolve to also include a number of other new trends that are affecting and impacting yields, and certainly affecting and impacting the benefits to, you know, to the livestock operations throughout

our province, Mr. Speaker.

These agrologists are now going into water management. They're looking at some of the soil science, Mr. Speaker, some of the more troubling challenges with soils in our province. They have been accustomed to gradually adapting their trade over a number of years and they've become more well rounded, more professional, Mr. Speaker. And that's the value of the agrologist sector in the province of Saskatchewan.

[14:45]

They know as well as we know that there are certain challenges facing the agricultural community overall. I made reference of course to the transportation crisis of 2008-2009, Mr. Speaker, when there were billions of dollars of our crop were stuck in bins because the federal Conservatives and the provincial Sask Party members couldn't get the crop to market. And how many different producers and farmers sat on their crop and had them in their bins over many, many weeks and months, Mr. Speaker? And that cost them a lot of money. That was a failure that the agrologists of course couldn't solve, Mr. Speaker, but those were real challenges to the agricultural sector.

And now some of the agrologists are talking about the water challenges that we have as a province. And we spoke about the incredible challenge behind water management and yet, Mr. Speaker, again the Sask Party has not addressed those key critical issues that affect our agricultural community overall.

So I think there's a lot of different ways and means that we can look at this particular bill. I know some of my farm-based colleagues who have been raised and born on the farm and then have a lot of history as it pertains to, you know, to that particular lifestyle overall, Mr. Speaker, that we want to make sure that we certainly hear what they have to say. And as I had pointed out at the outset, it's important that every member of the NDP caucus team learn as much as we can about every sector of Saskatchewan. And I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that we've had the opportunity to hear some of the members from our caucus talk about the value of rural Saskatchewan. And of course we realize, being a member of the government, the incredible, incredible contribution that the agricultural sector plays and pays to our provincial coffers.

However on Bill No. 1, Mr. Speaker, it makes an amendment to *The Agrologist Act*. The definition of "practise agrology" has been broadened. Of course this allows the Saskatchewan Institute of Agrologists to recognize the current scopes of the practice of agrologists that are now working in the province, Mr. Speaker. For example, as I mentioned, more agrologists are looking at bioresources and of course environmental remediation now. And the environmental remediation, Mr. Speaker, I read flooding and I read some of the changing weather patterns — these are some of the things that the agrologists now deal with. And as I said, their industry is getting much more complex. The teaching is getting greater and, Mr. Speaker, more and more so, the agrologists are learning a heck of lot more than the average person on the street about how to improve yields and of course how to have those important connections to the livestock sector and how that's all important and relevant to the health and the economy of Saskatchewan overall.

Mr. Speaker, we think that some of the changes to how they are being trained is a reasonable adjustment. It allows for adaptability as the field of agriculture changes, as I had pointed out. There are different demands nowadays, so the teaching has to be improved. And, Mr. Speaker, there's no question that the agrologists are able to do that. And some of the changes in the bill allows for that and recognizes some of those changes.

There's also changes to the language for membership certifications to license, minor changes of the composition of the council and now allows for two public appointees as opposed to one. And, Mr. Speaker, there's again some minor changes that allow the notice of meetings to be done in a manner prescribed in the bylaws instead of just saying ordinary mail. So by and large, those are some of the administrative changes.

It also creates a category of restricted licensing for people who don't meet the full four-year degree requirement, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it allows for people with a diploma instead of a degree to get licensed with certain parameters in place.

So, Mr. Speaker, overall the changes in the bill are relatively minor and some of the stakeholders have expressed that they do not have any major concerns with this bill. We want to keep that channel open and the communication flowing. And obviously as I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, during our comments here, that it's important for every member of this Assembly, and more important for our side of the Assembly, to understand every sector of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture is something that we pay close attention to, and as my colleagues have reminded me time and time again, it is the mainstay of our economy. It's very valuable to Saskatchewan, has been and always will be of significant value to the future of our province. And once we understand that, Mr. Speaker, and try to learn more about it as a northern MLA, I think that does justice in our service to the people. So I think it's important we stay engaged on these bills. But however, on that note, again other people that have more experience and knowledge on my side of the Assembly will speak at greater length on this bill. So at this point I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 100, *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 100. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 101 — *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, at the end of my remarks I will move second reading of *The Agricultural Implements Act, 2017*. Mr. Speaker, *The Agricultural Implements Act* regulates the sale, lease, and lease-purchase of new and used agricultural implements. The

Agricultural Implements Board appointed through the Act investigates and adjudicates complaints regarding warranties, repairs, and parts and services of agricultural equipment.

It has been 14 years since the Act was last revised, and there have been significant changes in the farm implement industry and the marketplace in that time. The current Act does not reflect current advances in technology or farming practices. A number of stakeholders have approached the government to suggest changes or updates to the legislation. The Agricultural Implements Board has asked that the legislation be reviewed with an eye to increasing the levels of compensation for inadequate service. Agricultural implement manufacturers and dealers have asked us to consider the value of this legislation.

Through ongoing discussion with our industry partners, it was agreed that the Act provided the framework for the industry, and that to balance stakeholder interests, the Act should remain in place. They point out: (1) agriculture is evolving at an unprecedented rate and that today's farmers need access to the latest, most cutting-edge equipment available; and (2) flexibility is essential if implement manufacturers are expected to be industry-leading innovators.

After consulting with stakeholders, the government is ready to act. Mr. Speaker, allow me to detail our proposed changes to the legislature. First, on the advice of the Ministry of Finance, the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund will be eliminated and all transactions related to *The Agricultural Implements Act* will now go through the General Revenue Fund.

The move to budgeting and financial reporting on a summary financial basis means the fund's financials are now being reported as part of the government's financial results as a whole. Keeping a separate and distinct fund for implement compensation payments no longer serves a purpose.

To address the Agricultural Implements Board concerns about inadequate compensation, the new Act will increase compensation levels and will also increase the penalties on distributors who fail to maintain an adequate supply of repair parts. The new penalties will reflect the current cost of purchasing and repairing modern agricultural implements. They will also reflect the cost of producers of lost revenue and down time as a result of inadequate parts service.

The Act requires that implement dealers have parts available to the producer within 72 hours of a request. Now, Sunday has not been included in that time frame, meaning the mandated three-day turnaround could stretch to four days. A day is a long time, particularly during seeding and harvest. Mr. Speaker, most implement dealers are open seven days a week now and so there is no need for a Sunday exemption. Removing the Sunday exemption will get repair parts into the hands of producers or mechanics more quickly and will not place any unnecessary burdens on implement dealers.

We have reviewed the Act carefully to ensure that there is a clear understanding of the terms. To that end, we will amend the Act so that the reference to repair parts will be amended to say "parts." This change will help clarify which party is liable for parts, repair, and rental costs related to farm equipment.

Finally, since we are updating the Act to take new technology into account, the clause "by any prescribed means" will be added to the sections dealing with written notes. This will allow all parties to make the best use of modern digital forms of communication and notice as it becomes available to conduct business.

Mr. Speaker, since *The Agricultural Implements Act* was last updated, many things have changed. The changes we are proposing will bring it up to date with technology and farming practices and allow the Act, the Agricultural Implements Board, our agricultural manufacturing industry, and implement dealers to continue serving the farmers of Saskatchewan.

Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move that *The Agricultural Implements Act, 2017* be read a second time. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Agriculture has moved that Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements 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. And once again I'm prepared to offer initial comments as it pertains to *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker. And with the Act, some of the information that we've gleaned from this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, that the minister alluded to and touched on a bit, is the fact that it removes references to repairs and references either parts or parts and service, Mr. Speaker. And it repeals the section that outlines that the minister can appoint employees for the purpose of this Act.

And it also has explanatory notes stating changes throughout the bill, and also certainly what is covered under *The Public Service Act* and other changes as prescribed, you know, throughout the bill, Mr. Speaker. It also talks about allowing notices to go out through other prescribed means, allowing for use of digital forms of communication — I'm assuming that's email and I think even probably texting is included there, Mr. Speaker — and we need to get clarification on what is meant by other forms of communication, digital forms of communication.

It would also allow for changes for the minister to impose a penalty on a dealer or a distributor. Previously it was a board that imposed penalties, Mr. Speaker. The Act also abolishes the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund, and of course all compensation and penalties associated with this Act will now go through the GRF [General Revenue Fund].

Many penalties throughout the Act are increased. As an example, maximum award for compensation for a farmer under section 10 increases from 10,000 to 50,000. Maximum penalties for distributors who fail to pay an amount to the board required by section 12 was increased from 5,000 to 25,000. Penalties for distributors under section 24 increase from \$5 a day to not more than 25,000. Penalties under section 25 for the supply or repairs by distributors increase from 5,000 to 50,000. And, Mr. Speaker, when a dealer orders emergency parts, they have 72 hours for this part to be available. And previously these 72 hours excluded Sundays and now Sundays are included.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to go through a bit of the bill itself,

Mr. Speaker. What changes when you talk about the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund? Like all compensation or penalties associated with this Act will now go through GRF. Is there any dollars that would remain that the GRF would then claim as part of government's income, Mr. Speaker? Obviously when you look at the compensation fund, we'd like to know how many dollars were in the fund. What are the trends over the last number of years?

And it's kind of odd, Mr. Speaker, that they would have a separate process, that as I mentioned earlier, Mr. Speaker, that there was a board that decided which penalties would be imposed. But not only are they abolishing the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund, it's now going to the GRF. And there's a board that used to decide the penalties. Well now it's the minister, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

So as you look at the changes itself, the question you've got to ask: why is the minister now heaping power on himself and making all these decisions on their own as opposed to going through a board, Mr. Speaker? And I'm assuming that the board itself was probably made of producers and certainly the implements dealers themselves. So there's probably an issue of fairness there, Mr. Speaker. Now the minister has total control and total say.

And again, as I had mentioned on the compensation fund and the penalties fund, now it's going through the GRF. Well, Mr. Speaker, the question we're going to ask is, does the government get any financial reward for having all this money being channelled to the GRF if there is a significant amount?

These are some of the questions that we have to ask for, Mr. Speaker. And as an example, we talked about the maximum award for compensation for a farmer going up as high as 50,000 and 25,000, and certainly other fines that are out there, Mr. Speaker. How has the implement dealership responded to that? Obviously they would have some issue with that, and some concern. We need to ask them for their input as to how they feel about the increases because, Mr. Speaker, as you look at \$10,000 penalty in one section, under section 10 it jumps up to 50,000. Now obviously that's a significant jump, and while we want to recognize that in today's modern farming era, Mr. Speaker, that there are needs . . . There is more complex machinery. There are probably more complex parts. There's probably more training required to install parts, Mr. Speaker.

And all these definitions are always being modernized. And like I said before, there has been many changes, not only to the manner in which we farm but the machinery that we use to farm, Mr. Speaker. There's actually been some phenomenal changes. And while, yes, we certainly want to modernize the language in any Act, Mr. Speaker, we have to know what effect some of the parts of this bill will have, not only on the farmer himself, which is primary in this case, but also the people that provide the implements for the agricultural community.

Mr. Speaker, there's . . . We're going to be asking a lot of the stakeholders some questions as it pertains to the issues that I raised. It should be noted that if you look at the whole process of the dealers having 72 hours to make those parts available,

how has the elimination of the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, STC, how has that affected and impacted this particular part of the Act? Because obviously, Mr. Speaker, when we hear the Minister Responsible for STC talk about ridership, he cleverly ignores the freight concept, Mr. Speaker, and we know that the government right now is paying much more for freight through the private sector than they ever paid for STC, Mr. Speaker. So obviously they're not giving the full story to the people.

And now I would dare say that some of the changes, especially around including Sundays, which is primarily . . . before was considered a holiday, Mr. Speaker, that the value of STC in getting parts to all parts of the province of Saskatchewan, it must have had some incredible benefit for a lot of the dealers to exchange parts or to send parts from various parts of the province, if not North America, Mr. Speaker. That obviously was something that I'm sure that not only did the farmer benefit from but certainly the implement dealer as well. So what was the effect there?

And now as a result of the decision to shut down STC, thereby resulting in less efficiency in getting the parts, and then of course getting the producer, the farmer back on track, Mr. Speaker, those are all impediments to ensuring that the farmer gets his repair done in a timely fashion. Now would that be . . . Would it be fair to assume that the Saskatchewan Party is now responsible for some of the delays and they themselves should be fining themselves as a result of eliminating the STC service, Mr. Speaker? Because as I mentioned, it was not just people that STC transported; it was equipment parts, Mr. Speaker. It was supplies, and there was a lot of cargo that the STC transported all throughout Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, as I said, this was a silly decision. They didn't think it through. Once again their philosophical ideals took over from common sense. And that's one of the reasons why the Saskatchewan people have had enough of the Saskatchewan Party, and I think they're gradually getting the message.

And, Mr. Speaker, that decision to close down . . . STC had so many benefits, so many benefits in place and now that they've eliminated it, has so many repercussions and, I might add, many negative repercussions especially as it pertains to Bill 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act* because in that Act suppliers have a certain time frame to get parts to their producers or to the farmers. And if they don't get those parts to them on time and the service on time, obviously there's penalties to be imposed and, Mr. Speaker, the elimination of STC further complicates that process.

So I would say there is a lot more information that we're going to be seeking, a lot more advice. We obviously don't like the idea when the minister confers more power unto himself as opposed to a committee. We don't like the idea that now all the compensation funds they have for this particular Act are going to the GRF. We know they're going to take money off the top, Mr. Speaker. And again if we have any inkling of how bad the STC decision affects Saskatchewan overall, this is a prime example of how this has hurt the producer, how this hurt the implement dealerships throughout the province, and how this has hurt many sectors of the province in general, Mr. Speaker.

That's why it's important that people in Saskatchewan should

know that as a result of the ill-timed and ill-advised closure of STC, Mr. Speaker, it has repercussions throughout Saskatchewan. And this bill is another example of how they have not thought through their decision to shutter STC. And, Mr. Speaker, again this also affects the provisions in Bill 101. I think the people of Saskatchewan have just about had enough of the Saskatchewan Party. But as I said before, other people in my caucus will certainly have more advice to give on this particular bill, so I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 101.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 102 — *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan's agri-food agencies serve an important purpose in our province's agricultural industry. These agencies include 12 development commissions, 3 development boards, and 5 marketing boards. They cover the spectrum of our agricultural industry, from all manner of crops and livestock to eggs and milk. Saskatchewan's agri-food agencies are mandated to perform promotion and development activities, including research. Their activities help producers reduce input costs, increase production, and generally improve farm profitability.

The Agri-Food Act, 2004 provides a framework for Saskatchewan's 20 agri-food agencies. To date the Act has been an effective tool for industry growth and development; however, the Act is 13 years old. A refresh is in order to keep the legislation current. Our government reviewed the Act to identify potential areas for improvement. We consulted with all 20 of the agri-food agencies as well as the provincial milk processor and the province's two poultry processors. We looked closely at how our legislation compared to that of other jurisdictions. We had conversations with the Agri-Food Council, the independent, appointed board that supervises and monitors all agri-food agencies, and we talked to the Ministry of Justice.

Through these consultations, we identified a number of areas for improvement. The proposed amendments will promote the principles of accountability, transparency, and efficiency, while reducing unnecessary red tape and increasing flexibility for agents. I will take a few minutes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to outline the proposed amendments.

We propose to grant agencies the power to make governance and operational changes using board orders rather than regulatory amendments. A straightforward change such as a

change to a board size or a term length currently needs to go through a full regulatory amendment. Allowing a change to be made through a board order approved by the Agri-Food Council will improve efficiency.

The bill will also grant marketing boards power to develop and deliver animal welfare and food safety initiatives. Agencies already take a proactive role in these areas and this amendment will ensure their ability to lead these initiatives is directly recognized within the Act.

The bill also proposes to clarify the role of the Agri-Food Council to ensure the Act reflects council's role as adviser and facilitator in addition to its traditional role as supervisory body. The council currently provides valuable governance training to new agencies and ensures all agencies are following governance best practices, in addition to reviewing agency minutes and board orders. These important responsibilities will be clearly recognized in an updated Act.

We also propose general housekeeping amendments such as clarifying timelines in which notification of orders or decisions must be provided. Additionally, changes are needed to reflect that the way we communicate has changed significantly over the past 13 years. The changes proposed will ensure agencies can use a variety of options to notify producers of information instead of requiring agency orders or other information to be shared by mail. The changes will provide flexibility for agencies to use other communication methods as needed. This is a practical change that will serve producers more efficiently and more cost-effectively.

Our consultation with stakeholders was thorough and they have expressed support for these changes. These amendments build on the foundation of the Act and its purpose of promoting, developing, regulating, and controlling the production and marketing of agricultural products in Saskatchewan.

In summary, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the amendments to *The Agri-Food Act* will provide agencies more freedom and flexibility in determining general governance and operational matters. These changes will make the Act more forward looking while ensuring it continues to provide an effective framework for the province's agri-food agencies.

I move, Mr. Speaker, that *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017* be read a second time. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Agriculture has moved that Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017* be 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. Again in keeping consistent with some of the teachings I guess, if you will, over time of how important the agricultural sector is to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, it's such a complex industry. And certainly as you look throughout the province of Saskatchewan and certainly growing up in northern Saskatchewan, you learn that the breadbasket of the world are really the three Prairie provinces of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. And, Mr. Speaker, certainly as a young child growing up in northern Saskatchewan, I was always very proud

of that reference. And it's an amazing opportunity for us as Saskatchewan residents, no matter where we're from and certainly what our backgrounds are, to learn more about agriculture and what makes it so strong and vibrant to this day.

Now, Mr. Speaker, again I want to say, preface some of my comments that it's important to note is that you have to be very, very aware of what's happening within the agricultural sector. And as we try . . . As an opposition MLA, I try from northern Saskatchewan to learn as much as I possibly can. And it was with a bit of confusion that I heard some of the comments as it pertains to the Canadian Wheat Board, some of the comments made by members opposite. And you look at some of the language in this particular bill where it talks about marketing boards. It talks about developmental boards, Mr. Speaker. And I sit back in the Assembly here and listen to some of their statements and their position as it pertains to the Canadian Wheat Board, Mr. Speaker.

And all of a sudden, you know, I started thinking to myself, well if this Wheat Board is there to help farmers collectively, why is the Sask Party advocating the sale of the Canadian Wheat Board? Why are the conservatives trying to get rid of the Wheat Board and why would they sell it to a Saudi group, Mr. Speaker? It's just totally confusing to me because obviously if we owned the Canadian Wheat Board and they worked for our interests collectively and they actually had a history of being able to buffer some low years as compared to some robust years, Mr. Speaker, why wouldn't we keep the Canadian Wheat Board?

These are some of the things that were certainly bouncing in the back of my mind and you would ask a lot of questions of the value of the Canadian Wheat Board. And this particular bill, Bill 102, it talks about developmental boards and marketing boards in which they want to do some regulatory changes, Mr. Speaker.

And then it kind of dawned on me, like while they were certainly trying to do minor changes to marketing boards and developmental boards, Mr. Speaker, or development boards, Mr. Speaker, they failed on a big front, and that's of course the Canadian Wheat Board. And now they're trying to do some changes to the smaller marketing boards throughout the province, as the minister made reference to.

And the challenge I see, again not having any agricultural background and not having any degrees, is that why would you first of all shuttle and kill off the Canadian Wheat Board and sell it to some overseas or out-of-country country, I guess, and where they would control the Canadian Wheat Board?

[15:15]

Why would the conservatives and the Sask Party advocate for that? That really confused me at that time, Mr. Speaker, because overall, overall as you look at the challenges I think to the agricultural sector and that is that the farmers in the province of Saskatchewan are excellent at what they do. They are top-notch. And not only do they certainly grow their produce, Mr. Speaker, but they also raise animals. And the amazing thing is they look after their land very well. Notwithstanding a few challenges around illegal drainage, Mr. Speaker, by and large

most of the agricultural sector have a great respect for the environment.

And you notice or you see all these attributes and the strength within the agricultural sector and they're very, as I mentioned, economically they are the powerhouse of the province of Saskatchewan. They're one of the mainstays of our economy. So we learned that over the years being a northern MLA.

And as you sit here and watch what the conservatives are doing, Mr. Speaker — and certainly the Sask Party from my perspective are, you know, they're one and the same — I see them getting rid of the Canadian Wheat Board. And I say to myself, why would they do that, because doesn't the Wheat Board help the producer? Well they said, no, we're going to go to the private market or the market in general.

And then you look at some of the changes they're doing to some of the smaller marketing boards in the province of Saskatchewan. Well wouldn't that hurt that particular sector of agriculture? And I think it does, Mr. Speaker.

How about the grain transportation crisis, the point I made earlier? Does that hurt the producer? No action on the Port of Churchill as a result of, you know, of the train tracks being inaccessible, Mr. Speaker. Like, these are all issues that really hit agriculture so hard — so hard, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm sitting here in my opposition bench and thinking, well what are the conservatives going to do about all these problems? Well, Mr. Speaker, they did nothing. They did nothing. So here I am, a northern MLA that has limited experience and exposure in most of my adult life as it pertains to agriculture, and I see inaction, and I see real threats to the agricultural sector. And yet, the people that pretend to care for the agricultural community, the conservatives and the Saskatchewan Party, are sitting on their hands, not doing anything. Mr. Speaker, they sold off the Canadian Wheat Board, and they are not responding to the Port of Churchill crisis.

Several years ago, the current Minister of Highways, who was the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] president at the time, didn't say a peep, didn't say a word because he was told by his political masters do not talk about this agricultural transportation crisis. Well he didn't say a word, Mr. Speaker, and they continue not saying a word about the incredible transportation crisis that this province faced in getting our producers' goods, and certainly the livestock, that they've grown to the markets, Mr. Speaker. We're a landlocked province, so why wouldn't they address it? And this is why it's so confusing to me as a northern MLA, the inaction of the Saskatchewan Party when it comes to critical points of agricultural sector.

And this bill, Mr. Speaker, talks about the development boards and marketing boards, and how they can change some of their membership, Mr. Speaker. Well, can the Sask Party tell us today what are they doing to protect some of these marketing boards that are smaller in nature, as compared to the Canadian Wheat Board? Because, Mr. Speaker, some of these marketing boards are under extreme threat by what they call global trade. And the Saskatchewan Party understand what global trade is,

but yet they're doing very little to prepare our sector, our agricultural sector, the breadbasket of the world.

In these changing times economically, the fact that they have not done very much to prepare the people of Saskatchewan, especially the agricultural sector, for the new way of trade, Mr. Speaker, and commerce throughout the world, Saskatchewan is at a deep threat, Mr. Speaker. There are real threats to our ability to grow crops and there are real threats for us to continue building our cattle industry, Mr. Speaker. And the list goes on, and yet I see the Saskatchewan Party not dealing with the matters at hand which we talk about international trade.

And people need not go any further, Mr. Speaker, than the mad cow crisis that was experienced by Canada a number of years ago. This is a prime example of how quickly the markets can turn against Saskatchewan produce, and how quickly that the livestock industry can be infected and impacted, and how badly some of the repercussions are to our provincial economy, Mr. Speaker. We cannot have an ad hoc approach or a hit-and-miss approach that the Sask Party and the Conservative governments have been advocating for years.

And, Mr. Speaker, when they make a major mistake in agriculture, and I would make reference to the grain transportation crisis of 2008-2009, they won't say a word about it. They will not say a peep about that problem, Mr. Speaker. And political masters have told some of their followers, in particular as I made reference to the current or the past president of SARM who is now acting as the Minister of Highways, he knew this was a major problem, but with a Conservative prime minister, with a conservative Premier, he was told to sit on his hands, not say a word.

And, Mr. Speaker, we had producers with crop in the bin for a number of months. And does that hurt our provincial economy overall? Well from my vantage point, it certainly does. It certainly does. And when we look at the impact on agriculture, does it have an impact on the North? Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely. As Saskatchewan people, we're all fans of the agricultural sector, northern Saskatchewan included. We understand the value of what is being produced in the farm fields, what is produced on our farms, Mr. Speaker. And we also know that we're a landlocked province. So not being able to get cattle or to get the livestock or get our product to market, that has a significant . . . That offers some significant potential problems for Saskatchewan's future.

But so far, Mr. Speaker, there'd been very little word from the Saskatchewan Party as to how they're going to address some of those incredible challenges to Saskatchewan's agricultural community. I say to the people in Saskatchewanland very simply that the trust and confidence you've had in the Sask Party has been misplaced. The Canadian Wheat Board — gone, sold to the Saudis, Mr. Speaker. They control the Canadian Wheat Board today. And when it comes to some of the changes within, Mr. Speaker, that's required to really build a robust economy for the agricultural sector, they have not addressed the growing water crisis. The transportation crisis of 2008-2009, not a peep, Mr. Speaker.

And you wonder why the farmers continue to have some faith in the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker. The bottom line is I

think they have been very patient with them. And certainly from my perspective I think that patience is wearing thin, because we obviously see there's been very little effort on the Saskatchewan Party's front to protect the agriculture sector to the extent that they should.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is Saskatchewan, as a landlocked province, is one of three prairie provinces that produces great crops. They produce great livestock. And the Saskatchewan Party has not been dealing with the real issues that threaten that agricultural sector, and that is everything from the Port of Churchill closure, Mr. Speaker, to the challenges around BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy], to the challenges of preparing our agricultural sector for international trade, Mr. Speaker.

All these things are very, very important, and on every front the Saskatchewan Party has failed to deliver. And I say shame on them because again from my vantage point from northern Saskatchewan, all I see is just a complete failure of the Saskatchewan Party to protect the agricultural sector of the province of Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know some of my colleagues will have a lot more to say about this particular bill. So on that note I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 107 — *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to speak about *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*. Saskatchewan has a number of provincial emblems that celebrate its rich heritage, including the provincial bird, which is the sharp-tailed grouse; provincial animal, it's the white-tailed deer; provincial tree, the paper birch. The provincial sport is curling. The provincial flower is the western red lily, and provincial mineral is potash.

The purpose of this amendment is to establish the *Tyrannosaurus rex* as the official fossil emblem of the province of Saskatchewan.

Saskatchewan's fossils are of tremendous value to scientists exploring the history of life on earth, a source of great fascination to our residents and tourists, and fossil discoveries are a source of pride for many Saskatchewan communities. Designating a provincial fossil will help bring attention and recognition to these aspects of the province's natural heritage. Although the provincial emblems are not exactly as designated

to Executive Council, a public engagement process was used by the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport, Royal Saskatchewan Museum in consultation with the office of protocol for the selection process.

In November of 2015 the Royal Saskatchewan Museum generated a province-wide campaign encouraging people to help select the new emblem to represent Saskatchewan, as well as to discover more about the province's rich fossil history. Through this process, the public voted through a paper ballot at the museum or province-wide online for one of seven fossil candidates. The seven options for voting were Mo, the long-necked Plesiosaur found near Ponteix. This 30-foot-long marine reptile was a new species to science when it was discovered. Scotty, the Tyrannosaurus rex discovered near Eastend, one of the largest and most complete T. rex skeletons ever found; Kyle mammoth, a 12,000-year-old giant elephant-like woolly mammoth.

The Herschel short-necked Plesiosaur, found near Herschel; this marine reptile was also a new species to science when it was discovered. The Brontothere, a rhino-like mammal found near Eastend from 35 million years ago. Big Bert, the most complete and best-preserved specimen of this 92 million-year-old crocodile found near Carrot River; and Thescelosaurus, a plant-eating dinosaur species unique to Saskatchewan, found also near Eastend.

Ultimately the Tyrannosaurus rex was selected and on May 17, 2016 results were revealed at the RSM [Royal Saskatchewan Museum] by former minister of Parks, Culture and Sport, the member from Coronation Park.

While Manitoba and Nova Scotia have a provincial fossil and a number of states in the United States have a state fossil, Saskatchewan will be the first province or state with a Tyrannosaurus rex as an official emblem. People of Saskatchewan helped make the decision, selecting a provincial fossil that is representative of and unique to Saskatchewan.

To conclude, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport has moved that Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017* be now read for a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've been a member of the Assembly for a while, and I've really grown accustomed to the manner in which the Saskatchewan Party promotes themselves. And, Mr. Speaker, this particular bill when we spoke about *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act*, when they made reference to a fossil nomination, I thought they were going to nominate the Saskatchewan Party caucus, Mr. Speaker. So I wanted to make sure we stood up and wanted to pay particular attention to this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, because they are an old, tired government and they need to go. I think it's important to note that while the fossil emblem is not the Sask Party themselves, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that we note that there has

been some competition for this particular emblem.

And of course the minister made reference to a few examples, and most certainly I think the most famous one is the T. rex fossil, Mr. Speaker. It certainly, just for the size of it and certainly the historical perspective of T. rex, it really shows the incredible spirit of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. So again, a few other members will make a few comments on the T. rex being the fossil emblem for the province of Saskatchewan. I think again and I pointed out, I'm certainly glad that the Saskatchewan Party didn't nominate themselves for the fossil emblem award themselves.

So on that note I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*.

[15:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 107. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 108 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*. This bill will make housekeeping changes to numerous pieces of English legislation in order to update and modernize their provisions.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed changes will update legislation to uniformly refer to "the Court of Queen's Bench." Currently there are various styles of reference that are used, including "Her Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan." The change will ensure consistency between different pieces of legislation and aligns with *The Interpretation Act, 1995*, which already defines "Court of Queen's Bench" as "Her Majesty's Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan" for all Acts. The proposed changes will also assist in preparing for Crown succession by substituting reference to "Her Majesty" with "the Crown" throughout various Acts.

Mr. Speaker, also the Latin phrase *ex parte* is commonly used in legislation in reference to matters such as applications and hearings where a party is not required to provide notice to the other party. The proposed changes will replace this Latin phrase with the simple wording "without notice." This change is particularly beneficial to self-represented litigants and other members of the population who may be required to consult legislation but do not have legal background.

Mr. Speaker, the proposed changes will make a number of additional updates to further clarify and modernize the existing language of legislation. These changes are all housekeeping in nature and will not have a substantive impact on the provisions of the legislation being amended. With that, Mr. Speaker, I am

pleased to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 108, *The Statute Law 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. I don't think it is any surprise that this particular bill, as you look at the statute amendment law 2017, that it affects or impacts a lot of the other bills that the minister made reference to. And it's important to see how those effects change the intent of different laws throughout our province.

As we all know in this particular business, it's important to pay attention to the wording of any Act. Because as I said time to time, there's a significant difference in the Acts when you use the word "shall" versus the word "may." Both those words . . . One can assume that they would mean the same, but quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, there are some significant changes of intent when you use different language. An example I used was "shall" versus the word "may." Mr. Speaker, there are some rules and regulations that attach themselves to every definition of both those words, and it's important that we pay attention to the changes in any particular law bill that might be coming forward. And that's why when you look at some of *The Statute Law Amendment Act* and some of the changes under this bill, we have to make certain that the wording is innocuous and that the intent to change some of the rules on these bills aren't intended to hurt any particular community at all, Mr. Speaker.

So as you look at the bill there are, as I've said, changes to a lot of different Acts, changes such as removing the language "as amended from time to time." That language is gone. Certainly updating reference to the Court of Queen's Bench; update references to "of Her Majesty" with "the Crown." Mr. Speaker, what significant change is that? Because obviously there is a significant change in the wording. Replacing outdated references to legislation contained within certain Acts; updating definitions throughout several pieces of legislation; replacing "department" with "ministry," Mr. Speaker.

And that while we know that the Saskatchewan Party, one of their first major moves as it became government is going to replace the wording of "department." Instead of having Social Services department, they wanted to do Social Services ministry. Like we were really impressed with that first move of language changes, Mr. Speaker, but that's exactly what they did as their first initial bold step. So I think it's important that we try and find out the definition changes that's being amended in Bill 108.

And the other significant point, Mr. Speaker, the language, and this is the important part of law, I think. And certainly from my perspective, when they use some of the wording like *ex parte*, like the average person like myself, well what does *ex parte* mean? It's Latin obviously, but what's the importance of that particular phrase? Well obviously it means without notice, but, Mr. Speaker, you can see the language barrier. And the changes — the terminology, the definition of some of these wording, and even moving a certain Act to another Act — these all have major implications on how we interpret law. And I think it's

important that people make an effort to understand what exactly the changes are being proposed.

And that's why, as the opposition, we listen to the bills being proposed. We then of course offer . . . take the time in the next two or three months to assess that information, reach out to people that may have advice for us and which we always constantly seek that advice, and to see if there's any significant changes from their perspective as the language in this particular bill would dictate.

So it's important that we understand the changes, the wording, the intent. These are all things that are important in this particular Assembly. And we will certainly again lean on those within my caucus that have some significant legal background and certainly have a lot of interest in these particular bills, and they'll certainly have their opportunity to comment on this bill as you move it further down towards proclamation. So on that note, I move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 108, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 108. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

**Bill No. 109 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*
(No. 2)/Loi n° 2 de 2017 modifiant le droit législatif**

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I recognize you as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I recognize you and respect you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017* (No. 2). This bill will make housekeeping changes to numerous pieces of bilingual legislation in order to update and modernize their provisions. Mr. Speaker, several of the proposed changes in this bill mirror changes contained in the English statute law amendment piece such as replacing the outdated term "*ex parte*." In addition, a number of unique housekeeping changes are contained within this bill such as: replacing outdated cross references to legislation and updating the phrase for "extraprovincial corporations" that is used in the French version of *The Non-Profit Corporations Act, 1995*.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, the proposed changes in this bill are entirely housekeeping in nature and will not have a substantive impact on the legislation being amended. With that, Mr. Speaker, I am, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill No. 109, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017* (No. 2) 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. As we

look at some of the changes that are being proposed in Bill 109, Mr. Speaker, as the minister spoke about, there's a few administrative changes that's important that we note. And certainly from my perspective, we want to be able to make the justice system much more, much more easier to understand, Mr. Speaker, because obviously from my perspective, as I mentioned from some of the earlier discussions on some of the earlier bills, when you use the language "*ex parte*" in a court of law it really confuses a lot of people. And I'm all for the notion of using English that people could understand so we can understand our justice system better. So it's important to note, as I said, some of the interpretations or the definitions and the rules being proposed on any amendment, that we have to pay very close attention to that because, as I mentioned, wording, interpretation, intent of that word is really, really where we need to spend a lot of time.

So under this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, there are changes to a lot of different Acts. As I said, I think there would be easy to assume the consequential changes to the earlier bill, Bill 109 . . . sorry, 108 when they updated definitions to several pieces of legislation, they updated references to outdated departments. They replaced outdated references to legislation contained within certain Acts. They replaced the language "*ex parte*" to "without notice" and they also removed the language, "as amended from time to time."

So some of the bills in 108 are similar to the bills in 109. They're obviously two separate bills, so the same process must be undertaken. But again, I would point out to the people that are out there that may want to give us some advice on not only this particular bill, as it changes the wording and the intent. I think once the word changes, then the intent also should come into question and how it affects the bills and the application of law and so on and so forth. These are very complex discussions that need to occur on any legal bill, Mr. Speaker. And as I mentioned at the outset, there are people within our caucus that have a better understanding of how the justice system works, and obviously we will be looking forward to some of their comments.

But also I ask the people out there that have a network of legal minds, whether it be a law firm or a student or somebody just fresh out of law school, that if they have any perspective on this particular bill or any bill coming forward as it pertains to justice, that our caucus is always looking forward to networking with you, getting advice from you. And that information is highly sought after and highly valued. So I would certainly want to encourage the people that are out there paying attention to these bills, that if you have any information, please contact us, or any concerns. We'll certainly bring the issues and matters forward as it pertains to the bill and the word changes associated with Bill 109.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 109, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 109, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2017* (No. 2). Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 85

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Heppner that **Bill No. 85 — *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and enter into this debate. And it's one that I understand might be a little overdue, but it's good to have it here before us at any rate.

I am a little perplexed, right off the get-go because I look at the back and I see that it was moved by the Minister of the Economy, but the person giving second reading speech was the Minister of Energy and Resources, and so I'm not sure who was responsible for this bill. It would be, I think, the Minister of Economy as his name is on this bill, but I don't know who is going to be speaking in committee. But at any rate, we'll get to that when we get to that.

But it's just an unusual move that the person that's named on the back of the bill is not the one who gave the second reading speech. And I guess to the first question, sometimes people are gone for a variety of good reasons. And whether or not they were, I'm not going to get into that debate because that's all what we do here and that's fair enough.

But the question before us is whether the minister who put forward the bill does stand by the second reading speech that was given by the Minister of Energy and Resources because that's very, very important. Because as I know, and anybody who has served that has had the privilege of being a minister, that these second reading speeches, in fact, really do outline the intention of the government, the intention of the government of the day when it comes to bills like this. And it actually can be used, can be cited as evidence when you're trying to interpret the legislation. If it's not as clear as it might have been, then the second reading speech by the minister could be used to illuminate, articulate, and hopefully not speculate on the meaning of the legislation.

And while I would assume that the Minister of Energy and Resources would have been quite involved in the development of the bill, I assume the Minister of the Economy was as well. His name is on the bill. And I assume as well that the Minister of Environment would have been as well. Interestingly, the history of the Minister of Environment who is now on his second round, just came out of Energy and Resources and so probably had quite a lot to do with this piece of legislation.

[15:45]

So I'm sure between the three of them they know and they are

quite familiar with the . . . And it's quite interesting because the current Minister of Energy and Resources was also a minister of Environment at one time. So, you know, it was quite a bit of a musical chairs, and they all had their finger in this one piece of legislation.

And interestingly, Mr. Speaker, I too had some fingers in this piece of legislation back in the early 2000s when I was the minister of Environment and worked with the minister of Economic Development, is what we called the person at the time. That was our term. They were the lead on it, but clearly we had an interest and the folks within the ministry, the Department of Environment at the time, played a major role, played a major role. And I think the member from Athabasca who was also a minister of Environment also had an awful lot to do with this.

It takes a lot of work to get the balance right here. Because as we know, as we are completely committed to on this side of the House and I really hope they are on that side of the House . . . There is, you know, we would call the triple bottom line, where you have the three lines where you think about the three bottom lines in terms of economic development. Of course there has to be a sound business case to the development. That is critical, that you have a sound business plan. That has got to happen. The second one is you've got to have a sound environmental impact assessment. That makes a lot of sense too. And then third, and particularly we see in vulnerable communities where often they depend on projects like this, there is the social implications. The third bottom line is the social aspect of it as well.

And we can see examples around the world where we have situations that have not worked out well because they've not had a really good approach to the triple bottom line that often has been used. And, you know, you can think of whether it's in Africa or in Asia and some of the projects, large projects particularly. Whether it be the social impact has been huge, the environmental impact has been negative, and sometimes we even see where there has been investment in mines particularly, where it hasn't panned out to be the way it has.

But fortunately here in Saskatchewan . . . and we're glad to see that the government of the day has continued the commitment to this piece of legislation, the reclaimed industrial sites. We introduced and passed that legislation back in 2006 or '07, and then there was a five-year implementation of the legislation to see how people, how industry responded to it. Of course they were consulted, as they were in this past period. So that would have taken to 2011 or '12, and then the government took it back and did an evaluation assessment of it. And that was always the plan, that there was going to be a period of time of review after the first five years. So they have done that and so we are glad to see that they actually are following up with that.

And of course when we looked at it in 2006, you know, Saskatchewan's a very, very attractive place for industry to take a look at investing, in terms of whether it be mining, any kind of project along those lines. And the point of this legislation was that you would put money aside, set money aside or resources aside so that when the project was finished that it could be turned back to its natural state, its first state that it was found in.

And we had seen, and my colleague from Athabasca, the real learning here in Saskatchewan of course was the uranium mines up by Uranium City, Gunnar mine and the other mines that we are still paying. And I don't know what the tab is right now but it continues to grow because there were not resources set aside for proper decommissioning and proper reclamation of the mine after the fact. And there's two or three mines that that's the scenario and we are left holding the bag. And we can't have that situation where you have abandoned mines.

We often see it in the cities and our communities where we have orphan gas wells or a gas storage from gas stations that were there and then they were, are essentially abandoned. And the orphan wells, gas storage tanks are just too, too expensive to do anything about. And of course if you've been in Saskatoon this summer you would have seen the project on the corner of H and 22nd where it's not an easy thing to reclaim a site when something's been left to sit for a long, long time, for many, many decades because there was never part of the business plan to set aside resources to reclaim the land.

And so this is important that we set this up and we think of this. And the term that's often used in the environmental world is from cradle to grave. So if you're building a mine and you're setting it up, you're setting up, considering we're all excited about something new. And so you get the cradle part is exciting, you know, and the new build, the new jobs, all of that. What could go wrong?

Well you know, at some point there is a finite resource. And whether the mines exhaust themselves and there's no resource left, or the world has changed and that particular mineral or whatever is no longer needed in our world, then something has to change. And so there's a variety of reasons why . . . Or market prices are such that mines get closed down that were once thought to be successful and the business plan was solid and no longer is.

And so, Mr. Speaker, this is important that we have set aside . . . And I understand we were one of the first in Canada as a province to set this, to do this kind of thing. And I hope we're still leaders in this because it is critical, it is critical that when you set a standard . . . And some may balk at the idea, saying, well this is something that business won't like. Actually it is interesting because if you set out the rules clearly and have them involved at the beginning so there are no surprises and this is part of the business plan, then they will participate.

That's what we found in the early 2000s and leading up to 2006. There was never a question about whether or not . . . And we saw in fact following that, the boom that happened in Saskatchewan with the resources, and whether it was uranium or whether it was with potash, that they were quite willing to step up to the plate, understanding that in the new world thinking that the environmental impact is a huge, huge part. And we can make plans and you can make part of the plans right from the beginning so that the industrial site is seen as cradle to grave. And the grave will be properly prepared for and that it's not a surprise, nobody's surprised when that happens, as opposed to the earlier experiences that we had in the far North with uranium, especially around Uranium City where that was not managed in the end as well as it should have been.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know we've got lots of work today to do, but I just want to cover the four parts that they have talked about in Bill No. 85. That the minister now requires the site holder to provide acceptable financial assurance before a closed site can be accepted into the institutional control program. And I understand that probably now when we talk to the minister we'll hear more about that in terms of . . . Because at some point the company may not last as long as they would like to, and think they're going to be around to manage. Somehow there has to be a program, and these programs will be in place for decades if not longer.

And now as well, a new section outlines that a minister can transfer a closed site from the institutional control program to a responsible person. Now that's going to be interesting, and that's one of the questions we'll have in committee is, what does that mean? Is that something where they think they might actually restart the site, that in fact they found a new use or have discovered more of the resource on-site and they want to start over again, or what is it that they are looking for? What would make that a viable and reasonable thing to do?

And then as well a new section will allow the minister to appoint a fund advisory committee, which seems to make sense, you know. And the committee is exempt from liability from investment decisions, obviously. And we assume that these will be . . . Probably some of them will be people within the ministry and they will . . . When you're dealing with large amounts of money, hopefully you've got the skills and the capacity to make the right decision and there won't be those surprises, but we need to make sure that's the case.

And importantly that they maintain that the minister must conduct a review of the Act every five years. It gets a little vague though about what will be expected in that review.

And so with that, I know that the minister talked about some of the things that she's looking forward to putting forward but, as I said . . . And she talks about she's pleased, and I quote, ". . . that this bill has the support of industry, industry organizations, and the federal and provincial regulators involved in our stakeholder consultations." And so that this addresses some of the concerns.

I'd be curious to know whether some of the people . . . Now it talked like they . . . and very importantly they talked the business side, the investor side, the people who would be the primary, you know, stakeholders. But I think the other primary stakeholder group that we need to really think about of course are the environmental groups who have become much more sophisticated, much more understanding of this government's approach to environmental regulation in that there is a high degree expected in terms of technical knowledge. And so I'm not sure if some of those people have been consulted on this. I think it's important to reach out to those.

And then the other, third group that I think that should be, and they're very close to these industrial sites, are the northerners particularly, but anybody . . . And I think in rural Saskatchewan if you happen to live close to a mine site, you're thoughtful. You see the tailings pond. You see the tailings particularly; we often think about that at the potash mines. We see them and it's become a fact of life and people driving through often wonder

what those big hills are. We all know what they are, but they wonder about that.

So this is an issue for all of us in Saskatchewan. And so has the ministry responsible for this . . . And I think it's the Economy. As I said, there was some confusion that may need to be clarified at some point, but we'll assume it's the Economy because that minister's name is on it. And so we'll be having some questions about that. But we will be having questions about who was consulted, and is it appropriate or not appropriate.

I would feel it should be clear that there are other groups who should be consulted in these kind of pieces of legislation to make sure they're as good as they can be and as solid as they can be and that we really are leading the country, and that we're also seen as the best place to invest for these kind of activities that can have a long-lasting effect. But people will know . . . Sure we'll get behind the investment, but we know at the end of the day it's a cradle-to-grave approach and that people will accept that, knowing that we will reap the benefits but, with so much that's in the world today, that there is a limited thing.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll be taking my seat soon. I don't think there's . . . Let me just think if there's anything more I need to say. I'm not sure; I'll look over there and see if anybody sparks a thought. But, Mr. Speaker, with that, I move adjournment on Bill No. 85. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 85. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[16:00]

Bill No. 86

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Merriman that **Bill No. 86 — *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. No, I'm not Mr. Belanger, but I just want to clear that up for my colleague from Regina Coronation Park. But as ever, good to take my place and join the debate at this stage of Bill No. 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*.

Now there are a lot of things that get addressed in this legislature, Mr. Speaker. And you know, some, in terms of the degrees of impact or seriousness, there are . . . There's a whole swath of society that would be able to attest to the ways that things under child and family services either go right or do not go right.

And when you think about growing up with your friends and the different folks that head off into different things, maybe this

one wants to be an entrepreneur or somebody wants to be a professional athlete or someone goes into the fire service or someone goes off into social services, Mr. Speaker, becomes a social worker and in turn lands up working in child and family services or in child protection. And this being Saskatchewan, there are a lot of different ways where we see how that system can go right, and there are a lot of different ways where we can see how that system hasn't worked out, Mr. Speaker.

And in terms of the ways that it can go right, you know, there's a broader discussion to be had around things like colonialism or racism or the Sixties Scoop or residential schools. Or even now the whole question of the seizure of kids, Mr. Speaker, from homes and from families and how our adoption system these days has evolved certainly, but how the challenges remain. And it seems that not too many months go by where the adoption system is again in recruitment mode and trying to find places to put kids that have been seized and have moved from foster care, Mr. Speaker, and are ready for adoption.

Or the ways that jurisdiction and the wrangling and the funding and the proper resourcing of the system, Mr. Speaker, between First Nations, Métis, and the Government of Saskatchewan, again how that is working or is not. And you inject into that, Mr. Speaker, the role of the federal government. And I think of things like the work of Cindy Blackstock and the work that has been done there to establish the inequity between what happens on-reserve and the resources that are on offer, and the way that, you know, as for whatever problems it's got, the Government of Saskatchewan's system having a significant resource advantage over that experienced on-reserve.

And again, Mr. Speaker, you think about things like the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision that was made in response to the Canadian caring society, and very much spearheaded by Cindy Blackstock, and I think locally the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] was a party to that suit, Mr. Speaker, trying to again get the child and family services on-reserve on a level playing field with the rest of provincial jurisdictions.

And you think about how long that is going on and then the fact that that has been appealed by the federal government. And you think about how again there are few things that are more important in terms of the work we do in this legislature than getting some of those things right and putting aside the jurisdictional wrangling. And again I always think of . . . There's a great saying from Sitting Bull, Tatanka Iyotake, who once said, you know, "Let's come together and see what we can do for the children." And that's good advice then, Mr. Speaker, and it's good advice now for any level of government.

And again you don't have to look too far to see where the system is either failing or succeeding, where the system's either in sort of ongoing crisis or where it's not. And again, Mr. Speaker, far too often we hear about how the system is failing, and it's not . . . I certainly do not fault the hard-working men and women that are in that system that are tasked with making some very heart-wrenching decisions, Mr. Speaker. I don't fault this government, Mr. Speaker. I think I fault us as a society for not giving it the attention and the resources and the careful thought that is needed to do better. Because the way that not doing better has worked out is that we fill our jails, we make for

threats in our community that need not be there, and we in a systematic way are party to the wasting of so much human potential. And again, Mr. Speaker, that the stakes are so high, you'd think that there would be a better way to do this work than through the court system or through the judicial system, the quasi-judicial system in the case of the Human Rights Tribunal, and get some things sorted out in a fundamental, generational way.

Some of the best work that this government has done was the early on convening of the child and family committee of cabinet, the work that had been done from the . . . under the leadership of the Ministry of Social Services in conjunction with the FSIN and the MNS [Métis Nation of Saskatchewan] and the different tables that were under way there, Mr. Speaker. But that that work has gone on as long as it has, seemingly to as little effect as it has, makes you sit back and wonder, you know, what is it that we continue to get wrong?

Now again this is fine legislation in and of itself. It's brought forward by a . . . The minister's a fine individual. And like I say, there's again a lot of good men and women doing work in that ministry, often under very difficult circumstances. But you know, what does it say about us as a society where again many of our fixes for these situations are administrative and would seemingly amount to tinkering around the edges of the broader problem that again seems to present, you know, in a new way every generation or so?

So is it a question of resources? Is it a question of jurisdiction? Is it a question of power sharing, Mr. Speaker? Is it a question of dealing with that intergenerational legacy of different things that have gone on in our society, Mr. Speaker, knowing those things for what they are and acting upon them? Is it recognizing the truth of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and then proceeding on in earnest with the steps that are in accord with the calls to action? I'd say that yes, it is.

But again we seem to have problems in this House even recognizing the truth part of the truth and reconciliation, which is unfortunate to say the least, Mr. Speaker.

So again it's with a heavy heart that we approach these discussions. And again, you know, there are some arrows pointing out of this to making better use of things like a person of sufficient interest and the roles that kinship care play in a child's life, or the roles of, you know, family cohesion and what we can do as a society in a way that helps people, not makes the problem worse or puts that problem down the line. There again, to quote the minister's second reading speech, "The amendments in Bill 86 are generally administrative in nature," Mr. Speaker.

Now as the minister goes on to relate, hopefully this sets a stage for better and bolder things to come because again, Mr. Speaker, the way that the system doesn't work plays itself out in some terrible waste of life and potential. And we see that in all sorts of different ways, Mr. Speaker. We look at our corrections system or we look at what's happening with addictions in this province. Look what happens with crime. This is part of this, Mr. Speaker, and I don't say these things lightly and I don't say these things to, you know, play the blame game because certainly there are parts of this that we all have

responsibility for.

There are some things that are going right. I was pleased to see the opening of a home where the focus is on keeping families together but in a therapeutic setting. And again great to see that, Mr. Speaker, but we see too little of that. Whereas alongside we see again the different sort of problems that I've touched on in my remarks here today.

So in terms of the legislation coming forward that is mostly, generally administrative in nature, given the magnitude of the challenges, the ongoing crisis that we're dealing with, Mr. Speaker, I don't know that this does the job. And I don't know that . . . You know, I know for a fact there are kids in care right now that minute to minute is a tough enough thing as it is. Waiting for the next round of legislation or setting up the administrative suite of measures to hopefully to foster further co-operation through the sector, I mean meanwhile you've got kids that are paying the price for our collective failure to deal in a better way than has been the case to date.

So I know others of my colleagues have different things that they will be saying in this debate, but I guess I'd move to wrap up my remarks in this particular debate, Mr. Speaker, saying that, you know, we're looking for more. We're looking for better. We're looking for a sign that all different levels of government, you know, on reserve, off reserve, that we can figure out a better way to put our heads together and do right by the kids of this province — all the kids of this province, Mr. Speaker. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 86. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[16:15]

Bill No. 87

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 87 — *The Data Matching Agreements Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to rise to enter debate here in the legislature. Today it's my pleasure to talk about Bill No. 87, *The Data Matching Agreements Act*, Mr. Speaker.

For a Luddite like me, data matching and what this bill does is hard for me to wrap my head around. I do know just a few months ago I heard a really great program about data matching and lawyers using data matching to search large documents, Mr. Speaker, to try to find bits and pieces of information. And it sounds like that's much what's going to go on here, Mr. Speaker.

Data matching, for those Luddites out there like me, it's the act of using software to track and analyze large amounts of data. And this particular Act outlines how this would happen and the efforts to ensure privacy and good practice.

It's always good to look at the minister's second reading speech. Often there can be more to the second reading speech or more to the bill than is in the second reading speech, but it's a good place to start, Mr. Speaker.

This particular Act will allow for the matching and linking of information in databases, the minister says to facilitate fact-based decision making within government. I'll talk a little bit later about fact-based decision making in this government, but he goes on to say that "This Act promotes co-operation amongst government institutions sharing information while still protecting the privacy rights of individuals, following recommendations made by the Office of the . . . Privacy Commissioner."

I'm curious, I think, some of the questions that'll come up in committee. So it's being made on recommendations by the Privacy Commissioner. I'm wondering if every recommendation that he would've made has been included in this report, because I know that there's been — oh pardon me, in this legislation — because I know there's been legislation that comes before us previously around privacy that perhaps not all recommendations make it into legislation. So I know that the critic responsible will be covering some of that off in committee.

"This . . . Act will create a statutory authority for government institutions and prescribe local authorities to enter into data-matching agreements and participate in data-matching projects using personal information or personal health information."

The minister goes on to say, his explanation: "Data matching is where information from one database is matched or linked with information in another database." He points out that "This Act will establish requirements for the initiation of a data-matching program by a government institution or prescribed local authority and also place requirements on participating organizations."

Again as someone who isn't very familiar with data matching, I know one of my questions would be just around examples. What does this look like? Has data matching . . . I know this legislation is just coming forward with recommendations from the Privacy Commissioner, but has the government already been doing some data matching in its work? So those will all be questions that get asked, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure, in committee.

The Act also:

. . . will require parties to a data-matching project to enter into a data-matching agreement which meets the criteria set out in the Act. Oversight will be provided by the government access coordinator where the initiating organization is a government institution, and the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner generally.

He points out, "The government access coordinator and the

Privacy Commissioner will review agreements and provide comment.”

Mr. Speaker, we know there’s been . . . When it has come to . . . It is the access coordinator right now in each ministry who coordinates access to information requests or freedom of information requests, they’re called provincially. And there have been challenges I know not just within or from our caucus seeking information, but the news outlets and others who have run into trouble with the government in trying to access information, with the government withholding information or charging exorbitant fees which make it cost prohibitive to get information, or in fact instead of answering questions here in this House, telling the opposition, well do a freedom of information request, Mr. Speaker.

But back to this bill. Back to Bill No. 87, the data-matching agreement. This Act, as the minister points out, it “. . . establishes reporting requirements where a data-matching project has been completed and sets out expressed good faith liability protection for disclosing information and compliance with such an agreement.”

He says that:

. . . the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner will continue to retain all of its investigative and recommendation power under *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

I don’t have the details in front of me, but I know that it’s been a long time coming in terms of the need to update, actually, our freedom in information privacy Act. I know the Privacy Commissioner would like to make those rules a little bit more robust to increase accountability and transparency, and that’s something that hasn’t come before this House, Mr. Speaker. And I know that our Privacy Commissioner and previous privacy commissioners have recommended some changes and amendments to make public access of government decisions more readily available.

And the speaker — pardon me, Mr. Speaker — the minister also points out that:

The government access coordinator . . . [will be] a new role that will be created through consequential amendments to *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* . . . [and this] coordinator will review data-matching agreements for government institutions and provide comment. The . . . access coordinator will also receive reports from government institutions where a data-matching project is completed.

So these, Mr. Speaker . . . I think it’s an interesting area and an interesting place and time where, when you have large blocks of data, in this particular news story that I had heard about, lawyers and the use of it in preparation for cases being able to go through literally thousands and thousands of pages of documents that would previously have to be combed through by a person by hand . . . There’s still work that needs to be done in analyzing the data that you come up with, but it’s an interesting

place to be here in 2017, and technology and how it facilitates our work, Mr. Speaker.

But I’m very curious. I’d like to know a little bit more about the data-matching projects that have occurred and, if nothing has happened yet, what this might look like and some examples of that.

It’s interesting to me when the minister, in his speech, talked about fact-based decision making. That jumped out at me, Mr. Speaker. As a critic here in the opposition I would argue that fact-based decision making would be a very nice thing to see from this government, that by and large we haven’t seen that. We can go to the wind-down of STC. And we have a minister and a ministry in Health, in particular, where a decision was made and then people are searching for answers on how that decision will impact people. So I believe in evidence-based policy, and fact-based decision making sounds like a good idea.

I think about another area for which I was the critic when this government got rid of the film tax credit. There was all kinds of evidence and facts that showed that that helped generate income and jobs here in Saskatchewan, and the government ignored that. So I’m interested in . . . And there are many, many examples along the way in my eight years that I’ve been in this House, Mr. Speaker, but I am interested in their comment about fact-based decision making.

One of the things . . . We’re talking about accountability and transparency here because we have large pieces of information and expectations to security that are involved in this bill. We have a Premier who can’t figure out how to stop using his private email server at the Sask Party office for government business. We have major concerns about accountability and transparency when it comes to the GTH land scandal, Mr. Speaker.

I have the privilege of serving as the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee. It’s the only committee chaired by the opposition and it is in fact a scrutiny committee. And I know that members have asked, an opposition member has asked on repeated occasions to have a key figure appear before our committee, which it was normal practice actually. It’s interesting to me when you have a ministry come before the Public Accounts Committee it’s normal that the deputy minister responsible for that ministry is the witness who appears along with, if it’s a third party organization, whether it’s the Saskatchewan Arts Board or a school board, the school board appears but so does the deputy minister of Education. Or if it’s the Arts Board it would be the Minister Responsible for Culture along with the Arts Board. So it’s been very unusual in my time as the PAC [Public Accounts Committee] Chair to see that Laurie Pushor has not, as the deputy minister responsible for the Economy, has not appeared before the committee. It was quite unusual, actually, that happened.

So I know that in general we have serious concerns about how this government deals with accountability and transparency — a government who had committed to be the most accountable and transparent government in Saskatchewan’s history, which I think it’s been shown to not be the case, Mr. Speaker. But I think the Privacy Commissioner has made some recommendations and it’s good to see them in legislation. I’d

like to know if there were more recommendations by the Privacy Commissioner and what maybe didn't make it into the legislation, but those are all questions that I know the critic responsible will ask, questions once this bill gets to committee.

But with that, with respect to Bill No. 87, *The Data Matching Agreements Act*, I move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 87. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 88

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 88 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to stand today to add my comments to the debate with regards to Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*.

First, Mr. Speaker, I want to bring a little bit of reference to some of the comments that my colleague, the member from Cumberland, referred to when he was giving his responses to this bill. And he continuously referred to the member of Prince Albert Northcote, but I know he meant to refer to the member of Prince Albert Carlton, you know, and that is the minister that brought forward this bill. And so I just wanted to make sure that anyone who is researching this bill can understand that he made a little bit of an error there.

So, Mr. Speaker, getting to make some comments with regards to changes with regards to this bill, my understanding is this is an Act that is administered by Saskatchewan Government Insurance — so oftentimes we refer to that as SGI, Mr. Speaker — and it's talking about people who are injured in vehicle accidents and how they administer some of the costs that are related to that, Mr. Speaker.

And first I want to talk a little bit about how important it is and how wonderful our Crown corporation of SGI is for the province of Saskatchewan. We're very fortunate to have a government insurance company that provides affordable insurance for our vehicles and medical insurance when we need it, if we're ever in a situation where we're in an accident. And I know the staff that work at SGI are wonderful. I've had the opportunity to work with them due to some of the incidences I've had with regards to vehicle collisions, some of them maybe my fault, some of them not so much. But in any case, they've always been very good to work with and very helpful and very professionally trained, and I appreciate the services that they provide.

I know other people from other provinces, some of my relatives or friends, they talk about how they really wish they had an opportunity to get auto insurance from a Crown corporation like we have with SGI because of the affordable rates that we experience, and then the benefits that we get with regards to dividends when the insurance company doesn't need to pay out because people are having less accidents or using the insurance a lot less. And so I think that's really important that we keep that in the back of our mind when we talk about these Acts and the importance that these services are for the people of Saskatchewan.

SGI has a safe driver recognition program, Mr. Speaker. And with regards to this recognition program, they have safety rating scales and they're based on your driving history. And so people who have been safe drivers are awarded a discount on their vehicle insurance, and drivers that may have displayed riskier behaviour or happened to be in some different collisions are assessed and they receive financial penalties. So I know this program has been well received by a lot of people, because they appreciate the fact that they're getting rewarded for their safe driving records. And so having some of your insurance discounted with regards to that is very helpful, you know, and people appreciate that.

[16:30]

And I know people, as soon as they get into an accident they're like, oh no, what are my points going to look like? And that's what you oftentimes hear them talk about, and so it really does put that in your mind when you're driving. So some of the changes that are with regards to this bill have some implications with this recognition program, and that's why I thought it was important to talk about that a little bit.

So this bill defines chargeable incidents for the purpose of the safety rating assessment. Mr. Speaker, I was looking in there and wondering why they needed to define "chargeable incident" and why, if that was something that would affect your rating assessment, why that wasn't already in the Act or the bill? And so I still don't really have a clear understanding of why that was needed to be more defined.

And I hope that whoever is going to be looking at this bill and figuring out if these changes are going to be good or not . . . Because my other understanding is some of these changes are coming into effect because there was some other changes the last time and they didn't realize the impacts. So I think it's really important that we take a lot of time to understand what the potential impacts could be when you're making changes to a bill.

And so I'm wondering, like if you were in a car accident and whoever the agent was determined that there'll be a chargeable incident, are they in a position that they can identify that? And if in fact you were charged but then proven innocent, what kind of implications does that have, you know? And so . . . Because I read later on with regards to that, and they talk about the conviction aspect, if you are charged with an offence and then convicted, how then the insurer could go back and receive the compensations that they already paid out. So do we need to . . . How do we go about with determining which chargeable incidences we determine aren't going to be included or are, and

which ones are? Because I'd hate to put agents in a position where they have to make these decisions. But when people are convicted, then I think that changes everything. So that's why I don't understand the reason why we need to have that defined to the extent that it was.

They also said a part of the definition of chargeable incident is duplicated in the regulations, and so they made changes to eliminate this duplication because it was not necessary, and everything will be more efficient when changes are required to the listed offences. So again there's been some more changes there. And I don't understand what the purpose of that duplication was at one point and why it's not necessary now. So excuse me for the lack of information I have with regards to this, and I know the critic responsible will have a better understanding and do the due diligence of talking to the stakeholders that would have some better understanding of it than maybe I do.

So when SGI changes a driver's safety rating, Mr. Speaker, the driver has the option to appeal this decision with the Highway Traffic Board. And so this is a great opportunity to have outside observers look at a situation and make a determination of whether that decision from SGI is warranted.

And so part of the process of the appeal, the Act indicates that the board will contact the driver applying for the appeal to schedule the appointment. But apparently, according to what the minister's remarks were, he indicated that they're going to be changing the rules to indicate that the driver will contact the board, because apparently that's what's being done at this point. And I'm not understanding why the drivers would be contacting the traffic board. I would think it would make more sense for the Highway Traffic Board to be contacting drivers on their time, and making those appointments. But I guess if people are already making those calls, who's monitoring them? Who's scheduling them? And I guess that would be something to look into too. Like is it going to be too convoluted, or maybe it does make more sense. Like, so I think that's another area that should be looked into to see if this is going to be a decision that we're going to see later down the line, that it's going to make more work than we anticipated. I think we need to make sure that that's looked into.

So another change that they're going to be making with regards to the amendments to this Act is if a driver is convicted of criminal negligence causing death. Or I'm thinking, because the minister said, "... and criminal negligence causing bodily harm," I'm wondering if its needing to be both of those or if it's and/or — those two different offences — or if they have to be together.

SGI can recover any insurance paid for, with regards to pain and suffering or bereavement damages, from that driver's third party liability insurance. So, Mr. Speaker, my understanding of this is that if someone is convicted of an offence, that then SGI can go back and say, you need to pay us back whatever money was put into their medical expenses because of the accident, or if they've deceased, the family members, or if there was any payments with regards to that.

My question I guess, Mr. Speaker, would be: if these people are convicted, at times they might be in the justice system. And the

justice system has an obligation to ensure that their medical needs are met and handled, so what cost of medical expenses will then be under the Department of Justice as expenses? Because my understanding is they have that obligation to ensure the individuals get the medical treatment that they need, you know.

And so if SGI isn't going to be the person who provides that, then it might be held on to another ministry of ours and so it'll be taken from one pot to the other. Or how much expenses would that . . . And would there be other ministries that might see some expenses with regards to that? I don't know, like Social Services or other agencies that provide health care for individuals. I'm not quite sure, but . . .

And so I guess another change that I'm going to talk about is that because of changes that was made to this Act in 2016, some of the cost penalties to the more riskier drivers, they doubled the cost to them. And so they're making amendments to this Act to allow for people to be able to make monthly instalments with regards to what they would be owing for penalties. And I was kind of a little bit shocked about that because I thought, well I know some of these penalties can be quite big and I would have thought that SGI would've already been allowing to take a monthly payment with regards to that.

But I'm glad that this is going to be allowed then because a lot of people really do want to pay for their mistakes but they can't just put down the money immediately. So if they have an option of doing monthly instalments, that's a good plan. And so when I talk about people who maybe have gotten some benefits from SGI with regards to their medical expenses but then they were criminally found negligent and then now they have to pay that back, I'm hoping they'll also be included with regards to that monthly instalment because I think some of those costs might be just too big for people to be able to pay immediately. And if they're making that effort and they're trying their best, I think we need to honour that and respect that, that they're taking the responsibility.

But I guess one of the things is, if we haven't been doing this as a corporation, how much more is it going to cost with regards to implementing a program or a process in order to allow for this? Are we going to need more staff to be able to manage a monthly program? Or will people be able to just do like bank withdrawals? And then who sets that all up? Or will there be more people coming in on a monthly basis to make payments? And so will this be a program that needs to be set up? Will that cost extra money? So how much money will that cost to start implementing this program I think is a question that needs to be asked.

And then there's the more . . . clarifications in this Act with regards to finances given to family members that require counselling because of someone being injured in a collision, Mr. Speaker. And so they kind of identify who is a family member and they provide more definition with regards to that, and then they clarify a little bit about that aspect.

One thing that I saw that was lacking in there is they don't clearly identify counselling in there, or services. So I don't know if this is just based on the agent's response and what they feel is appropriate or if there are any boundaries with regards to

that. I think it's really important that . . . And I think this is a really good thing that SGI does, is provide that counselling because, as we see, if people don't get services to deal with a trauma then we'll see those effects later down in life. And so I was happy to see that being part of this Act. And it's up to \$5,000 with regards to the benefits that are allowed. And so I'm assuming that's per family member that's requiring this service because when they identify people who are eligible, they say parents. So I'm wondering if it's for both father and mother or if it's for them combined, or brother and sister, if it's for each individual member.

So I guess those would be some questions that I'm sure the critic will ask when there's time to do so. And I know my colleagues will have a lot more to add to the amendments to this particular Act. And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to make a motion to adjourn debate. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 88. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 89

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 89 — *The School Choice Protection Act/Loi sur la protection du choix d'école*** 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 enter into debate on this Bill No. 89, *An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995*. It is kind of a different kind of Act that we have before it. It almost looks like a private member's bill. It has a preamble; we don't usually see preambles in government bills. And it goes on, whereas, whereas, whereas. And whether that's part of . . .

What we have seen, unfortunately, from the Premier in his grandstanding on this particular issue — where calmer minds, more reflective minds can find a solution that we would think is more appropriate — that the Premier and the minister of the day last year, when we had heard the ruling, actually jumped to some positions that I think weren't in the best interest of the people of the province. We have a situation today where, myself, I introduced a petition, and it's been daily, about the costs of education, how that's being cut, cut over \$600 per student in this province. We have a situation like that and here we are dealing with a bill where, no doubt if the ruling stands from last spring, that it would be a shift, quite a significant shift in how things are done here in Saskatchewan.

[16:45]

But we know that there's a process in place, a time-honoured process, one that we've seen. And in fact the government side often refers to it in terms of the court system and honouring the

court system, the judicial branch, and letting it do its process. We'll see how that unfolds, but we need to give them some time to do that. And there is an appeal process that's happening.

And we have met with both sides of the issue and both sides, all sides, are taking this very seriously. This is a serious, serious matter, but this government seems bent on . . . I don't know whether it's creating a diversion. I found it interesting today the minister in an answer to a question period essentially said — and we'll see what *Hansard* says tomorrow — but when she read from a headline in a paper saying that essentially it's not a total disaster what's happening in education in Saskatchewan today, just a little, a little, a little, a little bit of a debacle, you know.

And here this is the kind of legislation that we have before us, that we have before us today, and we're debating this in all seriousness when really parents today when they come home at suppertime, will be talking to their children: how did your day at school go? And they will be talking about, they wish that they had another learning assistant in the classroom; they wish that the classes weren't quite as crowded as they are today, and that there were more teachers, there were more resources. But the reality is that the government has cut, while they increased the taxes and what people are paying by some 120 million, 121 million, yet cut over \$60 million in the total funding. Now they will play some interesting math over there. And they like to talk about the last 10 years. But what we often ask over here, where did that money go? Where did that money go?

And here we have a situation where we have this bill before us today and the minister just today is talking about that headline, and saying, well she was expecting something much worse and it's not quite as bad. It's not . . . We averted a total disaster.

But you know, I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that when I've known people who have been on school boards and teachers and everybody who's been connected with the school system . . . And you know, I think of myself that I first started teaching in the fall of 1982, a few years ago, and it was up north in a small village called Makwa, a great little community. And I was actually with the member from Meadow Lake at the reunion a few years ago, and over 800 people. I think he was a little surprised to see me standing in front of the Co-op, but I was up there . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Not in front of the Co-op; that would not be a surprise. But I was a little ways from home but it always felt like at home. And I was up there for seven years.

But I always see that school boards, teachers, parents, kids will make schools work. And that's been what we've done in Saskatchewan. We've always been doing that. And we have a situation today where we really need to make sure that we have this ruling that, as I said, really if unchallenged would provide a huge shift in how we do things in Saskatchewan.

And it's got to be clear. And I want to make sure we get this on the record here because the government always likes to get out in front and say what our position is. But when we've been clear about our position and that we support publicly funded education, which includes both our public systems and our Catholic systems. We've been very clear about that, and we've always felt that way. And I think that's important. We have

people on our side who have recently been on the public school board and also has been on a Catholic school board. And our kids go to all the schools here. And so, Mr. Speaker, we know the situation that we see.

But we also know very clearly that things are not as they should be in our classrooms. And clearly this government, the leadership within the government, are failing, are failing the students and failing the future generations of our families because they are eliminating the growth. And the cuts, the mismanagement, the waste, the scandal that this government has really put out there in the last 10 years when they had record revenues, record revenues. Now often they will try to portray it as if it was business as usual. And they made . . . they had found this money from someplace that we were unaware of.

But it would fact . . . The province is booming and now we're in a situation where they've had to cut, had to cut the very things that we should hold near and dear to ourselves and be ready to invest and stand, and stand. And these are not the times, these are not the times when you cut funding in our classrooms.

And so we've said, and we've said this right from the beginning when the court ruling came out, that in order to move forward, we need both time, time and clarity are needed. We support the appeal because it could provide both. But the Sask Party's grandstanding provides neither. And this is what's so alarming. And we've seen this from the Premier in his last weeks here in the legislature that he'd rather grandstand and divert attention from what really is happening.

And as the minister said, and I think we'll hear more and more about this, but we have a situation where she talks about wanting certainty in the classroom. But yet in her own Throne Speech, she opens the Pandora's box of uncertainty, uncertainty. And where we've had several weeks and letters to the paper and all sorts of people questioning, what does she really mean? What does she really mean? And this has really been a challenge.

So on one hand she's calling for certainty, but on the other hand she can be pretty, pretty vague and, you know, suggesting to a lot of people question marks about the direction that so many in our province have said this is the right direction to go. And I'm thinking around treaty education, that there were several weeks where people were really, really questioning, what does that minister really mean? What in her heart does she really mean? And she still hasn't actually come clean on that but she has — and I think by the government's insistence — that she really is clear about the mandate of treaty education in our schools.

And I have to say, you know, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if you watched the Grey Cup last night, but I thought it was so neat at the beginning when the indigenous fellow talked about the two teams that were playing and one was from the traditional grounds, the homeland, of the Mississauga against the traditional lands of the Blackfoot confederacy. Which I thought was really neat. What a view of Canada. It made me feel really proud that this is happening right across Canada. And yet I hope that wasn't lost on many people here because we often think of Mississauga as the community, but I don't think of them necessarily as a First Nation, but truly they are and we need to think about that. We need to think more about that.

And so when we talk about certainty in our education there should be some things that we're certain about, that we are certain about. And, Mr. Speaker, we are certain that our system of public education that includes both the public and Catholic system will be valued and will be honoured and will continue forth. We need to allow the processes that are there right now to continue. This is not the time. And it's a dangerous thing, and the unintended consequences of using the notwithstanding clause at this point, we are not sure what the ramifications of that could be. That could be huge. Have we really thought that right through, or was this a knee-jerk reaction of a government that was looking to divert attention in the spring from a budget that was bad news for everyone but particularly education?

And we're talking about education today and we're seeing the minister dodge questions about the fact there are fewer teachers in our classrooms, but yet more students; fewer learning assistants, but more students. We're seeing real, real impacts. And we're still not having dealt with the question that indigenous students in our province get funded at a lower level — and not by a little bit; by a lot, by a lot — than their neighbours, and how we need to address that issue. And that's an issue that's real, a real issue that has impact not only on those students, the indigenous students and their families, but also on our economy. This could be a huge thing, and the University of Saskatchewan has produced research to back that up.

We're seeing the fact that because of that budget last year, where the government had announced a mandate of . . . a cut of 3.5 per cent, and in fact a leak in terms of the bargaining that's happening between the teachers and the impact it's having on the morale of teachers at a time when they need support, at a time when we had the minister saying, well, it wasn't a total disaster, just a debacle. This is something that we can't let go of. This is a time when we need to come together. We need to come together, and I'm not sure that using the notwithstanding . . . I'm sure not using the notwithstanding clause is not an appropriate signal. We will get the clarity, and we will get the balance that's appropriate. But I think that we need to see what happens with the appeal and where they're going.

So this is irresponsible to be throwing around comments or let's do the notwithstanding, particularly, particularly when the Premier is about to leave. This is one that I've not heard the candidates speak on. Clearly many of them are, and I know several of them are just status quo, keeping the same line going forward. That is unfortunate because clearly when you're having leadership, this is a problem.

So we're very concerned that the government is playing politics with our kids and their classrooms, and the impact will be felt for generations because once you lose that kind of ground, the ground of losing \$674 per student is hard to make back up. It's hard to make up. And while they can talk about some of the things they've done, this is the reality, that tonight when parents and their children are sitting around their classrooms, they're going to be talking about this, about how are things in the school. And so this is a real concern that we have. And I think that when we look at the issues that are before us, the indigenous education, the lack of equity with that, the issue around the uncertainty that the minister has introduced around treaty education and has refused to come clean, and then the

fact of the cuts to, you know, per student. That is huge.

So we have some real concerns, Mr. Speaker, with this. I mean this will be interesting as we get into the debates further on this, the questions and more on this. I know my colleagues will have a lot to say as we hear more, as the school year rolls out. We're going to be breaking for the Christmas break soon, and we'll be hearing about how things are actually going in the classroom. We hope for things to be much better than just a near close call, or a near disaster as the minister would categorize it, because that's just not good enough. That's not good enough for our kids. It's not something I would expect.

And, you know, now that I'm a grandparent, I'm thinking more about generational change, generational improvement. My kids had a great education. I want my grandkids to have a great education. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment on Bill No. 89, *An Act to amend The Education Act, 1995*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 89. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. It now being 5 p.m., this Assembly stands recessed until 7 p.m. tonight.

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

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