



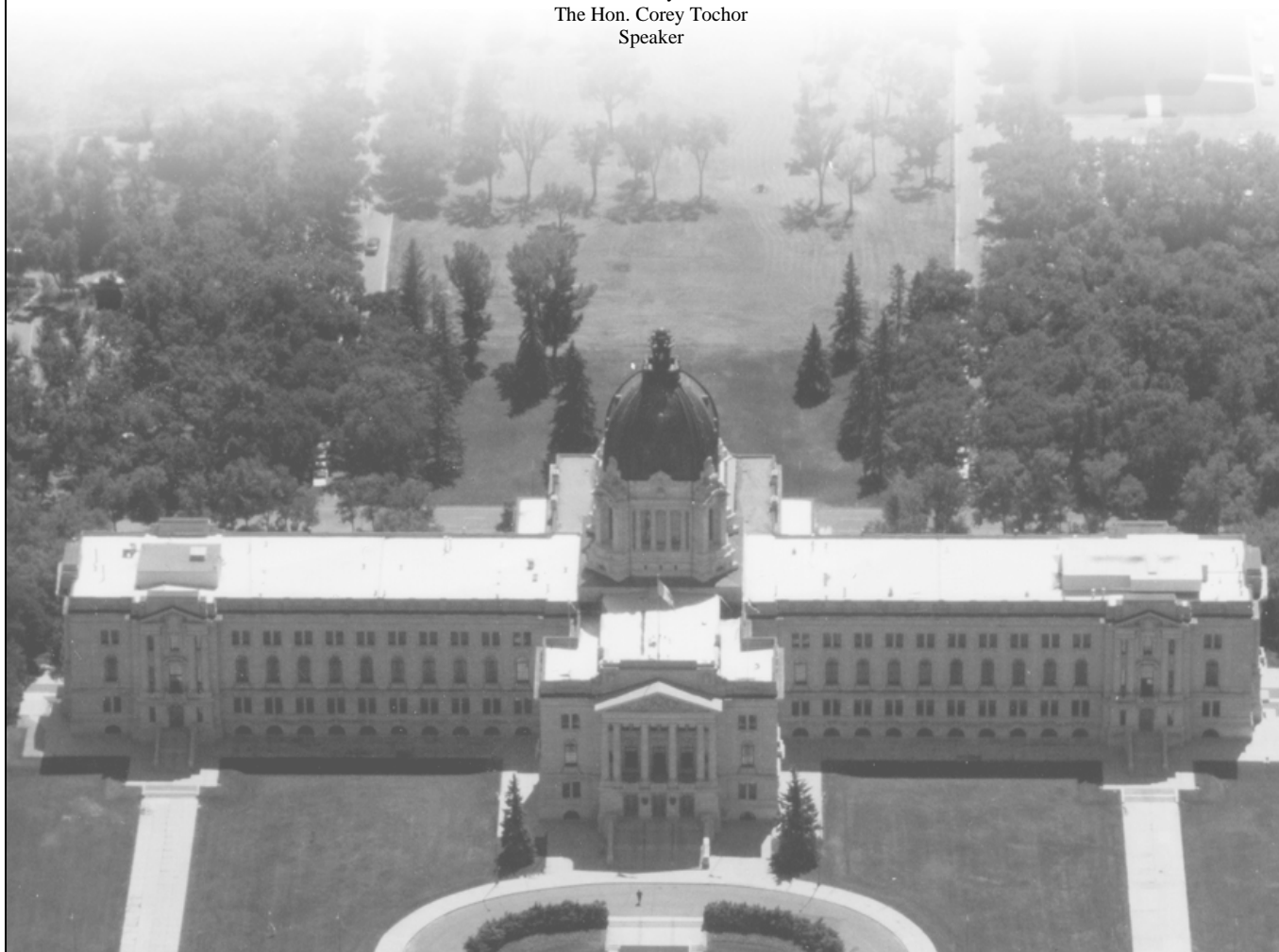
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz
Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.
Principal Clerk — Iris Lang
Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyak
Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Pursuant to section 14(1) and 14(3) of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, I am submitting to be tabled the 2017 special report for the Legislative Assembly.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on a Point of Order

The Speaker: — I am prepared to rule on the point of order raised yesterday by the Government House Leader. He stated that during question period, the Deputy Leader of the Opposition yelled, “That’s a lie.” The Opposition House Leader requested that there be a review of the tapes. I have reviewed what was said on record and listened to the audio of the proceedings in question. I did not find nor did I hear the comments alleged to have been said by the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Accordingly it is impossible for me to rule on this matter.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Later this month, many in our province will celebrate Christmas, will celebrate the birth of the Christ. Mr. Speaker, it’s worth noting that during his ministry, he was asked by a lawyer what was the most important law of all of the Hebrew laws, and he actually mentioned two. He said, love God and love your neighbour, if I can summarize it that way.

Mr. Speaker, I want to introduce today, to you and through you to all members of the House, a worldwide organization and our representatives of that organization that have lived out those laws every single day and especially at Christmastime. They are seated in the Speaker’s gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are members of the Salvation Army. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge and thank them for being here at the legislature today. We all heard the brass band playing in the rotunda, reminding us of the season and also of their good work, the Christmas Kettle campaign.

And so joining us today — and I’ll ask them perhaps to give us a wave as I introduce them — joining us today are Major Mike Hoeft, area commander for Saskatchewan; Majors Kristiana and Bruce MacKenzie, corps officers for Haven of Hope; Ivy Scobie, director of the William Booth Special Care Home; Captain Kyla McKenzie, director of Grace Haven/Gemma House; Major Wayne McDonough, director of Waterston Centre; Major Sharon McDonough, chaplain at the William Booth Special Care Home.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to acknowledge Wayne Mantyka of CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] News, who I think is

instrumental and has been instrumental in coordinating this relatively recent development and now a tradition here at the Legislative Assembly.

And may I just say by way of the introductory comments here, on behalf of a grateful province we are so thankful to the Salvation Army right across Saskatchewan for what they do all the year round, but especially at this particular time of year. And we remind all of our fellow citizens to give generously when they hear those bells and see the kettle, Mr. Speaker. I’d ask all members to join with me in welcoming these special guests to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I’d like to join with the Premier in welcoming these folks from the Salvation Army to their Legislative Assembly. They did a tremendous job of providing a musical performance with some snacks and some coffee earlier today. It’s always a delight to see them come into the legislature at this time of year and provide us with some Christmas cheer. The work that the Salvation Army does throughout the province is absolutely invaluable, Mr. Speaker, especially at this time of year but also throughout the year.

And since I’m on my feet talking about them, I do want to give a special plug. I know the Salvation Army does incredible work in many different areas in helping those in need but in particular they do a partnership with the charity I used to work for, Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan, in ensuring that people in need can access legal services free of charge throughout the province. So thank you for that partnership. Thank you for all the work that you do and thank you so much for being here today, on behalf of the opposition.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery today is a number of professional firefighters from across the province. They’re represented by Lloyd Zwack who is their president, as well as a number from different municipalities across the province. They’re down here for their government relations days. They’ve met with both sides, and I understand we’ll have further meetings later in the day.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to thank them for what they do as part of their job every day, not just in firefighting but in health and emergency responses. They do, every day, things that keep us safe and make our province a better place. So on behalf of all members, I’d like to thank them for what they do.

In particular I’ve been asked to mention the firefighters from Swift Current who recently saved a dog that had fallen through the ice, which gives them a remarkably wonderful human touch. It received national, some international attention. And good news is always better than sometimes the other news that comes, so we’re always pleased to see that type of thing. So, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of all members, I’d like to welcome them to their Assembly.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the minister also to welcome the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association for attending here with their president, Lloyd Zwack.

I think it's important to also point out that the Professional Fire Fighters Association represents the firefighters across Saskatchewan, but they also represent paramedics and emergency communication dispatchers also in this province. And these men and women, they risk their safety on behalf of fellow citizens every day, and for that we are thankful.

And I think it's also important, Mr. Speaker, to point out that the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association were key driving forces to helping establish and promote the expansion of post-traumatic stress disorder supports for workplaces, which I believe both sides of this House can agree was much needed. So thank you. So I ask that all members of the Assembly welcome them to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome some guests seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. They are owners of a company called sMedia, and I'll introduce them by name. Just wave if you wouldn't mind, please: Regan Hinchcliffe, this is my son; Marshal Finch; Tayler Ursu; and Tommy Douglass. These men, these young men are Saskatchewan entrepreneurs, Mr. Speaker, thriving in Saskatchewan and in Canada. There's more to come on a member's statement. I ask all members to please welcome them to their Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce some special guests seated in your gallery: Roland and Laurie Schulz, along with Greg Mildner. Give us a wave, please. Thanks.

Roland and Laurie recognized the need for a different type of music instruction in our province. They combined their business acumen with their musical gifts and opened our province's very first School of Rock. Greg is, by day, a long-time civil servant. Outside of office hours, he fronts the blues and rock band called Call Me Mildy, who you may have seen or heard of at various venues throughout Regina. Roland is also a drummer in the band.

The partnership brings a fresh take on music instruction in the Regina area, with a focus on band performance and more contemporary songs. It's a style that they wish that we would have had at option when we were growing up and learning music. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members of the House to join me in welcoming Laurie, Roland, and Greg to the Legislative Assembly.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I'd like to introduce a school group that's seated in the west gallery. We have 26 students, grade 4 students, from W.S. Hawrylak School in my constituency. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Meaghen DaCosta, and educational assistant, Dianne Swann. I ask all members to join in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the minister and member on our side of the House in welcoming the Professional Fire Fighters Association today. I had the privilege and the pleasure of working very closely with them when I brought forward the private member's bill on presumptive legislation for those injured on the job with a psychological injury. And the minister built on that, and the Assembly passed that bill, which was really important.

But I continue to appreciate the work that the association continues to do to ensure that that legislation is rolled out well. There's lots of work to do around policy and making sure that forms and details make it easy for people with psychological injuries to get the support that they need. So I want to thank the professional firefighters for the work that they continue to do around mental health.

I'd also actually like to give a little shout-out to a long-time friend of mine, Tony Johnston. Tony is a new member on the Saskatoon Local 80. Tony and I grew up together actually, elementary and high school, although Tony's a little bit older than me. But his mom actually, Ev, still lives across the street from my parents, actually just across the school grounds, and his wife, Anna, was the much-beloved teacher of my daughter, Ophelia, just a couple years ago. And I'm not sure what Tony's going to think of his first trip to the legislature and his first viewing of question period, but I just want to ask all members to welcome Tony and all the members of the Fire Fighters Association here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a friend of mine, no stranger to the House. She's a constituent and a former colleague from Prince Albert Northcote. She's sitting behind us: Victoria Jurgens, a woman with a big work ethic and an even bigger heart. Please welcome her to her Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, there's many guests that certainly that deserve our honour and respect here today. I appreciate very much having the Salvation Army with us here today, but I wanted to take a moment just to pass along a thank you for the leadership of the Saskatchewan professional firefighters all across this province. We're all thankful for their service, the protection they provide all of us, the peace of mind they provide all of us. Quite simply, they lay their lives on the line in the protection of ours and others, and we're thankful for this. So we had a chance to meet here today. We look forward to meetings later today.

As well I've also had the special opportunity of late to join with the member from Riversdale in the Fire Ops day up with Local 80 in Saskatoon where they put us through drills and training; extrication of a vehicle, tore the side off of a vehicle with the biggest power tools I've ever utilized with Trevor Warren up there; and learned some of the leadership that they're taking as well with pit crew CPR [cardiopulmonary resuscitation], leadership that they're taking that's saving lives all through Saskatoon.

Of course we have strong relationship with firefighters across this province, regularly join folks over at 4 hall here in Regina for graduation ceremonies. And quite simply, Mr. Speaker, I'm just very thankful for all these members do in serving our province and am very thankful for their commitment to work together to build a province that works for everyone. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce, seated in your gallery, some special guests from the All Nations Hope Network and SISHA [Saskatchewan Indigenous Strategy on HIV and AIDS]. We have Margaret Kisikaw Piyesis who is the CEO [chief executive officer] of All Nations Hope Network. We have Lana Holinaty who is their director of operations.

[13:45]

Now, Margaret's been with the organization for nearly 20 years. Lana's been there for 14 years. We have a recent arrival from Manitoba, Jann Ticknor, who is the coordinator of the Saskatchewan indigenous strategy for HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] and AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome].

And All Nations Hope, for those who don't know, is the longest serving indigenous-specific organization for HIV in the country. They do incredible work advocating for people living with or at risk of HIV, not just here in Regina but for the whole province. I've been very proud to get to know them through my work with research and advocacy around that issue, and I can tell you from experience that the respect for their knowledge and their commitment is province- and nationwide.

So I'd just like to say ninanāskoman for your work and tawāw.

Welcome to your legislature. Thank you for being here today. I ask you to join me in welcoming them.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to support mental health emergency units. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that Saskatchewan's mental health funding is among the lowest in Canada.

It also grew out of the issue this summer when the government wouldn't fund the mental health assessment unit at RUH [Royal University Hospital], despite the fact that a generous donor had committed a million dollars of capital for that. It was very good to see in the last month or so that the government did come on board to fund that single mental health emergency unit at RUH, but I do know that I talk to people from across the province who think that we need to do better by people with mental health issues when they have acute incidents, Mr. Speaker. And 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 Sask Party government to support mental health emergency units across the province and commit to supporting the otherwise funded mental health emergency unit in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from across Saskatchewan. Today there are folks from Yorkton, Melfort, Saskatoon, and Regina, Outlook, just to name a few. I so present.

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

Mr. Kaeding: — 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, the petition is signed by citizens of Spiritwood, Leoville, and Medstead. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I rise in my place to present yet another petition as it pertains to the community of Balgonie, the town of Balgonie, because someone has to, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition pray as follows:

To ask the Sask Party government to take the necessary steps and actions to leave in the west-in, west-out driving access for vehicles into and out of Balgonie at the intersection of Highway No. 1 and their 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, Balgonie intersection, but would not allow the public access to cross east- and westbound lanes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, attending that meeting, we were aware of this petition. The people that have signed this petition are all from throughout Saskatchewan, and especially around the community of Balgonie. They have hundreds and thousands of names that they've attached to this petition. And the people that have signed these two pages are primarily from Balgonie. They're from Regina. They're from Pilot Butte, 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've signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: Saskatchewan has the highest rates of intimate partner violence amongst the provinces; employers should be obligated to reasonably accommodate survivors of domestic violence in the workplace; and employees who are survivors of domestic violence should be able to take a leave of absence from their employment without penalty. 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.

Those signing this petition today come from Regina. I do so present.

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 who have signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following: that the Diefenbaker bridge in Prince Albert is a 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 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; and that the Saskatchewan Party government refuses to stand up for Prince Albert and 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.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition come from the city of Saskatoon. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition from citizens in Buffalo Narrows calling for the reopening of the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre. Mr. Speaker, they point out that the abrupt and harsh closure of the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre in last spring's budget left 15 individuals out of work. They point out the financial hardship that that poses for the beautiful community of Buffalo Narrows.

They also point out that the damage that that does to the chances for correction and rehabilitation for those that came through the correctional centre as inmates, Mr. Speaker, that they might get the life skills, that they might get the training, that they might get the understanding that would work against them reoffending, Mr. Speaker, and benefiting all of us. And they're also well aware that that decision on the part of that government came in a time when we should be looking to respond to the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and that this decision on the part of that government is precisely in the wrong direction that those calls to action point out.

So, Mr. Speaker, I rise to present this petition:

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 future generations to come.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Saskatchewan Order of Merit Recipients

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year 10 exceptional individuals were awarded the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, which is the province's highest honour. I had the pleasure of attending the ceremony last Wednesday, hosting my constituent and recipient, June Avivi.

This year being the 150th anniversary of the Canadian federation, it was a special day to celebrate and reflect on those remarkable people who live in our constituencies. Mr. Speaker, the recipients were June, Murad Al-Katib, Martha Cole, Roland Crowe, Rod Gantefoer, Paul J. Hill, Robert Laing, Dr. Roberta McKay, Robert Mitchell, and Brigadier General Clifford Walker.

These recipients have made substantial contributions to Saskatchewan and are leaders in their communities. Their passion and care for the social, cultural, and economic well-being in this province is now part of our history. We thank them for their success and their achievements. Mr. Speaker, the impact these individuals have made is immeasurable. The recipients truly embody what it means to be a Saskatchewanian.

Their hard work and passion has been driven by their generosity and care for the communities that they serve.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that all members please join me in congratulating the 2017 Saskatchewan Order of Merit recipients and thank them for their tremendous contributions to our province.

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

Artist is Finalist in Canadian Painting Competition

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House to recognize Laura Payne, an accomplished Saskatoon artist who was a finalist in the 2017 RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] Canadian Painting Competition. The RBC competition seeks to bridge the gap between emerging and experienced artists. They highlight just 15 artists every year from across Canada, and Laura was among them.

Laura received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from The University of Western Ontario and her masters from the Maryland Institute College of Art. She has since moved to Saskatoon and this spring hosted her first solo show in Saskatoon at the Darrell Bell Gallery.

Laura's work is part of the optical art movement, which stems from her interest in investigating the qualities of simulated light and colour. Using acrylic paint and irregularly cut but flat panel, she played with light and patterning to create the illusion of three-dimensional folds and bends. Unless one sees it in person, it's hard to believe the surface is flat and painted.

Canadian Art magazine called the finalists, painters to watch, and RBC called them the 15 artists redefining Canadian art. I'm happy that Laura was recognized to be part of this group. And, Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to join me in congratulating Saskatoon artist Laura Payne.

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

Local Company Has Global Presence

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to share a story about homegrown success. sMedia is a local company with a global presence. Based in Regina, sMedia is a digital tech firm providing artificial-intelligence-based online advertising solutions.

The start-up team of Regan Hinchcliffe, Marshal Finch, Tayler Ursu, and Tommy Douglass were all born and raised here in Saskatchewan. They employ 10 people locally, with roughly 30 more spread around the world. Mr. Speaker, their five-year projected growth rate is around 4,800 per cent, an impressive display of their early success.

This has not gone unnoticed in their industry. Google has hand-picked sMedia from hundreds of Google Partners to become a Google channel SMB Premier Partner. This recognition means Google actively invests time and resources into helping sMedia scale and develop their product. The

company's also received two invitations to Googleplex based on their performance.

Mr. Speaker, sharing their success is of utmost importance to the crew of sMedia. Their advertising savvy has helped raise more than \$100,000 for non-profits and charities in Saskatchewan. sMedia is another Saskatchewan success story where our business owners haven't forgotten to give back.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of everyone in this Assembly, I want to thank sMedia for all they've done for their community and wish them the best as they continue to grow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in this House today to honour the hard-working men and women of the Saskatchewan Professional Fire Fighters Association. The SPFFA represents 950 paramedics, community dispatchers, and firefighters across eight cities in Saskatchewan, working to keep our communities safe.

Members of the SPFFA are here today as part of their 20th annual lobby of the Saskatchewan government. This year they continue to bring forward important issues such as occupational disease, including expanding the list of cancers covered under *The Workers' Compensation Act*.

Mr. Speaker, our firefighters and first responders put their lives on the line every day to protect our families and communities. They serve and protect us daily; we need to do our job as legislators and protect them. Unlike other occupations, firefighters are unable to refuse to work in dangerous conditions. These conditions are simply the reality of their job.

Firefighters are also active in the communities in which they live. The SPFFA has a long history in working to improve health care, annually granting to hospital foundations across the province. Their recent donation of \$60,000 to the Royal University Hospital Foundation in Saskatoon helped support an MRI-compatible [magnetic resonance imaging] patient monitoring system that provides faster and safer access for critically injured intensive care patients that require an MRI.

Through the SPFFA's Burn Fund, they also support training and education for trauma nurses for wound and burn care. In fact, since 1978, over a million dollars from SPFFA has supported patient care and education for burns, respiratory care, and trauma at Saskatchewan's critical care and trauma hospital, RUH. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I want to again recognize the brave and selfless work of firefighters across our province and wish the SPFFA all the best during their 20th annual lobby days. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Regina School of Rock

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many

of us were fortunate to have had the opportunity to take music lessons when we were growing up. But we can also attest to the struggle of practising the classics when the hits of the day were so much more appealing. Well, Mr. Speaker, on that note I am pleased to say Saskatchewan's first ever School of Rock is now open in Regina.

[14:00]

The School of Rock brings a different type of music instruction to eager students in the Regina area. Local and travelling musicians are hired to teach kids rock 'n' roll classics. Instead of learning with Beethoven and Bach — not that that is bad — they'll practise their skills with the edgy tracks of AC/DC or the vibrant sounds of the Beatles.

Roland and Laurie Schulz, along with Greg Mildenerger, saw an opportunity for something different, and the School of Rock focuses on band performance in addition to music instruction. With their bandmates relying on them, students are more likely to practise. The goal is playing actual gigs around town, part of show coordinator Greg's role. If their opening weekend is any indication of future success, it could be a future training ground of inductees of the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all of my colleagues to join me in congratulating Roland, Laurie, and Greg on their new musical adventure right here, and wish them every success for the future. Thank you.

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

Announcement of Heavy Oil Extraction Plants

Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday Husky Energy announced they're approving two brand new steam-assisted heavy oil extraction plants here in Saskatchewan. This news comes a year after the company committed to build three initial units, two of which are in my constituency of Meadow Lake. All told, this represents a \$1.7 billion investment in our province. And these investments are just the beginning, as Husky Energy has a broad strategy to approve two additional plants per year for the foreseeable future.

Our government has worked hard to create the environment for the energy sector to grow and prosper, and not only that, but we've defended the sector from attacks by the NDP [New Democratic Party] and the left over the past decade. The NDP don't particularly like the energy sector. We know that and Saskatchewan people know that. And I give credit to the Leap Manifesto-supporting member from Meewasin for at least being honest about it when he yesterday once again confirmed his support for a carbon tax in Saskatchewan.

We've also been clear, Mr. Speaker. As long as we're the government of Saskatchewan, we will fight a carbon tax with every tool that we have. Even the Trudeau Liberals have gotten the picture and have seemingly backed off their threatened imposition of a carbon tax this year.

Standing up for the interests of this province and people is what we do and it's getting results. Caving to the Trudeau Liberals is

what the NDP want to do. I think I know which approach the people of this province prefer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Enhanced Communications Access for Rural Communities

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to announce that our government is in the process of launching a four-phase initiative that will provide rural communities with enhanced access to their communication services. The first phase begins with a SaskTel lead investment of \$4.2 million to expand its high-speed fusion Internet service to 34 additional tower sites. Mr. Speaker, this work is already under way and the first six towers will be online by the end of January 2018.

The second phase will see SaskTel deploy small cellular sites that will improve the level of service available in 100 rural communities. The public can expect this government to begin announcing the locations early in the new year.

As part of phase three, this government will continue to explore ways that SaskTel can enhance its co-operation with the private sector to look for additional opportunities to improve rural wireless services.

And the fourth phase will involve research gathered to identify coverage gaps in both mobility and Internet service. That data will be used by SaskTel to formulate a broad expansion plan to improve those services.

Mr. Speaker, our government understands the importance that rural high-speed Internet and cellular connections have both in business and our personal lives. The initiatives being announced today show that our government is committed to making sure that as technology advances, rural communities won't be left behind. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Role of Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, when answering a question about the Sask Party's GTH [Global Transportation Hub] scandal, the Premier's deputy minister, who is currently on leave to run for their leadership, said, "If elected leader, I will ensure the integrity of government by implementing the highest standards for ethics and conflict of interest rules that reflect best practices. Simply put, [she said] this would not happen under my leadership."

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier agree with his deputy minister? And if her leadership would be strong enough to stop a scandal like this, will the Premier tell us what he thinks went wrong?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

Speaker, the Provincial Auditor has already shared with the people of the province and members of the House what went wrong. She's highlighted a number of mistakes that were made in an environment where land prices were very inflationary at the time, and we have implemented all of those recommendations, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition likes to get into our leadership race on this side of the House. Fair enough, Mr. Speaker, I guess, especially if she's prepared to answer questions then with respect to the leadership on her side of the House. Because this morning after this side of the House, the Minister of the Environment, announced for the province a made-in-Saskatchewan climate change plan that'll actually deliver results, the critic over there said that they would be opposing and it wasn't stringent enough, was clearly the message. And then today, in a very enlightening moment for all of us, the leading leadership candidate over there, the member for Saskatoon Meewasin, doubled down and said no, if he's the premier, there's going to be a made-in-Saskatchewan carbon price.

That's what they said in Alberta before the last election. What they got was an Alberta carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, just like Mr. Trudeau's federally imposed tax. Is that now the position of the NDP?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, in a move that surprises nobody, the Premier tries to deflect from the GTH. Mr. Speaker, the member for Saskatoon Willowgrove joined the Premier's Deputy House Leader in committee to "... immediately begin action to sell the GTH to the private sector" if he becomes leader. Mr. Speaker, does the Premier think the Sask Party government should sell the GTH to the private sector?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, there's another question about our leadership campaign on this side of the House. I just want to say with respect to the GTH, the minister responsible isn't focused on its sale or continued ownership. He's focused though on the fact that this is a logistics story that's good for the province. Over 500 permanent, new jobs created. We've been talking a lot about jobs this week, quite appropriately, and significant private sector investment, Mr. Speaker, as we seek to continue to improve logistics and expand exports across the world, as we have seen for the last 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, but here again we're talking about our leadership candidates and what they might be saying on this side of the House. I wonder if she has a comment for what the leadership candidate, the member from Meewasin, told a group that was gathered at Louis' at the University of Saskatchewan just earlier this month, Mr. Speaker. Here's a direct quote from her leadership candidate from Meewasin, the prohibitive favourite in their campaign. He said, "And too often as a party, plain and simple, we've hidden what we really believe in and thought that Saskatchewan wasn't ready for us."

Wasn't ready for what, Mr. Speaker? The Leap Manifesto that the Finance critic supports? Wasn't ready for what, Mr.

Speaker? A Trudeau-like carbon tax that that member from Meewasin would implement as a premier, Mr. Speaker, if he ever got there? The good news is that because of this leadership renewal on this side of the House, that will never happen, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Wow, Mr. Speaker, it's the greatest hits of deflection attempts from the Premier today. Maybe eventually he'll stop trying to deflect and actually answer the questions the people of Saskatchewan deserve.

Mr. Speaker, during his guest appearance in the Sask Party leadership race, the Premier's Deputy House Leader said that land development is problematic for governments because "Inevitably, it leads to questions of conflict of interest." Mr. Speaker, does the Premier agree that the questions of conflict of interest were inevitable, or is this a scandal of the Sask Party's own making?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the premise of the hon. member's question. And she keeps saying, well are you going to answer the ... The fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker, these questions have been canvassed in this House and by the independent officer of the Legislative Assembly. The Provincial Auditor asked these questions, Mr. Speaker, and let's remember the Provincial Auditor isn't hired by the government. The Provincial Auditor works for the Assembly, an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly who looked at this, Mr. Speaker, who was afforded all of the documents.

I've heard recent media commentary that, well if only all the documents were accessed. Well the Provincial Auditor had access to all the documents, came up with the recommendations which related to government policy, the ... Well they don't like the answer, Mr. Speaker. They ask the question and then they say, why won't you answer? Then they don't listen to the answer, Mr. Speaker. But the issue has been dealt with by the Provincial Auditor.

Now there might be more work done on behalf of the government, pending the existing review that's under way and after that review's complete. That's something we've also said already on the record.

Mr. Speaker, though, I think it's worth noting that she stayed a thousand miles away and deflected from what the prohibitive favourite for the NDP leadership said over there to some students that were gathered at the University of Saskatchewan earlier this month. What did he mean when he said, "Too often as a party, plain and simple, we've hidden what we really believe in and thought that Saskatchewan people weren't ready for us"?

What does he believe? The elements of the Leap Manifesto that the member for Nutana supports? Is that one of the things that they've hidden from the people of the province? Well they haven't hidden it very well. We kind of know what they think of that. Or is it, Mr. Speaker, a carbon tax that we know would hurt exposed industries in this province, cost consumers

money? Or maybe it's the fact that they oppose a tax reduction for small business, but that's not hidden anymore either because that's how they voted last week.

Mr. Speaker, it's time for members opposite, their leadership candidates to start answering questions, including what's the hidden agenda the member talks about.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Wow, Mr. Speaker, nothing but deflections and tired old lines today, I guess, from the Premier. Mr. Speaker, let's try one more time. The member from Saskatoon Willowgrove also said, "I believe that we owe the people of Saskatchewan answers to questions around the Global Transportation Hub." Well we agree, and I hope the Premier also agrees. So if after he quits serving as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] the Premier is called to testify at committee or another public forum, will the Premier commit today to providing testimony? Or will he refuse like Bill Boyd and Laurie Pushor?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of the GTH.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we have indicated on this side of the House, when matters were, concerns were raised, the Government of Saskatchewan under the leadership on this side of the House worked with the Provincial Auditor to provide the Provincial Auditor with access to any questions that she had.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We provided information to the satisfaction of the Provincial Auditor, any information that the Provincial Auditor . . . including cabinet documents which is, Mr. Speaker, not a usual practice of government. Certainly it wasn't the usual practice when the members opposite were in government and there were concerns raised around all sorts of business dealings that the NDP government were involved in.

And what the Premier hasn't ruled out is further action being taken by the government to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan have answers to the questions that they may have around this. But in the meantime we're going to work hard to ensure that the Global Transportation Hub continues to grow jobs and grow investment in the province of Saskatchewan and outside of our capital city.

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

HIV Testing and Treatment

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it's been interesting to hear all the questions from that side. I think that's great practice for when they're in opposition.

But let's get to a serious topic, Mr. Speaker, 170 new cases of HIV in Saskatchewan last year. One in four of the people

diagnosed with HIV in the last 10 years in the Saskatoon Health Region have already died. It's a serious problem and this government has not responded with enough seriousness. There are gaps in access to services, including coverage for antiretroviral medications, despite repeated calls from front-line workers who recognize how needed those are.

Mr. Speaker, full coverage of these medications would prevent new cases of HIV, would save money, and most importantly, would save lives. Will the minister commit to fully funding HIV antiretroviral medications?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the member opposite has said, this is a very serious concern for our government. We have increased the amount of testing that we do; that of course has led to an increased number of diagnoses.

Mr. Speaker, I should also acknowledge the All Nations Hope people here who the member opposite introduced earlier. During HIV Awareness Day this past summer, I was tested there. Mr. Speaker, again we take this very seriously but we have taken action. We have increased by 443 per cent the amount spent on HIV testing, by 45 per cent in prevention funding.

Mr. Speaker, to the specific question the member opposite asked: we are considering where we should go from here. We certainly want to do everything we can to help, but it should be clearly stated that as of right now, 93 per cent of the cost of HIV medication is covered by the government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

Mr. Meili: — Well it's good to know that that's being considered. It would be an addition of less than half a million dollars to fully cover those medications. We know how much each new case costs. It would be a very good step to take.

An increase in testing is good and that is a good thing. But you cannot say that the increased number of cases come from increased testing. These are new cases, new outbreaks — 170 more people with the disease. The virus continues to spread and people continue to suffer under this minister's watch.

Last week the Minister of Social Services said ". . . we're very supportive of all the programs that our community-based organizations do . . . to serve the clients with AIDS." Mr. Speaker, key organizations like AIDS Saskatoon and All Nations Hope Network have learned that next year they'll be losing all of their federal funding. Will the Minister of Health step up, help them to fight for funding for these vital organizations, and commit to making absolutely certain that they can continue to do their essential front-line work in response to this very real crisis?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the question, just for clarity, if the member was asking would we advocate for funding on behalf of them with the federal minister, I'd be pleased to do that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would also, I guess, respectfully disagree with the point that the member made in his preamble earlier on the point of testing. The deputy chief medical health officer for the province, Dr. Denise Werker, has confirmed in the past that the recent increases in the number of HIV cases isn't a surprise and is the result of increased opportunities for testing. Mr. Speaker, testing is very important. We need to know people who are HIV positive so that they can get the appropriate medication and the appropriate medical treatment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Health Services for Northern Youth

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth's report on our northern youth suicide crisis is out. As the report says, "... the picture is appalling." For young people in Saskatchewan, suicide rates are six times higher for First Nations boys and 26 times higher for First Nations girls.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard the kind words from the government, but our kids need action. Jordan's principle is a standard that puts the needs of children ahead of federal and provincial fighting. Will they listen to the advocate, adopt Jordan's principle in full, and start giving the same access service for all children in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As a parent or a grandparent, one could only imagine the hardship and what families go through when there is a loss of a child, especially due to suicide, Mr. Speaker. I've spoken with the advocate prior to the release of his report from time to time, and we want to thank the advocate of course for the work that he's done over the last year on this report, Mr. Speaker. But more importantly, we want to thank the many children, youth, elders, community members that contributed to the report. And if one takes the time to read the report, it's very evident that their voice was heard in the advocate's report, Mr. Speaker.

We accept all the advocate's recommendations as they pertain to health, Mr. Speaker. I can report to the Assembly that we remain committed to ensuring that jurisdiction and the background of the individual does not get in the way of children and youth getting the care that they need. That's been a policy of this government and this health organization, this Ministry of Health, and will continue to be.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member of Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, to quote the Child Advocate's document, "Our children deserve better." Mr. Speaker, they deserve better than governments playing hot potato with the lives of our children. And that's the point behind Jordan's principle, that the health, well-being, and education of our kids

is more important than governments fighting about jurisdiction.

As one young person quoted in the report said, "Suicide is not the problem. It is the backlash of the problem."

Mr. Speaker, the advocate also called on the government to support the development of FSIN's [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] suicide strategy, the continued implementation of the Métis Nation's Métis suicide prevention strategy, and to implement the mental health and addictions action plan.

Mr. Speaker, finally will the government support the FSIN and the Métis Nation in this important work? And will they finally fund, will they finally fund and implement their own plan that they announced three years ago?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, this government, this province does not let jurisdiction get in the way of treating those that need health care. From time to time rural and remote situations do stretch the system a bit thin. That does pose challenges from time to time, Mr. Speaker, but it is not impacted by the background of any individual.

Mr. Speaker, as the recommendations do lay out, we are fully committed to working with the FSIN, the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, as well as the federal government, to implement changes that are so desperately needed, Mr. Speaker.

Suicide prevention demonstration project in La Ronge is being developed with Mental Health Commission of Canada to engage community partners in implementing sustainable, culturally appropriate suicide prevention initiatives, Mr. Speaker, and that includes recommendations made in the mental health addictions and action plan impacting northern rural and remote areas, Mr. Speaker. As it stands today, approximately 42 of the 46 recommendations of the mental health addictions action plan have been either implemented or being worked on, and we continue on that work.

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

Presumptive Coverage for Workers

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, representatives from Saskatchewan's Professional Fire Fighters Association are with us today. Last year we questioned the minister about changes to presumptive coverage under WCB [Workers' Compensation Board] for firefighters who risk their health every day just doing their jobs.

Other provinces are moving forward in providing the coverage, but here in Saskatchewan, cancers they contract while at work including breast, prostate, skin, and myeloma cancers are still not presumptive diseases under workers' compensation for firefighters. Last year when we asked the minister, he said, "If there is valid information we'll certainly want to review and assess it, and we'll be asking the Workers' Compensation Board and the people in the ministry to look at this issue as

well.”

Well the minister has had a year — plenty of time to consult with WCB and get it done — so what is the minister waiting for? Why won't he extend the same support to Saskatchewan fighters as have British Columbia, Ontario, Alberta, and Manitoba?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, since we've been in government, we've provided presumptive coverage for PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder], one of the most broad, all-encompassing coverages in all of Canada — not limited just to specific vocations but all the way across the working spectrum.

Mr. Speaker, we've also, twice since we've been in government, increased the number of presumptive coverages for cancer. We've asked the people at Workers' Compensation Board to continue to look at, continue to analyze the statistics that they've been provided with, do interjurisdictional comparisons, and to make sure that we're using the best science to provide the best coverage that possibly can be done.

Since we've been in government as well, we have the only asbestos registry in all of Canada to ensure that we've got something that's workable, something that . . . [inaudible] . . . a database can be located so that anybody, firefighter or otherwise, can access that information, Mr. Speaker.

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

Carbon Pricing Strategy

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Environment rolled out their so-called plan to deal with carbon emissions yesterday. And like the emperor's new clothes, many are already seeing through the minister's sales pitch.

Mr. Speaker, let's start with their revival of the green tech fund. It would have been a great first step when they passed it in 2009. But it sure brings into question their claim that this new plan is neither a carbon price nor a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. The options laid out in this new plan for heavy emitters include paying into the provincial technology fund or buying offsets.

Now I hate to quibble with the minister, but he, the Deputy House Leader, the former Finance minister, the Premier, and so many more of them have said that the technology fund is a tax. So were they all wrong? Or is he wrong now?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I want to thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, this is a made-in-Saskatchewan plan, something that the members opposite have been calling for, including the member from Nutana. It includes the ability as one option, as a flexible approach to ensure compliance. It does include a technology fund, which the members opposite — including the member from Nutana — have called for, Mr. Speaker. The federal

government have given all jurisdictions two choices: a carbon tax or cap and trade. We reject both for the province of Saskatchewan.

And the members opposite very soon will have the ability to weigh in on where they stand on this, whether they want to stand with the federal government and see a carbon tax imposed, which we hear from some members, including the presumptive leader, the candidate leading the leadership for the NDP race at this point. Or do they accept a cap and trade, which we don't think is the right approach for our province as well? So the members opposite have the ability to support this plan and to help us ensure that the federal government does not impose a carbon tax on this province. Where do they stand on that?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, last year we brought in a motion to enact the green tech fund law, and every single one of them voted against it. Now the minister calls their new document comprehensive. Well it does cover a lot. As a solution to carbon emissions, they include highways and culverts and even drainage, which they are failing on. I'm surprised the GTH isn't in there somewhere, Mr. Speaker.

Now I don't know if they were trying to sound bold or what, but they even say they will “Introduce regulations governing emissions from electricity generation by SaskPower and Independent Power Producers.” Mr. Speaker, Stephen Harper already did that.

And then there's the small matter of the federal carbon tax we don't want Ottawa to impose it on us. The Sask Party says they agree. So before rolling out this new plan, why not check with the feds to make sure that it will protect Saskatchewan people from having a carbon tax imposed on us?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So the member from Nutana just basically put . . . The position of the NDP is for this province to wave the white flag, to check with the feds, to negotiate with the feds to see whether or not a made-in-Saskatchewan plan is going to be acceptable, Mr. Speaker. With respect, Mr. Speaker, to that member, we developed the plan, a made-in-Saskatchewan plan, made by Saskatchewan people for Saskatchewan people, that we will defend when it comes to the federal government ever imposing a carbon tax on this province.

And the members opposite have a very clear choice. They can agree with the federal government that it's either cap and trade or a carbon tax, or they can agree with the Government of Saskatchewan to say that those options do not work for this province. And they can agree with the Government of Saskatchewan to say to the federal government that we stand up for the people of Saskatchewan; we stand with the Government of Saskatchewan, and we will not allow the federal government to impose a carbon tax.

It's very simple. Do you agree with the federal government that

it's either cap and trade or a carbon tax, or do you agree with the Government of Saskatchewan and the people of Saskatchewan that it should be a made-in-Saskatchewan approach?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, that's what we've been calling for is a made-in-Saskatchewan approach. But we know that the federal government already is concerned about the plan that was brought out yesterday and that we're still stuck with the feds imposing their will on us. So now . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Check Facebook. That's exactly what she says on the Facebook page. It doesn't go far enough.

So the plan also says, "The Government of Saskatchewan will use existing legislation, such as *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*, to proclaim and/or amend necessary sections to provide legislative authority for provincial regulation."

Mr. Speaker, this is back to the future. In case you forget, that's the green tech fund that they passed through the House in 2009 but never made it law, when we've been calling for that, Mr. Speaker. Now the former Finance minister said, "It's a carbon tax." The Premier said, "A carbon levy is a carbon tax by definition."

Mr. Speaker, forget what the headlines tell you. The Sask Party has introduced their own carbon tax, but what they haven't introduced are any targets. In 2009 they said they were going to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 20 per cent by 2020. Now that's not going to happen, Mr. Speaker. So what are their new targets and how will this plan get us there?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I would offer to the member of Nutana and the members opposite, where this plan will get us — with their support I would hope — is the ability for Saskatchewan to have our own plan, without the federal government imposing a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan, one that almost all, except for members opposite, agree would be harmful to the economy, would slow growth in our province, would slow investment, and would put our industries at a competitive disadvantage with industry around the world in which we compete in. We are world leaders in agriculture, in potash, in uranium, and oil, Mr. Speaker, to name just a few sectors, and a carbon tax imposed by the federal government will do nothing but harm those industries and harm employment and harm jobs, Mr. Speaker.

So the choice is very clear. The members opposite have already said that they would check with the feds. Mr. Speaker, here's a check-in moment for them. They can decide either to accept a cap and trade or carbon tax by the federal government, or agree with the Government of Saskatchewan on a made-in-Saskatchewan choice, made-in-Saskatchewan approach on climate change. The question is very easy. Do you stand with Saskatchewan or do you stand with the federal government?

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Question period is over. We'll do it all again tomorrow.

[14:30]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 115 — *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 115, *The Residential Tenancies Act, 2017* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved first reading of Bill No. 115. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When will we hear second reading? I recognize the minister.

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Concurrent motion, fourth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report that it has considered a certain supplementary estimate and to present its fourth report. I move:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice now be concurred in.

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

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice be concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon Westview.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Buckingham: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report that it has considered certain supplementary estimates and to present its fourth report.

I move:

That the fourth report of the Standing Committee on the Economy be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Westview:

That the fourth report on the Standing Committee on the Economy be concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 100, *The Agrologists Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole and that this bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the minister.

THIRD READINGS

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

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan. Order.

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 75 through 82.

The Speaker: — I'm having difficulties hearing the member from Estevan. I believe she said that she's tabled the questions from 75 to 82.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand today to give my remarks with regards to *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*.

Mr. Speaker, I was reading some of the notes that were presented here with regards to this Act. And my understanding was that this current Act was approved in 2007, and so it's been about 10 years old now. And I think it's a really important bill to have because, with the advancement of our resource revenue and the resource economy, we've had a lot of industrial sites that have come across in our province, and some that were here,

of course, way before that, you know. And it's important that we have proper legislation that manages these sites when it's time to address the potential environmental concerns with regards to it and the future of handling what these sites are going to look like. It's really important to have a good framework with regards to that, Mr. Speaker.

I remember talking about a bill, one of the first bills I talked about, well since being elected in this Assembly here. And it was with regards to abandoned orphan wells, Mr. Speaker, and talking about the importance of having good structure with regards to abandoned wells, and to the issue that a lot of landowners here are feeling that . . . are not being met because companies will come and they create these wells, and once the market is depleted or the company is no longer resourceful, that they leave and they leave these wells there. And they're supposed to have an obligation to clean them up, but sometimes the company's either bankrupt or they leave and the people who own the land are responsible for that. And the cleanup for those are really costly and oftentimes landowners are upset with the fact that they're left to manage these sites, you know, and they're looking for the government to incorporate some legislation that would help manage those issues.

I know there's some states that have had this issue before and they've implemented some legislation that helps. I'm thinking of North Dakota as being one of them. They have a really well-managed oil sector there, Mr. Speaker, and the amount of orphan wells that they have in that state are minimal for the amount that are created. And that's because they have good legislation. They hold those organizations accountable and they have a way to assure that these companies clean up these sites before they are leaving the area. And so it seems like maybe we need to look at some of these other areas to develop these sites.

But with regards to this bill, Mr. Speaker, I think this bill also is talking about how they've made regulations with regards to this bill that they need to re-evaluate the effectiveness of it every five years. And so my understanding is that when the five-year mark came along, the minister conducted a review and consulted with some of the stakeholders, and some of the points that they are bringing forward with regards to amendments to this bill come from that review.

And so there are some specifics here, and one of them being that there be a requirement to review that the money in the fund is sufficient enough to meet the needs of the sites accepted into the program and that the ICP [institutional control program] require that a site holder post an assurance fund, which is commonly known as financial assurance. And with regards to that, that could be in the form of cash. It could be cheque, or it could be another financial instrument or security, Mr. Speaker. And that fund would help to oversee the maintenance of dealing with the industrial sites or any unforeseen events.

So there's a new section, Mr. Speaker, that allows the minister to appoint a fund advisory committee to advise on the Institutional Control Monitoring and Maintenance Fund and Institutional Control Unforeseen Events Fund, which is mostly on long-term investments of the funds. And this committee is exempt from liability for these investment decisions. And it seems that this committee will likely be composed of employees from the Ministry of Economy, I believe. And so I

wonder because of that and because this committee then is exempt from liability, does the minister accept liability then? Like who is responsible if something happens?

And I think . . . When I reviewed that, I feel that there should be a little bit more clarity with regards to that, Mr. Speaker, because it doesn't seem to be very specific. And I wonder with the fact that most of these . . . The committee, if it in fact is employees from the Ministry of Economy, it seems interesting that it isn't a committee that's based on a variety of people who could be appointed for different reasons. And where's the transparency and accountability for that? How is that going to flow? And so I think that's really something that will be really important.

I'm sure the critic will have lots of questions with regards to the committee and how that's going to be established, and who is going to make the decisions on who is going to be on that committee, and what's going to happen with regards to liability and accountability and transparency, and how they're going to manage that. And so I'm fully confident that the critic will have those questions when this comes to the chance of going to committee and having those discussions.

There's also a new section that outlines that the minister can transfer a closed site from the institutional control program to a responsible person. And again, Mr. Speaker, I have some questions with regards to what that looks like, the institutional control program. What's that going to entail? How's that going to look? What's the description a little bit more and who that responsible person will look like? I wonder how that's going to have more accountability than with the minister transferring that. And again I think the critic will have a lot of questions with regards to that as well.

[14:45]

And so, Mr. Speaker, there's some serious concerns about removing specific agencies or entities within this bill. I would be also really interested to hear who those stakeholders were that they said that the minister consulted with and who that's going to look like coming forward. My understanding is that this bill will continue to be reviewed every five years, and so once this is passed, this will be in continuous review. And so I think those are questions that'll need to be discussed.

But with saying that, Mr. Speaker, I know I have colleagues that will have a lot more to add to this with regards to the discussion of this bill. And like I said, I have great confidence that the critic will do her due diligence and ask the appropriate questions when this comes to committee. But with saying that, I am going to move to adjourn debate on Bill 85, *The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Amendment Act, 2017*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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 member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter the discussion today about Bill No. 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*. It's always good to look at the minister's second reading speech to get a sense of where the government wants to go with a bill. It doesn't necessarily tell the whole story, but it does tell the government's reasoning and rationale on a particular bill, Mr. Speaker. And then there's always the opportunity to take that bill to committee and ask questions.

But with respect to Bill No. 86 on this very important topic, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act*, the minister in his second reading speech said:

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

So I will in a few moments here go through some of those administrative changes, Mr. Speaker.

But this is an area in which we always want to ensure that we're working to do better, Mr. Speaker. Our children are, to be a bit trite, are really our future, Mr. Speaker. And to make sure that children have all the opportunity and support and guidance and to be connected to their families, to their biological family, and that their biological family has the support that they need to be able to parent and raise that child, I think is a really important first goal. And when that can't happen, putting in place the supports — but I know that even in the most difficult situation, children ultimately love their parents, Mr. Speaker, and want to be with their parents — and to try to put those supports around family to ensure that families are strong. Because you can't talk about a child without talking about the context of the family. When we talk about child poverty, we're actually talking about poverty in a family. They're not independent of one another, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to this particular bill, some of the things that it does, it adds the definition. As the minister said, they were administrative in nature. Actually before I go there, he had pointed out that this lays the change for substantive change in the future, which as I said just a moment ago, it's important to always be looking at legislation and policy and programming and how we do things better.

But that's always a red flag with me with respect to this government around substantive change. Just over a year and a half ago at the last election, the government, following that election and leading up to a tight budget, talked about transformative change when it came to health care. And I would certainly argue that we need to make changes, serious changes, around health care, particularly ensuring that the people stay well and don't . . . Some of the things that cause ill health like

poverty, Mr. Speaker, we need to address those front-end pieces. So I would be the first to say that transformative change is one thing, but changing administration isn't necessarily transformative.

And I have concerns as we've just moved to one health region what that all looks like for front line, not just the service care providers but the patients really. The system exists because patients and residents in health care need the best possible services.

So with respect to this comment around substantive change, I worry with this government that there isn't the necessary consultation, real and meaningful consultation that digs down and connects with people, with where they're at and finds out what it is people — families who are struggling — what they really need. We know that here in Saskatchewan . . . I believe, just recalling off the top of my head, I think the national average of when it comes to children in care, 48 per cent nationally are indigenous children, but here in Saskatchewan it's close to 80 per cent I believe, but I could stand to be corrected. But I do know we're well above the national average.

That enters into a whole discussion about truth and reconciliation, and you need to accept truth to be able to move on to reconciliation. And we have some calls to action as a province and as legislators that we can move to better support families. And I think that that would go a long way to helping support families who have struggled because of intergenerational trauma, because of residential schools, Mr. Speaker. That is really I think . . . Intergenerational trauma, poverty, lack of housing, all those kinds of things are the things that send families into care.

I know in our own offices, in my office in Saskatoon Riversdale, when people come in with a child and family service issue it's the most difficult thing. I have a Bachelor of Social Work degree. I've been a registered social worker. I'm not currently a registered social worker and I've never worked on the front lines in this particular area, but I do know that it's a very difficult situation. And folks come to our offices to ask for help, and that's one of the most difficult things. I'm not, I am not a professional. I don't have first-hand knowledge of the families usually and so trying to guide them and support them in the best way possible to resolve some of their issues can be a big challenge. And it's heartbreaking for children, but it's heartbreaking for families who want to be with their children and do the very best they can for their children.

But the reality is we are faced with a situation in many cases where there are families that have been damaged generation after generation because of residential school and because of poverty. I've talked to families who've been in . . . well families who have children with disabilities who have been told that they will get better supports if they put their child into care. And I can't even imagine being placed in that position, Mr. Speaker, where you know that as a loving, caring parent that you have the best interests of your child at heart and want to ensure that they have what they need, but financially you can't afford to meet their needs if they have some particular concerns, Mr. Speaker. And being told by folks that the best place for their child and the best access to supports will be if you put your child in care is not acceptable.

With respect to this Bill No. 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act*, some of the things that this particular bill does again, as the minister says, it lays the ground for substantive changes which I know in committee the critic will dig down into and try to get a sense of what that's going to look like in the future, that substantive change — what the minister has in mind and what that's going to look like.

This Bill No. 86, there are added definitions for “business day,” “dispute resolution,” and “peace officer.” It redefines “parent” to clarify that it “does not include the minister or a person providing out-of-home care services on behalf of the minister.” It updates the section referencing child’s best interests; changes “the child’s physical, mental, and emotional level of development” to “the mental, emotional, physical and educational needs of the child and the appropriate care or treatment, or both to meet those needs.” It changes “the child’s emotional, cultural, physical, psychological and spiritual needs” to “the child’s cultural and spiritual heritage and upbringing.”

And it eliminates family review panels and boards. Previously the minister could appoint for any region a family review panel consisting of members of that community or region to help make decisions around appeals. Similarly the Family Services Board could also be established to review cases. This bill also makes a change from dispute resolution. It’s being offered in place of mediation services. So I’m curious what that will look like, dispute resolution, how that looks different from mediation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Section 83 and 56 are being repealed after they were never proclaimed. And First Nations authorities and the government were never able to come to an agreement on implementation. These sections relate to transfer of guardianship, financial assistance, transfer of custody, etc.

So I know that I have colleagues who actually work in this area. Some of them have put comments on the record already. And I know our critic, who is in fact a social worker and has worked in addictions a good chunk of her career and is very knowledgeable about this area, will have some comments on this particular bill, but many questions in committee. This is hugely important. Again this is just an administrative bill at this point it sounds like, by and large, but there’s still always questions to ask. And I guess the goal will be in committee to find out what those more substantive changes will look like down the road because we do need to do better by children here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But with that, for now I think I’d like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 86, *The Child and Family Services Amendment Act, 2017*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

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 Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It’s a pleasure to rise into the debate on Bill No. 87, *An Act respecting Data Matching Agreements and making consequential amendments to The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

And I take particular interest in this, first as an MLA, as we do any kind of law making in this Chamber, but also as the critic for ethics for our side of the House and the questions I have raised, particularly around the serious matter of the issues around this government’s attitude towards the proper use of data and that type of thing here in Saskatchewan, but also as Labour critic. And I’ll speak more to that in a minute.

But I think that this is one that creates a lot of questions, creates a lot of questions and doesn’t provide the answers. And it’s one that of course many of us would not have been familiar with the term “data matching.” And I’ll read the definition if people are at home wondering what in fact is data matching. Well this is the definition that they are proposing that we pass. It means:

the matching or linking of information in one database in the possession and control of an initiating organization with information in one or more other databases in the possession and control of a participating organization without the consent of individuals who are the subjects of the information.

And that’s the key phrase that we’re looking at: “without the consent of individuals who are the subjects of the information.”

And so this is a pretty big deal. This is a pretty big deal and it’s one that I think we’ll take a lot of time and talk to the Privacy Commissioner about his interests, his thoughts around this piece of legislation, and where does he stand. What are some of the concerns he has? As we pass any kind of legislation, particularly when we’re talking about going into areas we’ve not gone into before, what are the unintended consequences of putting ourselves into that realm? We want to make sure that we get it right and we get it right as much as we can the first time because often we see that we’re often coming back. And this is the thing with this government, that they come back with the corrections that they’ve made.

So we’ve not heard the reason why. What were the issues that caused this to come forward? Were there some breaches of privacy that, of course, did not make it into the public eye? Is that the case? We don’t know why this is all of a sudden the issue. We don’t know who the organizations are. Who were the participating organization? Who was the initiating organization?

[15:00]

Who are these partners that have been working together without the consent? Because we are talking about limiting liability, and if this means that there has been significant breaches of trust in terms of privacy within government and this is one way of

limiting that liability, this would be an unfortunate way of doing this without full disclosure to those whose information has been breached. And I think this is a major, major concern.

On one hand, and it's quite lighthearted, we joke about the Ministry of Highways winning the cone of silence award in Canada, and that is humorous. And that is significant because clearly that is a sign of what people think across Canada when it comes to our transparency and accountability of this government. And it's not one that, while we can chuckle a bit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's not one that we should let pass by without saying, hey, is there a message in that award? Is there something we should be thinking about?

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have on numerous occasions stood in the House and during question period raised questions about the integrity of our email system, our government email system. The Premier has from time to time used his own private email server or their email server. And he said, well for example, this past fall for a few weeks in September the government email server was down. But there was no record of it being down. There was no ticket, no point in time where there was in fact proof that that was the case.

And when we asked the minister responsible, I mean . . . And it's a question that happens often in question period where we see the minister actually not paying attention, or intentionally not answering the question at hand. She actually answered a question that needs to be asked, and that is the quality of the storage of emails and the fact that we are concerned that they could deteriorate over the course of time. And it's important that we are able to keep those records.

But the question was, how do we feel about a provincial system that may or may not be working, that may or may not be able to serve when needed to serve? Particularly when government ministers are carrying out Executive Council work, it's critical that they can . . . [inaudible] . . . count on their servers to be working. And it's something that the government needs to, and particularly the minister needs to take very seriously, not just sort of pass off and say, it sort of comes and goes; it was kind of a tough month; we were aware that there were moments when there was high traffic and it just didn't seem to be meeting the demand. That's not good enough. That's simply, simply not good enough. In this day and age when we're dealing with issues around the world and, you know, the kind of the bills we're talking about that have international impact, and perhaps this is one, that we're saying, well we're just not sure whether or not the government infrastructure can handle the load.

And here we have a question about data matching at the government level and whether or not the machines will even be able to handle it. Can the infrastructure handle this? And the minister of the day is saying, well you know, we're not too worried about it. So I'm wondering if . . . That would be a very good question in committee. I mean, is the Minister of Central Services able to guarantee that the infrastructure of the government of the day can actually cope with this? And if it can't cope with this, then what are they going to do about this?

And so as the critic for ethics, I think this is one that's hugely, hugely important because privacy is one . . . In this day and age of the Internet and the difficulty in protecting your privacy, that

there's so many places where we know we are vulnerable, that this is a big matter. This is an important matter before us, and so I'll be watching very carefully on this.

The other one that I want to raise . . . [inaudible] . . . I go through this, and it's just a flag I always think of, I always think of as the critic of Labour around the issues of privacy, and that is around WCB, Workers' Comp. Because they have an unusual approach to privacy, and that is one that I think is not good at all. It's not good at all. In fact I think it's one that is bordering on, that it needs serious attention. Because for many years, the government or the WCB folks from the highest levels have really thought they are above and beyond the Privacy Commissioner and *The Privacy Act* in legislation.

And this is really, really concerning. Because we hear stories on this side of the House of employers going into workers' files and just going in there on fishing trips. And I raised this issue in the last committee of review, that they can go in and they feel if a worker has been injured and there's been a claim, that that action, that file now is an open field, an open field for the employer and doesn't actually need, they don't actually need a good reason and they don't need a specific reason to look in that file. They can just say, hey, that employee was working for me and I want to look at their whole file. And really what they're doing is they're looking for any kind of sign, any kind of sign that might disqualify that worker from their claim. And that worker doesn't even know that they're in there looking.

And this is really, I think, a breach of trust, a breach of trust for the WCB who's supposed to be there protecting both the employer and the employee's interests. And clearly it looks like they're favouring the employer's interests who says, well I have an interest. Well the question would be, what is that interest? Specifically tell us, what is that interest? What leads you to believe that there's something in that file? They don't have to say that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They just have to say, you know what? I think I need to satisfy my curiosity about what might be in that file. And yet on the other hand, boy, is it ever hard for a worker to get information on their file.

So when I look at this data-matching situation, I go, so how big? When they talk about wired pieces of information, how big does that have to be? Is there a threshold? Is there a size? Like, you know, 50,000 people are involved. Is that what the size of this large information piece is? Is it 5,000 or is it 50? Is it the size of a company? How big is this . . . search parameters do they have? And this is really, really problematic.

And then the other part of this which particularly relates to workers is the fact that we're one of the few provinces that does not have privacy legislation that covers workers who work in the private sector. Our legislation covers workers who work in the public sector but does not cover workers who work in the private sector. So would this be out of that realm of workers who might be having issues or concerns or are connected in some form with WCB, and because they're in the private sector, that doesn't count?

And so this is really problematic, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'll have many, many questions about this when we get to the committee, you know. Because here we have a situation where we have the minister playing both roles, as Minister of Justice

but also Minister of Labour. And he should know, he should be very well versed in the issues that . . . And this has been brought up for many years by many unions, many groups who are deeply concerned, and also the Privacy Commissioner, in terms of the exemptions that WCB has sought or continued to seek out.

And so this is one that I think we cannot just say, okay well this is a bright new shiny thing and we're just going to let it go, and what could be wrong with this? First we know, what was the cause? What caused this to come forward? Was there a breach? Was there a breach in managing information? And this government needs to come clean with the people impacted on it. And if that was the reason that this came forward, or if it's from the uniform law commission that we see things from across Canada . . . It might be that. Nothing's ever happened in Saskatchewan. Nothing's ever happened in Saskatchewan. But I don't see, when I looked at the minister's comments, I don't see anything like that at all in his comments about that.

And so I want to talk a little bit about this, you know, and what he talked about. Now he talked about, this was a recommendation made by the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. So it will be interesting to see where did . . . and I hope, I hope . . . often what happens . . . and so we'll have to have a meeting here. I think that we'll have to get together and meet with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner. What was the driving force behind this? Because you know, I mean it's a case of where there's smoke, there's probably fire, eh? And something's burning underneath the house. And so we need to take a look and say, so if it doesn't smell quite right, what is the cause? And I'd be very unhappy and very concerned if it's because it's coming out of issues around the workforce, labour, workers' comp, that this is really where it's coming from.

You know, Mr. Speaker, just on a side note — and I know our time is limited — but I was very disappointed, very disappointed that we aren't seeing amendments to *The Workers' Compensation Act*. Today we had presentations by the firefighters talking about how they would like to see other cancers covered by workers' comp. But you know, Mr. Speaker, we are now two years past the committee of review that was struck by Workers' Compensation Board, which is mandated that they do it every five years. Now we're two years past.

We've got two days left before we break for the Christmas holidays, and we have not heard a peep from the Minister of Labour around this. Where is that legislation? And that legislation should contain some information or some amendments concerning privacy. And I would not be surprised if that's one of the big holdups right now, because I know the bureaucracy of the Workers' Compensation Board is very reluctant to move forward on that area. And they need to. They need to.

As I have said, we are deeply, deeply concerned around what has been perceived and raised to me as fishing trips — workers who feel and who have heard after the fact, or as a result of some consultant actually getting access to their information working on behalf of the employer . . . but workers who have actually completed and quite successfully returned to work and

thought their injury and their time off was all done. And now they're back at work and everything's going along fine. And all of a sudden they're in some sort of trouble because of what, I would think, was a breach of privacy, where a consultant went into a file on behalf of an employer and had no real issue or claim or any specific reason they were looking into the file, but just thought they'd take a look and see what was what.

And so we have a problem here. And so we have some really, you know . . . And I have to chuckle just a bit because when we read the minister's comments, and here he goes, he talks about oversight, and the "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." Now he says, "The government access coordinator and the Privacy Commissioner will review . . . and provide comment."

Now we should just be clear, we should be clear the legislation doesn't use the word "will." The legislation uses the word "may." And that's a big difference. That's a big difference.

[15:15]

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if I could find, and I'll read into the record some of these things here that talks about this. Here's what I'm talking about. This is section 11: "The commissioner may do all or any of the following." He might not do anything. He's not required to do a single thing. Nobody's going to force him or her to do a single thing, but this is what they may do, not will do. And the minister was leading the House to believe they will do it, because he used very much the word "will." But it's actually section 11, under Commissioner:

The commissioner may do all or any of the following:

- (a) offer comment on the implications for privacy protection of a proposed data matching project;
- (b) after hearing from the initiating organization, make recommendations . . .

Now remember, that's "may" do that, or may not do that. And:

- (c) after hearing from the initiating organization, recommend that the initiating organization:
 - (i) cease or modify data matching that contravenes this Act . . .
 - (ii) destroy collections of information collected in contravention of this Act . . .

So, Mr. Speaker, I would feel a lot better if it was a little stronger instead of "may recommend." "Shall require" would be better language. "Shall require" would cause some confidence in this piece of legislation. But "may recommend," Mr. Deputy Speaker, is, to say the least, really wishy-washy. You know, I'm not sure if this is really changing anything when you have such a thing.

And then it only gets a little bit more bizarre, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in regulations, which we always look at, which we

always look at. The Lieutenant Governor in Council — which really means executive council and cabinet — may make regulations. They may define, enlarge, or restrict the meaning of any word or expression used in this Act but not defined in this Act. So they can really change the definition on the go here.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I feel like this is . . . And then they go on, next . . . [inaudible] . . . prescribing the requirements of the agreement and then defining who the initiating organization or participation organization is and prescribing the organizations. And then the other one — and this is in section 15 if you're following along here, Mr. Deputy Speaker — section 15(f), and this is what I talked about for the individual:

(f) for the purposes of section 9, respecting an individual's access to his or her information.

So they may make regulations in respect to how an individual has access to his or her own information. So there's no "shall require," this is "may," so we're all kind of at the mercy of big brother. So I don't know what this really, really changes. So, Mr. Speaker, I think for many of us, many folks in Saskatchewan while we think when the minister uses the word "will," it's not really "will," and as a lawyer, he should be more careful when he's talking in terms like that. And make sure we understand that it's a "may" and "recommend" and there is a lot here that I think leaves a lot of questions unanswered. And so I have a lot of concerns with this. And the big issue is of course being relatively new, we're not really sure what this all . . . what the impact will mean. What will it mean for us?

You know, and this is what . . . When I talked about the regulations, I should go back and talk about the access to information by the data subject or by the person, just to be sure we're understanding that. Section 9 says:

Subject to the regulations, any individual has the right to obtain from the initiating organization confirmation as to whether information concerning him or her is or was being used in the data matching project, and, if that is the case, access to that information and the details of the data matching agreement that are posted in accordance with clause 5(2)(d).

And then we go to section 15, because that's regulations and that's where it says that they have the ability to make regulations around that. So we really don't know. While on one hand it talks tough, but on the other hand, we have the regulations that say, but trust us; we are going to make sure that it's going to be okay. It's going to be okay. But we don't really know what that means.

And so, Mr. Speaker, forgive us if we seem a little cynical. This government that has . . . And this Premier and his legacy after 10 years, the outgoing Premier who came in, who came in saying he's going to be the most transparent and accountable government, but in the next couple of days he's leaving as the worst, the worst government for transparency and accountability, and in fact getting highway awards for this. This is his legacy.

They won an award. The Highways . . . the code . . . cone of silence. The cone of silence — that is his legacy. That is the

legacy of this outgoing Premier. And this is the kind of legislation we're looking at that creates I think many more questions.

And in fact if we look at the cover-ups, the kind of . . . When we've asked for information, for example, around GTH, just yesterday we asked about land sales involving a trucking company, I believe it was, and a grocery store and what happened there with the kind of land sales. It was total reluctance to share that kind of information, which they should have. We see the binders; they come in. They come walking in with binders that have got to be 4 inches, 6 inches thick. Some of them I think are 8. I see some on the desks right now. You would think they would have that kind of information in those binders. I don't know what they have in their binders. Maybe it's a daily cartoon, I don't know, to help them get through the day. I think that's what it is.

I know what the . . . The member from Moose Jaw, he has his binder. He has a half-inch binder that says, the GTH is not a scandal. It's a scandal. I know the member from Moose Jaw keeps correcting us. I know the GTH is a scandal. And he keeps reminding people at home every day, no matter what. And I think at home they try to avoid those three letters because he's got it burned in his brain that it's not a scandal. It's a scandal, you know.

I don't know, I know our former premier, Premier Calvert, always said scandal, so maybe it's something in Moose Jaw they say. I don't know. You know, I come from around there. We call a scandal a scandal. And definitely the GTH is a scandal. But I digress here. I'm talking about data management.

And so at any rate I was just talking about the size of binders they have over there and lack of information. I don't know what it is.

An Hon. Member: — It's not a scandal.

Mr. Forbes: — It's not a scandal. I don't know what it is. Maybe that's what they're really after, the data management here. Matching, matching, that's what we're talking, and the size of binders. And yet they have no information, nothing that they can share.

And this is the legacy of this Premier that we have on his last few days, the outgoing Premier who unfortunately can't turn this ship around. We are in a fog, and I think we're in a deep, deep fog. And no matter what they say, we're not going to get anything much better from this government. And we have a whole host of candidates seeking leadership over there who themselves say we need better answers. We need . . . There are questions to be asked.

Now maybe it's a question of data matching. That's the issue. And we don't know how . . . what the size of that data is, but we know five want some data matched around the GTH. Pretty simple. And even the member from Meadow Lake, one wanted some answers about GTH. Bad data matching, if I ever saw.

But, Mr. Speaker, I digress, not a lot but a bit. Because it's all about information and sharing that information, and we have a lot of concerns. We have a lot of concerns about what this

means for the individuals. And we'll be talking to the Privacy Commissioner; definitely on my list of things to do, particularly when it comes to workers. And what are the implications to the Workers' Compensation Board? Because I have seen the damage done by the inappropriate use or misuse of privacy when we should be so much better in this province, so much better. And we should be doing that. My disappointment, that we haven't seen a workers' compensation amendment Act come forward, just because it's critically important. And that is where we could be talking about data and privacy and that type of thing.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that there'll be many people who want to get up today. I hope I've said a few things that have enlightened the issue around this bill because it is an important one. And so with that, I would move adjournment of Bill No. 87, *The Data Matching Agreements Act*. Thank you.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 87, *The Data Matching Agreements Act, 2017*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — 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 Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*, just I guess to go over a few comments.

And I've heard different people raise concern. We have legislation that, you know, through this House we pass and it gives it some teeth, strength, I think people say. It's the law of the land.

But every time we have, I guess, a bill come forward that wants to change it and take it out of legislation into regulations, you wonder about why and what's the reasoning and what's the concern and why are you taking that away. To allow, I guess, it allows the minister the power, and we've heard that. I've heard some people back home when you explain that to them.

And you know, I've been in some meetings where these changes have happened and you get some of them saying, well oh, they have the powers just to change — and then they call them super powers — to change, to change the rules in the way legislation or the way, you know, the practice has been done where you have a minister who now with a stroke of a pen can just change, can change whatever they want. And that's very convenient. And sometimes, I guess, at the end of the day, you know, sometimes we have to ask why. Why are we doing these changes? Why are we taking . . . We want to strengthen the rules and we want to make sure. And the reason why, a lot of

people are concerned at the way this government operates.

And my colleague before me, you know, that was just talking about the data-matching amendments they were making to that legislation, you see that going on and the concerns when the government, the government takes over and just decides and doesn't want to release information. So he did a great job of explaining the process.

And any time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you have the government on the other side deciding they just want to make the changes and put something in regulations, it gives that minister and that government a lot of power. And I think they've had too much power, and a lot of people are not happy with the way this government's been operating. And they can sit there day after day and pat themselves on the back, and that's fine. The good people of this province know different. And we look at many areas of that.

But that is the concern when you're changing over, again like I said, going from legislation, you take and you put it into regulations where the government will have or the minister will have powers. And sometimes, you know, is it the best for residents or maybe somebody who has an issue with the way government is operating? And all of a sudden it's not legislation. It's through the regulations. So we want to be clear on that.

But having said that, that's an issue I know some will argue back and forth our concern when you have that. So for those that I guess maybe have not been on the best side of that argument, it's not good. But for those that benefit, like I've said to the minister, with the power just to change the regulations, the stroke of a pen can say, this is going to be changed and we're no longer going to do this. And maybe it's fine. Maybe there's a reason why. There might be a reason why somebody's asked for that. But having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we'll leave that where it is, and we'll continue to disagree on that side, or to agree on maybe there's changes where it has to happen.

[15:30]

Now I'm going to talk about . . . Everyone has . . . This piece of legislation, amendments they're making, everybody has a certain . . . You have a point system on with SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] on your driver's. Some people, you're in the plus, some are in the minus.

And you can go through, and every now and then you'll get in the mail, you'll get to renew your driver's if it's renewed once a year, or you get your notice that your driver's has been renewed. But in that driver's, in that package that you get from SGI, it talks about a point system. So if you've had any infractions or any tickets for some reason that come back to you that say, well because it was speeding. It might be seat belt; there could be different reasons why. It's on a point system and I guess, you know, SGI has come up with a process on how they weigh in on some of the fines that are handed out to people.

So there is a way that they put that, and some people get a discount. So if you have, you're a minus, you might get a

discount. If you're a plus . . . Either way. Like I'm saying, you know, if you're in the negative . . . You want to be in the plus, I would think, and you would get some benefits. If you're in the minus, then I guess you've got some infractions or some tickets that are going to cause you maybe to lose a rebate and maybe to pay more for your driver's.

But having said that, there used to be a process. If you disagreed with that, with any fees or you were concerned about the point system, you had a process to appeal and you could appeal that. You could actually appeal that to the Highway Traffic Board. You could go and submit your appeal saying, I disagree with what's going on here and that's not what happened. So you could have a chance, an appeal to have that heard. So that is a process they talked about and they're talking about in here. Having said that, you can appeal.

Now they're taking that away. That process . . . [inaudible] . . . require documents, they're moving that from the legislation again, as we talked about, to regulations where they can do that. So you would no longer have to go to the Highways.

The other part of this amendment they're making, and there's a number of different ones, but this one here where they're making . . . They're taking a new section and a clarification when it comes to the insured. So if you have I guess an insurance company, from my understanding, and I know in committee we're going to have to, you know, work this out and make sure . . . My colleagues and the critic will ask some questions and we'll get exactly what the meaning of it and why the proposed changes.

But here's what happened. I believe some legislation was introduced prior, a year ago maybe, and they're making some amendments. And what those amendments are, if for instance, if somebody was in a motor vehicle accident and I guess the person was charged with an offence and they've caused damage to another vehicle or injuries or death to someone else that was not in their vehicle with them, the insurance pays the family or pays the person that, you know, suffered damage to the vehicle or . . . [inaudible] . . . injuries or life. So the insurance will pay that; they pay that out.

Now from what I get from this is now the insurance of the individual, of the individual that would be driving and that was found guilty of an offence . . . And it has a certain offence, and I think in this case it might be impaired driving or something like that. If you were to, you know, cause death, injury to someone else and you were found guilty — maybe from my understanding you were impaired driving; there's certain offences that they're talking about but I'm assuming maybe it's impaired driving — and you caused that damage, the insurer can now come out and sue you for their portion of what they've paid out because of the damage and hold you accountable. I guess the insurance can hold you accountable because you've been found guilty of an offence, so they can try to recoup what they've paid out to that individual.

And that's one of the other areas where I see that they've gone with this. So it's going to . . . And I know that when we're in committee we're going to have, you know, we'll have a lot more questions and clarification on some. But from what I can see, that's where we're going, where they will hold you

accountable for I guess for whatever reason you've caused injuries, as I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you've caused injuries, damage to a vehicle, I guess a death that another insurance company has paid out. They now can try to get those dollars, recoup some of the losses because of, you know, the individual has caused this because for whatever they were found guilty of an offence that would trigger the insurance company to be able to get those dollars back. So now they've put that in clarification. They've put that in there.

Now also in part of that is if you're getting, I think it's payments, instalments, if you're somebody who . . . They can now recoup that. But because you're getting a monthly allotment of money from somewhere, they can also go after that and go after, my understanding, the instalments that you're getting. They can be granted a way to retrieve some of those dollars from your instalments. So again it's clarifying some of the legislation that was passed, but it's just clarifying it.

So I just wanted to go a little bit over this bill. And like I know my colleagues will have more questions, the critic will have, to clarification in this. So at this time I have no further comments on Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Prepared to adjourn.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — 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 Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and enter into adjourned debates on Bill No. 89, *The School Choice Protection Act*. This Act makes changes to *The Education Act* of 1995. Some of the key amendments in the bill, Mr. Speaker, are adding new sections to invoke the notwithstanding clause, so new sections 2.1 and 2.2. Some of this reads:

2.1(1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act and notwithstanding any other Act or law, grants must be paid by the minister to a board of education without regard to the religious affiliation of parents or guardians of pupils registered with the board of education or of pupils registered with the board of education.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act and notwithstanding any other Act or law, if regulations are made pursuant to this Act respecting grants that must be paid to a board of education, the regulations must provide for grants without regard to the religious affiliation of

parents or guardians of pupils registered with the board of education or of pupils registered with the board of education [and so on].

There are also sections that secure the minister's authorization to provide grants without regard to religious affiliation of parents or pupils themselves. And then specifically section 2.2(1): "Pursuant to subsection 33(1) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, section 2.1 is declared to operate notwithstanding sections 2 and 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*." And then the second subsection, Mr. Speaker, is invoking the notwithstanding clause with respect to *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* as well.

So these are the pieces that we are discussing in this particular amendment to *The Education Act*, Mr. Speaker.

According to the explanatory notes, these provisions will allow for the Ministry of Education to continue its current funding practices, and school divisions will continue to have the authority to apply their own attendance and admittance policies. When the minister gave her second reading speech on this bill, she identified that these changes are being proposed, and I quote:

... to provide certainty to parents and students that the government can continue funding students who attend Catholic separate schools regardless of their religious affiliation.

She goes on to state:

These amendments are in response to the April 2017 Court of Queen's Bench decision on the legal challenge brought forward by the Good Spirit School Division known as the Theodore ... case. The decision found the funding of non-Catholics who attend Catholic separate schools to be unconstitutional. While the court found that non-Catholic students could be admitted to Catholic separate schools, the court also found that government funding for the attendance of ... [these schools] violates sections 2(a) and 15 of the Charter, which violates the state's duty of religious neutrality. If the Court of Queen's Bench decision were to come into force, there would likely be a significant shift in funding between the public and Catholic separate school divisions, which in turn would cause significant disruption in the education sector.

The minister knows well that both the Government of Saskatchewan and Christ the Teacher Roman Catholic Separate School Division have filed appeals to the Theodore ruling, and between 6 and 18 months from now a decision will be delivered.

Mr. Speaker, this decision regards the future of non-Catholic students and their ability to attend Catholic schools. In no way is the decision implying that Catholic students' education is in danger.

I was raised as a Catholic and attended Catholic school, graduated from E.D. Feehan Catholic High School in Saskatoon. I understand the desire of some parents to want their children raised in a Catholic environment, to pass along

religious values of the family. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, I suspect that this is not why the government is suggesting invoking the notwithstanding clause here, and in fact not directly related in many ways.

I took some political studies classes so I know a little bit from the academic perspective about use of the notwithstanding clause or lack of use of the notwithstanding clause as it may be. I'm not opposed to it outright, but I think there should be a compelling argument for making legislation notwithstanding to certain rights that are protected by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

It's disappointing that this is very much a politicized decision, Mr. Speaker. We know that the Sask Party has cut funding by \$674 per student across the province. It hiked education property tax by 67 million, but cut total government funding for education by 121 million.

There is no doubt that we are paying more for our education and getting less. Kids are losing classroom supports that they critically need for their success. This includes funding for buses for kindergarten kids. And I spoke with some constituents in Saskatoon Fairview, Mr. Speaker. Throughout the summer I was out door knocking for the by-election. So many constituents raised concerns about the cuts to education that this government has brought forward with the most recent budget.

One of these cuts was the concern about the buses for kindergarten children. I had parents talking to me, being concerned that their five-year-old child was being asked to walk alone to school, that their work schedule wouldn't allow for this. They were just getting into figuring out a groove with the other kids and how to make things work, and now these burdens really negatively impacted families.

I also heard from parents who were concerned about cuts to speech-language pathologists, one family in particular where the daughter had undergone surgery. She was quite concerned about her ability to access speech-language pathology — is she even going to be able to talk? — and the exorbitant cost that this would place on the family as a result of these cuts.

I also talked to a family, some constituents in Saskatoon Fairview who are concerned with the fact that there were cuts to pre-school for their child that had disabilities and, you know, what quality of education their child was going to have as a result of these cuts.

The people of Saskatchewan know about these realities and many have signed petitions calling on the government to restore funding. We've presented these petitions several times in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, so it's no stranger to you.

People are quite frustrated, and I don't think this government is showing that they value the education of our future generations. It's certainly not the message that these cuts are sending.

Mr. Speaker, of course we support publicly funded education in Saskatchewan. This includes public and Catholic systems. There's no question that this ruling would make substantial changes in Saskatchewan that would also have an impact across Canada. Our position remains unchanged, Mr. Speaker. In order

to move forward, both time and clarity are needed. We support the appeal because it provides both. The Sask Party's grandstanding provides neither.

[15:45]

In the spring the Premier himself said, and I quote, "There's time. There's going to be an appeal, and the ruling is stayed because of the appeal." So it begs the question, Mr. Speaker, of why the Sask Party is proposing to pre-emptively throw in the notwithstanding clause before the appeal has been decided. It's playing politics, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll quote from my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre yesterday in something he said, raising concerns about the context within which this legislation comes forward. He said, and I quote:

Mr. Speaker, it makes one question the motivation. And is this about providing certainty and peace of mind for parents that are making decisions about where to send their kids for schooling? And what choices are available to them accordingly?

Or are we seeing this take place in a time where you've got a government that has a problem with dealing in good faith and in goodwill with teachers, with the sector, and how that in turn impacts the education offerings that there are for students? Is it about a diversion from that day-to-day reality which gets acknowledged in the more honest moments of the Sask Party leadership contest?

The Premier has admitted that it is not really necessary. While the appeal is being considered, there is no legitimate need to jump to the notwithstanding clause. The notwithstanding clause is a tool in the tool box, but I'm not convinced that that's where we need to be going right now. I think this bill is all about optics and distraction, Mr. Speaker, attempting to distract the intelligent people of Saskatchewan, to divert attention away from the Sask Party's cuts to education, deep cuts while people are all paying more in property taxes. People will not be fooled though, Mr. Speaker. They have closely observed these cuts. They have hit them personally and deeply.

Mr. Speaker, I know we will have more questions about this bill, and I will leave that work to several of my other colleagues to do. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill 89, *The School Choice Protection Act*.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview 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.

Bill No. 90

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 90** — *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and it is my pleasure this afternoon to enter into debate on Bill 90, *The Heritage Property Amendment Act*. Some of my colleagues have had opportunity already to speak to this bill in adjourned debates and it is, as I said, my pleasure to enter some comments on the record with regard to this bill.

I'm going to just turn to the minister's comments during second reading of this bill because I think that's often where we should start in seeing if there are some hints about what exactly is intended with legislation. As I've noted previously, when it's clear, the reasons for a proposed bill, we've got a clear understanding of why this legislation is necessary, who's been consulted, we are very willing to be reasonable about that, Mr. Speaker. But I do have some questions after reading the minister's second reading comments just exactly what is intended. And I have some concerns about the impact, whether intended or not intended, with regard to *The Heritage Property Amendment Act*.

In the preamble to his comments, Mr. Speaker, the minister did nicely outline the Act and some of its intentions:

Under the Act, heritage property is broadly defined as any property that is of interest on account of its historical, architectural, archaeological, paleontological, and other scientific or cultural value. This includes historic buildings . . .

I think as comes to mind for many people when they're talking about *The Heritage Property Act*, but it also includes archaeological heritage as well, including ". . . vertebrate and invertebrate fossils from the geological past," and provides for the formal designation of heritage property by both municipalities and provincially with an intention of the conservation, and also allows for the investigation of archaeological and paleontological heritage, Mr. Speaker, and the operation . . . It also allows for the operation, the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is shared heritage for all of us in this province, and it's important. I think that there is a great deal of value in not only preserving these sites but learning from them, and not only for our interests, for our own telling of our story as a people on this land, our built heritage, but also in uncovering truths that perhaps have not been discovered up to this point.

One of the things that I was thinking about when I was reading this was a trip that a number of people took this summer along Pinkie Road. Not far from the GTH that we hear so often about, there's a much less talked about site that was largely forgotten in this province, a site that recently and gratefully and rightly was provided with provincial heritage status, and that is the site of the Indian Industrial School. It had been designated as a municipal heritage site the year previous, largely due to the work of a number of small . . . a small group of very dedicated volunteers and advocates who were really tireless in their seeking of recognition of this site and that those who are laid to rest there would not be forgotten.

I want to single out in that, local artist Janine Windolph, who really brought her voice and her talents to bear here to ensure that this site was not only recognized but protected. And then that is something that is afforded in this Act and is one of the reasons that we should pay careful attention to it.

At that site . . . I moved to Regina in 1991. People who have lived here their whole lives weren't aware that Regina even had the Indian Industrial School, let alone the fact that there were at least 35 children buried there in unmarked graves, Mr. Speaker. And that is, in this era of truth and reconciliation again, that's one of those truths that was almost largely forgotten by the history books. So having this designation protects that land from commercial development, but it also allows us to understand our history. If we can imagine here — many of us are parents, are grandparents — what our society must have been like at a time when you could have 35 children buried in unmarked graves and be almost forgotten.

We had a ceremony there. There was a ceremony the day that we walked out to that site on the day of the designation, and we heard that many, many families didn't know what happened to their children, that this is part of our shared history, Mr. Speaker. So often our history is something to celebrate, and sometimes it's not, but we own all facets of our history. And again that is one of the reasons why this Act is important and that we should pay attention to any amendments to that Act and the intentions that are outlined in that Act and any watering down of the intentions of that Act.

In Saskatchewan there are approximately 50 provincial heritage sites and approximately 750 municipal heritage sites. All of these sites enjoy some protection under the Act as well as access to the funds that are afforded by the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund, Mr. Speaker. And this Act does propose to change how those funds are allocated, and some of the oversight of this Act. So again something that we ought to pay strong attention to.

One of the things that's mentioned by the minister here:

The proposed amendments will ensure that the review board hearings are handled in an objective, impartial, and transparent manner by clearly establishing the review board as a body that operates separately and independently from the rest of the Saskatchewan Heritage Foundation.

Mr. Speaker, what is being proposed here is a separation in terms of the "proposed amendment will implement an operational separation between the review board and the Saskatchewan Heritage . . . [Fund] . . ."

Mr. Speaker, what is lacking in the minister's preamble here is any indication that there had been conflicts of interest. Perhaps there had been, but that's not something that he presented any details about in his comments.

He talks about, "The review board serves as an impartial tribunal that conducts public hearings to consider formal public objections to proposed designations of heritage property . . ."

What seems to be suggested here is that there was some conflict of those two roles and that perhaps full hearing was not being

conducted, Mr. Speaker, but there's no evidence presented of that. So that's something to pay attention to. Who's raised concerns about the conflict? Who is asking for changes? All of that is missing from these changes.

There is talk by the minister in the second reading that there are some concerns about changes, the ability of designated properties, the owners of those properties, to make changes. Again the intention of this Act is to preserve built heritage and it has some restrictions on changing the architectural characteristics that make a site a heritage site. So that is the balance right now and what is being proposed here is to make it easier for owners of those designated properties to make changes to their property. Mr. Speaker, on balance that's something that I have heard from people, but we have to make sure that we get the balance right there.

The minister did note that he had consulted with heritage property owners in preparation of this bill, but not with those, for example, on the Heritage Foundation or those who advocate for preserving our built and our archaeological heritage in this province. So that would be an important question I think that one of my colleagues may have in committee around this, to see just who was consulted on this and why is it important. Why is this something that we want to preserve, as was the original intention of the Act?

It's good to have other voices come to the table. One such voice, this is an article that I'm reading from SUMA's [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] publication from 2016, talking about the Main Street Saskatchewan designation. So this was a designation that's been since cut because of budgetary constraints, but this was a very well-received program that allocated grants administered by SaskCulture to preserve local main streets. And if I could just read into the record some of the benefits that were noted at that time. Again this is only from 2016 from SUMA. At that point there were six designated main streets that had benefited from this funding and this preservation being: Humboldt, Melfort, Swift Current, Prince Albert, Spiritwood, and Maple Creek.

And I don't know if people have had the chance to visit these refurbished main streets but it really is a draw for tourists. It's a chance to go back in time in many of these communities and has provided a great deal of economic impact, a positive economic impact. Certainly we can think in the case of Moose Jaw, the tunnels. It's, you know, a place to go. This time of year especially, Mr. Speaker, walking down Main Street you see visitors from around the world. I've also had the opportunity to visit the refurbished main street in Maple Creek, and again it is a draw for tourists from around the province and around the world. In fact there have been numbers placed on this. For every dollar put into heritage property restoration, it generates \$12 in return, Mr. Speaker. So it is an investment. But we've seen that investment increasingly decline under this government, and now they are proposing to change the Act entirely.

[16:00]

Reading from that article that I mentioned from SUMA:

In any town or city, an economically dynamic, culturally

vibrant downtown contributes to the prosperity and quality of life of the entire community. Downtown has an important role as a shopping and service centre, and as a generator of jobs. It also represents a large portion of the municipality's tax base, and a huge amount of public and private investment in buildings and other infrastructure . . . [It] is also a prime location for social and cultural activities and can often be a marketable tourist destination, resulting in a potential increase in economic activity for the community.

Mr. Speaker, often without protection these buildings and these sites would find their way into obscurity or, as often is the case, in the landfill.

There are a lot of concepts that aren't mentioned in this second reading. The concept of embodied energy. Not only the historical and the heritage value of these buildings, but the environmental embodied energy that's contained in these buildings, and a full accounting of what the cost is of tearing down our built heritage. We have a number of buildings, bricks and infrastructure, ductwork, etc. that has made its way to our local landfill here in Regina. And that has economic impacts in terms of, you know, the demolition costs but also the cost of repeatedly having to look for new landfill sites because we have filled them up, Mr. Speaker. So where we can, to hold onto that shared and our built history, I think has, retains value today in fact both for the economic revenue that it generates but also, as I said earlier, it improves our ability to understand ourselves as a people and understand our history in this place.

Just briefly for my constituents in Regina Lakeview, this is an area that is defined literally by its built heritage: the beautiful sacred heart cathedral that stands along 13th Avenue; Westminster United, another heritage building, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that draws tourist from around the province and often from around the world. We have in the summertime, in the fall, we have heritage walking tours that are promoted by Sask Tourism. So when people go to cities and towns, they're not always going to look at the new shiny buildings. Of course they might end up at the hockey rink or the mall but they also . . . What's a real tourist draw is this built heritage, these heritage buildings.

Of course we stand in one today, one that very rightfully recently received a rather costly restoration. And that investment will not only preserve this beautiful building but it has economic impact. Any day when you're out in the rotunda, you see school groups, you see visitors from around the world coming in and marvelling at this building. And that is something that we have had to over the years invest in, and we protect, Mr. Speaker, because we've decided that that is important to us.

And so any weakening of this legislation without a full accounting of what's intended with it by those changes, I think, should be met with scrutiny and some further questions. I know that my colleagues have written or have put the comments of Mr. Merle Massie, a former director with the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund, from Biggar, Saskatchewan, some of his concerns into the record, and talking about the money that . . . In conjunction with this bill, the pulling out of money from the Saskatchewan Heritage Fund also puts in peril our ability to

protect, preserve, tell our own stories, as we saw such a drastic reduction in the amount of money that was put into the SHF [Saskatchewan Heritage Fund], but also that money was clawed back in a move that we have seen in other areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I guess in summation, this is not a frivolous . . . Our heritage is not something to only be interested in in the good times or when we have the money. This is something we should constantly be looking at, seeing it as an investment — again \$12 in return for every dollar invested. And it requires constant vigilance on our part so that we are not leaving buildings to the point or sites to the point that they are irreparable, that we can preserve that heritage.

And again this is . . . There are sites. Those 50 provincial sites are all over the province. I think of the Bell Barn in Indian Head. I think of Cannington Manor, one of my favourite places to go as a kid, Mr. Speaker. Every corner of this province. The church at Stanley Mission. Literally throughout this province, these are destinations for not only people around this province to learn about themselves, but also for tourists around the world. And if we take care to preserve them to make sure that we have the balance right, they will serve us well into the future.

I'll close by a remembered quote, and I will perhaps be paraphrasing it a bit, from one of my constituents, Ms. Jeannie Mah, who said that we seemed intent in this province and in this city in particular, intent on ripping out our built heritage from its very short roots, Mr. Speaker. I think that this Act allows for the protection of those roots, and I would like to see that continue and be strengthened. So we will be watching and we will have some questions for this in committee. But to this point, I think I will conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 90, *The Heritage Property Amendment Act, 2017*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — Carried.

Bill No. 91

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 91** — *The Snowmobile Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Chair of Committees: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Today I'm going to speak about the amendments that we see us before us to *The Snowmobile Act* in Saskatchewan.

Preparing for my comments, I recalled the thrill of being a kid out on the farm and getting on that snowmobile. And it was a lot of fun. As kids we used to do it, and I'm sure you did it yourself, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Great winter sport and certainly

one that I have many happy memories as a kid, but also as a young adult. And my first boyfriend loved to go really fast on a snowmobile. So we had a few, you know, carving through the river and through the banks there that it was a bit of thrill, shall we say, Mr. Speaker.

So I know the importance of the snowmobile in a province like Saskatchewan where it is really part of our culture. And certainly I remember the prairie trails as being a little different than the trails I've experienced more recently up the boreal forest. Because in the prairie you can be going along and it's soft snow and then you hit a hard snowbank at full speed and it's like the most jarring thing that you ever experienced. And the next thing you know, you're in soft snow again.

Whereas I think in the boreal forest it's little bit better. There's less wind that sort of hardens the snow and I think the northern snowmobilers, any time I've gone up there, it's a little smoother of a ride, shall we say. And certainly the beautiful trails that exist in the northern boreal forest and in the prairies are worthwhile visiting for sure. We know it's a sport that makes, it draws a lot of benefit for the economy. People are enjoying it and it brings us into the outdoors which, in a province like Saskatchewan, that's one of the best parts of the year I think, Mr. Speaker, is being outdoors in the wintertime.

So a few years ago, we were involved at the Ness Creek site in developing some trails and actually became involved with the Saskatchewan Trails Association. And they've done some really, really good work in terms of all kinds of trails in Saskatchewan, not just snowmobile trails. And it was our pleasure to be able to meet with folks from the snowmobile trails association. And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, those people take their sport very seriously, and they want to ensure that it's being done properly. And of course, you know, things like alcohol when it comes to driving, drinking and driving, we've seen tragic accidents when it comes to snowmobile use and the use of alcohol. A lot of dangers out there and I know that the snowmobile association of Saskatchewan is very, very diligent and dedicated to ensuring the sport is as safe as it can be.

Now when we look at *The Snowmobile Act* itself, it's obviously an Act regarding the operation of snowmobiles. And there's a lot in the Act about how the trails are managed by the association and also when snowmobiles can cross highways. You know, of course that's an important part of being in Saskatchewan as well is you have to get across the road sometimes to get to the other part of the trail. And over the years I think we've all noticed the smaller stop signs and yield signs in the ditches because those trails are being maintained and people are being warned. We all have heard of accidents where people hit an approach at high speeds causing serious injury or death. So again it's an exhilarating sport, but it has a certain amount of danger associated with it. And so the people that are promoting the sport want to make sure that people are safe. And that's a good thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Now the minister introduced the bill and gave us some introductory comments, and I just want to sort of start there at this point in time. There are a number of administrative or technical changes to the bill that I'll go through, Mr. Speaker. But he said, "The most significant amendment to this Act restricts snowmobile trail use to only snowmobiles and trail

maintenance equipment between December 1st and April 15th of each year." I find that really interesting because of course this is an Act respecting snowmobiles, so at no point to this point did anyone ever talk about other vehicles using those trails. And particularly, I assume, December 1st to April 15th is deemed to be the prime snowmobile time.

So I know in the North, especially at Ness Creek where we have a system of trails, there's often other vehicles that come through. And ours are cross-country ski trails, so you can imagine the mess that can be made with, you know, cross-country ski tracks when people come through with Gators and different kinds of . . . with quad runners, and actually make a heck of a mess out of the trail. And I think that's definitely what is trying to be addressed here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is ensuring that the trails, the identified snowmobile trails in Saskatchewan are really used by snowmobiles.

And we talked about that with the Snowmobile Association when we were meeting a few years back because they're also very interested in ensuring that cross-country ski trails are also not used by snowmobiles because they know how important it is for cross-country ski trails to have the proper tracks. So they're very co-operative and very willing to work with people who have those cross-country ski trails. And we all know that if, you know, dogs get on the trail or deer can make a heck of a mess on a cross-country ski trail as well. And of course we're not going to stop the deer from doing that, but when it's human activity that is something that we can legislate, and I think this change is pretty significant obviously for the association.

Now the minister hasn't indicated who has called for these changes or whether there's been any consultation, so that's certainly something we'll have questions about for him when we are in committee, Mr. Speaker.

Now we also see changes here, moving responsibilities from the Highway Traffic Board to SGI. So this is the second bill in this session where I've had the opportunity to speak to this, and where we see the role of the Highway Traffic Board being diminished or basically taken away. And I'm just wondering, you know, Mr. Speaker. We saw their sort of panic this spring, when a number of operators came forward to operate private bus routes, and it looked like the Highway Traffic Board wasn't very happy about having to do that work. And so I'm just wondering if maybe this is a move to finally eliminate the Highway Traffic Board, or what sort of reasoning, where we see moving this from their responsibility over to SGI.

[16:15]

SGI is a Crown, a provincial Crown, and it seems to me regulatory authorities are maybe better within a ministry than within a Crown. So it's an interesting move, and I guess I would have questions for the minister about that as well in committee, in terms of why are we putting more responsibilities on the Crown, the SGI, Saskatchewan Government Insurance, when we have the Highway Traffic Board that has the regulatory supervision of the ministry. And so I don't know why they're off-loading this on to SGI, and I think it's an interesting question at least. And you know, I'm sure the officials will give their reasoning, but I certainly would like to hear that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

He goes on to say that the Highway Traffic Board actually delegated these authorities to SGI in January of 2016. So it sounds that's what's de facto happening on the ground, despite the fact that the Highway Traffic Board was responsible for it, and so this is just really making that clear.

So I'll just take a few minutes now, Mr. Speaker, to go into some of the changes that we find in the Act. So first and foremost is a definition change where the definition of "board" is actually being removed altogether because it meant the Highway Traffic Board under *The Traffic Safety Act*. So that's being deleted. That's the first thing that happens in this bill.

Secondly, and I do have a problem with the drafting on this one, Mr. Speaker. It's section . . . of the new Act it's section 3, and what it's doing is amending the existing Act, section 2(b)(i). And what it says is that they're adding the words "or registration permit" after "certificate of registration." But unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the words "certificate of registration" show up in two places in the definition, one as the defined term and then further on within the clause itself. So it's not clear from the amendment which certificate of registration that those words are supposed to be added afterwards.

And I think that's a drafting error that probably should be fixed in committee. I'm hoping that it will be because I'm not sure. And I'm sure the drafters would have a better sense of this, but if you have "certificate of registration" twice, and you're amending it to add "registration permit" after one of them, which one is it? And I think the drafting needs to be fixed there. That's just an observation, and I'm sure that we can adjust that in committee or that can be explained.

There's also a change to the definition of licence plate. It's not clear from the minister's comments why these changes are being made or what exactly is happening there. But first of all, the licence plate definition, they're striking out a part of it that says the licence plate has ". . . an imprint or to which there is attached a validation sticker or stickers showing the year and month in which the licence period expires." I think that's because we have now generally moved to licence plates that don't have to have the stickers displayed anymore, so I'm assuming that's why that change is being made. That's section 2(e) of the existing Act.

They've also . . . Keep going here, I don't want to lose myself. Oh, yes. Section 3(d) of the Act is now changing the definition of non-resident. So currently there's just a definition. It's clearly ". . . a person who is not a resident of the province, and for the purpose of this Act a person who resides in the province for any period not exceeding ninety days shall with respect to that period be deemed to be a nonresident." So that's the definition.

They're changing that now and causing us to refer to another Act, which I find is always confusing, Mr. Speaker. So we no longer find a definition within this Act. We have to go now to *The Highway Traffic Act* to find out how "non-resident" is being defined. That annoys me more than putting it in the regulations actually, because at least in the regulations, when you go in the Queen's Printer you can click on the Act and find the regulations. But now you have to go to another Act altogether. And maybe it's a First World problem, but it's

annoying. So I'm not sure why you couldn't just leave the definition be, and there's no explanation from the minister as to why that was necessary to make us flip over to another Act rather than just leave it within the Act itself.

I guess the use of non-resident comes up in the Act in a few places, basically in terms of who's allowed to get a licence to operate a snowmobile here in Saskatchewan.

So the next change is section 3(e) where they're repealing the definition of "snowmobile" and substituting it with a new definition. Not a lot of changes here. I think a lot of this is just how you describe what a Ski-Doo is, or a snowmobile, sorry. A Ski-Doo is not a generic word. But a snowmobile . . . And I think what's happening — and I'm not sure of this — is that we see all kinds of different snow-type machines nowadays. It's evolving, obviously. It's not just, you know, the Ski-Doo that we used growing up, or the Bombardier, whatever the different brands of Ski-Doos . . . Arctic Cat, that was the one that was kind of a fun one when we were kids. And I don't even know if they still make them. I'm sure they do. But anyways, there's a new definition of "snowmobile."

One of the things that's still there that hasn't changed is the weight. It can't be more than 500 kilograms. I bet you didn't know that, Mr. Speaker, that you cannot call it a snowmobile if it weighs more than 500 kilograms. Seems like a lot of weight. That's half a tonne. So there must be some big ones out there. I don't know how many pounds that would be. Over a thousand anyway, so seems like a lot of weight. I can remember having to lift the tail end and move it when we got stuck. But I don't know and would be curious — and I guess I could find out — is what a normal, average Ski-Doo would be, how much that would weigh.

But anyway, that part of the definition isn't being changed. We are now looking at a definition that includes things like "is designed primarily for travel on snow." Now I don't know what snowmobile wouldn't be designed primarily for travelling on snow, but obviously that's an important part of the definition.

Secondly, the new definition says "has one or more steering skis." So you still have to have a ski to be considered a snowmobile. And then the next definition, "is driven by means of an endless track or tracks in contact with the snow." That seems to make a lot of sense.

And these are new, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the definition. Clause 3(e)(1)(v) says it has to comply ". . . with the requirements of the Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standard existing at the date of manufacture" and (vi) reads "bears a Canada Motor Vehicle Safety Standard label of compliance."

So I think those are solid additions to the definition. We want to make sure that anything that is out there and considered to be a snowmobile has actually been, has safety standards applied to it. So that is interesting.

The next change to the definitions is repealing clause (o) of the definitions, which was trail permit. And that's coming up, Mr. Speaker, but trail permits were specifically mentioned in section 20.1 and that section is being changed. So that's why they're taking away . . . There will no longer be trail permits, basically.

And again the minister didn't give much background in terms of why there will no longer be trail permits. In fact I don't think he has actually talked about that at all, so no. So we'll have to ask questions about that and why these changes are being made. It could be in consultation with the Snowmobile Association. It could be in consultation with the trail managers. It seems that, you know, it's not a huge burden to have a licence plate so maybe that's going to be the prevailing authority. Maybe back in times past, people just had trail permits and didn't have to get licence plates. So those will be interesting questions for the minister and his officials.

Now in part 2 of the Act is the registration process. So how do we go about registering our snowmobile? There's some changes being made there. In terms of the requirements, there were a lot of references to something called *The Vehicle Administration Act* and that's been changed now to refer to *The Traffic Safety Act*. So again we're switching from one Act referred to, to another, and it's not clear why that's necessary. And again I'm hoping the minister and his officials will give us some more background on that.

But basically the way the new section reads is you cannot operate or authorize anyone else to operate a snowmobile unless you have a certificate of registration or a registration permit for the snowmobile. And notwithstanding now *The Traffic Safety Act*, if you do have a certificate of registration, it has to be displayed toward the rear of the snowmobile. Or if you have a permit, that has to be carried on the person. So if you don't have the certificate of registration plate, then you can have a permit but it has to be carried by the operator — the owner, if the owner is operating, or the person in immediate charge of the snowmobile.

I mean, again I would like to sort of get some statistics on how often people are stopped. I assume this would be more conservation officers and they would be out there making sure that people are operating snowmobiles appropriately. A lot of ground to cover, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the wide, open outdoors, but I know that as best they can they would be making those efforts to observe and ensure that people are operating snowmobiles appropriately.

These are the kind of changes I find interesting. In the current clause 3(3) that says an operator who is "not a resident of Saskatchewan," now that's being amended to say an operator who is "a non-resident." So it kind of says the same thing to me, but I guess, because they changed the definition of "non-resident," they felt like they had to change that one as well. Perhaps a bit zealous but that's better than not being, Mr. Speaker.

So we go now into expiration of registration certificate, expiration of your certificate. And it's talking about who can revoke it, and there are a number of references to the Highway Traffic Board, who used to have this responsibility. Now it's being taken out and it's going over to this administrator. And I'm just going to make sure we know who the administrator is. Oh yes, now it's the administrator as defined in *The Traffic Safety Act*. So despite the fact that the board is no longer responsible for it, there is still a lot of role for the administrator under *The Highway Traffic Act*.

So going on to other changes. There's this new clause that I talked about earlier, putting in . . . It's called the designated trail clause, 20.01(1). And this says, "Notwithstanding any other Act or law, no person shall operate a motor vehicle other than a snowmobile on a designated trail between December 1 and April 15." And subsection (2) says, "Subsection (1) does not apply to a class or type of vehicle prescribed in the regulations." So here we go again, Mr. Speaker. We don't know exactly who will be allowed to be prescribed to operate on these trails, and it's something we'll have to wait and see once the regulations are passed. But again, I think the intent here is to ensure that the integrity of the trails are kept complete and that at least for those months, from December 1st to April 15th, there won't be anyone else allowed on it.

Now I'm going to get into enforcement of that a little bit later, but at least there's a change there that says you shall not. And I kind of wonder what happens when there's a big snowfall in November or October and why December 1st was chosen and why not just keep vehicles off them altogether. But maybe those are summer trails for quad runners, or I think other people are allowed to access them in summertime. So that's the big change, as indicated by the minister when he made his comments.

Section 20.1(1) now is just talking about section 3, which is the . . . I'm going to go back to that. Section 3 is the registration clause, so rather than . . . They just took out some words that were extraneous and just now refers to section 3. That's the change there.

There's an interesting clause here. 20.3 is what the trail manager can do. And I'm not sure how trail managers are actually appointed, but I think they are appointed by the association. I'm just going to double-check that one too. Trail manager means the person designated in 20.11. And 20.11 says . . . Oh yes, they're designated, oh, by Lieutenant Governor in Council. So it's up to the Lieutenant Governor in Council who she thinks should be the trail manager. And those are Crown appointments, Mr. Speaker, so I assume these names are put forward by the Snowmobile Association. It's a big job and hopefully the Trails Association and the particular trail that they're responsible for are making sure that they're well supported in that.

At any rate, section 20.3 allows the trail manager to ". . . designate areas of lands as designated trails in Saskatchewan on Crown land and privately owned land for the use of snowmobiles." Of course this is subject to restrictions in the regulations.

But we're making a change here now on section 20.4(1) where they're actually taking out any reference to trail permit fees and printing and selling trail permits. Now I don't really understand what that means and would be interested to know if this was a way to raise funds for the trail maintenance and why the trail manager is no longer going to be able to do that. Basically the only thing left in that clause is to carry out responsibilities set out in the Act or in the regs. So I don't know if they're going to move that into the regulations section and still allow them to print and sell trail permits. It's like printing and selling paper I guess — licence to print. . . I don't know, licence to sell. Anyways, Mr. Speaker, those changes, that's being taken away

from the trail manager.

[16:30]

Section 21.1 is also being amended and this is about the operation of a snowmobile at night or under dangerous conditions. So it says you can't operate a snowmobile between sunset and sunrise or at any time when atmospheric conditions render the operation of a snowmobile dangerous unless the snowmobile is equipped with lamps required pursuant to . . . Well it used to be pursuant to *The Vehicle Administration Act*. Now that's being changed to *The Traffic Safety Act* and the regulations made pursuant to the Act.

So this is again a change and I'm not sure . . . There was no comments provided by the minister when this was brought into the House here in second reading, but I'm sure this is something that again, that the officials will have an opportunity to explain in committee so that it's on the record and people understand why that's there.

Next change is to section 21.2 and again this is taking out the reference to the board and substituting the administrator, and it's taking out *The Highway Traffic Act* and putting in *The Traffic Safety Act*, so that's an interesting change, again for the reasons I talked about earlier. Used to have a reference to the Wascana Centre Authority. They don't exist anymore so now it has to be changed to the Provincial Capital Commission. And we've talked about that here in the House earlier in the year and it's unfortunate that these changes now are requiring changes to other Acts as well.

Next one is section 22(1) and there again taking out the reference to *The Vehicle Equipment Regulations* and *The Vehicle Administration Act* and substituting *The Traffic Safety Act*. Curious to know why those changes are needed and would need to ask in committee again about those changes and why they're required.

Now there's something very interesting in the Act here, Mr. Speaker, and I've never seen this before where section 23 is . . . The marginal note says "Certain prohibitions respecting operation of snowmobiles." Then section 24 says "Same" and section 25 says "Same." And I've never seen marginal notes like that where they're just repeated and then repeated. You would think if it's the same, it would be the same section. So I'm not sure why there are three sections here where these last two are called "Same" and the first one is about certain prohibitions, because they're all about certain prohibitions respecting the operation of snowmobiles.

So I don't know why that is existing in that format and it's unusual. I've looked at a few bills and legislation in my time and I've never seen that before. So curious. I'm not sure why it hasn't been changed as well . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, it is a drafting issue I think, Mr. Speaker.

Section 29 has been changed. Now this is a section regarding the duty to report certain accidents. So if there is an accident where somebody is hurt or there's injury or death to a person or damage to property, apparently exceeding the amount prescribed pursuant to *The Traffic Safety Act*, you have to . . . Now it used to say "forthwith" but now it's "as soon as is

[reasonably] practicable." So big change. I don't know. I don't know if that means anything substantively, but forthwith to me is as soon as possible and the wording that's now being set is as soon as is reasonably practicable. So I believe that just is some sort of drafting convention but again we can find out.

Now what's really interesting to me is how can you do it as soon as possible if you have to go to *The Traffic Safety Act* and look at the regulations to find out what the amount is prescribed. There's a whole lot of hoops you've got to jump through, Mr. Speaker, before you can actually get to the point of deciding whether or not that amount is exceeded "apparently" in the accident. So I think it's . . . The onus on the person to report is maybe a little more severe than most snowmobile operators realize, but certainly they're going to have to be able to look at *The Traffic Safety Act* and at the regulations to find out what the amount is before they can decide, as soon as possible, what damages are reportable.

Again they're switching out the word "board" to "admin" in that section. And there's also, section 30, a slight change there similar to 29. Section 30 is where peace officers are supposed to submit reports of accidents to the board. Now again the marginal note isn't being amended. I know they don't form part of the bill, but I assume that once the changes are made, that will be fixed up as well. So a peace officer . . . Oh, I'm sorry. These are still going to the board. I think I missed that. Oh no, they're substituting. It's not "board" anymore; it's "administrator" in section 30. So it's actually being repealed and replaced, and so the reference to the board is removed.

But again we see this "forthwith" being deleted and substituted with "as soon as is practicable." So again there must be some drafting conversations going on about that and concerns being raised.

Now one of the things I was curious about and would like to hear from the minister on this is, you know, we've now got this calendar time frame between December 1st and April 15th in terms of when non-snowmobiles cannot be on the trails. So you'd think, well you'd want to make sure that there was a good fining opportunity, that there's a stiff penalty for this to make sure that it's a deterrence to people. Like because, you know, is this going to stop people just by creating a calendar prohibition?

And I thought, I wonder what the penalties are for violations of the Act. And I'd be curious to sort of do a poll amongst MLAs to see what they think the limit on fines would be for violations of *The Snowmobile Act*. And I'd really say, Mr. Speaker, maybe you could tell me what your guess is on that. But I'll get ahead of you and I'll tell you what the Act says right now. So:

A person who is guilty of an offence against this Act or the regulations . . . is liable on summary conviction:

(a) for the first offence to a fine of not more than \$100 . . .

It's not a big fine. I was really surprised to see that. And you think, well maybe for the second or subsequent offence, it might be significantly higher. It's \$200. So I really think in order to have a deterrent for people who violate the trails and violate the new section of the Act, the minister might want to

take a look at the actual fines themselves. Because I don't think \$100 . . . And you know, when we know speeding tickets are higher than that and texting while driving, or is it . . . I forget the actual technical term of that offence, when you're texting. Distracted driving — that's what I'm looking for, yes. So that's a lot more, and then I can't think of too many fines nowadays that are \$100. I guess maybe a parking ticket. So you've got to kind of judge whether or not this is a deterrent or not, but I would think it might be something that the minister and the ministry might want to look at and you know . . . Yes, interesting.

The next one that is being changed is section 40, and in there it's just a switch from the board to the administrator. And there's Her Majesty again. Every reference we see to Her Majesty is now being changed. "Her Majesty in right of Saskatchewan" is now "the Crown." And I don't know if the Crown is defined at the beginning of the Act, Mr. Speaker, but I guess we're getting ready for the transition in the . . . No, Crown is not defined at all. So the Crown, it may be now defined in *The Interpretation Act*. I'm not sure. The only other change . . . *The Interpretation Act* of course is the definition of privatization which seems to be a shifting definition so we're not really sure. But anyways in this case it's no longer "Her Majesty in right of Saskatchewan; it is "the Crown."

So these are reports that are not available to the public. So any reports made to the administrator pursuant to the Act are the property of the Crown and are not made public unless the administrator determines that they need to be made public, so that's the clause within there. I have no idea why that's important, but I'm sure there are good reasons for it.

Then we get into the regulation section. Again a long list of regulations and with a weird numbering which again I think when we're in there changing things . . . I don't know — (q.1), (l.1), (l.2), (l.3), (l.4), (l.5) — it might be helpful to renumber just to make it easier. Because now there's a new . . . there's already an (l) and there's already a (l.1), so now we have a new one, (l.01), so you have to squish that in between (l) and (l.1).

So what is that regulation authority? Basically it's referring to section 20.01, the new clause, and it allows them to make regulations about the classes and types of vehicles that are permitted to operate on designated trails between December 1st and April 15th. So this is the regulations. We have no idea what kind of vehicles will be allowed to get on those trails on the prohibited time. But we'll wait and see, Mr. Speaker, and at some point those regulations will be approved by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and we will then know. I'm sure we'll all be waiting with bated breath to find out who is going to be allowed on the trails.

Clause (m) is repealed now in the regulations section, and that was the trail permit fees. So it looks like trail permit fees, there's not even going to be regulations about those. I guess trail permits are being repealed, so there will be no fees associated with them. And now it's a licence plate instead of a trail permit. And that's changed in section (p) and in section (q) of the regulations section.

So, Mr. Speaker, there is a number of changes. I think we'll have questions for sure in committee about the impact of some

of these changes. And again I just want to make sure that, you know, we pass on kudos to the snowmobile trail association for the fine work that they do in ensuring that this wonderful sport is enjoyed by all and that people are safe and looked after as they enjoy the winter, the great outdoors in Saskatchewan.

So that will be the extent of my comments on this bill. And at this point I would like to move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 91, *An Act to amend The Snowmobile Act*.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 91. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 92

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 92 — *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into the debate this afternoon, this time today on Bill No. 92, *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Amendment Act, 2017*. It's a pretty straightforward bill, Mr. Speaker. The government is amending, is asking to amend SaskTel and SaskTel Holdco's maximum aggregate borrowing limit from 1.3 billion to 1.8 billion. So they're asking to increase SaskTel debt by 500 million, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting to note some of the minister's second reading comments. That's where it's always good to look to get a sense of what the government is proposing or how they are telling the story of what they're proposing around this bill. The minister in his second reading speech points out in his comments that this will allow flexibility for SaskTel to continue to grow and have the capacity to respond to future financial demands. He points out that SaskTel is in the first year of a five-year capital investment plan.

So it sounds reasonable on the surface, Mr. Speaker, but this government has shown that they have some issue with debt. And I'll get into that in a few moments, Mr. Speaker. But the minister in his second reading speech points out that SaskTel's five-year plan, that it predicts debt through 2017-18 to 2021; it will see the corporation's debt peak at 1.25 billion in fiscal year '19 and '20, leaving it little room to manoeuvre within the current debt limit of \$1.3 billion.

He points out that "There are potential business investments that could be required in the future that have not been included in the plan because the timing cost of these investments is unknown."

And he points out that:

Some of these investments include funding for a spectrum auction to increase wireless capabilities, funds for the development of a 5G wireless network, and other technological changes that SaskTel could be required to implement in order to serve [he goes on to say] our fine province.

[16:45]

And so I think when the critic gets into committee there'll be some interesting questions around the five-year plan and some of these investments and what that looks like, Mr. Speaker.

I think, around this government and debt, we just need to look to the government's own budget documents where . . . So they're proposing a \$500 million increase to SaskTel and SaskTel Holdco's aggregate debt. So the problem with that, Mr. Speaker, is this is a government who since 2012 has seen government debt double. From 2012 the overall government debt was 8.5 billion; this year, in 2017, it's 16.1 billion. And by 2021 it's projected to be at a record whopping \$22.8 billion of total government debt, Mr. Speaker. That's record debt that we've never seen in the history of Saskatchewan.

And the challenge with debt is that it can limit your ability to provide services for your citizens, Mr. Speaker. There was a time not long ago, in the '90s actually in fact, that from what I understand, we were paying more in debt servicing charges than we were for the entire education budget, Mr. Speaker. So it's that fine balance between maintaining and investing in services and taking on reasonable debt and not letting things get out of control.

And to be perfectly honest, Mr. Speaker, around the Crowns and around debt, I think many people in Saskatchewan have some questions of wanting to think that the government is on the right track but seeing that there's some issues around our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker.

For example, with respect to STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], less than two years ago we had a minister responsible for STC who assured the people of Saskatchewan that their bus company was safe, that it was in good hands and it wasn't going anywhere. And less than a year ago in a budget we saw the government get rid of our bus company that connects quite frankly people all across Saskatchewan, providing important services and transportation for seniors, for students, for people who don't own vehicles. Not everybody has access to a vehicle, Mr. Speaker. And it's true, although not every community had access or had STC, the reality is many communities had access to STC nearby. So it's the difference between a half an hour, catching a half-an-hour ride to a community that has STC so you can get into one of the larger centres or having to catch a ride, a four-hour ride into one of the larger centres yourself.

So STC itself, this government has some explaining to do to the people of Saskatchewan. And rightfully so, people have some issues around trust with respect to this government when it comes to Crown corporations in this proposal. Although it might be completely reasonable to increase debt by 500 million, and in committee the critic will ask many good questions and they could have a very reasonable response, but because of this

government's past actions, people are starting to question this government's actions.

I know on the doorstep in Fairview and quite honestly, in the doorstep prior to the Fairview by-election, in Riversdale over the course of the summer, many people were upset about STC. I actually, in one of my communities where I didn't think STC would be an issue that would come up very often — Montgomery actually, which is one of my more affluent communities — it actually was raised quite frequently.

We all have a connection to rural Saskatchewan or people who live in rural Saskatchewan and want to make sure that people have access to services. This is a government that made a decision without thinking of the consequences over the long haul. There were people this spring stuck when STC was, as they say, wound down before any other services could get up and running, which created a huge issue for people with medical appointments, the general transportation.

And even now in some areas that have services, those services are sketchy, Mr. Speaker. In talking to folks who are trying to get back between Saskatoon and Regina or in other locations, but even between Saskatoon and Regina, people purchasing tickets online from the new provider of transportation services between these two cities, getting to the parking lot where they're going to be picked up and finding out that the driver is arguing whether or not this person purchased a ticket. And that has happened on a few occasions, Mr. Speaker. Or bus runs where you purchase a ticket and think that you have a ride into another community only to discover that the bus isn't running because there's not enough people on it. So how do you plan medical appointments? How do you plan at all, Mr. Speaker, when we don't have the consistency?

The beauty of STC is people knew when it was leaving, when it was arriving, and what was happening in between. You could actually plan your life. And again we've argued on this side of the House, and people in Saskatchewan are arguing, that STC was in fact a public service.

And you know, our Crowns are great, and Crowns serve multiple purposes. We can talk about SaskTel, this particular bill, *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Amendment Act*, which is directly dealing with raising SaskTel's borrowing limit. Our Crowns create good, mortgage-paying jobs across the province. They ensure that people have services in communities where private corporations won't necessarily provide those services. STC is a good case in point, Mr. Speaker. They ensure that money actually . . . our Crowns who do make money actually put that money back into the General Revenue Fund to pay for things like health care, education, and roads.

With respect to SaskTel, one of the things our Crowns do is they create a competitive environment and help ensure that where there are private providers, that they're keeping costs affordable, or rates affordable, whether it's wireless or cell service, Mr. Speaker. So those are very important things for our Crown corporations that they do. And so yes, this might be a reasonable ask, increasing debt by 500 million or half a billion dollars, but there will be many questions to be asked. But the reality is, so STC is one case in point of people in Saskatchewan having concerns about their Crown corporations

in this government's hands.

Another actually is *The Interpretation Act*, Mr. Speaker, which is before us right now, which is the bill that the government has said defined, simply defined privatization. But what we saw that bill actually do is enable this government to sell a Crown up to 49 per cent without going to the people of Saskatchewan for a referendum and without talking to the people of Saskatchewan. And I think the government heard loud and clear over the course of the summer — I know I did again in Riversdale and in Fairview on the doorstep — people didn't want this government messing with its Crown corporations and wanted the opportunity to have a say in that and expected that the government, if the government was going to do something like that, they should come to the people of Saskatchewan.

And you know, a couple of months ago the Premier said genuinely that he heard the people of Saskatchewan and he was going to repeal Bill 40, Mr. Speaker, that would see the ability of this government to be able to privatize our Crowns up to 49 per cent. But you know what? Just two days later this government said that, or the Premier has said that no, we're not repealing it all. We're just repealing a small portion of it, the piece that allows the privatization up to 49 per cent, but didn't remove the piece around winding down.

We've heard mixed results or mixed messages from this government. We've heard the minister, various ministers say and the Premier weigh in saying that Bill 40 was necessary for the privatization or the wind-down, pardon me, of STC. Back and forth between the ministers and premiers, there's been the debate on that side of the House whether or not it was necessary. But we would still like to see, like the people of Saskatchewan, the entire repeal of Bill 40 because quite honestly people don't feel good about this government when it comes to their Crown corporations and, I think, rightfully so. They've demonstrated that loud and clear, Mr. Speaker.

So raising the debt by half a billion dollars, I think again, it's just important to remind people at home that this government, its track record around debt, around general government debt is one of increasing debt and not necessarily seeing a vast improvement in services. As the Health critic, I know we can look to front-line services actually. Whether you're in long-term care or in any one of our hospitals, people on the front lines and patients and residents would all tell you that front-line care is being starved.

So we've got a government who has chosen to do things in the most expensive way and has piled on debt, piled on debt, quite frankly at the richest time in this province's history, Mr. Speaker. At a time of record revenue, they have racked up debt and are projecting debt by 2021 — so just four years from now or less than four years from now — to be at \$22.8 billion.

So I think about my own kids. I have a 10-year-old and a 19-year-old, and I think about what the future here in Saskatchewan looks like for them when debt continues to increase. I think about a time, again in the 1990s when the then NDP administration, because of the previous Conservative government, was in fact paying more to service debt that had accumulated at that time than they were on the entire education budget, Mr. Speaker.

So I think about my kids and I think about others, their cohorts and your kids, Mr. Speaker. I know you've got young kids, and there are members in this Assembly with young kids. And I think about what this piling on of debt means to future services, to education, to advanced education, to health care. This has all been incredibly challenging, will prove possibly down the road to be incredibly challenging. This government who's locked us into P3 contracts for schools, for hospitals, for long-term care facilities, basically rent-to-own schemes that will ensure that we're paying for these things for the next 30 years at incredibly high rates.

So I think that the people have the right to question the government's motivation when it comes to increasing debt, whether it's general government debt or forcing debt onto our Crown corporations. This isn't the first bill that's been before this legislature in my time where this government has come before us asking to raise debt limits. I think it was SaskPower or SaskEnergy last spring. I can't recall which one. But in my time too, around cities, the cities have had to increase their debt borrowing limits.

So this in fact is an issue. And I know when the critic gets to committee they will have many questions to ask around Bill No. 92, *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Amendment Act, 2017* that sees the increase of the debt limit for SaskTel from \$1.3 billion to \$1.8 billion. Not an insignificant amount of money, Mr. Speaker. That is \$500 million. We could fund an awful lot of things with \$500 million, Mr. Speaker.

Some questions undoubtedly the critic will be asking is around SaskTel's five-year plan, what that will look like, and try to dig a little bit deeper into the comment the minister made about the details of the investments that are still unknown, Mr. Speaker. I know that there will be many questions around that.

But as always, it's a pleasure to wade into debate here, and I look forward to hearing more from my colleagues who will also be speaking to this bill. And I look forward to the questions asked and the answers that hopefully the minister will provide in committee when this bill gets there.

But with that, with respect to Bill No. 92, *The Saskatchewan Telecommunications Amendment Act*, I think I just have to summarize that it's very important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that increasing debt by \$500 million might be a very reasonable ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It might be a reasonable ask. And we shall see when we get to committee.

But this is a government who is doubling debt, has doubled debt actually, doubled debt from 2012 to 2017, Mr. Speaker, from 8.5 billion in 2012 to \$16.1 billion in 2017. And as a mom of two kids and someone who represents many families and many children, I worry about what this might look like for the provision of services down the road, whether it's education or health care or advanced education — all those things, Mr. Speaker. This is 500 million and we will see what the minister has to say once we get into committee. But with respect to that, I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 92.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 92. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, so the committees may carry on with their good work tonight, I move this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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