



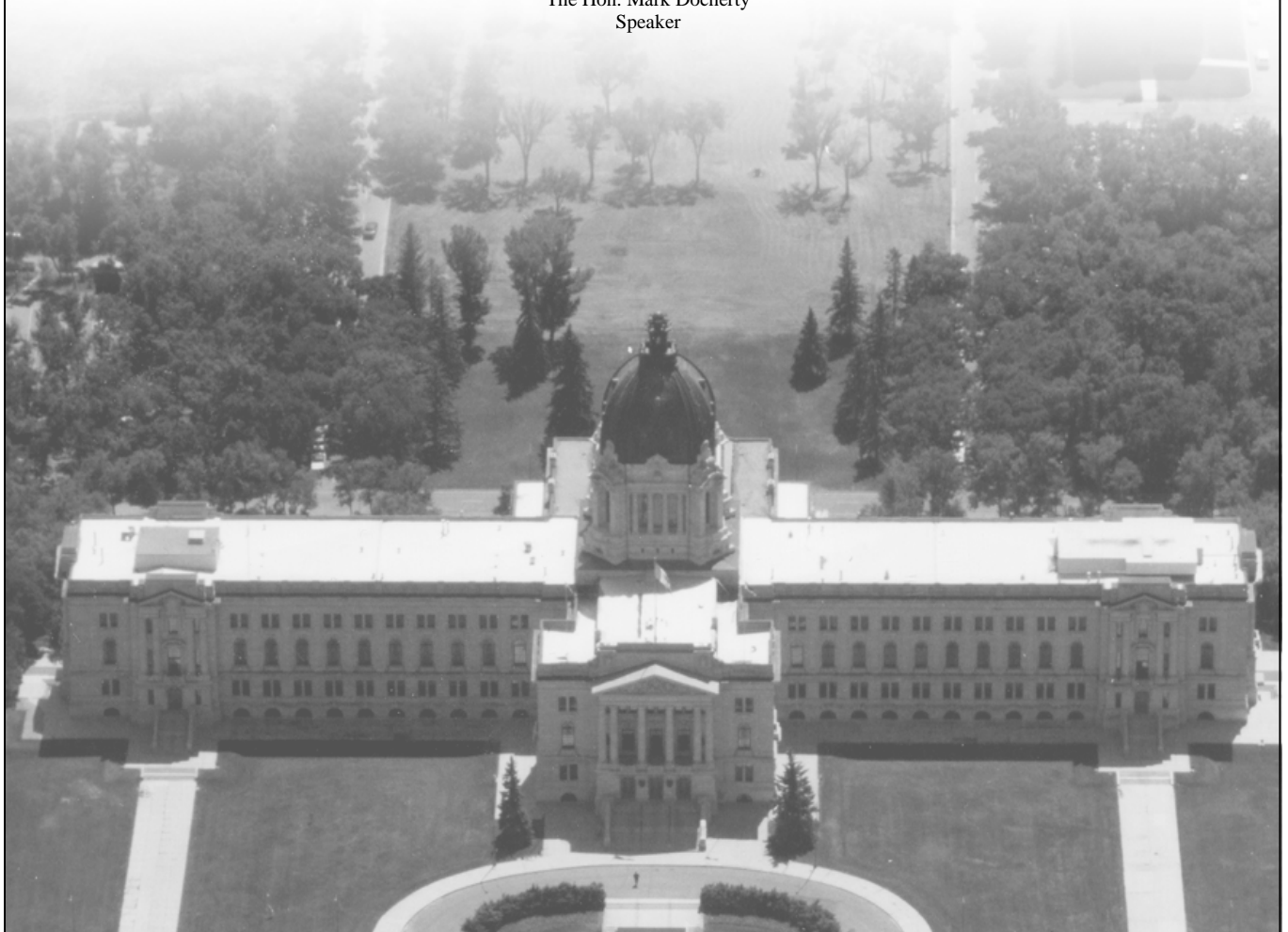
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)
Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker



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

Speaker — Hon. Mark Docherty
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

Beaudry-Mellor , Hon. Tina — Regina University (SP)	Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)
Beck , Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)	Makowsky , Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
Belanger , Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)	Marit , Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
Bonk , Steven — Moosomin (SP)	McCall , Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)
Bradshaw , Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)	McMorris , Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Brkich , Hon. Greg — Arm River (SP)	Meili , Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Buckingham , David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)	Merriman , Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Carr , Lori — Estevan (SP)	Michelson , Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Chartier , Danielle — Saskatoon Riversdale (NDP)	Moe , Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Cheveldayoff , Hon. Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)	Morgan , Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
Cox , Herb — The Battlefords (SP)	Mowat , Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
D'Autremont , Dan — Cannington (SP)	Nerlien , Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Dennis , Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)	Olauson , Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)
Docherty , Hon. Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)	Ottenbreit , Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Doherty , Kevin — Regina Northeast (SP)	Rancourt , Nicole — Prince Albert Northcote (NDP)
Doke , Larry — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)	Reiter , Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Duncan , Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)	Ross , Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
Eyre , Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)	Saraauer , Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Fiaz , Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)	Sproule , Cathy — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Forbes , David — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)	Steele , Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Francis , Ken — Kindersley (SP)	Steinley , Warren — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)
Goudy , Todd — Melfort (SP)	Stewart , Hon. Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Hargrave , Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)	Tell , Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Harpauer , Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)	Tochor , Corey — Saskatoon Eastview (SP)
Harrison , Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)	Vermette , Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Hart , Glen — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)	Weekes , Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Heppner , Nancy — Martensville-Warman (SP)	Wilson , Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)
Hindley , Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Wotherspoon , Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Kaeding , Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)	Wyant , Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Kirsch , Delbert — Batoche (SP)	Young , Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)
Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 49; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12

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.]

Clerk: — Please be seated. It's my duty to inform you of the resignation of your Speaker, Mr. Corey Tochor, effective January 5, 2018. The letter of resignation was previously tabled as sessional paper no. 107. In accordance with the rules and pursuant to the provisions of *The Legislative Assembly Act*, the election of Speaker will now take place immediately.

ELECTION OF SPEAKER

Clerk: — Members, it's my duty to commence proceedings for the election of Speaker. Pursuant to the procedure specified by rule 43, seven members have declared their candidacy for election to the office of Speaker. When I state the members' names, I will ask he or she to rise to be acknowledged. The members are, in alphabetical order: Ms. Danielle Chartier, the member for the constituency of Saskatoon Riversdale; Mr. Mark Docherty, the member for the constituency of Coronation Park; Mr. Glen Hart, the member for the constituency of Last Mountain-Touchwood; Mr. Delbert Kirsch, the member for the constituency of Batoche; Mr. Warren Michelson, the member for the constituency of Moose Jaw North; Mr. Eric Olauson, the member for the constituency of Saskatoon University; Ms. Colleen Young, the member for the constituency of Lloydminster.

In preparation for the vote, the Sergeant-at-Arms will now bring in the ballot box. The ballot box will then be inspected. The sealed ballots will be opened, the list of candidates distributed to all members and posted in the polling booths. We will now proceed to the setting up of the Chamber for the casting of the votes.

Members of the Assembly, I will now ask members who wish to cast their ballot to proceed to the registration table on both sides of the Chamber. There you'll receive a ballot paper, and then you will proceed to the polling booths according to the plan that has been placed on your desk. May I remind all hon. members to please print the first and last name of their candidates on the ballot paper. The balloting will now proceed.

[The members proceeded to cast ballots.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, if I could bring the Assembly back to order. Members, if there are any members who have not voted and wish to do so now, would you please identify yourself and vote now. Seeing none, all members having voted, the House will now recess to the call of the bells while the Clerks-at-the-Table count the ballots. The bells will ring for three minutes to recall members to the Chamber when the result of the ballot is ready to be announced.

[The Assembly recessed from 13:46 until 14:03.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, it's my duty to inform you that a second ballot will be necessary. The list of candidates for the second ballot has been prepared, and in accordance with the rules, by excluding the name of the candidate who received the fewest votes on the previous ballot.

The list of candidates for the second ballot is as follows, in

alphabetical order: Danielle Chartier, Mark Docherty, Glen Hart, Delbert Kirsch, Eric Olauson, and Colleen Young. If any hon. member whose name I have just read to the Assembly wishes to withdraw as a candidate on the second ballot, will he or she rise and please state that intention now.

We will now prepare the Chamber for the second ballot. The list of candidates will be posted in the voting booths, and the sealed ballots opened. We'll just pause a moment while we reset the Chamber for the ballot.

We'll now proceed to have the registration tables brought back down to the centre and then we'll commence voting.

Members, we are now ready to proceed with the next ballot. You may come forward to receive your ballot papers.

[The members proceeded to cast ballots.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, if there are any members who have not voted, I'd ask you to do so now, please. Seeing none, all the members having voted, the House will again recess to the call of the bells and the Clerks-at-the-Table will count the ballots. And as before, the bells will ring three minutes to recall the members to the Chamber when the results of the second ballot will be announced.

[The Assembly recessed from 14:14 until 14:23.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, it is my duty to inform you that a third ballot will be necessary. The list of candidates for the third ballot has been prepared and again, in accordance with the rules, the name of the candidate who received the fewest votes on the previous ballot will be eliminated.

The list of candidates for the third ballot are as follows, in alphabetical order: Danielle Chartier, Mark Docherty, Glen Hart, Eric Olauson, and Colleen Young.

We'll now proceed to prepare for the third ballot. The list of candidates again, as in the past, will be posted in the voting booths. I remind all hon. members to please print the first and last name of the candidates on your ballot. We will now proceed to set the Chamber up.

Members, I will now ask you to proceed to collect your ballots and cast your vote.

[The members proceeded to cast ballots.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, if there are any members who have not voted, please do so now. Seeing none, all members present having voted, we will now recess to the call of the bells and the Clerks-at-the-Table will count the ballots.

[The Assembly recessed from 14:27 until 14:35.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, it's my duty to inform you that a fourth ballot will be necessary. The list of candidates for the fourth ballot has been prepared, and in accordance with the rules we've excluded the name of the candidate who received the fewest votes.

The list of candidates for the fourth ballot is as follows, in alphabetical order: Danielle Chartier, Mark Docherty, Glen Hart, and Eric Olauson.

We will now prepare the Chamber for voting. In the meantime if any member whose name I have just called wishes to withdraw their candidacy, please identify themselves now. Seeing none, we'll proceed to the fourth ballot.

I'll now call on our registration clerks to enter the Chamber and prepare for the next ballot.

Members, we're ready to proceed to the vote on the fourth ballot. Please proceed to the registration tables to collect your ballots.

[The members proceeded to cast ballots.]

Clerk: — I now call upon any member who has not voted to do so now. Seeing that all members have voted, we will now proceed to count the ballots.

[The Assembly recessed from 14:45 until 14:56.]

Clerk: — Members of the Assembly, it is my duty to inform you that a fifth ballot will be necessary. Members, there was a tie of votes for two members having the smallest number of votes, consequently the names of these two candidates will be excluded from the next ballot. The names of the candidates in alphabetical order for the final ballot are, in alphabetical order, Mark Docherty and Eric Olauson. We will now proceed to set up the Chamber for casting the next ballot.

I'll now ask the registration clerks to prepare the Chamber for the next ballot. Members, the Chamber is now ready to proceed to the next vote. I invite you to cast your ballots at this time.

[The members proceeded to cast ballots.]

Clerk: — I now call upon any member who has not cast a ballot to do so now. There being none, the Clerks-at-the-Table will proceed to count the ballots.

[The Assembly recessed from 15:17 until 15:28.]

Clerk: — Members of the Legislative Assembly, it is my duty to inform you that you have elected as your Speaker Mr. Mark Docherty, member for the constituency of Regina Coronation Park.

The Speaker: — This is actually the reason I ran, is to put this on. Okay. Members of the Legislative Assembly, I wish to express my grateful thanks and humble acknowledgement of the high honour the Assembly has conferred upon me. While I leave the floor of this Assembly to take the Speaker's Chair, I leave behind all political partisan biases in order that I may discharge with impartiality to all, and to the best of my ability, the various important duties pertaining to the high office of Speaker.

It will be my aim and duty to uphold the principles and traditions of the Assembly and secure for each member the right to express his or her opinions within the limits necessary to

preserve decorum; to recognize the rights and privileges of the hon. members, the political groups, and the Assembly itself; to facilitate the transaction of the public business in an orderly manner; and above all, to seek to be fair and impartial in the decisions you entrust in me.

With that, thank you so much to all members of the Assembly. It's a great honour bestowed upon me and I will do my best and thank you. I've got a tricorn. I'll have to take a chair. Thanks. I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — I ask for leave to make remarks regarding your election.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to members of the Assembly for granting leave. And first of all, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the members on this side of the Assembly, our most sincere congratulations on your election. And we appreciate your remarks now very, very much.

[15:45]

And I know, working with you — we were elected in the same year, in 2011; we served as MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly]; we served in cabinet together, served on various committees — that you will now, in this service, bring great honour. And I look forward to serving with you in this capacity over the next number of years.

Mr. Speaker, you leave no doubt that you understand how important the role of Speaker in our parliamentary democracy truly is and that you intend to carry out your duties in a spirit of impartiality and fairness. And I think this Assembly is confident, all of us are confident, that you will be true to that word.

Mr. Speaker, today you join a small but illustrious group in our province. You are the 26th Speaker of our Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan. And if you look back at that history, that very rich history, I think you'll find that our province has been well served by Speakers in years gone by. Certainly we were well served by your immediate predecessor, the member from Saskatoon Eastview, who was firm but had a collegial presence in the Chair for nearly two years. We thank the member and we wish him the very best.

And while I'm at it, I would also like to mention the member and thank the member from Cannington, who was the Speaker when I was first elected and provided valuable advice to myself as a raw rookie of the day, as he had years and years and years of experience at that point in time.

Mr. Speaker, I want to express my deep gratitude to the other members in this Assembly that put their name forward. Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I think you will agree that you had some tough competition today, and it speaks well of this Assembly that so many commendable individuals came forward on both sides of this House to take part in this election. So thank you again to the member from Saskatoon Riversdale. We had the

member from Saskatoon University. We had the member from Lloydminster. Where else are we here? The member from Last Mountain-Touchwood, Batoche . . .

Some Hon. Members: — Moose Jaw North.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you so much for putting your name forward.

Mr. Speaker, this is a Chamber where we consider legislation that has real impact on the lives of the people who sent each of us here, the citizens of this great province of Saskatchewan. This is a Chamber where we pass laws on behalf of those very citizens that we all represent. I think Bismarck famously observed that, and I quote, “Laws are like sausages, but it’s better to not see them being made.” It’s a true statement. And he may have been referring to the debate that accompanies law-making, law-making in this House as well.

The discussion in this Assembly, and other assemblies just like it, can sometimes get loud and the odd time it can even get a little scrappy. And from the outside, this may not seem all that edifying or it may not even seem that dignified from time to time, and maybe even from times it seems that way from the inside as well.

But it was early in the 19th century that the British prime minister, Lord Grenville, declared, and I quote again, “I can hardly keep wondering at my own folly in thinking it worthwhile to leave my books and garden even for one day’s attendance in the House of Commons.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, I don’t think any of us in this Assembly want decorum to unravel to the point where we may prefer to stay away. We have a job to do, each of us on behalf of the people that we represent across the province of Saskatchewan. And you have an honourable job, Mr. Speaker. It’s to uphold the rules of this Assembly on behalf of each of those people in our province, to oversee the debate in an even-handed, in a fair, but all the while in a judicious manner. This is your obligation, but it’s really a shared responsibility by all of us that preside in this provincial legislature.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we resume our business in the Assembly today, I would urge all members on both sides to be mindful of our obligations to one another and, more importantly, to live up to our obligations to the people of Saskatchewan who expect us to attend to their business with enthusiasm and with diligence. But we would prefer to do so in a respectful manner that provides some confidence that our business is actually getting done at the legislature.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of the members in advance for their co-operation. I wish to express our gratitude to the folks supporting you, Mr. Speaker, the Clerk of the Assembly, and your team. And thank you to our Sergeant-at-Arms and his staff for the terrific work that they perform here each and every day.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, congratulations on your election, and we very much look forward to working with you.

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

Mr. Meili: — I ask for leave to make remarks regarding your election.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s a sunny day outside for those of us who haven’t spent hours deciding who the next Speaker will be, and it’s a new season. We have a new Speaker in that Chair. We have a new Leader of the Opposition, three new members about to join us, a new Lieutenant Governor soon to be named, and a new Premier. And this new season I think is a great opportunity for us.

I want to thank all of the members who put their names forward and were part of this important process. That role, that Chair means so much to the decorum, to the due process for us to be able to represent, in the good democratic way that we should, the people of this province.

I do want to make a special thanks to the member for Saskatoon Riversdale from our caucus for the passion that you put into your work at all times, but especially today, as you cared so much about this role and you care so much about the work of this House. Thank you for that.

And I just want to also extend my thanks to the member from Saskatoon Eastview for your work. You have been a great welcomer to new members, and I’ve always appreciated that. We also had a little bit of a discussion over here and when you’re done, we’re ready to welcome a new member for Saskatoon Eastview on this side of the House.

And you know, at the opening of this session, it is a new season. It’s a season of political change. And I know the people of Saskatchewan will be watching closely as we do our work, and they’ll be watching to see how we conduct ourselves in these new conversations and these new roles. And of course that conduct is up to us, the members. The Speaker can’t decide how we behave.

And the call is on us to make sure that we do what we need to do. And this is my commitment and the commitment of our caucus is that we will be here in vigorous debate. We’ll be here working hard. We’ll also be doing everything we can to make sure that we stay focused on the ideas, on the issues, and not on the personalities, try to make your work just hard enough, but not so hard that it’s not enjoyable. And we’re looking forward to working with you. Congratulations. Let the speaking and the listening begin.

The Speaker: — I’d like to thank both the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier for their words. And I was remiss in not thanking everybody that put their names forward to run, and again I’m honoured to be here.

So let’s continue on. First time reading this.

All stand; we’re going to rise for the prayer. You can all rise. It’s okay.

[Prayers]

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Vacancy in Swift Current Constituency

The Speaker: — It is my duty to inform the Assembly that a vacancy has occurred since the last sitting, the constituency of Swift Current, due to the resignation of Mr. Brad Wall.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Government House Leader may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 118 — *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader may proceed to move second reading of this bill.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 118 — *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act* be now read a second time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved second reading of Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 118, *The*

Swift Current Constituency By-election Act be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act* be committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills and the said bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills later today.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Government House Leader may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 119 — *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader may proceed to move second reading of this bill.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 119 — *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* be now read a second

time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved second reading of Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* be committed to Committee of the Whole on Bills and that the said bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills later today.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to introduce and consider all stages of Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Government House Leader may proceed.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 120 — *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader may proceed to move second reading of this bill.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 120 — *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* be now read a second time.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved second reading of Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed?

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* be committed to the Committee of the Whole on Bills and that the said bill be considered in Committee of the Whole later this day.

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

Principal Clerk: — Committee of the Whole on Bills.

The Speaker: — I do now leave the Chair for the Assembly to go into Committee of the Whole on Bills.

[16:00]

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ON BILLS

Bill No. 118 — *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*

The Chair: — Members, we'll call the Committee of Whole on Bills to order. The business before the committee is three bills. The first item is Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*. Is the committee ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Chair: — Clause 1, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Chair: — The Government House Leader has moved that the bill be reported without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

Bill No. 119 — *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*

The Chair: — The next item of business is Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Chair: — It has been moved that the committee report the bill without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

Bill No. 120 — *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*

The Chair: — The last item of business is Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Clauses 1 to 6 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly, enacts as follows: Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*. I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

The Chair: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the committee report the bill without amendment. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Chair: — The Government House Leader has moved that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Chair of committees.

Mr. Hart: — Actually, Mr. Speaker, the Chair of committees. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by committee to report Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act* without amendment.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 118 — *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 118, *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act* 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.

Principal Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of committees.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* without amendment.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader may proceed to move third reading.

Bill No. 119 — *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 119, *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act* 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.

Principal Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of committees.

Mr. Hart: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* without amendment.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader may proceed to move third reading.

Bill No. 120 — *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 120, *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act* 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.

Principal Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the committee sit again?

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

The Speaker: — I'm advised that Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan is here for Royal Assent. Please all rise.

ROYAL ASSENT

[At 16:10 Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber, took her seat upon the throne, and gave Royal Assent to the following bills.]

Her Honour: — Pray be seated.

The Speaker: — This Legislative Assembly at its present session has passed several bills which in the name of the Assembly I present to Your Honour and to which bills I respectfully request Your Honour's assent.

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

Bill No. 118 - *The Swift Current Constituency By-election Act*
 Bill No. 119 - *The Melfort Constituency By-election Act*
 Bill No. 120 - *The Kindersley Constituency By-election Act*

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

[Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 16:13.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to move a motion to recess for the swearing-in ceremony of the new members.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave has been granted. The Government House Leader may proceed.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this Assembly recess for the administration of oaths of allegiance for the new members of the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved:

That this Assembly recess for the administration of oaths of allegiance for the new members of the Legislative Assembly.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly stands recessed to the call of the Chair.

[The Assembly recessed from 16:14 until 16:33.]

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

The Speaker: — Okay. This Assembly is now reconvened. I hereby inform the Assembly that pursuant to an Act of this Legislative Assembly, a by-election in the constituency of Swift Current, which was assented to today, March the 12th, 2018, Mr. Everett Hindley is authorized to take his seat as a member for the constituency of Swift Current.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Mr. Everett Hindley, member for the constituency of Swift Current, who has taken the oath, signed the roll, and now claims the right to take his seat.

The Speaker: — Mr. Hindley, I want to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly. I hope that your time here will be one that serves to be a record of honour to yourself and your constituents. Let the hon. member take his seat.

I hereby inform the Assembly that, pursuant to an Act of this Legislative Assembly in a by-election in the constituency of Melfort which was assented to today, March the 12th, 2018, Mr. Todd Goudy is authorized to take his seat as a member of the constituency of Melfort.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Mr. Todd Goudy, member for the constituency of Melfort, who has taken the oath, signed the roll, and now claims the right to take his seat.

The Speaker: — Mr. Goudy, I want to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly. I hope that your time here will be one that serves to be a record of honour to yourself and your constituents. Let the hon. member take his seat.

I hereby inform the Assembly that pursuant to an Act of this Legislative Assembly, a by-election in the constituency of Kindersley, which was assented to today, March the 12th, 2018, Mr. Ken Francis is authorized to take his seat as a member of the constituency of Kindersley.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I have the honour to present to you Mr. Ken Francis, member for the constituency of Kindersley, who has taken the oath, signed the roll, and now claims the right to take his seat.

The Speaker: — Mr. Francis, I want to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly. I hope that your time here will be one that serves to be a record of honour to yourself and your constituents. Let the hon. member take his seat.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have said many times in this Assembly that members that represent their constituents and people across this province do not serve here alone. We serve at the pleasure and with the support of our families. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm certain I speak for every member of this Assembly when we would acknowledge that we would not be serving here today without just that tremendous support that we all receive from our families, in particular from our spouses, the most significant people in our lives, really the unsung heroes in our lives.

Mr. Speaker, for 25 years now I have been blessed to be married to my wife, Krista, who is most notably my best friend. She's my partner and a wonderful mother to our two children. I think Winston Churchill put it best, and I quote that as watching *The Darkest Hour* here the last couple of days. But I quote Winston Churchill that "My most brilliant achievement was to persuade my wife to marry me." And it's true for Winston and it was true for the present Premier of this province, Mr. Speaker.

My wife, Krista, is a successful pharmacist. She runs her own business in the community where we were both raised of Shellbrook, and today she's taking a little bit of time away from that work as Krista and Leone Ottenbreit, the wife, the much better half and the wife of the Rural and Remote Health minister, teamed up to organize a breakfast for some of the spouses of the MLAs on the government side.

Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure to introduce the folks who attended this event here this morning. Some have left but many are here yet. As I said previously, my wife, Krista; Leone Ottenbreit; Candace Bonk is here, the wife for the member from Moosomin. If you could give a wave as I call your name. We have Valerie Kirsch, the much better half of the member from Batoche. We have Debbie Michelson, the wife of the member from Moose Jaw North. We have Sandy Morgan, the long-suffering spouse of the Minister of Justice. We have Giselle Nerlien, the wife from the member from Kevington-Wadena. We have Linda Stewart — oh, Linda — the wife of the Minister of Agriculture. We're all on your side, Linda. And Lisa Danyluk, the partner of the member from Regina Coronation Park and our new Speaker. Anita Hindley, the wife of the newly elected member for Swift Current, and joined with Anita are the parents of the member for Swift Current, Tom and Pat Hindley, as well as a brother and sister, Taylor and Erica. We have Karen Francis, the wife of the newly elected member for Kindersley and their children Dacey, Dylan, and Dexter. And, Mr. Speaker, I think there was a sign out that said, Vote For Dexter's Dad in the most recent by-election. We may have an upcoming politician here as well. We have the member from Melfort's wife, Tannis, and their children, Mary, Sara, Rachel, David, and Hanna.

Mr. Speaker, our guests had a terrific time this morning. It was a good opportunity for us to get to know one another better and likely commiserate with one another as supporting our spouses in this legislature. And of course, Mr. Speaker, they represent a larger group of spouses who do so much in keeping the home fires burning while we're all busy here, and at the most notable as we enter our spring session.

But they do much more than that, Mr. Speaker, because most if not all of the spouses of the members on this side of the House, and likely the opposite side as well, they have their own careers in the communities where they reside. They have their own interests to pursue in addition to raising families in many cases, and extra duties at home while we're away.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think all of us owe these folks and our spouses a very special thanks. We are in their debt. We could not represent our constituents; we could not attend to the people's business in this House without their love and without their support. I would ask all members of the Assembly to welcome our guests to their Legislative Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly I do want to just acknowledge, I see Orville Bilous has come down from North Battleford. I see Kerry Peterson down from Parkside — good area, up in north of Saskatoon area there. Mr. Speaker, I see the previous MLA from Estevan, a close friend to many on this side of the House, Doreen Eagles. Al Brigden, Mr. Speaker.

I see a number of familiar faces, but I do want to point out one as well, Mr. Speaker, that is a friend to many, has been very busy the last number of months and years, and that's the executive director of the Saskatchewan Party. It's Patrick Bundrock, and I want to wish him all the best. And I ask all members of the House to welcome all of these Saskatchewan people to their Legislative Assembly here today.

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

Mr. Meili: — I ask leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Mr. Meili: — I'll try not to make it too extended. This has been a long day. But I do want to recognize a few people who are in the House with us today, Mr. Speaker. In the east gallery we have a number of people who are supporters and were participants in the recent NDP [New Democratic Party] leadership race on both campaigns. And it was a very vigorous and fun competition, and I want to thank everyone who was part of that for their involvement.

And I also want to recognize the folks from CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] 5430, health care workers who are here today. I know my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale will say a bit more, but I was really happy to join you the other day at your annual convention, and great to see them here in the Speaker's gallery.

I'd also like to introduce . . . Well I'll add my comments to Doreen Eagles. Great to see her, a woman who has been a leader in politics, and two other women who are leaders in politics here. Today we have the former leader of the Saskatchewan Green Party, Larissa Shasko in the east gallery. And in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, we have Tara Jjian, the Acting Leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal Party.

And lastly, I'd like to introduce, also in your gallery, Mr.

Speaker, two people who are very special to me, Wally and Lea Meili of Moose Jaw, my parents. I thank them for all of the support and encouragement along the way for being such a great support to me and Mahli and such great and proud grandparents of Gus and Abe. With that . . . [inaudible] . . . introduce them to you. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — Thank you. I'd also like to join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming all the family, all the spouses, the guests. Your support has been immeasurable to a number of people. I'd like to thank you on behalf of, again, this legislature, the efforts that you put in supporting everyone.

I'd also like to join with the Premier in welcoming my spouse, Lisa Danyluk. Thank you for giving me a nice little nudge in order to go forward on this endeavour. Thank you again, and if you'd join me in just saying thank you one more time to everybody for, again, supporting all the members. Thank you.

Holy smokes, where are you from? I recognize the member from Kindersley.

[16:45]

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all the members of the Legislative Assembly here today, I would like to take this opportunity to again introduce my family seated in the west gallery. I have my spouse, Karen, who is currently the CFO [chief financial officer] of our land and environmental company. And we have Dacey and Dylan who are attending studies at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], and our baby is in grade 10 in Kindersley currently. So thank you guys for coming. Appreciate your support.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming the folks today from CUPE Local 5430. CUPE Local 5430 is a provincial health care union which resulted from the merger of five CUPE health locals this last summer. The member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote and I had the opportunity this morning to sit down with these folks and hear a bit of their challenges and struggles in health care. And then at about noon they presented about 2,000 signed postcards. I don't know if they actually got to present to the Minister of Health, but they went to his office to deliver the 2,000 or so postcards which express their concern about wage rollbacks, freezes, and concessions, and the impacts that they believe this will have on the already under-stressed health care system.

I'd like to introduce . . . Today we've got Bruce Chubb who is from Battleford. We have Linda Vancuren from North Battleford, Edward Sawatsky from Big River, Sabrina Parenteau from Chitek Lake, Rebecca Reynard from Regina, Laurie Hughes from Manor, Susan Coad from Weyburn, Heather Daniels from Yorkton, Chelsea Schlechter from Yorkton, and we have Guy Marsden who is here supporting them in a staff role.

Mr. Speaker. I would ask all members . . . I'd like to thank them for their time and their willingness to share their stories and their concerns with us as an opposition and sharing that with the government as well. But with that I would like to ask all members in joining me in welcoming these folks to their legislature today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Legislative Assembly here today, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce to you my wife who I'm so proud to have here today, and my children: my oldest daughter, Mary, my second daughter, Sara, and then Rachel and David and Hanna and my son who's not here today, Joel. But at church if I ever mention their names from the pulpit, I owe them a . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Did I not say my wife's name? Tannis. But I would owe them a Blizzard; so I'll take you all to Dairy Queen later. But I would ask also . . . My mother and father are here today, and Harold Lutzer too. I see him. So I'd ask that all the members would welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Swift Current.

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly here today, I'd also like to take this opportunity to introduce a few guests in the west gallery. Some have been introduced already. First of all, my wife, Anita Hindley, has joined us here today. My folks, Tom and Pat Hindley from Melfort, my brother, Taylor Hindley from St. Brieux area, and my sister Erica Hindley also from the Melfort area. Some good country up there. Thanks so much to my folks and to my wife for coming down to this today, and to my brother and sister. It means a lot.

Also some other folks from Swift Current, some close friends of mine who have helped out over the past few weeks and have been, in some cases, friends for a long time. Tyler Bragg is here. Also Murali Krishnan, Amanda Farnsworth, Ryan Switzer and Wade Sutherland and Caterina Coletti, and finally, Nola Smith and Tye Hapke sitting up in the top row there.

I just want to thank everybody for coming to the Assembly today, and I'd ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since we are introducing spouses today I thought I would be remiss if I did not welcome my partner and my husband of 20 years to this Legislative Assembly. I think he wasn't here the last time when I mentioned that we had been married for 20 years and that perhaps I was difficult to live with at some times. There was some nervous laughter and maybe some agreement. So, Guy, there are folks that do agree with me, or agree with you rather. But kidding aside, thank you for all the work that you do and the support that you provide that allows me to do this work. I invite all members to join me in welcoming Guy to his Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to education in Saskatchewan. The prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions are signed by concerned residents of Saskatoon. I so submit.

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

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who oppose the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Frontier, Eastend, Claydon. I do present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to stop the cuts to our children's classrooms. Over this last year, despite taking in \$67 million in additional education property tax, the government saw fit to cut \$54 million out of our children's classrooms. That's a decision that has had terrible impacts across this province.

I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition today reside in Melville and 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 provide a petition for a second bridge for Prince Albert: that the Diefenbaker bridge in Prince Albert is the primary link that connects the southern part of the province

to the North; and that the need for a second bridge for Prince Albert has never been clearer than it is today.

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

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 the plan and then quickly commence the construction of a second bridge for Prince Albert, using federal and provincial dollars.

Mr. Speaker, this petition was signed by individuals from Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for critical workplace supports for survivors of domestic violence.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to pass legislation to ensure critical supports in the workplace, including reasonable accommodation and paid and unpaid leave for survivors of domestic violence.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin. Oh sorry, I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

International Women's Day

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about International Women's Day. On the 8th of March, I joined with others across the globe in protesting against gender inequality. I was pleased to attend an event at the U of S, where the University of Saskatchewan students' union, Women in the Legislature, and Young Women in Business co-hosted a panel on women in leadership. Alongside four young women who work as professors, entrepreneurs, and professionals, I was honoured to share my experiences and interact with so many inspiring participants. I was also pleased to see some young men in attendance at the event acting as allies in building women up.

Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day was well documented this year; #iwd2018 was trending on Twitter, and my Facebook feed was flooded with messages and images of mothers, daughters, friends, and mentors — powerful women — who are publicly appreciated in honour of this special day. It is important that we take a moment to recognize International Women's Day in light of the structural inequalities that women still face in our province, in our country, and across the globe. Women face barriers in the workplace, sexism and discrimination, violence and under-representation in many fields still dominated by men, such as politics.

In honouring International Women's Day, I call on all members to join me in celebrating the successes of women in our communities and to recognize the work we still need to do to achieve gender equity. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Agriculture Safety Week

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week has been proclaimed Agriculture Safety Week in Saskatchewan. As someone who is still actively involved in agriculture, I can tell you first-hand that agriculture is one of Saskatchewan's largest and most vital industries and is crucial to our economy and well-being and way of life in this province. Unfortunately, it can also be hazardous if proper safety precautions are not in place. Every year an average of 13 people are killed on Saskatchewan farms. Most accidents occur in the farmyard, and of all serious injuries, 14 per cent involve youth. Three-quarters of farm fatalities involve machinery such as grain trucks, semis, tractors, and combines.

To help promote safety of Saskatchewan farmers and ranchers, our government supports organizations such as Agricultural Health and Safety Network and the Saskatchewan Farm Stress Line. We also support Saskatchewan Association of Agricultural Societies and Exhibitions and the important work that they do in educating rural children about farm safety.

Saskatchewan Agriculture Safety Week is held in conjunction with Canadian Agriculture Safety Week. The AgSafe ribbon campaign raises awareness about farm safety and celebrates AgSafe families. We must continue to strive and reach the very important goal of eliminating injuries and fatalities in the agriculture sector.

On behalf of all members, I extend well wishes, and hope that all producers are safe out there this spring. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to join with the member from Moosomin in recognizing Agriculture Safety Week. Even before this land became a province, producers and the whole agricultural industry have been key contributors to the Saskatchewan economy and our way of life. This long-standing tradition of hard work and perseverance continues today.

Like many others in this Assembly and across this province, I grew up on the farm. And we know, sometimes all too well, both the joys but also the dangers that can come with life on the farm. You learn from an early age that everyone has a role to play in getting the work done. Generations, young and old, work together preserving the farm and the way of life for future generations, but sharing the work also means that there are risks for the entire family as well.

[17:00]

This year, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Agricultural Week is focusing on supporting senior farmers. We know that for those working in agriculture, sometimes tragically, the risk of injury and death increases with age. That's why support and awareness of safety measures and practices become all the more important. I think of the important role that family members and neighbours play in checking in with and looking out for their fellow producers, be it during snowstorms, in the middle of the night, during calving, or during the long hours of seeding and harvest.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing Agriculture Safety Week here in Saskatchewan.

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

Maple Creek Trans-Canada Visitor Reception Centre

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to rise today to talk about the success of the Maple Creek Trans-Canada Visitor Reception Centre. The centre does a wonderful job of greeting visitors to the region, offering them information about the local attractions and events happening throughout the province and local communities.

Last summer the town of Maple Creek and the Cypress Hills Destination Area teamed up with the Ministry of Central Services and the Tourism Saskatchewan opportunity . . . the centre for the summer. The visitor reception centre had a lot of success with almost 24,000 visitors coming through the doors between May and September. During the same summer, local area attractions and businesses saw visitations and sales increase, which is a big attribute to the centre.

Mr. Speaker, I had the wonderful opportunity attending the grand reopening last June, and I am very delighted to see that it was a success. I would like to thank the town of Maple Creek and the Cypress Hills Destination Area for working together to ensure the continuation of the centre.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the members to join me in congratulating the town of Maple Creek and the Trans-Canada Visitor Centre on a successful reopening. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Canora-Pelly.

Recognition of Canadian Silver Medallist

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan was well represented at the recent Winter Olympics and our athletes performed extraordinarily well.

I want to acknowledge the achievements of one athlete in particular with ties to my constituency, Brigitte Lacquette. A defensive player for the Canadian Women's Hockey Team, Brigitte was a member of the Cote First Nation. She has played for Team Canada in different capacities since 2008, when she first began playing in the Under-18 National Women's Team.

Brigitte also participated in the Tony Cote First Nation Winter Games with the Yorkton Tribal Council. Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Women's Hockey Team performed exceptionally well at the Olympics, earning a silver medal for their country. Brigitte is the first First Nations woman to play on the Canadian Olympic Women's Hockey Team.

Mr. Speaker, Brigitte has acknowledged her obstacles as she's overcome that eventually brought her to PyeongChang. As a young woman and First Nations hockey player, she faced many challenges. Mr. Speaker, it is important that we continue to encourage young women and First Nations to pursue opportunities in sports and provide safe environments for them to play.

I ask everyone in this Assembly to join me to congratulate Brigitte Lacquette in all her incredible accomplishments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Induction Into the Prince Albert Council of Women Hall of Fame

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have the pleasure of congratulating an exceptional educator and friend of mine, Jeannette Eddolls. She was inducted into the Hall of Fame this month by the Prince Albert Council of Women.

Though she was surprised to hear she had been nominated, she is very deserving of such recognition. As a retired teacher, principal, and administrator in the Saskatchewan Rivers School Division, Jeannette dedicates her time to her community and is still actively instructing in classrooms at SUNTEP [Saskatchewan urban native teacher education program], the First Nations University of Canada, and many more.

Mr. Speaker, between her instructor duties, she is volunteering and focused on her work as Chair of the Catholic Family Services, as well as Grandmothers for Grandmothers. She believes that if she has the time and the health, it is important to give back and contribute to building and supporting her community.

This is not her first recognition as she has also received a YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] Women of Distinction Award, the Citizen of the Year in 2014, as well as the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal in 2016. She is an exceptional role model for women at any age, and I'm proud to have her serving in our province.

I ask all members, please join me in congratulating Jeannette Eddolls on her induction and thank her for her service to education in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Carbon Capture and Storage Milestone at Boundary Dam 3

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the carbon capture and storage process at SaskPower's Boundary dam power station has reached a significant milestone. Over 2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide have now been prevented from entering the atmosphere, the equivalent of taking 500,000 vehicles off the road.

Mr. Speaker, Boundary dam CCS [carbon capture and storage] is another example of groundbreaking innovation happening right here in Saskatchewan. The project allows SaskPower to provide electricity to 100,000 people while drastically reducing the emissions of the coal-powered plant.

Boundary dam 3 began operating in 2014, and Saskatchewan has since become a global leader in CCS technology. Leaders from over 30 countries around the globe have visited the facility and, Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has said that this technology is vital for efforts to address climate change worldwide.

With 1,600 coal-fired plants being built worldwide, this technology is still crucial to help with the greenhouse gas emissions. It is also an important tool to meet our local goals as SaskPower continues to implement a strategy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating SaskPower on reaching this significant milestone. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Just before question period, I'd like to make a quick statement in regards to decorum. So let's start off this session . . . Spirited is okay, but let's be respectful and let's be role models for some young people watching.

QUESTION PERIOD

Shared Priorities of Government and Opposition

Mr. Meili: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in that spirit, I mentioned earlier that this is a new season for this House, and it's an excellent chance for us to take a new approach to how we do politics.

When I was elected as Leader of the NDP, the Premier tweeted to me. He said, "I look forward to working with you on areas where we agree and to a vigorous debate on areas where we disagree." This is a welcome sentiment and it's one that I share. Because for all of our points of disagreement on the approach, every member in this House is here to serve the people of this province. So I commend the Premier on the signal of this constructive approach, and I'm eager to work with this government wherever possible to make lives better for people in Saskatchewan.

So I ask the Premier, Mr. Speaker, I ask him: what points of agreement does he see across the aisle? And because my caucus

colleagues and I stand ready and committed to serve the people of Saskatchewan, what are the issues where the Premier sees us finding common ground?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I think there's numerous places where we could work with the opposition. And we look forward to the opportunity to work with the opposition within the constraints, the budgetary constraints that we have as we look forward through . . . as we enter into our year 2 of our three-year plan to balance here in the province of Saskatchewan.

And we must always remember that we need to balance that budget, Mr. Speaker. And we've put forward this three-year plan to balance on behalf of the people of the province so that we can continue with the investment that we have enjoyed the last decade, continue with that investment not just out over the next year, not just out over the next couple years, Mr. Speaker, but ensure that we have the fiscal ability to continue with that investment for the next generation and set it up for the generation after that.

Mr. Speaker, we have a number of initiatives that I look forward to working with the Leader of the Opposition and the opposition caucus in general — most notably, Mr. Speaker, as we see with an issue with a fentanyl overdose this past weekend in the city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward with some of the crime issues that we have, Mr. Speaker, some of the mental health and addiction . . . The sources of those crime issues quite often are mental health, addictions, alcohol abuse, things of that nature, Mr. Speaker.

As we look to really approach these in a more holistic manner if you will, Mr. Speaker, not just from an enforcement point of view — enforcement will be part of it — but also, Mr. Speaker, from some of the root sources that are affecting, some of the challenges that we see in communities across our province right now within the confines, the budgetary confines that we have.

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

Saskatchewan Employment Numbers

Mr. Meili: — In terms of things that both sides of the aisle can agree on, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that there's concern among all of us about the latest job numbers showing there were 7,800 fewer people employed this time than a year ago. Compare that with 46,000 new jobs in Alberta, our unemployment up by 1.4 per cent. We're the only place except Newfoundland that didn't see an increase in employment. We saw ours go down.

These numbers, these numbers further prove that this government's approach of responding to tough times by cutting health, cutting education, cutting key services deeply — it hurts people and it hurts the economy.

Now the Premier is signalling that he wants to double down on this failed approach and cut 1,250 public sector jobs. Past efforts at shrinking the civil service have shown no savings. It hasn't worked before and it won't work now. But it will hurt workers. It will hurt their families and it will hurt struggling

local economies.

My question, Mr. Speaker: with the loss of these 7,800 jobs, will the Premier concede that now is not the time to put more people out of work; now is not the time to push ahead with further cuts to public sector jobs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I do acknowledge the recent job numbers, but I also acknowledge that over the past decade, Mr. Speaker, in this province we were up 62,000 jobs. Mr. Speaker, that has attracted people to fill those careers from all around the world, Mr. Speaker, living in communities — the community of Spiritwood, the community of Climax, the community of Frontier, Mr. Speaker, as well as cities such as Moose Jaw, Saskatoon, and Regina. And with those 62,000 jobs, Mr. Speaker, people have brought their families, resulting in over 165,000 people living in communities across this province.

Mr. Speaker, I do acknowledge the solid management that we have put forward, Mr. Speaker, to ensure the management that private companies take each and every day across the province, Mr. Speaker, goes into our Crowns and into our executive government as we manage those numbers through attrition and through retirements over the next two years, Mr. Speaker. There are dollar figures that are set to ensure that we have the proper and responsible management that the people of the province expect of their provincial government, Mr. Speaker, and those financial targets will be met through attrition and retirement, Mr. Speaker. No one will be losing their job.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, we're not talking about the last decade. We're talking about the last year, a year in which 3,800 jobs were lost in agriculture alone. And, Mr. Speaker, the jobs go away but the work doesn't. We all depend on the services provided by public employees. A report last week described the way in which Social Services clients, people in vulnerable and difficult circumstances, are having to wait hours on the phone before they get any attention to their pressing concerns.

In many areas — health, justice, education, addictions treatment, services for children with special needs — Saskatchewan people are not able to access help when it's needed. Existing staffing levels are already too low. And increased overtime costs, those are rising while the access to services is getting more and more difficult. Cutting jobs in these fields, it doesn't save money but it does put added hardship on those most in need. How, while eliminating positions, will the Premier make sure that these already overburdened departments are able to do the work, to deliver the services that people need?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I do need to re-emphasize that these targets, these financial targets will be met through attrition and retirements. No one will be losing their jobs. It will be in executive government, Mr. Speaker, as well as the Crown corporations — not front lines, Mr. Speaker, in our classrooms or in our health care centres,

Mr. Speaker.

As a matter of fact, in our classrooms we have reinvested, Mr. Speaker, as we had promised through this leadership campaign, with 400 EAs [educational assistants] in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, in the next budget year. But we've bumped that up, Mr. Speaker, in this last quarter with seven and a half million dollars so that our school divisions can start that process of putting those educational assistants into our classrooms to ensure that the next generation has the supports that they require.

[17:15]

Mr. Speaker, this also is about the last decade as well, with increases in our health, education, and social services investments up some 72 per cent, Mr. Speaker. These are significant numbers that have included hiring 750 additional doctors, over 3,400 nurses. And these are numbers that we have all heard, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly before. But we hear them again because they are true and they are real people that are offering services in communities right across this province.

Before I was elected, Mr. Speaker, I worked on a volunteer committee in my community trying to attract physicians, trying to attract health care professionals into our community. And through recruitment of physicians, recruitment and training of nurse practitioners, we now have those services in communities across the province, Mr. Speaker.

So this very much is about the last 10 years, and it's about the next 10 years and what we can continue to provide to the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier mentioned the reinvestment in education, something he talked a lot about during his campaign for leadership — a promise to return \$30 million to our education system. But this government cut \$54 million from education in the last budget. You may forgive teachers and parents if they don't take to the streets to celebrate the return of half the funding that had been taken away only months earlier.

And then we learn that this promise was pro-rated, that it's only 7.5 million. It's only for a quarter of the year, meaning \$46.5 million was still cut from public education. A massive shortfall in the funds that are needed, with more students, fewer teachers, more complicated classrooms. Why does the Premier think it's adequate to return only a small portion of the money that was removed? How can he celebrate such a half-hearted — or perhaps in this case, quarter-hearted — commitment that doesn't even bring us back to the level of 2016?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, not a month ago, the Premier stood in the rotunda of this building and announced seven and a half million dollars in mid-year funding to support educational outcomes in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. That

translates into an annualized amount of \$30 million, Mr. Speaker. And contrary to what the Leader of the Opposition has said, we have got kudos; we've got compliments from almost every school division in this province, Mr. Speaker, with respect to our commitment to public education.

Mr. Speaker, we heard this when we were out on the campaign trail — all the leadership candidates did — and this \$30 million, Mr. Speaker, in annualized funding demonstrates this government's commitment to public education. And in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue our ongoing dialogue with teachers, with school board trustees, and with parents to make sure that we're meeting the requirements, to make sure that we're meeting the needs of the children in the classroom. This is going to be a continuing and ongoing dialogue, Mr. Speaker, but certainly the \$30 million in annualized funding that'll be in this budget, Mr. Speaker, is a clear demonstration of this government's commitment to public education.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And in the spirit of the day, I want to welcome the new Education minister to his new role. And I know that this minister knows as well as I do that the Premier didn't say a thing about fractions when he was vying for the role of premier. No, Mr. Speaker, he promised a whole number.

The Sask Party cut \$54 million from government funding in 2016 from our classrooms, and that's before taking into account growth, contracts, inflation, or the Sask Party hikes to both the PST [provincial sales tax] and power rates. Our K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system is growing by about 2,500 students every year. Will the new Minister of Education show that he stands by not only the Premier's commitments but also his own? And will he admit that instead of dividing up that \$30 million, he needs to be multiplying it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my last answer, Mr. Speaker, this \$30 million represents this government's commitment to public education in this budget, Mr. Speaker, and it's an annualized payment. So when they talk about fractions, Mr. Speaker, certainly the seven and half million dollars is in-year funding to help support classrooms, to help support supports in the classroom, Mr. Speaker, and as the Premier has mentioned, Mr. Speaker, to give school divisions the opportunity make sure that they're ready for the fall.

But it's a start, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to have ongoing dialogue with our partners in education — not just school board trustees, but teachers and parents and other professionals that support classrooms, Mr. Speaker — to make sure that we're continuing to advance the interests of children in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. That's the commitment that we made, Mr. Speaker, and that's the commitment we're going to follow through on.

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Far from reinvesting, the Sask Party has been cutting even more from across the budget. The third quarter shows that there was about \$81 million more than predicted in the education budget. But instead of putting it back in the classroom, they grabbed it to cover up their own mismanagement. And they did it with \$37 million from municipalities, 225 million from agriculture, and 22 million from transportation. They even collected \$40 million more in fees than they had budgeted for.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when their heartless cuts are hurting so many people, how can they justify not using these surpluses to help Saskatchewan people instead of the Sask Party's bottom line?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Finance minister.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, only the NDP would be very unhappy when, at the third quarter, we're on track to balance and actually meeting the targets that we had set. The difference of the line for education, quite frankly, is a pension adjustment. So I'm hoping the member opposite isn't asking for us to spend what is an accounting pension adjustment. And the increase in agriculture was a decline in crop insurance claims, Mr. Speaker, which is very positive for the farmers within our province. I would think that would make her happy as well.

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

Management of Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, instead of making things even tighter for Saskatchewan people's wallets, they should be tightening their own belts, especially at the GTH [Global Transportation Hub]. On top of the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] investigation and possible charges, the GTH is losing so much money it can't even cover the interest payments on its debt anymore. In fact, they've grown its debt to \$11 million more than they had predicted at the beginning of the year.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the Attorney General to his new role — it's a recycled role — who gets to be Minister Responsible for the GTH. Now it's the Attorney General. Can he tell us, how much money does the GTH have to lose before the Sask Party finally admit that they've failed with it in every way except scandal? How much of the Saskatchewan people's money do they have to lose before it's too much?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, with respect, I think it was the Environment minister that was recycled and maybe a few others who were recycled. But, Mr. Speaker, some of the ideas that are recycled are the ones that are coming from the other side of the House. They haven't had a fresh or a new idea in the last decade.

Mr. Speaker, the GTH is intended to attract business, attract

international commerce to our province. There are highways, railways going in there. There are a growing number of people moving into the program, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, we will stand by that and make sure that it continues to grow and flourish. At this point, Mr. Speaker, it is under construction. More work is being done; more work needs to be done. And, Mr. Speaker, it's on track.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Support for the North

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I wish they'd defended the North the way they defend the GTH. The Premier had a chance to show us he was different but in his first speech to municipal leaders from across the province, he didn't say a single word about the North. Mr. Speaker, a strong Saskatchewan needs a strong northern Saskatchewan, and our children are losing hope to live. So why are they still leaving the North and northern people behind?

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

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank the member for his question, but we have not forgotten the North. The 2017-18 budget commits \$210 million for First Nations and Métis organizations and individuals. The 2017-18 budget commits \$76.7 million in gaming agreement transfers to First Nations and Métis organizations. In 2017-18, 19.2 million to be allocated to the North from municipal revenue sharing. In the last 10 years of government, the NDP provided the North with roughly 58 million in revenue sharing.

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

Mental Health Services in the North

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we're not helped by that government's inaction. Children are giving up all hope. And as the Children's Advocate says, they are literally dying in the North. That government squandered a historic opportunity to make changes that would save lives. Every child in Saskatchewan, whether they live on a remote First Nation, a small town, or right here in Regina deserves access in a timely way to high-quality mental health supports when they need them. We owe it to them. We owe it to ourselves. We owe it to our future. When is the Sask Party going to stop making excuses and start to support vulnerable kids who need and deserve help and hope?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, this government fully recognizes the challenges of some of our youth across the province, specifically in the North. We know that youth mental health and suicide rates in the North are far too high. We've been paying attention. We've been working with our northern partners, getting input from them, also working through the regions and through other supports to add those supports into the northern areas specifically where they are needed, Mr. Speaker. We've been fully engaged with, whether it's New

North or other organizations in the North, to hear their ideas and also continue to implement mental health supports and supports throughout the North, Mr. Speaker.

In the former regions that we had in the North, now covered by the new Saskatchewan Health Authority, there is specifically a focus on increasing those supports including psychiatry appointments and psychiatry availability through the North, mental health first aid, Mr. Speaker, as well as when we look at northern opportunities with engaging youth right in the schools, whether it's ASIST [Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training] training or other facilities and other programs that we can help with our northern partners in mitigating these terrible tragedies.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — You know, we've heard those lines before. What families need is someone that's going to listen to them, someone that's going to sit down with them and understand that children are being stolen from loved ones, from families all through our province, and certainly in the North.

In February the Children's Advocate took to Twitter to share his own personal story about his experience with our broken mental health system. After hours of waiting, he was told that he would need to leave Saskatchewan to get the care that his family needed. Mr. Speaker, that happened in our province's largest city, in Saskatoon. If the Sask Party can't ensure services in Saskatoon, a city of over a quarter million people, what does that say about the kind of hope and support that they're offering in rural, remote, and northern Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I have mentioned in my previous answer, there is a host of different areas that we've been investing in and talking to our northern partners when it comes to these issues, Mr. Speaker. But in respect to the question from the member opposite, I spoke to the advocate a number of times, along with his family members, to kind of hear what the challenges that they had been facing, Mr. Speaker. We know that the response that they got from the ER [emergency room] was not an acceptable response, Mr. Speaker.

When we look at services across our province, when compared to Alberta for example, we know that — and when talking to our federal counterparts across, and our provincial counterparts across the country — almost every province suffers some of these challenges, Mr. Speaker. We know that our services in Saskatchewan are very comparable to Alberta. When referred to maybe a private system, Mr. Speaker, we don't have as much private accessibility in this province, but we are working very diligently and making sure those sources are available in our public system, Mr. Speaker, as well as for the issue mentioned by the member opposite, the Dubé Centre, the mental health emergency system that will be set up in the Saskatoon hospital by summer and then transitioning to the new Pattison Hospital through the emergency department following that.

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

Funding for Mental Health and Addictions

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This weekend we learned of tragic deaths in Saskatoon related to drug overdoses, apparently caused by cocaine laced with fentanyl. Over a year ago the federal government committed \$158.5 million to mental health and addictions over a decade. More than 3 million was supposed to be dedicated to the last budget, but we don't have a clear answer about where that money went.

Has it been added as new money to help address the growing mental health and addictions challenges in Saskatchewan, or is it just backfilling for Sask Party cuts? Will the minister put an end to the doubt, do as the Deputy Premier urged during the most recent leadership campaign, and commit to using these funds to raise mental health and addictions funding to 7 per cent of the health care budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we recognize the importance of mental health. It's front of mind, not just in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, but for all health ministers across the country. It was a significant part of the discussions at the recent federal-provincial-territorial health ministers' conference in Edmonton.

Mr. Speaker, to get to the specifics of the question that the critic asked, specifically this year the federal government provided \$3.1 million for mental health projects. \$1.6 million of that, Mr. Speaker, was spent in various areas for mental health treatments, suicide prevention efforts. And to the point about addictions, there is addiction medicine services in Prince Albert.

[17:30]

Mr. Speaker, the rest of that funding will be carried forward. It will be added incrementally to the money that will be available in this upcoming budget. Mr. Speaker, again we recognize the importance of mental health. We're going to make use of every single penny of those federal transfers to improve mental health programming in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government could improve our abysmal mental health funding from taking us from 5 per cent to the 7 per cent that the Deputy Premier had called for in his leadership campaign. So again to the minister: will you commit to using these funds to raise the mental health and addictions funding to 7 per cent of our overall health care budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, again we recognize how important mental health is. I would point out how much, since we were given the privilege of forming government, the overall

health budget has increased. So, Mr. Speaker, that again substantially increases the target to get to 7 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier and the Premier both, in the leadership race, said it was their intention to get to 7 per cent of the budget. That is our goal. We are going to get there as soon as finances allow, Mr. Speaker. We're going to make every possible use of all the federal money that's available, as well as other allocations from our own finances. Mr. Speaker, we recognize the importance and we will get to 7 per cent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, I don't think those leadership candidates talked about when the finances were in place, Mr. Speaker. They committed to 7 per cent. So I ask the Health minister again: when will we get away from our abysmal spending in mental health and get to at least the 7 per cent of the national average of mental health spending as a percentage of the overall health budget? When will we get there, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, that was a platform position of both the Premier and the Deputy Premier. That indeed is our goal. We're going to reach that.

Mr. Speaker, I would just point out very simply this: we have been increasing funding for mental health. We've increased it by, mental health and addictions by 44 per cent since we were given the privilege of forming government, Mr. Speaker — substantially more than the last year of the NDP in government.

Mr. Speaker, mental health's a priority. It'll continue to be a priority. And, Mr. Speaker, I would just point out the kinder, gentler approach that the Leader of the Opposition spoke of apparently ended fairly quickly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this House does now adjourn for the day.

The Speaker: — The House Leader has moved adjournment of the Assembly. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:34.]

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