



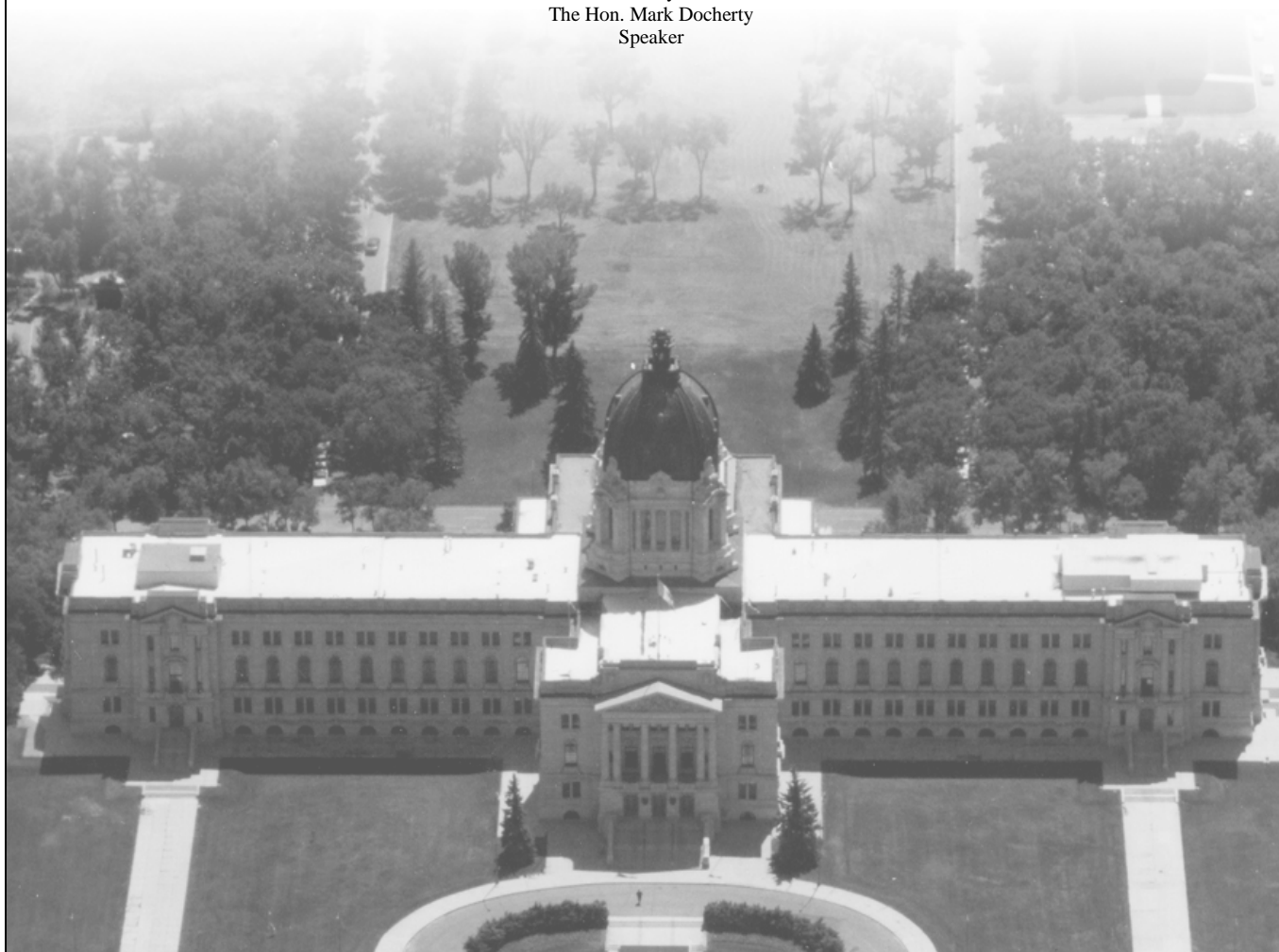
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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

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Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Regina Northeast

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

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways. Why are you on your feet, sir?

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask for leave to make a personal statement.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave for a personal statement. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Apology

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today I was made aware of a statement I had made in the fall sitting that was incorrect. Mr. Speaker, it never was or never is my intention to knowingly mislead any member of this House. I consider all my colleagues honourable members and I assure you that I would never deliberately mislead this House in any way. I apologize unequivocally to all members of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. I thank you for your statement. I will take that under consideration and I will comment further later today.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave for an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to members of this House for granting leave. It's my great pleasure to introduce through you, Mr. Speaker, to all members of this House a very special guest: Ms. Lu Xu, the consul general of the People's Republic of China, based out of Calgary. She's on her first official visit to Saskatchewan and, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Lu is an experienced diplomat who has also served in the United States, the United Kingdom, as well as the Czech Republic.

And accompanying Ms. Lu this afternoon are Mr. Shan Gangang and Mr. Bai Jie, who are also with the consulate in

Calgary. Mr. Speaker, accompanying them are Melinda Carter and Nadette Schermann from our protocol office.

And, Mr. Speaker, the consul general has a very busy schedule during her visit to Saskatchewan here today. She's already met with a number of ministers in the government, the Provincial Secretary, as well as representatives from the University of Regina. And I'm looking forward to visiting with the consul general later this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, we're thankful for Ms. Lu in spending time in our province. Saskatchewan and China are very strong friends and our two jurisdictions have a long-standing trade partnership dating back to the year 1961. And that's when Canadian prime minister — from our province — Mr. John Diefenbaker authorized Canada's first sale of grain to the People's Republic of China. That was the beginning of a fruitful commercial arrangement, which has blossomed most notably in recent years.

Today China is our second-largest export market. The value of our exports to China are up more than 300 per cent in the last decade, to about three and a half billion dollars. We continue to ship grain to China and a number of other commodities as well, including potash; most recently, uranium; as well as canola, lentils, and pork, as of a number of years ago.

And let me say on behalf of the people of this province how thankful we are for that great and strong trading relationship. We are grateful for our relationship with China, which should be noted is a two-way partnership. China is also our source of our second-largest source of imports. Chinese companies have invested more than a billion dollars in the province of Saskatchewan since 2009 and, Mr. Speaker, there are other dimensions to our relationship as well.

Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions have more than 100 academic and research partnerships with post-secondary institutions in China. China also shares our desire to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the use of carbon capture and storage. Like Saskatchewan, China is making significant investments in CCS [carbon capture and storage] and is working with our international carbon capture and storage knowledge centre based right out of Saskatchewan here.

Mr. Speaker, I would close by noting this: that Ms. Lu is now posted in a city where the colour is red. This has some significance. That colour is associated with the Calgary Flames. In China the colour red stands for happiness, it stands for success, and it stands for good fortune. All of these, Calgary Flames fans are hoping for this year. The Flames are still in the playoff hunt, and that is very painful for myself as an Edmonton Oilers fan to acknowledge. But, Mr. Speaker, I hope Ms. Lu and her colleagues can attend an NHL [National Hockey League] playoff game in Calgary in the coming weeks. That's even harder to acknowledge as an Edmonton Oilers fan. Mr. Speaker, playoff hockey is as Canadian as it comes, almost as Canadian as a Saskatchewan Roughrider football game, Mr. Speaker, and it doesn't happen often in Calgary or Edmonton.

We are honoured here in this province by a visit from the consul general, and we are thankful for the long and enduring

friendship that we have with the People's Republic of China. And I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming our guests to this legislature.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in extending our welcome to our guests from the People's Republic of China. So glad to have you here today. Thank you very much for joining us. And to join with the Premier in acknowledging the importance of that relationship, both in the ongoing relationship with the People's Republic of China in trade, the existing relationships that we have, and the opportunity for future engagement and future opportunities.

I also want to point out the important role that people from the People's Republic of China have played in our own history right here in Saskatchewan. The Chinese-Canadian community has been part of the fabric of our province for over 100 years, and as pointed out when discussing the students that are coming, more people continue to come and be part of this province and integrated into the life of this province. And that's something I think that is very positive. So I thank you for joining us, and I ask all of the members to join me in welcoming the representatives to this Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services . . . I'm sorry, Advanced Education.

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure and honour to introduce to you and seated in your gallery, three students from the University of Regina Students' Union. They are Shawn Wiskar, Haris Khan, and Derrick Gagnon. All three of these young individuals have been great community champions. They've been involved in a Dress for Success event recently to help raise clothing items for women who are less fortunate. They've been involved in stand-up comedy. They've been involved in a number of mental health initiatives. And I just would like to welcome them to their legislature and thank them very much for their leadership on campus.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my honour to join with the minister and welcome these leaders within our university, but leaders within our province, to their Assembly: Derrick Gagnon, Shawn Wiskar, and Haris Khan. I've gotten to know Haris rather well. But these are three strong leaders within our province for students, but those that have also, as has been identified, raised attention and dollars for important causes within our community.

I know recently I had the chance to join with Haris and with president Jermain McKenzie, along with MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Regina Lakeview to take a pie in the face. Actually the member for Regina Lakeview seemed a little too happy to put a pie into my face, Mr. Speaker, and all raising very important dollars for Hope's Home. It's my pleasure to welcome these student leaders to their Assembly and to thank them for their leadership within our province.

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

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly board members of the Saskatchewan Young Brokers Network, who are in attendance today as part of the Insurance Brokers' Association of Saskatchewan's first-ever day at the legislature. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, they are . . . Well I can't really see them but I know they're there, and I'd ask them if they could give everyone else a little wave when they're acknowledged: President Alyssa Taksas, Jaycee Turtle, Jenna Dusyk, Reece Ricard, and Catherine Schraeder.

Over the past 15 years, the YBN [Young Brokers Network] has evolved into an energetic group of more than 120 professionals under the age of 40 that promotes the industry as a rewarding career path by offering an array of educational and networking experiences, including the inaugural Saskatchewan Summit of Young Insurance Professionals which will be held in Saskatoon April 12th. Today representatives from both the YBN and IBAS [Insurance Brokers' Association of Saskatchewan] are meeting with several ministers, caucus policy committees, and various other key stakeholders. I'd ask all members to welcome these individuals to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these young brokers to their Legislative Assembly for their first-ever lobby day. I understand that you were up very early this morning, I think around 7:30 . . . to be here for meetings at 7:30, and I do hope that you had a fruitful and rewarding day as your first-ever lobby day.

I know, and maybe this doesn't come as a surprise to people here, but in the meeting this morning we talked about the fact that brokers are in communities all over this province, in fact a huge percentage of communities. And often in a small town you might have a post office and a rink and your local insurance broker. It's part of the fabric of this province. And I want to thank each of you for being here today and welcome each of you to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Regina Lakeview in welcoming our young brokers here today. Specifically I would like to welcome their president, Alyssa Taksas. Alyssa and I have known each other personally for a great number of years — I didn't count it out. And I probably have something to do with the fact that she ended up in a military uniform at some point. I don't know whether that was a good thing or a bad thing, but we spent a lot of time together and I'm very proud of where she's come and the leadership she's shown on this front, and would like to welcome her to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the rest of the members of the legislature, I'd like to introduce a very special guest who's sitting behind our area in the House here, Mark Wartman, a former MLA for Qu'Appelle Valley here in Regina and a former minister of Agriculture for four years — well respected in his role there — now working for the Nature Conservancy. And so I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Mark back to his legislature. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, seated in the east gallery, I want to recognize as well certainly Carol Kos that's here who's been identified and recognized before. But nice to have you here, Carol, somebody who's given a lot of service as a nurse to her province as well.

But I don't know that Chris Gust has been welcomed to his Assembly before. And I want to welcome Chris Gust, a friend, a tireless leader within our community, and someone who's a young and strong leader with the ironworkers within our province and the building trades within the province. So it's a pleasure to welcome Chris to his Assembly and to express thanks for all of his efforts within our province.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from the citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, these good citizens recognize, more importantly, the great work that's being done at our Boundary dam 3 project with carbon capture. We heard yesterday in a member's statement 2 million tonnes have now been captured from that plant. This is a far better method than any carbon tax would ever be.

[13:45]

If you take a look at the agricultural sinks that are involved in this province, we're not getting credit for, a credit to the farmers in this province and their farming techniques. I think this is far more important.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Shellbrook, Holbein, Canwood, Mont Nebo, and Parkside. I do so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'm presenting petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to the cuts to post-secondary education in our province. And 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 today are signed by good citizens of Saskatchewan. I so submit.

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. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: that the Sask Party has cut at least \$674 in government funding for every student across this province; and to the fact that the government hiked education property tax by \$67 million in the last budget, but at the same time clawed back \$54 million from our children's classrooms. And of course these cuts have had a profound and terrible impact on our children's classrooms; for example, we have seen decreases to busing and the loss of pre-K [pre-kindergarten] programs designed for children with special needs and children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition reside in Preeceville, Regina, and Saskatoon. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to present a petition from citizens of Regina, and this one is in regards to the carbon capture tax. The people signing this wish to bring to our attention the following: the Sask Party government has spent billions of taxpayers' dollars on the carbon capture project at Boundary dam 3, and after four years it is still only online 61 per cent of the time and just barely has captured only half of its original targets. The parliamentary budget office has stated that this project is equivalent to placing a price of \$57 per tonne on carbon, and this carbon capture tax has resulted in three power rate increases in two years and has the average Saskatchewan family paying more than \$500 each year on their power bills since the Sask Party came into power.

The Sask Party's refusal to propose and defend a made-in-Saskatchewan plan is costing Saskatchewan \$62 million in federal funding, and this means that Saskatchewan people will be the only Canadians forced to pay Ottawa's carbon tax. The Sask Party government is hurting

Saskatchewan's economy, costing families and businesses, and this project has not seen the results the Sask Party promised or are still bragging about. And the Sask Party government is looking at expanding carbon capture to Boundary dams 4 and 5 which would cost the people of Saskatchewan billions more.

So I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to avoid another carbon capture tax on the people of Saskatchewan by not expanding carbon capture projects.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the restoration of public intermunicipal transportation for persons with disabilities. And people signing this petition want us to be aware of the following: that the cruel and heartless Sask Party budget of 2017 cut public intermunicipal transportation services for persons with disabilities, including all persons with various disabilities. This decision has left persons with disabilities stranded and isolated in both urban and rural communities, and that since cutting transportation services for persons with disabilities, the Sask Party has failed to replace this service in any meaningful way.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know that *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* states, and I quote, "Access to equal, dignified transportation is essential to the achievement of equality for persons with disabilities." It goes on and I quote further: "Persons with disabilities have a human right to adequate, dignified public transportation services on an equal basis. The Code guarantees the right to equal treatment with respect to services without discrimination based on disability."

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately restore public intermunicipal transportation services for persons with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. The people signing this petition come from the city of Regina. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to get big money out of politics. These citizens wish to bring to your attention that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals, even those outside the province, to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties; that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics. But over the past 10 years, the Sask Party has received 12.61 million in corporate donations, of that, 2.87 million

coming from companies outside Saskatchewan. That Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people, and that the federal government and the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, and Nova Scotia have moved to limit this influence and level the playing field by banning corporate and union donations to political parties.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party to overhaul Saskatchewan's campaign finance laws to end out-of-province donations, to put a ban on donations from corporations and unions, and to put a donation limit on individual donations.

This petition is signed by citizens of Regina, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

International Women's Day

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. March 8th marked International Women's Day. This day is celebrated globally, highlighting the economic, political, and social achievement of women around the world.

We see so many women in Saskatchewan also make positive strides, becoming leaders within their own community, and we need to celebrate them. Mr. Speaker, in our own Assembly we have so many influential female MLAs who raise their voices, stand up for the needs of their constituents, and we must thank them for blazing a trail of opportunity for our generations and many generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, International Women's Day is more than just a celebration. It is also a very important day to educate both men and women on the importance of equality, inclusion, and how every community can benefit from it. It was truly an encouraging day to see so many women with testimonials of how influential they were in everyone's lives and how they touched so many communities. The acts of courage and leadership that we have seen decade after decade has strengthened the foundation for future generations to close the gender gap in business, but also, Mr. Speaker, in public office.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in celebrating and acknowledging the women in their lives and around the world who continue to inspire us. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Tim Hortons Brier Held in Regina

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. One of the curling world's premier events, the Tim Hortons Brier, wrapped up this past Sunday at the Brandt Centre, located in the

beautiful and ever-happening constituency of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. The champion Gushue rink repeated their march to the winner's circle in a thrilling 6-4 victory over the Bottcher Alberta rink.

Congratulations to team Gushue for a win that was literally right on the button. And congratulations to Steve Laycock and Team Saskatchewan for representing the green and gold in fine style. And congratulations to all the rinks and officials and supporters from across the country who helped make the 2018 Brier such a roaring success.

Like many large events, the Brier attracted thousands of people to Saskatchewan and helped to generate millions of dollars in economic activity. Who says throwing rocks at houses doesn't pay, Mr. Speaker?

And amidst all the action, the prestigious Paul McLean Award was given to the Regina *Leader-Post's* Murray McCormick for his significant contributions to the sport of curling. McCormick commenced his curling coverage in 1983 with the women's world championship in Moose Jaw and he's been hurrying hard ever since, Mr. Speaker. Great work, Murray McCormick.

Last but certainly not least, events like the 2018 Brier cannot take place without tremendous support of the host community, and in this regard the team of over 750 volunteers turned in a championship effort, putting on one of the best Briers ever. Thank you very much to them, Mr. Speaker. Thank you as well.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Rural Women's Month Proclaimed

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In recognition of the achievements made by rural women across the province, March has been proclaimed Rural Women's Month in Saskatchewan. Thousands of women across this province have chosen to develop their careers in agriculture industries, currently accounting for every one in four farm operators.

Across Canada almost 78,000 women are involved in these industries, and we see this number grow each and every day. Mr. Speaker, it's important that we continue to encourage young women to pursue careers in our agriculture sector and we enhance our support for women who are already our producers.

Saskatchewan is a leader in the agriculture sector across the world, and our growing economy relies on the innovations and advancements of this industry. Women contribute very heavily to these industries as they provide innovative and competitive perspectives to our sectors and industries. Their hard work and efforts do not go unnoticed.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the House join me in acknowledging Rural Women's Month and in thanking all the incredible women throughout our agriculture industry for all the amazing work that they have done and will continue to do so. Thank you.

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

Women's Final 8 Tournament a Success for Huskies and Cougars

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this past weekend the province of Saskatchewan proved once again that we know how to host national events. In addition to the Brier, the U of R [University of Regina] gym was packed and the action on the court was non-stop all weekend for the 2018 U Sports Women's Final 8 basketball tournament.

This was the third time in the last decade that the University of Regina Cougars have hosted this national tournament. And not only did Saskatchewan host the tournament, we put forward two nationally ranked teams. Both the University of Saskatchewan Huskies and the University of Regina Cougars competed for the right to raise the Bronze Baby. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan teams were unable to win it all, but the Huskies and the Cougars won silver and bronze respectively.

The bronze medal was a fitting end for veteran Cougar forward Charlotte Kot, who has endured multiple knee surgeries and injuries that will prevent her from playing competitive basketball into the future. Her perseverance was an inspiration to the entire team and she lit it up on the court.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the U of R Cougars organizing committee for hosting this tremendous event and for the fans and volunteers that showed support of this event, attended, and especially to the Saskatchewan teams that make us so proud. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You can never congratulate someone too much. It was an exciting weekend for both the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] Huskies and the U of R Cougars as their women's basketball teams competed for the national title over a four-day tournament held here in Regina.

The Cougars defeated the Huskies in the Can West final the week prior, and basketball fans across the province were eager for a rematch. In a semifinal game Saturday night, the two teams squared off again in front of a crowd of close to 2,400 people. The Huskies were successful this time around, beating the Cougars 74 to 71. The Cougars would then take the bronze over the McGill Martlets.

In the gold medal game, the Huskies made their presence known and defended our province well. The Huskies fought hard right to the end, and would finish second in the nation.

Though the rivalry between the Huskies and the Cougars remains strong, it was incredible to see the camaraderie in our basketball community as they came together to cheer on the nation's best. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to please join me in congratulating the U of R Cougars on their bronze medal, and the U of S Huskies on their silver medal wins at the national championships. Thank you.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Estevan.

Telemiracle 42 Raises Record-Breaking Amount

Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The 42nd annual Telemiracle telethon was held on March 3rd and March 4th. And in an impressive display of Saskatchewan generosity, a new fundraising record was set. The final total was \$7,150,000 — far surpassing last year's total of just over 5 million.

Mr. Speaker, the annual telethon is hosted to raise funds for Kinsmen Foundation. Dozens of performers, along with hundreds of volunteers, worked tirelessly through the 20-hour event to make this telethon the most successful ever.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would also like to take a moment to especially thank Susan Colbow who was this year's chairperson. Susan also works as my constituency assistant, so I saw first-hand all of the time, effort, and heart she put into this event to ensure it was a success. I'd also like to acknowledge Lucien Wayne Jacobs for a record-setting donation of 1.2 million, as well as Dr. Phil Thacker setting a new record just hours later with a donation of 1.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, there is a reason the people of Saskatchewan have a reputation for being generous. It truly takes a community to come together for an event like this to see so much success year after year. On behalf of this Assembly I'd like to thank the Kinsmen Foundation and everyone who volunteered and donated to help Telemiracle 42 achieve so much success. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Remembering Kevin Phillips

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last fall Kevin Phillips and his wife, April, invited my wife, Tannis, and I to attend the Throne Speech here in Regina. And honestly it's a bit difficult for me to stand here in his place today.

Kevin was a good friend, and so it was with mixed emotions that I ran to replace him that day. Even watching the results on the night of the by-election wasn't as exciting as it could have been if things were different. When April gave me Kevin's favourite tie on that night, it was her gracious way of saying that Kevin would have wanted me to serve in his place. And this green tie that I'm wearing now, I wear in honour of Kevin. You see, Mr. Speaker, I know that as I stand in this House today I stand as our constituency's second first choice. Kevin was their first first choice.

Anyone who knows April, she's a strong and she's a courageous lady, and this gesture that she showed shows the kind of character that she possesses. Mr. Speaker, this tie represents more for me than a cherished memory of a friend. It also represents a promise, and that promise is to April to honour her husband by serving with that same kind and faithful spirit that Kevin did.

You know, it's an easy thing to wear a friend's tie, but in this place replacing Kevin, it's a very difficult thing to fill his shoes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Federal Carbon Pricing and Provincial Plan to Reduce Emissions

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The federal Environment minister, Catherine McKenna, informed the Premier this week that because of his refusal to develop a viable made-in-Saskatchewan climate change plan, Saskatchewan will be the only province not to qualify for energy infrastructure funding. We've lost \$62 million. We're the only province to have a federal plan imposed upon us.

This Premier's refusal to approach this issue in a constructive fashion, first when he was Environment minister, and continuing today, has already lost the people of Saskatchewan millions of dollars, delaying meaningful action on climate change and wasting valuable time that could have been spent creating thousands of jobs for Saskatchewan people in the renewable energy field.

So my question for the Premier is, what's the plan? Does the government actually intend to continue stalling past that September deadline? Do you intend to leave the money on the table and see a plan imposed on Saskatchewan rather than design a plan ourselves that works for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I was remiss yesterday in welcoming the Leader of the Opposition to his role and thanking all of those candidates that ran in leadership contests on both sides of this House. And I was just thinking of the member from Melfort in filling our friend Mr. Phillips's shoes, and I was picturing Kevin in his red pumps.

So let me catch up to the member opposite's question. Mr. Speaker, the plan is this. The plan is to ensure that we do not have this type of a tax, a \$4 billion tax over the next five years on the people and the industries and the families in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to talk to the federal government and to our customers in some 150 countries around the world about what we are doing in our industries here in the province of Saskatchewan and why they should buy more product from our province, Mr. Speaker, because our ag products are produced with zero-till technology that makes crop agriculture virtually carbon neutral, Mr. Speaker. And in addition to that, we have our grasslands here in the province of Saskatchewan that offset two and a half times of our total emissions, Mr. Speaker.

We have world-leading carbon capture and storage technology, of which now has captured and stored 2 million tonnes of carbon, Mr. Speaker, technology that is now being utilized and conversed with places like India and China, Mr. Speaker. Just in Vietnam there is a coal-fired electrical generator that is under construction as we speak, Mr. Speaker, that is the equivalent capacity of SaskPower's total electrical generating capacity, Mr. Speaker. Can you see the potential of this technology:

zero-till drills, carbon capture and storage, Mr. Speaker, technology from the province of Saskatchewan to have an actual impact on global emissions all around the world?

So this tax will not be on the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We will not be looking for \$62 million to pay \$4 billion in order to get that grant from the federal government.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, we heard a lot of great comments about the things that are happening here in this province, what we could do as leaders in addressing climate change, but we need a plan. What we have so far is a plan with no targets, no real measures. By all accounts, that's not a plan, Mr. Speaker; that's a wish.

To have a proper carbon pricing plan in this province, a proper plan to address climate change, we need to make sure that it reduces emissions, that it protects producers, that it recognizes the role of producers in sequestration of carbon, that it protects trade-exposed industries, that it keeps life affordable, and that it creates new jobs in renewable energy.

We can do all of that, but to do so we need to design it in Saskatchewan with farmers from Saskatchewan, with business leaders from Saskatchewan, with local experts in environmental and economic policy. Why does the Premier want to leave our best minds out of the process and leave the design of this plan to Justin Trudeau?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we do have a plan. It's called the prairie resilience plan. It's a plan that works for Saskatchewan people and Saskatchewan industry. Mr. Speaker, it's a plan that's endorsed by Crescent Point Energy. It's endorsed by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. It's endorsed by Mosaic company. It's endorsed by the Regina Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Speaker. It's endorsed by the Federated Co-operatives, Mr. Speaker, here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this prairie resilience plan is part of our target. And part of our targets, Mr. Speaker, in addition to the prairie resilience plan, is to reduce our electrical generation emissions by some 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's 40 per cent, incorporating 50 per cent renewables here in the province of Saskatchewan, developed by our best and brightest minds here in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, it's fair to say that this is not a wish. These are targets that are put forward by the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in conjunction with industry. What is a wish, Mr. Speaker, what is a wish is, Mr. Speaker, is when a party comes forward with two and a half billion dollars of promises, Mr. Speaker, two and a half billion dollars with no plan on how to backfill those, Mr. Speaker. Not even a carbon tax on the people of the province will pay for these types of promises, Mr. Speaker, promises that include \$18 million for farmers to not spray their crops, Mr. Speaker. Only the NDP [New Democratic Party] would come up with an economic development plan like that.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, a plan that was an acceptable plan, that was a plan you could count on wouldn't be largely filled with to be determined, which is what we saw from this side of the House. We expect you to do a better job. We expect them to do their homework.

And one would hope, Mr. Speaker, that this government has also done their homework in terms of the legal case that they have to back up this position of intransigence, the way the Conservative Premier Pallister of Manitoba has. And the advice Manitoba got was pretty cut and dried, Mr. Speaker. As the Premier of Manitoba announced last October, and I quote:

If we just say "no," we get Trudeau. If we go to court, we lose. Our alternatives are pretty clear, I would say. We develop our made-in-Manitoba plan and we put it out there.

My question is, Mr. Speaker, when all the other provinces have recognized that there's no grounds for a constitutional challenge, why is the Premier planning to spend a fortune on a legal case that we know he'll lose?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost, we're certainly consulting with lawyers in the Saskatchewan Department of Justice, not the Manitoba Department of Justice, or lawyers in the province of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. If it's the position of the Leader of the Opposition that we should get all of our legal advice from lawyers outside of this province, Mr. Speaker, that would include a couple of legal minds on the other side of the aisle, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have a plan. It's called prairie resilience. It's a plan that will not see a carbon tax imposed on the people of Saskatchewan, a carbon tax that we know will not work to reduce emissions, Mr. Speaker, one that will kill jobs in this province, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a plan that has been endorsed.

As the Leader of the Opposition indicates, where we need to consult with farmers, Mr. Speaker, farmers have consulted on this plan and they agree with this plan. We need to consult with industry. Industry has consulted on this plan and will consult in this year on this plan, Mr. Speaker. This is a made-in-Saskatchewan plan. We certainly would hope that the members opposite would be able to endorse this plan, and not a Trudeau carbon tax.

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

Mr. Meili: — Once again, Mr. Speaker, a plan that leaves us losing \$62 million because it doesn't qualify for us to have that support that we need to invest in renewable energy. A plan with no targets, with no significant measures; it is simply a wish.

But my question was not for the Minister of the Environment. It was for the Premier because this is his job to show leadership on this, Mr. Speaker. And I want to share a quote from his predecessor. His predecessor, Mr. Brad Wall, said that "The

people of Saskatchewan must be assured that any challenge based on the *Constitution Act* has a reasonable expectation of success.”

Has the position of this Premier changed from the previous premier? Do you really want to pursue, do we really want to pursue an expensive case that we won't win, instead of getting down to the work of designing a plan that works for Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Yes we do, Mr. Speaker. Yes we will, Mr. Speaker. We will always stand on behalf of the jobs and the industries that we have, that the people of Saskatchewan work in here in the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that's what this government has committed to do, and that's what this government will continue to commit to do.

Mr. Speaker, we have talked about the impact of what a \$50-per-tonne tax on the people of Saskatchewan would mean. Mr. Speaker, it would mean \$4 billion over the next five years — \$4 billion, Mr. Speaker, in order to get back 12 and a half, \$12.4 million a year, Mr. Speaker, in this Low Carbon Economy Fund. We'll be applying for the fund, Mr. Speaker. Last I checked, we're still part of the nation of Canada. Mr. Speaker, we'll be applying for the fund to ensure that we can reduce the emissions on behalf of the people in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And it's only math like this, as I said, Mr. Speaker, it's only math like this that doesn't add up, Mr. Speaker. This is the same type of math with two and a half billion dollars of promises, Mr. Speaker, by that party over there, with no plan to pay for it, Mr. Speaker. It includes encouraging farmers to not apply chemicals to their crop, incentivizing farmers actually to produce less, Mr. Speaker. What would disincentivize our agriculture industry, our other industries, more than anything, Mr. Speaker, would be a \$50 NDP carbon tax in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

[14:15]

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, I was happy to see the Premier find his feet on this. I hope he will also find his way to show leadership and design a made-in-Saskatchewan plan that will actually address climate change and that will qualify, that will meet the requirements because otherwise . . . And I'd really like to see, I'd really like to see if this is his preference: would he prefer that that be designed by us, for us . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I'd ask that the members listen to the question and also be respectful of the answer, and let's have a spirited and respectful debate. Thank you. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Just to end my question, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that reminder. The question is, will this Premier show leadership, design a made-in-Saskatchewan plan

that meets the requirements, or will we have a plan designed by Justin Trudeau?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, as I said earlier, we have a plan. We have a prairie resilience plan on behalf . . . that is endorsed by industries here in the province of Saskatchewan. What the opposition is really saying, Mr. Speaker, is they would trip over themselves, like the opposition to the west of us, in getting a carbon tax on the people and the industries and the jobs in the province of Saskatchewan without quite understanding what that actually means, Mr. Speaker.

What that means is when you have a steel plant here in the province of Saskatchewan that has an 80 per cent reduced emissions profile when compared to the industry, Mr. Speaker, and you tax it, it will move, Mr. Speaker. It will move, quite likely to China. It'll open up a blast furnace, more emissions in the world, Mr. Speaker, and we lose a thousand jobs right in this city, Mr. Speaker. That's what they're talking about, is moving jobs to other areas of the world, Mr. Speaker.

That's something this side of the House is not interested in. We will always stand for the industries that operate here in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. We will stand for the jobs in our communities across this province, Mr. Speaker, and we will always stand for the people of the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier is refusing to give a real answer to these important questions about why he's opening the door to Justin Trudeau's carbon price. All he can say is, just watch me. Well, Mr. Speaker, we have. And anyone who's watched him as Environment minister knows there wasn't much good to see. Nothing when it came to action on illegal drainage or water management, nothing when it comes to reducing our carbon emissions, and nothing in the Environmental Code when it comes to even mentioning climate change.

So setting aside Trudeau senior's quote, what in the Premier's record as Environment minister should give people in Saskatchewan any confidence in his ability to protect us from the federally imposed carbon price?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite would know that in terms of water management in this province, it's the Premier of Saskatchewan, this Premier of Saskatchewan when he was the Environment minister, brought in legislation in this House, passed legislation that really corrected a problem that existed for over 30 years in terms of how water management was operating in this province, including when that member was an Environment minister and did nothing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, greenhouse gas emissions in the 16 years the NDP were the government went up 70 per cent, and that member was

an Environment minister and he did nothing. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, the economy, the province, and the population was going down, greenhouse gas emissions were going up under the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to this issue, the members opposite, who have a leader who said that we need a modest carbon tax, which wouldn't actually work because the carbon tax has to meet the standard of the federal government. So throw that idea out the window, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, we will not impose or have imposed a \$4 billion tax on the people of Saskatchewan over the first five years that will net us in return \$62 million. Only under the NDP does that math make any sense.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Nutana.

Carbon Capture and Storage

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, at best, these answers are weak, but at most of the time they're wrong and they're expensive. They have sent millions of dollars to an American lobbyist to polish and promote carbon capture. Still they were left out of the large carbon capture coalition that was announced last week in the United States. Now, Mr. Speaker, let's not forget. This comes after no one in the world, literally in the whole world, was willing to join the Sask Party's so-called CCS global consortium. Mr. Speaker, they like to say that they're leading the world, but the fact is the world leaders don't even want them in their club, and they don't want to sit at the lunch table.

Why is the minister not more concerned about how little Saskatchewan people are getting in return for the billions of dollars that the Sask Party has dumped into CCS?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first of all, the consortium that the member opposite talks about is an American-based consortium. We have contacts with that American-based consortium, including a number of the organizations that make up that American-based consortium. Mr. Speaker, we've had discussions with the State Department. We've had discussions with the Department of Energy about being a part of a future ministerial in Copenhagen later this year. We're awaiting word on that, Mr. Speaker.

But in terms of this actual consortium, it's an American-based consortium that the global institute on carbon capture based in Regina has partnerships with the individual organizations that make up the greater consortium. So once again, Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong in the premise of her question.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I wish that this minister would refer to the facts before he gets up and speaks. Sask Party's own numbers show that between January 2017 and January 2018, Boundary dam 3 and the CCS was only online an average of 61 per cent of the time. There were a couple months that it hit 100 per cent, but then it had to be shut down for months. After four years, it has still captured less than half of its target of 1 million

tonnes per year, resulting in millions of dollars in penalties.

Mr. Speaker, instead of getting it right, this government is forcing power tax hikes, leaving Saskatchewan's people vulnerable to Ottawa's carbon price, and stubbornly rejecting \$62 million in federal funding. Why is the Sask Party so committed to pushing this \$1.5 billion carbon tax?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, only the members opposite would think that removing the equivalent of 500,000 vehicles from the province of Saskatchewan in terms of emissions would be a bad thing. Only the members opposite would see 2 million tonnes of carbon dioxide being sequestered and stored underground, that enhances oil recovery — which was frankly pioneered in this province, to their credit, under the NDP — only they would think that now that is a bad thing. And, Mr. Speaker, only the NDP would think that . . . At COP [Conference of Parties] 21 in Paris, the only reference by the UN [United Nations] secretariat for what Canada is doing in terms of emissions reductions is Boundary dam 3, Mr. Speaker. That's the record of this province.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite introduced a petition earlier today that quoted "Canada's greenhouse gas emissions: developments, prospects and reductions." That was the office of the parliamentary budget office, I believe was the document that she referenced. And, Mr. Speaker, I hope I get a subsequent question because, not surprising, the premise of the question was wrong. The information she provided to this House was incomplete. Again after again, time after time, incomplete information from the members opposite.

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

Public-Private Partnerships

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, increasingly the Sask Party stands alone. And that's true with their blind support of privatization as well. Yesterday the Conservative Government of Manitoba announced that they had done their homework. Mr. Speaker, they asked financial experts and they found that they could save money by going back to traditional builds. Mr. Speaker, now not only will teachers and students be actually able to open their windows and put things on the walls, instead of three schools, they're getting a fourth one thrown in because of all the money that they've saved.

Mr. Speaker, why is the Sask Party ignoring the facts, and why are they still defending their 30-year rent-a-school scheme when they could've gotten more for less?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the province of Manitoba will make their own budgetary decisions when it comes to how they want to proceed on capital but, Mr. Speaker, this government has done its homework. And the members opposite only need to go online to look at the value-for-money reports that were done by this government when we made the decision to move ahead with P3s

[public-private partnership], Mr. Speaker. They're saving the taxpayers of this province \$100 million, Mr. Speaker, over the course of these contracts, Mr. Speaker. We put a P3 lens on these contracts, Mr. Speaker, and that's the demonstration, that's the result of that demonstration, Mr. Speaker, by reputable accounting firms in this country that verify those reports, Mr. Speaker. They're written by them, Mr. Speaker.

So we stand by the decision to put a P3 lens on those contracts, Mr. Speaker, and as we go forward with other capital projects, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't always provide value for money, Mr. Speaker. We've seen projects where we've put a P3 lens on the overpasses at Warman and Martensville, Mr. Speaker, where it didn't save any money. And so we didn't proceed that way; we proceeded with a traditional approach, Mr. Speaker. But where they make sense, where they save the taxpayers money — and in this case \$100 million — to build, to build nine joint-use schools, Mr. Speaker, which were on time and on budget.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, yes, the former SaskBuilds minister has all the tired lines, but the reality is this is a failed model that has failed in every other place on the planet. And P3 contracts cost more and they hurt our kids' experiences. My facts are straight. According to the guidelines, "P3 schools should be treated like leased space."

Mr. Speaker, P3s were never about saving money. It was about the Sask Party being able to cut ribbons and kick the can down the road, forcing generations to pay for their mistakes. Conservatives in Manitoba decided that it was better to revamp traditional builds so that they could save money and serve students.

So the question for that minister is this, Mr. Speaker: why did the Sask Party plow ahead with their P3 plans rather than looking for a model that actually works?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned in this House on numerous occasions, we look and determine whether or not a P3 is going to save the taxpayers money over the term of those contracts, Mr. Speaker. We put that lens on these contracts, Mr. Speaker. So for the member to suggest that we didn't look at options is completely wrong, Mr. Speaker. These school divisions are not leased, Mr. Speaker. They're owned by the school divisions. They're owned just like any other school, Mr. Speaker. But the fact of the matter is when we put a lens on this, when the accounting firms did the value-for-money reports which were available for the members opposite to look at, they'll see that they save, over the term of the contract, \$100 million.

Mr. Speaker, this is all about transferring risk, the Government of Saskatchewan who doesn't take the risk on for the development and the building of these projects, Mr. Speaker. I can point out to hundreds of projects that have been built by the province of Saskatchewan over many, many years that have gone over time and over budget, Mr. Speaker. We don't have to go far back in history to see the projects that were built, some of

them. But these buildings were built on time, on budget. Children were in their classrooms for September of this last year, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to put this lens on these projects as we move forward, Mr. Speaker, where it makes sense for the people of Saskatchewan.

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

Funding for Municipalities

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's cuts are hurting our communities. Their choices like cutting grants-in-lieu for municipalities and freezing revenue sharing are hurting Saskatchewan people in their hometowns. Unlike the Sask Party government, municipalities can't run deficit after deficit when they have a shortfall. They can't double the debt every five years. They have to run balanced budgets, so this leaves only two choices: raise taxes or cut services for people who rely on them.

These tax hikes are Sask Party tax hikes and these cuts are Sask Party's cuts. Will the new Premier work to restore funding to municipalities that his predecessor slashed, or will he try to force municipalities to take the blame for his party's failure to support our communities?

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

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand by our government's record in supporting revenue sharing, that we've had a tremendous program going forward in the last 10 years, certainly looking at the virtually doubling of what we've had with the previous government's support for revenue sharing to our municipalities. We've had extensive consultations with our partners, with SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], and every one of them has supported this process and will be moving into the future.

[14:30]

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

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — I ask leave for an introduction.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave for an introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce a constituent of mine in the west gallery. He's an executive member of ours in our constituency of Melville-Saltcoats. He's also a former president of the Saskatchewan Party and I consider a very good friend. I'd like everyone to welcome George Haas to his Legislative

Assembly. Thank you.

**MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH II**

The Speaker: — So before orders of the day, I'll ask all members to rise for the Commonwealth Day message of Her Majesty the Queen:

We all have reason to give thanks for the numerous ways in which our lives are enriched when we learn from others. Through exchanging ideas, and seeing life from other perspectives, we grow in understanding and work more collaboratively towards a common future. There is a very special value in the insights we gain through the Commonwealth connection; shared inheritances help us overcome difference so that diversity is a cause for celebration rather than division.

We shall see this in action at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting which takes place in the United Kingdom next month, bringing together young people, business and civil society from across the Commonwealth.

These gatherings are themselves fine examples of how consensus and commitment can help to create a future that is fairer, more secure, more prosperous and sustainable. Having enjoyed the warm hospitality of so many Commonwealth countries over the years, I look forward to the pleasure of welcoming the leaders of our family of 53 nations to my homes in London and Windsor.

Sport also contributes to building peace and development. The excitement and positive potential of friendly rivalry will be on display next month as we enjoy the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast, Australia. Contributing to the success of the Games, alongside athletes and officials, will be thousands of volunteers.

Voluntary effort, by people working as individuals, in groups or through larger associations, is so often what shapes the Commonwealth and all our communities. By pledging to serve the common good in new ways, we can ensure that the Commonwealth continues to grow in scope and stature, to have an even greater impact on people's lives, today, and for future generations.

I'd also like to make this statement. So earlier today . . . Oh sorry. Be seated.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Ruling on Question of Privilege

The Speaker: — Earlier today, the Opposition House Leader raised a question of privilege. Under the provisions of rule 12 of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*, I received the notice this morning, Tuesday, March the 13th, 2018, at 10:53 a.m. Upon receipt of this notice, in accordance with the rules, both House leaders are aware of the details of the case and the proposed question of privilege. It is the responsibility of the Speaker to determine if a prima facie case of privilege has been established.

Contempt of the Assembly is a serious charge, which requires careful examination of the case and this Assembly's practices and precedents. The minister has apologized to the Assembly and I will consider this apology in my decision. However I've not had sufficient time to carefully consider all matters related to this question, so for this reason I shall defer my ruling.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Membership of the Board of Internal Economy

The Speaker: — I'd like to inform the Assembly that a message from the Lieutenant Governor has been received stating effective February the 6th, 2018 that the membership of the Board of Internal Economy was the Speaker, Chair; Hon. Jeremy Harrison; Hon. Paul Merriman; Hon. Greg Brkich; and MLAs Dan D'Autremont, David Forbes, and Warren McCall.

Vacancy in Regina Northeast Constituency

The Speaker: — Further, I would like to inform the Assembly of the vacancy in the constituency of Regina Northeast due to the resignation of Mr. Kevin Doherty.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I rise today to move second reading of *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017*. We are proud that in Saskatchewan the vast majority of tenancy agreements are amicable and respectful. In the cases where they are not, however, they have recourse to the able women and men of the Office of Residential Tenancies.

Mr. Speaker, the goal of the government with *The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006* is to provide balance and neutrality between the rights and obligations of landlords and the rights and obligations of tenants.

We have become aware of some provisions of the legislation that provides some rights without concurrent obligations. Other provisions have proven troublesome. These amendments will make adjustments to bring the legislation to balance between rights of tenants and rights of landlords.

Mr. Speaker, one of the significant amendments is the amendment to section 22.1 which ensures that landlords may establish reasonable rules prohibiting the possession, use, selling, or distribution of cannabis, or the growing and possession of cannabis plants in the rental unit.

The announcement by the federal government that possession, use, selling, and growing of cannabis will be allowed in certain circumstances by the summer of 2018, has caused concern for many people, including landlords. They are worried with the

potential effect on other tenants in multi-family housing. As well, for single-family premises, there may be insurance issues that the landlord will need to take into consideration. Although the landlords already have the right to make reasonable rules, this amendment ensures that rules relating to cannabis are available.

Mr. Speaker, there are two amendments to section 70 regarding the powers of hearing officers. The first amendment clarifies a practice that has been ongoing for many years, which is to include rent arrears in an order for damages awarded to a landlord. The second amendment equalizes treatment between landlords and tenants who fail to comply with an order made by the office. Once this is in place, both landlords and tenants will be at risk of having subsequent applications declined if they have not complied with an order made pursuant to the Act.

The next amendment, Mr. Speaker, deals with appeals from orders that issue writs of possession to landlords for tenants' failure to pay rent. These are, in the colloquial terminology, eviction orders for non-payment of rent. The current appeal provision, section 72, allows appeals on questions of law or jurisdiction. It provides that in order for a tenant to appeal an eviction order for non-payment of rent, the tenant must either deposit one-half of one month's rent with the court or prove to the local registrar that the rent in fact has been paid.

The new provision eliminates the deposit with the court and simply requires that the rent continues to be paid. This again balances the right of the tenant to appeal with the right of the landlord to be paid for the occupation of the premises. It will also end the rare but highly publicized incidents of tenants who use the appeal process to prolong their stay in the premises without paying their rent. This strategy is highly unfair to landlords and has been the subject of critical media stories throughout Canada.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, amendments are being made to section 85 dealing with the personal property abandoned by tenants when they leave a tenancy situation. If these tenants have chosen to leave their low-value property behind instead of dealing with it, landlords become responsible for disposing of it. Currently landlords may not sell or destroy it, no matter what the value, without an order from the Office of Residential Tenancies. Although these officers are made relatively quickly, they still cause delay in re-renting the property.

The amendment, Mr. Speaker, will permit the landlord to deal with the abandoned property without an order from the Office of Residential Tenancies if the value of the property is below \$1,500. This will ease the process for landlords immensely without causing significant hardship to tenants. Incidentally, it will also ease the workload of the Office of Residential Tenancies in dealing with these orders, which is significant. Any proceeds are paid to the Office of Residential Tenancies for the tenant to claim.

Mr. Speaker, we feel that these amendments will help make the process fair and equitable for both landlords and tenants. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of

Bill 115. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand in my place today to give, as I've done on numerous occasions, to give the opposition's perspective on bills as they're being introduced by the Saskatchewan Party government, Mr. Speaker, and I want to speak briefly about the history of some of the bills that the Saskatchewan Party has brought to the Assembly, everything from the CCS carbon tax that they've imposed on families and farms and businesses throughout Saskatchewan, yet that's certainly a complete failure. The fact that they had a billion-dollar tax hike last year, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that after a number of years with the Sask Party at the helm we've had record revenue the first five years of their tenure as a government, and now, Mr. Speaker, after 10 years we have record debt.

So how do you translate record revenue into record debt, Mr. Speaker, and future debt? Well leave it to the Tory math wizards on that end of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to figure out how you take a province that has record revenue, a booming economy, a growing population, and now we're faced with record debt. And, Mr. Speaker, the future looks bleak under the Saskatchewan Party government and that's why it's really important, that's why it's really important that the people of Saskatchewan pay very close attention to what the Sask Party's doing, not just to the fact that they have this debt that's climbing up every single day that they're in power, Mr. Speaker, that future generations will have to pay.

This is why politics is important. This is why scrutiny of bills that are being brought forward, Mr. Speaker, is also very, very important, and that's why this particular bill, Bill No. 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act*, we have to pay very close attention to that, Mr. Speaker, because obviously there are changes in there for the relationship between the landlord and certainly someone that is leasing an apartment off that particular owner.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the intent behind some of these bills is so very important that we have to take the time to reach out to various groups and organizations that may be impacted by these bills. And I'll give you a perfect example, Mr. Speaker. It'd be very interesting to do the analysis of how much the carbon capture sequestration plan, the carbon capture tax being imposed by the Sask Party, how it's going to affect businesses and families and the farm community throughout the province. As we're paying for the carbon capture sequestration project, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are paying that bill. We're paying it on our power bills, and so the carbon capture tax is compliments of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker.

And then they talk about the federal imposed carbon tax, so what I think is happening here, Mr. Speaker, is that they are . . . they don't want no competition from anyone under the carbon tax scenario. They're the ones that want to impose a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, on the people of Saskatchewan, called a CCS strategy, Mr. Speaker.

So I wouldn't mind doing an analysis of what they're making Saskatchewan farms and families and businesses pay for their carbon capture tax versus what they are proposing the federal

government is doing. And once the analysis is done, Mr. Speaker, then I think it's important for the people of Saskatchewan to be advised how the analysis comes out, and we're certainly going to do that, you know, from our end as well. So the intent of some of these bills, as indicated, it's really, really important to show exactly what the Saskatchewan Party is trying to do, Mr. Speaker.

Now under Bill 115, Mr. Speaker, as I've indicated, it is important on every single bill that the Saskatchewan Party brings forward that we allow it as much scrutiny as possible, that we as an opposition have to network with those being impacted. And we also have to at times really begin to try and assess who the winner is and who the loser is and really if there is the opportunity, to balance those interests.

As the senior government within Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, it's important to always look at the interests of all people being impacted by the legislation to make sure that balance is achieved. My point in the history of the CCS carbon capture tax being imposed by the Saskatchewan Party is that the messengers have long had a history of betraying Saskatchewan people and then simply deflecting to other governments so that they're able to cover up their mismanagement, scandal, and waste, Mr. Speaker, and more importantly, the increased taxes that the people of Saskatchewan pay each and every day because of that mismanagement, because of that waste, and because of the scandal, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

So I think it's really important that we hear the messenger and make sure that we reflect the history of some of the other bills being brought forward and how they weakly try to deflect, Mr. Speaker, of how they weakly try to deflect from their miserable record, Mr. Speaker, as a government. And this is what we're seeing evidence of today. There is a complete lack of leadership. There has been a history of bringing forward bills and then certainly trying to circumvent the good intentions of many people that do participate in the design of these bills by bringing forward their taxation processes, and certainly trying to cover up for their mismanagement, scandal, and waste.

And this is a good example, Mr. Speaker, of why it's important to look at these bills, to understand who is presenting this bill. It's a Saskatchewan Party bill so the opposition's going to get up and they're going to provide every bill every opportunity to scrutinize exactly what's going on when it comes to the Saskatchewan Party government because, Mr. Speaker, the art of deflection, the art of deflection employed by the Saskatchewan Party right now is not working. The people of Saskatchewan are simply not buying it anymore. They see this party do it time and time and time and time again.

And that day is coming, Mr. Speaker, where that arrogance is going to be . . . There'll be a price imposed on that arrogance, Mr. Speaker. And one of the biggest, greatest challenges we have in Saskatchewan is that future governments — and I dare say the NDP is going to be a future government, Mr. Speaker — that they will have to once again clean up the mess, clean up the mess. And that's why it is important that we pay attention to bills like Bill 115, because, Mr. Speaker, it is a huge financial mess that's being created by the province right now, and people

of Saskatchewan know that.

So as much as they get up and they start trying to deflect and change the channel, Mr. Speaker, our job as the opposition is to make sure and to remind people, to remind people exactly the damage that the Saskatchewan Party's doing to the province of Saskatchewan. And notwithstanding the theatrics of the members opposite in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we know, we know that at the end of the day the interests of the Saskatchewan people are not being maintained by the Saskatchewan Party. And they continue using the politics of deflection while not dealing with the real issues that are challenging people right across this great province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, under *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of changes that affect people that rent units. And I'm assuming the vast majority of these rental units we're talking about are apartments. Now, Mr. Speaker, there may be other arrangements such as housing and so on and so forth.

So again you've got to go back on the history of the party proposing these amendments and these changes. And right away there's a lot of mistrust by a lot of people, especially those most vulnerable, especially those most vulnerable, in making sure that their interests are being maintained, Mr. Speaker. And that's certainly something that ought to be in the back of every leader in this province's mind. And I think it's very paramount to how we think that as a society or as a government or as a legislator, Mr. Speaker, we have to incorporate in our mind how is this going to affect and impact the most vulnerable people in our province.

That should drive, many times, our thought process. That should drive, Mr. Speaker, our planning process and that should be in our minds every single day as we do these bills, as we move forward, Mr. Speaker. And again I go back to the history of the Saskatchewan Party and the miserable way in which they've managed this province, Mr. Speaker. And at the end of the day, the future generations will pay the price and the people of Saskatchewan will find out exactly how they have squandered record revenue and to this day have put the Saskatchewan people under record debt. It doesn't make any sense how we go from record revenue to record debt, Mr. Speaker. And that's why, Mr. Speaker, it's important to scrutinize what the Saskatchewan Party do on every single bill, as I've mentioned time and time again.

Now under this bill, Mr. Speaker, as I look to the bill itself, the bill really accomplishes four main things. And I want to talk about some of the areas that the bill covers.

First of all I'm assuming, Mr. Speaker, that there's been good robust discussions with both impacted groups, the landlords who will obviously, or the people that own the properties — could be landlady I guess, to be fair . . . The people that own these properties, that rent these properties to a great number of people, Mr. Speaker — and I'm one of them that rented an apartment here in the city — it's important to know that they have the ultimate cost of maintaining the building, paying the mortgage, to ensuring that the building is safe and secure.

It is indeed a great amount of responsibility and thus and therefore they should also be receiving their duly compensation for people living in these units, as of course this is not a free service. And I think people understand that. And certainly from our perspective we look at the landlords throughout the province. They have had some significant, some significant advantages to offer people that can't afford their own home, and certainly those that are moving to the city and are transitioning to home ownership eventually. Those services are really important that we . . . We certainly understand the incredible value they offer the people of Saskatchewan.

So some of the bill's main thrust, Mr. Speaker, it gives landlords new powers to make rules, and I quote, "... prohibiting the possession, use, selling or distribution of cannabis or the growing or possession of cannabis [plants] . . ."

Mr. Speaker, it also gives the Office of Residential Tenancies, the ORT hearing officers new powers to refuse to allow an application from a tenant who is in contravention of an ORT order. Now what that means, Mr. Speaker, is if I have an ORT order against me and you're my landlord, I cannot delay the process nor can I abuse the process by turning around and challenging you back. I think clearly it's got to be an understanding that the few that may want to abuse the privilege that we have in appealing some of these decisions, Mr. Speaker, this really hurts the cause overall in building a solid relationship between the tenant and of course the landlord.

So I think what's happened with that particular process, Mr. Speaker, the officers now have new abilities to refuse an order to appeal a decision by the ORT from tenants that may be in contravention of the rules. Mr. Speaker, during all the appeal processes, tenants have to continue to pay their rent for the duration of the appeal process when they are arguing against an ORT decision. And, Mr. Speaker, they also have the right to grant the landlord possession of a rental unit for rent arrears. That's also another important factor, one of the three issues that are being considered, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, the final part of the bill, it allows landlords to dispose of property worth less than \$1,500 without an order from the ORT, when the tenancy ends or if the property is abandoned. Now, Mr. Speaker, there are many examples that I would think offhand. Obviously there are many times where tenants will leave an old couch or a bed or a dresser behind. Either they're abandoning that unit or abandoning that item. I think it's important that many times the landlord has the responsibility of cleaning up the unit and disposing of any unwanted furnishings and so on and so forth.

So the new change in the bill allows the landlord to dispose of that property of less than \$1,500. Now, Mr. Speaker, we've got to be very careful on some of the issues that may come into play. As an example, there may be a spouse leaving a domestic violence matter, that they maybe suddenly have to leave. Is that process being incorporated into this? Is there a relationship that could be achieved when we have those kinds of circumstances, Mr. Speaker? There's a big significant difference in how the landlords, by and large, are very, very responsible landlords. And, Mr. Speaker, there are times when, yes, certain tenants will leave behind an old dresser or an old bed. They obviously understand that they're throwing that unit away, and it's always

the responsibility of the landlord to clean up that suite so others could use it.

But, Mr. Speaker, there is a significant difference between a \$50 dresser drawer, Mr. Speaker, or a \$100 bed, versus a \$1,000 TV. There's got to be some kind of an understanding. There's got to be some kind of a process that makes sure that, at the end of the day, that if there's something of significant value, that the tenant themselves and the landlord should be able to work out a deal where they're not leaving some of these really, really expensive assets behind for a reason of domestic violence or it was borrowed from someone or there was a sudden passing. All of these matters need to be taken into account.

So finally, Mr. Speaker, as I wrap up my comments around Bill 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker, in northern Saskatchewan there was a great opportunity under a housing initiative that really talked about *The Residential Tenancies Act* overall, where working families were allowed to own their own home after a period of time. And what happened in 2012 was the then minister of Housing — I'm not sure if I can offer her name, but the Hon. June Draude — that decided to cancel the option of families owning their own home and withdrawing through the Sask Housing Corporation that ability for families to purchase their home.

And, Mr. Speaker, that was the biggest slight to northern Saskatchewan families because, as we all know, in order for us to have successful families, in order to have very nurturing environment for children, you've got to have a decent home, Mr. Speaker. You've got to have home ownership. That's so bloody important, so vitally important to the future of any family. And the opportunity to own the home in northern Saskatchewan where's a limited housing market, Mr. Speaker, that was ripped away by the then minister of Housing and the Saskatchewan Party, Mr. Speaker. And I say to them in this Assembly, shame on them. Shame on them because this could've helped a lot of families. It could have helped a lot of families.

And the vision attached to this at that time was to make sure that we strengthen families to the extent where they're strong and resilient for years to come. And the Saskatchewan Party, in their very limited, very limited wisdom, decided to rip away that opportunity. And I say to them, shame on them again. And shame on that minister for making that decision at that time because it was nothing more than petty politics, Mr. Speaker, in the fact that they didn't understand northern Saskatchewan communities. They didn't understand northern Saskatchewan families. They didn't understand that northern Saskatchewan people, like the rest of the province, wanted the opportunity to own their own home, as the rest of the province enjoyed 74 per cent ownership, Mr. Speaker, and it's a third of that in northern Saskatchewan.

And this is the reason I say to people today, when it comes to housing and taking care of your families through decent, good, affordable housing, you do not trust the Saskatchewan Party, and we need to fight them every single day and every step of the way. And that's why it's important to continue to pay attention to the bills of this sort because anything to do with housing and families and building a future, we don't trust the Saskatchewan Party government in any way, shape, or form. In

fact we're prepared to fight on every front. And this is why scrutiny of any bills they bring forward, it needs to happen, Mr. Speaker.

So on that note, I have much more to say on other bills, and I'll certainly take the opportunity to do so, but I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member for Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 94

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cox that **Bill No. 94** — *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And while I'm on my feet I want to congratulate you on your new role. I feel like I might be a little rusty in doing second readings, but you're new, so we'll get through this together.

I do rise today to speak to Bill No. 94, and for those who might not remember, that is the Saskatchewan advantages grant for education savings, otherwise known as SAGES, amendment Act in 2017. And, Mr. Speaker, sometimes we use euphemistic language. In this case, the amendment Act means the suspension of that program.

This program provided Saskatchewan families with a matching grant of up to \$250 when they saved money in an RESP [registered education savings plan] for their students to put towards a post-secondary education. This was one of many decisions that we saw in the last budget that really . . . I think budgets really show where your values are, Mr. Speaker. And this was a budget that took a real aim at education in our province, both at the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] level, but also at the post-secondary level. And this was one of those decisions.

[15:00]

Just as a recount, Mr. Speaker, this was not the only direct cut to post-secondary education or the only impact on families who might be looking to save for post-secondary education. This represented a \$7.6 million cut with the suspension of SAGES [Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings], and in order to make this cut I believe there was a \$60,000 expenditure that went along with cutting this program for families around

the province — and this at a time when families see increasing pressure on wages and on their ability to pay bills in the province, and it's increasingly difficult to save money for post-secondary education.

Unfortunately Saskatchewan has the second-highest rates of university tuition in the country. Having a child in grade 12 and one in grade 10, this is a reality that's all too real for people. So when they're looking at where to send their students, of course we would love for our students to stay here at our post-secondary institutions. But decisions around funding and underfunding of our universities, coupled with a tax on families' abilities to save for their children's post-secondary education, makes that increasingly difficult, Mr. Speaker.

And there's a quote that I'd like to enter into the record here that I think is important because again, budgets being about values, but they also shouldn't be about just short-term decisions. They should take the long term into account as well. There are a lot of places that you can cut today that might end up costing a whole lot more in the future, and I think education maybe is foremost amongst those. So the quote is this, Mr. Speaker: "If you think education is expensive, you should try ignorance."

And I'm afraid that there were some decisions made with this last budget that really, really do question the long-term planning and the value that this government places on education. I know that there are a lot of nice words around how much education is valued, and young people and keeping young people here. But words, if you don't back them up, are just that. They're just fancy words.

And if we see increasing cuts to education, in post-secondary education, while we say we value it, we value education, Mr. Speaker, it really does beg the question: what are people to believe? I think "actions speak louder than words" is another quote that I didn't coin but I think is appropriate in this instance.

And this was a rather short-lived program that had good uptake in the province, introduced actually only in 2014 by this government. The SAGES program was introduced with rather large fanfare and a lot of those nice words that we've been talking about. I'm just going to read a couple of quotes into the record here, from the then minister, Mr. Norris, who noted:

To support our government's Plan for Growth [because education is integral to growth], we want to ensure more students have the opportunity to pursue a post-secondary education. SAGES will help achieve this by encouraging families to plan for their children's future and promoting the importance of completing post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, apparently that is only believed in the good times. When times get tough, education and support for education seems to be one of the first things to go. And that's really, it's more than disappointing. I think it's long term on the unwise side, both economically but also in terms of the wrong signal sending to people in the province, particularly our young people.

I want to give a little bit of a highlight to the great work that

does happen despite some unstable and underfunding, chronic underfunding, of our universities. Things like the Global Institute for Water Security, an interdisciplinary program at the U of S, these are world-class programs. These are exactly the type of diversification and things that we should be promoting in this province as we look forward to the next several decades. Interdisciplinary, tech sector, teaching critical thought and problem-solving skills, these are all things that are learned at . . . agricultural innovation, which this province is known for — these are all things that happen at our universities. And we're in peril of going backwards on that when we make decisions like this, when we restrict access to post-secondary education for students and when we also, when we underfund our post-secondary education institutes.

So this program, SAGES, offered as I noted a grant of 10 per cent of subscriber contributions to a maximum of \$250 a year, to a lifetime maximum of \$4,500 which, Mr. Speaker, is almost . . . which is a year's tuition in many institutions. Not in Saskatchewan anymore because again our rates of tuition keep climbing, but it's more or less a year of tuition, and that makes a big difference to many families.

I know when our kids were little, I was working part-time and it was one of the . . . One thing we were able to do for our kids was put some money aside for their education. And I tell you, I'm pretty happy that we did that now when we're looking at the oldest going into engineering. She has options because we were able to put money in that savings plan that, frankly, a lot of families without that option simply . . . a lot of students wouldn't have without some of those supports.

Not only does it play the role of saving them money, but it also draws attention to the importance of saving money for families. And it's a little bit of . . . There's an educational piece about how investing little bits over the course of your child's life starting from a young age actually, you know, multiplies; the benefit multiplies. And by the time they're in university, you're able to provide them with some support.

I'm going to read another quote by one of the then people working within, the Minister of State in social development, Candice Bergen, who said this at the time:

We recognize the challenges that families face in saving for their children's education. That's why our government is proud to invest in future generations through initiatives such as the RESP, the Canada Learning Bond, and the CESG.

Again, a similar type of program to SAGES. And that is the case. Families do have difficulty saving for post-secondary education. And this was just one more hit both to families in this province in this last budget but also, as I've noted several times, a hit to education.

Looking at further reductions in the last budget for education, a 5.8 per cent reduction, \$44 million; a 5 per cent reduction to base funding for post-secondary education; 5.4 million for the U of R alone, that followed for the second time in a row a \$1.66 million mid-year reduction. If you can imagine that, Mr. Speaker, having your budget set for the year and two years in a row having your budget clawed back at mid-year because

frankly someone else failed to plan.

And as has been mentioned before, you know, universities don't have the same options that governments do. So this is a burden that's foisted on our post-secondary educational institutions mid-year and they're left to pick up the pieces. And frankly, those costs and that uncertainty gets passed down to students. And it really does weaken our post-secondary educational institutions and I think, Mr. Speaker, that is completely wrong-headed and short-sighted.

I'm just going to look for a quote here from Vianne Timmons at the time. I may have to bring it closer to my eyes, Mr. Speaker.

The cuts to scholarships and student aid will make it that much harder to afford for those enrolled in classes and the elimination of the Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings means that parents saving for their child's education are going to be paying more when their child starts post-secondary education.

So already we've seen a reduction to grants and awards.

Branching off of this, Vianne Timmons' email stated that this is "obviously disappointing" and that "more critically, the cuts ignore the affordability challenges facing students and neglect the significant economic and social benefits of post-secondary education."

Mr. Speaker, this is what happens when you look at things like education simply as an expense. This is an investment. It is one of the wisest investments that we can make as a province, as a society. And it is an investment that this government unfortunately has failed to make and chose to, in fact, put first on the chopping block in this province when times turned downwards.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I think, I know that others of my colleagues will have comments on this bill but I think I have come to the end of my own comments and I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 94.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 94, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 95

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 95** — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal and Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I too would like to join my colleagues in wishing you well in your election as Speaker. I'm confident you will serve us all to the best of your

ability and actually make us very proud of your work in the Chair. So I'm glad that you stepped forward and put your name. Kind of an exciting time with seven choices there, but I'm glad that you were able to come out on top and I'm confident that you'll do a great job. I also wanted to thank my own colleague from Riversdale for stepping up too. It means a lot. And all the other ones too. Being Speaker is a very, very important position in our legislature, in our democracy, so here's to your future achievements as Speaker.

But I wanted to join in today in talking about Bill No. 95, *An Act to repeal and amend miscellaneous Statutes and make consequential amendments to certain Statutes*. It's always interesting — I look forward to this bill every year to see what is coming forward, what from the Justice department they've decided needs to . . . no longer is relevant, no longer serves its purpose, in fact could be confusing or detrimental to the application of law here in Saskatchewan.

And this is an interesting group of candidates that we have before us. Some, I have to say, are real heroes; what they did in terms of developing Saskatchewan is truly, truly amazing. And others are some real dogs, some that should never have seen the light of day. And in fact sometimes when we ask where did the money go, we'll definitely see. Yes, we'll see where the money went. But I save that for later because I want to talk about the good work first.

And the one that . . . there's a couple here that I think are very, very interesting that were amazing pieces of legislation that were brought forward, and one was *The Rural Electrification Act*, is now being repealed. And in fact I think this is a kind of thing, particularly in a rural province like our own, really is an outstanding piece of legislation that really brought forward rural homes and farms and communities into the 20th century and the work that was done around the '30s and the '40s.

And you know, when I was looking it up and, you know, there was a rural electrification bill for the United States, Saskatchewan, I think probably right across North America. It was a real period of change. And that is a bill that I think is really pretty special and we're sad to see . . . well not sad. I guess we get sentimental about the good work that was done. It probably has outlasted its usefulness, but I don't know if they have a wall of fame up there with good bills that we should be proud of. And this is one that I would nominate to say that's one of the top bills we should be . . . I think that it's something that we should be thinking about when we do legislation, not as we've seen this side. I mean it's going to be interesting when in years future . . . I mean they're already . . . And I'll get to the one where they're already throwing out past legislation that they've created, they know was a dog.

But the other one I want to talk about which is so interesting, especially in the debate that we had today in question period, it was around *The Home Energy Loan Act*. And of course *The Home Energy Loan Act* was created in 1978, and it's interesting what was happening in the '70s in terms of energy conservation. And it was caused because of the high price of oil at that time, and some of us may remember those times.

[15:15]

And of course there was a real push on in the '70s to do something about conservation. And I think about Premier Blakeney and his visionary approach to governing Saskatchewan. And one was about how we need to make sure our homes in Saskatchewan were better homes, homes that really showed the best in conservation. And so this home energy loan Act was about that visionary process that we actually see very lacking today with this government, this government, when it really has no plan for climate change, has no way of addressing the real challenges that we see before us.

And in fact I think of specifically one thing they did that was a backwards step was alternate fuel cars that they had. And I think the minister of the day that brought it forward was the MLA from Silverwood, when he was minister of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], had the foresight to say, let's make sure those people get a reduction in their licence plates as a nod to say, right on; you should have hybrid or alternate energy cars. A few years later though they realized that wasn't doing so well in terms of making cash, so they repealed that. And the signal was very much that they're not in favour of that kind of thing, and they repealed that kind of work. So there's big gaps, big question marks about their commitment to that kind of thing.

The other one is the *Lord's Day Act*, and of course that now, as we realize in this day and age that we're a multi-ethnic community, and maybe that's not as relevant. But it does remind me in every . . . I actually get pretty disappointed about this when I think about when we repealed *The Labour Standards Act* and took out the weekend. And here we are. It always saddens me a little bit about this government's lack of commitment to family and the weekend, and here we have it.

But the one that really is interesting, and I know that members over there want to say, what are the dogs, what are the dogs of legislation that we're putting out of their misery? Well one of them is the Enterprise Saskatchewan bill. We are putting that one out of its misery. And I remember when, I think it was the member from Meadow Lake was the . . . Was not the member from Meadow Lake the minister? I remember when he thought that was the greatest thing since sliced bread; nothing could be better than Enterprise Saskatchewan . . . But it really ran havoc through the business community right across Saskatchewan. Nobody knew what was going on, what was the plan of this government.

And of course that was the brainchild of Brad Wall from Swift Current, and he thought it was a great idea and was one of his major platforms that he brought in when he became premier. And now as he's left just a few short weeks ago, they're getting rid of that legislation. They don't want to have anything like that around. That is a bad dog, bad dog. When there's something rotten in Denmark, like Enterprise Saskatchewan, you've got to get it out the door. And so here we are.

You know, I've just got to say when I look and I read it, it's not just us, but this was the premier's pet project. So I know for them over there, it must have been interesting when Justice says, we've got to get rid of this thing as soon as we can. Like they couldn't wait for the premier to get out the door, because I know the premier signed off, Premier Brad Wall signed off on this piece of legislation to say it just was a dumb idea and I'm

sorry that we spent . . . I would like to know how much of all the money did they spend on Enterprise Saskatchewan. How much was that? What did that great idea cost? You know, in . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You know, it's like those guys over there, they've only got one or two answers, you know? You've got to talk to them about their heckling. Make it a little bit more interesting, you know.

Today we heard about the 2016 election campaign, and those guys have the nerve to stand up and lecture us on the 2016 election campaign. Look at the last two budgets that we've seen from them. How do they have any, any courage at all to talk about money management?

But this is what Bruce Johnstone had to say about that dog, Enterprise Saskatchewan. In 2007, Bruce Johnstone wrote for the *Leader-Post*, and I quote, "Enterprise Saskatchewan, Premier-elect Brad . . ." Well this was before. "Premier-elect Brad Wall's vision of how to manage the province's economic development could be the biggest achievement of his administration, or it could be his biggest flop." Well it looks like it's heading for the dust bin, and the House Leader and all those folks, it's going to be interesting when they vote in favour of that. And we'll have to just let the former premier, Brad Wall, know that we just ixnayed on that little thing called Enterprise Saskatchewan. So I think it's pretty clear where we landed on that, Mr. Speaker.

And so at this point, I know many of my colleagues will want to have comment on this for a bit. It's a very interesting piece of legislation. So with that, I would move adjournment on Bill No. 95. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has adjourned debate on Bill No. 95, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal and Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 96

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 96** — *The Choice of Court Agreements (Hague Convention Implementation) Act/Loi sur les accords d'élection de for (mise en œuvre de la Convention de La Haye)* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And might I join my colleagues in first off starting with a word of congratulations to yourself and many happy returns of the day in terms of the work set out before you serving this Assembly, gainsaying the rights and responsibilities of we, the members of this Legislative Assembly. We wish you the best in all of that.

And now I will not tempt your inclination to call me to order or anything like that; I'll just try and stay on the straight and narrow here. But I do so in the certainty that you'll get me back

on the path should I require that help, Mr. Speaker.

But I'm interested in joining the debate here today, and particularly, you know, sometimes you get choice spots in the batting order. Coming after a bill like *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act*, I'd, you know, I'd want to attach myself with a nail to the remarks from the member from Saskatoon Centre in terms of . . . That's one for the Hall of Fame, for sure. And again to think that, here we are in our place in the cosmos, Mr. Speaker. We're here when they're putting down Enterprise Saskatchewan. And, you know, again there's no word on what sort of auction they've held for the uniforms that they had along with that. There's no word on what happened to the Starship Enterprise. It's perhaps pushing the outer limits of this government's legacy ever further. Maybe it wound up in the scrap heap. I don't know where that wound up, Mr. Speaker. There's no word on the 30 years of risk that attached to that, but I'm sure that they managed SaskBuilds into that.

But again, Mr. Speaker, the mind wanders. You think about, you know, where were you? Where were you when they introduced *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act* and it contained a provision to put down Enterprise Saskatchewan? Finally, repeal that legislation. And we of course, Mr. Speaker, can say, where were we? Here we were. We were looking on in amazement, Mr. Speaker.

So again, coming in this spot from the batting order, to move from a heady topic like that on to Bill No. 96, *The Choice of Court Agreements (Hague Convention Implementation) Act*, I mean it's a bit of a letdown, frankly. You know, anti-climactic I think would be the way some might term it, Mr. Speaker. But certainly I don't know if they're ever going to get taken to The Hague to adjudicate the great works like the Enterprise Saskatchewan. You never know. You never know. The future is not ours to see, but que sera, sera. Oh, I hear the member from Saskatoon south, the Attorney General. He's currently the Attorney General; I'm getting that right? That's right. He is, and of course the person that introduced this legislation to the Assembly. I don't know what else he'd . . . I don't know what personal insights he'd be able to bring to us about the goings-on at The Hague, but you know, they were absent from his second reading speech, which was again — not unlike my spot in the batting order — a bit of a letdown, Mr. Speaker.

But in terms of the member bringing forward this legislation, and again putting The Hague firmly on the radar for Saskatchewan legal proceedings, getting with the program like that, again you just think, well, you know, yet again the Sask Party's put us on the map, put us well on the globe. You know, Google's going to be coming around to film us sometime soon, I'm sure. I don't know if they're going to send a drone or if they're going to send Mr. Google or how they're going to do that, but it's going to be interesting to be sure.

But again, I'm also sort of saddened by the fact that there's . . . One of the more insightful observers of the economy and society in Saskatchewan, Bruce Johnstone, he of course had something to say about Enterprise Saskatchewan. And again, there's no reference as to whether or not that hit the Lifetime Achievement Award that Bruce Johnstone was given by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Mr. Speaker, in terms of commenting on, you know, maybe Enterprise Saskatchewan,

biggest accomplishment for the then member from Swift Current, Brad Wall, or perhaps the biggest flop. There's no word on whether or not the Hague Convention legislation that's been brought here, Mr. Speaker, no word on Mr. Johnstone's thoughts on this particular piece of legislation, but I'm sure it's fine.

It does bring to mind the adage that history's a bit of a hanging judge. History's a bit of a hanging judge. I don't know if, you know, that judge sits at The Hague or where precisely, but in terms of greatest success or biggest flop, I think the jury's coming in on the old Enterprise Saskatchewan. And again . . . but I stand here in a bit of jealousy for my spot in the batting order and the fine speech given by my colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre.

But certainly they keep referring to the Attorney General's second reading speech on *The Choice of Court Agreements (Hague Convention Implementation) Act* wherein the Minister of Justice states:

This proposed uniform bill provides for the implementation of the Hague Convention on Choice of Court Agreements. This convention establishes rules for parties to an international contract from participating nations to choose the court jurisdiction where disputes under the contract are to be determined. Mr. Speaker, supporting choice of court provisions in international contracts will . . . prevent litigation in multiple jurisdictions where a dispute arises in an international contract.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it sort of, you know, makes the mind wander in terms of what sort of application this will have in terms of the international agreements that we've entered into under SaskBuilds with different global consortia and the sort of song and dance and the line that we've been sold around P3s and how this is going to set us all free. Vinci — see you in The Hague. I don't know. I don't know. I don't know if that's the prompt for this or if we're just trying to keep up to Ontario. Because of course, you know, you can't be too far behind them.

But I guess the other interesting thing would be, you know, maybe we could keep up on the accounting practices on offer in a place like, oh, I don't know, Manitoba, friendly Manitoba. Friendly Manitoba where, you know . . . And just to show how non-partisan we are, guess who's in government there, Mr. Speaker? It's a Conservative government. The Conservative government did the math, ran the numbers, and it turns out — P3s, not such a great deal for the people of Manitoba. But of course they had yet to buy wholesale the Kool-Aid tanker that the members opposite have, you know, apparently brought home to share for all that are interested here in the province of Saskatchewan.

[15:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, how that relates to the Hague Convention and the choice of courts that are now on offer, we'll . . . The future's not ours to see, but who knows, who knows what junctions that's going to be showing up in. But I know other of my colleagues have got much more informed opinions on these matters than I, Mr. Speaker. So with that I'd move to adjourn

debate on Bill No. 96, *The Choice of Court Agreements (Hague Convention Implementation) Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 96, *The Choice of Court Agreements (Hague Convention Implementation) Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 97

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 97 — *The Arbitration (Family Dispute Resolution) Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Bill 97, I guess a little bit of an understanding . . . But before I comment on the bill and get into it, I just want to say congratulations to yourself as being elected to Speaker to represent us. And with that I will say thank you and wish you luck on your duties.

Having said that going in, I think the Act that's coming into play and being amended is going to . . . We know that some people go through disputes, whether it's a child custody, divorce, property — there's many areas where sometimes we have to use the courts' services to get to a settlement.

And my understanding of what's being amended in here is going to give provisions now for arbitration, where you will have a process where . . . Right now you see — and maybe on billboards and stuff you've seen where they're saying maintenance — you could go and find a process, you know, that mediated disputes with families and different ones. And they recommend that you go through it. And I think the court system or lawyers had to recommend people go through that process to try to, if they could, you know, mediate the dispute and get through that process.

If that didn't work then I guess the last place you would go would have been to the court system. And you'd have the judge, and I think, my understanding — not being a lawyer, I'm not sure — and with the Justice department if this is something they're moving to, if we're having our court system held up with certain cases.

And what my understanding I've got from the information that's been shared by the ministry and the minister, there's areas where we can use the arbitration. And I assume that both parties must have to agree. But in that agreement the mediator would hear both sides of it, and I believe, my understanding, this would be binding. And I think we need to ask those questions. And my colleagues will be asking that in committee, the critic, you know, finding out is it going to be binding. So if people agree to go to arbitration, does it mean that whatever the arbitrator says, they will have no choice, but they're forced to. Or will there be a mechanism where they could say well no, I'm not happy? I still want to go to court. So I think we'll find that

out in committee, and then that's it.

But just, you know, to get into a little bit of the areas where they could use the arbitration would be in *The Children's Law Act*, *The Family Maintenance Act*, the family protection Act, *The Family Property Act*, or a divorce Act. There's four areas, according to what I have here, that they could use arbitration for to find, I guess, a settlement. And sometimes I know I've had, you know, people that I know, friends, and sometimes they've had a tough time deciding on who's going to have custody of the children and that has been a lengthy court battle sometime. And if this process will help with making sure that it's, you know . . . You're saying it's arbitration. It's binding, and a mediator would make a recommendation that that would . . . I don't know if that would implement. If it was to go to court, a judge's decision saying you've gone through this process, or we're saying that they have to go through this process before they go to court.

And I know we're going to have many questions and I think these questions could be . . . This is impacting people's lives whether it's divorce, like I've said, which is serious and, you know, a couple decide that they're going to end their marriage or their relationship, I think there is a provision to have somebody arbitrate that. And I think it is a good act than to go through the courts and lawyers because it can get pretty costly, and at the end of the day, certain, you know, disputes could be a lengthy court trial. And I think, to be fair, this is giving some an opportunity. And I think this is an option and I'm not sure if — and we'll ask in committee.

And I'm curious if it's going to be binding and would those individuals have to go through the arbitration or do they opt out. And my understanding, I think, with the previous program that was out there where they tried to mediate, I believe my understanding is the lawyers would recommend that and try to get them to go to mediation. I think in this case we'll need to ask those questions to get the clarification. Is it binding on them? Is it their lawyers, you know, from both sides, both parties? And it doesn't matter what area they're going to dispute, like I said, whether it's a child custody, whether it's maintenance, whether it's property, whether it's a divorce. Are they going to be binding on them that they have to go through that course or their legal counsel has to advise them or recommend they go through that process?

So I think overall, looking at it, I think obviously there's been recommendations brought forward. And I don't know if it's the Law Society, the courts, the Ministry of Justice, if it's individuals — someone obviously made a recommendation to bring this forward. And I know my colleagues, the critic for Justice will have an opportunity in committee to ask some tough questions and to make sure we understand it because, you know . . . And I know she'll do the reaching out then as she will have to in her role as the critic. She'll reach out to individuals and probably to some of her colleagues out there that are practising and, you know, probably find out exactly why is this being brought forward and is it right before we . . .

And if we need to make amendments to it, maybe she'll find out or that she could make some recommendations, changes. And we've seen how our critic has worked well with the minister to make recommendations and we've, you know . . . They've

come together sometimes in a positive way when it's helped a situation, to resolve it so that we could pass the legislation and protect the citizens, which of course Justice is asked to do. And sometimes, you know, they've done that. They've showed that partnership, that they can work together. And I give, you know, that credit, that process.

But having said that, again there will be many questions that, you know, need to be asked. And I know my colleagues will ask those tough questions in the committee. And at this point, I'll allow that process to happen. And I know my colleagues have, you know, more questions on other bills that we have to . . . But for today, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn on Bill No. 97.

The Speaker: — The member for Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 97, *The Arbitration (Family Dispute Resolution) Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 98

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 98 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Family Dispute Resolution) Amendment Act, 2017/Loi modificative diverse (résolution des conflits familiaux) de 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, it's an honour today to stand here to put some discussion, my discussions in here with regards to Bill No. 98, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Family Dispute Resolution) Amendment Act, 2017*.

First of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to also congratulate you on your new role. It was an exciting day yesterday with the elections and having seven people running for the Speaker role. And I believe that is kind of unprecedented. So it was nice to be part of history in the making and happy to be here and serve with you in our role as Speaker. And I look forward to working with you through the next few years.

And I also want to congratulate the three new MLAs that have come from the by-elections we had in the break that we had between the fall sitting and the spring sitting. And we almost have a full house here, but it looks like we're going to be having another by-election coming forward and potentially maybe some more. So always an exciting day in the House and the legislature here in Saskatchewan.

But again I wanted to put some of my thoughts towards Bill 98. And this was brought forward by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General in the fall session with regards to making some changes to the bill here with regards to the family dispute resolutions Act. And, Mr. Speaker, it's really important that we regularly take a look at these bills and Acts and make sure that

they're reflective of our times and days that we have here. And I think the family dispute resolution Act is a very important one.

Mr. Speaker, we know that we have high rates of domestic violence within our province. And oftentimes when people are ending their relationships, some of those behaviours of individuals who are violent or abusive will come forward through these times when you're going through a divorce or a separation, and so ensuring that there's options for individuals who are going through a separation is very important. And I think ensuring that it's a timely process is also very important because it helps people get through this process and not drag it on long.

Mr. Speaker, I have said before that prior to being elected in my seat here, I worked with men who were abusive, and so I know a lot of their personality traits or some of the behaviours that they have, you know. And some of that would be about trying to make a process like this last a lot longer so that they could have control over the person that they're abusive towards.

I often talk about a male being in that position because that tends to be the majority of cases that we see, but it's not always the case. But so oftentimes when I would make reference to that I would talk about men who are abusive and women and children having to face the situation, being part of this relationship and having this control set over them. And oftentimes they'll put in a lot of obstacles within the court process so that they can still have control over the relationship and the children, and that is part of their behaviours.

And we unfortunately don't have a lot of services for individuals who have this type of issue or situation, and so they tend to continue with their behaviours, their negative behaviours. And that's another topic of discussion that could go on a lengthy time. And we need to ensure that we have services for abusive men as well because the men that I've worked with, they wanted to learn different ways and they wanted to know why they did the things they did. But oftentimes this is so ingrained in them and they don't realize that what they're doing is further damaging to their partner, or ex-partner if it's the case of a separation.

And we also know that our court system, Mr. Speaker, it's overburdened by a lot of the cases that they deal with, and we want to keep our courts available for dealing with very serious situations that are happening and getting them done in a timely fashion so people are not waiting. We know we have overcrowding in our jails, and we have a lot of issues with regards to that as well. So if could expedite the cases that don't necessarily need to go into the court system, that would be more beneficial.

And so I think, for example, the family law aspect, it would be nice to be able to have a system that we could use that can free up court workers and lawyers and such so that they could do the work that they need to do to solving some other criminal calls.

So when the Minister of Justice presented this bill and the changes with regards to this bill, he also indicated that this bill will also amend other Acts. So it amends *The Children's Law Act, 1997*, *The Family Maintenance Act, 1997*, *The Family*

Property Act, and *The Queen's Bench Act, 1998*. So all of these Acts will need to be updated as well because of the changes of the language that is going to be used within this Act. And my understanding that a lot of the changes are with regards to putting in the language of family mediators in here. And so again this is to promote early dispute resolution.

[15:45]

So we know that when we have early dispute resolution methods in family law, it's cost effective because the quicker this can get done, then the less families need to spend on the costs. We get fast results, and there's a lot less emotional turmoil with both parties, and children involved too because they know that their parents are still trying to manage the logistics of the separation, and that causes a lot of stress on the whole family. So if we could do this in an out-of-court aspect and have early dispute resolution, that is more appropriate in resolving these family disputes.

So the other new provision that is being proposed here, Mr. Speaker, is with regards to making sure that the application to the court is done in a quick manner because they do adjust the issues of when there's a relationship that has a history of violence or a child has been abducted or a restraining order is in place, the family can receive an exception and have this completed a lot more quickly.

So again that brings me back to what I was saying before, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the fact that with our high rates of domestic violence — and that's what's actually been, you know, documented — we know that there's a lot of relationships, that there's domestic violence within those relationships that aren't necessarily being documented. So we want to ensure that if there is a history of violence, if there's any threat to the children, that people could end these relationships quickly so that they could progress and the families can move on.

Some of the questions I had though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I was reviewing this, and I know my colleague will review that a lot more when she has a chance in committee, was the access to family mediators within the province. And I know they need to have special training, which is very important. And I think we've got to be mindful of the importance of that training so that they could do the jobs that they need to do effectively.

But if we have specially trained family mediators, how many do we have in the province? Are they very available? We know this is very valuable. We know it's cost effective to go through family mediation. What is the government doing to ensure that there's a process in place to have them available?

And what's the cost of family mediators? Who sets the cost, and who's paying for that? I have to admit that I don't know a lot of those details. If the family's having to pay those costs, what does that look like? Because we have a lot of families that don't have the financial means, and if they don't have the financial means, is there a process for them to receive this service also?

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when reviewing this bill, a lot of the changes, I have to say that they seem to make sense. We need to

review these Acts and make sure that they're applicable to the issues that we have in our community. And I'm happy to see that some of the changes here do address just that. But also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to ensure that we go through this with a critical lens, you know, and ensure that all of the avenues were looked at because we don't know when we'll get back to reviewing this Act again, and we want to make sure that when we put forward something that it's going to be in the best interests of the residents of Saskatchewan.

And I know our critic that's on our side will ensure that she does an excellent job in committee with regards to this bill. And with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to allow my colleagues to have more discussion with regards to the bill, and I'm going to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 98.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 98. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 99

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 99 — *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2017 (No. 2)/Loi modificative n°2 de 2017 sur l'interprétation*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to enter into the debate today on Bill No. 99, *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2017*. And it was just, it was just about a year and a half ago, I guess now, Mr. Speaker, that the original bill — the bill that we're amending here, Mr. Speaker, Bill 40 — came before this legislature that created the opportunity for the Sask Party government to privatize our Crowns up to 49 per cent without having to take it to the public, contrary to the Crown protection Act.

So they'd created an opportunity to privatize without taking it to the people, in direct conflict actually with . . . On three different, separate occasions; in three elections, the Premier had very much committed and the Sask Party had very much committed to not privatizing our Crowns. They had said that those Crowns were important to the people of Saskatchewan. They had learned their lesson in 2003 and realized that Crowns were important to the people of Saskatchewan because they create good, mortgage-paying jobs, because they keep services like telecom rates lower. They make sure that people in rural communities have access to services where a private company might not provide those services.

Mr. Speaker, and even recognizing that despite the fact our Crowns have contributed greatly to our General Revenue Fund — the government, this government and governments before actually draw dividends from our Crown corporations that help us pay for things like health care and highways and education — the government had agreed that people in Saskatchewan like

our Crowns, so it was unusual that they introduced this bill. Actually maybe it wasn't that unusual because we had seen privatization by stealth, and actually not just by stealth — directly. We can take a look at ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan], Mr. Speaker, and the privatization of the Information Services Corporation. We can look at other examples: our liquor stores. There's all kinds of things, Mr. Speaker, that have gone on anyway.

This particular bill, Bill No. 99, what happened last fall actually, Mr. Speaker, is the Premier says that he heard from the people of Saskatchewan. He heard loudly and clearly yet again that they didn't want the Sask Party government to sell off our Crowns, Mr. Speaker. And so the Premier, in a Facebook Live post, says that he understood that that is the case, that they will repeal Bill 40 which allowed for the privatization of our Crowns up to 49 per cent.

But two days later, Mr. Speaker . . . It's the same thing with this government. They say one thing, but then you get the whole picture a short while later, Mr. Speaker, where the Premier said, oh no, no, no, we're not repealing all of Bill 40. We're not going to take back the piece around winding up and dissolution of a Crown corporation because there were a few parts to *The Interpretation Act*, Mr. Speaker, that Bill 40 — and actually it was in May of last year, May 3rd actually — that the Premier admitted they needed Bill 40 to do what they did to STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]. So I was just briefly talking about Crowns and what this government has done with Crowns.

The Saskatchewan Transportation Company, with no preparation, with no preparation . . . As the Health critic, it was interesting to me that this government could make such a huge budget choice, such a huge choice that impacts people from all across the province to cut, to get rid of the transportation company that really binds our geographically disperse province together.

And I say they did it without any preparation because, as the Health critic, I saw an email two days after, just within a couple days after this government just made this budget decision that the deputy minister, or the assistant deputy minister actually was emailing folks saying, hey, what's the impact on Health with this STC cut? And there was a huge impact in not only the transportation of blood products and medical samples, but getting people to medical appointments, getting people to their cancer appointments — all kinds of things, Mr. Speaker.

So this is a government who often doesn't think before they act. But in this case, with Bill No. 40 which was the precursor to Bill No. 99, this is a government who said they saw the error of their ways but still couldn't just take it back to where the people of Saskatchewan want. Instead of repealing the whole bill, they are still insistent that the definition of privatize does not include a winding up and dissolution of a Crown corporation.

I don't think that that's what the people of Saskatchewan were talking about when they said to the Premier and said to Sask Party MLAs on the other side of the House that we don't want our Crowns privatized. I think that people in Saskatchewan were saying we don't want you to call it a windup and then start selling it off piecemeal either, Mr. Speaker. I'm pretty sure that

that's not what the people that I've spoken to about Crown corporations were talking about as well.

STC has been a huge cut. It amazed me this summer and this fall in my constituency. I wasn't quite sure how much I'd hear about the STC cut, but knocking on doors in the more affluent parts of my constituency, I actually heard from people who have relatives all across this province who relied on STC to get family to Saskatoon or to get back out to their respective communities — students who are in town either at the polytechnic or at the university, cutting off their lifeline.

I actually just talked to someone just a few weeks ago, two people — an electrician and an editor actually, a writer — who have now moved to Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, in large measure because of the cut to STC. They were a one-car family. They were a couple, a 2018 couple living in two different cities because of economic reasons. One had a job here. One had a job in Saskatoon, and STC was their lifeline. They had one car and this couple . . . The wife commuted every week back to Saskatoon, and she found that unfortunately she had some concerns with the bus service that was now being offered, Mr. Speaker, and I know her husband had some concerns. There was great comfort in being on an STC bus, a large bus with a professional driver, and you know that you're in good hands instead of having to meet in a parking lot, Mr. Speaker, and be dropped off at an approximate time.

Bill No. 99 doesn't go far enough. I'm glad the government heard from people in Saskatchewan that they don't want their Crowns privatized, that Crowns serve well the people of Saskatchewan. And it's really great when a Crown makes money and provides dividends to the people of Saskatchewan and supports things like health care. But there's other reasons why we have Crown corporations and that's public service. And Crowns allow us that opportunity in a province like Saskatchewan to make sure, for example, that we have transportation from all four corners of the province. We would encourage this government to rethink the decision to not include winding it up in dissolution. They should be actually repealing all of Bill 40, Mr. Speaker. That's what we would like to see and I think that that's what people in Saskatchewan would like to see.

I know that that's the message that I've gotten loud and clear from people on the doorstep and people who come into my office. And when I have an opportunity to talk to folks about other issues, they share that it's . . . STC was a big part of all our lives, Mr. Speaker. And the Premier admitted back in the spring that Bill 40, the bill that we're amending, was the reason, or allowed them to privatize or, pardon me, sell off STC.

So again this is a government, you had a Premier who came on to Facebook Live, made an announcement — it sounded like a great announcement — and lots of people celebrated. And this government got the benefit of that celebration and then . . . Many people don't realize that the government didn't go the full way and are still holding on firm to the ability to do what they want with our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker.

But with that, I know I've got colleagues who will enter into the debate on Bill No. 99, *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2017*, and I know that they'll have lots of good comments to make.

And I know when it gets to committee there'll be lots of questions as well. But with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 99, *The Interpretation Amendment Act, 2017 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

[16:00]

Bill No. 103

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 103 — *The Land Contracts (Actions) Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm happy to stand today to add my comments with regards to Bill No. 103, the land contracts Act, amendments to that Act. My understanding, when the Minister of Justice brought forward this Act, that a lot of the intentions of the amendments is to modernize the Act and also build with regards to the recommendations that were reported from . . . recommendations contained in the 2014 Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan report, which was titled the *Reform of The Land Contracts (Actions) Act*. And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with regards to the recommendations brought forward and the fact that this Act needed a little bit of touching up and modernizing, that's why this is being brought forward now.

But also my understanding is because of the changes that'll be made with this Act, it will result in repealing *The Home Owners' Protection Act* and *The Agreements of Sale Cancellation Act* as well. And so he'll have some changes with regards to a lot of the legislation that we have. And I think again it's always really important to bring forward legislation that needs to be looked at and modernized with regards to the day and age that we have today.

So with regards to the remarks that the Minister of Justice provided, he indicated that this bill will provide some protection to borrowers with regards to require lenders to obtain leave of the court before starting foreclosure proceedings. So this basically means that this will provide some time to get the mortgage up to date if the individual needs a little bit more time and some adjustments with regards to that or allow the ability to refinance or sell the property before foreclosure and judicial sale and/or time to find alternative accommodation.

And so this would be happening in the case of an individual or family that's having some financial difficulties and unable to maybe keep up with the payments that they originally established. And I think, if in all cases, if we can help individuals in these situations so that they don't have to undergo, like, foreclosure, bankruptcy, I think that is really

important that we help families with regards to that because those issues will have long-standing consequences on individual's borrowing abilities. And we know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that something that might happen today, you know, in a few years later you might be in a different situation. And to have a situation, a bad time happen, at that point that will impact you for many years down the road is really unfortunate.

And with regards to this Act, it was brought forward actually in 1943. It's about 70 years old. And so it got me thinking, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if this maybe was not put forward because of the situation that people were in with regards to the dirty thirties. And I think we were all really familiar with stories that we've heard, either from our grandparents, great-grandparents, about the struggles that they had back in the dirty thirties, and how just due to the fact that it was hard to make a living at that point, and families were really struggling. It probably put them in really tough situations, and they had to leave their homes, and they had to just leave everything.

And I know we're definitely not in that dire need of time, but I sit and think about the high unemployment rates we have at this time, and a lot of individuals who are really struggling. And I know my office, and I'm sure many others in this House here, they're getting calls from constituents who are having a tough time making ends meet. We know with high unemployment and the fact that costs have gone up with regards to things like power or property taxes, because municipalities are struggling with the cuts that this government has made.

And then the PST [provincial sales tax] has gone up, and also has caused a lot of businesses less business because people are spending less. And families can't afford as much because they're paying more. And the lack of PST exemption now with children's clothing is higher. Everything, all the costs are higher.

And I know, I was talking to some business owners around Christmastime, and they said that sales were a lot less around Christmastime than normal. But a lot of grocery stores said that usually when the economy is struggling, their sales are still quite stable because people need food, and especially even around holidays like Christmas, people will get their groceries and they'll make sure that they have a good meal. But even they said that their sales were down during this last holiday season.

And so that really shows an impact that people are struggling. And I know in Prince Albert we have some really wonderful volunteers who provide a Christmas meal. And they had well over 2,000 people attending that on Christmas Day — 2,000 people who didn't have a meal at home to have with their family, that they came together with the rest of the community and shared a meal. And that's wonderful that that community group did that, but it really does show that people are struggling.

And so in a time like this when we know a lot of people are struggling within our province, we have a duty to ensure that we can help them get through this time. And instead of trying to take 3.5 per cent of their income back to support the government's bad decisions, maybe we should allow them to keep that money and so that they could afford their costs of living a bit more. So the amendments to this bill . . . It hopes to

reduce the costs involved in the process with regards to ensuring that people have an ability to be able to pay their bills and be able to keep their homes, hopefully, so that there isn't foreclosure or have other means to manage what they owe.

But there's also responsibility for . . . [inaudible] . . . I can't say that word right now . . . and lenders to go through the due process and ensure they go through a process so that they're not just foreclosing on a bunch of homes. But one thing that's really important to keep in mind is that this is not intended for farm land and commercial properties. So this would be just strictly for, my understanding, is for homeowners and so there's a whole other area that needs to be looked at and regarded to.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know a lot of my colleagues will have some more information that they'll want to put forward with regards to this bill. And I definitely know that the critic responsible for this bill will have a lot of questions that she'll want to ask in committee and discussion and dialogue with regards to the minister. And I think it's really important that we ensure that everything is accepted with regards to the changes of this bill. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to adjourn debate of Bill 103.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 103. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 104

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 104 — *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2017/Code des droits de la personne de la Saskatchewan de 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is my honour today to rise and turn to debate on Bill No. 104, the Saskatchewan human rights code amendment Act, 2017. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think any time when we are discussing the issue of human rights, it's probably appropriate that we stand up and pay some attention. This is one of the most fundamental and important rights of any society, of certainly any province, and it is an area where this province has a proud history.

I'm not sure that all members are aware of this, and I'll say it perhaps for my own benefit and those at home, but Saskatchewan was the first jurisdiction to bring in a Bill of Rights, way back in 1947, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We were in the foreground. We were at the absolute cutting edge of human rights at that time. In fact, other countries have modelled their human rights bills and codes on the 1947 Bill of Rights that was enacted right here in this Assembly in 1947. And I think that's something that we all should be very proud of. My colleague here tells me that was passed by . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Tommy Douglas and Frank Scott. I think we should give them

credit there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when we are at our best, we are groundbreakers in this province, and we have been historically at the cutting edge of human rights. And I hope that we continue to do so.

So when I first saw this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was quite excited that perhaps we were doing something innovative again. But what this bill proposes is important, but not exactly cutting edge. It is basically complying with legislation and that is bringing the Human Rights Code, making it bilingual. So it doubles, of course, the size of the Act by adding both French and English portions, which is certainly important, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it is something that should be done.

But I think perhaps maybe it might be a bit of a missed opportunity as well here. I know that human rights complaints in this province have not decreased over the last number of years. In fact last year there were 144 complaints brought to the Human Rights Commission in Saskatchewan, a number that, perhaps on one hand, is a signal to people's willingness to come forward and is a signal to public awareness, which I think is probably part of the equation, and that's to be commended in part by the good work of the commission and those who work there.

But it also does I think signal and point to some issues that we still grapple with — and certainly Saskatchewan isn't alone there — and that is having basic human rights respected. We know that some of the most challenging issues, or the issues that are in the news and on the minds of people, are impacted by human rights and how we address and protect the human rights of the citizens of Saskatchewan. I think of the notion of reconciliation and what role that human rights and the respect of human rights has to play in that exercise, an exercise that this whole country really needs to undertake, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think of some of the gains that we've made with regard to LGBTQ [lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning] rights in both this province, in this country, and around the world, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I think that success is not in small part to the respecting of human rights both by individuals but sometimes led by lawmakers in this country, and again something that we've been I think ahead of the curve at least in this country with regard to issues such as gay marriage. Perhaps not the trail-breakers that the Douglas government was back in 1947, but ahead of the curve there.

So I think that there are some opportunities when we're looking at the Human Rights Code that we might have concerned ourselves with when bringing this legislation forward. Of course it opens up to the debate in this Assembly and the scrutiny of the ministry and the minister. So any time we're opening up that legislation it provides an opportunity to not only hold the status quo, but perhaps improve on it and hold our place as being in the foreground of human rights in the country.

[16:15]

There are a number, as I noted, a record number of human rights complaints that have been coming forward, 144, also a record number of complaints that have been dismissed. And I don't have enough evidence to hazard a guess as to why that is the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I think it's something that

warrants further investigation. And of course, as I've mentioned, there are troubling trends in our province and across the country that I think it would bear, would be worth our while to work with the Human Rights Commissioner to ensure that we are getting that right, that we are protecting the rights of the citizens of this province and that we take both human rights as a concept but the Human Rights Code, the Act, we take that very seriously, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I can't help but thinking when we're talking about this is that . . . Not of this bill perhaps but another bill that we have before us right now in this Assembly, Bill No. 89, that proposes to set aside certain portions of the Human Rights Code. And I'm not sure we've had a proper discussion about why we ought to do that.

I think, I hope that we do enter into that debate and we have a fulsome discussion not only in this Assembly but with the people of Saskatchewan. Because any time I think that we talk about setting aside Charter rights, we start talking about setting aside provision in the Human Rights Code, I think it should get everyone's attention. And I hope that it will and I hope that that discussion is full, that we consider it very carefully, Mr. Speaker, before we enter into that.

The other thing that I think some people will know, that the notwithstanding clause, which we don't hear about very often because it simply, in the history of this country, hasn't been invoked very often, is that there is a five-year sunset clause that comes along with the notwithstanding clause for the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. And that was put in as a safeguard to ensure that it would have to come back every five years. There is no such provision when we are making notwithstanding portions of the Human Rights Code.

So when we propose to set aside the Human Rights Code by an Act of this Assembly, we actually are doing that in perpetuity until we come back to this Assembly at some point — but we're not compelled to — to revisit that. So I think that that is something that ought to be paid very, very close attention to, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I mean I think what I'd like to do is read a couple of pieces from the Human Rights Commission annual report that I believe the current Education minister signed off on about the importance of the Human Rights Commission and the human rights Act.

The commission meets the obligations of public education. Students, and I think we should listen to the voice of students, at an event noted that they don't want nice words, they want action. They were concerned about racism. And it goes on to say in the closing paragraph: "If protecting rights was easy we would not need a Charter." And Mr. Arnot goes on to say:

To that I would add, if protecting rights was easy, we would not need a Charter or a human rights code. This work, difficult though it may be, is fundamentally important. The Commission remains committed to this important work and to serving the people of Saskatchewan.

Of course I don't think I have to explain to anyone here the importance of human rights. I think that that is something that I trust that we all uphold and find important. And with that, I would also hope that I would have consensus amongst members in this Assembly that the suspension of any portion of our Human Rights Code should be met with a great deal of scrutiny.

And so I would put that challenge, and that thought hopefully, to all members here, encourage them to think carefully. Not precluding any decision regarding that but we need to have that discussion clearly, thoughtfully, and out in the open because it is a very serious measure to consider.

I wanted to go back to, again, Commissioner Arnot. He said, reflecting on the human rights motto, from many people . . . the Saskatchewan motto rather, “from many peoples, strength:”

. . . observing that this motto recognizes that many people have come from all over the world to this province with many different skills and talents.

This province is strong, in part, because it recognizes that by virtue of being born, all people [all people] automatically have human rights.

But the “concept” of rights if it is only written on paper, has no support if the people do not stand together.

Citizenship is about knowledge of rights, respect for rights, and responsible action. So I would counsel, if I may from this place, all of us to ensure that we take responsible action with regard to the contemplation of notwithstanding certain portions of the Human Rights Code. In case folks at home are wondering, the particular sections that are being contemplated to be, in Bill 89, to be made notwithstanding, the first one is the freedom of conscience. So this is what we’re anticipating. Every person and every class of persons has the right to freedom of conscience, opinion, and belief, and freedom of religious association, teaching, practice, and worship. So I’ll leave that there.

Also, section 12, discrimination and accommodation, service, or facility prohibited.

No person, directly or indirectly, alone or with another, or by the [imposition] . . . of another shall, on the basis of a prohibited ground:

deny to any person or class of persons the accommodation, services or facilities to which the public is customarily admitted or that are offered to the public; or

discriminate against any person or class of persons with respect to any accommodation, services or facilities to which the public is customarily admitted or that are offered to the public.

The other, the section 13 that is noted again in Bill 89, is the right to education. So just so we’re clear, what’s being contemplated there impacts those sections of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code*. And I think that that is something that we ought to be very, very cautious again and have strong and fruitful conversations before we contemplate setting those sections aside.

And we also should do so with the full understanding that there is no sunset clause. Like as I have mentioned previously, as people may or may not know — I think many do — it’s not the same as notwithstanding the Charter of Rights and Freedoms with that five-year sunset clause. It is notwithstanding those

sections in perpetuity until pending, awaiting Act of this Legislative Assembly. So that is quite a large deal.

Some places that we might look elsewhere, you know, to expand on our notion, again regain that place as a jurisdiction at the forefront of human rights would be, you know, around new Canadians and protecting the rights of new Canadians. I’ll just read from a report here on human rights in Saskatchewan, emerging issues:

Of the Western provinces, Saskatchewan has seen the largest jump in immigrant-related complaints, from a consistent 13% of complaints before 2008 to almost 30% in 2008-2009. This number stayed up at approximately 24% until 2011-12 when it dropped back down to 11 . . .

The Human Rights . . . commented on this jump in complaints . . . [saying] “Complaints from new Canadians accounted for one third of complaints filed this year. The Commission has identified racism in employment as a growing area of concern for complaint processing and as a topic on which to focus public awareness.”

And of course, as is often the case with legislation but certainly in an area such as human rights, these issues are emerging. As circumstances change in this province, the need to respond at the very least, at the very least responding to those changes in the makeup and the dynamics of society within this province. So I think that that is very important.

There are millions, probably billions of people around this world who would give almost anything to be governed by a piece of legislation such as this, to enjoy those human rights that we take for granted here in this province and that we were amongst the first to enjoy in this province way back in 1947.

I think we should never become complacent about that, that we should always strive to innovate, to, as I’ve said, retain that role as innovators, as protectors of human rights, to be the place where people look to for innovative and forward-thinking legislation. You know, the protection of human rights, we are the first province in Canada to have a human rights . . . a bill of rights, and I think that that is something that we ought to be very proud of.

The problem sometimes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that when it’s been in place for a long time, we forget. We become complacent, and we too often don’t know our own history. So I do want to make sure — and I think I’ve gotten it on the record a few times now — to champion that, to highlight that, because it really is, you know, to be known around the world as the place to come to to learn about how to protect human rights is something quite extraordinary. And I think we should shout that from the rooftops, as we should continuously look at legislation before us and make sure that we are doing the job that we could be doing.

Certainly it is a good thing to update this legislation to ensure that it’s bilingual, and I commend that. But I think that there’s also a missed opportunity here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I hope it’s something that will be rectified if not by this government, then perhaps when we change places across the aisle. With that, I think I’m going to conclude my remarks, and I will move to

adjourn debate on Bill No. 104.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 104, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 105

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 105** — *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Consequential Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So often when people find out that you're elected to the Assembly, they want to know what it's like, what the job's like. How did you get here? What's the day-to-day like? And borrowing from my colleague from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, there is nothing quite like standing up to speak for a little bit on a consequential amendments Act.

The bill itself was something I had a bit of a song in my heart for. Of course the consequential amendment Act maybe is . . . I'll have to admit to having a little less passion for. But nonetheless this is important that we enter this into second reading here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I think . . . I like to start, when I'm speaking to second reading of bills, I'm always curious about the reasons that this particular bill comes forward. So I often, I go to the comments by the minister, in this case the Attorney General, when putting legislation forward. He said this way back on November 22nd of 2017:

I rise today to move second reading of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Consequential Amendment Act, 2017*. This Act accompanies *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2017* and makes consequential amendments to the Saskatchewan employment code. *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* is being repealed and replaced with a new bilingual statute, and references to the name of the old Act in the Saskatchewan employment code will be updated to reference the new Act. There is no change in substance to the Saskatchewan employment code.

Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Consequential Amendment Act, 2017*.

[16:30]

I won't always leave the last word to the Attorney General, but I think in this case I think he's covered most of what is contained in this bill and I think I have very little extra of value to add. So with that, I'm going to conclude my remarks and move adjournment of Bill No. 105.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 105. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 106

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 106** — *The Missing Persons and Presumption of Death Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Vermette: — I thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in on adjourned debate on Bill 106. Initially looking at it . . . Of course I know we'll have more questions in the committee, but going into the details of it . . . And there's a provision . . . In this bill there's some housekeeping points that they're taking care of, which is fine. We know that from time to time we'll have amendments and legislation that corrects some of the . . . And they're minor things that they find in a bill and they make the amendments, and that's fine.

But in this bill they've also added . . . Not only have they done some housekeeping in it, the bill also adds a whole new section. And that whole new section gives the, I guess, the process of trying to find records and the whereabouts of somebody through certain records or information, maybe a landlord. And my understanding, if it was a missing person, like if we have a child missing and you have an Amber Alert, the police maybe before would have to go to the courts, or there was a provision for them to get information of who the landlord was, certain records and documents that would help them maybe move quickly to find a missing child or a missing person. And it's now giving the powers . . . Whether they had to go through the court and ask a judge for, you know, a court order or for whatever, a warrant to get the information.

Being of course, as I've said earlier, commenting I'm no lawyer as my colleagues and the critic is. I know in committee we'll get to go through some of these details and probably know, you know, some of the process that are needed in here, or we'll definitely find out.

But I'm curious at the end of the day if this . . . what the purpose of bringing this bill forward and this new Act. Has there been some type of identification? Or have they, you know, come across a situation where maybe someone was put in harm's way because they didn't get to act quick enough, a police officer?

Now this gives chiefs of police, a commanding officer, certain powers. And any time you give . . . And we've said that before here. I give an example. We have legislation that protects certain things, ministries, and a certain way business is done, of all of us in here. And it's the law of the land and you have to do that. But sometimes when you take legislation and you give the power to a minister, that that minister has the powers to do

whatever they want and changing the regulations rules. And we've seen the Sask Party government has done that quite a bit over the time that I've been here, where they've taken the power away, I think, from the legislation and from this legislature and actually have given the powers . . . or the ministry, and they've given it to the minister to just . . . Stroke of a pen, they can change it and do whatever they want. And we've seen, we've raised it many times about the concerns about doing that.

In this situation it brings up different, I think, raises different questions. There might be a reason why they need to move quickly on this, as I said — an Amber Alert, you know, a missing person being put in harm's way. But in that situation I'm hoping . . . And I know my colleagues will ask the questions that need to be asked, the critic in committee, and try to find out the details. What happens should somebody use those powers and not use those powers in the right way? Is there a chance of that happening? What kind of guarantees are they putting in there to protect citizens' rights, being that it would be used in a way . . . And I'm not implying that it would be, but you never know. Something happens where someone feels like that.

Will they take that provision . . . Can they go to the court? Is there an appeal process? How will that happen? Is it going to the Supreme Court? And I realize sometimes legislation comes in here, and again there might be a good reason why this amendment's coming in or this new, you know, this new section will give those powers. But any time you, I think you go on someone's rights . . . And my colleague talked earlier about, you know, certain rights that are certain protections that we're proud of in this province that protect people. You don't want to be going and doing anything that causes us or anyone harm when you're trying to do the right thing, and I mean passing this.

And this might be good legislation. It might have been talked about. And it might be the right legislation that we . . . [inaudible] . . . and section in there. But again I go back to this; there's going to have to be some questions. And maybe it's come from Justice or it's come from legal counsel. It's come from concerned citizens, or it comes from situations where again, someone has been put in harm's way and they're going to come up with this legislation to find somebody. We don't want to see anybody in harm's way.

But any time you give certain powers to an individual, I'm hoping . . . And I guess my colleagues and the critic will have some tough questions in committee to make sure and, you know, she'll probably consult with some of her colleagues. And we'll see where this goes and what this provision brings. Again, we're always on the side of the police to be able to find someone. Should one of our grandkids or, you know, an adult family member, or friend, community member go missing, we want the police to be able to do their job. But we want to make sure people's rights . . .

And I know that's why we have the opportunity here to debate these bills and find out, what's the purpose? And I know committee gives us . . . This is one venue that we get to do this, an opportunity to have a dialogue and ask some questions and put something on the record. But at the end of the day, I guess

in committee is where we can get to, to the actually . . . the questions that need to be asked and hopefully get the answers.

We talk about government and the House, that we want to be able to work in a way where we work together in a positive way. I hear that. And sometimes . . . I mean from the public looking at it, you wouldn't think that's happening. And sometimes I think it's a free-for-all in here unless the Deputy Speaker decides to tone it down and, you know, be the referee, and he does a good job of that.

So having said this, I know that at the end of the day there's going to be some questions that we will have in committee. My colleagues are going to have questions that they want to . . . And there's going to be many of my colleagues, you know, if I'm missing things that are in here. And that's why it's nice to have my colleagues and myself and go into a committee where you have an opportunity to question the minister and his officials. And sometimes those officials will have the answers that we are looking for or the reason why we're putting in new sections or we're amending it. They have those answers and obviously they have, you know, the staff and the information that's needed.

And I'm hoping at the end of the day they have consulted. We have said that. Here we have a government . . . And we've said this very clearly from many, many different places I've heard; the government doesn't consult enough and needs to do that. This government has been very bad, when I say . . . for not consulting with many Saskatchewan residents before they just go out and do what they want to do. There is no . . .

So on that note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would encourage them to make sure they consult more; they do what they need to do with the leaders, our local leaders, our elected leaders. But they can also consult with the opposition. We can work together sometimes on certain issues. So with saying that, this is a process, like I said. We're going to go to committee. We'll ask some tough questions, and hopefully they'll have the information that we're needing and making sure that no one . . . and making sure that those provisions in the new Act in here or the new section in here will give the law enforcement the opportunities to ensure, whether it's a child missing on an Amber Alert, that they get the information they need to make sure. If it's a landlord who is residing at that residence, they can find out. I understand that. Or if it's a missing adult or a person . . . they can find out.

So having said that, I think again my colleagues have a few more things they'll want to say on this. So at this point I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 106. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 106. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 101

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 101 — *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to add some discussion to Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act*. This was brought forward by the Minister of Agriculture in the fall session and so I'm happy to be able to add some of my remarks.

This Act regulates the sale, lease, and lease purchase of new and used agricultural implements. So it has a lot of information within this Act, and it's a really important Act, the more that I've been reading about it, about some of the laws and regulations that it applies to.

So the Agricultural Implements Board is appointed through this Act, and the regulations on how that board is appointed. That board investigates and adjudicates complaints regarding warranties, repairs, and parts and services of agricultural equipment. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I realize that . . . I believe you come from an agricultural constituency, and I was raised in a farm town. And so we know that, when it's seeding and harvest time, it becomes a really busy and hectic time, and so ensuring that things are regulated properly is really important.

Changes from . . . This bill was last revised 14 years ago and we know there's been lots of changes within farming practices and the technology for farms now. It just amazes me when I look at the farm equipment that they have and how far advanced we've become since my days of hanging out on the farm and such, and it's pretty impressive when you see the equipment that they have, and the technology.

And also we know that equipment comes with a hefty cost, and all of that stuff is very pricey. And when you're in the midst of seeding or harvesting, you have very little time when something happens to one of the equipment to get it fixed, and that becomes first priority. And I know a lot of the parts and businesses that help with maintaining that. I've known mechanics that are called out at all times of the day. They know at that time that they need to be on call at any time to get out there and fix things. And also the businesses, they make changes to their schedules so that they're open longer hours and oftentimes seven days a week now during those periods of time. Because you want to make sure you get your harvest off before the frost comes, or you want to make sure you get your seeding in right away so that you could have a good harvest in the end.

So the board asked for the legislation to be reviewed, especially with regards to increasing the levels of compensation. And also agricultural implement manufacturers and dealers have asked for this legislation to be reviewed as well, and to consider the value of the legislation and make it a little bit more comparable to now and the changes that have happened within the 14 years.

So the compensation levels are going to increase and the penalties on distributors who fail to maintain an adequate supply of repair parts is going to also increase. We know that

there's an expectation that distributors ensure that repair parts come in within 72 hours. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know for a fact, and even myself riding the STC, farm parts were always distributed on STC. And that was a way that they made sure that this equipment got to where it needed to be. And we don't have distributors in all farm locations, like, and so getting to the city and making sure you get the parts or like . . . How is that going to be maintained now? It's going to be a lot trickier on ensuring that that 72 hours is maintained.

And so I think we've got to be mindful of that. And I know that the critic will probably be asking a lot of questions with regards to that and how . . . We don't want to be implementing penalties and increasing those penalties when we have a government here that created a system that's going to make it even more difficult for those parts to get to where they need to be. So I think that needs to be evaluated, and we'll definitely be talking to the stakeholders that this will involve.

[16:45]

So when you look at the compensation rates, they go up quite a substantial amount, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So the maximum award for compensation for a farmer under section 10 increases from 10,000 to 50,000. Like, that's a \$40,000 difference. And the maximum penalty for distributors who fail to pay an amount to the board required by section 12 is increased from 5,000 to 25,000. That's five times as much.

Penalties for distributors under section 24 increase from \$5 a day to not more than \$25,000, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And penalties under section 25 for the supply of repairs by distributors increase from 5,000 to 50,000. That's 10 times as much.

I don't know if those costs have increased that much within the 14 years. I find that to be quite a substantial leap. And so again I guess it'll be a lot of consultation with stakeholders and seeing how they feel about this, because when I look at those numbers, that seems pretty substantial within changes, you know? And so we want to make some changes. We want it to be applicable but we also, we've got to recognize that they have to be reasonable as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And so also another change that's going to be made with regards to the amendments to this Act is, the Agricultural Implements Compensation Fund is going to be eliminated and that money is going to go into the General Revenue Fund, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So any of the transactions will go right through the General Revenue Fund. And we see this government has been doing a lot of that, putting everything through the General Revenue Fund. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I see that I ask myself, how does that account for . . . How is it going to be accountable? How are we going to ensure that accountability is in place and that we know exactly where our dollars are going?

I think taxpayers in this province deserve to know where their tax dollars are going and have a statement with regards to that. So with this compensation fund being eliminated, how is that going to happen? And how many dollars are we looking at with regards to that?

I know the critic will dig into that but, like, how much money are we talking about here? I would suspect it's probably quite substantial. But is this just another way for this government to cover up their mismanagement, scandal, and waste? Right? Is this how they're just trying to cover everything up and throw everything in the General Revenue Fund so that they can't be accountable any longer?

And so there's a lot of questions with regards to the amendments to this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We know there's a lot of housekeeping and language changes, including gender-neutral language, which I think is really important. And probably in the agricultural business we probably did not do a good job with regards to making sure that language was gender neutral, so I think that's a good step. And we know that there's going to be changes that allow the minister to impose the penalties on dealers and distributors, where before that was administered by the board. So I don't know why there was some changes there, and I think there'll be some really good questions with regards to those changes.

So for sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know the critic will be talking to stakeholders because that will be very important with regards to the changes of this bill, and they'll be directing a lot of questions to the minister in committee. But I'm sure a lot of my other colleagues will have some further discussion they'll want to add to the amendments to this bill, and so I'm going to move to adjourn my remarks with Bill No. 101.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 102

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 102 — *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Here we are in the spring session of this portion of this legislature. And this is my first opportunity to get up and enter into debate once again and, as always, it is a real honour to be able to do so as part of the official opposition.

This particular bill is making a few changes to *The Agri-Food Act*. Some of them are minor housekeeping changes such as defining, giving a new definition for business day, which means a day other than Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday. So that helps clarify in the Act some of the maybe interpretation issues that were had.

Just to talk a little bit about what the Agri-Food Council is about and what this Act does, is it basically provides a structure for research and development and marketing and promotion of

various forms of agricultural production here in Saskatchewan.

Each one of these — there's commissions, there's boards, there's marketing boards — they are all governed by the Agri-Food Council. This system has been in place for decades. Many of these boards have been in place, or commissions been in place, for many decades. And so it's an orderly process, a way for many of these boards and commissions to access funds as well. All three of the types of agencies that are governed by this Act all have the ability to issue levies on their producers. So for the marketing boards and the development boards and the regular boards, they all have the opportunity to pass levies on their producers.

Now of course as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, until 2012 or '13 when there was still a Wheat Board across Canada, wheat wasn't included in any of these boards, nor was barley. But now they have established commissions to deal with these boards because they needed that. They needed some sort of regulatory oversight and agency so that levies and marketing and research and development could be worked at as a group, where individual farmers aren't expected to look after all their own seed testing or the types of markets that they want to reach.

So they represent a really important part of producers being able to work collectively. And certainly we know the strength of collectives when it comes to farmers being able to present themselves to the world. And obviously these . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . These collectives are important, despite what the member from Cannington might think, because they are important venues for farmers to use the levy dollars to enhance the entire industry, and not just leave farmers by themselves trying to figure out how they can improve their marketing practices, how they can improve the development and research of their particular farm, or of course whatever animals that they may be involved in.

It's interesting to see that there's development boards and boards, and for example the pulse crops are represented by a board, but much of the other grains and plants are governed by development commissions. I was curious about that. I couldn't find any reason why they're different but, Mr. Speaker, it appears that these are probably historic . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — I'm having some difficulty hearing the member from Saskatoon Nutana. I see there are a lot of private conversations. I would ask the members either to cease and desist, or else take those behind the bar or out of the Chamber. I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are a few changes that are being made in this bill. As the minister explained in his comments, it's just to modernize and, as we see often, certain bills are brought up for modernization and language change that will just keep it relevant for today.

One of the things that's changing here is the ability of the boards to actually set their own terms and their number of members on the boards. And at this point in the current legislative scheme they have to go for an order in council. And as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, orders in council are lengthy

and cumbersome and procedural, and there's a lot of red tape involved in them. So this is a positive move that's being made at this point. The minister indicated he had consulted extensively with all the agencies and commissions and boards in order to make sure that this would suit their needs. And in speaking to some of the boards, I can say that this is something that's being received well.

Another part I think that is quite interesting is in section 21. The Agri-Food Council has a number of responsibilities to the minister. And there's two new responsibilities that are being added, and one is to review minutes, board orders, and regulations. But the second one, which I find very interesting, is they're now required to provide governance training to new agencies and work with established agencies to ensure that governance best practices are followed.

Now I know, Mr. Speaker, having been on various boards in my time, that best practices in governance are something that's really important for the proper functioning of these agencies. And quite often when you elect your own board members from your volunteer base, there will be gaps in awareness or exposure to proper board governance. And I think you can imagine what things can go wrong if board members aren't properly trained or don't understand the role of governance in their agency. So I think this is something that the Agri-Food Council is now going to be required to deal with. And I think it's something that, you know, in many ways will strengthen the commissions and the boards that are being supervised by the Agri-Food Council.

Another piece in terms of the general powers that is being added is that the Agri-Food Council now will be able to develop, deliver, or develop and deliver. So they can develop, they can deliver, or they can develop and deliver, which is kind of the whole smorgasbord of that concept, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And what can they develop and deliver? "... guidelines, principles and expectations for agency operations, governance and policy development." And it goes on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think this is obviously a response to maybe some struggles that some of the individual agencies are having in terms of governance and procedures and guidelines. And I think this is obviously a good move as well.

There's a limit now as well on . . . There's something called the appeal committee and this is under the minister's powers. An agency shall now no longer serve more than four terms. So that's another change. I think that is welcomed because we don't want to be like China, where you can just pass a law and be president for as long as you want to be. That would not be democratic, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I suggest, and I think that is being reflected here in this bill because no one, no member of the council or commission can serve a term for more than four consecutive terms. I guess what they could do, though, is establish the terms to be 20 years long, but I don't think that would be the intent of any of these committees. There is a requirement for the terms to be a minimum of three years.

So this is giving some flexibility to these commissions and these boards to do what they need to do and operate their business, but it's also requiring the Agri-Food Council to now make sure that these commissions and boards are given the

tools that they need to serve their members. And the levy power is a very powerful part of what these commissions are able to do. They can raise a lot of money, and of course they are responsible for the development of that particular form of agriculture or agri-food.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think these are all good changes, although I know we'll have more questions in committee. But at this point I am prepared to conclude my comments and adjourn debate on Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. It now being 5 o'clock this Assembly stands recessed until 7 p.m.

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

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