



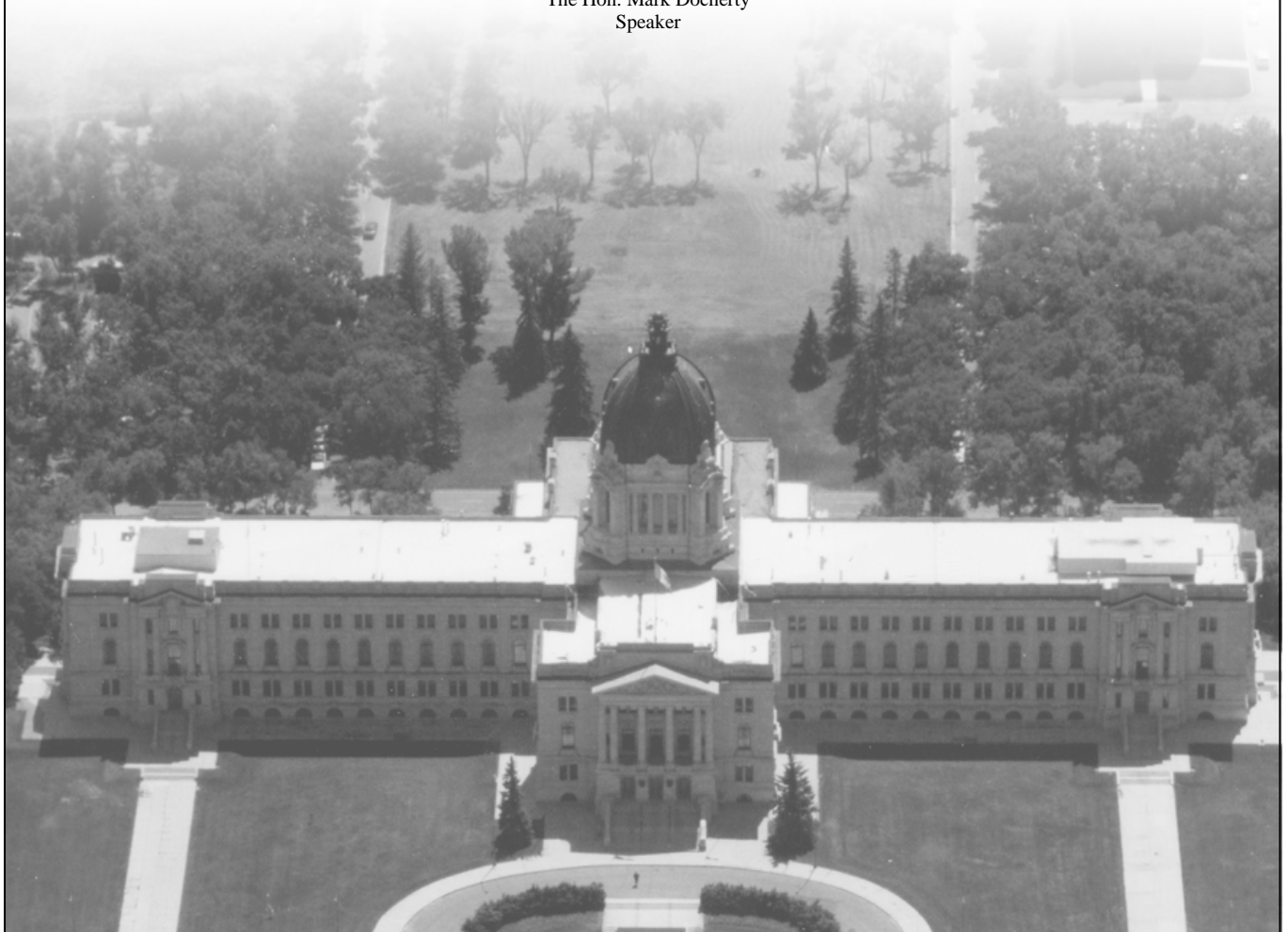
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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Vacant — Regina Northeast

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — I am tabling a special report from the Advocate for Children and Youth, pursuant to section 12 and 28 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce Mr. Norm Campbell. He's in the Speaker's gallery this morning. He's the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association. He's joined today by his wife, Marian. Welcome.

For over 40 years Norm has been involved in the recreation sector at local, provincial, and national levels. He began his career as a rec programmer in the city of Moose Jaw, later working his way up to become the recreation director. In 2000 Norm began his current role as CEO.

In just a few short days Norm will be taking on a new role, and that's retirement. So for nearly two decades under Norm's leadership, SPRA's [Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association] served as a recognized recreation sector leader in our province, providing services to members in the areas of training, professional development, and project grants and funding. Under Norm's leadership, the SPRA's represented numerous community organizations across the province and has been a fantastic steward of the Lotteries Trust Fund, contributing to the enviable quality of life we enjoy here in Saskatchewan.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Norm for his many, many years of commitment to recreation in Saskatchewan. I'm sure you've helped many people directly and indirectly across our province over many, many years. You will be missed. So I ask all members here at the legislature this afternoon to thank Norm for his time and wish him all the best in his retirement.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to join with the minister opposite just to briefly thank and welcome Norm to his Assembly and to thank him for his life of service to our province. He'll have bettered many lives and certainly he'll have bettered our province. So it's my honour to join with the minister and to thank Norm for his life of leadership within our province.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you, through you to all the members of the Assembly, I'm very pleased to introduce a school group from my constituency, 28 very brilliant students, 28 very brilliant students from grade 5 and grade 6 from Dr. A.E. Perry Elementary School, accompanying with their teacher, Ms. Miranda Fraser, and parent chaperones, Julene Harmel and Amy Walsh. After this question period, we're going to have a little question-and-answer . . .

An. Hon. Member: — You're going to buy them ice cream?

Mr. Fiaz: — And the Minister from Rural Health is going to buy ice cream, Mr. Speaker. I ask all the members to join me welcoming this school group in their Legislative Assembly. Thanks.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to the damaging cuts to our kids' classrooms across Saskatchewan. The petition references the fact that the Sask Party actually hiked education property taxes by \$67 million last year at the same as they cut our classrooms in a serious way, Mr. Speaker.

And they highlight that Saskatchewan people are paying more and that certainly students are getting less, and that includes every last student. It references that the Sask Party has cut at least \$674 in government funding for every student across Saskatchewan. Of course that impacts class sizes. It impacts student supports. It impacts every last student in Saskatchewan.

And the prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions are signed by good folks from Prince Albert, from Eastend, from Paddockwood, and from Kinistino. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics.

The people signing this petition want to bring to our attention the following: 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.

And we know that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics. And we know that over the past 10 years, the Saskatchewan Party has received \$12.61 million in corporate donations, and of that, \$2.87 million coming from companies outside of Saskatchewan. And we know Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people, and that the federal government and the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and now British Columbia — leaving Saskatchewan by itself — have moved to limit this influence and level the playing field by banning corporate and union donations to political parties.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request 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.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to present a petition as it pertains to Orkambi.

Whereas Orkambi was approved by Health Canada's use in cystic fibrosis patients with two copies of the F508del-CFTR [cystic fibrosis transmembrane conductance regulator] mutation, aged 12 years and older, and:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows [Mr. Speaker], respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the Ministry of Health to negotiate a fair price for Orkambi and to make it available to the Saskatchewan drug plan for those who meet the conditions set out by Health Canada and the clinical criteria established by the Canadian CF clinicians.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this petition was signed by many people throughout the land, and on this particular page the people that have signed are primarily from Meadow Lake, Rapid View, Saskatoon. And I so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise again today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to appoint a seniors' advocate. The petitioners point out that Saskatchewan seniors, seniors in Saskatchewan have not been a priority of this government. They point out that there's been budget cuts and cuts to programs that've made life less affordable for seniors, including the cut to the hearing aid plan in the last budget, increasing the seniors' drug plan rates, cutting STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], Mr. Speaker, hiking rates in long-term care.

The petitioners point out that Saskatchewan doesn't have legislated minimum quality-of-care standards in long-term care, and even with government's own continued CEO reports, including one that was just in February, along with concerns from families about issues in long-term care, the Sask Party has failed to ensure safety, quality of life, and dignity for seniors.

They point out that other provinces have seniors' advocates that work very well, ensuring seniors have the supports that they need; and they point out that a seniors' advocate would provide vital support for seniors and their families across the province. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to immediately appoint a seniors' advocate to ensure the rights of seniors are upheld and that all seniors across the province have the supports they need and deserve.

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by citizens of Saskatoon, Regina, and Strasbourg. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Remembering Charles Red Williams

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday Saskatchewan lost an extraordinary and influential individual; Charles Red Williams passed away at the age of 93. Born in 1925 at Richardson, Saskatchewan, Red fought for Canada during WWII. After the war he earned his bachelor's and master's in Animal Sciences from the University of British Columbia and his Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] from Oregon State University.

Red returned to Saskatchewan in 1954 where he began teaching students in agriculture and veterinary medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. At the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], he was at the forefront of introducing crossbreeding of beef cattle to Western Canada and his research on the dwarf gene in Herefords and on bull fertility was cutting edge.

Mr. Speaker, Red's list of achievements is immense, far too long to read off entirely here. He was a member of the Order of Canada, the Saskatchewan Order of Merit, and the Saskatchewan Agriculture Hall of Fame, but to name a few. But he may be best remembered for his involvement in the community.

He produced over 300 newspaper columns; handled over 1,500 rural- and agricultural-related speaking events where he was an entertaining and sometimes fiery speaker, and produced over 4,000 radio editorials during his career. Red will be greatly missed but his influence will prominently remain throughout this province for decades to come.

On behalf of this entire Assembly, I'd like to acknowledge Red for all he has done for Saskatchewan and for agriculture and to extend our thoughts and prayers to his family at this very difficult time. Thank you.

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

Local Band Wins Juno Award

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize a fantastic local band who just won their first Juno Award. On Sunday night Regina's own Dead South won the Juno for Best Traditional Roots Album of the Year for *Illusion and Doubt*. They were also nominated for Breakthrough Group of the Year.

The Dead South is a five-piece acoustic ensemble based in Saskatchewan. They blend elements of folk, bluegrass, classical, and rock which results in a unique modern and authentic blend of boot-stompin' acoustic music. They have been hard at work since they formed in 2012, having played several notable shows, several festivals, and live shows across North America.

On top of playing shows, the band really hit their stride in the last few years when their single, "In Hell I'll Be in Good Company" blew up in 2017. The video has almost 47 million views on YouTube. The song is off the debut album, 2014's *Good Company*, which the band followed up on in 2016 with the record, *Illusion and Doubt*.

Mr. Speaker, I have spent a few evenings at Dead South shows, and I can certainly confirm that you are in good company with Nate Hilts on guitar and vocals; Scott Pringle on mandolin, guitar, and vocals; Danny Kenyon on cello; Eliza Mary Doyle on banjo; and Erik Mehlsen on cello. This Saskatchewan-grown band never fails to put on an amazing show. I would like to once again congratulate The Dead South, 2018 Juno Award winners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[13:45]

Saskatchewan Musicians Nominated for Juno Awards

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well this is going to be fun now, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to thank you because this weekend, as you've already heard, the 2018 Junos were held in Vancouver, and Saskatchewan was well represented with five nominations between two artists and one group.

From Piapot, Buffy Sainte-Marie's album *Medicine Songs* was nominated in the Indigenous Music and Contemporary Roots

Album of the Year categories. She took home a Juno for the Indigenous Music Album of the Year.

Born in Langenburg and now a proud resident of Rocanville, Jess Moskaluke who is no stranger to many of us was nominated for a 2018 Juno in the Country Album of the Year for her album *Past the Past*.

And of course, as has been noted, the Regina-based band Dead South was also nominated for two Junos, including Breakthrough Group of the Year. My backyard chilling playlist has two of their songs, which I really love: "Rox in the Box" from the "Mason Jar Sessions," and "In Hell I'll Be in Good Company," whose video was noted by the member opposite, but is especially cool because it has a number of Regina-based landmarks like the fountain outside, Vintage Vinyl, and the Farmer's Market. They started off, actually, at Queen City Rocks, which is on right now.

Both Jess Moskaluke and The Dead South have received noteworthy support through Creative Saskatchewan. Over \$400,000 have been invested in both of these artists, allowing them to travel all over the world and to promote their work. And we're very proud of the support that Creative Saskatchewan has been giving them to support our artists.

And on behalf of everyone in this Assembly, I'd like to congratulate Buffy Sainte-Marie, Jess Moskaluke, and The Dead South on all of their success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Radiance Cohousing Project Nears Completion

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to acknowledge a wonderful housing project that began construction last fall in my constituency, and will be completed this spring. Radiance Cohousing, a nine-townhouse project in King George, is one of two co-housing projects in Saskatoon Riversdale, of which there are only 119 completed in all of North America. Co-housing is a type of housing development that includes fully equipped private homes clustered around shared indoor and outdoor space, with the design itself creating opportunities for neighbours to interact.

Mr. Speaker, co-housing is planned, designed, owned, and managed by the residents who will be living there. Because of this, the final product is the result of decisions that were made through a collaborative and co-creative process, and reflects what the residents want in their own homes and in the shared spaces.

Radiance Cohousing is also breaking new ground in more than one way in Saskatchewan. Aside from the co-housing model of development, they are building their project to meet passive housing standards, which are considered to be the most rigorous voluntary energy-based standard in the design and construction industry today. Passive house buildings consume up to 90 per cent less heating and cooling energy than conventional buildings. Mr. Speaker, there's no furnace in this particular project. It's quite amazing.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Radiance Cohousing on their innovative, forward-thinking, environmentally friendly project, and in thinking about ways that we as legislators can foster and support the development of the passive house industry in our province. Thank you.

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

North Battleford Hosts Saskatchewan Winter Games

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month I had the privilege to participate in the opening ceremonies of the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games, which were held in North Battleford. The games drew 1,900 athletes, coaches, managers, and officials in 17 sports from all seven Sport, Culture and Recreation districts in the province. As well, there were over 5,000 spectators who cheered on our young athletes.

Our city's passion for volunteering was also prevalent, as more than 1,000 volunteers helped make the games a success. The city of North Battleford and its citizens were wonderful hosts for the games, living up to the theme, Celebrate Winter's Best.

Mr. Speaker, the 2018 Saskatchewan Winter Games were noteworthy for their attention to diversity and inclusion. For the first time ever, athletes competed in a para-sport — para-nordic ski. And at the Sask Games as well, 32 Special Olympic athletes participated in the sport of bowling.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan is proud to support provincial athletic competitions like the Winter Games through Sask Sport, Saskatchewan Lotteries, and the Sask Games Council. They contribute to our local and provincial economies and make Saskatchewan stronger.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in congratulating the medal winners and everyone who participated in the competition. I also ask that we join in thanking the North Battleford host committee, the Saskatchewan Games Council, the city and the people of North Battleford, and all the amazing volunteers for a very successful Saskatchewan Winter Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Lloydminster Teacher Receives Arbos Award

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Inspiration Through Learning was this year's theme for Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week in Saskatchewan. And as poet William Butler Yeats once remarked, education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

For many students a passion for education is often ignited by an inspiring teacher. Joan Hill of the Lloydminster Catholic School Division is one of these teachers. She was recognized as being an influential educational professional and dedicated educator. Joan received the 2017 Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Arbos Award for contributions to education and the teaching profession, the highest honour a teacher in this province can earn.

Mr. Speaker, Joan began her career with the school division in

1981, teaching all elementary school grades up until her retirement in 2017. Beyond the classroom, Joan devoted much of her time to extracurriculars, sporting activities, beautiful drama productions and Christmas concerts, and getting students volunteering in the community. Her creative drive and passion were key vehicles to the success she saw in her students, and as a province we are very grateful to have Joan as an exceptional role model for all.

Mr. Speaker, I now ask that members please join me in acknowledging Joan Hill on being recognized during the Teacher and Staff Appreciation Week and on receiving Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation's 2017 Arbos Award. Thank you.

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

Mosaic and Regina Pats Donate to Hunger Program

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week Mosaic and the Regina Pats Hockey Club announced the results of their Mosaic Saves for Hunger initiative in support of REACH [Regina Education and Action on Child Hunger Inc.] for the 2017-18 regular season. REACH serves as an umbrella association for a wide range of food programs. The programs are delivered through over 150 organizations and schools, ensuring that all people in the community can have safe, affordable, and nutritious food.

For every save made by a Regina Pats goaltender during the regular season, Mosaic would donate \$25 to REACH. With a total of 2,017 saves, Mosaic and the Regina Pats were proud to hand over a cheque for \$50,425 to the program.

Mr. Speaker, this is the first year that the Pats ran this initiative. Regina Pats COO [chief operating officer] Stacey Cattell said, and I quote, "To be able to partner with two great organizations in Mosaic and REACH has been a great benefit for everyone . . . [on our team]." The players really enjoyed being part of this initiative, as they were given a great opportunity to give back to the community that they represent each and every night.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like all members to commend the Regina Pats Hockey Club and Mosaic for their commitment to their community and thank them for their generous donation to REACH. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — Thanks for joining us today. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Global Transportation Hub and Land Transactions

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We had some surprising news here yesterday. We heard from the minister that it's not the Sask Party supporters who made a fortune selling land back to the province. It's not the growing debt of the GTH [Global Transportation Hub]. It's not the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] investigation. It's not the millions lost by Regina taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. Those aren't the reasons that are clouding the GTH sales. No, it's the opposition that's

responsible for its failure, Mr. Speaker. We haven't been positive enough about that change. And the minister asked us to change our tune.

So the question remains, will the Premier face the music? My question, Mr. Speaker, is will the Premier do what it takes to clear the air and commit to a public inquiry into the GTH and to strengthening the conflict of interest Act the way that his Deputy Premier asked us to do in September?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a good opportunity here I think to speak to the generational investment that has been invested at the Global Transportation Hub just west of the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker, and understand the private sector investment that has followed on that public sector investment, Mr. Speaker, with a number of different private sector companies buying, purchasing lots out in that area, Mr. Speaker, and investing some \$485 million, Mr. Speaker. That's private sector investment in the GTH, now 860 jobs out there.

But it is important to recognize the generational nature of this investment, Mr. Speaker, and what it can add to the Saskatchewan economy in the decades ahead, Mr. Speaker. Because the reasons for the idea of the Global Transportation Hub, Mr. Speaker, under the members opposite when they were in government, Mr. Speaker, is where this idea originated.

It's this government, Mr. Speaker, that has moved forward with the construction of the Global Transportation Hub, Mr. Speaker. But the idea and the need for the free flow of products in and out of this province, Mr. Speaker, was recognized by the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, was acted on by members of this side of the House, Mr. Speaker. And the need for that free flow of our products, our export products out, Mr. Speaker, and our import of products into this province, is as necessary today as it has ever been, Mr. Speaker.

We recognize the challenges around land procurement, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Global Transportation Hub. We understand that those are with the Justice department in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. We haven't precluded further action, Mr. Speaker. We have not precluded further action, but we will await the return of those documents and that decision before we make any decisions.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, with sales having slowed to a halt with less than half the land sold, and with \$37 million in debt, there are significant concerns with this project. There's also significant concerns with our conflict of interest legislation, concerns that were raised by the Deputy Premier, raised by the member from Meadow Lake.

It's good to see the Premier find his feet on this question today. Will he have the courage to shine some light on the questions of conflict of interest and the concerns that have been raised through the land deals related to this GTH?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as I explained, we have not precluded further action, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the land procurement of the property that is now the Global Transportation Hub, Mr. Speaker. And we do not in any way, Mr. Speaker, discount the investment that has been made in that project, Mr. Speaker, because of the reasoning behind it identified by the members opposite when they were in government, Mr. Speaker.

The source point of wealth in this province, Mr. Speaker, is our exports. We need free and open trade agreements with nations all around the world as we export to over 150 countries all around the world, Mr. Speaker. We also need the opportunity for the free flow of those goods, whether it be over rail or pipeline to an export port, Mr. Speaker. And the Global Transportation Hub is part of that free flow of goods. It's identified as being a generational investment to be part of enhancing that free flow of goods, Mr. Speaker, both into the province as well as out of the province, Mr. Speaker.

As I said before, Mr. Speaker, the land procurement details lie within the Ministry of Justice. We outsourced those, Mr. Speaker, out of the province. When those return, we do not preclude further action, Mr. Speaker. We have always said that, Mr. Speaker. We continue to say that. If there's more questions, Mr. Speaker, I'll rise to my feet and I will repeat this answer again.

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

Fiscal Situation of the City of Moose Jaw

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We'll head a little further west to my hometown of Moose Jaw where they just saw their sewer rates go up by 6 per cent, the water rate go up by 9 per cent, and a two-year increase of over 12 per cent in their property taxes — a direct result, according to Mayor Fraser Tolmie, of cuts in the 2017 provincial budget.

This shortfall is keeping them from making desperately needed investments in capital expenses, Mr. Speaker, with further tax increases expected next year because of the continuing consequences of this shortfall. Moose Jaw's motto is Surprisingly Unexpected, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think being blind sided by ill-considered cuts was quite the surprise that they were thinking of.

My question for the Premier and the two members from Moose Jaw: Mr. Speaker, is anyone willing to stand up for the friendly city and make sure that there are no more nasty surprises in this year's budget? And will we continue to see costs downloaded to Saskatchewan's hometowns?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Government Relations was kind enough to hand me two sheets of investments that we've made in Moose Jaw and the surrounding area, Mr. Speaker, over the last number of years. Mr. Speaker, but I have met with the mayor of Moose Jaw, most recently a few months ago, Mr. Speaker, and talked to him with respect to the challenges that they have as a community but also, Mr. Speaker, in recognizing the investment that has come from the

provincial government, associated or affiliated or partnered with the federal government and the municipality of Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that that community can be open for business and moving forward. And that's most notably, Mr. Speaker, with some of the businesses that have moved into that particular area.

But, Mr. Speaker, since the members opposite were on this side of the House, revenue sharing in the city of Moose Jaw is up some 126 per cent — 126 per cent. That's the revenue-sharing formula that was asked for each and every year at SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]. It was asked for each and every year at SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association].

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, and it was those members that said yes, we'll always do it, but they never did quite get to it, Mr. Speaker, just like every other . . . many other investments in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. What we hear, Mr. Speaker, from the members opposite is weak leadership, Mr. Speaker. Talk about the projects like the hospital in Humboldt and infrastructure projects across this province, Mr. Speaker, never delivered, never built those projects, Mr. Speaker. It's members on this side of the House that continue to invest in our communities, including the one in Moose Jaw.

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

Pardons for Possession of Cannabis Convictions

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, in 2016, the year with the most current available statistics, 821 people in Saskatchewan were charged with possessing cannabis, 51 per cent higher than the Canadian average. All too often these charges lead to criminal records that create serious barriers for people looking to travel, go back to school, or find work. It's not right and it's not fair, especially since these convictions were handed down for an activity that will be legal and regulated in a few short months.

This afternoon I'm sending a letter to the federal government calling for them to issue pardons to Canadians burdened with a criminal record for possession of cannabis, and I've given a copy of this letter to the Minister of Justice prior to question period. Will the Minister of Justice sign my letter and join me in calling for pardons for people with criminal records for possession of cannabis?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the member opposite for having sent over the letter earlier in the session today. We'll take some time and we'll have a look at it and we'll consider what position.

We should make it clear what the members opposite are asking for. At the time of those convictions, when they were entered, they were entered at a time when that was an offence. What she is asking us to do now is to disregard what the law was at that time and in effect change the marijuana legislation so it

retroactively applies some time ago. Mr. Speaker, that is a significant stretch from where we are today.

Mr. Speaker, we'll have a look at that. We'll have some discussions on it. It's not something that was consulted on when we went through the consultations on our legislation and, Mr. Speaker, we'll have a fulsome response in due course.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party and this government has never been shy when it comes to disagreeing with the current federal government. They should show that same passion when it comes to standing up for Saskatchewan people who have these criminal records for simple possession.

No one should be burdened with a criminal record for doing something that is going to be legal and regulated in just a few short months. How can the Minister of Justice explain his position that people convicted of possessing cannabis should continue to be punished well after cannabis is legalized?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite is a lawyer. These are penal statutes. We don't ask for those laws to be amended retroactively. We don't have convictions set aside simply because a law was passed that changed. Laws are enforced from time to time. We expect all of the citizens in our nation to comply with the laws at the time they were passed.

Mr. Speaker, it would be open to the federal government to have included in a portion of their legislation that they wanted to retroactively amend some portions of it, that they wanted to grant a wholesale pass to the people that were there. They chose not to do it, so now for the member opposite to look to us and say, Minister, you're the Attorney General; please disregard the law that's been in our country for years and years and years.

Mr. Speaker, we'll have a look at what the request is but, Mr. Speaker, we need to understand in our province that we have respect for the law. We have respect for the judicial process. We have respect for due process and, Mr. Speaker, we'll look at it.

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

Donations to Party Leadership Candidates

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister for Central Services' decision to put a call out on offers on 660 government buildings raised a lot of eyebrows last week, but there's more here than meets the eye.

The minister's conflict of interest disclosure form shows that he's a shareholder in two different commercial real estate firms with holdings here in Saskatchewan, and his leadership campaign took tens of thousands of dollars from commercial real estate companies to finance his bid for the premier's chair. The minister who is bent on selling off government real estate has deep ties to commercial real estate business. How does the

Minister for Central Services think this is acceptable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that question is, you know, nothing short of astounding, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, questioning the ethics of someone in this Assembly is most disturbing to this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, and I think that to most hon. members in this House, Mr. Speaker.

I know both sides of this House went through leadership campaigns in the last year, Mr. Speaker, and there's been donations made — more on this side than that side, I might add, Mr. Speaker — but there's been donations made to all sorts of campaigns, Mr. Speaker, in an effort, in going through the great democratic process that we have in this province, where people are free to help and donate to their pleasure as we come through this very strong democratic process, both of us.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Saskatoon Centre may want to look a little closer to his leader, Mr. Speaker, which accepted 60 per cent of his donations from 12 individuals, Mr. Speaker. Twelve individuals in the province of Saskatchewan, free to accept donations from outside of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, but that's all right. There's a double standard in this House, Mr. Speaker, that continues. Mr. Speaker, they have a new leader, but it's exactly the same old NDP [New Democratic Party].

The Speaker: — I would ask the member to . . . This House is honourable. I expect you to have your question with that frame in mind, please. Thank you.

I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — For sure, Mr. Speaker. But we are the last . . . We are the wild west here in Canada when it comes to ethics here about corporate donations, union donations — all of that. And it may cause a little nerves on that side; they get a little upset. They would like to brush us off, or brush it under the carpet.

Mr. Speaker, we have some questions. We have questions and we need answers. These are serious questions about the motivations of the Sask Party government's front bench. The disclosures show that the Minister for Central Services has a significant stake in commercial real estate in Saskatchewan. He owns parts of real estate corporations. He took tens of thousands of dollars in donations from real estate companies, and now he's talking about putting up 660 parcels of publicly owned real estate on the open market.

Does the Minister of Central Services think he's in a conflict of interest position? Does he think our conflict of interest rules are strong enough?

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister of trade and export development.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, different leader, same old NDP. This is something that I would have expected when Dwain Lingenfelter was leader. I would have expected it.

It would have been disappointing even at that point, Mr. Speaker, but it wouldn't have been a surprise.

But for a leader who came in here on the very first day pledging to do things differently, this is beyond disappointing that where they go two weeks in is smear, gutter politics, unfounded accusations. That's where they go. And I'm actually disappointed in the member asking it as well. And I would say, Mr. Speaker, if they want to go down this road, that those who live in glass houses should not be throwing stones.

We know that the Leader of the Opposition, the newly elected Leader of the Opposition, took a very significant amount of money from a very small number of individuals. We're not standing up questioning whether he's asking questions and leading his party on the basis of the influence from those 12 individuals that gave him money, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure he's acting in an honourable fashion. We're not calling into question his motivations. We believe he's trying to do what is best for the province, just like members on this side of the House and particularly, just like the member, the Minister of Central Services.

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

Status of Crown Corporations and Intent of Government Legislation

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, continually the people of this province have called on the Sask Party to keep their promise to not sell off any of our Crowns. Yet again, they have failed to scrap Bill 40 in its entirety and guarantee that there are no more Crowns on the chopping block. The then minister of Justice claimed it was needed to continue the process of dismantling STC, but they've left the door open to more sell-offs and potential wind-downs for future sales.

Time and time again the Sask Party has promised to protect our Crowns, and time and time again they have broken that promise. Whether it's Crown land or government buildings, the Sask Party solution is always a fire sale.

Last budget we saw the surprise announcement on STC, and it's that time of year again. Will the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments Corporation commit today that Bill 99 will not be used to wind up, in whole or in part, any more Saskatchewan Crown corporations?

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we passed Bill 40 in 2017. It was a bill that would allow for the sale of up to 49 per cent of a Crown corporation. It provided a definition of privatize so the people across the province had some level of clarity. Mr. Speaker, after that we heard from people during the election. We discussed it with people, and we decided that it was something that people in our province were not comfortable with, so we made a decision that we would repeal that section of the Act. So we're doing that, Mr. Speaker.

In that piece of legislation it makes reference to winding up of a business or winding up of a corporation. At the time we brought

the bill forward we were in the middle of the process with STC. So we left that in place so there would be no issues with certainty with regard to STC.

Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite feel strongly about that, let them bring a private member's bill or let them do an amendment and we'll have that discussion, Mr. Speaker.

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

Costs and Benefits of Carbon Capture and Storage

Ms. Sproule: — Last week after dodging questions in the House about the skyrocketing cost of Boundary dam, the minister told reporters that costs were spent on maintenance at the power plant and unrelated to the carbon capture facility. That's not actually the case, Mr. Speaker. Significant costs were associated with the replacement of CO₂ compressor coolers, an essential step in the CCS [carbon capture and storage] process.

Now SaskPower claims they will continue to learn from this major issue and hope to see improvements sometime in the future. Mr. Speaker, this project has turned into a never-ending, taxpayer-funded experiment with costs and penalties climbing each year. We continue to dump taxpayers' dollars on this expensive experiment with no end in sight.

And so to the minister: when does he expect the original price tag of 1.5 billion to hit 2 billion, and how many rate hikes will be needed to pay for it?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I had indicated when the questions did come up, Mr. Speaker, we've acknowledged and SaskPower has acknowledged that there have been some challenges with respect to the amine solution at Boundary dam 3 with respect to the CCS.

There was also an issue with the power plant itself which was offline, unrelated to CCS. Mr. Speaker, I'd also say, in terms of the amount of maintenance that has been spent on Boundary dam 3 and CCS, this is obviously . . . When we're going from operations starting from zero now up to a couple of years in operations that maintenance would increase with any type of facility.

This is a company that has \$600 million in annual expenditures related to operations, related to maintenance, as an organization, Mr. Speaker. The good news is it has captured 2 million tonnes, actually reduced those tonnes from going into the atmosphere, which I think is the goal that we're all striving for, and not doing so by placing a carbon tax on the people of Saskatchewan.

That's why we will fight against the carbon tax, whether it's by the Liberals in Ottawa or the NDP across the way, Mr. Speaker. We don't think that that's the right approach for the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, just to get on the record, this project has nowhere near met its goal. It should be at 4 million tonnes by now and it's only halfway there. So there's a long ways to go before those goals are being met.

Mr. Speaker, the minister also refused to provide a timeline on the decision for whether to proceed with retrofitting Boundary dam 4 and 5. Last year in April, the president of SaskPower said that December 2017 was the target for making a recommendation to cabinet. It's almost April, Mr. Speaker. The decision should be clear by now. The minister told reporters the units were 50 years old and "Even before you can do carbon capture and sequestration, you've got to sink some money into rebuilding the units like we did at Boundary dam 3." Sink is the word, Mr. Speaker.

At a time when this province is taking food out of the mouths of people with disabilities and cutting supports from kids' classrooms, how could the Sask Party even consider giving the green light to sinking more taxpayer dollars in this costly technology? Has a decision been made on what to do with Boundary dam 4 and 5, and if not, when will Saskatchewan people find out how much more we're going to have to pay?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the member opposite is up to date with respect to the amount of tonnes of carbon that would be sequestered by the unit. Mr. Speaker, we're at 2 million tonnes. Mr. Speaker, we're certainly looking forward to seeing what those numbers are going to be like in the future years.

[14:15]

We're certainly a long ways away from the 1 billion tonnes that that member put out in a news release, saying that that was the goal. Certainly that's never been the goal, Mr. Speaker. It is 1 million tonnes that was the goal at 100 per cent operations. The company has set operations though at 85 per cent to take into account planned and unplanned maintenance which is, I think, reasonable for any type of facility like this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite would also acknowledge that the UN's [United Nations] IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] has acknowledged that a two-degree reduction in global temperatures is not achievable without carbon capture and utilization and storage technology, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are demonstrating this technology on the largest scale in the world, Mr. Speaker. This is going to be important in a world that is not going away from coal any time soon, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that's something that this province is being leaders on, and we certainly will have decisions to make into the future with respect to not just 5 and 6, but also Poplar River 1 and 2, Shand as well, Mr. Speaker. Especially in light of the fact that the federal government is making this a very difficult file to work with, Mr. Speaker, we certainly would appreciate the members opposite's co-operation on this.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Cost of Power for Saskatchewan People

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People from across the North are struggling to make ends meet, and the Sask Party's cuts and fee hikes are making life much more expensive. The Sask Party's spending money hand over fist on their failed carbon capture plan at Boundary dam, but they always tell us there's nothing left over to help the North.

People in both northern constituencies come to our offices all the time with huge power bills that are caused by higher rates charged by SaskPower to northern communities. Many can't afford to pay on the incomes they earn, and elders, pensioners, and families are forced to ask for help to pay for their power bills. The chamber of commerce highlighted this problem all the way back in 2014. Mr. Speaker, will the Sask Party's budget finally include action to address the unfair power bills so many in the North are struggling with?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear, the policy in terms of the power rates in the province of Saskatchewan are no different than when that member was a cabinet minister. Power rates are the exact same regardless of where you live in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I'll tell you what will make things worse for all people, including northerners, Mr. Speaker, is people's power bills, if the members opposite are in power and put in place a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. A \$4 billion carbon tax over five years would, Mr. Speaker, make people's power rates high, Mr. Speaker. It would make rates for any number of services and products that people in this province purchase, it would make it very much more expensive Mr. Speaker.

That's why, whether it's the Liberal government in Ottawa or a possible NDP government in Regina, Mr. Speaker, we're going to fight it every step of the way. We're not going to accept a carbon tax in this province, Mr. Speaker, for anybody in this province, whether you live north, south, east, or west in our province.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017* with amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 101, *The Agricultural Implements Amendment Act, 2017* with amendment, and that the bill and its amendments are now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — When shall the amendments be read a first time?

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

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

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the amendments be now read a first and second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First and second reading of the amendments.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

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

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 101 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 102, *The Agri-Food Amendment Act, 2017* without amendment.

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

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

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 102 and that the bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

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

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 102 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 121

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 121** — *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today and enter into the debate on Bill No. 121, *An Act to Control the Sale, Possession, Consumption, Distribution and Transportation of Cannabis and to Make Consequential Amendments to Other Acts*. And it's a piece of legislation that the government found itself doing this because of, obviously, a federal Liberal campaign promise made a few years ago, and that here we are now preparing for that legalization that might happen this summer. We're all watching closely to see what would happen. It almost died this past Friday when the Senate . . . It didn't look like it was going to make it through. I guess it would have been Thursday. It didn't make . . . it looked kind of not likely, but it did happen.

And so we find ourselves here debating this and thinking about, what does this mean for Saskatchewan people? And of course this, while it seems to be a new idea in many ways — the idea of cannabis and the fact that there has been cannabis use in this province — it's not a new issue. It's been here for decades and in fact, you know, we've been . . . And I imagine both sides have been lobbied about this issue. Whether it's legalization of cannabis or legalization of hemp as an agricultural product, it's one that we need to come to terms with. And it's the new reality of the new Canada and many states in the United States. And how can we be proactive in dealing with this kind of drug?

And so, you know, in many ways we can take our lessons from when alcohol and liquor became legal. And of course there are old stories about that, about the bootleggers. In fact I remember one in my neighbourhood of Caswell and some parts, the older parts of the city of Saskatoon and I imagine here in Regina, Moose Jaw, that you can tell where the bootleggers' homes were because if you looked in their chimneys, you could tell there was a panel on the chimney in the attic where the stovepipe would go into the chimney.

But this is a pretty serious, pretty serious thing that we find ourselves facing. And of course while we have a lot of questions, and I know people will have many questions about this in committee, there will be some things that we want to get on the record. And even today during question period, it was a very good question I thought by our Justice critic around the people with criminal records with cannabis, particularly in the last year where we see an increase of some . . . 800 and some charges, over 800 charges of possession of cannabis, simple possession, and what this impact could mean for individuals.

And of course, and I had been talking with this and . . . I've talked to the minister about this in terms of the fact that it's harder now than ever to get a pardon. The former Conservative government, the Harper government, increased the costs of pardons from some \$150 to over \$600 and created more hoops in getting that. And while this is not an issue of going soft on crime, it's like being realistic about . . . and the fact that the people of Saskatchewan expect the lawmakers of Saskatchewan to be realistic, to have a sense of with-it-ness to know what's going on with the rest of the country. And when our charges are much higher than other parts of the country, this is a problem.

And so this bill creates a regulatory framework for legalized cannabis. Key elements of the framework include cannabis . . . Consuming cannabis in public spaces is prohibited. Now I understand that is, when we talk about consuming we also mean

that that can be digesting as well as smoking, and whether that's a thing that . . . We'll need to understand more about that, and so I think this is a very, very important part of it.

And possession of more than 30 grams, or more than four plants, is prohibited as well. People under 19 . . . So that was the age that came out just recently, that it will be 19 and that people under 19 are prohibited from possessing or consuming cannabis and punishable by a fine of up to \$2,000.

I'm not sure where that fits into the spectrum in terms of other fines of possession, illegal possession of alcohol. I don't know if that's quite the same. I would imagine that that would be higher than, but I haven't had any experience with that, so I don't know what that would be. And we can ask that question definitely in committee. Possession of cannabis in a vehicle is prohibited except when transporting from a place where it is obtained to the place where it will be consumed.

And so it also established rules for retail stores, and of course we had a lot of discussion around the wholesale nature of this and whether or not that's as effective as it might be in terms of making sure that it's . . . And how does the product get into Saskatchewan? How is it registered? How do we keep track of all of this stuff? And if there's not a role, or whatever the role is for, you know, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, that will have to be spelled out more, in more detail. So we'll have questions about that.

So we are concerned that it has taken too long for the framework to roll out, and I want to take a look at the back . . . Because from my part, when I talk about human rights, I think that there's some real gaps in there when they looked at what were the key issues, and of course the key issue is around the human rights Act. Access is really a problem. And as we said, this was a promise that was made by the Liberals in 2015. And so while sometimes governments — and we've seen this notably of the other side — may not actually follow through on their promises, and we've seen that in several examples, but this shouldn't have taken people by surprise. And in many ways the former minister of Justice and the current one have used that as a bit of a defence, that this was a surprise, that they weren't thinking this was actually going to happen. But in fact the Liberals are living up to their campaign promise, and here we are. We have to make do.

[14:30]

We have, and I know several members on our side have talked about how the rules around the transportation in a vehicle seem onerous and difficult to enforce. And so we have some serious questions about how that will look like, because it's really important that . . . This is interesting. We're dealing with another piece of legislation, the Office of Residential Tenancies, where there are rules about what landlords can dictate. And so it leaves some people out of the loop. Because if you don't own your own home, don't have access to a garden spot, you're renting, and you can't consume it in a public place, that clearly this is a gap that will force again what the challenge was before — black market activity. Or in terms of whether you're purchasing or whether you're consuming, that in fact if the law becomes a bit of a farce because it's unenforceable or people don't respect it, then what have you got? Where have you

landed on this whole issue? And so we need to make sure that people respect the law, that they understand the law, and it's not so complex or draconian that it seems to be unfair.

You know, we have come out and we've been pretty clear about supporting the minimum age of 19 and the prohibition of consumption in public spaces. But we want to make sure that there's enforceability and that that actually can lead to other successes. At the end of the day, we want to see a healthier society. We want to see a more mature society that has a mature approach to drugs and this kind of activity. And so that comes with reasonable laws that are enforceable and people can understand. We don't want to get into a situation where another set of laws drives activity underground or into the black market, or somehow we're known as a backward province in Canada. And this is something that, when you see the number of charges that have come up in the last year, what does that indicate and how do we handle that?

So I want to take a minute, Mr. Speaker, if I can. When I was just taking a quick look at *Saskatchewan's Cannabis Framework* — and this was one that was released by the Government of Saskatchewan — it talks about keeping Saskatchewan's roads safe, and that's a paramount thing. We see that here whether it's with drinking and driving, a huge, huge issue here, and so we've talked about the zero tolerance approach with drugs and driving, which is very, very important, and the impairing impacts of cannabis and how we have to be guided by best science, best practices in this area. Of course this is not anything brand new, because as I've said, the consumption of cannabis has been something that's been going on in this province for many, many years, and so we need to take a look at that.

Workplace safety. And as a former Labour critic, and I know the new critic will take this up, this is an emerging issue. Consumption of drugs in the workplace is something that is very, very important. Of course, what the impact that will have on drug testing will be interesting, because people will be able to consume marijuana after hours, and if that's showing up in the testing, that's very important.

Home cultivation is important, public health. But as I said, in talking about taxation, possession limits, that type of thing, but it didn't really deal with the issue around . . . This is what we're trying to get at today, was the issue around the criminality of cannabis and how are we moving beyond that. And I think that's something that's very important because, you know, as I've raised the issue around from the human rights perspective, and that we've raised it today as a justice perspective, this is an important issue as we're moving forward. People want to know, what will happen with my record? And is it just as the minister indicated? If it happened when it was against the law, you are out of luck. There will not be any changes into our attitude towards that.

I hope that he can think further along the lines and what that means for people, when particularly it's a simple possession. In fact, it might be time to think about how do we approach this in terms of where you have some people criminalized by an activity, and then just days later when it becomes legal, that you have a situation where it's really important that we take this in a serious, serious manner.

Because this is part of the issue, this is really . . . In fact it's really the guts of the issue, is the criminality of cannabis consumption. And it wasn't that the Liberals were just trying to figure out a way to create work for justice departments around the country, but in fact it's about the criminality of this. It's something that many view as a recreational habit that is not harmful to anyone, particularly if it's consumed in their private, and so . . .

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move adjournment on this bill, because I know that there's lots that we'll have in the session and in committee further on. But right now I would like to move adjournment of Bill No. 121, *An Act to Control the Sale, Possession, Consumption, Distribution and Transportation of Cannabis and to Make Consequential Amendments to Other Acts*. Thank you very much. I move adjournment.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 121, *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Act*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 122

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 122 — *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act, 2018/Loi de 2018 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it is a pleasure to rise again into this debate on 122, which is the amendments part, the cannabis control consequential amendments Act, 2018. So my comments won't be that long because it's pretty well straightforward as what we had before in terms of the Acts that have to be amended, and that includes *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act* as is amended, and what it goes through is pretty well straightforward and it's a pretty short Act.

And as well, talking about the authority to establish one or more processes in terms of regulations. And then as well:

. . . *The Court of Appeal Act, 2000* is repealed and the following substituted:

Subsections (3) to (7) do not apply with respect to appeals related to prosecutions pursuant to the *Criminal Code*, the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* (Canada) and the *Cannabis Act* [2000] . . . and appeals pursuant to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* . . .

And *The Vital Statistics Act*. So in many ways it's pretty well the same, just to follow up in terms of making sure that all the

legislation aligns and that there is no unintended consequences, nothing is missed out. And so the questions will be if that is particularly the case, and so I think that we would have questions when we got into the House around that piece of legislation.

And so as I said, we are a little worried that, in fact, we're leaving this a little too late. The bill may be . . . The Canadian law may be changed this summer. We're hearing mixed messages about that, whether or not that is particularly the case, that whether or not the federal government is ready. And so we want to make sure Saskatchewan's ready though. And I know that there's lots of questions around this, whether it be from people who are taking cannabis as a medication, a home medication under the prescriptions of doctors, that that type of thing, that we're all ready to make sure that the right thing is being done here.

So Bill 122 does the consequential amendments to make sure that it's all aligning. We hope that all of it is in place. And so with that, I would move adjournment of Bill 122, the consequential amendment Act. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 122, *The Cannabis Control Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 107

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 107 — *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into the debate. It's a good bill, Mr. Speaker. It is a fine bill. This particular bill, Mr. Speaker, is pretty straightforward. This amendment is to establish the Tyrannosaurus rex as the official fossil emblem of the province of Saskatchewan. I have to say, I don't think that there's anything too controversial about that, Mr. Speaker, but when you get to committee, one never knows. One never knows about these things.

It's interesting to note — and the minister noted this in his second reading speech — that we are the first province or state with a T. rex as our official emblem, although I understand that Manitoba and Nova Scotia do have a provincial fossil. It was interesting actually hearing the process by which we chose a provincial fossil, Mr. Speaker. And I know that you were in the role as the minister, I think, during the time. But in November of 2015, and the minister points this out in his second reading speech:

. . . the Royal Saskatchewan Museum [actually] generated a province-wide campaign encouraging people to help

select the new emblem to represent . . . [our province and] to discover more about the province's rich fossil history. Through this process, the public voted through a paper ballot at the museum or province-wide online for one of seven fossil candidates.

Those seven options were, for our fossil, Mr. Speaker, were Mo, the long-necked Plesiosaur found near Ponteix, Mr. Speaker. So Mo, the long-necked Plesiosaur near Ponteix was in the running. This 30-foot-long marine reptile was a new species to science when it was discovered. We had Scotty, the T. rex, discovered near Eastend and one of the largest and most complete T. rex skeletons ever found. Kyle Mammoth, a 12,000-year-old, giant, elephant-like woolly mammoth, Mr. Speaker.

That just actually brings to light some interesting discussion I've heard around cloning, Mr. Speaker, and the possibility of bringing back a woolly mammoth, Mr. Speaker, with crossbreeding or . . . I'm not a geneticist, but I know that there's been some talk about how to work with elephants and use DNA [deoxyribonucleic acid] from fossils, Mr. Speaker, to bring back a species like the woolly mammoth. So maybe Kyle the 12,000-year-old, giant, elephant-like woolly mammoth might have another day in the sun, Mr. Speaker.

Also in the running was the . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have some interesting comments about fossils, but I'll leave it with that. We had in the running the Herschel Short-necked Plesiosaur who was found near Herschel, a marine reptile who was also a new species to science when it was discovered.

We've got the Brontothere, a rhino-like mammal found near Eastend from 35 million years ago, Mr. Speaker; Big Bert, the most complete and best-preserved specimen of this 92-million-year-old crocodile found near Carrot River; and Thescelosaurus, a plant-eating dinosaur species unique to Saskatchewan, found also near Eastend. Clearly Eastend is a . . . We have many pockets of richness around fossils in Saskatchewan, but Eastend is one of those places, Mr. Speaker.

So again ultimately the T. rex made the cut, Mr. Speaker, and with this bill will become our provincial fossil, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting, just looking at some of the emblems and flags that would have been noted in previous iterations of this bill, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

Maybe many, many people knew this. I know everyone . . . You often hear people say curling is Saskatchewan's provincial sport. I'm not a curler, Mr. Speaker, but it truly is Saskatchewan's provincial or official sport. I didn't realize this, but if you take a look at the Saskatchewan government's emblems and flags page, curling has been played in now what is Saskatchewan since the 1880s. And the predecessor of CurlSask was established in 1904, before we were even a province.

And we have to note that this province has been home to some of the best curlers in Canada, and world champions, and the first women's world champion and the first Olympic gold medal in curling. To recognize the significance of curling for

Saskatchewan and the international contributions of Saskatchewan curlers to the sport, our legislature adopted curling as the province's official sport in 2001. I did not know that, Mr. Speaker. I come from a hockey family and a badminton family, but obviously curling is the sport of Saskatchewan.

I did not realize actually either, Mr. Speaker, that we had an official grass emblem, which was selected by a coalition of environmental, wildlife, and agricultural organizations through the prairie conservation action plan, seeking to sustain a native prairie ecosystem in a healthy state. So needle-and-thread grass was chosen because it's the dominant grass of Saskatchewan's mixed grassland ecoregion, and it is also common in the moist mixed grassland and aspen parkland ecoregions. And it was adopted also, Mr. Speaker, as our provincial grass emblem, also in 2001 when curling became the official sport.

We have an official berry, Mr. Speaker, and I think if I gave you one guess you'd probably get it, Mr. Speaker, but our fruit emblem is the Saskatoon berry or Juneberry. We know it's small and edible and delicious in pies and tarts, Mr. Speaker. It's sweet and has long been eaten by indigenous peoples in Canada. The name derives from the Cree noun which I can't pronounce, Mr. Speaker. Please forgive my lack of good Cree. And obviously our city of Saskatoon, the place that I call home, is named after this plant. And in 2005 it was recommended that the Saskatoon berry be named as one of the provincial emblems.

I know my colleague from Rosemont knows very well the sharp-tailed grouse. It was selected as our province's bird emblem in 1945 and it is, as my colleague from Rosemont would recognize, one of Saskatchewan's most popular game birds.

We have an official tree of the province, which is the white birch. The white-tailed deer is also a notable Saskatchewan emblem. So this bill again today is to recognize . . . Oh and who could talk about Saskatchewan emblems without talking about our western red lily, Mr. Speaker? It's our floral emblem, again since 1941, and it grows in moist meadows in semi-wooded areas and stands out brilliantly with its flaming red blossoms against a natural green background. I think, Mr. Speaker, I hadn't seen a western red lily in person actually, probably, or in real life until probably about 20 years ago. But they are quite beautiful in nature.

But it's quite exciting to add yet another emblem to our list, Mr. Speaker, adding the T. rex. I know that many students . . . Hopefully by adding this emblem, the T. rex, to our long list of culture here in Saskatchewan, that it'll help enhance learning for students and for adults alike.

So as I said, with Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*, I don't believe that there's anything too controversial about it. And it will eventually make it into committee and perhaps there will be one or two questions there. But with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 107, *The Provincial*

Emblems and Honours Amendment Act, 2017. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 110

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 110 — *The Animal Protection Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to stand today to add some of my remarks with regards to Bill No. 110, *The Animal Protection Act*. My understanding is this bill will replace *The Animal Protection Act* of 1999 with this new amended Act.

And a lot of the changes that are within this Act is much appreciated by a lot of the stakeholders within our community . . . our province, I mean, and that I believe the Minister of Agriculture has done a lot of due diligence with regards to consulting with stakeholders, which is really refreshing, Mr. Speaker. It would be nice to see a lot of the other ministers doing that front work before they put forward some legislation.

This legislation has been asked for and needed for a long time, Mr. Speaker. And we've been hearing a lot about different animal groups within our province that have needed more protection from us as residents here. And, Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that this particular bill is near and dear to my heart. I have a particular fondness for animals, and oftentimes people will say that I could be quite tenacious with humans, but when it comes to animals I have a real soft spot there. And a lot of it is because they rely on us to ensure that they're safe, and their dedication to us is impeccable. And I've always had animals growing up, and growing up my mom oftentimes wouldn't even name the animals because that's kind of how it is, kind of farm life. Mom grew up on a farm and such, and so we'd have a cat and she'd be like, that's cat number one; that's cat number two. They're mousers. That's what they do. But we always make sure we take care of them. And with our dogs, they were there for my entertainment anyway.

And I know I really enjoy coming home and seeing my two dogs, Roxy and Diesel. And Roxy is a pit bull-blue heeler and Diesel is a pit bull-German shepherd, and they're big, goofy dogs but they're so sweet and cuddly. And someone said, I can't believe you let your dogs be on the couch and I was like, well how am I supposed to cuddle with them otherwise? I don't want to lay on the floor. So they're my babies and they get so excited when they see me coming home. And after a week of being in Regina, they're really excited to see me.

So I think most people in the province here, Mr. Speaker, do appreciate animals in our lives and they do take care of them and treat them as their furry family members. And I'm going to have a grandbaby furry animal soon. My daughter just purchased a Pomeranian puppy yesterday that she'll be getting

in four weeks, and so we're excited to add this furry grandbaby to the family. And I'm looking forward to spending some time with a little puppy again. We haven't had that for a long time with our big dogs that we have now.

So like I said, Mr. Speaker, I believe that most people in this province take good care of animals but there are some animals that need our attention, our protection, and animal welfare resources in this province have been really immensely under pressure and not completely supported. And many humane societies, which with the changes in this Act will be changed into animal protection agencies, but I know the humane societies in Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, and P.A. [Prince Albert] — and I know of some other ones that are really volunteer based — but those four in the major cities, they provide animal protection services in the communities, primarily through donations. So these agencies and the people who work in these agencies don't do it because they'll be able to have a secret home in the Bahamas or anything like that. They do it because of their love for animals and them wanting to make sure that these animals go to safe homes and are protected. So I would like to see more resources being provided to these agencies so that we can ensure that animal protection is a priority in our province.

Mr. Speaker, when I was doing some research here, Saskatchewan is the lowest ranked province for animal protection laws. So it's very important that we change that and strengthen our legislation. So this is definitely the step in the right direction, Mr. Speaker, but there's still going to be more to do.

There was a report that was presented. It's the *2016 Canadian Animal Protection Laws Rankings* from the Animal Legal Defense Fund. And it talked about all the provinces and some of the strengths and weaknesses of the provinces, the existing strengths that they have, and improvements that needed to happen. And actually our neighbours to the east, Manitoba, is ranked as number one, Mr. Speaker, which I found very interesting because I find that a lot of the issues that we may have in Saskatchewan are pretty in sync with potentially the issues in Manitoba as well. And so I think it's good to look at comparison of what they're doing well and the areas that we need to strengthen.

When I looked at some of the potential improvements for Saskatchewan, what they list here, I do have to say that quite a few of the recommendations they have are actually going to be implemented in this legislation, Mr. Speaker, which is wonderful news, nice to see. But there are some areas too that still need to have some improvement.

Some of the areas that I looked at was an area for immunity for anyone that reports. I think it's really important that we look into that because some people will want to, say, report their neighbour — even family member — that they're not taking care of their pet as well as they should, but don't want to report in fear that that will get disclosed and ruin the relationship that they have with that individual. And I think about, you know, smaller communities where everybody knows each other, but you know that person who might not be taking care of their animal as well as you think they should, but you don't want to be outed as being that individual that does that. So I think that's

an important aspect.

Prohibiting animal fighting, I know that's becoming more and more of an issue. And of course being a mom of two pit bulls, I think about that often and how some people will have these animals and breed them just for fighting, which is very scary. And these animals are . . . that's not their pure intention. And they do that for entertainment or money-making opportunities.

And so I think . . . They were saying that's one of the major strengths in the Manitoba legislation was that they addressed those issues and the psychological factors of how that plays for animals. So I think that's something that should be looked into adding to this piece of legislation as well, is that fact.

And increased penalties for repeat offenders, Mr. Speaker, they are saying that that's something that could be improved within our legislation. And I notice in this piece of legislation they talked about, second-time offenders would get the same penalty pretty much as what a first-time offender would. I guess it's based on the discretion also, how much they could be fined. But I think it's an important factor to have that. If you're a repeat offender, the consequences should be getting progressively worse because we don't want to encourage that.

[15:00]

And to make sure that people have education on what it is to be a good animal caregiver. I know especially since my daughter's been looking for an animal, we were looking at different adoption agencies too, and looking for a rescued animal. We feel that that's important. And when you contact these agencies they do a really good job with screening individuals and ensuring that they're going to have good homes and talking to them about what their plan is, the future plan for animals. Because you hear about people who might give a puppy for a gift, and they don't think of the long-term consequences of the care for this animal when you take on a furry family member. That's years you're dedicating to this animal, and so having to be mindful of that.

And so I think they do a really good job with educating individuals with regards to that, talking about the breed of the animal, the personality, what you can expect from them, and prepare for that. So they play a huge role with ensuring that individuals are informed before they have one. But we know that not everybody gets their animals through these animal protection agencies and they might get animals in other means. And so they might not have that education for themselves at that point. So I think maybe we could look at providing a little bit more support with regards to that. So like I said before, some of the changes here is going to be housekeeping in nature as well, and changing some of the language, "humane societies" to "animal protection agencies."

And also some of the change here was to provide animal protection officers with more authority and some of the same abilities as peace officers. So I think that's wonderful as well, Mr. Speaker, because that gives them protection pursuant to the *Criminal Code* and gives them a little bit more authority to be able to enact some of their duties.

It seems like they're going to expand the legislation so that the

animal protection officers will have more ability to go in and do search warrants and also, but just casually go in and look at facilities and ensure that they're being operated in an appropriate fashion. So during regular business hours they could go into any business, that they can inspect vehicles, ". . . place or premises where animals are kept for sale, adoption, slaughter, hire or exhibition."

So they could walk in and just check to see if animals are being taking care of the way they should be. And I think having that when you know someone could just come in at any time and check out your facilities, you oftentimes are more mindful of how you're caring for the animals as well. And so I think that's good. That will hold them accountable for the care of the animals.

So it also expands the definition for an animal in distress. So I think that it'll include conditions that would cause the animal extreme anxiety or impair the animal's well-being over time. So they could use that reference in determining whether they think the animal needs extra supports. I know they did also some work here of expanding abandonment of animals, you know, and so they're saying that if someone doesn't come and search for their animal within so many days that then the animal protection officers could decide to allow that animal to maybe be with someone else and such.

And I know a lot of these animal protection agencies have probably been going on for a bit longer but I've been hearing more about it, having foster parents for these animals. And so they take in some of the animals instead of having them being living in the animal shelters, which is a good place for them when they need support for emergencies, but having the animal living in the home or living with these families provides them that environment where they're not so institutionalized and the families can work with them. So if they, say, have some behavioural concerns, the families can help work with that like training them or maybe some of these animals are a little skittish.

I know when we got Diesel, I don't know if he was abused but he is very skittish about people he doesn't know. And even when we first adopted him he would hide oftentimes from us and then it took him a while to trust us and gain that . . . know that he was supported. And then when we'd have company over he'd be really skittish and now he's realizing if we're letting people in, that that's okay, and we tell him it's okay and he manages with that. So some of these animals need that extra support, so I think that's a wonderful opportunity to have them fostered and then they can work on some of those issues so that when they are adopted out the families know that the animals have had that work done with them.

It also includes limits of transporting animals who would suffer unduly during the transportation. And so I'm not quite sure exactly what that's in reference to, but I know that the Minister of Agriculture did some consultation with some agencies that work with horses like and . . . I'm just trying to find it here . . . I can't find that note here but I know they were individuals who work with more livestock, so horses and so maybe that's including that as well. I know when we're talking about including agriculture animals within this legislation, too, the animal protection officers are going to need those resources to

be able to manage that as well, and how that works.

I know Saskatchewan Animal Protection Services handles all the other calls in the province, and so I'm sure they're probably more versed with regards to that because the urban centres of the animal protection agencies probably don't have those calls very often. So that's also a concern because I know I heard about an issue where there was some horses that weren't being treated properly, and so they had to go in and handle that.

So a big change within this legislation, too, Mr. Speaker, is that veterinarians would have a duty to report when they have reasonable grounds to believe someone isn't caring for an animal or is causing them distress. Previously, Mr. Speaker, veterinarians would just have a moral duty to report if they felt that an animal was in distress, but they didn't have a legal obligation to report. So that really would put them in a tough spot sometimes, whereas at least making this a legal obligation, as soon as they feel that an animal might be living somewhere where they're not being cared for or they're in distress, then they have that obligation. They have to report. And I know that they're pretty happy that this has been put in the legislation so that they can tell people that they have that legal obligation to do that.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that's about all of the information that I wanted to put on the record with regards to this.

I know one thing I wanted to say was, I know there's a lot of veterinarians that they donate a lot of their time going to the northern communities and working with animals there because they know the resources there are minimal. And it's wonderful that they provide their services and do this. I've known of some people myself that have done it and they said they love doing that because it's giving to the province and those animals are so sweet. So they go there, they provide them the medical needs that are needed there and also make sure that they're spayed and neutered.

And that reminds me of an amazing animal activist that I used to watch on TV regularly. And I'll quote him, Mr. Bob Barker: "Have your pets spayed or neutered." And I think, Mr. Speaker, we all need to know that, and I think that message is oftentimes given to people. And like I said, I think these animal protection agencies do a really good job advocating for that and working towards that, and I know like there's other people who go around and they're ensuring that people realize that they need to do this. If you're going to be a good pet parent you need to make sure that your pet is spayed or neutered. And Bob Barker used to always say that that was one of the best gifts for him is when people would go up to him and say, I know that it's so important for you to have your pet spayed or neutered so I made sure I did that, you know, and he would be really happy when he would hear that.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that I have other colleagues that are going to have a lot more they'll want to add with regards to remarks with this bill. And I know my colleague will consult with the stakeholders with regards to their concerns and issues, and address those within committee. And so with that, I'm going to adjourn debate on Bill No. 110, *The Animal Protection Act*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 110, the animal protection amendment Act, 2017. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 111

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doke that **Bill No. 111 — *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and to debate on Bill No. 111, *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act, 2017*. And of course potash is a pretty big topic here in Saskatchewan. It's something that we've come to really appreciate when it comes to one of the major resources of this province and the impact it's had on our economy since the '60s, the '50s, as we've come to appreciate what we should be realizing in terms of the value of this product. And of course we appreciate all the players who, over the course of the time, have really stepped up to strike that appropriate balance of fairness for the province, the municipalities, and also making sure that the corporations were getting their fair income as well.

But we have a special gift here in Saskatchewan of potash and it's one that we should not take lightly. It's one that has seen us benefit in so many, so many different ways. And we know with this government in the past few years, when we did have a real boom in terms of potash, both in terms of production but particularly around the cost per tonne, that in fact this province really benefited from that worldwide market and the changes that were happening at that point.

So this Act changes the membership for the Municipal Potash Tax Sharing Administration Board. It expands the membership from three to five and includes representatives from SUMA and the potash industry. The Act redefines the "actual municipal mill rate" and sets a standard formula for being used in all municipalities. And they state that "a formula is added to make clear how the mill rate is to be calculated for potash tax sharing and to avoid improper calculations in the future." And of course we wonder, has this been a problem in the past? Has there been issues identified that called for this to be done? And so we'll be wanting to ask some more questions about that in the committee.

And some of the, you know, minor housekeeping issues around changing some of the provisions, where they used a reference to miles is now kilometres. And it outlines the standard date set for when the board will announce the mill rate for the year and inform individual potash mines and producers' association. And it clarifies that tax tools are prohibited but that incentives are not. Municipalities can continue to apply discounts to tax on potash mine assessments.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, I might just take a minute and just reflect on what the minister at the time . . . Because this bill was introduced last November, and we know since that time there's been some ministerial changes. And so the minister at the time talked about, when he raised this back on November 28th, that he wanted to give a little background. And he talked about how this bill was introduced for the first time in 1968:

. . . and established a tax-sharing system for municipal taxes on potash mines. The intent was to create a system where municipalities closest to the mines, and not only the municipality where the mine is located, are able to benefit from municipal tax collected from the potash mines.

So that was something that seemed to be fair so that the region can be benefiting from the potash mine, not just the municipality in which it was located. It seems like a reasonable time and good forward thinking in 1968. And so to make sure that the taxes were collected and distributed fairly, they established a tax sharing administration board and it's the one who's responsible for receiving the taxes collected from potash mines and then making sure it goes around to the RMs [rural municipality] within a 20-mile radius from the mine. So I assume that's the word that will be changed. It won't be a 20-mile radius anymore. It probably will be so many kilometres and so probably 25 or 30 kilometres, a different meaning. Now it will be interesting because RMs are built around a grid system that uses miles and kilometres might . . . I don't know if that will impact introducing any new players into this; I'm not sure.

So it's into some revision, obviously in 1978, but it's remained relatively unchanged with the exception of some housekeeping that was done in 2005. And so the minister of the day said, well this looks like something we need to really take a look at. Maybe it's an understatement and maybe it is, maybe it's not. It's one of those bills that in some way become a bit of a housekeeping thing when you update and how drastic a change would it be, I'm not sure. But he says it's to:

. . . modernize the Act and ensure that provisions of the Act align with current potash mining practices and operations of the board into the future. To address the outdated language and requirements of the Act, the ministry . . . began an internal review [you know, it's actually quite interesting] of the Act and identified . . . [some suggestions that were made].

And so they had got some feedback and they worked with SARM, SUMA. And it's interesting because when I look at this, this is one of the longer ministerial speeches that are usually given. They're not usually longer than two or three minutes, and the minister here looked like he was talking for some 10 to 15 minutes. And so I know we'll have to go into some things.

But I am curious though because, you know, you have the impact of the mine above ground and you can see what that is, but of course now with the modern operations that they have, some of the mines can be quite extensive underground. And does that take into account here whose RM are they under, you

know, because that could potentially have some impact. Are they taking that into account, and are those RMs that they're under exceeding a 20-mile radius? I don't know. That'd be a question to ask the officials: how far, how extensive are some of these mines? Because that clearly would be of interest, I would assume, to some RMs.

Because while there's obviously extremely careful, careful mapping that's done underground — there obviously has to be for a variety of reasons; the most important would be safety — because clearly you don't want to end up going into some sort of cavern or some sort of underground water aquifer, but these things are very, very well mapped out. And of course the potash producers, they're not just doing this randomly. They're clearly finding different seams of potash and they want to keep producing from those seams.

But I do think that . . . And if you've seen one of these machines, Mr. Speaker — I don't know how many people have actually seen the potash mining machines that they have — they're really quite the tool. And of course they're very, very precise and they're very technical, in terms of this is not a chisel-and-hammer operation. But the machine is very high-tech. It is one that's with . . . Their production really strives to get the most production.

And of course we see that with the mines that we have, they're very, very highly efficient in getting the product out of the ground and into the manufacturing process and refining process. Because there just can't be, you know, there's not a lot of room for error, particularly when we have markets overseas and you have a lot of costs in making sure you have the best product possible.

So this bill itself seems to be relatively straightforward, and we probably won't have too much more to say on this bill because it is straightforward. But I do want to take a minute and just say how important potash is to our province, to our economy, and it's one of the important pieces of our economy that's driving us forward.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move that Bill No. 111, *An Act to amend The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act*, I'd like to move adjournment of that bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 111, *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 112

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 112 — *The Miscellaneous Vehicle and Driving Statutes (Cannabis Legislation) Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert

Northcote.

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to add my remarks with regards to Bill 112, the miscellaneous vehicle and driving statutes.

So, Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that there has been some amendments with this legislation because of the fact that the cannabis legislation is coming forward. So that was a promise that the federal government made when they got elected; it was that they were going to implement this new cannabis legislation. And now provinces are working at adjusting their legislation to reflect that. The last I heard was that legalization was supposed to occur July 1st. And then I've heard rumblings that it's going to be postponed a little bit from that, but I'm not sure if that's completely accurate or not. I haven't been completely following that, and I'm sure when it's time, someone will inform me that it's legalized.

But because of the legalization of cannabis, we've had to go back into a lot of our legislation and adjust it. Once cannabis is legal, then we have to ensure that there's platforms in place so that people aren't possibly using it and it could impact other individuals, sort of like with alcohol. When alcohol became legal, we had to make legislation so that it would work within our parameters of our society. So part of that is making amendments to this bill which would include when you're driving, and so there's been a lot of discussion with regards to how this is going to be enforced and how this is going to look coming forward.

And so like I said, this bill adds the new federal drug offences under the Criminal Code to various sections of *The Automobile Accident Insurance Act* as well as *The Traffic Safety Act*. And it also defines what "drug" is to *The Traffic Safety Act*. And this bill adds a new section to *The Traffic Safety Act* that outlines a zero tolerance for drugs. And it sets out the licence suspensions, vehicle impoundments, and administrative fees for drivers found to have driven while having consumed drugs.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's what brings me to some of my discussion I want to have, is the zero tolerance. So we've been having some questions about what that will look like. We know even with alcohol if a person is stopped and they've had one drink and the police officer tests them, they wouldn't be proven to have had enough to be intoxicated, and so chances are then they would be free to go. They wouldn't have any charges.

If zero tolerance means absolutely nothing in your system, we know with cannabis that it's a fat-soluble drug and it stays in your system for, it could be 20 to 30 days. And so how do we determine whether the individual had used yesterday or a week ago or two weeks ago? If zero means zero, then anyone who's used within 20 to 30 days could never drive a vehicle, which doesn't seem to be very logistic.

So I was looking at the media release that was sent out by the government on November 28th, and it says:

Implementing a zero tolerance approach means that drivers should not get behind the wheel with any level of impairing drugs in their system that is detectable by a federally-approved screening device.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's another issue that I've heard is a problem is that, what is the federally-approved screening device? What is going to be utilized to enforce this? And so part of this media release here too it said:

These devices will test saliva for the presence of THC (the impairing component of cannabis) as well as some other drugs. If a driver tests positive, or fails a standardized field sobriety test, police can demand a blood sample or a drug recognition evaluation.

And so again, Mr. Speaker, from what I understand is that there's been a lot of questions on what exactly is going to be that testing instrument. And so when we say the testing, I know some workplaces, for example, if there is an accident in their workplace, they instantly test all the employees who were at that work site with drug testing. And they use a machine that tests for 12 nanograms as the baseline, and because they indicate that 12 nanograms is a baseline to say that you used, like, within 24 hours ago. So basically what I'm saying is if you used marijuana in the last 24 hours, you will have a reading of 12 nanograms or over. So that indicated to them if you've used within what they believe is the appropriate time frame, which is 24 hours.

And my understanding is that there's been talk that maybe the police want to use a 4-nanogram as their baseline, which I don't know exactly what that would mean of how long ago you used, but my understanding is they don't know if there's a machine that will actually test for that.

So there's been a lot of rumours and confusion in how they're going to manage that. So again, if they've tested your saliva and it indicates that you have some THC [tetrahydrocannabinol] levels within your system, and then they order to have a blood sample done, at what level, like, could you have used two weeks ago and then still be determined as . . . Because when they say zero tolerance though, I mean, in my mind, nothing in your system, absolutely nothing in your system.

So again, if you used two weeks ago and then the police officer pulled you over, what I'm concerned about, Mr. Speaker, is our court system going to be just bogged down with a lot of these cases that people will say that the testing device is not appropriate, and that the legal system will use that as a way to get people to not be charged for these offences. But then again, our court systems are already bogged down, and we don't need to have more put on the plate.

[15:30]

So I'm not happy that the federal government is going, in my mind, so quickly with regards to this legislation, and putting us in a tough position as a province to have to make these changes to this legislation in a very quick manner. But my biggest concern is that if we're going to make some legislation, we better make sure that we've done our research and we make good legislation that's going to work well for the province, and that when we have police officers who are going to these calls, that they have the appropriate tools to be able to enforce whatever laws or regulations that we are asking them to enforce.

And so another question I have, Mr. Speaker, is if we're going for a zero tolerance of having cannabis use with regards to driving, why can't we do that for alcohol? Like alcohol has proven to be a dangerous substance in our province and has caused so much trauma within our communities. If we're going to take a strong stance, why don't we say zero tolerance for alcohol for driving, and if you have anything in your system then you can go have these tough consequences.

I think like if that's the stance we're wanting to take, then we take it for it all, and we put out a big publicity that we're not going to tolerate any of that, Mr. Speaker. But no, I think that wouldn't be very favourable with a lot of the members, you know, so that's probably not a direction that they want to go. So I don't think that's fair to say zero tolerance when you're going to say, but you can have a few drinks of alcohol because yes, that's okay. I don't think that's appropriate.

So it says here, drug offences will be dealt with in the same way as alcohol-related offences are dealt with, except for the exemption that they want zero for drugs and they're allowing them to drink some alcohol, except that the ignition interlock cannot be used to deal with the consumption of drugs. So that one, that's going to be an issue.

Currently it is illegal to drive while impaired. And again, define impaired, whether that is for alcohol or from drugs, and that remains the same with this bill. So again, we need to really look at what impaired is with regards to the drugs. Is it you smoked a joint two weeks ago and now you're still impaired? What is that definition?

We will continue to have questions with regards to this for the minister as this continues to roll out, and I know that the critic with regards to this, she'll do her due diligence and consult with stakeholders and meet with the appropriate people so that she'll have a lot of questions. And she'll be asking a lot of questions on how you're going to implement and enforce this legislation and ensure everyone's safety so that . . . And we've got to make sure that everyone is safe, and that's the main point.

I think one of the positives about this is that I know there is a lot of people who are driving that are under the influence of cannabis right now. And so with this legislation and with the fact that we're having this discussion, maybe we could get some of those people off the roads, and that would be a good thing, Mr. Speaker.

So we will definitely be following this issue closely. And I know my other colleagues will have a lot more that they'll want to add with regards to discussion with this bill. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I think I've concluded my remarks with this bill, and I'll leave it in the hands of my colleagues and the critic when she has a chance to discuss this at committee. So I am going to adjourn debate for Bill No. 112, the miscellaneous vehicle and driving statutes.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 112, *The Miscellaneous Vehicle and Driving Statutes (Cannabis Legislation) Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 113

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doke that **Bill No. 113 — *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and get into the debate on Bill No. 113, *An Act to amend The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. This kind of legislation is very, very important. It's really in so many ways — I don't know what I would call it — the heart and soul. But I just get really pumped up when I see this kind of stuff because it's what the tools that our communities need to have to make our communities the best places they can possibly be. And whether that's a region or a city, a small community, I think people have put a lot of work into planning and thinking about the development they would like to see. And we've come such a long, long way in terms of good work here.

And I would particularly . . . I always look to see if they talk about the provincial interest, and that is one that I always look forward to seeing because there are . . . And I don't have the sheet in front of me, but I always refer to the, I think there are seven provincial interests, and where the indigenous issues, the water issues, the environmental issues, the resources issues — what the provincial interest is. And I think particularly, and I talk a lot about this in Saskatoon, where we talked about the river that runs through our city, the South Saskatchewan.

And we've had a lot of debate about that around urban parks and whether or not there's a provincial interest in our communities, and particularly around what has been termed . . . And it's been termed an urban park provincially, even though we all know what an urban park is. It's different than a city park or a village park or a community park. Urban parks have a provincial interest in them, that's namely that there's a river running through them. And we see that in Prince Albert. We see that in The Battlefords. We see that in Weyburn. We see that in Regina and Moose Jaw. So it's very, very important. And numerous other communities that have creeks or rivers running through them. And it's not something to minimize. It's a huge, huge responsibility and so I think that this is important.

And I appreciate that people are hanging on . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I think it's a creek, isn't it? Well I don't know. We may have to take a geography lesson. I know that I've seen some mighty rivers in Saskatchewan that aren't more than a creek. But at any rate, I digress. I've been thrown off my game here a bit, so I have to focus a little bit more tightly here.

And so at any rate, what I was saying though, and I think that this is an important bill before us and it's one that I do think that we should take some time and think about what this means and think about the role the province has ensuring that there's adequate, good, solid planning happening in our communities

for, as I said, a whole host of reasons, whether that's economic development or whether that's environmental protection or water protection, indigenous issues, both in terms of any sacred grounds or issues like that, or potential for betterment.

I think again about the Wanuskewin in Saskatoon where we see the potential for bison being returned into a parkland that may . . . In 100 years, the area around it might be all urban development. And here you have a park that is a significantly sized park that, at this point, we say it's kind of on the edge of town. But it's not because, as the member from Martensville would know, that actually urban developments are happening right up to the edge of Saskatoon on the north side.

At any rate, it's how these cities grow, and it's very important to have good local, provincial planning. And so I think this is a . . . As I said, this bill here, I want to take a minute and talk about some of the key points on it and then I want to talk a little bit about what the minister of the day brought this forward last December.

But right now he talks about some of the amendments “. . . ensure the conflict of interest provisions apply to members of any District Development Appeals Boards and members of any Regional Planning Authorities.” And that is so critically important. And we saw that happening here in Regina and surrounding area where there appeared to be some conflict of interest issues, and we need to make sure that we get those all sorted out and that in fact people are acting in an appropriate manner. And sometimes people don't really understand whether they are or not. They feel like their own personal judgment can rise above that benchmark, but it can be very, very, very difficult. And so I want to say that this is an important piece before us because I know that what happens when there are conflicts at the community level on boards, and whether or not . . . whatever the issue, it can really slow down planning and can have a huge impact on neighbours, and it can be something that we really need to be mindful of.

And so they talk about “Ten cities in Saskatchewan have been granted approving authority status.” That's important. An amendment allows the minister to modify the terms of an order granting authority status to achieve a provincial interest. And an order that a minister issues under this new section must be published in the *Gazette*.

Now examples of this might be here, and we saw the controversy a few years ago, and it's now been more or less settled, I think — I may be wrong on this — but when some land was taken to develop a new P3 [public-private partnership] school and how that was handled. And not all were on the same page about how that went, and clearly that needs to be dealt with. And so it allows the minister to modify those terms, and I feel that's really something that needs to be noted, be noted for sure.

And currently the ability to apply policies for site plan control is limited to commercial and industrial land but expands now to institutional and mixed-use development. And that one makes some sense there because sometimes an institution can be quite large, and I would assume this is the kind of thing that we'd be talking about — universities or large colleges. And mixed-use development which involves commercial property, we're seeing

more and more of that, where it seems people want to live closer to their work. And this is something that this may be speaking to.

And we talk about municipal bylaws. Planning bylaws are now submitted to the director of community planning instead of the Minister of Government Relations. Now we're not sure whether that's a good thing or a bad thing because that sort of institutionalizes the role of the director of community planning as opposed to the Minister of Government Relations. Not that we're thinking you need to get rid of the director of community planning, but it might be something that, further down the road, that we have a different terminology and it's not appropriate. Likewise it could be Government Relations, but I think that we'd have to ask questions about that and again, whether or not the minister then isn't aware of these bylaws. And what is the intent of this? We're not sure.

And so we do have some questions about that and so I think that we'll have some questions for sure. And the minister still has the ability to require municipalities to amend their official community plan or OCP, as it's often referred to, to achieve consistency with provincial interests. And again I just want to highlight how important the provincial interests are in making sure that we have some solid benchmarks here in Saskatchewan and that we have some consistency from community to community. And so this is very, very important.

[15:45]

And a new section requires “. . . municipalities to develop their school site policies collaboratively with the Minister of Education, any local school divisions, and any municipality(s) that the Ministry of Education determines is necessary . . .” So I think, Mr. Speaker, this is kind of ironic as this government is the one that did with local school boards or even special meetings when people have an issue, and so I just think this is interesting.

You know, we used to have so much more control at the local level over education, and we see that moving further and further away. And so I hope this is . . . I appreciate the word “collaboratively” but I'm not sure if this government is used to that language. It might sound a little too forward to them, when actually we've seen the minister come down to some pretty heavy-handed things.

And so we know that their many changes will impact municipalities. I hope they've consulted with them. And we've been having those discussions with municipalities like this. I trust my colleague has been out there and doing that kind of work, as she appreciates that and she has been very much appreciated in the conversations she's had with the people on this topic.

And so when the minister got up on December 4th and talked about this, he talked about a new “. . . framework for municipalities to manage and facilitate development of their communities.” Good stuff. And how this will improve incrementally our land use planning framework and saving taxpayers money. Well I think it's even more than that. It's about having great communities, great communities both to work in, to have your families, and to have your kids play. All

of this is so, so important.

Now he talked about strengthening existing legislation that will help municipalities plan regionally and support opportunities for servicing, and clarifying planning process — that type of thing, educational purposes and all of that. And that's really, really important.

So I would want to focus on some of his things. He talked about the groups that he was able to consult with, so that's important. He talked about how actually this took us some time. He talked about how this started back in 2014-15 and even went into '16-17 and had 25 engagement sessions, so there you go.

But he wanted to talk about how regional partnerships can make it easier and be more cost effective, and I think that's a very, very good thing because if they can work together, that's a good thing. And additional flexibility to make sure they, if they want to plan regionally they can do that kind of thing and make sure they manage areas of common interest. And that's very, very important.

And it talks about, "The existing legislation allows regional planning authorities to include a city and adjacent . . . municipalities." They wanted to make sure they had some additional flexibility, so this is good. We think about that both around the cities of Regina and Saskatoon because it's so clear that with the population growth that we've seen that we need to be thinking in decades. We need to be thinking out there. We need to be thinking about . . . I know in Saskatoon we're talking about transit systems; we're talking highways systems. All of that is very, very important and even the minister further talks about that.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know we'll have questions in committee, but at this point I'm going to move adjournment of Bill 113, *An Act to amend The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. I do so move. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 113, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 114

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 114** — *The Vehicles for Hire Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter into the debate on Bill No. 114, *The Vehicles for Hire Act*, Mr. Speaker. This particular bill outlines the regulations for ride-sharing companies, or otherwise known as transportation network companies. It provides a framework for the operation in Saskatchewan, setting requirements for companies and

drivers. So these are companies, just for example, like Uber and Lyft. The bill will be administered by SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], as the minister has pointed out in his second reading speech.

So some of the things that this bill does in terms of laying out that framework. So transportation network companies or ride-sharing companies will require a licence issued by the municipality and then the municipality will make bylaws around licensing standards, fees, records required, those kinds of things. Drivers must have a driver's licence. Trips between municipalities will apply . . . The bylaws of the municipality where the trip originated will apply. Vehicles that are used in ride sharing must be registered as required by *The Traffic Safety Act*.

The ride-sharing company or the transportation network company must prove that they have insurance. Information — it has to be provided to the insurance — which would be the name and the place of the business, the name and the address of drivers, the list of vehicles providing service, the geographic area for service, the proof of licence to operate. The bill lays out that the government has the power to suspend or cancel a registration permit to a transportation network company if they fail to comply with the Act or regulations.

And as well, this bill lays out that the government has the regulating powers on defining vehicles, prescribing classes of driver's licences which will be in the regulations, prescribing a special feature indicating that a vehicle may be used for vehicle-for-hire services, prescribing insurance premiums that'll come in the regulations, and procedures for suspending or cancelling a licence.

Ultimately, Mr. Speaker, it's again important to look to the minister's second reading speech to see where he's coming from. I think questions that get asked whenever any bill comes before us is: who asked for the bill, what's the purpose of the bill or the stated purpose of the bill, what kind of consultation has been done. All those things will happen when we get to committee.

And ultimately again this bill points out that it will be municipalities that will license and create bylaws for this industry, but really it's up to the province to ensure the safety of communities, consumers, and drivers. So when we get to committee, there'll be lots of questions. I know our critic will look for some clarification from the minister and we'll continue to talk to all the stakeholders involved.

There's been regulations developed over decades around the taxi industry to protect both the public and the drivers, and I think that that's one of my concerns or things that I think about. It's important to protect the public who may be using a ride-sharing service to ensure the safety of individuals. But I think it's also important to look to the employees.

I know I've heard stories in other jurisdictions around those who work for ride-sharing companies who think initially that it's going to be great employment and it ends up being precarious employment or people trying to piece together work and ending up working long days for little money, or investing in a vehicle, trying to meet the requirements and not being able

to pay it.

So I think that there is important discussion to be had around protecting those who are going to be using these services but also around making sure that those who become contractors or become drivers for these companies are protected and are not vulnerable workers as well.

I know in the minister's second reading speech he talks about impaired driving being a problem in Saskatchewan and he says that this is one tool in the toolbox or hopes that this will be one tool in the toolbox for combatting impaired driving. I'm ever hopeful.

I had the privilege of sitting on the traffic safety advisory committee in 2013 where we talked about how to lower impaired driving death rates. And the government initially implemented some of those recommendations but not the minority report. It took them until 2016, the end of 2016, to finally get to the place where they saw, I think, saw the light around what other jurisdictions like Alberta and BC [British Columbia] were doing around impaired driving to change the culture, creating a place where if you're in the warning zone — .04 to .08 — you could have your licence . . . not your licence suspended but your vehicle impounded for three days.

And it's interesting to me, Mr. Speaker, just looking to . . . I'm just going to use another medium here for discussion here. Looking to headlines in 2016, at the end of 2016, when the government had just passed the legislation or the beefed-up legislation around impaired driving, our drunk driving deaths were up in Saskatchewan, which has been a sad story of Saskatchewan for many years. And we don't yet, I don't believe — I haven't been able to find them yet — we don't have the impaired driving death rate for 2017 yet. I suspect that'll be out in the next few months, if not sooner than that, to see where we're at.

But I'm happy to report a news story on January 18th, 2018. Its headline was "Fewer Saskatchewan impaired drivers charged in December than previous three years." So a year after implementing the impoundment, the three-day vehicle impoundment in the warning range, which had been proven very effective in BC. Within a year they decreased their impaired driving death rate by 50 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And we don't have those rates yet here for Saskatchewan or we don't know what our 2017 impaired driving death rate was. But we do know that the police were saying ". . . December 2017 saw the lowest number of impaired driving offences when compared to the previous three years — even with increased enforcement."

So I think obviously ride sharing perhaps is potential . . . I've read conflicting literature around ride sharing and decreasing impaired driving. I'd like to see some harder research on that, maybe some peer-reviewed research as well. I know one thing that this government could also do around impaired driving is, especially with the soon-to-be legalization of cannabis . . . The one thing we heard in 2013 was around drug recognition experts or DREs. They're especially trained police officers who can . . . Not having a physical test that you can do for drivers, like a saliva test or in the case of alcohol, a Breathalyzer, drug

recognition experts are trained to identify impaired drivers or those impaired with other substances beyond alcohol.

And I know back in 2013 we had a terribly low rate. I can't recall. It's back in the deep recesses of my brain, Mr. Speaker, the number of drug recognition experts we had in 2013. But I do know in committee that we heard that it wasn't enough. And with the legalization of cannabis and with alcohol still, I think that a place . . . If the minister and this government is serious about reducing that impaired driving death rate, that really looking at the number of drug recognition experts that we need and hiring those or ensuring that police officers have the training would go a long way, Mr. Speaker.

I think there's been comments around the legalization of cannabis that we don't yet know what we need, but I'd like to point him back to those committee meetings and hearing that in 2013 we had a very low rate of drug recognition experts and needed to beef it up at that point, and we'll continue to need to do so, going forward, Mr. Speaker.

But with respect to Bill No. 114, as I pointed out, our critic when we get to committee will have some questions, just some clarification, and will want to know a little bit more about . . . The critic will have had many conversations with stakeholders, but we'll want to know a little bit more from the minister as well.

But with that, for the moment, I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 114, *The Vehicles for Hire Act*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 114, *The Vehicles for Hire Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 115

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 115** — *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

[16:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the mother of Roxy and Diesel and the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

Ms. Rancourt: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's nice to see that you were listening to my rambling for the last bill that I was speaking to. It's an honour again to get up and speak to Bill No. 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act*. And I don't how I could relate this to my furry animals at home, but I guess I'll have to talk about something else and something that's much more interesting, which is the future of legalizing marijuana within our province.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government has decided to have legalized marijuana within the country so that's made the provinces have to reorganize some of their legislation to

accommodate for that, which has made the fact that we've had to change some of our legislation, like I said before, to accommodate for the legalization of marijuana. So the changes to *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act*, a lot of it pertains to exactly that, Mr. Speaker.

So this bill accomplishes four main things, Mr. Speaker. So it gives landlords the new powers to make rules with regards to prohibiting the possession, use, selling, or distribution of cannabis, or the growing and possession of cannabis plants, Mr. Speaker. So we know that this is going to become somewhat of a difficult issue for landlords with the legalization of cannabis, and so this legislation will allow them to have a lot of authority with regards to how they want to manage their rental property.

I guess with looking at this through a critical lens, Mr. Speaker, I guess what I would wonder is how is this going to impact individuals who are going to be using medicinal marijuana because of medical issues that they have. And if they need to rent places, this could really limit the ability for them to rent a location if the landlord does decide to prohibit all of these — the possession or use of cannabis within their homes.

So I agree with the fact that we need to allow landlords and owners of their establishments to be able to make these rules, but I hope that they're mindful of the fact that some individuals are using cannabis for medical purposes as well because of some medical conditions that they have. And I would have liked to see, like, if there was some conditions here that if that was the case that maybe there would be different legislation, but I guess that's something that could be discussed within committee when the critic has an opportunity to speak with the minister, if that was something that was discussed at the table.

Another thing that this bill does, it gives the Office of Residential Tenancies, ORT for short, hearing officers new powers to refuse to allow an application from a tenant who is in contravention of an ORT order. And another aspect of this bill, it forces tenants to continue to pay their rent for the duration of the appeal process when appealing the ORT's decision to grant the landlords possession of a rental unit for rent arrears. So I think part of the changes with this legislation as well is that a landlord would be able to utilize the damage deposit that was placed when the tenant moved into the facility, and use that for purposes of paying rent that might be in arrears as well, Mr. Speaker. And it also allows landlords to dispose of property worth less than \$1,500 without an order from the ORT when a tenant ends or a property is abandoned.

And so I've heard of these situations, Mr. Speaker, where tenants just up and leave. And oftentimes they leave all of their stuff within the housing location because of whatever reason why they needed to leave. And then that puts the landlords in a tough situation because previously they would have had to make an application to the Office of Residential Tenancies in order to dispose of the items, or they would have to store those items. And then, like if they wanted to rehouse people within the rental location, they would have to find a place to put all of this property. So in case a tenant came and wanted it or until they got direction from the Office of Residential Tenancies which, my understanding is that the ORT would try to get back to landlords as quick as possible so that this would be resolved quickly.

So what the changes to this legislation is, is that if the property is deemed to be less than \$1,500, then the landlord could do what they want with it. But they cannot be held back with regards to the property that was left back.

But I often wonder why people just up and leave like that? What is going on in their lives that they feel that they have to leave all their property behind? And I know of some people who said, like they might even leave like family portraits and stuff like that behind. And what's going on in their world that they need to up and leave?

And it makes me think of potential victims of domestic violence. And I know oftentimes victims of domestic violence will leave quickly in those kinds of circumstances because that's the safest and easiest way for them to get out of those bad situations. So I would hate to see that people who are in those situations, that they will not have their property left afterwards and completely lose everything. So again I hope that's something that could be discussed. And I know we have some legislation on helping people who are fleeing domestic violence situations. So hopefully that will come up for discussion in the future events, Mr. Speaker.

So I think it's really important that we strike the right balance between the rights of the tenant and the powers of the landlord because I think that could be a real tightrope to be on. We want to ensure that landlords have rights with their property, but also tenants should have rights as well and know that their landlords can't just abuse the situation that they're in. And it is a very powerful situation that you're in when you are the landlord. I think putting some restrictions on cannabis and rental units make sense, but we need to make sure this legislation strikes the right balance as well.

I know we'll do the consultation that needs to be done and, as the official opposition always does, offer amendments where it makes sense. So I know the critic will do a good job with consulting with stakeholders. It's fine for government to look at closing loopholes that may be abused by some people in extreme cases, but we'll be asking committee what impacts these changes will have on the most vulnerable. So we have to also take that into account.

And when it comes to disposing of property that belongs to a tenant, we should make sure that landlords are reaching out to the tenants should take into consideration that someone who has abandoned their unit may be difficult to get a hold of. So take that into account. And I know, you know, oftentimes you have to put yourself in that person's shoes and think, like how would I want to be treated if I was in their circumstance.

So I sure hope that landlords will do their due diligence with having a good relationship with their tenants and ensuring that if they do need to dispose of their property that they've been able to reach out and talked to them and made those connections.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that my colleagues will have a lot more that they'll want to add to the discussion with regards to this piece of legislation. And at this point I've exhausted all of the remarks that I have. And so I am going to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment*

Act. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote 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.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 103, *The Land Contracts (Actions) Act, 2017*. Before I get into it, I guess this is making some changes, Mr. Speaker. And to join in the debate on this bill, the bill makes some changes to the procedures of dealing when it comes to foreclosure. The changes they make is to non-farm mortgages, that these changes will affect closures, mortgage closures on non-farm mortgages.

But having said that, before we go into it, I know we have had a few questions in question period. The Leader of the Official Opposition has referred to foreclosure rates in Saskatchewan. Right now, I believe it's three times the average, you know, the national average, three times the national average for foreclosures in Saskatchewan. So if we are seeing that, and sometimes I just wonder, I think it's the worst in all of Canada: foreclosures in Saskatchewan.

So families are being hit hard. Now I think it's important to make it very clear why, why Saskatchewan families? And some of them . . . And here's some of the causes: if your utility rates are going up steadily; if your cost of living, if PST [provincial sales tax] is impacting your family, whether it goes from five, which the last budget we see it went to 6 per cent, on many things that used to be exempt. This government, you know, made a decision to try to grab another billion dollars from Saskatchewan taxpayers, going after them.

So I think all these pressures are being put on people. And if you look at the economy, when you look at jobs and the people that are losing jobs, but you look at government, you have good-paying jobs, government jobs. And government has been going after and deciding where it's going to pick and choose, you know, civil servants, and finding that list. And again, asking the good people of this province to do their part, but then charge them more in every way you can possibly charge Saskatchewan residents. So you're putting more burden on the Saskatchewan residents.

And we talked about in question period today, you know, as the leader talked about the community of Moose Jaw and referring to some of the, I guess, the effects that the government's cuts have affected municipalities like Moose Jaw. And you know, the leader talked about that today in question period, about how yes, you know, you may say, oh we're not raising taxes, but in

every other way you're making residents pay more because you're cutting the grants or you're cutting the programs that used to fund municipalities. Whether it's rural, North, urban, it doesn't matter. They're all feeling it. And they're having to raise the money because people want the same services that they were getting before. And government seems to think, you know, they can charge more, charge our residents more and give them less services. It just doesn't make sense. Things don't work that way, but this government seems to think it's all right.

But having said that, on this bill, Bill 103 talks about doing foreclosures. And it talks about a different process of doing it, and I believe it requires a pre-action process for foreclosures. So there is a process that needs to be done before you can go ahead and go to the courts to ask them. So they are making some changes in this bill.

They are also repealing. The notice of the hearing will remain the same, but there is two areas of this bill that they're actually repealing. *The Home Owners' Protection Act* no longer relevant, so they're doing that. The other one, *The Agreements of Sale Cancellation Act*, they're actually putting that bill, from my understanding, they're going to be putting that bill into the new bill that they're making. So they're going to get rid of it. They're going to adapt it and bring it over.

[16:15]

Now I know we sometimes ask why this is coming and why certain bills come forward. And I know that some of the recommendations, you know, being considered were recommendations by the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan. Now they have made some recommendations, sounds like a report, and maybe there's a reason why and a good rationale to why this is happening. But having said that, you know, I want to talk a little bit about that.

But again we see the rise of three times the national average in Saskatchewan, and the burden that's being put on many families. And we look at the jobs, and I think that at the end of the day the government has done a terrible job when it comes to the economy and support and that. They all sit there and try to pat themselves on the back. Every time somebody announced that they were doing an improvement in an area, they wanted to take all the credit.

But they sure don't want to take credit when the economy is going down. It has nothing to do with it. They want to blame. Oh, it's the NDP, the old days of the NDP. It has nothing to do with them. They have been in power for 10 years. They have had opportunities of record revenue, and I think we were talking about, I think, seven deficit budgets, if I have that information correct, that they have run.

And I know the good people of this province are waiting until April the 10th to see what's coming and what the changes will be. Hopefully they won't be bringing a budget that we've seen them reverse after the pressure from many different organizations. We see the reversal in the libraries; the most vulnerable, we think of our citizens who were asked to pay more when it came to funeral costs and stuff like that. So we've seen a government have to reverse, go after the most vulnerable and reverse.

But again, talking about this bill and the changes it's going to make when it comes to, you know, foreclosures and the burden that it has put on many, I think the government of the day has to wear this. The Sask Party government needs to be aware that some of the challenges you've put on many families, you know, have caused a lot of costs to families. And whether government gets those dollars into the government coffers and they spend them, or municipalities get less to do the service that people want, then it has to go back.

At the end of the day, they forget there is one taxpayer — that's the good people of this province. One taxpayer, and they all seem to be going after them. And again they brag about, oh no taxes . . . [inaudible] . . . Look at every place you go, you see. And then you talk about fees, like I mean my colleagues have been talking about that in the last little while, the different fees that have been charged and are going to be charged. You know, they're going up, every time you look at it they want to do something. They want to give you more fees for less services. How does that make sense?

And you're going to go door knock and sell that to the good people of the province? You want to sell that? So you know, at the end of the day I think the people of this province are starting to get wise and they're going to hold this government accountable. We've been saying that.

So having said that, on Bill 103 we've made a number of points. I wanted to make a number of points as to why. And maybe I'm no expert when it comes to foreclosures like the bank. There's different reasons. We know the economy. We see what's going on.

But again we have the worst mortgage foreclosures in all of Canada from my understanding, if the information that's being shared with us is correct. So this government has no, this government has no ability, but to pat them on the back for it, because they should be ashamed of themselves for the burden they're putting on many Saskatchewan residents.

So having said that, Mr. Speaker, we talk about a few changes and where they're going. But it's sure many Saskatchewan families are feeling this impact and the burden that this government has been putting on many working men and women and families of this good province who have done their share, who deserve a little more service and a little more respect from their government. But again they will hold this government to account, and we will see exactly what happens.

And I know they can heckle and they can make all the noise they want. This is what I'm hearing back home, whether it's seniors trying to make ends meet, the cost of living to provide for their families . . . And every time we see a government coming out with new fees, with taxes that they say, that's not taxes, but it's a different way.

So having said that, Mr. Speaker, you know, I wanted to give a little brief comments about this Bill 103. But having said that, I wanted to maybe give a little bit of reason why it's costing more and causing maybe more, you know, foreclosures with all the added costs that families are being burdened by that government.

So with that I have no further comments. I know my colleagues will have lots to say in committee and we'll maybe get some answers, for a change, from the government. But we'll see. At that point, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 103.

The Speaker: — The member for Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 103, *The Land Contracts (Actions) Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into discussion here this afternoon as it relates to Bill No. 104, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2017*. Certainly this is an incredibly important piece of legislation to the people of Saskatchewan, protecting the people of our province from discrimination, protecting their fundamental rights.

And we enter into discussion here this week during TransSask week within our province, a week of activities and advocacy advancing the rights and dignity and support and security and ability to thrive for the transgendered community within Saskatchewan, in fact. This morning of course you were there, Mr. Speaker, as well, as we raised the genderqueer flag over at city hall. And of course yesterday we raised the flag here at the legislature as well.

It's important for us to get any changes to our Human Rights Code and our human rights legislation right. And these changes here today with respect to this bill, I understand, are more of an updating around ensuring that it's bilingual as well. And certainly that's important, Mr. Speaker.

As we engage in scrutiny of this bill and constructive engagement, we'll be engaged with members of the human rights community across Saskatchewan to ensure that this bill is as suggested by the minister, simply a stating of it in French, Mr. Speaker. But certainly human rights legislation in Saskatchewan is something that is vital and something that we're incredibly proud of, something that I'm incredibly proud of as a New Democrat, Mr. Speaker, to know that we as a province pioneered the legislation across Canada with the first human rights bill within Canada in 1947, which really turned out to be landmark legislation from a human rights perspective.

At that point in time, Mr. Speaker, before that was brought in it was sort of, you know, judges were of the perspective that they felt that there was wrongdoing, but that if something wasn't illegal it was obviously difficult for them to act. So that

legislation that was brought forward by the Tommy Douglas CCF-NDP [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation-New Democratic Party] government in 1947 was incredibly important to who we are as a province, Mr. Speaker, allowing us to ensure the dignity and protection of all individuals. And that legislation has been updated through time, and that's going to be important that we continue to update this legislation through time.

The law, when it was brought about, ensured that it affirmed the fundamental freedoms that Canadians now take for granted, Mr. Speaker. And that human rights legislation that was brought forward by Premier Tommy Douglas and the CCF-NDP government of 1947 served as a model for provinces across Canada and for other jurisdictions as well.

Of course at the time it prohibited discrimination on account of race, creed, religion, colour, or ethnic or national origin. We've updated that legislation over the recent history to include, of course, sexual orientation and gender identity. I think some of the unfinished business on this front is updating it to properly reflect gender expression as well, Mr. Speaker. And I know I hear from many that are acting within our province and that are leading voices for human rights within our province, many of them so courageous, so many courageous voices. I know that that updating to ensure gender expression is important, and more properly recognizing who people are across our province and affirming the respect for all people within our province.

I know that David . . . I can't say a member's name, Mr. Speaker. The member for Saskatoon Centre has been a tireless force frankly his entire adult life to advance human rights in our province. He did so as a citizen, as an educator. He certainly has, as well, as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] within this Assembly. And he serves all of us well and certainly serves our opposition and the people of the province well as our critic leading the discussion around human rights within our province. And I know this is important to him.

That legislation in 1947 of course prohibited discrimination with respect to accommodation, employment, occupation, and education. You know, I think it's important that we're engaged on this discussion still, Mr. Speaker, around matters of employment for example. And I think there's an important discussion to be had around the appropriateness in utilization of criminal records for example, Mr. Speaker, to prohibit employment within Saskatchewan and whether or not we have the balance right right now within Saskatchewan, or whether or not the criminal record itself is something impeding many, many Saskatchewan people from moving forward in life and being engaged within our economy in a way that they so deserve, Mr. Speaker. So sort of putting on notice that the discussion of human rights isn't done.

We have a code in place, but there's important areas to continue to look for advancements that are important to the people of our province. The legislation, when it was brought forward as landmark legislation in 1947, also prohibited the publications that are likely to deprive someone of his or her legal rights on account of ". . . race, creed, religion, colour or ethnic or national origin." And of course we've updated that for sexual orientation. We've updated that for gender identity. We need to look to improve it with gender expression being included there

as well, Mr. Speaker. This bill itself doesn't make those changes.

We in Saskatchewan have played a leadership role for a long period of time when it comes to human rights. It's important that we look to continuing to provide that role within Canada, within the world, Mr. Speaker. And that's why this is so important. It's important for us to broaden our discussion I think, and look at our human rights legislation and how we're dealing with human rights with what the TRC [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] has taught us, Mr. Speaker, and applying that lens and the importance of reconciliation and ensuring that we examine whether or not there's opportunities to strengthen our human rights legislation, supported by the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Mr. Speaker.

It's important as well that we look at other aspects of human rights. And when we're looking at matters of poverty and of housing, Mr. Speaker, basic needs and basic dignity for people, you know, there's an opportunity to enshrine basic standards for Saskatchewan people within human rights legislation. And whether or not this code is the best tool to do so, Mr. Speaker, or whether independent legislation to do so is the best way to go forward, I think that would be a very important piece of legislation to enshrine basic protections to all the people of our province. So areas that our discussion needs to move forward.

You know, as you were there today with me, Mr. Speaker, and the member for Saskatoon Centre were as well, we had a, you know, a powerful message being shared about the discrimination that many face still within Saskatchewan. It reminds me that our work on this front is far from done. And as you hear today, hear the powerful voice of Stephanie Cox of TransSask sharing courageous personal stories, Mr. Speaker, reminds me of the importance of our work in this Assembly and us taking a stand and us enshrining rights and then us of course standing as allies within the community as well and walking as partners, Mr. Speaker.

[16:30]

What we recognize for just one example is that those that are in the transgendered community, Mr. Speaker, are facing levels of poverty at a much higher level than the rest of the population. Mr. Speaker, we recognize that levels of understanding and awareness are low, Mr. Speaker. As such, levels of not being accepted, of being discriminated against are high, and we need to look at so many different areas on this front. We need to certainly look at our health system and our health services, Mr. Speaker, and the level of understanding within that system.

We need to look at our classrooms, our community, and our workplaces, Mr. Speaker, and of course make sure that we're a place in all of those places and all of our institutions — this one as well, Mr. Speaker — that doesn't just allow and protect basic rights and ensure safety, but allows a level of understanding and affirmation of all people within our province, Mr. Speaker, and conditions in a response that will ensure that all can thrive within Saskatchewan.

You know, I've been inspired for a long time by so many within the human rights community, Mr. Speaker, who are willing to

courageously tell their own stories, Mr. Speaker — at a time where many have been so hurt, discriminated against, and marginalized — for the greater good of all, Mr. Speaker. You know, it reminds me of that famous quote, Mr. Speaker, that the greatest injustice of a time of transition isn't, you know, "... the strident clamour of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people." And I've been heartened by the incredibly good people all across our province that have stood up, spoken up, and told their story. But I think there's so much more that all of us can do on this front to be an ally and to stand as partners.

You know, I think in our modern context, Mr. Speaker, when we're looking at rights across Saskatchewan, you know, there are so many that are leaders. And I do look to our, you know, to our trans community. I do look to the queer community, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan. And I've seen so many leaders there.

I think of people like Laura Budd, Mr. Speaker, who grew up, you know, lives out near Kelliher and challenged a system that didn't allow the change of ... allow her to change her identification Mr. Speaker, without having proof of surgery. And with the support of the Human Rights Commission, she challenged that and she brought forward meaningful change for all within our province. I think of so many others across our province and organizations that are working to ensure rights and dignity and extend supports and care to so many across our province. And that's in part the lens that I look at this legislation with, Mr. Speaker.

So the changes that have been brought forward by the government to make the Human Rights Code bilingual are important, and certainly something that we support. This landmark legislation brought forward by Tommy Douglas and the CCF-NDP, with the support of Saskatchewan people in 1947, is something that we should all be proud of, Mr. Speaker. But importantly when we look to human rights legislation and our current Human Rights Code, we should be looking for every opportunity to strengthen that legislation and to respond to the powerful voices and actors within our human rights community across Saskatchewan.

You know, and it's been a short period of time on some of these fronts where I've observed a level of allyship and partnership with Saskatchewan people that wasn't there to the same level a number of years ago, Mr. Speaker.

I think simply of Pride weeks within Saskatchewan. It wasn't long ago that Pride parades and Pride activities were sparsely attended and a brave few, in fact, Mr. Speaker, went out to stand up for human rights. It wasn't that long ago that right here in Regina, that those that did participate had bags that they actually placed over their faces, Mr. Speaker, as they organized and had assembly, Mr. Speaker, to protect themselves from the discrimination and hate and repercussions within the community.

And I contrast that to where we've got to on this front, where I think this last year in Saskatchewan alone we had Pride activities, Pride weeks that were organized in over 14 communities across Saskatchewan. Loud and proud marches in places like Regina, in Saskatoon, and new marches and assembly and organization in places like Swift Current and up

in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker. I was proud to be a part of many of those activities.

I know that the member for Saskatoon Centre, the critic for human rights within this Assembly, was a lead actor and supporter within many of those activities. So I also want to give a shout out just to all those people that toil and work to protect human rights in Saskatchewan and to promote human rights in Saskatchewan — all those that were behind those Pride activities of last year, and what I suspect will only grow this year. And what I say to you is that that work is important, you know.

I was up in La Ronge for the first Pride march last year, Mr. Speaker, and there was a good turnout, right down Main Street. It was a beautiful spot. In fact I remember walking along, and there was a boat going right along the shoreline with the Pride parade flag being flown within that boat. And I sure thought it was a powerful and moving day. I think it was Councillor Jordan McPhail that was ... I believe it was his boat, anyways, that was being utilized, Mr. Speaker. I know he was one of the key actors in organizing that parade.

But I found it a moving event and an important one, and I suspect that these events as I've heard from many young people and all people across Saskatchewan, they're not just important to those that show up and those that march and those that walk. In many ways I think these activities are very important to someone that might be very isolated, someone who might be maybe a few blocks back from Main Street there that day in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker, but might be not feeling very affirmed in who they are and not feeling very loved, Mr. Speaker, at times including by their own family, Mr. Speaker.

So we have a long ways to go on this front. We have a lot more to do. I'm impressed by all the partners that are tapping in to advance human rights across our province. And I think of the pioneers across Saskatchewan who have been there for a long period of time. And of course, as I say, I think it's important for us to, as we evaluate human rights legislation, come at it from a perspective of reconciliation and all that we've learned from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and looking for every avenue to strengthen and protect human rights.

I think that we should look for opportunities to ensure basic rights are protected around the basic needs of people around housing, around food, Mr. Speaker, around poverty. And I think that it's important to enshrine basic rights like these in legislation, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that it becomes law of the land.

It's similar to the discussion that we've had in the past over gender sexuality alliances in schools, Mr. Speaker. And I know we have a lot of leadership by educators and by community groups across Saskatchewan, by school boards across Saskatchewan on this front, Mr. Speaker, and many GSAs [gender and sexuality alliance] that have been formed, and this is so important, Mr. Speaker. But I think we're still lacking in doing what we should be doing as an Assembly, Mr. Speaker: standing on our feet and legislating the right to form a GSA within the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that we send that powerful message to all within our province that it is their right, Mr. Speaker.

And so when we look at this legislation we should, you know, certainly remember its powerful history in advancing human rights all across Canada — that genesis of 1947 and Premier Tommy Douglas, Mr. Speaker. We should look to all those within our province that have stood strong for human rights, advanced the discussion, and advanced this legislation, including sexual orientation of course, and gender identity. And importantly we need to move on to the discussion of gender expression and proper protections there, and making sure that we have all the tools to support human rights in our province.

With that being said, I simply want to thank all those across Saskatchewan that work to ensure human rights are protected each and every day, for all those that are promoting greater understanding and promoting human rights and . . . Sorry, I'm just getting heckled by the . . . I didn't hear the member. That we should work in every way we can to continue to improve human rights legislation in our province, and supports to students, people all through our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At this time I will adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 104, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code, 2017*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure once again to rise in the legislature at this time to speak to Bill No. 105, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Consequential Amendment Act, 2017*. This piece of legislation simply accompanies the piece of legislation, Bill 104, that I was speaking to, Mr. Speaker, for the last period of time, so I won't go on at length with respect to this piece of legislation. What I will say is that we'll be engaged through the committee process on this front. We'd encourage anyone throughout the human rights community across Saskatchewan to be engaged certainly with government and opposition, all of us through this period of time.

As I've said, ensuring that the Human Rights Code is bilingual is important; that it's available in French is important. But there's so much more that we need to be focused on as well when we're advancing human rights within our province. But at this point in time, I'll simply adjourn debate for Bill No. 105, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Consequential Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 105, *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Consequential Amendment Act, 2017*. Pleasure of the

Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and enter into the debate of Bill No. 106, *An Act to amend The Missing Persons and Presumption of Death Act*. This is a very important piece of legislation before us. It's one that we just . . . When we hear of missing persons, it's something that brings shock and fear to all of us in terms of what could be happening and what can we do, what can we do. And we see communities go through this. We just recently saw the city of Montreal go through a period of shock where a child was missing. Today, even in the Children's Advocate report, where a child just went missing for a few seconds and how this is so, so important.

And so all of this is important work that we do and we have before us. And while this bill really focuses on making a few housekeeping amendments, it adds a new section about allowing police services to have search orders and access to records when conducting an investigation into a missing person. And also an emergency demand for records could come from chiefs of police or commanding officers in cases where they believe a person is at risk of imminent harm and, for example, a case of Amber Alert when a child goes missing.

And so, Mr. Speaker, "missing person" is really a phrase that's really come into our lexicon and it's one that, as I said, particularly within the indigenous community with missing and murdered indigenous women and girls — and also for males and boys and men — this is one that the indigenous community struggles with and continues to struggle with through their federal processes. And many of us I know on this side and perhaps a few on that side have been out to the walks and remembrances and the different activities to keep the issue front and centre, front and centre of the government so that they can keep current and the best practices to make sure no one goes missing and, if by chance they do, that there is a range of tools that the police can use to act quickly and respond efficiently and effectively so that the issue of a missing person can be dealt with, and also the whole issue of presumption of death.

[16:45]

So I want to just take a minute and reflect on what the minister had said because I think it's always important to do that, particularly when people are just hearing about this for the first time. And this is something that happens, where the good thing about adjourned debates is the opportunity to have time for people to hear about legislation that is before us, and they may

not have heard about that.

Anyways this bill came up a few months ago, November 22nd, 2017. And the Minister of Justice at the time talked about expanding the ability of the law enforcement agencies to access information and to obtain search orders in a missing person investigation, and how important this was. He did talk about how Saskatchewan was the first jurisdiction to incorporate access-to-records provisions into its missing persons legislation:

The current provision permits both family members and law enforcement agencies to apply to the court for an order permitting access to information with respect to the missing person such as financial information, telephone and communication records, health information, and identification information, including a photograph.

And other provinces have followed suit by doing this similar thing.

And he talks about the Uniform Law Conference of Canada has also adopted uniform legislation which forms the basis of this bill and has been adopted into five different jurisdictions. And this is very, very important because we want to have a consistent approach right across the nation when it comes to dealing with missing people, so that you know what the law or the rules or processes or protocols in one province most likely will be the same in its neighbouring province. So five jurisdictions have stepped up to the plate and I would hope that others would go join them as well. So I think this is really important stuff that we have before us.

Additional types of information that may be accessed with a court order now include electronic information, including cellphone records, text messages, global positioning system tracking records, employment information, records from schools, attendance records, travel accommodation records. And so all sorts of things that might help in the search. And so this is important to have full and complete tools, a tool kit that can really help find a missing person, and particularly if that person's a minor or a vulnerable person is involved. And so this is important for us.

We think that while the minister did talk about the length of time, it doesn't talk about the length of time that it took in terms of the consultations. But we'll be seeing this before committee and there'll be questions about this, the impact in terms of how this could have been seen to help missing people in Saskatchewan. Unfortunately time is always of the essence when it comes to missing people and because, as I alluded to earlier, we just have seen before us the Children's Advocate report where a child was just missing for a few brief seconds and we had a tragic accident that happened, and here we are, dealing with the fallout from that because of the procedures that might have been or should have been in place.

But having said that, I know that we'll want to get through a few other pieces of legislation today and so I'm going to move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 106, *The Missing Persons and Presumption of Death Amendment Act, 2017*. I do so move. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has

moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 106, *The Missing Persons and Presumption of Death Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 76

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into discussion here today around Bill No. 76, *The Parks Amendment Act, 2017*. I've always thought our provincial parks are an incredible asset within our province, to all the people of our province. I've grown up with a lifelong connection to our parks, Mr. Speaker, and the very legislation talking about provincial parks gives me a sort of a good feeling, Mr. Speaker, thinking about so many great times through childhood, Mr. Speaker, and now experiences that I get to share with our little guy and our family, Mr. Speaker, in provincial parks across our province.

It's important that any changes we make to provincial parks legislation are in the interests of our provincial parks and the people of the province, making sure those parks are protected and utilized and living up to the spirit of what they were intended to provide to the people of our province. I know that there's also some boundaries being established in this legislation around the great new Porcupine Hills Provincial Park, Mr. Speaker, a new park that's being established. And I think it's important that as we work through this that we work with all voices within the local area, the region, importantly the indigenous voices and leadership in the area as well, to make sure that these boundaries are appropriate, Mr. Speaker.

I believe, and I don't know this file inside and out, Mr. Speaker, I believe there's some concern on this front. So clearly before this piece of legislation gets pushed forward, we need to make sure that the traditional land users of the area, that those in treaty, which is all of us, Mr. Speaker, and that the local First Nations are engaged as well as the local community.

That Porcupine Plain country, I don't know if you've been up there, Mr. Speaker, but it's beautiful country, Mr. Speaker. I've hunted up through that area and it's beautiful country, Mr. Speaker. And I'm certainly very interested in where this, the location of this park, and look forward to making sure that it's established in a way that will ensure it's a lasting legacy to all the people of the province. So importantly, we need to make sure that the consultations have occurred the way that they need to, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that those boundaries are appropriate.

I think the members . . . I guess it would be the member for Kelvington-Wadena, I believe, that the park would fit within. I think the member from Carrot River maybe fishes up there once in a while, Mr. Speaker. We know he struggles on that front,

Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to help him out one day. I think we're going to get together at some point and fish.

As I saw this piece of legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, I ended up having all sorts of fond conversations with the member from Regina Elphinstone, who shares a love of the provincial parks. And we traded stories as we were sitting in our chairs. We were talking about our favourite childhood experiences. He was recounting to me his love of Echo Valley Provincial Park and his sharing as a child. I think the family would locate there for a good month and Doug McCall would drive back and forth to work. Sounds like a pretty good existence to me, Mr. Speaker.

And certainly our family as well has been all across this province, from the South to the North and points in between, utilizing our provincial parks. And they're so important to ensure that people across our province are able to connect to our incredible natural assets, our natural environment, Mr. Speaker, to ensure as well that there's protection of habitat and protection of lands and promotion of historical stories and our heritage, Mr. Speaker, and that there's healthy recreation all across our province that allows people to get out and connect in those natural environments.

I know that it's this time of year when the melt is on, Mr. Speaker, that families across Saskatchewan are looking to their camper gear or that are going out to check their RV [recreational vehicle] or going to sort through their equipment, Mr. Speaker, that will allow them to be ready to get out there to those provincial parks across Saskatchewan. And certainly we should do all we can to continue to make sure that our parks, our provincial public parks across Saskatchewan are offering the kind of quality of recreation that they have for generations, Mr. Speaker.

I was looking through the Act and looking at all areas that have been designated over the years and I was astounded actually with the number of those places that I've been to, Mr. Speaker. I think I was sharing to the member for Regina Elphinstone that, boy, I'd love to be — you know, there's no place I'd rather be than here, Mr. Speaker; don't get me wrong — but if there was a place, I think it would maybe be Devil Lake provincial campground, Mr. Speaker. Right just north of Otter Rapids, connecting on the Churchill River, a beautiful base camp, Mr. Speaker, to enter in to the Churchill River. Once you cross Devil Lake of course you're into a bit of a portage and then up through that beautiful system through Barker Lake and Sluice Falls, and incredible walleye, great sunsets, Mr. Speaker, the best campfire coffee a person can find. So if there was a place I'd rather be than this place right here, Mr. Speaker, I think that would be it.

We need to make sure our parks are affordable as well. And you know, the fact is the Sask Party have hiked the cost to access those parks and to camp all across our province, Mr. Speaker, and that's a hardship for families. You know, I can think of our family, back when we were young, loading up into an old beater of a station wagon, Mr. Speaker, stuffed full of gear to get out to our provincial parks, where there wasn't a whole lot of extra cash around the household at the time, Mr. Speaker. And those provincial parks allowed a quality of life and experience that was second to none.

I remember being young, packing that . . . being I think the lead packer on the vehicle, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to have to sort of teach that to my son now, Mr. Speaker, so I can get out of the work that I think my dad once did, Mr. Speaker. But it's so important that we ensure the affordability of those high-quality experiences, and doubling the camping fees just simply isn't on, Mr. Speaker. So we need to recognize how important that high-quality recreation is, how important those parks are.

And I believe as well that it allows many that maybe don't live in a . . . you know, maybe live in cities and don't have a connection as well to some of those natural environments. I believe it's an important piece to establish that connection, certainly to get out there and camp and fish and enjoy the water, Mr. Speaker, but also to build a respect for nature and our natural environment, Mr. Speaker, ensuring that we all do what we can to be stewards of our land and our natural environment. And I believe our parks play an important role on that teaching.

I know as a teacher before, Mr. Speaker, I used to utilize our provincial parks and heritage sites to extend some of that teaching. I see within the legislation that the Last Mountain House Provincial Park is one of those places, and that's a place that I used to take students out to, Mr. Speaker, you know a historic trading post right there on the Qu'Appelle Valley and the beautiful grasslands of the valley, Mr. Speaker. It's important to have the opportunity to take students and others into natural environments to teach, Mr. Speaker, and our provincial parks play an important role within that.

Looking at the list here, too, I see St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Park, Mr. Speaker. That's down in the Southwest, down by Willow Bunch. Last time I came across those I was out for a hunt, Mr. Speaker, and had the chance to see the park for the first time and the petroglyphs, and they're astounding, Mr. Speaker, and beautiful.

And I also see I'm running out of time with the clock here, Mr. Speaker. I would certainly have more to say. I've got a deep love for our parks. We need to protect them and make sure they're accessible, but at this point in time I would adjourn debate for Bill No. 76.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, to accommodate the committee sitting tonight, I do now move that this House adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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