



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

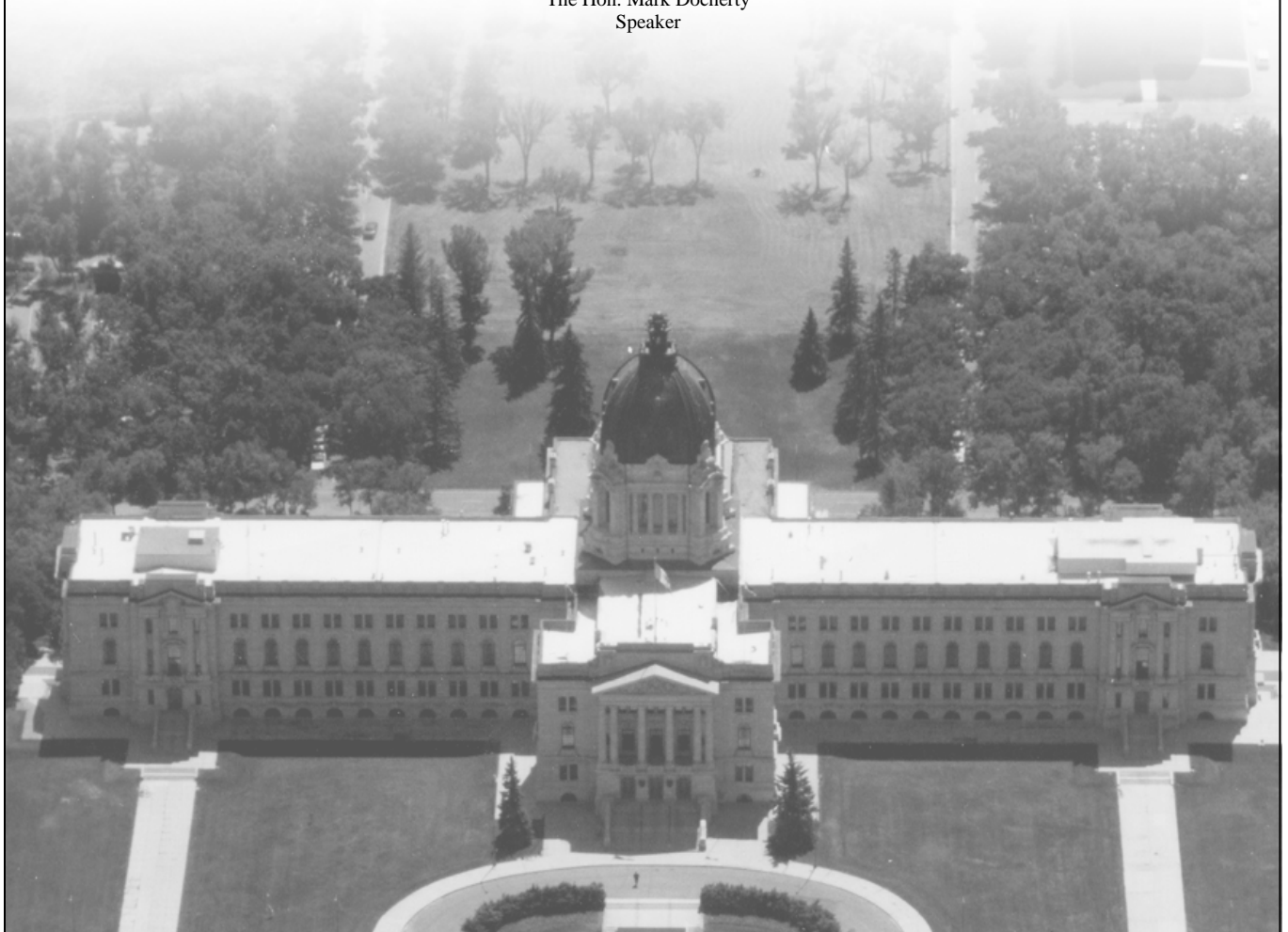
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

---

**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

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

Vacant — Regina Northeast

---

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

**Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel** — Kenneth S. Ring, Q.C.

**Principal Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyak

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

**Hansard on the Internet**

*Hansard* and other documents of the  
Legislative Assembly are available  
within hours after each sitting.

<http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/legislative-business/legislative-calendar>

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my honour to introduce a large group that's with us here today: two classes, grades 6 and 7, from Lakeview School here today. They're not very far from their school here today. But it's a pleasure have them here. They can give us a wave. They're joined here by their teachers today, Jared Clarke and Rochelle Anderson. We welcome them to their Assembly.

I also want to recognize that a group of these students, about half of them, were involved in leading a climate conversation throughout this year and for a period of time. I had the privilege of being over on December 5th, I believe, to Lakeview School to watch these young, inspiring leaders of today and for tomorrow lead us in a very important climate conversation. They engaged many from within our community. It was packed. It was filled within that gymnasium there that night.

I'm bringing the greeting here today on behalf of their MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], the MLA for Regina Lakeview, who sends her best and her thanks for your leadership. She's looking forward to coming by the school once again very soon.

I also want to single out Jared Clarke, one of their teachers who's a real leader within our province. He's a climate leader. He's a farmer within the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone. He's a biologist, a teacher of course. The Prairie Naturalist is his title on CJTR, and he's somebody that offers our province real, important leadership as he leads an important conversation around climate change. He's a hunter and a fisher and all-around good guy, and somebody that I'm happy to count as a friend, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also identify that Jared is holding a conversation on climate change tonight at 7:30 at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, and certainly members on both sides of the Assembly are invited, and all within the public. But it's my honour to welcome these 55 students, these two very fine teachers to their Assembly here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — We're okay with one, one introduction.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the member from Cumberland.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to provide trapping licence exemptions for residents 65 years or older, that trappers are a very important group of people that maintain traditional values in Saskatchewan, that the fur-harvesting industry provides many economic benefits to the province. The province

has exemptions for fishing licences for residents over 65 years or older, but there are no age exemptions for trappers yet.

The prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to immediately show their support for Saskatchewan trappers and provide a trapping licence exemption for Saskatchewan residents over 65 years of age.

It is signed by many good trappers of northern Saskatchewan and the rest of the province. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Frontier, Climax, and Claydon. I do so present.

**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. And the people signing this petition want to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations and 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 cannot buy or 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 come from companies outside Saskatchewan.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people. And we know the federal government, the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and now British Columbia have moved to limit this influence and level the playing field by banning corporate and union donations to political parties.

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

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

from corporations and unions, and to put a donation limit on individual donations.

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 for Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to recognize the importance of non-profit child care centres. These citizens wish to bring to your attention: across Saskatchewan, licensed non-profit child care centres are taxed inconsistently. Many of our licensed non-profit child care centres pay commercial property taxes. Child care is essential to the economy, yet most centres struggle to balance their budgets. Quality child care has an enormous positive impact on a child's future outcomes, and yields high rates of economic return. And child care centres are institutions of early learning and child care development.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan recognize that licensed non-profit child care centres provide programs that are foundational to a healthy society by including them in the Saskatchewan education Act and exempt all licensed non-profit child care centres from Saskatchewan property tax through changes to the appropriate legislation.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by residents from Regina. I do so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place to present a petition around the drug Orkambi. Whereas Orkambi is the first drug to treat the basic defect in the largest population of Canadians with cystic fibrosis, Mr. Speaker, Orkambi can slow disease progression, allowing patients to live longer, healthier lives. So the prayer reads as follows:

Urge the Ministry of Health to negotiate a fair price for Orkambi and to make it available through 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, the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout Saskatchewan, and throughout Canada as a matter of fact, Mr. Speaker. And in fact they have an online petition going as well. But the people who have signed this petition that I'm . . . the page that I'm presenting today are primarily from Saskatoon. And I so proudly present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Political Studies Student Receives Vera Pezer Award for Student Enhancement

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm honoured to recognize a constituent of mine, Kirsten Samson, who recently received the Vera Pezer Award for Student Enhancement, volunteerism, at the University of Saskatchewan.

Kirsten is a third-year political science student at the University of Saskatchewan and is a leader among the student body, but also in the broader Saskatoon community. She is the executive secretary of the Political Studies Students' Association and has served as a peer mentor at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan]. After finishing her undergraduate studies, Kirsten hopes to study law with a focus on human rights. She hopes to work to address social issues that affect many people in Saskatoon and across the province, including the enhanced availability of low-income housing and racial and gender violence and discrimination.

The USSU [University of Saskatchewan Students' Union] Experience in Excellence Awards recognize and show appreciation for those individuals who go above and beyond in improving the experiences of U of S students, faculty, and staff. Kirsten has been recognized for her leadership qualities and volunteerism that improves both the academic and non-academic environment at the University of Saskatchewan.

I ask that all members join me in congratulating Kirsten on her leadership award and wish her all the best in completing her studies and the pursuit of social and economic justice for the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Night With STARS Gala

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I had the pleasure of attending the Night with STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] Gala along with the members from Regina Wascana Plains, Moose Jaw Wakamow, and from Meadow Lake. The Night with STARS Gala is an annual fundraising event with all proceeds assisting STARS in providing life-saving support across our province.

Mr. Speaker, since its inception in 2012, our government has been a proud partner and supporter of STARS and the valuable work the STARS team does in our province. Since that time, STARS has transported or provided care to more than 3,650 patients in hundreds of communities right across Saskatchewan. Continued government funding for STARS, along with the generous financial support from businesses and families within our province, helps ensure these services will always be here for our residents.

Mr. Speaker, the Humboldt Broncos bus accident was a stark reminder of the important and valuable work that STARS does to save lives in our communities. This is a service we never want to have to use, but we are grateful to have STARS and their team during our most difficult times.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of this Assembly, I'd like to take a moment to thank STARS and all the first responders and pilots for the incredible and courageous work they do in our province each and every day. Thank you to everyone who attended the STARS gala to help raise money for their valuable efforts across our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Support for National Pharmacare Program

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, last Saturday was World Health Day and the World Health Organization called on leaders around the world to commit to universal health coverage. In Canada we're fortunate to have a health care system where citizens don't have to worry about whether they'll be able to pay when they need to access emergency care or have medical procedures. But there are gaps in this coverage, Mr. Speaker.

We live in the only country that has universal health coverage that doesn't include prescription drugs, and this lack of coverage costs Canadians billions of dollars a year. We pay the highest prices in the world for generic drugs, second-highest prices for brand name drugs. And when people with chronic illnesses skip their medication to pay their rent, their health suffers, hospital visits increase, and costs to the health care system skyrocket. Universal drug coverage would save Canadians over \$7 billion.

Now the Sask Party has cut programs that made prescription drugs more affordable for seniors and children, ostensibly to save money. We heard a couple of weeks ago that the Sask Party wasn't sure whether they supported a national pharmacare program, and it's unclear to me what part of a national pharmacare program they wouldn't like. Is it the part where the province saves money, the part where Saskatchewan patients save money? Is it the part where health outcomes are improved and lives are saved, Mr. Speaker, because when we have people choosing between paying their rent and paying for their medications, they don't have what they need to stay healthy.

We hope that this Premier will see the light and join us in the common sense call for a national pharmacare plan because it's a smart response to a costly problem.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon University.

### Rotary Badge Shield Star Dinner and Citizen Awards

**Mr. Oluson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 12th I had the pleasure of attending the 2018 Rotary Badge Shield Star Dinner and Citizen Awards at Prairieland Park, along with the Attorney General. This event was organized by the Saskatoon Rotary Clubs, Saskatoon Police Service, Saskatoon Fire Department, and Medavie Health Services to celebrate the unique contributions made by the women and men involved in these services.

Mr. Speaker, the keynote speaker for this event was Kevin Lamoureux who, among other roles, is currently serving as the education lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. Mr. Lamoureux spoke eloquently about the

importance of truth and reconciliation and how education plays a vital role. The event also awards citizens for important contributions. This year, Heather Miller was awarded the Badge Award, Janet Barnes won the Shield Award, and Hayley Hassel won the Star Award.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, important words and heroic actions make this event the largest Rotary event in Saskatoon, attracting nearly 800 attendees. Ticket sales raised proceeds to support the restorative action program through the Saskatoon Rotary Clubs. On behalf of the entire Assembly, I want to congratulate all award winners and those involved in the event for putting on another successful fundraiser. And thank you to first responders across the province for the extraordinary work they do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Westview.

### Ability in Me Fundraiser Dinner

**Mr. Buckingham:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on March 24th I, along with the Minister of Social Services and the member from Saskatoon University, had the privilege of attending Dine for a Difference, a fundraiser dinner for Ability in Me or AIM.

AIM is a charity that provides specialized education programming for people with Down syndrome and their families. Tickets for the event were sold out. The goal of these programs is to enable the support and inclusion of individuals with Down syndrome all across the province.

Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on several priorities that will improve the lives of people with disabilities. The Saskatchewan disability strategy is our 10-year framework for creating a more welcoming, innovative, and inclusive province for all residents. And we continue to work on priorities such as housing, supports for children, employment opportunities, and accessibility. But, Mr. Speaker, we cannot do it on our own. Organizations like AIM that do so much good for so many across our province are crucial and assist us in achieving our goals.

On behalf of everyone in this Assembly, I'd like to thank AIM staff and all the volunteers for putting on such a successful dinner and for providing programming that is making a significant difference for so many families across this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the Provincial Secretary.

### Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation Annual Convention

**Hon. Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Volunteers from across the province convened in Prince Albert to discuss the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation goals and objectives at their 89th annual convention.

Thank you to convention chair, Ken Cantin, for his role in a great weekend with speakers and delegates. The theme of this

year's convention was Habitat Trust: Your Land — Your Legacy. A variety of topics were discussed, including land access, hunting restrictions, and firearms legislation, which allowed for the federation's members to have their voices heard and share ideas going forward.

Mr. Speaker, fishing, trapping, hunting, shooting sports, and wildlife-orientated activities have been among this province's most popular pastimes since before Saskatchewan's inception. Wildlife conservation and habitat form the background of our province's culture, history, and economy.

The Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation contributes throughout the province to charitable projects, children's initiatives, hunter safety education, and responsible, sustainable fishing. Responsible, caring stewards of the land are not born that way; they are developed through the hard work and experience that the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation advocates.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking all the members for the annual convention for their dedication and commitment. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

#### Community Production of Broadway Musical

**Hon. Mr. Kaeding:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In early March, the Langenburg Arts Council successfully produced four showings of *Chicago: The Musical* to sold-out crowds, which I was a member of.

Based on the original 1926 Broadway play, *Chicago* is a major musical production including trained vocalists, advanced choreography, extravagant costumes, professional lighting, and a live six-member orchestra. *Chicago* was produced by Denise Dobko, musical direction by Shannon McIntyre, vocal direction by Rob Zerr, and choreography from Tammy Kostersky.

Mr. Speaker, rigorous rehearsals began last October for the 21 cast members, who range in age from grade 12 students to a couple of grandmothers. All cast members were dedicated to the success of the show, each putting in over 100 hours of individual practice time. Mr. Speaker, they all hit their marks precisely.

The backbone of the production were the six members of the orchestra who did an exceptional job, so well in fact that the audience could hardly notice their smooth and timely presence. Anyone in the audience would agree that the show was excellent in all aspects.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Langenburg Arts Council and the local talent who dedicated their time to providing exceptional entertainment to the area, as I understand it will be a very tough act to follow.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — Okay. We're looking forward to a spirited but respectful question period, and that's where we're at.

#### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Response to Opioid Crisis

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week we pointed out that the 2018 budget did not allocate any new funding for or even mention the fentanyl and opioid crisis, despite a growing number of overdose deaths in rural and urban communities. The Premier since said that the government will expand the naloxone program, which is a welcome shift that we have been calling for. But it's just one measure among the many that are needed to address this crisis.

So my question is, did the government forget about the opioid crisis as it was putting together its budget? And what is the government's plan to address the rising number of overdoses from fentanyl and opioids?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the member opposite for a question that is important to communities across the province of Saskatchewan — I think, in fairness, across the nation of Canada as well — as we struggle as leaders across Canada with the introduction of opioids and most certainly the results from the usage of these drugs, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in this province we have introduced \$50,000 in our funding to ensure that those that are at highest risk of experiencing exposure to opioids, whether they be in our first responders, in our police forces, or people that are utilizing the product themselves, Mr. Speaker, have access to the naloxone kits as well as the training to utilize those kits, Mr. Speaker.

We've expanded that to some of our first-line providers, Mr. Speaker, some of our community-based organizations, Mr. Speaker, so they have access as well. And we'll have further expansions in the days ahead that we'll announce to those around those that may be in contact as well, Mr. Speaker, all with the eye to ensure that we have trained individuals across this province with access to the naloxone kits so that we can save lives in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Something that has been missing from this discussion is an announcement that was made about 11 months ago where the government announced the creation of a task force to address fentanyl and opioid deaths in the province. At the time, a member of the task force, Dr. Peter Butt, he said that this work would be difficult without funding for that task force, but its formation was a good first step.

Unfortunately we haven't seen a second step but only more steps backwards. It's the last we've heard about this task force, Mr. Speaker. It has yet to report publicly, hasn't been mentioned at all in recent weeks, and certainly didn't appear anywhere in this year's budget. What is the status of this government's promised task force? Has it issued any

recommendations? What action has it taken, and what actions have been taken based on any recommendations given?

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

**Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan drug task force was established to improve information sharing for those stakeholders and better coordinator responses to these emerging drug trends and the issues associated, and to also inform some of our stakeholders as to what's the best way to get some of these supports, naloxone kits and others, to our first responders and family members that are affected by this terrible problem that we do have, Mr. Speaker.

I want to point out that we have invested well over \$275,000 additional to the prescription drug review, because it's not only about treating the issue and finding treatment and supports for these people. It's also about being preventative, that we can track some of these prescriptions more closely to make sure that a lot of the issues that we're seeing aren't because of overprescribing or misprescribing of these drugs, Mr. Speaker.

Also I want to point out as well, well over half a million dollars to 28 different harm-reduction programs across Saskatchewan too. As these individuals come in for their clean needles, they can access programming that way as well, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Government Action on Announced Initiatives

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, it's hard not to see a pattern forming here. Whether it's the forgotten and unfunded fentanyl task force, the poverty reduction strategy that the government announced and then did nothing with, the mental health action plan that had no action and no plan, their promise to get to 50 per cent renewables without any investments to actually achieve that goal, this government seems to have a really hard time following through on the announcements that it makes.

As one former member of this Assembly liked to say, the best predictor of future behaviour is past performance. How can the government expect the people of Saskatchewan to take this government at its word when its words are so rarely followed by action?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm just a little unsure of a specific question in there. I heard a few comments, Mr. Speaker. Maybe we could change this to comment period rather than question period, Mr. Speaker.

But maybe I will comment with respect to the plan that the province has when it comes to climate change and it comes to our goal in this province of a 50 per cent renewable mix in our SaskPower generation mix, Mr. Speaker, resulting in a 40 per cent emission reduction — 10 per cent in addition to Canada's commitment at the Paris accord — in our power electrical generation sources here in this province, Mr. Speaker. A reduction of 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

I would point the members opposite and the people of the province to our plan for a prairie resilience here in the province of Saskatchewan that has been worked on through different plenary sessions with industry, Mr. Speaker, the electrical generation industry as well as other industries that are operating here in the province of Saskatchewan.

What this province does not have a plan for, Mr. Speaker, as long as the Saskatchewan Party government is at the helm — unlike the members opposite, unlike the NDP [New Democratic Party] — is to never have a carbon tax on industries and the families in this great province, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Global Transportation Hub

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, this government has made choices to take supports away from the most vulnerable, to cut training opportunities for workers, and to cut funding from climate change efforts. All the while, they continue to prop up the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] with hundreds of millions of taxpayers' monies. And, Mr. Speaker, of course jobs at Loblaw are important, but we're talking about their management at the Global Transportation Hub Authority and the huge empty footprint that is costing taxpayers dearly.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to tour Loblaw with the minister. But the last time I was out at the GTH, I toured empty lands with blowing tumbleweeds, and that empty land at the GTH employs no one. So I'll ask again: how can the Sask Party continue to prop up the GTH with taxpayers' monies while they cut funding to our kids' classrooms?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, this is a generational investment. It will take some time to fill up. If the member opposite . . . Well the members opposite don't seem to want to hear; they seem to enjoy chirping more than understanding what is really taking place out there. And, Mr. Speaker, that says a lot about what kind of people we have on that side of the House because, Mr. Speaker, out there we have facilities that are employing hundreds and hundreds of people. We also have Emterra out there, a recycling facility that does the recycling for the city of Regina. And if she had chosen to go out to the far end of the facility, she would have seen that, but she chose not to. It was easier to come here and do it.

Early this morning when I came in, I left a message on her cellphone saying, can I arrange a tour for you this week? And I'm going to leave the same message again tomorrow.

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

#### Emissions Reduction and Renewable Energy

**Ms. Sproule:** — It's already arranged, Mr. Speaker, so the minister isn't obviously aware of that. But before he casts aspersions on this side of the House, the minister should maybe check in with the Minister of Education and current Deputy

Premier what he thinks about their GTH scandal. Or maybe the minister responsible for immigration and trade, who once admitted the facts and even their own opinions matter less than what they've told to say by the staff in the backroom, Mr. Speaker.

But that's just the way it is with the Sask Party, who are never clear or upfront with the taxpayers of this province about any of their pet projects — for example, carbon capture, Mr. Speaker. We haven't been able to get a straight answer about carbon capture at BD4 [Boundary dam 4] and 5, even though SaskPower was making their decision in December. So with no money in the budget for a retrofit at Boundary dam 4 and 5, can we assume that when it comes to carbon capture, utilization, and sequestration, the Sask Party has finally waved the white flag and conceded that their \$1.6 billion experiment doesn't make sense for the people of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, there is only one party in this province waving the white flag, Mr. Speaker, and that's the members opposite, the members opposite who say we should just give up; we should just accept the carbon tax from the federal government or put in our own carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. That's what the members opposite have to say on that.

Mr. Speaker, carbon capture and sequestration is obviously an important part of not just Saskatchewan's emissions picture, it's a part of the global emissions picture. That's why the United Nations IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] indicates that a 2-degree reduction in global temperatures is not feasible or realistic without carbon capture and sequestration.

That's why we need to ensure that we're demonstrating this technology. That's why we see interest from around the world of what's happening here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we have seen 2 million tonnes of emissions reduced and sequestered safely underground and further enhancing oil recovery in the province of Saskatchewan, which benefits, obviously, the people of Saskatchewan through those revenues, Mr. Speaker. So this is an important part of the picture not only for SaskPower, not only for the Government of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan, but the entire world.

[14:00]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of our guests today, I think we can understand why this is called question period and not answer period, Mr. Speaker.

For years the Sask Party has clung to carbon capture, spending hundreds of millions of dollars promoting it around the world, knowing that Saskatchewan ratepayers would never make their money back. The Saskatchewan Party has been recklessly bent on promoting CCS [carbon capture and storage], pouring money into a project that only works 60 per cent of the time, and they have failed to plan for Saskatchewan's future.

They promised years ago to reach 50 per cent renewable power

generation by 2030, but we've seen next to no action, Mr. Speaker. We asked, but they were never able to tell us how they would get to that target. So does the Sask Party have a plan to meet their targets, or is that to be determined like the rest of their plans?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we plan to add 60 megawatts of solar generation by 2021 through competitive procurement partnerships with First Nations Power Authority and communities across the province. We are launching, or have launched, a competitive process to buy up to 200 megawatts of wind generation from independent power producers. We've signed a power purchase agreement with Deep Earth Energy Production Corp. to allow for research into Saskatchewan's first geothermal project. And, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower's also engaged with industry on a new flare gas power generation project that came into operation in September of 2017. The goal is to add up to 750 kilowatts to Saskatchewan's power grid.

These are just a number of ways that we are going to reach our target of 50 per cent capacity through renewables by 2030, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, the best news of all is the bulk of our work is going to be done through contracting through the private independent power producers who have an interest in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's the way that we think that we should proceed in this and that's the way that we will proceed through to 2030 and beyond.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, this government has proven time and time again that they are unserious about climate change. And again in this budget, Mr. Speaker, they are failing the people of Saskatchewan by refusing to take action on climate change, one of the greatest challenges facing our provinces.

They cut \$719,000 in the climate change branch — 18 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's an 80 per cent cut since 2012. And this government is moving backwards. It undermines what little credibility they might have had when it comes to climate change. In fact that lack of credibility has cost our province \$62 million in federal climate change funding. My question is, when will this government take the environmental challenges of our province seriously and reverse the cuts to the climate change branch?

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you want to know another percentage? A 70 per cent increase in carbon dioxide emissions when the members opposite were the Government of Saskatchewan. Where was their plan? Where were their reductions? Nothing but increase in greenhouse gas emissions.

Mr. Speaker, through prairie resilience, our made-in-Saskatchewan plan, Mr. Speaker, we will see a reduction of 40 to 45 per cent reduction in methane emissions in our oil industry, Mr. Speaker. Would the members opposite propose we go further than that? Do they propose we go further



than a 45 per cent reduction in methane?

Mr. Speaker, on electricity, which I just already answered in the previous answer, a 50 per cent move to capacity from renewables, which will see a 40 per cent reduction, including using CCS at Boundary dam 3, Mr. Speaker. Would the members opposite go beyond that? Would they go beyond a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from our electricity?

And, Mr. Speaker, we have seen an incredible story when it comes to agriculture through innovation and technology in this province, moving from 600 000 tonnes emitted in 1991 through our cropland to now sequestering 12 million tonnes on an annual basis. Would the members opposite go further than that when it comes to agriculture? Would they tax the ag industry in our province? What would their plan be?

**The Speaker:** — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, a good start would be fill in the TBDs [to be determined]. Mr. Speaker, this government does not understand the dire need to make environmental sustainability affordable. It's clear, Mr. Speaker, that they are happy to make Saskatchewan families pay for their unwillingness to take action. On top of cutting the climate change branch, this budget also removes exemptions from energy-efficient appliances. And again, they continue to undermine what little credibility they've had on the climate change file.

Mr. Speaker, this government is trying to cut corners and pinch pennies on the back of Saskatchewan families with no apparent plan to create incentives for families to make their homes more energy efficient. Instead of raising the mission accomplished flag, Mr. Speaker, what initiatives will this government take on to make it more affordable for families to make their homes more energy efficient?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well you know what won't help families across this province, Mr. Speaker? What won't help families across this province is imposing a carbon tax, which is what the members opposite are advocating for. We just give up; we wave the white flag and we accept the carbon tax from the federal government, Mr. Speaker. That's not going to get it done.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite will know that in terms of the PST [provincial sales tax] exemption on energy-efficient appliances, this was a program that was created across the country at a time when very few products were energy efficient. And so the point was to encourage people, when making a decision between an energy-efficient appliance and one that wasn't energy efficient, to make that choice, that energy-efficient choice, Mr. Speaker.

The member opposite will know that today you go to look for an appliance, you cannot I believe find any products, appliances that are no longer . . . not energy efficient. So as every other province has done, we have sunsetted that program, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, what we're doing is prairie

resilience. We're going to see a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions without imposing a carbon tax on our people.

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

### Funding for Post-Secondary Education

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's attacks on our universities and students are putting post-secondary education out of reach, out of more and more within this province, shutting out young people across our province. This year's 4.8 per cent increase in tuition at the U of S is a direct result of the devastating cuts by the Sask Party last year, the ones that they plowed ahead with.

And with this budget, they're making things worse, not better. On top of the failure to reverse the cuts that they brought in last year and repair the damage, this year's budget cuts \$12.6 million from student supports, including a cut of \$5 million from the Student Aid Fund. How can the Sask Party cut supports that increase accessibility, when we have the least accessible tuition rate in Western Canada?

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Well I want to thank the member opposite for the question, Mr. Speaker. Of course the changes that he's referring to, to the student supports that were done that were reflected in this budget, are a result of changes that we made last year.

One of those changes, Mr. Speaker, was to defer the Saskatchewan advantage grants for education savings, which is annualized into this year's savings part of the budget, Mr. Speaker. And the other part of that comes from the student loan fund, where we made changes last year so that we would provide upfront funding to students who are attending university, particularly low-income students, Mr. Speaker, so that they would have predictable funding through the course of their education.

As we can see with the enrolment levels of both not only at the University of Regina but also the enrolment levels of First Nations and Métis students across all of our institutions, Mr. Speaker, we have created a system where we've been funding our universities and helping grow the province for young people in this province, including our graduate retention program, which I talked to last day, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, students, post-secondary students across Saskatchewan deserve so much better than they're getting from this Sask Party government — students like the U of R [University of Regina] social work students up in Saskatoon. These students are rightly concerned that their classes that they need to complete their program in a timely way are no longer offered. They've been cut. And they're concerned that their accreditation is at risk because of the Sask Party's cuts. We're talking about the next generation of social work — those that we need to extend hope and support all across our province.

Will the minister guarantee these students that they'll be able to finish their program on time, and will she reverse the cuts from last year's budget that have put this critical program at risk?

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, again I thank the member opposite for the question, and I thank the social work students for raising this issue for our attention. It is of course an issue which we will work very closely with the universities on, in order to make sure that their planning for programs and services are such that these students can graduate in a timely fashion. That's ongoing work. That's work that the autonomous institutions have under their purview, but certainly we are happy to work with them and the boards of governors to make sure that's the case.

But while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to talk about not only the investments that we've been making in education, but also in the sense of the future investments that we're making. You know, the Finance critic last day talked about our incentive for start-ups. And every time I meet with students in this province, Mr. Speaker, they talk about entrepreneurship, that they want to be entrepreneurs in this province.

In her speech in reply to the budget speech, she talked, Mr. Speaker, about it being a program that maybe some would want, that it's overly complex, etc. Mr. Speaker, this is something that many, many young people in this province want. It's the future of employment here. It's the future of our province, and I'm really glad that we're supporting it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, that answer completely ignored the reality that this budget did nothing to repair the damage caused by the budget last year, and she certainly didn't answer the question to the social work students who are rightly concerned with the cuts and with their ability to finish their program. This budget did nothing to restore, or to repair the damage caused by last year. And certainly she can't hide from the fact that this budget actually has \$12 million less than the budget in 2016-2017, \$12 million less than a full two years ago, Mr. Speaker. Just like the Education minister, she's trying to convince us that not as bad as last year is somehow good enough. It's not.

Mr. Speaker, the social work students deserve answers and commitments, not spin. When will the Sask Party fully fund our universities, repair the damage that they caused last year, and make higher education the priority that it needs to be?

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

**Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We provided a 1.5 per cent increase in this budget. And I understand that it's difficult for our universities, but we will be working with them. I met with the board of governors of all of our major institutions and will be doing that on a go-forward basis.

I think it's important to recognize that we also provided funding for the College of Medicine at a time when we have an opening of a children's hospital and the North Battleford facility, Mr. Speaker, which is incredibly important to the future of this province. It keeps that university in the U15, and there are tons of students who are involved in that particular program and in that college, Mr. Speaker.

I would also add this, that our universities . . . the comprehensive university of the University of Regina is one of the fourth-highest dependent on government resources going forward. The University of Saskatchewan is also the fifth-highest dependent on provincial revenues. We're going to work with our institutions to try to diversify their funding pool, Mr. Speaker, and I'm really looking forward to working with them closely over the next year. Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

### Job Advertisements and Employment Numbers

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, it's no secret that, under the Sask Party, more and more Saskatchewan people are looking for work. But it's not just their tax hikes and heartless cuts that are making it more difficult to find a job posting. The Sask Party is also shutting down the saskjobs.ca website. This is a valuable tool for people looking for work in our province, and the Sask Party is taking it away. Why is the Sask Party shutting down this website that helps so many people get back on the job site?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well the reality is that that site will continue to operate. It's going to be connected with the National Job Bank website. This has been the result of a long-standing negotiation and agreement between the provinces and the Government of Canada to integrate provincial job sites with the National Job Bank, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, we finally get an economic question from the NDP, which is a good thing. What we don't know, Mr. Speaker . . . We have a singular issue before the country right now that has engendered debate, engendered discussion right across the political spectrum, that has been the dominant issue that we have seen, and that is of course the Trans Mountain pipeline, Mr. Speaker. We have an opposition opposite, a fundamentally unserious . . .

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — The member from Athabasca would like to maybe somehow get a question? Maybe somebody can disperse one to him. I recognize the Minister of Trade.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — We have a fundamentally unserious opposition across the way, Mr. Speaker, who have had nothing to say on this issue. We don't know what their position is. We haven't heard a comment on this, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition needs to stand up and say what his position is on this. Does he support this government's efforts, this government's efforts to have the Kinder Morgan pipeline go

forward? Or does he stand with his friends in British Columbia and John Horgan to see it not go forward?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, no answer on jobs yet again. We've seen this government off-load its responsibilities over the years, off-loading onto school boards, off-loading onto municipalities. Now they're off-loading responsibility for job postings onto the federal government — this on top of the fact that they're cutting job training and workforce development programs by nearly \$3 million in this year's budget. And an Edmonton-based construction company is running radio ads in Saskatoon for jobs in Alberta.

No wonder Friday's jobs vacancy numbers showed Saskatchewan at the back of the pack along with PEI [Prince Edward Island] and Newfoundland. How can the Sask Party justify cutting programs that help people get back to work when there are so many in our province in need?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think I gave a pretty clear explanation as to what's happening with saskjobs.ca and our partnership with the National Job Bank.

As far as jobs, Mr. Speaker, I'm not actually sure what reports they're looking at. The last Statistics Canada labour market force survey that came out just I think about a week and a half ago showed in fact that Saskatchewan had added 4,200 jobs over the course of the last month and 1,500 jobs year over year, which is in addition to the over 60,000 jobs that have been created in this province over the course of the last decade, Mr. Speaker, which is in stark contrast to their record which was the absolute worst in Canada.

Now, Mr. Speaker, last question I gave an opportunity for the Leader of the Opposition to stand up and clarify his position with regard to Kinder Morgan. I suspect the Leader of the Opposition says that, you know what, he's supportive of pipelines. He's just never yet found one that he can get behind. Mr. Speaker, he has an opportunity right now. He can stand in his place. He can stand in his place and say what the position that he has and the position of his party is on Kinder Morgan rather than hiding under a pile of coats. What's your position?

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

#### Wait Times for Surgery

**Mr. Meili:** — The member would be happy to table the job numbers so that you can learn a bit from her. And I'm happy to inform you on my position. This is a pipeline that has been approved and should go forward. I've been very clear on that.

We'll also ask you to address another question that didn't get answered last week. I asked the Premier, increasing wait times for surgeries. And he seemed to be a bit taken by surprise, which is surprising because we've seen these numbers continue to rise over the last few years. I'm sure the Premier will be happy to tell us old statistics or explain how this is somehow

the fault of an NDP government from 15 years ago, but it's the Sask Party that's let this happen, and it's happening now.

To the people across the province who are desperately waiting to get the surgical care they need: has the Premier done his homework? Can he explain what's changed, why those numbers have risen so much, and why, during the tenure of this Health minister, those wait lists have gotten so long?

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

**Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, you know, something that's gotten a lot larger in this province is our population. We've grown by over 160,000 people over the last 10 years, and some of those people that have come to move here are elderly and children that do access more health care, Mr. Speaker. So sometimes, in situations like that, there is more health care that's needed.

But, Mr. Speaker, this government has invested mightily in doctors and nurses, and surgery wait times, Mr. Speaker. In fact, as something that members opposite are opposed to, private surgery centres within our public system, Mr. Speaker, they've accomplished over 69 surgeries in those private centres. Where would we be if still under the NDP and under their plan of not partnering with private enterprise to shorten some of these wait times, Mr. Speaker?

We know that right now, although there has been a slight increase in some of these wait times, 79 per cent of patients are receiving surgery on or at their offered surgery date within three months; 91 per cent are receiving surgery their offered date or on that date within six months, Mr. Speaker.

We have invested over 421 million in dedicated funding since 2010, and we'll continue to keep our . . .

**The Speaker:** — Next question.

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It would be odd that a party that talks so much about the population growing up wouldn't have estimated, when they were making the promise that no one, zero people would be waiting more than three months for surgery, that they wouldn't have taken that into account as they made that plan.

But the most recent data shows something more than a slight increase, Mr. Speaker. It shows close to 10,000 people waiting more than three months for surgery. That's not zero, Mr. Speaker; it's 10,000. There's a lot of zeros, and it's five times as many people as were waiting three years ago.

Other provinces are finding solutions, improving the public health care system. Saskatchewan, at the same time, is falling behind. Talking about how good things were five years ago is cold comfort for those who are waiting now. Mr. Speaker, I'll try again. What's changed? What's changed, and what's the plan to reverse this trend so that Saskatchewan people can get timely access to the surgeries that they need?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Moe:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the surgical wait time initiative, the efforts that we have made in health care in general — but specific to the surgical wait time list that we inherited some 10 years ago — have paid off, Mr. Speaker, and have paid off in shorter wait times for all of those waiting for their surgeries here in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Our investment in health care in general and access to medical professionals in this province, as well as access to facilities, Mr. Speaker, has been strong, with 15 long-term care and health care facilities built in rural Saskatchewan. We see a new hospital in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker. We see a new hospital coming up in the children's hospital in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. We see a replacement of a 100-year-old hospital in the community of North Battleford, Mr. Speaker. We see the hospital in Humboldt that was announced seven times under the members opposite, built under this government, being invested in, Mr. Speaker.

We see investment in physicians, 750 more physicians working in the province versus, under the NDP, 173 reduction in physicians, Mr. Speaker. We see investment in over 3,000 nurses here in the province of Saskatchewan relative to 450 fewer nurses under the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

This government continues to invest in health care and health care facilities rather than closing them in communities across the province of Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — I hope the students in the gallery enjoyed that.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

## WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government House Leader . . . sorry, the . . .

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 221 through 223.

**The Speaker:** — Table 221 to 223.

## SPECIAL ORDER

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Ms. Sproule.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Pasqua.

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour to stand in this House to speak on any topic, whether it is members' statements, petitions, speaking to the budget.

This April marks my two years sitting in this House, and I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to all my constituents of Regina Pasqua who sent me to represent them in this legislature. Mr. Speaker, also I would like to say thank you to my wife, Attia, for supporting me for my day-to-day life and this job. Also our three boys: Ayaz is in grade 10, Kashif in grade 7, and Arsalan is in grade 3. These three boys are truly a blessing for our house. We had a great time during last Easter break, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to our former premier, Brad Wall, for his great service and dedication to this province for 18 consecutive years. Also, Mr. Speaker, I would like to say congratulations to our new Premier for holding this torch strong and high with great enthusiasm to serve the people of Saskatchewan. With this unprecedented team, we are very confident for Saskatchewan's future.

Mr. Speaker, the budget was delivered on April 10th. And we received a number of feedback, very positive feedback from Saskatchewan people: businesses, stakeholders, and analysts. The CEO [chief executive officer] of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, Steve McLellan, posted on Facebook on April 10, 2018, and I quote, "Without a plan, getting a balanced budget would not be achievable. We are pleased that this 2018-2019 budget has a clear plan that is working towards that balanced budget."

We have a plan, Mr. Speaker, a plan for people of Saskatchewan, a plan for sustainable economy and growth. And the books need to be balanced, Mr. Speaker. Everyone understands that spending should not exceed revenue. If government does not control spending and relies on borrowing money from other sources, then they will have loan repayment in the next budget rather than an emphasis on saving and investment. Then the vicious circle of crowding-out effects leaves the government allocates with less money to invest in education, health, and the highway system, as this happened in the NDP government when they temporarily benefited by borrowing money and sending the bill to the next generation to pay the debts, which the Saskatchewan Party government had to pay \$3 billion for that. Mr. Speaker, we chose not to find a temporary solution to cover up difficult financial situations in this province.

Mr. Speaker, on March 24, 2017, a professor at the University of Calgary, Blake Shaffer said and I quote, "... the Government of Saskatchewan presented a budget offering what one might call a middle ground. That is, they will solve their budget problem with *both* revenue and spending measures."

Mr. Speaker, last year we made a plan for balancing the budget within three years, and we are on the track to have it balanced next year in 2019-2020. Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that the prices of our commodities are low, Saskatchewan is the fastest growing province in Canada. The province's population has now increased for 46 consecutive quarters, growing by more than 176,000 during that period, the fastest and the most sustained period of population growth in 85 years.

Remember the challenging time in the NDP government: no plan other than raising taxes, no investments in nearly 16 years, and the highest unemployment rate in the country, which was

the reason people started leaving this province.

Mr. Speaker, we delivered a deficit budget in 2017, and of course a few difficult decisions were made. But, Mr. Speaker, here I would like to quote from Fraser Institute on March 22, 2017: "Saskatchewan's budget lays out a generally realistic quick path to balance and future generations in Saskatchewan will benefit from the reduced debt accumulation that will result."

But we still have the fastest growth in this province. The building permits issued in Saskatchewan in January 2018, raised by 31.2 per cent more compared to January 2017. During this period, Saskatchewan ranked fifth among the provinces in terms of growth, and the national average increased by 18.7 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, on April 11th, 2018 in question period, the Leader of the Opposition quoted a very popular phrase, that the best time to plant a tree is 30 years ago. This is very correct, Mr. Speaker. That tree they planted while they were in the government, the tree of the debt, the loan tree, the borrowing money, which grew up very fast, and our generation scurried from that dark shadow of that tree and started moving out of this province. Later on, Saskatchewan Party government harvested a \$3 billion debt from that NDP loan tree, Mr. Speaker. And that money could have been spent on our health and our education in Saskatchewan.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, the NDP is trying to plant one more tree in Saskatchewan. They are working hard on that carbon tax tree. The plant is going to take approximately \$4 billion to grow it. And we can assure you that we will not let them plant this tree.

Mr. Speaker, we released *Prairie Resilience: A Made-in-Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy* in December 2017. The strategy focuses on climate resilience, reducing our emissions and adapting to the effect of climate change without raising tax, reducing emissions in a way that is economically sustainable and promote growth, in our focus. By 2030 our strategy will result in a 40 per cent reduction in emissions from electrical generation, as well as 40 per cent to 45 per cent reduction from methane.

Mr. Speaker, we know when and where to plant a tree. We know how to spend the nation's dollars, how to maintain farmers' demands, power plants and roads, health and education, investment in existing businesses, marketing for new businesses and other infrastructure and, at the same time, reducing taxes. Saskatchewan people have already saved \$5.9 billion, and 112,000 people have been removed from the provincial tax roll, \$4.3 billion in personal income tax cuts. And again, Mr. Speaker, \$1.3 billion in education property tax cuts, saving residents approximately \$100 million per year.

Here is our record of infrastructure, Mr. Speaker: 12.5 billion in infrastructure since 2007 averaging \$1 billion per year; 1.4 billion in infrastructure for our health care system, more than double the previous 10-year period which allows the shortest surgical waiting time in Canada, Mr. Speaker, compared to the longest surgical time under the NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, we understand the significance of health care. Saskatchewan was one of the two provinces that had no children's hospitals. Now we do, in Saskatoon, and that is not the only one, Mr. Speaker. In Moose Jaw we have a hospital; Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford.

Let's compare with their record, Mr. Speaker: 52 hospitals were closed. And one can tell that . . . where did that staff go from those hospitals. We understand the seniors' need and built about 15 new long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker, tripled the seniors' income plan benefit from \$90 to \$270 which never have been increased during the NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, we had the best use of public dimes, hired 750 doctors and 3,400 more nurses of all designations in Saskatchewan. \$8.55 million annual for autism services, which is a 1,600 per cent increase since 2007. These are the realities that how we use public money, Mr. Speaker.

Now in this budget 2018-2019, \$2.8 million will fulfill the government commitment to provide individualized funding for children with autism spectrum disorder, initial funding of 4,000 per child under the age of six, Mr. Speaker. And \$2.7 billion invested in mental health and addictions since 2007; double the funding to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, which is a 117 per cent increase.

Mr. Speaker, we're very serious about providing services to the people of Saskatchewan they deserve. Mr. Speaker, our minister of trade and export development is absolutely right: this opposition is non-serious. Mr. Speaker, here is a very important topic of my debate on this budget, is education. Education is a precious asset we give to our generation which cannot be compromised at any cost. But the NDP government failed to provide quality of education by closing schools, which overcrowded the classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, they have never been serious about education. In fact they closed about 176 schools, and we all know where did the staff go for those schools.

We have been serious about education, Mr. Speaker: nearly \$1.5 billion to build and repair schools; 40 new or replacement schools, including nine joint-use schools in Saskatchewan in Saskatchewan's fastest-growing communities, and 25 major renovations; \$49.6 million for preventative maintenance and renewal as well as emergent funding, a 15 per cent increase; 35 per cent increase for school division and operating funding since 2007; 840 new teachers since 2007, which is a 9 per cent increase, Mr. Speaker; created over 8,500 new child care spaces, which is a 75 per cent increase.

We are on track, Mr. Speaker. We have a plan. We set our goals and the targets, and we tell our people of Saskatchewan how to accomplish that. We do not just write something on an Excel sheet and call, this is a plan. And without knowing, the plan can cost the next generation billions of dollars, as in the NDP leadership, the Leader of the Opposition told that plan that costs about \$2.5 million and has no cost on that . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Leader of the Opposition, yes.

Mr. Speaker, I support the motion put forward by the member from Canora-Pelly, and I oppose the amendment by the

opposition since that do not have any rationale in it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the budget. It's a great opportunity as well, Mr. Speaker, to be able to thank and recognize people.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the opposition has been waiting for an update on the Saskatoon Southeast turkey raiser . . . turkey fundraiser. Turkey raiser, well, speaking of . . . Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the members opposite a little bit about the turkey fundraiser. We sold and we delivered 97 turkeys. I want to thank everyone that participated. For those people that did not want a turkey, we gave them the option of having a donation equal to the value of the turkey made to a charity.

This year Read Saskatoon will receive nearly \$1,000. They're a great charity and they're a wonderful resource. They teach reading and literacy to new Canadians, adult learners, and families. They use volunteers to do a lot of work, and I want to thank them and give them a shout-out.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I usually give an update on our moms. Sandy's mom is 94. My mom will be 97 in about two weeks. Both of them are in facilities that provide them some assistance, but both of them are in remarkable health. And they tell me, both of them, that they plan to live long enough that we don't receive any kind of inheritance from them. And actually we're just fine with that.

My mom is a keen watcher of question period, and sometimes when she watches it she doesn't even put me on mute. She's been carefully assessing both the . . . I know that some of my colleagues, Mr. Speaker, will put me on mute, some maybe not so much or always. But, Mr. Speaker, she's also been watching the new leaders and their conduct in the House. And she told me the other day that after a lot of consideration, she was supporting the new Saskatchewan Party leader. And I thank her for that, and so does her MLA.

I want to thank all the Saskatoon Southeast constituents, and for that matter all of Saskatoon and our province. They provide great feedback and input. They've been great volunteers and supporters. My constituency president, Eugene Paquin, has recently been named as a recipient of the Saskatchewan Volunteer Medal. He's been a tireless advocate for people with disabilities, so to him I offer my congratulations and my thanks.

I want to thank my office staff in Saskatoon. My long-suffering constituency assistant, Gordon Rutton, has retired after 10 years of trying to make me look competent. He's 73 years old. He was, Mr. Speaker, the mayor of Martensville, and he is the mayor that took Martensville from being a town to being a city.

I remember when he came in and told me that he was going to run for mayor. After he became mayor, I congratulated him and I asked him, will I be obliged to call you Your Worship? He thought about it for a moment and he said, absolutely. I then asked him if he was going to start calling me Minister. He quickly replied that he had no time for that nonsense. We had a good laugh.

He's a retired educator, and he comes from a large family of teachers, all of which have very strong views on the importance of the teaching profession, and they've all been very generous at sharing those opinions. I value those opinions and frankly, Mr. Speaker, they're correct.

My very new CA [constituency assistant] is Angela Knoss who's been working out extremely well. She's very bright, very caring, very compassionate with the constituents. Her husband, Brad, has the unique and strange hobby of racing Volkswagen dune buggies at the Bonneville Salt Flats. He's gone over 130 miles per hour in an open dune buggy. Angela, I want to thank you for what you're doing.

My staff here has had some changes. My former chief of staff, Drew Dwernychuk, who had worked with me for six years, has gone to work in Executive Council. He has been a friend and ally and a co-conspirator of pranking some of the people in my office. Also notably Brayden Fox who's one of the victims of our pranks; Brayden left to become chief of staff elsewhere.

Matthew Glover's gone to the Ministry of Education to do comms. I miss Lacy, Donna, Sherry, and Aidan who are also in the Education minister's office. The new Education minister will be well served by Lacy and Aidan who still remain there. I thank all of them.

My new chief of staff has certificates that show he was born and christened with the name Clinton Fox, but I've always referred to him as Flinton Cox and plan to continue to do that. I have a new ministerial assistant, Darryl Filazek, and I haven't figured out anything creative to do with his name, but he looks after SaskTel issues and does really well. I also have an MA [ministerial assistant] from Saskatoon, Molly Waldman who came to me very early on after she started with me and asked me to call her Wallace. I have agreed and will continue to do that. Our senior admin is Cindy Chamberlin and is awesome. Dominique Sauve was our junior admin until today when she was also vacuumed up to work in Executive Council.

I've had, Mr. Speaker, some of the finest staffs anywhere. They've been bright, competent, hard-working, relentlessly funny. They've put up with my pranks and my occasional bad joke.

**An Hon. Member:** — I trained them, you know.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — The Minister of Education says that he trained those people and, to the extent of their abilities, I'll certainly give him credit for that much.

These people are not just co-workers. They're friends. They're always up for a trip to Five Guys or Smokin' Okies.

But most of all, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Sandy. Sandy's been with me for nearly 23 years. She's the one that's on the billboards and Christmas cards that make those things look good. When we were doing the 2016 election, they were preparing a draft of a new brochure. I told the people that were doing the draft, make sure you've got lots of pictures of Sandy and Brad Wall. The first mock-up had three pictures of Sandy, five of Brad Wall, and none of me. Probably a good decision.

I want to thank all of the families of all of the MLAs. They make it possible for us to do what we do. They prop us up when we're down. They go to events. They remind us to take our papers and our clothes when we leave. They were sounding boards for our thoughts and ideas. It's great to have family like we do.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, it's an honour today to stand here and respond to the 2018-2019 budget that was delivered last Tuesday by our Finance minister and my good friend, the member from Humboldt. Mr. Speaker, the member from Humboldt is the second woman in Saskatchewan history to deliver a budget. Her strength, determination, and dedication to her portfolio and our province is an inspiration to all of us, and she is truly the right person for the job.

I'm proud to stand with the Finance minister, the Premier, and the rest of caucus in support of this budget. The budget was an important one for our province. This budget showed that our government has heard the concerns of Saskatchewan citizens and, Mr. Speaker, it shows that we listened and will continue to listen. We are on track, Mr. Speaker. We are on track to meet the goals of balancing the budget in three years.

With regards to our justice budget, I would like to take this time to speak to a few of the things that we're doing. In the justice budget this year, you will see \$4 million to court services, 98.9 new FTEs [full-time equivalent]. Mr. Speaker, since we've been in government, our province has grown. It's grown more than I think anyone could have imagined, especially the members opposite. With that growth though, we've understood that there are increased pressures on the justice system. That's why, in this budget, you will see that \$4 million will go to court services to ensure that we can effectively support our courts.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that domestic violence is an issue faced by too many in our province. In this budget we have reconfirmed our commitment to funding the transition houses and shelters that are desperately needed by women and children fleeing unhealthy relationships and environments. I am reminded of the late member from Melfort and his unwavering support for the transition house in Melfort. As an MLA, Kevin Phillips has been one of the best people that we've had in our province, and there's nothing better than to be part of a building that would help those that are in need. So the legacy that Kevin Phillips has left for that transition house is something that we say thank you for.

Last session we introduced legislation to empower survivors of domestic and sexual assault to terminate residential leases early. Additionally, after consultations with numerous stakeholders, we introduced legislation for employers to allow for up to 10 unpaid days off for survivors to seek help or to help family members who are suffering.

Currently the Ministry of Justice is looking into Clare's law, which was introduced by a father in the United Kingdom who lost his daughter in 2009 to domestic violence. Mr. Speaker, this father believes his daughter's senseless death could have been prevented if she had known about her partner's violent past. Our government wants to do what we can to prevent

violence and, Mr. Speaker, we think that Clare's law would help. Clare's law is an interpersonal violence disclosure process. It will allow the police to disclose information about previous violent or abusive behaviour. In Saskatchewan this can be developed under existing laws and police powers to prevent crime. Police can also use the opportunity to proactively engage the individual in safety planning.

The existing system in the United Kingdom has two different streams: the right to ask, where an individual can apply to the police for information about previous violent or abusive behaviour; and the right to know. If the police receive information about violent or abusive behaviour by an individual, they may proactively disclose the individual to that individual's intimate partner. If a matter is classified as no concern, then no disclosure is made. If a matter is classified as a concern, the police will conduct a further evaluation to determine if disclosure should be made. Mr. Speaker, I hope that our commitment to health and domestic violence is clear.

The federal government imposed an aggressive timeline on us to prepare for the legalization of cannabis, Mr. Speaker, and I'm proud to say that our province did its due diligence. We consulted the people of Saskatchewan by providing a survey to allow them to share their ideas and concerns. Over 34,000 people utilized this survey and informed our development of the cannabis framework. Public safety has remained our top priority through the entire legalization process, and we're confident that the framework we announced will keep this province safe.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the privilege of being the Minister of Labour for a long time. I was actually reminded of this — just how long I've had this portfolio — when I was informed that I'm currently the longest serving Labour minister in Canada. My counterpart in the labour movement, Larry Hubich, is the longest serving president of a provincial federation of labour. Maybe it says something about both of us having been here too long. I don't think so.

I want to thank the workers in this province for everything that they do. The growth we've seen in Saskatchewan is a true representation of the hard work that they do each and every day. The safety of workers in Saskatchewan is a priority for this government. Since 2007 the time-loss injury rate in our province has dropped by over 50 per cent. This drop in injuries is largely due to the WorkSafe Saskatchewan Mission: Zero initiative launched in 2008 in partnership with the Workers' Compensation Board and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety.

The goal of Mission: Zero is to achieve zero injuries, zero fatalities, and zero suffering. In 2017, 88 per cent of workplaces reported injury free. Mr. Speaker, while this is a great number, it also demonstrates the hard work of employers and employees, and that this is paying off. However, we still have work to do, and we will not stop until we achieve our goal of Mission: Zero. Now is not the time to be complacent.

In support of our targeted intervention strategy, we created five new OHS [occupational health and safety] officer positions in this budget. Now that we have reached 88 per cent of the workplaces, we are refocusing our target to get to the smaller employers that are more geographically dispersed across the

province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to inform you that, after a lot of hard work and attention, the Ministry of Labour have completed updates to mining regulations that will come into effect April 9th, 2019.

The regulations include the introduction of an asset management plan which requires employers and owners to develop a plan for the inspection and maintenance of all fixed assets not already covered by a prescribed inspection program, a safety equivalency process that allows employers to apply for a variance from the existing regulations if a process or technology equals or exceeds the level of health and safety set in the regulations, new explosive provisions which harmonize with the federal Act and regulations, a requirement for each hoist to have a preventive hoist maintenance program, a fire risk mitigation strategy approved by a professional engineer and the occupational health committee, and a maximum airborne contaminant level and testing standards for diesel particulate matter. We believe that with the changes made to the regulations, and the introduction of these new ones, the safety in our province will continue to improve.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take this time to talk about the Global Transportation Hub. I know this House often hears about the GTH, but the members opposite rarely recognize the great work and investment that has been taking place out there. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if this will be the year, maybe even during the budget debate, that some of the members opposite will finally speak up. Maybe they will talk about the fact that there is 60,000 containers being moved by CP Rail [Canadian Pacific Railway] annually. They might even highlight that there are 4,600 trucks coming and going, in and out of the hub every week.

They could also talk about the 24-7 operations of Loblaw, which is the place of work for 750 employees. Mr. Speaker, while on a tour of Loblaw a few weeks ago, I not only had the opportunity to see how hard the employees work every day, but also how proud they are to work there.

Mr. Speaker, as soon as you walk in, you're greeted from flags from the countries all over the world. Mr. Speaker, there are employees from 47 different cultures, and each time someone from a new country is hired, they hang a flag for them. It was wonderful, Mr. Speaker, and I'm reminded of Saskatchewan's motto, "from many peoples, strength."

Mr. Speaker, the GTH is something for our province to take pride in. Maybe this year we'll see members opposite recognize the progress and hard work of a Saskatchewan-based business and its operations and its employees. Maybe they'll see that it's a multi-generational project.

Again, Mr. Speaker, let me say it is an honour to stand today and to support this budget. I will be voting in favour of this budget and against the amendment, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and

congratulations to you in your new role. I know you have high aspirations for all that you hope to bring to it, and I'm sure that you will.

Of course it's been a sad 10 days and it's at times such as these, as we continue to collectively grieve over the tragedy in Humboldt, that friendships and connections, and of course family, matter more than ever. Every connection holds perhaps deeper significance.

Many of my colleagues on both sides last week spoke eloquently about the tragedy, in some cases through the prism of personal experience or interpretation of what it's like to get that call about a child who has been injured or worse, about being a team, and how the Broncos will always be our guys; about a new, renewed, and deeper sense of what the phrase "thoughts and prayers" can really signify; and about the importance and meaning of expressing thoughts and prayers in all sorts of circumstances to those who matter to us.

And I was struck as I listened to colleagues about how in just two short years, in most cases just since the election, these colleagues have become friends, and how indeed certain moments — certain comments, be it of support or of asking after family members, just moments of simple generosity or graciousness or camaraderie, of fun, day to day as we pass through this place together — I was struck by how these moments have mattered a great deal to me and how I will always hold them dear.

These are good people here in this Chamber and in this building. And there are now friends I didn't have just over two years ago before this adventure began. Among them, dear Ang Currie, the mighty, my former chief; my trusted current chief, Jeremy Brick; the lovely Sandy LaClaire in my office.

And in this and in other offices and in other capacities, Mr. Speaker, Drew D, as I called him, Dustin Clark, Dane Seidle, Max Waldman, Aidan Katz, Michelle Chyz, Donna Rybchuk, James, Patrick, Tim, Stuart, the former premier, the current Premier.

Outside this building too, Mr. Speaker, how can I have known Carrie Zdunich, my CA, for just over two years? Surely we have known each other a lifetime. Thank you to all of them.

And most of all, to my darling family, you are quite simply everything to me.

Mr. Speaker, every day, every night that I leave this place — and as my family isn't here in Regina, I often work pretty late — I roll my little document roller bag through the Souris gallery. We all know it. It features members of this Legislative Assembly, men and women, mainly men in the early years. In that gallery and around the corner is a photo of every member who has ever worked here, who has passed through. And as you pass the photographs, you note certain faces and you wonder, what was their story? What was their passionate issue? What did they hope to achieve here and did they achieve it? Or did they just get the proverbial ball rolling, which of course can be important too.

And I think of that old movie *Dead Poets Society*, and the



Robin Williams character telling his students to look at class photos from the '20s and the '30s and to look at all the expressions of earnestness and expectation and hope on their forebears' faces, and how important it is as students living now in this time to seize the day and to imagine they hear those forebears whisper *carpe diem*, to seize their moment.

Politically of course, Mr. Speaker, that can be challenging at times. For one thing, it all depends on one's point of view and about what seizing the moment means to you. I remember the member for Regina Lakeview once saying, and I paraphrase, that we live in a time of great flux, great change, where everything is changing. And depending on one's point of view and where one falls politically on certain issues, I suppose we all feel that at times, that the other side on this or that issue actually threatens our ability to seize the moment and to achieve what we consider to be the broader good.

Mr. Speaker, just take here in Canada the polarization that we are seeing over pipelines and the carbon tax. The Leader of the Opposition has said that he considers the right wing/left wing dichotomy to be a bit overplayed and oversimplified. Okay. He has also said, and I do paraphrase a bit here, that spending money left, right, and centre, let's say to the tune of \$2.5 billion in terms of promises, is actually an investment and that it pays off down the road. And I would submit that's where the old clichéd split between, let's call it left and right, comes in.

Of course we believe in investments in health, education, highways. We've made record investments in these areas, and investments across the board have continued in this budget. But we have made them in the spirit of fiscal stewardship and responsibility.

[15:00]

And with all respect to the new tone that the Leader of the Opposition strives for, honourably strives for, I would ask, where has that model ever worked? Did spending as if there's no tomorrow and calling it investment work in Premier Rae's Ontario? Is it working in Premier Wynne's Ontario, where interest on the provincial debt is now the fourth-largest spending item in the budget, which is equivalent to sending 1 million children to school, Mr. Speaker?

Is it working in Premier Horgan's BC [British Columbia], which has now decided — surprise, surprise — to divert part of its provincial carbon tax to fund tax credits to so-called preferred groups, and where gas prices are exploding? So much for revenue neutral. Where has it worked and not left a huge mess behind it for someone else to clean up?

As for right and left, whatever you want to call it, we would say, Mr. Speaker, that seizing the moment is about fostering a competitive economic atmosphere, getting our goods to market. Seizing the moment is about backing pipelines with everything we've got, and it's about mounting the most spirited defence we can against a federally imposed carbon tax.

Mr. Speaker, in 1885 Sir John A. Macdonald wrote of the great trans-Canadian railway, "... events have shown us that we are made one people by that road, that that iron link has bound us together in such a way that we stand superior to most of the

shafts of ill fortune."

Mr. Speaker, from our perspective it amounts to nothing short of madness that we live in a time in which achieving that same sense of unity as a country again is within reach, that this time a pipeline link, pipeline links, could bind us together as a nation and bring about greater prosperity for all so we could withstand the shifts of ill fortune . . . madness that we are indeed in such flux that we face an existential threat to our nation's identity within our own nation. And frankly we find the Leader of the Opposition's position on this vexing.

Let's talk for a moment about the importance of the oil and gas industry. Actually I hardly know where to begin, Mr. Speaker. We have Jeremy Corbyn; Bernie Sanders the younger over there; and we have leave-it-to-the-feds, leave-it-in-the-ground leaper. So it makes for an interesting combination.

The Leader of the Opposition told *Pipeline News* that we need to look at whether pipelines improve the economy and result in new jobs. He called Keystone XL "economically unwise" and has called pipelines generally a way of transporting liquids. Liquid gold more like, Mr. Speaker.

Last year, the upstream oil and gas industry accounted for almost 34,000 direct and indirect jobs in this province. Oil and gas revenues, including royalties and land sales, added \$600 million to the General Revenue Fund. Saskatchewan's oil and gas sector is among the largest primary industry contributor to our GDP [gross domestic product], making up 15 per cent of the provincial total of \$4.8 billion investment last year in Saskatchewan's economy.

Also last year, Saskatchewan was ranked no. 2 in Canada by the Fraser Institute, no. 7 in the world for the best investment for climate for oil and gas, Mr. Speaker. Is that economic enough? Is that economic enough for the Leader of the Opposition? We are proud of the oil and gas sector and we're not afraid to say so. This Premier, our new Premier is not afraid to say so, that we will continue to do everything we can to address and rectify pipeline delays and the lack of connections to tidewater which cost Saskatchewan some twenty, \$200 million in royalties last year, Mr. Speaker.

More broadly too, we have to remember the effect that our energy and resource sector has on the people of Saskatchewan and on improving their livelihoods. Take mining which provides some 30,000 direct and indirect jobs, including some 2,000 direct jobs in northern Saskatchewan. Moreover, the mining sector in northern Saskatchewan is one of the largest employers of First Nations people in Canada. And as recently as 2016, the northern mining industry purchased 43 per cent of its total goods and services worth \$316 million either from northern suppliers or joint ventures with northern ownership.

Take potash. It accounts for approximately 30 per cent of world production, directly employs some 5,000 people here in the province, and contributes to the livelihoods of thousands more.

And take forestry. Last year this industry generated nearly \$1.2 billion in sales, an increase of 21 per cent from last year and the highest level of forestry sales in over a decade. It is another sector that would be gravely impacted by a carbon tax.

So by all means let us try to embrace that new tone to debate and to analyze things and to do what we can to work together. But a great start, in fact the best way to seize the day and seize our destiny as a province, and as the former premier said, to try to leave this place better than when we found it, is to stand united as a province and as a nation behind the things, behind the projects that build this nation. We owe that to all the fine people who've come before us whose pictures hang in the Souris gallery, and to those who are yet to come.

Which is why, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion put forward, and not supporting the amendment.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Fairview.

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to weigh in on the budget, provide some of my thoughts. I will stick pretty closely to that topic, which I know some other members have not done so much today, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to provide some of my thoughts on this year's Sask Party budget. But first I want to take the opportunity to thank my constituency assistant, Twyla Harris. She works very hard to keep things going in our office in Saskatoon and she approaches people with kindness and empathy and patience, which I know you know, Mr. Speaker. And if anyone has closely observed the work of constituency assistants, patience is quite the virtue for those folks, who often deal with a lot of the brunt of hardships that come to our offices, Mr. Speaker. So I want to thank Twyla for her work and her dedication.

I also want to thank my partner, Grayson Beaudin who is an extraordinary teacher, a student in graduate studies, and he still manages to keep the home fires burning as well, Mr. Speaker. We're buying a house right now and that can be quite a large project, all things considered, when you add up all the tasks. And he has been so helpful in leading that purchase and all of the things associated with it. And you know, it's not the best time to be buying a house, in the middle of session as an MLA, Mr. Speaker, which I'm sure you can appreciate. So I want to thank Grayson. He's been by my side for so many important moments, supporting me, challenging me at times, and helping me grow. And I hope that I provide the same support to him as well.

And while I'm on my feet I would like to offer my sincere condolences to all of those affected by the Humboldt Broncos tragedy, Mr. Speaker. It's true that this tragedy hits home for many of us. I know that I've spent countless hours of my life travelling to and from cadet activities, both as a teenager and once I was an officer. I've been on that bus. I think we've all been on that bus or been close to people who've been on those buses.

And the tragedy also hits home for me and makes me think of my dad who used to play hockey out in rural southwest Alberta. And it really gives you pause. It makes you think about your loved ones. And I remember reading a post on Facebook right after the tragedy — that's so much a source of our consumption of information nowadays, Mr. Speaker — and the post said something to the effect of, hug your loved ones tonight. And I was definitely feeling that as we grieved collectively as a group,

not just that day but since then as well. And I think that's how many of us have felt.

But as many have said, it is still our duty to go ahead with the task at hand, and the task at hand is reviewing this year's provincial budget. And I have to say that a lot of people of this province are still dealing with a lot of feelings and the effects of last year's provincial budget, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party's PST hike has hurt several economic-driving and job-creating industries in our province, including the construction industry and the restaurant industry, and people aren't able to find and keep steady employment.

And since so many of the members opposite have quoted news articles in their budget replies, I'll follow in that tradition as well by sharing some of the articles after the 2017-2018 budget. And I just pulled a few that I could find in about five minutes, Mr. Speaker. This one is a CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] article from March 7th, 2017, and it says, "Sask Premier wants to cut overall public-sector worker compensation by 3.5 per cent." Another article from March 26th, 2017: "Saskatoon city council pursuing legal measures, other revenue, following loss of provincial grants." And from March 21st, 2017: "Sask budget hikes sales tax to 6 per cent, kills provincial bus company."

And I know a lot of people are still feeling the effects from many of these budget choices, Mr. Speaker. And I do say choices because these are decisions that were made in last year's budget when the Premier was around the cabinet table, when those ministers were around the cabinet table, and they still bear responsibility for last year's budget as well.

And in my city, Saskatoon, Saskatoon's job market is looking sluggish heading into the next quarter. When I'm talking about job numbers in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, I focus on Saskatchewan, but I also have concerns for my hometown, which is Saskatoon. According to a report from ManpowerGroup, the employment outlook in Saskatoon is expected to drop by 2 per cent over the next few months. That is a 16 per cent decline since this time last year.

I care a lot about people getting back to work in my city, Mr. Speaker, in my constituency, and the economic health of this province depends on the ability of folks to find good jobs. And as much as I appreciate the minister's sunny outlook on some of the economic future of this province, that provides little comfort to folks who are struggling to find work now, today.

And we hear the members opposite speak about the past quite often, Mr. Speaker, and they are more than welcome to look into the past all they like. On this side of the House, we are very focused on acknowledging the present and looking toward the future because that is what members of this Legislative Assembly have a responsibility to do. And I will tell you a little bit about the present. And some of the members opposite don't like to hear news that doesn't make them feel good. And I'm sorry to have to share with them some basic facts, Mr. Speaker.

We have the slowest employment growth in the country, outside of Newfoundland and Labrador. That is a fact. While we saw only 900 additional jobs in Saskatchewan last month, most of them part-time jobs, that was nowhere near the 32,000

additional jobs in British Columbia or the 46,600 additional jobs in Alberta. That is a fact. We have the lowest minimum wage in the country. That is a fact.

More people are leaving . . . I told you, Mr. Speaker, that some of these facts make the members opposite uncomfortable, and it seems that that's happening.

More people are leaving Saskatchewan to look for jobs in other provinces. Stats Canada's interprovincial migration numbers demonstrate this. The number is over 50 per cent higher than in 2008 when the Sask Party took over. That is a fact that the minister seems oblivious to. They don't seem to want to talk about interprovincial migration right now, Mr. Speaker, only overall population numbers. And we are so pleased that the population is growing due to international immigration, Mr. Speaker. But newcomers need to be able to find work once they're here.

[15:15]

What we are seeing is that people who already live in Saskatchewan, more of them are leaving to find opportunities elsewhere. And since 2008, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has tripled the debt. These are facts, Mr. Speaker. And the members opposite don't like to hear these facts because it upsets them. But don't worry; I will get to some positive ways forward, Mr. Speaker.

Budgets are a time to look at our priorities. And when the employment growth is the slowest in Canada outside of Newfoundland, we should be making strategic investments in getting people back to work. We were hopeful, and I was hopeful, Mr. Speaker, that this budget would provide some of those investments, that we would see investments in job training and job creation programs.

But instead of seeing these types of investments, Mr. Speaker, we saw cuts, cuts to the tune of \$2.9 million in labour market programs. This Sask Party government is cutting programs that are designed to get people back to work in this province. And if there are citizens watching from home, they can have a look for themselves. Provincial estimates are available online and you can go look on page 89 of the Estimates book and see the cuts to the labour market programs that I am referring to, cuts to skills training, workforce development, and the provincial training allowance.

And I'll just briefly note what those cuts are. So in skills training allocation . . . Again I'm on page 89 of the Estimates book. In skills training allocation estimated for 2017-2018, we had \$18.525 million — and excuse me, I'm having to translate as I go because it's listed in thousands of dollars, so that's also important to note for the people who are at home — down to 17.847 million. Workforce development, 20.438 million down to 19.194 million. And the provincial training allowance from 28.917 million to 27.917 million.

So when you add these up, Mr. Speaker, using basic math, it's about \$2.9 million that we're seeing in cuts to labour market programs. So you can imagine my overall shock at the fact that not only are we not investing in job training programs, but we're actually seeing cuts from the Sask Party government.

And the provincial training allowance, if folks aren't familiar, provides income assistance to low-income adult students enrolled in full-time adult basic education, workforce development, or skills training programs. Isn't this something that we would want to support, Mr. Speaker? And aren't these areas we should be investing in for the future of our province?

Instead we're making higher debt payments this year, and the Sask Party has put us in a position where we have the highest net debt per capita that this province has ever seen — per capita, meaning we are accounting for the population growth, Mr. Speaker. And this is how they spend our money, our taxpayers' money, after 10 years of record revenue, Mr. Speaker. It is upsetting.

This budget shows no new investments in job creation and a government that is either not acknowledging the problem or is oblivious to it. And I will suggest that both of those scenarios are problematic, Mr. Speaker. We have Alberta construction companies advertising their work in their province on Saskatoon radio stations. Canada's employment growth is picking up and our neighbouring provinces are creating jobs but Saskatchewan is being left behind.

The bulk of my concentration has been spent on implications for jobs, Mr. Speaker. We know that since budgets are an opportunity to demonstrate the priorities of the government, they have implications across the board and they're widespread. And I'll speak briefly to some of these implications.

First we have serious concerns about the elimination of the rental housing supplement. This supplement helps to put a roof over the head of some of our most vulnerable in Saskatchewan. This is a short-sighted cut to funding, and we need to take a new approach that protects our most vulnerable from ending up on the streets.

And there was some mention, Mr. Speaker, about the national housing strategy and how this would integrate. And I've read the national housing strategy, Mr. Speaker. I've read it. I don't see a firm plan for how it's going to be executed in Saskatchewan and I certainly don't see that being implemented in summer of 2018, Mr. Speaker. So what that means is that there is a gap in place from the cut-off of this rental housing supplement until at some point in the future when the national housing strategy comes into play.

And I have another question about this, Mr. Speaker, and that's the fact that the national housing strategy actually accounts for . . . There's federal money coming into it, but there's also an expectation that there are provincial dollars that go into it as well. So my question as well is, where are those provincial dollars? If we're counting on the national housing strategy being implemented, those provincial dollars need to be included in that.

And if the argument from this government is that those provincial dollars are actually being cut, that we're actually going to see a cut with the implementation of the national housing strategy, I have trouble understanding how that's going to make our housing situation better in this province and how that's going to help protect other individuals.

So I look forward to asking a number of these questions in committee about what the plan is for implementation and how we're going to keep protecting some of the most vulnerable in this province. And I'm certainly not alone in this. I hear some comments from the other side as I've been talking about this. I'm certainly not alone in expressing my concern over this, Mr. Speaker.

We have seen housing organization . . . people who are directly involved in working with folks who receive the rental housing supplement. We've worked with some folks directly in our constituency office who have benefited from this, and really there is a fear out there that this cut will lead to some of our most vulnerable out on the streets.

And of course we've taken the time to talk about the cuts to education as well, Mr. Speaker. We've heard some comments about this already coming up in question period, but we know that in fact education organizations are not lining up to say thank you for the budget and what it looks like this year, Mr. Speaker.

The SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] talked about how it only goes so far in meeting pressures, you know, the fact that this is still very much a cut that they're seeing. The STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] talked about how this funding won't make it any easier to meet the needs of their students. So we've also heard organizations expressing concern over continued cuts to education, reflected in the fact that the 54 million that was cut in last year's budget has not been reinstated in full, Mr. Speaker, and the impact this is going to have on our kids' classrooms.

And of course I also want to take the time, Mr. Speaker, to talk about some of the positive things coming out of this budget and to give credit where credit is due. Some of the initiatives that we've seen from the Sask Party government have been helpful to individuals in this province, and I will give credit for those initiatives. I will also highlight the fact that there have been many different members of communities calling for some of these changes. Some of the members here have been calling for some of these changes as well, but we want to give appreciation to the government for putting forward some of these.

So this includes screening babies for hearing loss, Mr. Speaker. One hundred per cent coverage for HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] drugs, something we've joined with community groups in calling for. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I also want to mention that we need to work on prevention of the spread of HIV in this province. So I'm very pleased to see that people will be getting the drugs that they need, but this needs to factor into an overall prevention plan.

And the individualized funding for children under six with autism, this was promised back in 2016, so I'm glad to see the allocation now. I know many parents who have children with autism have said to me that they had sort of given up that the government was going to provide this funding because it was an election promise so two years ago, Mr. Speaker. It's good to see them coming forward with the funding now. I've also heard some concerns about the fact that autism doesn't end when kids are over six years old, so also concerns about the level of support that's provided there. But these are good pieces, Mr.

Speaker. I'm not afraid to give credit where credit is due.

I also said I would talk about providing hope and the opportunities presented by the future, Mr. Speaker, so I'll use some of my remaining time to do that. We need a fresh approach in this province that makes smart investments to grow our economy, to create jobs, and to protect the most vulnerable.

The Sask Party government's idea of diversifying our economy is to expand our tax base by increasing PST by a billion dollars. That's taking money out of the pockets of hard-working people of the province; it's not diversifying.

One of the most important ways to grow our economy is to ensure we have a healthy and educated population. We need to create an environment where businesses can succeed. For that they need access to well-trained workers, and that the people of this province can afford to be customers of Saskatchewan businesses so that they're putting money back into the Saskatchewan economy.

High rates of poverty or unequal access to education impede employment growth where smart, upfront investments have been shown to have a positive effect on economic growth. There's so much possibility for growth here and so much opportunity, Mr. Speaker. These opportunities have not been embraced. And as we work to assemble our platform, we will be consulting with economic experts to determine which areas of investment would have the greatest impact on the economy and the well-being of Saskatchewan people.

Overall, Mr. Speaker, I think there is hope for the province of Saskatchewan and I thank the Leader of the Opposition and my colleagues on this side of the House for providing their constructive thoughts on what we should be prioritizing around budget time. Budgeting is about prioritizing spending. And I will submit, Mr. Speaker, that prioritizing job training, skills training, workforce development, and education, these should not be viewed as expenses or areas to be cut. These are investments into the future of this province, Mr. Speaker, and to cut these areas demonstrates to the people of this province that the Sask Party government is shortchanging their future, our future, the world that my niece and nephews are going to be working in.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to support the amendment put forward by my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana, and to be part of this budget debate.

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

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to rise in my place and participate in this budget debate. I echo the sentiments of my colleagues and congratulate you in your new role in this Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to focus on the matters at hand when we are in the midst of such profound grief and sorrow in our province. I would like to share the eloquent words of an acquaintance of mine, Cam Fuller, who writes for the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix*:

There are events in life that don't make sense, that won't ever make sense, that are outrageously unfair and unbearably cruel. There are times when fate turns, looks impassively at the vulnerable people it has forced to their knees, and shrugs.

It's too big to fight. There's no winning. You can't put your hand up and stop the wind blowing across a field on a frozen April day when spring and life and lives are postponed, perhaps indefinitely.

And yet, what we've seen in the past few days isn't resignation. It's been a collective, intuitive, immediate and heartfelt effort to make a difference regardless of the odds — countless gestures that speak to the basic decency of people . . .

There's no way to change what happened and nobody thinks there is. But maybe our answer to the unfairness is to change ourselves. How much do we take each other for granted on those days when we allow ourselves to be seduced into thinking it'll last forever?

Thank you, people of Saskatchewan, for your countless gestures that speak to your basic decency, your caring, your kindness, your sense of community. I again extend my deepest sympathies to the families and friends affected by the Humboldt Broncos bus tragedy.

With Mr. Fuller's words fresh in my mind, I would like to thank those individuals in my life whom I might take for granted. At the top of that list is my husband, Jim. We are heading towards our 36th wedding anniversary this July, and a girl could not ask for a more supportive and committed partner in life. He does all the grocery shopping in our household, and much more, so much more that one of my nicknames by colleagues here is the pampered MLA.

Jim and I have been blessed with three daughters, even more blessed that two have made Saskatoon their home. Our oldest, Amy, is married to Karl, and they are parents to three of our grandchildren: Gianna, Isabella, and Lukas. I am grateful that they chose names for their children that are manageable to spell and pronounce. Amy has earned a chartered professional accountant designation and is an auditor with Canada Revenue Agency. Karl is a journeyman mechanic. They are co-owners of Market Mall Auto Service in Saskatoon and have joined the large number of entrepreneurs across this province.

[15:30]

Monique, our middle daughter, is mother to 16-month-old Sebastian. Monique is a lawyer and will be returning to the workforce in the near future. She is married to Aaron who is full of entrepreneurial spirit and always planning his next adventure. Mr. Speaker, our youngest daughter, Janelle, is currently in Edmonton working for the Government of Alberta after completing a Master of Public Administration at the University of Saskatchewan. Like so many of my fellow MLAs who are grandparents here, Jim and I are enjoying the little ones and our family circle of love continues to grow.

I would like to acknowledge the work that my constituency

assistant, James Hawkes, does on my behalf. We have a busy office with constituents dropping by, emailing, and phoning with comments or needing assistance, and James helps me with it all. He has a solid understanding of government and how ministries work as he spent two summers in this building, Mr. Speaker. He was completing a double majors degree at the U of S that included political studies at that time.

I am fortunate, Mr. Speaker, to have a great group of volunteers who offer support to me as members of the Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood Constituency Association. My association is led by Robin Mowat who serves as our capable president. We get the work done, but we also focus on having fun along the way. The association serves as a good source of insight and advice to me on behalf of the residents of my constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to share something that I read in the December 2017 edition of the *Reader's Digest*. Different authors were asked to pen advice that they wanted to pass on to their grandchildren in the year of Canada's 150th birthday. One story that caught my attention was written by Rudy Wiebe. He shares with his grandchildren that their great-grandparents, his parents, had fled from Russia in 1929 because of violent revolution and religious persecution. He could not explain how 4,000 Mennonites, including his parents and their children, were allowed to leave by train from Germany and were among a small group of 1,344 persons accepted by Canada. Rudy is the youngest of seven children and was born on their homestead in northern Saskatchewan, where the family ended up.

My parents could never explain why they were seven of the few who "got out over Moscow" or why they were accepted as refugees by the best of all countries, Canada.

Luck? They didn't believe in it. They had faith in God, in the goodness of God's mercy, in prayer, in the daily evidence of miracle. And because of that, they were thankful to God every day of their lives.

My sweet grandchildren: through no effort of our own, we are blessed to live in a great nation of peace and human dignity.

Mr. Speaker, I would add that we are blessed to live in a great province within a great nation. And I hope that Rudy is as proud of this province as I am vis-à-vis the adversity we have faced in the past 10 days.

There are only so many choices, Mr. Speaker, the government has when it comes to balancing a budget in the face of revenue shortfalls. Like every business in this province and every family in this province, we have to face our fiscal situation head on and make the best choices we can for the benefit of all.

We could look at tax increases, but we are not going to do that. There are no tax rate increases in this budget. Low personal and corporate income tax rates remain the same with no increases to the education property tax or provincial sales tax rates. We could look at service reductions, but we are not going to do that either, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to deliver high-quality services for Saskatchewan people. But what we have chosen to do and what the people of this province expect is to control spending while keeping our economy strong and returning to

balance in 2019-20. This budget supports our vision to ensure that Saskatchewan is the best place in Canada to live, to work, to start a business, to get an education, to raise a family, and to build a life.

I would like to take the next few minutes to highlight some of the ways that the budget accomplishes this. There is a \$2.8 million investment that will fulfill this government's commitment to provide individual funding for children with autism spectrum disorder. The initial funding of \$4,000 per child under the age of six will be effective on July 1st of this year. This budget makes a \$532,000 investment to create the universal newborn hearing screening program to provide babies born in Saskatchewan hospitals with a screening test to support early detection of hearing loss. This government will fulfill the final commitment to the Canadian National Institute for the Blind for vision loss rehabilitation services and equipment with funding of \$500,000 which represents a \$250,000 increase. Supports for autism, hearing loss, and vision loss — all examples of how this government supports our vision as the best place to live and raise a family, Mr. Speaker.

Our government continues to invest in supports for those most vulnerable, children in need of protection, at-risk families, people with disabilities, seniors, and those experiencing low income. We continue to help people in need. The increase of \$54 million in the social services budget includes 10.4 million for community-based organizations and caregivers; 8.2 million of that will be targeted to those providing direct daily care of those with intellectual disabilities and/or mental health challenges. The remaining 2.2 million will help foster families and others providing daily care to children in need of protection as well as families needing intensive supports. In this budget there's an additional \$700,000 for children and youth with exceptional medical and behavioural challenges, and 4.5 million for extended family members caring for at-risk children and youth.

Two major hospitals in this province, the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in Saskatoon and the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford, are on track to open by the end of next year. There is a continued phase-in for doctors, nurses, and other health care professionals for the children's hospital. And the new facility in North Battleford is a significant commitment to improve mental health — more examples, Mr. Speaker, of how this government supports our vision to ensure that Saskatchewan is the best place in Canada to live, to raise a family, and to build a life.

The Saskatoon Housing Corporation will launch the seniors' education property tax deferral program this month. Approximately 1,600 low to moderate senior homeowners will be able to defer the education portion of their property taxes through a repayable loan, giving them more financial flexibility and helping them stay in their homes longer.

Education in this province will see an increase of \$30 million in operating funding over last year. This will allow school divisions to support students in the classroom by hiring up to 400 teachers and other education support staff. The education budget of \$2.5 billion will see nearly 50 million for preventative maintenance, renewal, and emergency funding, which is a 14.8 per cent increase over last year.

There is inclusion of the 20.8 million in new funding from the federal government through the recently signed Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement. This child care funding will allow for the continued support of 16,000 licensed child care spaces with provision for an additional 2,500 licensed child care spaces by 2020.

This government has reaffirmed that boards of education will continue to have the responsibility to make decisions on how to allocate funding and make expenditure decisions that meet local needs.

In a news release from the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, Dr. Davidson, president of the SSBA said that, and I quote, "Boards see the efforts made this year to reprioritize funding for education as critical to supporting continued progress in the area of student achievement."

I'm excited that student financial literacy has been added to the provincial K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] curricula. I brought forward this resolution to the SSBA when I was a trustee. Little did I know that one day I would be including this as part of my recommendations as Legislative Secretary for curriculum development and consultation to the Minister of Education. I am hopeful that financial literacy will help to mitigate the growing levels of personal debt in our country. I am also hopeful that it will assist the future entrepreneurs of this province as we provide a financial foundation of knowledge for our students as they graduate from our schools. This is supporting our vision that Saskatchewan is the best place in Canada to get an education.

As part of this year's budget, there is an addition of \$250,000 being allocated to the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, which will be targeted to programs that directly support the efforts of Saskatchewan exporters to increase activity in both new and existing markets. More than 100,000 jobs in this province depend on exports. We need to protect those jobs and expand our access to export markets around the world to create new jobs.

We export more per capita in this province than any other. We export energy products, agricultural products such as meat and grain, forestry products, mining products, and manufactured goods. We export those products to about 150 countries all around the world. We will continue to take steps to increase the value of all these exports so that we can continue to grow the opportunities for jobs in our communities. As we increase our export wealth, we will enhance our population growth as well.

This government is introducing the Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive to help foster a competitive business environment in the province and improve investment attraction and retention outcomes. The SVAI [Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive] creates a 15 per cent non-refundable tax credit for new or existing agriculture facilities and makes a minimal capital investment of \$10 million to expand productive capacity.

This budget announces the creation of the Saskatchewan technology start-up incentive, a two-year pilot project that provides a tax credit of 45 per cent to be applied to investments made in eligible Saskatchewan-based corporations. This

incentive will create conditions for the continued rapid growth and success of newly emerging technology companies. The tech sector is the fastest growing sector on the TSX [Toronto Stock Exchange], and we plan to be a major player in this burgeoning sector as we introduce the most aggressive investor tax credit for tech start-ups in Western Canada.

Doug Konkin, Chair of the Saskatchewan Capital Network, stated, "We are confident that this tax credit will give more people the incentive required to become investors resulting in positive economic spinoffs for the province." Women Entrepreneurs Saskatchewan CEO Prabha Mitchell is quoted as saying, "Not only will this new tax rebate foster entrepreneurship and innovation in Saskatchewan, it will undoubtedly lead to a more diverse economy and the creation of new jobs in the tech sector." These tax incentives support our vision to ensure that Saskatchewan is the best place in Canada to start a business.

Mr. Speaker, one fact that I would like to note is that non-renewable resource revenue now accounts for just 10 per cent of the province's total revenue. In 2008-2009 it accounted for a high of 32 per cent. This is a major step forward by our government.

Mr. Speaker, members opposite have gone so far as to call small-business owners and entrepreneurs elites. The NDP Finance critic has stated "... professional corporations like lawyers or physicians or surgeons who do not typically have a lot of employees." Well I was just recently at a surgeon's office and I think I counted over 10 employees, so I take exception to that.

With 98 per cent of all businesses in Saskatchewan and over 80 per cent of job creation in this province coming from small business, those businesses drive a large part of our province's economic activity. Thankfully this government recognizes the major contribution that small-business owners make to this province.

I read a column published in the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix* on November 3rd of last year that resonated with me. It was written by John Gormley, and here are some of his thoughts:

For generations, the quietly proud and hardworking people of this province convinced ourselves that remarkable or even good things happened somewhere else . . .

Over the past decade, as the world discovered Saskatchewan, we decided to change and ultimately leave tradition behind, from our political choices to a braver, more robust and confident view of our place . . .

By any objective criteria, from dramatically reduced health care waiting lists to health, education and social spending that have exceeded historic growth rates, Saskatchewan is not in trouble . . .

The staples of the economy — agriculture, oil/gas, potash, uranium and manufacturing — are cyclic, but increasing demand in a growing world and the value and quality that we add to our resources is improving Saskatchewan's prospects . . .

Governments do not generally make things happen but they can foster the environment and provide the catalyst for empowered citizens, investors and newcomers to create change and improvement.

Mr. Speaker, that's what this Saskatchewan Party government has done over the last decade. Marilyn Braun-Pollon, the vice-president of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business for the Prairies, stated in a news release:

We knew this would be another tough budget, but Saskatchewan entrepreneurs will be relieved that the provincial government's budget did not shock the economy . . .

We welcome the government's plan to reduce the size of government, through finding efficiencies and workforce attrition . . .

[15:45]

Mr. Speaker, shortly after our new Premier was chosen, one of his first messages was:

I'm optimistic about what's to come in Saskatchewan, and we must always remember the progress we have made in the last decade. After years of decline under the NDP, our province is now and can forever be the very best place to live, work, and raise a family in Canada. We can chart our own course. We can chart our own future. This time in Saskatchewan, right now, belongs to us, the people of Saskatchewan. We will not let the NDP throw obstacles in our way, and we will continue to tell the Saskatchewan story around the world.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciated the words that our new Lieutenant Governor, Tom Molloy, spoke at his installation ceremony on March 21st, and I quote:

We are fortunate to live in a province that is as diverse as our country. I have always loved our provincial motto, "from many peoples, strength." Our people are indeed our greatest strength. We are an innovative and tolerant people who want to live in peace and harmony with one another, and with this magnificent terrain that we call home. We value equal rights and opportunities for all. We look for input from all of our citizens. Simply put, we are stronger when we work together.

As citizens of this province, we all want the same things — a strong economy, opportunities for our young people, a good health system, a good education system, good highways, looking after the vulnerable. As one of my colleagues aptly describes, citizens want a job, a school, a hospital, and a road to get there. Three-quarters of all government expenditures are in the ministries of Health, Education, and Social Services. We enjoy a good quality of life in this province, but our expenses in these human service areas continue to climb. This government is doing its very best to meet those increased needs. I acknowledge that there is more work to be done, more challenges to tackle, but we are keeping on track. And we are keeping on track without adding a federally imposed carbon tax.

The goal to balance the budget in 2019-20 ensures the long-term sustainability of the services and programs that people in this province value. Staying on track ensures that investments in infrastructure including hospitals, highways, and schools continue this year and into the future. This government is making every effort to ensure that we are fiscally responsible and ensure that the investments that we have enjoyed over the past decade continue into the future. God bless our Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the budget motion made by the Minister of Finance. I will not be supporting the amendment made by the member from Saskatoon Nutana. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. First of all, I want to . . . I expected the Speaker to be sitting in his chair, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wanted to wish him good luck in his new and very important role. He's a patient man, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which is going to stand him in very, very good stead sitting in that chair.

Well, Mr. Speaker, before I begin my formal remarks with respect to the budget, I do want to provide a few thanks, Mr. Speaker, as is customary. First of all, Mr. Speaker, to my constituency assistant. In my ministerial responsibilities as the former attorney general and minister of Justice, and now in my role as the Education minister, Mr. Speaker, I don't spend as much time in my constituency office as I'd like, Mr. Speaker. And so I'm very thankful to my constituency assistant, Sara Briggs, for holding down the fort, Mr. Speaker. So I want to express my thanks to her for that.

And, Mr. Speaker, with respect to my office staff up in room 366, to my chief of staff, Julie Leggott; to my MAs, Max Waldman, Aidan Katz, and Lacy Orange; and to my administrative support, Dawn Cherkewich and Kielle Schmidt, Mr. Speaker, my thanks as well. They make me look good every day, Mr. Speaker, and I have to thank them for that.

And then, Mr. Speaker, with respect to my executive, I've been . . . the great honour of representing the constituency of Saskatoon Northwest now since 2010, Mr. Speaker, and I can't do a very good job of that without having a strong executive. And I wanted to thank my president, Doug Shaw, and in particular, my finance support staff, Ray Sladek, Mr. Speaker, for their support, and everyone else that serves on my executive and helps out on that side, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, for five months beginning in September, I spent five months travelling around the province meeting people in Saskatchewan, being invited into their homes, Mr. Speaker. I did that with a number of my colleagues on this side of the House in seeking the leadership of our party, Mr. Speaker. And I wanted to thank the people of Saskatchewan who welcomed me into their home and who wanted to sit and have conversations, Mr. Speaker, about the future of Saskatchewan. So I'm very thankful for that, all who supported me, Mr. Speaker, and all those that participated in our leadership campaign.

I specifically wanted to thank Megan Rumbold and Jim Kerby,

who served as my campaign chairs, Mr. Speaker; my campaign manager, Terri Harris; and Doug Shaw, who spent countless hours with me, Mr. Speaker, driving me around the province of Saskatchewan.

And I specifically wanted to thank my colleagues on this side of the House who participated in this grand adventure, Mr. Speaker. It was really quite an accomplishment and I think they'll agree with me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we had no regrets with respect to the participation in that leadership, Mr. Speaker. I certainly don't.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my colleagues on this side of the House for all the support that they provided me in my ministerial responsibilities. I'm very thankful for that, Mr. Speaker, especially the Minister of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to just acknowledge my family. Mr. Speaker, my wife Christine, who's an entrepreneur well known to most people in this legislature, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud of the fact she's the incoming chair of the Canadian Pharmacists Association and she's the North American representative, Mr. Speaker, on the world pharmacy conference, which is quite an accomplishment for her, Mr. Speaker, to represent North America in a very elite group of individuals dedicated to advancing the interests of pharmacy around the world. Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of her.

To my children, to Jeremy and Kayla and Allison and Stephen, who've been very, very supportive. Of course we all know that we can't do this job, Mr. Speaker, without the support of our families. So I'm very thankful to them for standing beside me, not just since I was elected, but through the leadership campaign, Mr. Speaker. It's been just a joy to have them and have their support, Mr. Speaker.

Well, Mr. Speaker, just to my remarks, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the budget, it's my pleasure to rise for the first time to do this budget reply as the Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker. And I do want to thank the Premier specifically, Mr. Speaker, for having confidence in me to take on this important responsibility. I'm truly humbled by the confidence that he's shown in me, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, education is one of this government's main priorities. As I have said before, not a wheel turns in this province without education, and I continue to believe that now that I have for the last few months as my role as the Minister of Education. Each year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, tens of thousands of Saskatchewan children are welcomed through the doors of our schools and into the care of our teachers and support staff. And during the time that they are with us, we have these students' futures in our hands and it's a tremendous responsibility.

So what will we do for those futures, Mr. Speaker? What will this government do to meet the challenges of funding our province's school divisions, of investing in our schools that our children learn in, of providing for the youngest and most vulnerable in our education system, of ensuring that each of our precious children leaves our classrooms with heads held high and a bright future ahead? These are among the questions I will answer today, Mr. Speaker, and that will be answered in this government's budget throughout the year.



Last week my colleague, my good friend, the Minister of Finance rose in her place in this legislature to deliver a budget that's focused on keeping Saskatchewan on track by controlling spending, delivering high-quality services for Saskatchewan people, keeping our economy strong, and returning to balance in 2019-20. This budget is faithful to that goal, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but not also without increasing our commitment to education.

Mr. Speaker, our Premier promised to reinvest in education while we were on the campaign trail as candidates for the leadership of our party. And I'm proud that soon after the race, I joined our Premier to confirm that our government would be investing 30 million new dollars into education in Saskatchewan for the 2018-19 school year. That \$30 million will have a real impact on our classrooms.

For proof of this, look no further than the impact of the immediate infusion of seven and a half million dollars into the school division for the final quarter of '17-18. We moved ahead immediately with a seven-and-a-half-million-dollar investment because we heard loud and clear from our sector partners, from parents, and from students about the need to support the classroom. This has allowed divisions to begin investing right away across the province.

For example, Regina Public worked to hire 32 educational assistant FTEs alone, while Saskatoon Public has hired 10. \$30 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the equivalent of 400 new staff, whether educational assistants, teachers, or other classroom support, wherever divisions identify their greatest need.

This government's support for school division independence — because we fully recognize that school divisions are in the best position to identify and respond to student needs — is very much unlike the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. For instance, the Leader of the Opposition has proposed in his leadership platform to decide the best mix of teachers and educational assistants, not the school divisions who currently do that very important task. He wants to decide how many resources the divisions need to provide before- and after-school programs, not the divisions who currently decide that. He wants to decide how best to combine many learning spaces into one school, not the school divisions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, who know their students' needs best.

We're thankful to school divisions for their co-operation and feedback as we work to ensure that funding is distributed fairly to ensure that student needs are at the forefront of all decisions. Moreover, our government announced that overall funding for education is \$2.5 billion to support our pre-kindergarten to grade 12 classrooms, as well as early years child care, libraries, and literacy.

This budget therefore joins a long line of Saskatchewan Party budgets that have made record investments in education here in this province. Over 10 years since we took government, we've invested over \$20 billion in education. We're proud of our record and excited to continue our work in this and future budgets.

The ministry's budget also reflects the change to provincial collection of education property taxes. As well, EPT [education

property tax] rates will remain unchanged in the '18-19 budget year.

Overall funding for school divisions includes \$1.87 billion in school operating funding for the '18-19 school year, \$76.4 million in capital funding, and \$418.9 million for teachers' pensions and benefits.

Included within this year's school operating funding is \$282.7 million for supports for learning. This money is nearly 15 per cent of our overall education budget, earmarked specifically for K to 12 and early-entrance students that require additional supports. Yet regardless of how much money we provide to school divisions for their operation, none of it will have much of a difference if our students don't have schools to learn in. To that end, this year's budget provides \$76.4 million in capital funding.

We're especially excited to announce record prevention, maintenance, and renewal and emergent funding budgets, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Together these budgets are just shy of \$50 million, a nearly 15 per cent increase over the '17-18 funding for those items. Both of these budget items are critical for maintaining quality school learning environments for our precious children. Preventative maintenance and renewal provides divisions with money for regular renovations and maintenance to pre-empt failures, while emergent funding exists to provide resources to fix disasters as soon as they occur.

Since 2007 we've invested over \$200 million across both these budget items. Meanwhile, members opposite invested a grand total of zero dollars while they were in government. This budget also includes \$22.7 million to advance two ongoing school consolidation projects in Rosthern and Weyburn.

To meet fiscal challenges, we must balance competing priorities. At this time our focus is on preserving and rejuvenating our government's record capital investments. Moreover, despite this focus on fiscal responsibility, our government is still investing more into capital than our neighbours are. Our per-student investment in capital is \$275 compared to only 163 in Alberta.

We're also providing \$3.1 million for relocatable classrooms. This will allow for the purchase of six new classrooms and 15 moves to accommodate the growing needs in our province. These are prioritized to schools with the highest need. With today's capital investment, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this brings the Government of Saskatchewan's overall investment in school infrastructure since November of 2007 to approximately \$1.56 billion, over five times as much as the NDP invested over the same period of time.

Ensuring equitable outcomes and improved student achievements for First Nations and Métis students continues to be a priority of this government. With this in mind, we are continuing our investments to respond to the recommendations made by the joint task force for improving First Nations and Métis education and employment outcomes. The government's overall investment has been maintained at \$6 million to continue this important work, with \$5.1 million of that money being directed toward education. The remaining \$900,000 is being invested through the Ministry of Advanced Education.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our ministry's investment of \$5.1 million will include \$2.4 million to continue the 16 invitational shared services initiatives; 1.6 million for the continued implementation of Following Their Voices; \$1 million for the expansion of Help Me Tell My Story and Help Me Talk About Math; and just over \$100,000 to continue Microsoft software licensing on-reserve.

[16:00]

The '18-19 budget continues to provide \$3.8 million in funding to targeted innovation, accountability, and promised practices that directly impact educational opportunities for First Nations and Métis students. This funding will enable school divisions to continue to actualize their First Nations and Métis education plan in order to improve student literacy, numeracy, and engagement. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we know this is the key to reaching our overall goals as set out in the plan for growth and the ESSP [education sector strategic plan] of improving the disparity between graduation and engagement rates of our First Nations and Métis students with their non-First Nations and Métis counterparts.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is also \$500,000 in funding for summer literacy camps that support the higher achievements of all students but especially that of First Nations and Métis children by providing rich learning experiences during July and August. These literacy camps are important because they improve literacy as a priority across our province. That's why this budget maintains library and literacy funding province wide at current levels.

Last budget, we heard from the people of Saskatchewan. We heard how much they value their local libraries. That's why library funding was included in the base budget through this '18-19 budget process. Therefore in this budget, library funding remains at \$11.1 million while literacy funding remains stable at \$1.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, this brings me to the subject of early years and child care. These programs provide care for among the youngest and most vulnerable in our province. It is crucial to the well-being of this province that governments adequately invest in these sectors. Yet for decades, successive governments, most of them formed by members opposite, failed in this regard. I confirm from none other than Pat Atkinson, the former NDP minister of Finance, who stated that "I was part of a government that did not put a lot of resources into child care." These are unfortunate words, Mr. Speaker, to hear.

Mr. Speaker, we're not so complacent in this government. For 10 years we have invested hundreds of millions of dollars into early years and child care in Saskatchewan. We've invested the funds to create over 8,500 child care spaces. We've more than doubled the number of pre-kindergarten programs. And we've expanded the investment in early childhood intervention programs by 34 per cent. And this year, Mr. Speaker, we presented a record-setting early years in child care budget of over \$100 million. This is the first time the province has ever cracked the \$100 million threshold in this sector and we can all be proud of this accomplishment.

This year's budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, provides \$76.8 million

in funding for child care, including the \$20.8 million federal investment through the Canada-Saskatchewan Early Learning and Child Care Agreement that I had the pleasure to sign last month. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our province is very grateful to the federal government for their investment in early learning and child care within Saskatchewan. With the federal government, we have developed very specific guidelines for these investments, focused on the zero-to-six age group and primarily on those who are most vulnerable.

As part of the agreement, we will be investing in creating pilot programs for children who are deaf and hard of hearing. We will work with stakeholders in the deaf and hard-of-hearing community on what this pilot could look like. There will be opportunities for divisions to put forth proposals that will further enhance supports for kids with intensive needs when we get to the RFP [request for proposal] stage.

Regina and Saskatoon divisions, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have already begun the great work on piloting a new early years intensive support pilot, a program for preschool-aged children experiencing disability. We look forward to hearing the feedback on how this pilot is working within our already successful pre-K [pre-kindergarten] programs.

The federal investment will also allow for the creation of an additional 2,500 licensed child care spaces by 2020, including centre- and home-based spaces and 65 francophone spaces.

We also know that in addition to high-quality spaces, young learners need high-quality educators. This is why we're also investing in additional training and resources for our child care providers. It is our hope that these investments in our youngest residents will also positively impact them as they grow and develop into school-aged students and beyond.

We continue to fund the child nutrition program with an investment of \$2.3 million to ensure that students are properly nourished and able to focus on learning. This year's budget also provides continued funding for KidsFirst at \$15.5 million and early childhood intervention programs at \$3.9 million.

Finally, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this budget provides \$20.5 million to continue to support 316 pre-kindergarten programs serving more than 5,000 three- and four-year-olds around the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, earlier in my remarks today I asked some questions of our government's commitment to education in Saskatchewan. I asked questions I'm sure parents and concerned citizens across this province are no doubt wondering as they hope for the best for their children, who are our future. I'm thankful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the answers to these questions are clear and leave no doubt our government is committed to public education.

A few days ago some members opposite suggested this budget failed, signalled a failure to invest in the children of Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to reply to this allegation and answer the questions, let me tell you that this government is actually investing.

This government is investing 30 million new dollars in our school divisions so they can provide a quality education to each

of our province's students. This government is investing in the largest ever budget of preventative maintenance and renewal so our schools can be excellent, as excellent as our students. And this government is investing in our largest ever combined budget for child care and early learning, the first time ever cracking the \$100 million barrier so that our youngest and most vulnerable receive the education and the foundation of a future they deserve.

Mr. Speaker, we're all in this together across this province when it comes to providing for our children and providing for their education.

The moment a child is born is a moment of impenetrable, unbridled, bewildering joy. Through almost two decades as we parent and raise our children, we nurture their hopes, engage their curiosity, and strengthen their courage. Each moment is a gift to cherish and each child is more precious. Mr. Speaker, that is what we are responsible for in the education sector. We must never lose sight of what the real priority is, and I'm proud to say that this budget keeps that priority squarely in our sights, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are on track. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say that I'll be supporting the budget and not supporting the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Hindley:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to participate in the budget debate today. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've had the opportunity on a few occasions to stand in this Chamber and make remarks, but we'll refer to this as my maiden speech in the House.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into the formal context of my remarks, I'd just like to take this opportunity again to extend my condolences to everyone who was impacted by the tragedy involving the Humboldt Broncos bus crash last week. It was a week ago today, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we stood in this Assembly to speak to the condolence motion and to remember those who were lost and those who continue to fight in hospital recovering. And our condolences are extended to everyone who was impacted by that tragedy.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I cannot stress enough how important and how honoured I am to be elected to stand as the representative of Swift Current in this Chamber, to be their MLA, for the constituents of Swift Current. I have a number of people to thank for this honour, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to take this opportunity to thank some of those people, most importantly my family, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'd like to thank my wife Anita, who . . . We've been married for a little over 10 years now and we were together a bit longer before that. And I just, I can't thank her enough for her love and support as . . . well long-suffering, as the member for Moosomin points out, and that is correct. I wouldn't disagree with that at all. I managed to trick her into marriage in 2007 and she perhaps is regretting that ever since.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also need to thank my two step-kids. Part

of that deal when Anita and I got married was I was so fortunate to have the chance to have a couple step-kids. And Raven and Adler have been absolutely fantastic. They were eight and six years old when I got involved and we became a family, and I'm just so proud of them. They're young adults right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Raven is currently overseas working in New Zealand right now on a farm project. And she'll come back a little bit later this winter, but she's enjoying her time over there. And my stepson Adler, you know, when he was younger, he was involved as a motocross racer. And we took him around the province and other parts of Western Canada, down to the States as part of that. And after travelling a little bit, he is now back home as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I just want to thank Anita and Raven and Adler so much for all of their support through all this, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I also need to thank my parents, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Thomas and Patricia Hindley. They were here for my swearing-in, sitting back over here earlier this session. Tom and Pat Hindley have been farmers from the Melfort-St. Brieux area their entire lives, and to be more specific, actually closer to Pathlow and Flett Springs. And they raised us four kids — I'm the oldest of four — to the best of their ability given, you know, we were a bit of a handful obviously. As any family would know, we spent just as much time fighting, I think, with each other as you do agreeing with each other and getting along.

I have two younger sisters, Melissa and Erica, and my younger brother, Taylor. And they all kind of live up in that northeast area — Melfort, St. Brieux, Carrot River Valley area actually as well. And I just want to thank that part of my family for everything they've done for me and for being here for me as well.

Family has been so important to me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, when I was growing up, my grandfathers had both passed away so I didn't really have a chance to know them. One had passed a year before I was born and the other shortly after. But my grandmothers were very close to us as a family, so I often think nowadays of my Grandma Hindley, my Grandma Kajner, and what they would think of what I'm doing today, and miss all the, you know, the encouragement that they gave us over the years and many valuable lessons that they taught us.

Countless aunts and uncles, nephews, nieces, cousins, relatives — family is very important to us and we'd spend lot of time getting together, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at Christmastime and Thanksgiving, other times of the year, and that was very significant for us growing up.

Not to single anybody out, but I should point out that there is one family member who may be watching today. I call her my aunt. She's actually my cousin Darlene Campbell from Melfort, and she's been a political junkie, I guess you could say, for as long as I can remember. And I think she's probably quite enjoying this thing that I'm doing these days.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as you get older . . . and I've been speaking about families. As you get older, your family grows. And that's happening to me as well. I mentioned my sister Melissa. She had a baby 10 years ago, Elizabeth, who's my

niece. And they enjoy coming down for the Swift Current Windscape kite festival, and they're living up in that Carrot River area.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, I talked about my stepson, Adler. And this past August he and his partner, Xuxa Bremner, gave birth to a baby boy. So that makes us grandparents which is . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Whoa.

**Mr. Hindley:** — Yes, that is a whoa, isn't it? It's taking some getting used to. And actually just yesterday we had a chance to have a bit of a family barbeque. But eight-month-old Axel Alexander Irwin has been an absolute bundle of joy as well, and it's been pretty cool to be a grandfather at this age.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was a long fall and winter of campaigning for me. This past August, my former boss decided that it was time for him to do some other things and, you know, if I could I'd just like to publicly thank him for the opportunities he gave me. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Brad Wall became more than just my employer, but he was a good friend and a mentor of mine. And I just can't thank him enough for first hiring me in 1999 as his constituency assistant, but then in 2006 he elected to have me serve as his executive assistant. And I've had so many opportunities over the last 18 years that he helped provide to me and I just, I want to thank Brad for everything he did for me over those 18 years that have led up to this point today.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on the night of my by-election in Swift Current, I talked about the volunteers that I had helping out and, you know, as any of us know, it really does require a great team of volunteers and those that are willing to give up their time, their spare hours, to help you to get elected. I had a few of them here in the gallery for my swearing-in ceremony, so I've mentioned some of those folks on the record.

But there was a handful there that weren't able to make it, and I'd just like to point out a couple of those names just to get on the record: one of my campaign Co-Chairs, Trevor Moe, who came and talked to me a number of months ago about the possibilities here. And I just, I can't thank Trevor enough for his support and encouragement and advice and counsel. And in addition to Trevor, his wife, Joy, who serves on a CBO [community-based organization] board back in Swift Current, she helped run the campaign office. And I just, I can't thank Trevor and Joy enough.

A couple other folks who were also involved in my campaign that weren't here at my swearing-in are family friends actually, Jackie and Randy Maffenbeier, who have been friends of our family for a number of years and helped out during the campaign as well and, as I said, have been friends of our family for a long time also.

[16:15]

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my constituency assistant, Nola Smith, who has agreed to continue on in the capacity, operating and running the MLA office back in Swift Current. You know, in the 18 years that we've had that MLA office in Swift Current, we've only had three permanent,

full-time constituency assistants. The first guy we hired in 1999 wasn't very good. He was marginal, sketchy at best, so we got rid of him. And then we hired Crystal Martens who's a friend of mine, to be the CA there and she did that job for three or four years I think. Then Nola we hired in 2009. And Nola and her husband Dave and their family, Cadence, Chloe, and Colbi, they've become friends of ours. And as we all know, it's pretty much impossible to be able to run that MLA office and to do an effective job as an MLA without having a dedicated and extremely competent constituency assistant. And I'm very proud to have Nola serving in that capacity.

I think congratulations are in order, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for a couple of my colleagues as well who are here today, the member from Melfort and the member for Kindersley. You know, I've gotten to know them a little bit in the last number of weeks here. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they are fine, fine gentlemen. They are men of character and conviction and I am so proud that I get the chance to serve with those two. I do apologize. Of the three by-elections, I'm the laggard of the group. Those two folks are up in the 80 per cent range and I had to fight through with about 73 per cent. So my apologies to my colleagues but . . . So anyways, Mr. Speaker, congratulations to the member for Kindersley and the member for Melfort.

I'm honoured to have this opportunity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to represent the people of Swift Current as we talk about the budget which was introduced in these Chambers just last week. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government in the past 10 years has made some significant investments into my constituency. I've talked about some of these before, but a number of them are fairly major investments such as the École Centennial and All Saints School in Swift Current, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Room for 1,000 students and replacing some long-standing schools which had outlived their useful life. The Meadows long-term care facility, 225 beds for the seniors of Swift Current and area, Mr. Speaker. That was a very, very big project for Swift Current and area.

We've done a number of fairly significant highways projects and investments in Swift Current and area, Mr. Speaker. Most recently, there was some lighting improvement enhancements done on the No. 1 Highway corridor right through the city of Swift Current. We partnered with the city on that particular project to improve visibility. In 2009, we made an investment in the No. 1 and No. 4 interchange project to improve safety and traffic flow at that intersection.

In opposition, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we advocated for a truck climbing lane at Saskatchewan Landing Provincial Park that used to be in our riding. It's on No. 4 highway, north of the city but climbing the hill, and there were some safety concerns there. We advocated for that in opposition, and when we had a chance in government we invested in that particular project.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, serving in government means being able to make difficult decisions. It's not easy for a government to decide which projects and programs and services that you want to proceed with. And I'd like to thank the Minister of Finance and her officials for doing some great work on this budget, Mr. Speaker, because that's not easy.

And I think all of us in this Chamber, regardless of which side

of the House we're on, we strive to represent our constituents and to do what's right for them. And part of that involves, you know, being open to talking to your constituents, being willing to listen to their concerns and see where you can find . . . You're not always going to agree on everything, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But what you try to do is find out areas where you can compromise and provide the best possible service and represent your constituency. Because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the end of the day, it's taxpayers' dollars. And that's what we always have to remember, that when we make these decisions it's with other people's money.

The 2018-19 budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker, talks about some significant investments and all, you know, at the same time also keeping things on track. And that's what's important to remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When we embarked on this last year, this government decided that it would be an ambitious project, a three-year plan to get back to balance. And I'm proud to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that's what this party on this side of the House, that's what we are striving to do. And we're on track to achieve that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, do that by year three.

And in doing that, we realized that there were some difficult decisions to be made. For years governments of all stripes — and I would argue not just in Saskatchewan but, you know, in Western Canada — have relied quite heavily on resource revenues to help fund some of these projects. And what we decided as a government last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was to try and move away from that reliance on volatile resource revenues. And we're down to, about 10 per cent of those revenues now come from resources. And that's meant having to shift the income sources to more stable forms of revenue — income tax, corporate tax, consumption taxes, that sort of thing.

And you know, while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, and talking about resources, I'd be remiss if I didn't talk about the oil and gas sector in Swift Current and area. And you know, I've got friends who work in the oil and gas sector, people who are either directly or indirectly employed by that sector, and so the decisions we make are very important to them, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And on a couple of particular items I would point out that they are in favour of this government's position.

Number one is pipelines. They are in favour of our support for pipeline expansion to help get that product to market. And secondly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would also say that they are supportive of our position on the carbon tax, and as we continue to fight a federally imposed carbon tax recognizing that that would be devastating to the oil and gas sector. And they expect us to continue to fight that, meanwhile working on a made-in-Saskatchewan solution to climate change.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a plan and our plan is on track. And in this budget there are some significant investments that we have made. I'll list just a few. 10.4 million targeted to people who provide direct daily care to those who have intellectual disabilities. Those are the folks working in CBOs and foster families that carry out this very important work. \$2.8 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in autism funding for families in this province and in my constituency have been advocating for this for a number of years. Over half a million dollars invested into the universal newborn hearing screening program in order

to support early detection of hearing loss. \$20 million in the final investment into the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. 34 million to complete the construction of the Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford.

And there's some local highway funding. We've always got infrastructure projects, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In Swift Current, we've got some money invested to continue the work on the No. 4 Highway between Cadillac and Val Marie, and the people of Swift Current and southwest Saskatchewan, for them, that's a very significant project.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the budget was unveiled last week, I've had the chance to go back to my constituency, as all of us have, to talk to our constituents. I attended a few events on the weekend and was in the constituency office on Friday. I talked to folks on the phone and via text message and other ways there, and by and large, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people that I've chatted with, they're supportive of this budget, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They realize that we have a plan. They know that there's difficult decisions to be made but they understand that we have a plan and that our plan is on track. And I think that's what the people of Saskatchewan . . . I know that's what my constituents, they expect. They want their elected representatives to reflect what they see in themselves, and I think that's an important thing for all of us to remember on both sides of the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this side of the House we're going to continue to work for the people of Saskatchewan. And as I've said before, it's an honour for me to be the MLA for Swift Current, to be their representative at this Legislative Assembly. There's more work to do; there always is. But on this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have a plan. That plan is on track, and we're going to get back to balance within these three years. And I'm proud of that plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting the government's budget and I will not be supporting the amendment proposed by the members opposite. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin here tonight, I'd like to thank my colleague, Nancy Heppner, who graciously took my spot last Wednesday because I wasn't able to do my response to the budget.

**An Hon. Member:** — You can pay me in shoes.

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Oh, and I can pay her in shoes, so we're good to go.

**An Hon. Member:** — Two pair.

**Hon. Ms. Tell:** — Two pair. It's a pleasure to be here tonight, today, in support of our government's 2018-19 budget. I must begin with thanking Jackie in my constituency office; Adam, Shelley, and Ken in my ministry office.

This budget shows that we have a plan — a plan to get back to balance, and a plan to invest in people. It is important to do

these two things together. Running massive deficits with no plan to pay for them isn't just bad fiscal policy, it's bad social policy also.

Saskatchewan people know where we stand on the carbon tax, so I don't need to get into that. Our government has . . . and will not support either the imposition or introduction of one in this province.

This is the second time, Mr. Speaker, that I've had the pleasure to serve as the Minister of Corrections and Policing. And as the Minister of Justice said, that we are both recycled.

As a retired first responder, Mr. Speaker, I must speak to the incident, the tragic accident that happened just outside of Humboldt or outside of Nipawin. I spoke at the STARS banquet this past Friday, and I was stating that the night that I received the phone call about the accident that had occurred, at that point in time we didn't know what the severity was of the accident or exactly what happened. However I hung up from the phone call and I said a prayer, Mr. Speaker. I said a prayer obviously to the people that may be injured in this particular accident, and also a prayer of gratitude to our former colleague Rod Gantefer and his wife, Carol. It was because of their passion and commitment to STARS that got this government to the point where we were able to support it financially. And as a result of our support financially to those people that work at STARS and the organization, other corporations, other organizations came on board to support it also.

And I couldn't . . . I knew, I knew if the accident was as severe as what it appeared to be, I knew what our first responders would be asked to do. I knew that these amazing men and women that respond or that choose this line of work are amazing.

I know as a past, former, retired first responder, I never, ever liked or appreciated the word "hero" on any of it. It isn't about that. I think I could speak on behalf of most first responders who perform this very, very necessary job in our society keeping our people safe, and they don't want to be called heroes. They're not heroes. They're amazing people who do a very, very, very tough job. Most of us couldn't do it.

And I think that my sympathy and my thoughts and prayers of course go with the people and families of the Humboldt Broncos. And also as a part of that, my thoughts and my prayers will go and do go to the first responders, not just STARS but all the air ambulance, the firefighters that responded, the police who responded — all of them. All of them together are able to manage these horrific, horrific incidents.

I was also speaking about, as a first responder, that these things, these incidents, these events that we witness stay with you for a lifetime. And I asked, and I know that the group that was there would do this, is to put their loving arms around everyone. And that includes the first responders, because the first responders are also going to need the love and attention that the families and loved ones of the ones that were involved in the accident will need.

So we can't, and I know none of us have, none of us have forgotten about those first responders. And you know, you

talk . . . Those first, those responders are just . . . I don't know. Words are indescribable, because you do not think about what you're doing, other than you do it. You just go do it. And it's usually, as with everything, it's afterwards that you feel the effects.

I know there are a number of difficult issues in my file as Corrections and Policing minister, but I believe that this budget takes important steps to address them. This year we are increasing our ministry's budget by roughly 30 million or just over 8 per cent compared to last year's budget. That's just the money spent though. Really what's the most important is where it is being spent and how it is going to benefit the people of this province.

[16:30]

I'd like to now speak about some of the important investments that we are making. I want to talk about Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford, this project of our government we are very, very proud of, and of course that's the new hospital in North Battleford. This year we are providing 1.061 million in new funding for this project. This funding will be used to open the second unit of 24 beds in a correctional wing of the facility early next year. We will be using existing funding to open the first unit of 24 beds later this year.

Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford will be focused on clients with mental health issues and will operate with a patient-centred philosophy. What this facility represents is a shift, Mr. Speaker. We are dealing with the root cause that many of our offenders suffer from, of course is untreated mental health issues. This facility is the first of its kind in this province and in Canada, and it is going to have a tremendous impact on these offenders. By focusing on improving their mental health outcomes, they will be better able to reintegrate into society and will also be less likely to reoffend and end up in our correctional system again.

The opposition says this budget doesn't invest, those are not investments. Well I have to ask them, how is supporting offenders with mental health issues, enabling them to reintegrate into their communities, and making them less likely to end up back in jails not an investment? Of course it is, Mr. Speaker. On this side of the House we believe that providing supports for offenders with mental health issues is not only an investment in their long-term well-being but an investment in the well-being and safety of all people in this province.

I'd also like to talk about another important initiative our government is undertaking: reducing the use of short-term remand. The unfortunate reality is that 97 per cent of the growth in our adult custody population over the past 25 years is attributable to the growth in remand. Currently 40 per cent of our overall adult custody population is on remand.

The overuse of short-term remand is not only expensive, but it also engages all aspect of the justice system — police, courts, and corrections. Our government recognizes that something needs to be done to make this correction. That's why our ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, is providing an additional 2.375 million to support and expand the remand initiative program in Saskatoon, Prince Albert, and

Regina. This additional funding will be used to address the increased use of short-term remand by expanding the early case resolution from weekends to weekdays. By switching to weekdays, this will help reduce short-term remand and in turn also help to address our inmate counts.

We know that the overuse of short-term remand not only costs a lot of money, but even more importantly, it risks exposing otherwise low-risk individuals to high-risk repeat offenders, which increases their risks of getting involved in more serious criminal activities. That represents a risk, not only to those individuals, but to the safety and security of their communities. That's why the remand initiative is so important and why we are expanding it.

Rural policing, of course we all have heard in the news over the past number of months about the issues surrounding policing or the crimes in rural Saskatchewan. We know that rural crime is a significant issue in our province, and our government is committed to continuing to provide the resources needed to address it.

One of our top priorities is to ensure that the people of this province are safe and secure, regardless of where they live. That is why we are providing an additional 4.9 million to support the work being done through the rural crime strategy. This funding will be used to hire 30 new police positions across the province for the combined traffic safety Saskatchewan initiative, a key component of the provincial response team.

We are also providing 1 million in continued annual funding to address other recommendations from the caucus committee on crime 2017. The opposition has said spending more on policing does not represent an investment. Well, Mr. Speaker, we know that, from what we're hearing from those who live in rural Saskatchewan, both SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and the farmers and the communities, that them being safe, them feeling safe and secure is very important. As a result of it being important to them, it's important to this government.

The people in rural Saskatchewan are dealing with repeated instances of property crime and fear for the safety of themselves and their families. People that live in these particular areas agree that investment in security is an investment well spent. I don't know what they are talking about, or where they are coming from, but on this side of the House, we take safety and security of everyone in Saskatchewan, regardless of where they live, very seriously. And we have, and continue to invest in that security.

Overtime initiatives and staffing levels in our correctional facilities. We want to ensure that staffing levels are sufficient to handle actual inmate levels and their associated pressures in our facilities. We know that having the appropriate staffing complement improves that safety and security of staff, inmates, and the facility itself. That is why we are providing \$11.4 million to achieve that objective, making sure we have the right complement of staff.

Capital projects. We are also undertaking or continuing a number of capital projects in our correctional facilities. These projects include installing trailers at the Paul Dojack Youth

Centre, making a number of security enhancements in our correctional facilities, continuing to replace the kitchen at Prince Albert Correctional Centre. All of these projects are necessary to keep the staff, inmates, and facilities themselves safe and secure. These projects represent our government's commitment to invest in important infrastructure, something that the members on the opposite side failed to do during their 16 years in government.

Reintegration programs of sentenced inmates. The one last initiative I'd like to touch on, the expansion of the reintegration program. We know that providing programming that helps inmates to reintegrate into their communities is good for them. And as they are more likely to become productive members of their community, it's also good for the communities themselves, as it makes them healthier, safer places for people to live.

I'd like to speak briefly about my constituency of Regina Wascana Plains. And this constituency, like many others throughout the province, has seen significant growth over the last 10 years, with new homes and neighbourhoods popping up every year. This growth is a good thing, but it also represents challenges. But that's okay, I'd rather embrace the challenges of growth, rather than dealing with the challenges of no, or negative growth. Our government has responded to these challenges.

My constituency. I can't think of a better example of this than the Regina bypass. While we have talked lots about the economic benefits that this bypass will bring, I think it's important to remember the safety benefits as well. Those safety benefits are just as important. This project is going to make travelling Highway 1 between Regina and Balgonie safer for thousands of people that travel every single day. I don't think it's a stretch to say that money spent on ensuring people are able to travel safely to and from work, or wherever they may be going, is an investment.

The investments in education have been made and it's very evident in my constituency as well: Emerald Ridge Elementary School in White City, École St. Elizabeth in the Greens on Gardiner, École Wascana Plains School in the Greens on Gardiner here in Regina. These schools represent an investment of our children's future and make these communities a more attractive place for families to live.

Mr. Speaker, our government has been investing in the people of this province for 10 years, and this budget is no different. That is why I am proud to support this budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to stand in my place today to give the address from the perspective of the opposition as to how we view this government, and in particular how we view their sorry excuse of a budget, Mr. Speaker.

But before I go through that, Mr. Speaker, I want to say I'm very, very amused. I am very, very amused at how each one of

them backbenchers, they sit there and they read from their prepared script, and they haven't deviated from that script at all. And . . . [inaudible] . . . very good, ladies and gentlemen, keep doing that and keep Saskatchewan going in the red. Keep Saskatchewan going in the red because that's exactly what you're doing when you sit on your hands and you get handed a piece of paper and told, read from the script, don't deviate. And that's a great injustice to not only your constituents but the people of Saskatchewan and the future, our children and grandchildren.

But before I go on, Mr. Speaker, I want to be able to say hello to a few friends of mine. In particular I had a discussion this afternoon from a gentleman who I've worked with for many, many years. I want to say hello to a gentleman by the name of Robert Merasty. Robert is from my home community of Ile-a-la-Crosse. And Robert is a great, well-known broadcaster. He's one of the best in Canada and certainly the best broadcaster that I've ever heard when it comes to Aboriginal communications or indigenous communications, Mr. Speaker.

I've often referred to Robert as our Knowlton Nash of the Aboriginal community, the indigenous community. And he's been one of the gentlemen over time that has had a very positive effect on me and certainly was a role model for me as I grew up in northern Saskatchewan, listening to him and Tom Roberts on the Northern News network. And, Mr. Speaker, I was so proud that this man was from Ile-a-la-Crosse who was being heard throughout northern Saskatchewan and the province in those early years, him and Tom Roberts. And, Mr. Speaker, that really stuck with me over my young life. And it's such a pleasure knowing Robert and some of the work that he's done.

And many people don't give him the credit that he deserves, Mr. Speaker, things like starting off the Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation. Make no mistake about it, Mr. Speaker. It was Robert Merasty that single-handedly developed Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation, Mr. Speaker. It was him in the early years. It was his dogged determination that made the Aboriginal network start. He gathered a bunch of leaders together to make sure this happened and, in some small way, Mr. Speaker, I helped in that regard.

But let us rest assured, from the early years of northern broadcasting, Mr. Speaker, to the creation of MBC [Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation], of helping many communication stations throughout the North, let us be perfectly clear. There is one man that stood above the rest, and his name was Robert Merasty. And I want to say hello to him.

And I did indicate to Mr. Merasty that I'd pay tribute to him in this budget speech because, Mr. Speaker, throughout the process of politics it is important that we get the message through to our people. And it is also important to recognize those means of communication which Mr. Robert Merasty achieved through English, and Cree in particular, was something that we need to constantly remind ourselves of as politicians, in the sense that there are people that play a vital link in making sure that we are communicating properly and fairly to the people through their skill and ability.

I want to recognize his wife, Cheryl Michel, as well as some of

his friends. He has a couple friends that he wanted to recognize from Pelican Narrows. There's Mayor Oude Michel and the councillors of Pelican Narrows and their administrator, Mrs. Doreen Linklater. Mr. Speaker, I did tell Robert I wanted to pay a little bit of tribute to him, and Mr. Speaker, those are some of the people that are supporting Mr. Merasty at this day. And certainly I would say to him that your skill and ability and all the friends that you surround yourself with in Pelican Narrows, Mr. Speaker, are also our friends, and that I wished him all the very best.

Now, Mr. Speaker, getting back to the Saskatchewan Party budget, Mr. Speaker. And as I sit in the Assembly today and hear a lot of the messages of the Sask Party MLAs, Mr. Speaker, is how they try and rewrite history, Mr. Speaker, how their feeble attempt at trying to hide the facts from the people of Saskatchewan really aren't going anywhere, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

And I tell the people this. I tell the people of Saskatchewan this. How is it that in 2007, that's when the world was created according to the Sask Party. You will notice in all their conversations, Mr. Speaker, they never talk about pre-2007, Mr. Speaker, because they're elected in 2007. They don't want to talk about the fact that they inherited a booming economy. They inherited a bulging bank account. They inherited a growing population, and they inherited all this great wealth and opportunity, Mr. Speaker.

Let us be very clear to the backbenchers that are reading from their prepared texts. You had nothing to do with that. All that work was set up for you. You simply inherited. But today you want to claim it. That's the problem with Sask Party politics, Mr. Speaker.

And today, 2018, where are we, Mr. Speaker? Where are we? They have had record revenue. Let's be clear, they've had record revenue. You've had record revenue. Never in the history of Saskatchewan have you had the record revenue that you've enjoyed the last 10 years.

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Okay, well I certainly enjoyed coming back. Thank you for that opportunity. Let's have a little order here. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — As I was so humbly pointing out, Mr. Speaker, they have had record revenue for the last 10 years. You had nothing to do with that revenue. You just came in to the government coffers. At the opportune time, you guys were elected government. Prior to that, you had nothing to do with it. You just sat there and the money showed up.

Now, Mr. Speaker, last year they had a record tax hike — \$1 billion in tax hikes. There was not one tax that you guys did not touch. You jacked up every tax imaginable. Mr. Speaker, \$1 billion from what? From the conservatives, a billion-dollar tax hike. What's up with that? From a right wing party, so to speak, Mr. Speaker.

So having record revenues that they've inherited, having record



tax increases, today, Mr. Speaker, in 2018, what do we have? Record debt. Record debt, that's what we have in the province of Saskatchewan. And shame on the so-called right wingers over there.

But, Mr. Speaker, the reason why they don't want any of this information out, that's why they keep talking about different things. They keep trying to distract the people of Saskatchewan's attention. The reason why they do that, Mr. Speaker, it is consistent with conservative policy in practice of politics. Mr. Speaker. They are a one-trick pony, a one-trick pony. All they do is criticize the other parties. That's all they do because, all of a sudden, there's no attention on them. There's no attention on them. Every conservative government that I've seen — going back to Grant Devine, going back to the Alberta government and the national federal Conservative government — they have driven every economy and every jurisdiction that they've governed deeper into recession and deep in debt. And Saskatchewan is in the same boat.

So we know this from this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, as we get up and we talk about things that concern the people of Saskatchewan. Every single time these grown men and women across the way called the Saskatchewan Party caucus, they get up and they're bewildered because we're telling, hey folks, you guys are losing jobs. You're losing a lot of jobs. They get up and they say, oh but it's the NDP's fault. Then they all clap and applaud. You're a one-trick pony of criticizing the other party without coming up with any solutions on your own. It's tiresome. The people of Saskatchewan are tired of this act of the Saskatchewan Party because . . . Focus on what your failures are.

And again I go back to my point, Mr. Speaker. I go back to my point. You had record revenues. You've had record revenues. You've had record tax increases. You've had record tax increases, and yet today we have record debt. How does that work? How does that work? You have record debt. You have record debt. How does that work? You know why, Mr. Speaker? Because I've never met a conservative government that can't manage their way out of a wet paper bag, Mr. Speaker. And the Saskatchewan Party is proving that in spades every single day, every single day.

The member from Cannington was tripping from his chair during question period today, Mr. Speaker. He was there. He was there. He was there when they had the government rack up the debt prior to the NDP taking over. And, Mr. Speaker, it wouldn't surprise him, it wouldn't surprise him today if I told the people of Saskatchewan the debt that the government of the day had to face, and that was our former Premier Roy Romanow.

Suppose today, suppose today, given the same prices we had, we were servicing the debt, Mr. Speaker, left behind by Grant Devine. And that service of just the debt, interest alone, was almost \$900 million, Mr. Speaker. In translation of today's dollars this Saskatchewan Party would have had to have paid \$2.8 billion in interest payments alone. You don't pay any of that. You don't pay any of that because you were gifted a booming economy. You were gifted a growing population. You were gifted money in the bank. So the theory is you guys just sat along, and that includes your former leader, the former

premier Brad Wall. Same thing. He just showed up and said, hey, look what we've got. And you know what our message was? Our message was, don't mess it up. Don't mess it up. That was our message. And what do you do? What do you do? You guys all messed it up. You all messed it up.

So keep chirping from your chairs. Keep reading from your prepared notes. Keep trying to rewrite history. But today, but today, nobody can argue. You've had record revenue. You've had record tax increases — last year a billion dollars alone. And yet today we have record debt. So much for Tory math. And I say to you guys, shame on your inability to take that promise that Saskatchewan afforded you, the promise and opportunity that Saskatchewan afforded you, and how you've driven this province deep into debt, Mr. Speaker.

And now we're seeing the P3 [public-private partnership] costings are going to come back to haunt us. The P3 costings, the cuts to health care, Mr. Speaker, cuts to education, people losing their jobs and losing their homes — these are serious matters that affect all of us, Mr. Speaker. The fact that you look at the tax increase of a billion dollars, a billion dollar tax increase. This is coming from right wingers, so to speak, Mr. Speaker. How do you guys manage a billion-dollar tax increase despite inheriting a booming economy and billions in the bank? How do you do that? Well, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the Assembly we say, that's Tories for you. That's how they manage the economy, that's how they manage opportunity, and that's how they manage promise, Mr. Speaker.

But what happens, what happens in this Assembly, is they'll get up and they'll start railing against other parties because, Mr. Speaker, that's all they can do. It's a one-trick pony that people have seen time and time again. And I'll say it again, Conservatives and Saskatchewan Party, you guys couldn't manage your way out of a wet paper bag when it comes to managing a booming economy. You never have and you never will. You never have and you never will.

And now today we're trying to find out what's on the chopping block next. What's on the chopping block next? What Crown are you going to sell? What Crown are you going to sell to cover for your mismanagement, scandal, and waste? Well, Mr. Speaker, everything's up for sale. I used to say wall-to-wall sale because that's all our former premier wanted to do was sell off Saskatchewan's future to back up his promises so he could continue trying to look good in front of the public. And, Mr. Speaker, I say to him today, as I say to the people of Saskatchewan and to the Sask Party caucus: was it worth it? Was all the manipulation, all the hidden debt, and all the fake promises, was it worth it? And I say to you today that no way was it worth it. We will be paying for your mismanagement, scandal, and waste for years and years and years to come.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm going back to my earlier point. You had record revenue, you had a record tax hike, and that translates into record debt. Thanks a lot, Tories, for once again mismanaging our economy and mismanaging our future and mismanaging our whole province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's two areas I want to point out. The current Minister of Highways is here today, Mr. Speaker. And in his previous life he was president of SARM, Mr. Speaker.

And you know what? The Sask Party couldn't move grain then, when he was president, but he was quiet. He sat on his hands. Like a good little student, he got a little pat from our former premier, Brad Wall, on his head saying, you just keep quiet because we don't want you guys complaining about not moving grain.

And today now he's the Highways and Infrastructure minister, and guess what, Mr. Speaker. Still can't move grain. Still can't move grain, Mr. Speaker. So he comes into the Assembly here and I say to him, you were playing politics with the future of the producers of this province and you continue playing politics with the future of the producers of this province. You can't move grain.

And the other thing you can't do, the other thing you can't do is you can't build a pipeline, Mr. Speaker. Brad Wall and company tried. Harper tried. No pipeline. No pipeline, Mr. Speaker. As we have said in this Assembly, and our leader articulated that today, articulated that today, is that there is a pipeline going to be built. We need to get our oil to market. We understand this on this side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Those folks don't understand that on that side of the Assembly.

Well the Minister of the Environment was chatting today about . . . He was chatting today about the carbon capture process at Boundary dam, Mr. Speaker. Do the people of Saskatchewan know this? And I'm going to ask the Minister of the Environment — he's chirping from his chair — how much have we sent to Cenovus in the last three years as a result? How many millions have we sent to Cenovus as a result of not meeting our obligation on the CO<sub>2</sub> volume? It's millions of dollars, and you're not paying that, sir. You know who's paying that? The SaskPower people that are paying that. We are all paying for your mismanagement, scandal, and waste, Mr. Speaker. All of us are paying.

But no, he doesn't talk about that, Mr. Speaker. He doesn't talk about the record tax increases, Mr. Speaker. He doesn't talk about the record revenues they enjoyed. They'd rather talk about something else, Mr. Speaker. And that's why the people of Saskatchewan, they look and they wonder, Mr. Speaker, how this Saskatchewan Party was able to survive. And, Mr. Speaker, the bottom line is they have manipulated the information coming forward. They have hidden much of our debt, Mr. Speaker. And they just simply refuse to accept their part and their responsibility of squandering opportunity after opportunity after opportunity.

And today, Mr. Speaker, you'll look at what is left. They had record revenues, they had record tax increases, and we have record debt. You put us into record debt, and that is your legacy. And that goes to the current Premier and the past premier. That is a legacy of the Saskatchewan Party government is that you guys enjoyed the largesse that no other government ever enjoyed in the history of this province and you squandered it. You spent every last cent. And not only did you do that, you turn around and you tax everything imaginable. That's the tax-and-spend Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. And this is the bottom line is despite record revenue and record tax increases, we have record debt. We have record debt. How does that logic apply to the supposed conservative party government across the way, Mr. Speaker? It doesn't make any

sense.

So I tell the people of Saskatchewan this: let us learn from our history. We've seen this act before, Mr. Speaker. We have seen this act before, and we have seen how they have squandered opportunity. But every time they get the message from the media, or they get the message from the opposition or from different groups that what they're doing is terribly wrong, Mr. Speaker, one of them will get up and say, oh but the NDP are bad. That's about the only thing they do. All of a sudden they all wake up.

Well that one-trick pony, folks, is hurting the future of our province. That one-trick pony is squandering opportunity to build a strong future for our province. That one-trick pony doesn't address the challenges in the indigenous community. It doesn't move grain. It doesn't get our oil to markets. That one-trick pony is tired but that's all you have left in your empty tank, one little-trick pony. Let's criticize the NDP and that's good enough for the people of Saskatchewan. Well, Mr. Speaker, that is not good enough.

We need the pipelines to get our oil to market, Mr. Speaker. We need a good, solid transportation system to get our grain to market, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — It now being 5 p.m., this House stands recessed until 7 p.m.

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

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS</b>	
Wotherspoon .....	3795
<b>PRESENTING PETITIONS</b>	
Vermette .....	3795
Young .....	3795
Forbes .....	3795
Mowat .....	3796
Belanger .....	3796
<b>STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS</b>	
<b>Political Studies Student Receives Vera Pezer Award for Student Enhancement</b>	
Sproule .....	3796
<b>Night With STARS Gala</b>	
Steinley .....	3796
<b>Support for National Pharmacare Program</b>	
Meili .....	3797
<b>Rotary Badge Shield Star Dinner and Citizen Awards</b>	
Olauson .....	3797
<b>Ability in Me Fundraiser Dinner</b>	
Buckingham .....	3797
<b>Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation Annual Convention</b>	
Wilson .....	3797
<b>Community Production of Broadway Musical</b>	
Kaeding .....	3798
<b>QUESTION PERIOD</b>	
<b>Response to Opioid Crisis</b>	
Meili .....	3798
Moe .....	3798
Ottenbreit .....	3799
<b>Government Action on Announced Initiatives</b>	
Meili .....	3799
Moe .....	3799
<b>Global Transportation Hub</b>	
Sproule .....	3799
Morgan .....	3799
<b>Emissions Reduction and Renewable Energy</b>	
Sproule .....	3799
Duncan .....	3800
Forbes .....	3800
<b>Funding for Post-Secondary Education</b>	
Wotherspoon .....	3801
Beaudry-Mellor .....	3801
<b>Job Advertisements and Employment Numbers</b>	
Mowat .....	3802
Harrison .....	3802
<b>Wait Times for Surgery</b>	
Meili .....	3803
Ottenbreit .....	3803
Moe .....	3804
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
<b>WRITTEN QUESTIONS</b>	
Lawrence .....	3804
<b>SPECIAL ORDER</b>	
<b>ADJOURNED DEBATES</b>	
<b>MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY</b>	
<b>(BUDGET DEBATE)</b>	
Fiaz .....	3804
Morgan .....	3806
Eyre .....	3808
Mowat .....	3810
Lambert .....	3812
Wyant .....	3816
Hindley .....	3819
Tell .....	3821
Belanger .....	3823

# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

---

**Hon. Scott Moe**

**Premier**

**President of the Executive Council**

**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

**Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor**

Minister of Advanced Education  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women  
Minister Responsible for Innovation

**Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff**

Minister of Central Services  
Minister Responsible for the Provincial  
Capital Commission  
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**

Minister of Environment  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water  
Security Agency  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Power Corporation

**Hon. Bronwyn Eyre**

Minister of Energy and Resources  
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Water Corporation

**Hon. Joe Hargrave**

Minister of Crown Investments  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Transportation Company

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**

Minister of Finance

**Hon. Jeremy Harrison**

Minister of Trade and Export Development  
Minister of Immigration and Career Training

**Hon. Warren Kaeding**

Minister of Government Relations  
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis  
and Northern Affairs

**Hon. Gene Makowsky**

Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor  
and Gaming Authority  
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

**Hon. David Marit**

Minister of Highways and Infrastructure  
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds and  
Priority Saskatchewan

**Hon. Paul Merriman**

Minister of Social Services

**Hon. Don Morgan**

Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan  
Workers' Compensation Board  
Minister Responsible for The Global  
Transportation Hub Authority  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Telecommunications

**Hon. Greg Ottenbreit**

Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

**Hon. Jim Reiter**

Minister of Health

**Hon. Lyle Stewart**

Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop  
Insurance Corporation

**Hon. Christine Tell**

Minister of Corrections and Policing  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Gaming Corporation

**Hon. Gordon Wyant**

Deputy Premier  
Minister of Education