



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

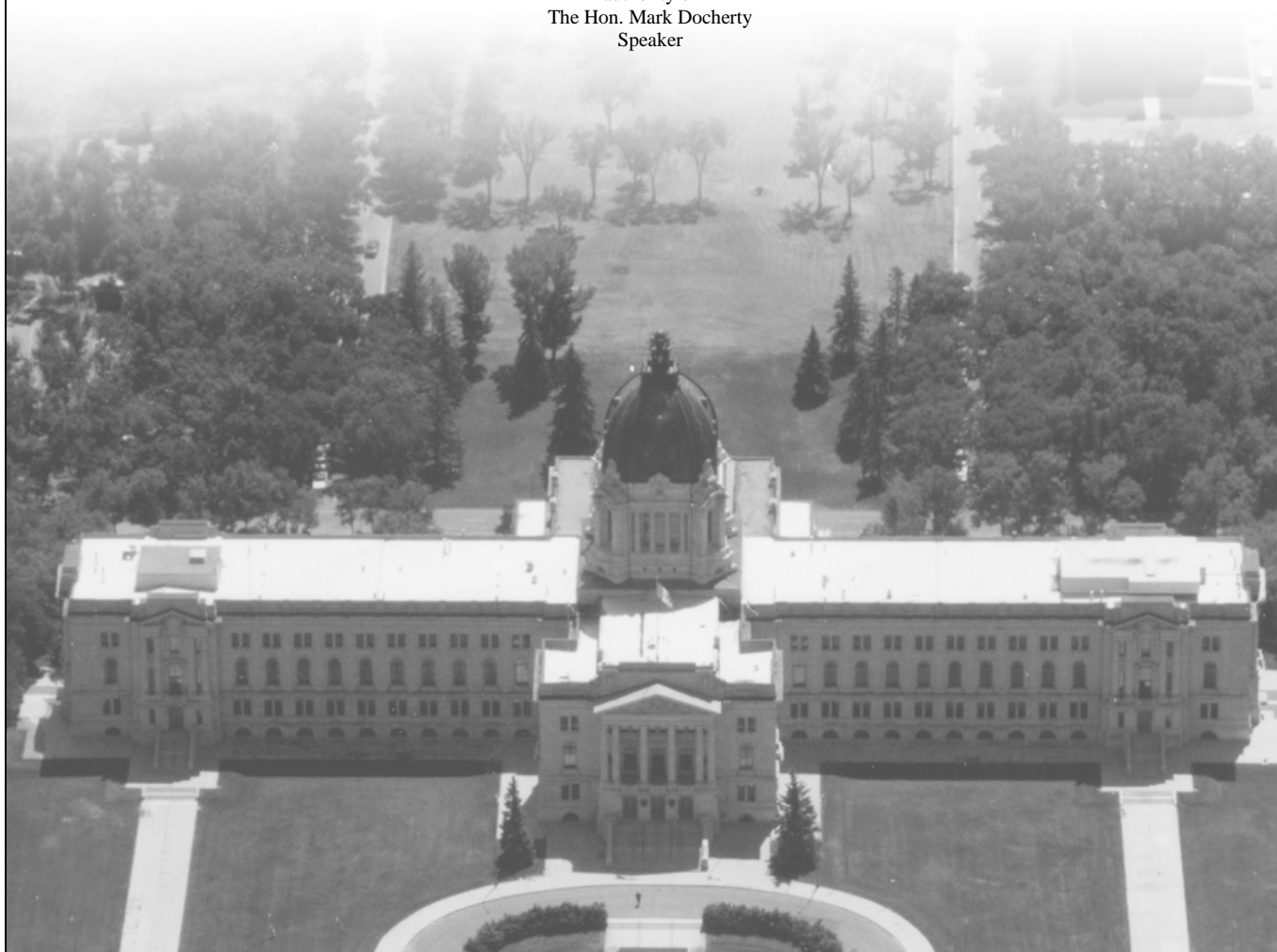
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker



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

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Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Regina Northeast

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

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would ask leave to make a statement with respect to the incident in Toronto yesterday.

The Speaker: — The Premier has asked for leave to make a personal statement. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Support and Condolences for Toronto

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, over the last few weeks we have seen a tremendous outpouring of generosity and compassion for the victims of a terrible accident involving our Humboldt Broncos. The entire nation has rallied for Humboldt, and they have rallied for our province of Saskatchewan.

And today, Mr. Speaker, in our nation of Canada there is another community in anguish. There is another community in Canada that desperately needs our love and support here today, Mr. Speaker. Today the great city of Toronto is in shock following a brutal, indiscriminate attack that took place on a busy street on a bright, sunny day. Mr. Speaker, 10 people died yesterday; 15 people were injured.

Mr. Speaker, I plan to speak to Premier Kathleen Wynne later this afternoon to offer the complete support of Saskatchewan as Toronto deals with this tragedy. Our hearts go out to the families who lost loved ones in this attack. We offer them our prayers and we offer them our deepest condolences, knowing that whatever we can provide is inadequate, given the enormity of their loss. We pray for the injured and their families watching over them.

We are thinking of those who responded to this tragedy: the police, particularly the courageous officer who arrested the man that apparently carried out the attack; the EMTs [emergency medical technician]; the paramedics; the medical teams; the trauma counsellors who will be busy, as we know, in the days ahead. The response has been heroic, and we are grateful for the bravery, compassion, and professionalism of all of those involved.

Mr. Speaker, the circumstances of this incident are horrifying. The attack was so senseless. The attack was so sudden. And once again, it is not difficult to put ourselves in the place of those victims. In Saskatchewan it might be easier, given what we've been through this past month.

Mr. Speaker, in our darkest hour, Toronto and Ontario came to our aid. You can see the names on the Humboldt Broncos GoFundMe page — the Rotherglen School in Oakville, The Mississauga Terriers Hockey Club, the Billy Bishop Airport in

Toronto — just three donations, Mr. Speaker, among so many. Mr. Speaker, there can be no doubt that Toronto stands with Saskatchewan these last few weeks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is our turn. It's our turn for Saskatchewan to stand with Toronto in their time of need. We must send an urgent message to Canada's largest city. Mr. Speaker, today Saskatchewan is Toronto strong. We honour those who died. We pray for their families. We honour those who were injured, and we pray for their speedy and full recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in offering my words of condolence on behalf of our caucus to those who were injured in the attack in Toronto, to the families of those who were killed.

You know, my brother lives in Toronto with his family. I think it's unlikely that any of us doesn't have some friend or family members who's been there. When you have an incident like this of this indiscriminate and senseless violence, it hits so close to home. You just can't help but imagine, what if those were your family members? And we think about the families of those who've been affected today. We offer our sincere condolences to them and to everyone in Toronto and Ontario as they're dealing with the reality that this happened at home.

And once again — and it's awful to have to be doing this again — but once again we are proud to thank the law enforcement officers, the first responders, those people whose work we don't want to be using, but we're so glad that they're there when they're needed, and thank them for their bravery, their dedication, and join the Premier in offering our strength and support to the people of Toronto in this difficult moment.

The Speaker: — I ask the Assembly to all rise for a moment of silence.

[The Assembly observed a moment of silence.]

The Speaker: — Thank you.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Pursuant to section 39 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, I'll be tabling the Advocate for Children and Youth's annual report 2017. That'll be tabled. Thanks.

I recognize the Minister for Energy and Resources.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to ask leave to make a personal statement.

The Speaker: — The Minister for Energy and Resources has asked for leave to issue a personal statement. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

STATEMENT BY A MEMBER

Release of Embargoed Information

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday an embargoed news release was sent to members of the media with respect to Bill 126, *The Energy Export Act* approximately 45 minutes before the House was sitting. This was an inadvertent mistake and in no way was there any intent to breach the privilege of this Assembly. I wish to apologize for this error, Mr. Speaker, and would like to ensure all members of the Assembly that every action will be undertaken to ensure that this will not happen again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Thank you.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, thank you to this Assembly for granting leave. And it's a great pleasure, brings me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to this Assembly, some constituents of mine and some constituents from the constituency of Saskatchewan Rivers, the member from Saskatchewan Rivers who, I believe, will follow.

Mr. Speaker, with us today are Janelle and Camille Harris, Mr. Speaker. Janelle is from Canwood, used to be a neighbour of mine, a next-door neighbour of mine not too long ago, Mr. Speaker, and Camille lives in Shellbrook. And they're accompanied today by their uncle Carmen who hails from the Briarlea area, Mr. Speaker, and Carmen's daughter Twyla Harris Naciri, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, members of the Harris family are long-time and active supporters of organ donation awareness in our province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, they're in Regina today attending events held as part of National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. Every year the Harris family holds a special event to support this very worthy cause, Mr. Speaker. And if you know the Harris family at all, it will come as no surprise that its Shoot for the Vitals 3-D [three-dimensional] archery shoot is this cause, Mr. Speaker, a fundraiser that takes place — and is in its fifth annual year — this June 23rd and 24th, Mr. Speaker. It'll be at a location just west of Prince Albert near Crutwell on Highway 55.

Mr. Speaker, the Harris family organized the archery shoot to raise awareness and also honour family members who have passed while waiting for organ donations, Mr. Speaker, as well

as, I think, to honour a current family member that is waiting for an organ donation, Mr. Speaker: Mr. Ralph Harris, who again lives in the community of Shellbrook. And I know him as Skippy as we used to play hockey together a number of years ago, quite a few years ago, and was active in the baseball league in the community as well, Mr. Speaker. And his kids remain active in sports.

Mr. Speaker, I can understand anyone can take part in the archery shoot, including children. Those who can't attend can support the cause by making a donation, by sponsoring an archery target, or by donating a prize to the raffle. And I'd like to commend the Harris family at this point in time for their compassion for their family members, their compassion for Saskatchewan residents, and their leadership.

In Saskatchewan we need to do more to raise awareness about organ and tissue donations, Mr. Speaker, and we will continue to do that. And that's why on Monday the Saskatchewan Health Authority announced a new model that will help boost donation rates in our province. Physicians have been contracted, Mr. Speaker, to serve as champions of the organ and tissue donations within our health care system.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all members to join me in welcoming our guests to their legislature here today.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the Premier in welcoming these guests today: Carmen, Janelle, and Camille Harris and Twyla Harris Naciri. Twyla I've have the privilege of knowing for many years now, Mr. Speaker . . . Oh, I'm still not better, Mr. Speaker. I'm getting there, though. It's been a bit of a slog here.

I've had the pleasure of knowing Twyla for several years now but got to meet some of the rest of the Harris family actually when they presented at the organ donation Human Services Committee to talk about their own experiences and what they felt and thought the province should be doing. They're strong advocates for improving organ and tissue donation rates. They really put their heart into it all, and I'll have an opportunity in a member's statement to just comment on some of their work as well. But I'd ask all members to welcome the Harris and the Harris Naciri family here today.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to welcome the folks from Women in the Legislature. They're a group of women from the University of Saskatchewan who've come for several years in a row here to hear from both sides of the House and from civil servants, to learn a little bit more about politics, about women in politics, but also women in the civil service and how they might fit. But just generally trying to improve their knowledge base.

I have to say, and I've said this in the past, this is one of my favourite things to do as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] is to connect with this group. It's always a great opportunity to share our experiences as a caucus. I know the other side of the House had an opportunity to do that too and hear the smart and engaging questions that these folks have, and

we always appreciate their time. With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Assembly to welcome the Women in the Legislature group from the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you and members of the Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce Carmen Harris of the Briarlea area. Now Carmen is a fellow 4-H leader and a passionate community advocate, and he's here today for the National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. I believe at least three of your family members are recipients and organ donation has played a very large part in your life since 1992. So please help me in welcoming Carmen and his family to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the Premier and the members in welcoming the Harris family today, specifically . . . So I had the opportunity to have lunch with all of them prior to this, and so I want to thank them for their time here and thank them for that enjoyable experience.

In particular, I would like to welcome Carmen Harris, who I've had the opportunity to get to know quite a bit over the years. I know him to be a caring and dutiful father and grandfather and just a terrific man, and also a great source for Wheat Pool paraphernalia, although he might not like me admitting that to such a large forum. More people will be knocking down his door. So I'd like to welcome you to your Assembly.

I would also like to welcome Twyla Harris Naciri here today, and Twyla and I have known each other for — I was just trying to do the math — I think it's about 12 years. We worked together in the cadet program. I was involved in helping convince her to put a uniform on and I think it was an okay decision. So we go back quite a ways, Mr. Speaker, and I have had the opportunity to see her work on a number of different avenues, including her advocacy in organ donation.

[13:45]

At present she serves as my constituency assistant in Saskatoon Fairview, so I also want to thank her for the hard work that she does every day. It can be a lonely job when you're the only person in the office and you're there to be the kind and compassionate and patient ear, and I want to thank her for all the work that she does in that capacity as well, and ask that all members join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming the young ladies that we have here from Women in the Legislature from the U of S. This is a trek that they make every year, and it started actually even long before I got elected, and I believe the member from Regina Rochdale was involved in that. But also when I was involved with Equal Voice, I had

the opportunity to connect with this group.

I met with them this morning, along with my colleagues, the member from Saskatchewan Rivers and the member from Lloydminster. We had a wonderful conversation, and I'm very pleased to see you here. There's never been a better time to be a woman, particularly a woman who aspires to positions of leadership, and who will get . . . We're going to be warming up some spots for you right over here.

So on behalf of my colleagues, I'd like to just welcome you to the Legislative Assembly. I'd like to welcome you to the Legislative Assembly, and if you could just give a quick wave, I'll just quickly read out some of the names: Mackenzie Stewart, this is her second or even third year here; Lukaa Jasem; Blake Tait; Deena Kapacila; Sabryna McCrea; Keonie Green; Olga Ifaka; Saleha Shahid; Darcia Roache; Deanna Black; Dalia Alazawi; Anwyn Huber-Stevenson; Santana Thomas-Dreaver; Monica Iron; Elizabeth McKay; April Elder; Preet Shoker; Irteqa Khan; Lauren Klassen; Katherine Raes; Farwa Wajahat; Romaisa Ismaeel; and Soudabeh Taghian Dinani. There, I think I did it okay. Please join me in welcoming these lovely young ladies to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure and honour to recognize the very esteemed colleague in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, the member that served here for many years, Mr. Ron Osika. As we all know, Ron is the former Speaker. He is also a former MLA. He is also a former mayor. He is also a former minister, a former police officer, but not a former friend.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Osika continues being a great inspiration to myself personally and to other members of the NDP [New Democratic Party] caucus and to people all throughout the Qu'Appelle Valley area. And I want to say to the Assembly today, it's a great honour to have Mr. Osika here again grace these halls and, as we all know, he served very honourably and he worked very hard for the people of Saskatchewan. And I want to take this opportunity to ask all members of the Assembly to recognize a colleague, a dear friend, and a great mentor, Mr. Ron Osika.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. I'd like to also join the opposition and welcome Mr. Osika to his gallery. He's sitting behind the clock, and I can't see him. And not very often do I trust the opposition with what they say, but now, now I get a glance, and yes, he is there. I needed to have visual confirmation, especially when that member is speaking.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank Mr. Osika for the years of service that he gave this province in his previous career in the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], this province as a sitting MLA and a cabinet minister and a member that sat in your chair. Mr. Speaker, the first Speaker that I had any experience with and was very fair at that time, and then most recently as the mayor of Fort Qu'Appelle. I think he's finally, I

think he's finally enjoying some retirement but, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government, thank Ron for all his service to this province on the many capacities that he had served. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to briefly join with the member from Athabasca, the member from Indian Head to welcome Ron Osika, a rock-solid person within this province who has served our province and people his entire life, and somebody that I'm awfully lucky to count as a friend and mentor as well, someone that it's always so enjoyable to sit down with him and Barb. So I welcome Ron to his Assembly.

But while on my feet, I would like to welcome and introduce two friends that are seated in the east gallery, Mr. Speaker, Dan Woloshin and Taylor Apperley. Both of these young leaders have served as the president of the Saskatchewan Young New Democrats at various times.

Taylor is an exceptional person, a young education student. I believe she just finished her internship over at F.W. Johnson. I think Johnson might be here today as well in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to have her here today.

And it's a pleasure to have Dan Woloshin here in his Assembly. This is a young leader in so many ways, a bright mind on policy, somebody who gives back to his community, and a law student at the University of Saskatchewan. So I ask all members to join with me in welcoming Taylor Apperley and Dan Woloshin to their Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. In the west gallery this afternoon we have a group of 14 grade 10 students from the aforementioned F.W. Johnson Collegiate. And once again their teacher, Scott McKillop, has brought them down to watch some democracy in action. I will have a meeting with them after routine proceedings. I ask all members to help me welcome them here today.

The Speaker: — I'd also like to join with the members in welcoming Mr. Ron Osika to his legislature. Maybe sometime we can have an opportunity to sit and have a chat just about how you instilled order. But it's a work in progress. We got our individual pieces, but we'll go from there ... [inaudible interjection] ... Yes. I think we're done.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

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 our province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Porcupine. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition calling on the Legislative Assembly to stop the Sask Party attack on our kids' already strained classrooms. Those who've signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following points: that the Sask Party cut \$54 million from our kids' classrooms in the devastating 2017-18 budget; that the 2018-19 budget only restores a fraction of last year's devastating \$54 million cut to classrooms, even though costs continue to rise; and even though the Sask Party is making us all pay more, our kids are actually getting less. The Sask Party cuts mean that students will lose much needed supports in their classroom, including funding for buses for kindergartners and programs to help children with special needs.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the government to fully restore the senseless cuts to our kids' classrooms and stop making families, teachers, and everyone who works to support our education system pay the price for the Sask Party's mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition today reside in White City and Regina. I do so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the undersigned residents of Saskatchewan want to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals, even those outside the province, to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties. And we know that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics.

We also know though that over the past 10 years, the Saskatchewan Party has received \$12.61 million in corporate donations and, of that, 2.87 million came from companies outside Saskatchewan. You know, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people, and we know that the federal government and 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.

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

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

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

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 Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for critical workplace supports for survivors of domestic violence. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the dubious distinction of having the highest rates of intimate partner violence amongst all of the provinces, and we all know that we must do so much more to protect survivors of domestic violence.

For those who are experiencing domestic violence, that violence will often follow them to their workplaces. And that's why the signatories to this petition are calling for five days of paid leave and up to 17 weeks of unpaid leave be made available to workers who are survivors of domestic violence, and that critical workplace supports be made available to survivors of domestic violence and also available to workers living with post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of that domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, this is what we're calling for in our private member's bill, Bill No. 609. This is the fourth time we've tabled those provisions in bill form in front of this House in the last two years, Mr. Speaker. The studies that show . . . PATHS [Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan] has done a very extensive study on this issue and found that the cost that these provisions would have on employers is extremely minimal, especially when you consider the turnover rate that employers will experience from those who are experiencing domestic violence, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we are joining with these signatories and calling for the government to finally do the right thing and pass these provisions into law.

Let me read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the signatories to this petition today come from Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to present a petition today calling on the Sask Party government to lead with a pharmacare program, Mr. Speaker.

The petitioners point out that in Canada we're the only country

with a universal health care system that does not include prescription drug coverage, and that this oversight results in unnecessary illness and suffering and costs us billions of dollars. They point out that over 90 per cent of Canadians agree that we need a national pharmacare program, which makes sense, as one in five Canadians don't fill necessary prescriptions because the medications cost too much. And they point out that when we cover essential medications we improve people's quality of life and save millions in downstream costs.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to immediately support the establishment of universal pharmacare for Saskatchewan patients and advocate for national pharmacare for all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Saskatoon today. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Lloydminster.

National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week is National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness week. For me it hits close to home as my son, Percy, was given a gift when he was 12 years old and received an organ transplant. He's now 25 and will have a successful career in dentistry.

Mr. Speaker, our province continues to grieve after April 6th; however this tragedy has sparked thousands of conversations about organ donation in Saskatchewan. Though we are still hurting, we see our communities rising in support, signing donor cards, and raising awareness for this important decision.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce that an investment of \$566,000 has been allocated in 2018-19 for the Saskatchewan Health Authority to establish a leadership model for organ and tissue donation. The investment also reflects four Saskatoon-based physicians that have signed contracts to share a half-time position to provide leadership and education as donor physicians across the health system.

In addition, we have launched a public awareness campaign, highlighting powerful real-life experiences of Saskatchewan families. Mr. Speaker, in support of my son, I was involved in the initiation of the Transplant Trot in Lloydminster, an annual event that celebrates life after transplant, raises awareness, and encourages citizens to become donors.

This week I encourage everyone in this Assembly to remember the remarkable lives of our donors, like Logan Boulet from the Humboldt hockey team, and thank them for their gift of life that has impacted so many families. Thank you.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon

Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week, April 22nd to 28th, is National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week. Across Canada people are raising awareness about the critical need for more donors. Approximately 4,500 Canadians are waiting for a life-saving organ transplant, and the sad reality is that on average 250 Canadians die each year waiting for one.

In 2015 Saskatchewan had the lowest rates among provinces for organ donation from deceased donors. We heard yesterday that the government has created half of one donation physician position and a public awareness campaign — a welcome start, but there's still so much the government should be doing to raise donation rates here.

One family that is doing its part when it comes to supporting organ and tissue donation is the Harris family. This will be the fifth year for a fundraiser they founded called Shoot for the Vitals. It's a 3-D archery shoot happening June 23rd and 24th to support members of the Shellbrook and Prince Albert communities who have gone through or are going through donation.

This issue hits close to home for them, as the Harrises have lost three family members who required organ and tissue donations, and they know too well the pain and hardships that families go through during this time. Their hope is that their event raises awareness around organ and tissue donation, breaks down stigma, and provides support to those who need it. Over the years they have raised over \$6,000 for community members.

I ask all members to join me in thanking the Harris family on their leadership and commitment when it comes to organ and tissue donation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Recognizing Volunteer Firefighters

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday April 21st, I had the honour of attending the volunteer firefighters banquet at the Evergreen Centre in Nipawin. Each year there are two firefighter training courses held in our province: one in the North, and one in the South. Nipawin is host for this year. Mr. Speaker, over 380 firefighters attended this year's fire school, all of them from our small towns and rural communities. The training and education they receive at this is vital to their safety and success.

Mr. Speaker, I was a volunteer myself for 25 years, and I certainly appreciate the time and effort all the firefighters dedicate to this service. The important role of volunteer firefighters in our communities was highlighted at the recent Humboldt Broncos bus accident. Volunteers from Nipawin, Melfort, Tisdale, Zenon Park, and Carrot River were all on hand to assist at this devastating accident.

Mr. Speaker, our volunteer firefighters are an integral part of our communities, providing us with protection and safety whenever we need it. I would like to express my gratitude to

each and every one of these volunteers. Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask everyone to join me in recognizing all of our volunteer firefighters in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Community Leaders Attend United Nations Session

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to stand and recognize Patricia Thomson and Kendra Strong-Garcia, two community leaders who recently had the opportunity to travel to New York City for the 62nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. The focus of the UN [United Nations] session was Challenges and Opportunities in Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Rural Women and Girls.

Mr. Speaker, these two inspiring Saskatchewan women represented our province in a panel discussion where they had an opportunity to discuss issues impacting their communities. Kendra Strong-Garcia is from Regina, is the senior director of programs for Regina's YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association], and I'm proud to count her as a good friend. She said the opportunity has motivated her to think bigger and said it was impactful being among so many powerful women leaders.

Patricia Thomson is the executive director for the Cowessess First Nation. She valued the opportunity to empower indigenous women and share how her connection to her traditional culture has helped her become the leader that she is today.

Mr. Speaker, we couldn't be more proud of the contributions of these two women within our province and on the world stage. I ask all members to join with me in recognizing and thanking Patricia Thomson and Kendra Strong-Garcia for their incredible work.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

4-H Public Speaking Competition

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this month young speakers from all corners of Saskatchewan came together. They came together to compete in the 2018 Provincial 4-H Public Speaking Competition held in Melville. This event gives members a chance to learn public speaking skills from a young age. Competitors are divided into four groups: Cloverbud, age 6 to 8; Junior, 9 to 12; Intermediate, from 13 to 15; and Senior, from ages 16 to 21. Each participant shares a persuasive, informative, or entertaining speech on the topic of their choice.

Mr. Speaker, I can say from experience that this is a unique and worthwhile opportunity for anyone who participates. My daughter participated in this event last year. And as members of this Assembly can attest, public speaking can be incredibly difficult and I, along with MLAs on this side of the House, were first introduced to public speaking through 4-H.

I would like to congratulate this year's winners: for Cloverbuds, Sunny Cooper; for Junior, Tyson Code; for Intermediate, Hunter Reid; and for Senior, Morgan Heidecker.

Mr. Speaker, public speaking is an important skill, and competitions like this can help these young competitors build self-confidence and communication skills. On behalf of this entire Assembly, I'd like to thank 4-H Saskatchewan, the event committee, and all volunteers for making this event possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Invitational Basketball Tournament

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lots of fun was had at the first annual Filipino North East Invitational Tournament in Melfort this weekend. Four teams participated, including teams from Melfort, St. Brieux, Humboldt, as well as our stacked team of MLAs, which included the members from Melfort, Lloydminster, and Saskatoon University.

Our MLA team picked up some players from the crowd, and though we did hit our stride eventually, it was a bit too late, Mr. Speaker. The member from Lloydminster refereed a few games and played very well, but most of all was notable for her familiarity with the moves required to Zumba. Though the MLA from Saskatoon University said he hadn't played basketball since grade 9, he scored a hat trick thanks to his lucky bright red Montreal Canadiens sneakers.

Mr. Speaker, the Filipino community in my constituency is very strong, and the atmosphere at the event was phenomenal. There are more than 100 Filipino families living in Melfort now, while hundreds more call St. Brieux and Humboldt their home. They've been a huge benefit to our community, and we appreciate their strong focus on family values. I am privileged to be a part of their lives and represent them here in our legislature.

Good basketball, family games, Zumba, and too much food were ingredients for a great day, Mr. Speaker. Humboldt ended up taking home the trophy, but our MLA team will be stronger next year. With a few practices, a little luck, and a hand-selected referee, I'm hopeful that we'll bring the trophy home to the Legislative Building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Doctor of Philosophy Graduate Develops Valuable Tool

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'd like to acknowledge the academic achievements of a member from my constituency. Lindsay Goodwin is a researcher and a recent Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] graduate in physics from the University of Saskatchewan. She has developed a tool that will help predict and possibly prevent negative impacts of space weather.

Lindsay's tool is a new way to measure the impact of solar activity in the ionosphere, the upper part of the atmosphere, as indicated by the northern lights and geomagnetic storms. More simply put, Mr. Speaker, Lindsay has said that her work will help ensure that all community's infrastructure that we rely on every day, such as satellites, sustaining banking transactions, TV signals, and the Internet will keep working properly. Yes, Mr. Speaker, your Netflix will continue to stream.

Major agencies across the world have invested in her project, including the Canada Research Chairs program, the Canada Foundation for Innovation, the federal agency NSERC [Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada], the Canadian Space Agency, the European Space Agency, and the US [United States] National Science Foundation.

Lindsay said that she has always been obsessed with galaxies and deep space but realized there is lots of learning to be done right here on our own planet. Lindsay will soon be working at Boston University, collaborating with Stanford Research Institute and MIT [Massachusetts Institute of Technology] to advance her research. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Lindsay on her achievements and wish her all the success in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Former Member and Irrigation Project Approval Process

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Premier said last week that Mr. Boyd was treated in precisely the same manner that anyone would be treated. And yet the deputy ministers of Environment and Agriculture said on Thursday that they, and the former deputy minister of the Premier, stepped in on this matter in early June — two months before any charges were laid — because the infractions they'd found involved a high-profile individual.

So I do wonder which it is, Mr. Speaker. Does the Premier still maintain that Mr. Boyd received no special treatment for his application or addressing his violations? Or was he treated differently, as the officials stated, because he's a high-profile individual?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, this was a high-profile individual, Mr. Speaker, with what appeared to be a serious offence in a very sensitive area of the province, Mr. Speaker, on the shores of the South Saskatchewan.

But the fact of the matter is, Mr. Speaker — and the people of the province can be reassured of this — is that the process that we have in place worked, and it worked regardless of who the individual was that had performed the infraction, Mr. Speaker. This individual was charged under our environmental protections laws, Mr. Speaker. This individual received one of the largest fines ever put out, Mr. Speaker, with respect to our environmental laws here in the province, Mr. Speaker. The individual was required to remediate the site, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the province can rest assured that the process works, and the process works regardless of who you are in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier rightly points out that Mr. Boyd did receive those fines. He also received the permits even while this process was still under

way, Mr. Speaker, which is what seems particularly strange.

The Premier has confirmed that he attended a high-level meeting between the deputy minister to the Premier, ministries of Agriculture and Environment on June 5th to discuss Bill Boyd's irrigation project and determine how to address what he again described as a serious infraction in a sensitive area on the shores of the South Saskatchewan.

The Premier said that at this meeting he was informed that there would be an investigation. And he added that he made one suggestion, one comment at that meeting. He said it would be worthwhile to have an experienced investigator.

So I wonder, Mr. Speaker, did that happen? Who conducted that investigation? And when did it begin?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, first and foremost I would just point out the contradiction in the member opposite, the Leader of the Opposition's own question, when he raises the fact that, as had been indicated, the deputy ministers informed the ministers when there was an infraction, Mr. Speaker.

But the member opposite also, last week out in the rotunda, indicated that hadn't the ministers been . . . not been made aware of this, that they apparently, in his words, would not be doing their jobs. So I'm not sure which is it, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite can't have it both ways.

Mr. Speaker, as I indicated yesterday, and as we've indicated on a number of occasions, there's more than one permit or licence or approval or certificate that is required. There's a 10-step process. There's an aquatic habitat licence. There's a water rights licence. There's a licence to operate, a licence to construct. There's a number of different steps that are required. And, Mr. Speaker, as email after email shows and indicates, and as I talked about yesterday, Mr. Speaker, that the process was followed professionally by the civil service. And, Mr. Speaker, that's the way it should be and that's the way that it was in this case.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, speaking of having it both ways, the question remains: is a high-profile individual treated differently or treated the same as everyone else?

Mr. Speaker, on July 5th, a month after that high-level meeting that the Premier attended, a member of the public saw a track hoe doing work on the South Saskatchewan river, resulting in a TIP [Turn in Poachers and Environmental Violators] call to the Ministry of the Environment and a conservation officer going out to investigate on the 12th of July.

Had a member of the public not phoned the government's wildlife protection TIP line in early July, Mr. Speaker, the call that appears to have launched the investigation that resulted in charges, would charges have been pursued?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and I, in fairness to the member opposite, I didn't directly answer his previous question. Frankly, Mr. Speaker, I don't know who did that inspection by the Ministry of the Environment. Frankly I don't think it matters, because of the fact that charges were laid. So clearly the investigation was a complete, full and complete investigation. Charges were laid and, in this case, Mr. Boyd pled guilty to two of those charges, which seems to suggest that it was a very fulsome investigation that was undertaken, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this shows that there were infractions, Mr. Speaker, that charges were investigated, they were laid and, Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated previously, a \$35,000 fine has been assessed to Mr. Boyd in this case and the shoreline must be remediated at Mr. Boyd's cost.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, the question does remain: did the charges result from the initial complaint, the initial observation? Or only from the later tip?

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, we've obtained through freedom of information a timeline of the Bill Boyd irrigation project, assembled by a director at the Water Security Agency. According to this timeline, on July 20th:

A site inspection was conducted by the Water Security Agency and the Ministry of the Environment, and determined the work as done would not have been approved in the permitting process, referring to the aquatic habitat protection Act.

As a result, an immediate environmental protection order was issued — immediate. Now, Mr. Speaker, this was the second MOE [Ministry of the Environment] site inspection to be conducted since the early June high-level meeting that the Premier attended. Yet only after that tip from the public that triggered an investigation by a conservation officer was an environmental protection order issued. So why was no such order issued after the early June inspections first confirmed that that infraction had taken place? Why did it take until the 20th of July?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again as has been indicated, in terms of an individual getting a licence to irrigate, there's a 10-step process that they must undertake, Mr. Speaker. This involves a water licence, which determines whether or not there's enough water to fulfill the application but as well the other obligations from that water body. There's a licence to operate, a licence to construct, an irrigation certificate that is required from the Ministry of Agriculture. This involves three different government organizations, Mr. Speaker, as has been indicated.

And I think the facts show in this case, Mr. Boyd was treated no different than anybody else. There were infractions that were found. Mr. Speaker, certainly there was an investigation. There

was people visually on the ground seeing the work that had been done as a part of the investigation. Charges were laid. Mr. Boyd pled guilty and a \$35,000 fine plus a remediation order that Mr. Boyd has to pay for. So, Mr. Speaker, I think in this case, clearly Mr. Boyd was not treated in any preferential matter. He was treated in a professional matter by everybody involved.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The repeated assertion that Mr. Boyd was treated the same as any other member of the public simply doesn't hold water. And the questions still remain. Would the charges have taken place had that tip not been placed? Why wasn't an environmental protection order not put in in the first infraction? Why was there no EPO [environmental protection order] on that first infraction?

Mr. Speaker, a tip was called in. A conservation officer was investigating and seeking witness statements from the WSA [Water Security Agency] on their interactions with Mr. Boyd. And on August 8th and 9th, permits were issued by the ministries of Agriculture and Environment, retroactively granting a special lease, an approval to operate a water rights licence, green-lighting a project that was already under way.

To the Premier and then minister of the Environment, the Premier: why did Bill Boyd receive permits for this project in early August after the record of flagrant and continuing violations was already identified — permits that sought to retroactively approve the damage Boyd had already done, actions for which he would be charged just a few weeks later?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will try again. In order for an individual to get a permit for an irrigation operation, they deal with three separate entities of government dealing with several different pieces of legislation, Mr. Speaker, and different individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture pointed out last week why the special licence was permitted. It was because there was an error with the survey and the wrong points were used in conducting that survey, Mr. Speaker.

A water rights licence is not the same as an approval to build or operate an irrigation. It is simply determining whether or not there is enough water, which . . . It's the South Saskatchewan River, Mr. Speaker. I'm not a hydrologist but I probably could figure out that there's enough water, Mr. Speaker. So these are separate issues. They're separate permits. There's not just one magic permit, and the two former Environment ministers would know this, and certainly they should help to educate the Leader of the Opposition.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, what step in that orderly regular process that would be the same for every member of the public, at what step do we regularly call in the deputy minister of Agriculture, deputy minister of the Environment, deputy minister to the Premier, and the Minister of Environment?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fact that, as the member should know . . . He may have this email; I don't know. But it's July 28th from one official in the Water Security Agency to the president, talks about:

In the normal course of events we issue temporary water rights licences [which apparently Mr. Boyd wanted a temporary licence] and leave it to the user to ensure that they have the necessary rights. [Goes on to say] I was not prepared to provide a temporary approval either verbally or through the products portal. He [meaning Mr. Boyd] was clearly disappointed but remained respectful and understanding of our requirements.

So obviously he was not given preferential treatment on this.

With respect to why a deputy minister would be involved and why the ministers would be informed, Mr. Speaker, that very member said last week:

You would think that he would know [meaning the Premier, the former minister at the time] if one of his members within his caucus was accessing services within his ministry and going directly to ministry employees. Was he not paying attention . . . [in case he's not fully doing his job]?

Mr. Speaker, how would the minister become aware of what's going on in the ministry? It's because the deputy minister speaks and informs the minister of what's going on, Mr. Speaker. So the member can't have it both ways. Either the minister is made aware of what's going on or he's not.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, this clearly is a special case. It involves Mr. Boyd, a well-known figure in that party with a long record, and then at the time an elected member of this Assembly, who continued . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, clearly this was a special case. It involved Bill Boyd, at that time a member of this Assembly and a member with a reputation for a number of different concerning activities, Mr. Speaker, a member who continued to advance a project for which he had not obtained the required permissions, a project that had already been found to have violated *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* as far back as June.

Mr. Speaker, why didn't the Premier — who seems quite quiet on the issue today — why didn't the Premier under his watch hold this individual to a higher standard and deny his permit until at the very least a determination was made on whether he would be charged?

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — So, Mr. Speaker, let me get this straight. So now the Leader of the Opposition thinks that the minister should step in and determine who and who is not given a permit. But at the same time he's asking, why is the deputy minister and the minister getting involved in this, Mr. Speaker? So, Mr. Speaker, if he wants the minister to get involved, how would the minister get involved if he's not made aware by the deputy minister of what's happening in the ministry, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, it has been indicated before, and I'll say this again — the member probably has this email as well — Mr. Boyd in previous emails had said that this was, in his case, an urgent case. He wanted speedy timelines. An official that was dealing with this case asked the president of the Water Security Agency, you know, should we make . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'll be happy to. Should we make this a little bit more quick? And the president said this: "No. Follow the process that we would normally use," Mr. Speaker. Clearly email after email after email shows that with respect to Mr. Boyd's dealing with the civil service, that he was treated professionally.

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

Availability of Government Officials

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, still no answers from the other side. None, Mr. Speaker. I'm surprised they think those are answers. Yesterday in the House we asked yet again for some transparency on the GTH [Global Transportation Hub]. We know several members in cabinet called for that transparency in their leadership campaigns, but yesterday in question period, in committee, and in the rotunda, the Minister Responsible for Trade and Export — not the minister responsible for the GTH, Mr. Speaker — would not allow Mr. Pushor to provide any answers.

Journalists asked to speak to Mr. Pushor but they wouldn't bring him out, which is a little odd, Mr. Speaker, considering last week the Sask Party had four different officials, including DMs [deputy minister], provide answers for the Premier. And we know some ministers can barely walk through the rotunda without having their DMs scrum for them. So, Mr. Speaker, what gives? Why is the Sask Party allowing the questioning of some officials but not others?

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — What an absurd line of questioning from the member opposite, Mr. Speaker. She's a former House leader. You would presume that she would understand the process for how estimates work, Mr. Speaker, where the deputy minister and officials of the relevant department are those that attend estimates. So I had my deputy minister responsible for Immigration and Career Training there for a part of the discussion last night. I also had my deputy minister responsible for Trade and Export Development, along with supporting officials, there at estimates for last night. The deputy minister that they attempted to call . . . Well it could be characterized charitably as political grandstanding and perhaps uncharitably in another way, Mr. Speaker.

They have the opportunity to raise these questions, which they did in estimates. I was happy to address them in estimates. I'm happy to address them in the House, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of our provincial nominee program. We're proud of the fact that over 100,000 newcomers have come to this province from outside of Canada over the course of the last decade — a rate of growth that we would never have seen under the NDP.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I think that the Chair of the committee would quibble with whether or not he was happy to answer those questions. You could just check the record.

Mr. Speaker, this is the minister who continually stood up in this House and said there was no wrongdoing at the GTH. Then he ran for leader, found religion, and admitted that he had serious concerns about the GTH but was just defending the position of government. But now after that very short time of the leadership race, he's back in cabinet and it seems he's lapsed back to his old ways.

Mr. Speaker, why is this one official off limits? Why this official is off limits does beg the question since he was intimately involved with the GTH land scandal. But still the Saskatchewan Party continues to deny access to him.

Yesterday in an article published in the *Leader-Post*, the Minister of Trade and Export said his favourite tradition of parliament is, and I quote, ". . . the chamber right here, it's not just a chamber. It's actually a court of law as well and Parliament itself a court of law . . ."

If this is this minister's favourite tradition, why won't he let this central official testify and give witness before the members of this Assembly?

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Oh my goodness. You know, once again just, charitably, an absurd line of questioning from the member opposite. The member opposite knows how estimates work. The relevant officials come to committee. They respond to questions, along with ministers, with regard to estimates of that department that are up for discussion, Mr. Speaker.

One very interesting part of committee last night that I think was relevant, and I would put to the Leader of the Opposition: we saw a break in caucus solidarity on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker. We saw the member for Saskatoon Fairview, and I respect her position on this, but she broke ranks with her leader explicitly on the carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. She said very clearly that she doesn't agree with her leader's position on this, Mr. Speaker.

I would challenge the Leader of the Opposition, because I would suspect, Mr. Speaker, that there are more members opposite who do not agree with the leader's position on the carbon tax, who think that this is a wrong position, that surrendering to Justin Trudeau, like the member's opposite position. They don't agree with that.

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

Graduation Rates of First Nations and Métis Students

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Of course, no answer from that very smug minister, Mr. Speaker. But, you know, we are very thankful for the work . . .

The Speaker: — [Inaudible] . . . withdraw that smug word.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I withdraw that comment.

The Speaker: — Thank you. I recognize the member for Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we are very thankful for the work of the Children's Advocate, who provided a road map of how we could do better for Saskatchewan's children and youth in his annual report released today.

The advocate raised concerns about what he called unacceptable graduation rates — 43 per cent among indigenous students compared to 85 per cent among non-indigenous. He noted that the government said that they support closing the education funding gap for on-reserve students, but haven't followed up with any action. He called on the province to go hand in hand with First Nations to the federal government and demand funding.

The last premier stood in this Assembly and joined me in calling on the federal government to close that funding gap immediately. Will this new Premier not only do the same, but follow up with concrete actions to address this crisis, knowing that we'll stand united?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, let me just acknowledge the work that the Children's Advocate has done on behalf of the children of this province, Mr. Speaker. We're quite pleased to get his report, Mr. Speaker.

And, of course, when it comes to graduation rates, I've stood in the House before, Mr. Speaker, talked about increased graduation rates among First Nations children at any school in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I know a number of school divisions are quite pleased and quite proud of the fact that they've increased graduation rates over the last number of years with respect to First Nations and Métis children, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

And, Mr. Speaker, I have commented in this House before we are having ongoing conversations with the federal government in terms of working to close the funding gap which is between First Nations and non-First Nations, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to have those conversations. We're as aggressive as we can be, Mr. Speaker. I'll continue to discuss this with the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

And we'll continue to work on increasing graduation rates right here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. As I say, they've increased over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker, and we're quite proud of the progress that we've made.

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

Social Services for First Nations and Métis Children

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, another area that we're not seeing meaningful progress is the growing number of children in the province's care. There are more than 750 more children in care than there were just five years ago. The vast majority of these children are indigenous, and 79 per cent of those who were lost and 65 per cent of children who sustained critical injuries were First Nations or Métis children. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

The very first Call to Action from the TRC's [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] report was to reduce the number of Aboriginal children in care. Despite this government accepting the TRC's Calls to Action, this government's sitting on its hands while we see progress and action both with our neighbours in the east and the west, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: what is the Sask Party going to do to reduce the number of First Nations and Métis children in care?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I also want to join in thanking the Children's Advocate for the report. It was a very good report and we're looking forward to going through it in more detail, Mr. Speaker.

But some of the things that I can say that we've done is we've worked with our First Nations communities. We have 16 First Nation partners with us, Mr. Speaker, in Social Services, out there actually delivering services on the ground, on the reserve, and sometimes off the reserve because we do understand, Mr. Speaker, that some cases go from on-reserve to off-reserve.

We continue to work with our partners in the North as well as all of the other First Nations to make sure that we are providing the best service for the children in care. As everybody in this House knows, children are our best resource, Mr. Speaker. We want to make sure that we continue to work with our First Nations to be able for them to have the most potential for success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Organ and Tissue Donation Physicians

Ms. Chartier: — Saskatchewan people are generous people. But unfortunately our province lags far behind the rest of the country when it comes to organ donation. Experts said we needed two donor physician positions back when we were passing *The Human Tissue Gift Act* in 2015. Then they scaled their request back to one because of Sask Party inaction.

We've learned recently that three doctors will split a half-time position as donor physicians. This half-time allotment is welcome, but it's only half of what experts say is a small start to improve donation rates here. We just need to look to Ontario that has some of the best rates in Canada. They will have 120 times the number of donation physicians that we have, Mr.

Speaker. Does this minister really think that this one half-time position is enough?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite's question. Obviously it's very clear that organ donation rates in Saskatchewan are far below where we'd like to see them. So the legislative committee was appointed. They came out with the recommendations that the Health critic spoke about, Mr. Speaker. We're taking those recommendations very seriously.

We're enacting a number of them, Mr. Speaker. We're looking at expansion of a number of areas to encourage it. I was at an announcement yesterday, Mr. Speaker, with a couple of transplant recipients that spoke to their experiences, Mr. Speaker. It was extremely powerful and it spoke to the need that we need to increase the number of transplant recipients and donors, Mr. Speaker.

Specifically to the member opposite's question about the donor physicians, we need to start somewhere. Mr. Speaker, to this point there's been nothing done in the province ever, so, Mr. Speaker, we had to start somewhere. We're starting with the donor physicians job-sharing a half-time position. Mr. Speaker, they feel it's a great start. We feel it's a great start, but it's just a start, Mr. Speaker. You're going to see more expansion of this program in the coming years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — A hundred and twenty times the number of donor physicians than we will have here, Mr. Speaker. I'm pretty sure that Ontario's population isn't 120 times our population. This is an issue the Sask Party has known about for years, our abysmal donation rates. They even commissioned a legislative committee to find solutions. Why are they ignoring the work of that committee and failing to provide the number of donor physicians and additional supports that we need to actually really improve donation rates here?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I just spoke to the legislative committee. Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious issue that's impacted many, many lives. One of my best friends is a liver transplant recipient, about 11 or 12 years ago, Mr. Speaker, and is doing fine because of it. We want to do all we can to enhance the number of donors, Mr. Speaker. We're not stopping here. This is a starting point, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to expand. We're going to continue to evaluate . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, it's an important issue but the member heckles from her seat about it.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is we're going to continue to expand this program. I mentioned this old adage at the scrum yesterday, Mr. Speaker. There's an old saying that says, the best time to plant a tree is 25 years ago; the second-best time is today. That's what we're doing, Mr. Speaker. We're kicking off this program, Mr. Speaker. We're taking this extremely seriously. In the coming years you're going to see this program expanded,

but it has to start somewhere. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Deferred Ruling

The Speaker: — I have a statement. I have a statement to read.

Earlier today, the Opposition House Leader raised the question of privilege under the provisions of rule 12 of the *Rules and Procedures of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan*. I received the notice this morning, Tuesday, April the 24th, 2018 at 11:10 a.m. Upon receipt of this notice and in accordance with the rules, both House leaders have been informed of the details of the case and the proposed question of privilege.

It was the responsibility of the Speaker to determine if a prima facie case of privilege has been established. Contempt of the Assembly is a serious charge which requires careful examination of the case and this Assembly's practices and precedents. However, I have not had sufficient time to carefully consider all matters related to this question, so for this reason I shall defer my ruling.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 227.

The Speaker: — Tabled, 227. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to question 228.

The Speaker: — Ordered, question 228. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 229 and 230.

The Speaker: — Tabled, 229 and 230.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 126 — *The Energy Export Act*

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of *The Energy Export Act*, 2018. This Act has been created to respond to the inaction of the federal government to assert its jurisdictional authority to ensure the Trans Mountain expansion project proceeds.

Bill 126 will create the legislative framework necessary to

optimize the value of Saskatchewan's oil, gas, and refined petroleum products. The legislation is similar in intent to the legislation recently introduced by the Government of Alberta. The Act establishes a permitting process for individuals or corporations that are seeking to sell or transfer such products outside the province.

Mr. Speaker, this new legislation will provide a means to help safeguard and advance the province's key economic energy interests. These interests include jobs, investment, industry revenue, and activity in our oil and gas sector. Saskatchewan's oil and gas industry accounts for as much as 15 per cent of our provincial gross domestic product, and it supports the employment of tens of thousands of people throughout our province and half a million people across Canada. This is a sector that generated \$9.2 billion in combined oil and gas production in Saskatchewan in 2017.

The expansion of our national pipeline capacity is vital — vital to the future of our energy sector and to the jobs that flow directly and indirectly from it. Increasing access to tidewater for our oil and gas products would inject billions of dollars into Canada's economy. Access to overseas markets is critical to getting the world price for Canadian crude oil and to ending the supply/demand imbalance that currently discounts Canadian crude oil in oversupplied North American markets. For example, Saskatchewan lost an estimated \$210 million in royalties, taxes, and other revenue, and producers lost an estimated 2.6 billion last year due to lack of pipeline access to tidewater.

Mr. Speaker, our government will always stand up for Saskatchewan and defend the people and businesses that rely on our oil and gas industry, which means taking action, taking action in response to the ongoing obstruction of this project and to federal inaction. Federally approved and properly regulated pipelines are integral to the continued growth and core economic interests of Saskatchewan and of Canada. The expansion of our national pipeline capacity must not be obstructed by a lack of federal leadership or by provinces attempting to overstep their constitutional authority.

It should be noted that our government considers Bill 126 to be a last resort that will be used only if the Trans Mountain expansion project continues to be stalled by provincial obstruction or by federal inaction, and if the Government of Alberta acts upon its similar legislation, but we don't want to be in this position and we hope we don't have to act upon this legislation.

We believe we must do something because the federal government in the past 18 months, since it has approved this pipeline, has failed to ensure construction could proceed. With that in mind, Mr. Speaker, this bill provides a sunset clause provision which allows the Act to expire unless it is amended to extend that deadline.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of *The Energy Export Act*, 2018.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of *The Energy Export Act*. The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill 126, *The Energy Export Act* be

now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, to ask for leave to revert to introduction of guests.

The Speaker: — I'll tell you what. Let's have a Speaker's mulligan. I'll have the minister redo. Let's finish up this piece before you stand. Okay? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Sorry, Minister, could you . . . Yes, I'll . . . Question, but I'll get a repeat. Speaker's mulligan.

The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill No. 126, *The Energy Export Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, I'm asking for leave to introduce a guest.

The Speaker: — The member for Athabasca has asked for leave to introduce a guest. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Sure, leave's granted.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for leave. And I thank my colleagues throughout the Assembly for granting me leave to do introduction of guests. Mr. Speaker, it's really important to know that there are different groups and organizations that come to Regina. It's a long ways into the city and there are various people visit us from all throughout Saskatchewan.

[14:45]

And I'm very pleased to see one of my constituents here that's involved with the Women in the Legislature effort. And, Mr. Speaker, she's from my home community, or from my home region of Athabasca, and she's from the neighbouring First Nations of Canoe Lake. So I want to welcome, I want to say a special welcome to Monica Iron, and basically to tell her:

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.]

So my translation: I'm so proud of her coming here to the Assembly, and I told her very clearly that she's a proud member of the Canoe Lake First Nations and she's the best, but not to be afraid of this Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's really important that I offer her a

great welcome from the office of the MLA. And I see very bright and positive things developing for any woman that wants to join the effort of getting involved with politics. So, Monica, welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 126 — *The Energy Export Act* (continued)

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to get up and make initial comments on *The Energy Export Act*. Now, Mr. Speaker, what I want to point out to the Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan that are listening to this particular debate is the argument around the pipeline sector and the opportunity that Saskatchewan must embrace when it comes to exporting as many of our resources as possible. In most recent weeks we've been hearing about the battle between Alberta and British Columbia over the pipeline, that people have been speaking up for a long, long time, Mr. Speaker.

What's important that people in Saskatchewan ought to know, Mr. Speaker, as we look through this bill, I want to point out from the official opposition perspective a number of really important things. As we look at how we export our oil and gas, and as we export our potash, and as we export our wheat and other resources, Mr. Speaker, we must be very careful to do the right thing. This is a very serious matter. It is a very serious matter and it's going to take a lot of collective thought, Mr. Speaker, on how we address the challenge of getting all our product to tidewater, Mr. Speaker.

We also know in the Assembly, and certainly from the opposition perspective, is that we have to have global discussion, global thinking on this particular bill. There's no question that there is a number of issues that we have to raise, and we have to make sure we think our way through this very serious matter as thoroughly as possible.

There also has to be great interaction, Mr. Speaker, between the industry and the various players in the province as we embark on this particular journey because this interaction is vital to understanding what their needs are, what the challenges are, and certainly what the opportunities are as we move together on this particular bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we also got to point out that there has to be robust discussion. So as the official opposition, we looked at the parameters on how we look at this particular bill. And we're talking about the very, very need, the very necessity that we have four or five principles attached to discussing this bill.

We know it is a very serious matter. There's got to be global thinking on every front. On every front there's got to be great interaction, Mr. Speaker, and there has to be robust discussion and consulting with all the parties involved. Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to the people that may be listening on this particular bill, there is no question in our minds, as we said time and time again, that the pipeline is necessary for Western

Canada.

A number of years ago we have spoken . . . we were privy to the discussions around the former premier as they signed this New West Partnership, Mr. Speaker. Now where is that partnership today, Mr. Speaker? There was not the time taken then to have these discussions. The Saskatchewan Party government had that opportunity under the New West Partnership, and the previous leader in the current government did not take that opportunity to address some of these matters, Mr. Speaker. So clearly they had a failure to anticipate this, and quite frankly this is certainly a big part of their fault in the sense of not protecting the jobs, the mortgage-paying jobs that are attached to the oil and gas sector, and therefore attached to the pipeline that we're speaking about today, and therefore attached to the bill that we're debating in the Assembly today.

So, Mr. Speaker, we know that the federal government has approved this project. The project has gone through a rigorous process, and that we also know in the opposition that it is in Saskatchewan's interest to go forward. It is in our interest to go forward. And from our perspective in the opposition we often look at how we balance all the discussion around the need for this pipeline to go through.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we talk about the economic opportunities attached to a vibrant oil and gas sector development opportunity, or a strategy, Mr. Speaker. We also talk about the environmental benefits of making sure we do what is necessary to protect those interests, and we balance those interests alongside of the economic opportunities attached to this project. We also . . . [inaudible] . . . some of the social opportunities, Mr. Speaker, that could be attached to this project.

So we have taken a fairly robust and encompassing view on the value of this particular pipeline, and that's why it's important that we state unequivocally, Mr. Speaker, that when it comes to this particular pipeline, that we need the pipeline to proceed for Saskatchewan's future economic interest, as well as balancing those interests against the environmental integrity that would be required. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, there's a great opportunity for some of the social benefits to flow to Saskatchewan people as well.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned at the outset, we spoke about the opportunity to show leadership. Under the New West Partnership, it was not taken care of then. And this is one of the reasons why today we're having this dilemma because Saskatchewan had the opportunity and it failed to anticipate some of these challenges, Mr. Speaker.

The other matter that's also quite concerning, Mr. Speaker, is that you look at the people that work in the pipeline industry, the people that build our pipe and the people that work at Evraz, Mr. Speaker. This party, this opposition party say to those workers that we support the 1,100 workers at Evraz who will be supplying 75 per cent of the pipe for this project. It's really important to note that these are Saskatchewan jobs. These are Saskatchewan people that pay Saskatchewan taxes and, Mr. Speaker, they buy goods in our stores. Mr. Speaker, they support their families. They invest in their communities.

So these 1,100 jobs and 1,100 workers at Evraz need to be

recognized for the fact that they will be supplying 75 per cent of the pipe for this project. And that is the reason why the opposition is going to stand up in the Assembly today to say, yes there is an opportunity, and that opportunity is right in front of us. And, Mr. Speaker, we have to, we have got to take the opportunity to protect those jobs and do all we can and leave no stone unturned in an effort to try and see the pipeline move forward.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we begin the process, when we talk about a robust discussion, an interaction of how this is really a serious matter, I say to the workers at Evraz that the Sask Party's failure to anticipate this and address this in the past years when they had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, they did not do so. They took a great risk, Mr. Speaker. So one of the points that I would raise is that in the past years they have failed to lead on this front, and this is why we're in a predicament as such today.

Now I say to the workers at Evraz as well that when we look at the importance of balancing those good, solid jobs for the future of Saskatchewan, we must also make sure we protect the environment, as everyone will say in Saskatchewan. So as the Sask Party has no credibility, has no credibility on making sure that we take care of the environment as we protect these jobs, achieving that balance that we speak about in the opposition, Mr. Speaker, it goes to their credibility when dealing with other provinces and certainly with the federal government.

Now the final point I would make to the workers at Evraz, the 1,100 workers at Evraz, is this, is this Saskatchewan Party government have failed to lay one inch of pipe to tidewater over the last 10 years. I'll say it again so the Sask Party can hear it loud and clear. You have failed to lay one inch of pipeline to tidewater in over 10 years. You have failed to get the job done.

And now they've cut climate change, Mr. Speaker. They have no plan to reduce greenhouse gases. All these inactions on behalf of the provincial government, Mr. Speaker, we say to them, is they had the opportunity and they couldn't get the job done.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we talk about the failure of the government to anticipate this, their failure to get one inch of pipeline built to tidewater, Mr. Speaker, we see now they're jumping up with this particular bill and hoping to look good when, Mr. Speaker, they could've been spending the last number of years preparing for this very challenging time. They did not do that, Mr. Speaker. They did not get the job done.

What's important as well, now we're hearing confusion from the right wing, Mr. Speaker. We're hearing confusion from the right wing because now they're suggesting . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Now as we talk about the robust discussion that has to happen and the interaction that's really important for — as the minister alluded to — the \$9.2 billion opportunity that Saskatchewan has in dealing with this particular matter, Mr. Speaker, now we're hearing from the Saskatchewan Party that somewhat are

confused on their position, Mr. Speaker.

First of all, they have taxed the industry to the point where many are really concerned about the tax rate in the province of Saskatchewan. They have failed to get the job done. Now some of the most ardent right wing politicians from across the way, Mr. Speaker, now they're also talking about investing in pipelines, of them getting into the business of building pipelines, as the Premier of Alberta has discussed. And, Mr. Speaker, they haven't even had those discussions with the current industry people that are saying, well what does that mean for industry?

And that's my point, Mr. Speaker, as I point out to the people of Saskatchewan, this matter has been handled terribly by the Saskatchewan Party because they're not sure what to do within this predicament, Mr. Speaker. So what they've typically done, Mr. Speaker, whenever they get cornered on a certain matter, is they get up and they criticize the other parties and, Mr. Speaker, they also do what we find, which is a great failure on their part and a great injustice to the people of Saskatchewan: they politically grandstand on issues of this importance.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I say to the people of Saskatchewan, we have to have discussions. We have to have interactions with the people that create jobs in the oil and gas sector in Saskatchewan. We have to make sure as well that when it comes to protecting the environment, looking at the green energy options, Mr. Speaker, we have to be able to establish our credibility as a province. And as a party we've been saying that on this side of the Assembly, because in the long run, as you take care of business, business will take care of the jobs and there won't be the threat to jobs that we see today. So it's all connected. It is all interactive, Mr. Speaker.

Now we're sitting here trying to wonder what will the future bring, Mr. Speaker. And that's why it's important to tell people today that, as we look at this bill from the opposition perspective, we are imploring the government to show leadership. And how you show leadership is you understand that this is a very serious matter. There should be no political grandstanding. There should be global thinking on this front, no knee-jerk reactions to investing in a pipeline, Mr. Speaker, as some of the ardent right wingers out there think should happen. There should be great interaction and discussion with all industry people and all impacted people, Mr. Speaker.

We need leadership on this from the Saskatchewan Party, because in the past they have failed miserably on trying to anticipate this, Mr. Speaker. And that's a crying shame because, as I mentioned, there's a great number of jobs and a great number of opportunity for many people in many sectors attached to our oil and gas sector. And this pipeline is an important piece of that thinking, Mr. Speaker, and so far the Saskatchewan Party has failed to get the job done.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the Assembly, we are going to undertake that global thinking. On this side of the Assembly, we are going to undertake that interaction. We are going to place a serious emphasis on where we go as it relates to the opportunity attached to this bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we know as a landlocked province that

there's a lot of discussion has to revolve around oil and gas. It has to revolve around wheat. It also has to revolve around potash, Mr. Speaker. We've got to get our resources to tidewater and, Mr. Speaker, this is why this pipeline is so crucial. And this is why I tell the people clearly from our perspective that there is a lot of discussion required. And we need to see that opportunity achieved, not only for Alberta but for Saskatchewan as well in co-operation through good, solid negotiation discussions with BC [British Columbia].

[15:00]

But clearly, Mr. Speaker, as we've said, this project has had its public hearings. This project has been approved by the federal Liberal government. We encourage them to proceed with the project because, as I mentioned, Saskatchewan has a lot to lose. And the people, from our perspective, the official opposition, do not want to see those 1,100 jobs lost at Evraz.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I know I'll have other members of my caucus that'll be discussing this matter at great lengths. It is really dominating many of our discussions and our meetings as a caucus, because we know that this is a very serious matter, and we'll continue treating this matter as such. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 126, *The Energy Export Act*.

The Speaker: — The member for Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 126, *The Energy Export Act*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 127 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I am here today to move second reading of Bill No. 127, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018*. This legislation implements various income tax initiatives that were announced on April 10th, 2018 as part of the 2018-19 provincial budget. The 2018-19 budget has introduced a number of revenue initiatives to support Saskatchewan's growth agenda and to remain on track to address continuing fiscal challenges facing the Government of Saskatchewan.

The 2017-18 budget announced that personal income tax rates would be reduced in two stages: an initial half-point reduction on July 1st, 2017, and a second half-point reduction on July 1st, 2019. The first stage of this reduction is providing a further 121 million in income tax savings to Saskatchewan residents in 2018. Mr. Speaker, this legislation will temporarily suspend the tax rate reduction plan. The tax rates have now been reduced by a half-point and will remain at these levels for the time being. A number of other provisions throughout the Act that reference the tax rates are also being amended.

This legislation maintains the existing provincial infirm dependent tax credit and caregiver tax credit. In its 2017-18 budget, the federal government announced a consolidation of

federal caregiver-related income tax credits into a single Canada caregiver credit. Saskatchewan will not mirror the federal change in order to ensure that dependants who are currently eligible to be claimed under these tax credits remain eligible.

In October 2017, the federal government announced an adjustment to the taxation of non-eligible dividends, generally those received from small business corporations, beginning in 2018. As a result of the linkage between the federal and provincial personal income tax systems, the federal change would automatically increase provincial income taxes on this type of dividend income. Mr. Speaker, to offset this potential increase to provincial income taxes and to maintain the current level of provincial tax on non-eligible dividends, Saskatchewan will amend provincial legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to announce that this legislation will also introduce the income tax provisions required to provide two new-growth tax incentives that will grow and diversify our provincial economy: the Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive and the Saskatchewan technology start-up incentive.

The Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive will provide a non-refundable corporate income tax credit equal to 15 per cent of qualifying new capital expenditures. Eligible activities are defined in the new Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive Act as the physical transformation or upgrading of any raw or primary agriculture product or any agriculture by-product or waste into a new or upgraded product.

Qualifying projects include new or existing value-added agriculture facilities making capital expenditures of at least 10 million related to new or expanded productive capacity. Potential applicants will apply to the Saskatchewan Ministry of Trade and Export Development, demonstrating how the proposed project will meet the qualifying criteria.

Once they have demonstrated that construction has been completed and the operations have begun, they will be issued a certificate of eligibility by the Ministry of Trade and Export Development. This certificate will state the amount of the company's qualifying capital expenditures. Eligible companies can claim the 15 per cent tax credit by submitting the certificate of eligibility to the Saskatchewan Ministry of Finance, along with the company's notice of assessment from the Canada Revenue Agency. The ministry will redeem the tax credit as a rebate up to the amount of the Saskatchewan corporation income tax paid by the company.

To further encourage business investment in early-stage technology start-ups, Saskatchewan is introducing an incentive to increase the availability of patient and risk-tolerant seed capital. The Saskatchewan technology start-up incentive will address the capitalization challenges faced by technology start-ups. The STSI [Saskatchewan technology start-up incentive] will provide a non-refundable tax credit equal to 45 per cent of qualifying new investments made in eligible small businesses. This will incent small Saskatchewan-based businesses that are early-stage technology start-ups developing new technologies or applying existing technologies in a new way to create proprietary new products, services, or processes.

A new Saskatchewan technology start-up Act will establish the

eligibility, criteria, and certificate issuance process for this new incentive, similar to the processes being put in place for the Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive. The income tax 2000 is being amended to allow eligible corporations to use their eligibility certificates to claim a rebate of income tax that's already paid.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, in October 2017 our government introduced legislation to increase the small business income threshold from 500,000 to 600,000 effective January 1st, 2018. The Canada Revenue Agency has requested an additional technical amendment in order to provide taxpayers certainty that the 120 per cent gross up of the 500,000 federal threshold will be calculated correctly in accordance with the federal legislation and will be applied correctly in all circumstances. I therefore move second reading of Bill No. 127, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the second reading motion moved by the minister that Bill No. 127, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? Recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And one of the points I want to raise is that we are certainly pleased to be able to stand in the Assembly today as the opposition and look at some of the proposals and some of the changes and the intent behind this particular bill, Bill 127, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018*. There are some significant changes, Mr. Speaker, and from our perspective, we want to make sure that we really take, as I've said time and time again, look at the impacts of what is being proposed in this particular bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the Saskatchewan Party do two things that's alarming to the whole manner in how we tax the people of Saskatchewan and how we generate revenues and how we stimulate our economies, which is part and parcel of what governments do. And this particular bill does propose some of the measures, as the minister alluded to, in what she believes is important that we achieve. But, Mr. Speaker, the question that we have on this side of the Assembly is really, in the out years as we move forward from 2018 on to 2019, 2020, 2021, Mr. Speaker, I think our debt is projected to be something like \$23 billion by 2020, Mr. Speaker, or shortly thereafter.

And it's becoming an alarming scenario, Mr. Speaker, as to how the Saskatchewan Party is racking up the debt at such an alarming pace, Mr. Speaker. And from our perspective in the opposition, we need the people of Saskatchewan to know is that when we ask questions on *The Income Tax Act*, as we ask questions on some of the incentives being identified in this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, we have to tell the people of Saskatchewan the fact is when we look at the out years, two or three years from now, Saskatchewan's going to be under a great burden of debt, Mr. Speaker.

And we don't want to be people that are going to spread doom and gloom about the opportunity that Saskatchewan has in the future because we think we can build a stronger province as the official opposition. We have that confidence. And, Mr. Speaker, we've cleaned up one mess already left behind by the

Conservatives and, Mr. Speaker, we are prepared to do the work that is necessary by their provincial cousins, the Saskatchewan Party, because once again we've seen how they have taken the opportunity that we often talk about on this side of the Assembly, when they've inherited a booming economy, a growing population, and billions in the bank.

And here we are 10 years later, Mr. Speaker. We're looking at record tax increases as we witnessed last year, and now we're looking at record debt, Mr. Speaker. And as they tinker with *The Income Tax Act*, they're trying to again appear that they're trying to manage the income tax levels to a point where that's also going to add challenges, Mr. Speaker, to many people that are missed in this opportunity, the people that could really do a lot with the extra dollars they would have as the result of tax savings.

We all know that eventually, Mr. Speaker, that that burgeoning debt that's being built by the Saskatchewan Party, it's going to come crashing down on the province of Saskatchewan, on the people of Saskatchewan. And this is one of the reasons why we pay a lot of interest to what this particular Finance minister is prepared to do, Mr. Speaker, and what she has done in the past, and certainly what does this mean for our future.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we practised when we were in government, there was four or five initiatives that we undertook to make sure we achieved certain objectives. I know that over a four-year time frame, we had targeted reductions in specific taxes, Mr. Speaker. There was a debt surtax that was eliminated, Mr. Speaker.

There was also a reduction of debt in various classes of people, a substantial amount of tax breaks for people that were in the middle-class sector, Mr. Speaker. We also looked at ways in which we could save families in the province of Saskatchewan a lot of the tax rates that were really, quite frankly, crushing many families because of the debt left behind by the Devine Conservatives, Mr. Speaker. So we've seen this Act before.

And I've told many people in our travels that what the Saskatchewan Party is simply trying to do. They are a tired, old government whose days are numbered. They're trying to rack up the debt as much as they can, as much as they can, so as they leave, they leave a significant challenge to the future of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons why we look at how they're tinkering, again trying to facade this whole notion of trying to deal with income tax, Mr. Speaker, all the time avoiding the challenge that they themselves created just to achieve one thing, Mr. Speaker, and that is to keep power here in Saskatchewan. For the last three elections — no, four elections, Mr. Speaker — their targets are clear.

But I'll point out, Mr. Speaker, I'd say to the people of Saskatchewan: that debt, you have a right to know what that debt is. Under the P3s [public-private partnership] we have the right to know what our obligations are. And on some of these megaprojects we have to know where the money is going, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatchewan Party is not sharing that, and this is the reason why, as they bring forward income tax amendments that are being proposed, as being discussed today, we pay very close attention to this party that have squandered the future of Saskatchewan just to do one thing and that is to retain power,

Mr. Speaker. And I've said to the previous leader, and I say to them today: was it worth it, putting Saskatchewan's future in doubt just for a short political gain, Mr. Speaker? And I suggest not.

And the people of Saskatchewan will continue finding out about these bills and the impact it has on their families as we continue exposing the years and years of Sask Party's scandal, mismanagement, and abuse of our finances, Mr. Speaker.

So, on that note, I move that we adjourn Bill No. 127, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member for Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 127, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2018*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 128 — *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — Recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2018*. This legislation implements various provincial sales tax initiatives that were announced on April 10th, 2018, as part of the 2018-19 provincial budget. These PST [provincial sales tax] measures continue to create a broader, sustainable revenue base and reduce government's reliance on resource revenues. They support Saskatchewan's growth agenda and allow us to remain on track to address continuing fiscal challenges faced by the Government of Saskatchewan.

[15:15]

To implement this change, specific amendments to *The Provincial Sales Tax Act* are required: to remove the PST exemption for used light vehicles effective April 11th, 2018; to reinstate the trade-in allowance so that the PST will only be paid on the difference in price between the trade-in and the purchased vehicle; and to exempt from PST from the private sale of used vehicles with the purchase price of up to \$5,000.

Mr. Speaker, the amendments also update the legislation with respect to PST exemptions that were announced in December 2017, including an exemption of PST on naloxone and certain other non-prescription drugs that are used to treat life-threatening conditions and an exemption of PST on prepared food and beverages sold by charitable or non-profit organizations at concessions.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to these changes, the amendments also include housekeeping items that further strengthen and modernize the legislation to sustain the province's revenue base.

The definition of "lease" is amended to clarify that a lease includes a supply of equipment or tools with an operator, and a new section is added to clarify the application of PST on

equipment based on use or consumption using a prescribed formula.

The definition of "vendor" is amended to provide additional clarity around retail sales into Saskatchewan and to include retail sales of taxable services.

An amendment is being made to clarify that engineering services can be purchased exempt of PST when the services are included in the retail sale of real property services.

And a new section is added to clarify the process around refunds for overpayment of tax.

Amendments are being made to clarify security requirements and the responsibility of contractors and principals in regard to real property service contracts.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to present this legislation changes today, and I am pleased to move second reading of *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a second reading motion moved by the minister that Bill No. 128, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2018* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? Recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I want to point out again it's my pleasure to offer the initial comments on Bill 128, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act*. And the minister spoke about very briefly some of the areas that she was expanding her tax, or as she puts it, looking at a broader, sustainable base. That was a quote that I'd like to use as a result of some of the points that she made.

Now, Mr. Speaker, on the broader, sustainable base, Mr. Speaker, last year we saw the Saskatchewan Party increase taxes by a billion dollars. And I've made the statement time and time again on many of the opportunities I've had to publicly speak on the management of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker. This is a party that had record revenue for 10 years. And then despite having record revenue for those 10 years — and I might add, revenues that no other government in the history of Saskatchewan ever, ever saw, record revenue for 10 years — and last year they had record tax hikes, Mr. Speaker, over a billion dollars in tax hikes. And every different corner they can find a ways and means they can increase taxes, Mr. Speaker, this particular party did it. And now we're looking, Mr. Speaker, at record debt.

So as you look at the history of the Saskatchewan Party, people in the province are really beginning to figure them out. They had record revenue for a long time, then they went to record tax increases. How in the heck does that translate into record debt? Doesn't make any sense, Mr. Speaker, but that is Tory math for you and that continues to plague the history of Saskatchewan. And once again Saskatchewan is being left behind to pay the bill and, Mr. Speaker, as the minister alluded to, continuing fiscal challenges.

No such language existed before the last election, Mr. Speaker.

PST on used cars reinstated. No such discussion at the last election, Mr. Speaker. And talk about the trade-offs that the people of Saskatchewan have. I'm not sure that millions of dollars are going to be attached to the used car premiums now that they are being taxed by the Saskatchewan Party. As I would point out to the people, every single tax that's been identified in this particular bill and other bills is compliments of the Saskatchewan Party government.

As I've said time and time again, there's not a tax that they don't like, Mr. Speaker. And then as they do all these broad, sweeping tax hikes, Mr. Speaker, and fee increases, and as you look at the reduction of services throughout Saskatchewan, and then what they do is they offer a small one-half of a per cent reduction in personal income tax. Well, Mr. Speaker, families throughout the province of Saskatchewan, as you look at rising food costs, Mr. Speaker, they look at insurance costs being elevated because of this particular government's activity. They look at the challenge around power and how much people are paying now for their electricity, Mr. Speaker, and they get further aggravated when they hear that some of the money they're paying on their electricity bill is going to an energy company in Alberta because the Saskatchewan Party has mismanaged the carbon capture sequestration project that they have been talking about for a couple of years here, Mr. Speaker.

So again as you look at how the Saskatchewan Party has managed our province and have really put the stress on families, Mr. Speaker, we hear a lot of families from all throughout the province — rural Saskatchewan, in our large urban settings, in northern Saskatchewan as well, Mr. Speaker — of how the cost to house insurance, of how the cost to food, of how the cost of power, and all the costs that are going up, many of our families are just absolutely struggling. People that are working two jobs are finding difficulty making ends meet, and yet we see more and more and more tax hikes being given to families and to businesses, Mr. Speaker, across this province.

And I say to the people of Saskatchewan, I think we've had enough of the tax-and-spend Saskatchewan Party government. And about the only thing that they have been consistent with, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what we say they've only been doing from the government benches is blaming the other parties for their inability to get the job done. This is quite frankly a one-trick pony, Mr. Speaker, that people of Saskatchewan have seen before. And as you look at this particular bill, what really irks me, Mr. Speaker, is what they refer to as a "dumb idea" of taxing a used car, Mr. Speaker. Here it is, 2018, the Saskatchewan Party government is now taxing the sale of used cars, something at one time that they considered "dumb."

So, Mr. Speaker, I say to the people of Saskatchewan, you're hearing from a tired old government that simply ran out of gas and ran out of taxpayers' money. They're continuing to do damage to our future. They're continuing to hurt families, and they're continuing to put us deeper, deeper into debt. So we have to pay attention to these bills that come forward to see what the effects are, and do not be persuaded by small offerings when in the larger picture, our province has got some real struggles in the future. And we've got to think differently, Mr. Speaker, and we've got to think more innovatively, and we've got to get a bit more energy into how we develop our resources, how we strengthen our economy, and how we begin to tackle

the debt being left behind after a decade of Saskatchewan Party rule.

Mr. Speaker, the future of our province and the people of Saskatchewan cannot afford many more years of Sask Party management, because all we're seeing is debt placed upon debt placed upon debt. And I say to them, despite what you inherited, to see where we are today, it is a crying shame of how you squandered our future just based on one principle, and that is to retain power.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have a lot more comments from a lot more people from across the province as it pertains to these challenges. So I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 128, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member for Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 128, *The Provincial Sales Tax Amendment Act, 2018*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 121

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to participate in the debate with regards to the bills that are put forward, and today I'm going to add my remarks to Bill No. 121, the cannabis control Act. Mr. Speaker, most people are aware that this is a new piece of legislation that's being brought forward to us right now because of the fact that the federal government, the Liberal government, in their campaign, they decided to make cannabis use legalized. And so this has made . . . All the provinces have to come up with some legislation to allow for this to come forward. And so Saskatchewan actually is one of the last provinces to jump onto this, even though they knew that this was coming from 2015.

So I think a lot of people have been anxious to see what this legislation's going to look like, but it's also put a lot of people on hold with regards to how to work through with regards to regulations and such, because we know that whatever decisions are made here on a provincial front is going to have a big impact on the municipal sector. And I know the municipal governments have been working to develop regulations within their sector, and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] have been working with the municipal

governments and helping them with developing legislation that can help with bringing this forward.

And, Mr. Speaker, I have to say that this is really important that we do this right. This is going to lay out how this is going to be brought forward within the province, and I think it's so important that we ensure that everything is done properly. And prior to putting forward this legislation there was a survey that was sent out to Saskatchewan residents, and it had the highest participation rate for a survey in Saskatchewan, I believe.

And so people in Saskatchewan are paying attention and watching with regards to this legislation coming forward. And I know my office has had multiple requests from stakeholders to have meetings with them, to discuss what their platform is, and what they would like to see us as the provincial government to bring forward. And I'm sure many members in this House have had those calls as well from community members so that they could have their points brought to our attention.

So, Mr. Speaker, I feel that there's so much to discuss with regards to this bill, and it's hard to get completely prepared for that. I've been trying to digest all of the aspects of the bill and all the information, and so I'm going to put forward my remarks, but I might be jumping back and forth, and I apologize if it's not completely consistent.

But I do have to say before again I start some of the remarks with exactly what's happening with regards to this bill, I was a bit disappointed to see that this budget didn't include any projections for revenue or expenses as a result of the cannabis legislation. We know . . . Of course we don't expect the government to be bang on on their numbers for the budget. The budget is to say, this is what we kind of expect is going to happen and this is what we project.

So it would have been nice to see a little bit of numbers because a lot of people are wondering exactly how the government's going to manage the expenses that are going to come forward with regards to the cannabis legislation. And there are going to be expenses, and we're going to need to figure out how we're going to manage that. And we would hope that some of the revenue of the cannabis sales will help with regards to the expenses, but it would have been nice to see what exactly this government is looking forward to how they're going to distribute that money.

And I think a lot of sectors are wondering what that's going to look like. How much money is going to be distributed with regards to education, preventative measures, with the legal aspect with regulations? How much is going to be going back to the municipalities to help with regards to policing costs? And how much is going to go to health with regards to providing the addiction services that are going to be needed to be addressed?

[15:30]

And also there was no information here of the details of what the costing is going to be. I'm not sure if that information has come out in other forms of documentations, but I haven't seen any information that's labelled what the costing of this is going to be. And so it would be nice to get a little bit more information with regards to that because we know that the

time's ticking. I believe they previously had a July 1st start date, but that the federal government has pushed back on that date and there was, as far as I know, the last I've heard, there wasn't an official start date presented since then. But we know it's coming and we know it's coming soon. And it would be nice to know a little bit about with regards to those numbers and how that's going to look.

Also I want to first of all start with . . . It looks like the bill is kind of divided into different parts and different divisions. So I'm going to start with part 2, the possession and distribution and consumption of cannabis. And I'm going to start with division 1, which is about minors, Mr. Speaker. And first of all what I want to talk about with regards to minors, we know that the government has set the minimum age at 19 years of age. And I believe that was what was the majority of people who participated in the survey indicated that was the number that they would like to see. And it kind of followed the alcohol consumption rules, and so that is good.

But we do know that minors will consume it as well because they are now. And we know they do with alcohol as well, but we have to have perimeters so that if they are caught with having possession, what we would do. And it looks like there was some information in here to talk about if a minor has been found with possession of cannabis, that the fine of not more than \$2,000 would be provided. I believe that there is an aspect of a fine, and also if a person is 18 years of age and older but not quite 19 yet, that that would be dealt with in adult court.

But I think it's really important to consider that when you're penalizing minors with a monetary fine, we also have to look whether that fine creates more social harm, Mr. Speaker. And exactly how are we going to allow that youth to be able to pay off that fine because \$2,000 is a lot of money for a youth. And I don't know exactly how they would come about with that kind of money.

And I don't know if fine option is any longer an option, or if that would be what the government would look at to have that as a payment option because we have to look at the socio-economic demographic of minors who consume cannabis, and there may be a correlation with the low socio-economic status. And if we're penalizing with a monetary fine, we are in turn penalizing the family unit which may in turn do more harm than good.

So I think granted that this is the maximum allowable penalty and it's discretionary. I think it's also important that we look at the different aspects that we're going to have to allow for people to be able to provide that payment and in what form that that can happen. So I think those are really important points that this government needs to look into.

Also I want to . . . Because I have a mental health background, Mr. Speaker, and I know exactly the dangers of cannabis to especially youth brain development, I think that's really important to look at as well. And so I think the best thing we can do with regards to that is provide the education component. I know when I was a kid I didn't know how damaging cannabis could be to my brain. And so I would hope that we are providing that information to youth now because it does cause a lot of long-term damage and oftentimes lifetime damage.

I'm also worried about the fact of drug-induced psychosis. We know that if youth are using cannabis and using large quantities and for a long period of time, they could develop drug-induced psychosis. And already our mental health units are busy with managing these disorders, and if a youth also has a disposition to a psychiatric disorder, cannabis can expedite that, Mr. Speaker.

And so we really, really need to be mindful of making sure that there's services available. Especially we know that just because we're legalizing marijuana, that because something is legalized does not mean that it's good and healthy. And we need to make sure that we have available services there.

My father was an addictions worker and he would really be happy to know that I'm bringing out this aspect and ensuring that we have addiction services and programs available. I know we have addiction services and programs for addictions and people who have charges with regards to drinking and driving. I wonder, has this government considered maybe having those types of services now for cannabis? Because we know that there'll be a zero tolerance for having cannabis in your system and driving. And so once we do charge people with intoxication rates, what kind of program do we have in plan, or what kind of processes there are going to be to ensure that people will have the treatment that they need and the programs that they need to manage that?

So I think it is only our responsibility to ensure that we think about that. And I think in a way this is kind of a good time to do that because, like, we all know cannabis is out in our community and people are using it. But this has given us a real good opportunity to sit down and think, what can we do better as a society to ensure that there's programs and policies in place for individuals to get the treatment that they need?

Also I think it's important to identify that the Lung Association, they've been talking a lot about the issue with regards to cannabis use and its impact on your lungs and breathing. And I know the Lung Association has been doing a lot of information with regards to smoking but also vaping and, you know, and how a lot of youth have started using, like, say flavoured vaping or flavoured cigars and such like that, and how it's kind of made it seem like it's a treat, you know. But we've got to really be mindful of how dangerous it can be for us as well.

And so I know people were . . . When I was reading about some of this stuff, individuals were talking about vaping of cannabis which also would be a concern, and so I hope that's also being addressed. And I'm hoping that the government is working alongside with the Lung Association and also talking about the consequences of the legalization of cannabis and how that plays a part.

So I believe in division 2, it's the purchase and possession and distribution. So when I'm thinking about that, Mr. Speaker, one of the areas here that was in this bill, it indicates that legal cannabis must be transported straight home from the retailer, Mr. Speaker. And I believe that is also a rule for alcohol is that when you purchase alcohol you really are supposed to go from the distributor to your home or wherever you're going, and you're not allowed to carry it in your vehicle.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think this is virtually unenforceable. Like, this is really putting . . . making a rule or a law that law enforcement are going to have a hard time to identify where the person purchased their cannabis or whatever they're purchased, and where they're going straight to, which residence or location. And so I don't know if that was just placed in there because it was part of the alcohol and gaming regulations because as far as I believe, it says no one shall have or keep or consume alcohol in a vehicle. But subsection 2 provides the exception. It is not unlawful to have alcohol in the vehicle for the purpose of transporting it from the place at which it was lawfully obtained to a place where it can be lawfully kept or consumed.

So usually that's a generous interpretation to mean no open liquor in the vehicle, but there is an exception there so that individuals . . . if they were transporting it. So I think it's important that we look at that too. We don't want to make some laws that are virtually unenforceable and put people in a tough situation. So I would hope that gets looked at.

Also with regards to possession, I believe that the possession is no more than 30 grams or having no more than four plants. If you possess more than that, that could lead you to a possession charge. I don't know if it would be anything above the 30 grams or anything more than the four plants. I don't understand what that would look like. But so if you had 35 grams, would you only be charged for the 5 grams? I don't know. I guess those are good questions to ask in committee.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't really know what 30 grams of cannabis looks like, and so I asked individuals that I know who might have that information. I will not disclose that though. They indicated that 30 grams is 1 ounce, and 1 ounce of cannabis can make 60, what they call joints. And so that is quite a bit, I think, Mr. Speaker, so I think that was a pretty generous amount.

But I believe that is kind of going in the same rate and fashion as the rest of the provinces. So I guess if that's the direction that the rest of the provinces are going, that is good. But for someone who does not use, that seems like a lot of money or a lot of cannabis, I mean.

So that's all I have to speak to division 2, but division 3 is the consumption. And so that has been a bit more of an issue for a lot of people that I've talked to, that they found that having the provision that does not allow any public consumption sites, individuals are a little bit concerned about that. Because my understanding is consuming cannabis in public spaces is completely prohibited and so some individuals have indicated that prohibiting the consumption in rental properties, in condominiums, without the provision of an alternative public site will promote and increase the incident rates of people consuming cannabis potentially in their vehicle or in other places that contravenes this Act.

Some individuals were wondering if there was going to be a process that we could have licensed cannabis consumption facilities as we do for alcohol. And so having licensed alcohol facilities is also what we have in our province. And they were wondering if we were going to eventually have that for cannabis.

Also another area that some people found was very disappointing was the fact that cannabis consumption will not be allowed in campgrounds or provincial parks because we know the cannabis culture embraces nature and exploration. And in other provinces such as Alberta, the parks like Jasper and Banff are supporting cannabis use and welcoming the new wave of tourism to the province. So since we're a province that has bountiful, beautiful lakes and amazing trails and forests, some people are thinking that this would be a good invitation to have cannabis users in the world to come and visit. So that's been brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker. And so I think we need to look at that as well.

[15:45]

Another one is the division 4, is applications. So what I feel is really disappointing, Mr. Speaker, is that it was really unfortunate and I think we've missed a big opportunity to not allow local businesses to have an advantage to gain these business licences. I think this is a big loss of opportunity because we should be supporting our Saskatchewan-based businesses. So other people are really extremely disappointed that there's a lack of preference for Saskatchewan-based business.

It seems like there's a current trend from this government to support big business and lobby them to secure positions. So we know that if we give this opportunity to Saskatchewan-based businesses that a substantial portion of the revenue shares will stay in Saskatchewan to benefit Saskatchewan residents. And I would like to see more of that, the money staying here in the province and being used by the people in the province here.

So the application process excludes small-business industry experts within our province, so that's unfortunate, and large corporations are monopolizing the retail industry across Canada with regards to the cannabis sales. And so I think Saskatchewan had a big opportunity here to make sure that the Saskatchewan businesses had a better opportunity to be providing the business and sales of cannabis. So I would've liked to see them having more preference.

Then, Mr. Speaker, we have, with part 4, the administration and enforcement of cannabis. So we've got to be really mindful that law enforcement needs . . . They need to be mindful of both the medical and recreational regime of cannabis. And so a lot of these guidelines are going to make that difficult. And so I think it's really important that we have a comprehensive approach to educating law enforcement.

And we have a large potential here, Mr. Speaker, of human rights and charter rights violations, if individuals are seeing . . . that are using, in a medical form, are feeling that their rights are being violated. So we've got to ensure that . . . Like I was saying before, Mr. Speaker, that municipalities, they're going to be experiencing a lot of financial expenses with regards to ensuring that their law enforcement officers are trained in order to be ensuring that the legalization of cannabis is done in the proper fashion.

In a news article here, it indicated that the Regina Police Service estimates legalized marijuana will cost them 1.2 million in training and equipment costs. That's a huge hit, Mr. Speaker.

Municipalities were hit by this government in many other ways and are struggling. And so who's going to be paying for those increased costs? Is it going to be the ratepayers in the cities? Or how is the province going to delegate that funding?

And that's why I indicated that it would've been nice to see some guidance within the budget with regards to this, and how the province is planning on supporting municipalities with this increase of costs. And so they indicate that it costs about \$15,000 to send an officer for drug recognition expert training because it's provided in the southern US, you know. And so more municipalities are wanting to get more officers trained in that because of this legalization coming forward.

So there's a lot of concerns with regards to the enforcement aspect of cannabis. And I was saying before about how the transportation, the rules around transportation and vehicles is onerous and difficult to enforce. And there's going to be serious questions needed to be asked and how this will impact people.

And also with the zero tolerance of intoxication, the driving impaired, Mr. Speaker, I agree with ensuring that we have drivers that are not impaired. But the fact is, is that cannabis is fat-soluble, and so it sits in your system for, I believe, 20 to 30 days. And so how are you to determine that an individual has used it yesterday or a week ago or three weeks ago? And it could be still in your system.

And there are some devices that will indicate how much is in your system, which can kind of give you a better idea of when a person used it. But with this zero tolerance that . . . Like so if a person used, they can't drive for a month? Like how is that going to be managed? And so I think that could have been looked at a little bit better. And how is that going to be enforced, you know?

And so I would have liked to see that with driving with alcohol impairment because, Mr. Speaker, we know alcohol goes out of your system real quickly, and maybe we need to have a zero tolerance for that, you know. And I would have liked to see that. If this minister is correct with his stance that he wants to get hard on drinking and driving, well you should put a zero tolerance for drinking and driving.

So there's a lot of questions with regards to the impaired driving aspect. Then we know that the legal enforcement of cannabis is going to be very costly. The policing costs, it seems to be dumped onto municipalities, and we're either going to pay through provincial taxes or municipal taxes with regards to it. But it is ridiculous that they haven't set aside any of the revenue to help with the policing costs. And so there's a lot of information a person could find out about that.

So, Mr. Speaker, a few other things I want to put on the record before I conclude my remarks is I think we missed a big opportunity to talk about the medical access of cannabis with regards to this. I find it extremely disappointing and short sighted that the provision of medical dispensaries didn't come alongside with the recreational ones.

We know there's a lot of people in our province who are relying on the medical aspect of cannabis. And clients deserve to have in-person access with quality support systems in place, and we

should have looked into that. This will in turn make medical patients have to resort to getting their cannabis in a different form or fashion with people who might not have the knowledge base of the medical field of it. And I think that's inappropriate to force medical patients to purchase cannabis alongside recreational users. It really devalues them.

And so also there was nothing in here about the cannabis edibles. I know a lot of people are using that, especially people with regards to the medical aspect as well. And so I wonder if that will be maybe added at a later date. I guess that would be a good question to ask, and why that was left out of the legislation. So okay, so it looks like it was left out by the Liberal government, which I think both sides here would agree that they haven't maybe gone through this process the proper way, and so they've been very frustrating to deal with. So I guess we'll have to work closer with them with regards to ensuring that all this information is put forward.

And also I think this doesn't address what they call is head shops, Mr. Speaker. Like we know that in these, what they call head shops, they sell cannabis products that people use cannabis with, and they sell it to minors, the cannabis devices to minors. And I think that is very troubling, Mr. Speaker. And I think we need to do a better job with monitoring and regulation with regards to these businesses, and that should be addressed and incorporated into an Act as well. So I think minors are having access to this because of a lack of regulatory regime, so I think that's something that's really important that we address as well, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that concludes the remarks that I have with regards to this legislation. Like I said before, there seems to be more questions than answers. And I know there'll be a lot of discussion when this comes to committee, and I know my colleagues have a lot more of information that they're going to want to add to in regards to this bill. And I know of my colleague, the critic for Justice, will do a good job with regards to asking questions to the minister and his staff about what the decisions were with regards to this piece of legislation. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I adjourn debate for Bill No. 121, the cannabis control Act.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 122

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, again it's an honour to stand today to add my remarks with regards to Bill No. 121. I just had the opportunity to sit up and talk to Bill No. 121, the cannabis control Act, which it has the majority of the meat and potatoes with regards to these bills. And as far as I know, my understanding is that Bill No. 122, the cannabis control consequential amendments Act is, it's just another piece of legislation that aligns with Bill 121 and is in for the purposes of changes being made so both of these bills align and the legislation all aligns as well.

So I'm going to leave that for my remarks because I added a lot of information when I have my comments to Bill No. 121. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to adjourn debate on Bill No. 122.

The Speaker: — The member for Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 122, *The Cannabis Control (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 123

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 123** — *The Snowmobile (Fees) Amendment Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into discussion here today around Bill No. 123, *The Snowmobile (Fees) Amendment Act, 2018*. This bill, it reflects a lot of hard work of the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association, Mr. Speaker, who have long played an instrumental role, a leadership role across our province to establish what are world-class trails, Mr. Speaker, and really unprecedented sledding or snowmobiling opportunities across our province.

I want to recognize Chris Brewer and the CEO [chief executive officer] or the executive director of the Snowmobile Association of Saskatchewan, all others over at Sask Snow, all the directors, all of the volunteers that make that incredible organization happen, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank them for their advocacy and their involvement on this bill and for pushing for changes to make sure that they have the revenues that they rightly deserve to build and support that incredible network of trails across our province.

[16:00]

Of course they work directly with the network of clubs all across our province. And you know, it's really remarkable, Mr. Speaker, if you go on their website and look at the interactive map of the snowmobile trails that connect our province, it connects our entire province. But it's quite the network if you look in from the southeast of the province all the way up through the northeast of the province, the central part of the

province, right across the province.

I was just visiting with the member for Carrot River casually behind the bar, Mr. Speaker. And of course he's a terrible fisherman, but setting that aside, we were talking about the exceptional snowmobile trails and the networks up through his constituency. And I remember . . . I know many, you know, that support this, these trails and the training and the warm-up shacks, all the pieces that come together to support this recreation infrastructure across our province.

And I think of Dwight Thesen, who I got to know a few years back, out of Arborfield, a real leader within the region in ensuring world-class snowmobiling opportunities. I think he was the president of the Pasquia Snow Goers in the area for many years, Mr. Speaker. And just listening to the passion and the commitment and the dedication of people like Dwight Thesen speaks to the incredible value that we get when we partner with the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association, when we partner with that network of snowmobile clubs across our province to allow for world-class recreation. And so to Dwight Thesen, to the thousands of others across our province, to all those involved in snowmobile clubs, I say thank you.

Snowmobiling of course is a good, healthy recreation for so many. The snowmobile association plays a vital role in ensuring training and safety as well, Mr. Speaker. They play an important role in supporting the clubs, who are not only maintaining trails but establishing trails, and doing it in an environmentally respectful and responsible fashion, Mr. Speaker. And of course their efforts and the efforts of volunteers all across our province and these clubs supports incredible tourism within our province as well.

To spend any time up in that — well in any part of this province, but again I'll single out the member for Carrot River's constituency — to be throughout that region, you certainly identify the asset that we have in these snowmobile trails. And I know those that are involved in hotels, those that are involved in restaurants, those that are involved in all aspects of tourism know it very well. Certainly getting on a sled or getting on a snowmobile is something that I enjoy, just like so many across our province, and it's something that we need to do all that we can to support within our province.

So I want to say thank you to that incredible network of volunteers across our province. I really want to say thank you to the Saskatchewan Snowmobile Association and Chris Brewer, Mr. Speaker. You know, you get to know leaders like Chris within our community. I often see Chris and the snowmobile association at Agribition, Mr. Speaker, and they are usually there raffling off tickets to raise dollars for the snowmobile association. I've never been lucky with the tickets I've acquired, Mr. Speaker, but here's hoping for the future.

But at this point in time, I don't have much else to say regarding this bill. But I would like to thank all those that are involved in snowmobile clubs across our province, all those volunteering countless hours, all those involved in Sask Snow itself, and all those that also support snowmobilers throughout our province from a tourism and from an economic perspective, Mr. Speaker.

And again, as I singled out the member from Carrot River Valley, I do want to put plainly on the record, Mr. Speaker, that I know he's a terrible fisherman, Mr. Speaker. And that must be difficult, coming from a riding and a constituency with such exceptional fishing. And you'd be hard pressed to try to figure out how could a member from Carrot River preside over a riding with such incredible fishing assets, Mr. Speaker, such incredible lakes and rivers, but be such a terrible fisherman. And you know, we're all left befuddled on that front, but we certainly know he's a good champion for his riding, Mr. Speaker.

It's my pleasure to enter into this discussion, and at this point I adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 123, *The Snowmobile (Fees) Amendment Act, 2018*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 124

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 124 — *The Environmental Management and Protection (Environmental Handling Charges) Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And as always, it is an honour to be able to rise in the Assembly in this beautiful Chamber and be able to be part of the debate on the bills and the agenda of this government as they advance their agenda throughout the province, Mr. Speaker. We've had a bit of a break because we've been debating the budget in the last couple weeks, which is a priority motion. And so it's kind of back to the usual now, Mr. Speaker, getting back to these bills and dealing with the business that's in front of the House. Of course once we deal with them in here in the House, we'll have more opportunities to speak to them in committee.

And committee's a great opportunity to, as we discussed recently, for committee members to ask questions of government officials. And the role of government officials and the minister in those committees is actually to give witness or testimony to the programs.

And I think it's important to remember that that's the role of the minister in those committees, Mr. Speaker, is to provide the information that the committee needs in order to vote off that bill. And it's kind of interesting sometimes. I think maybe there's a bit of confusion about what the role of the minister is, and I think it's important for us to often review the role, the roles that we all play in the committee process and in this Assembly.

The bill I'm speaking to today is a fairly straightforward bill,

and it basically is increasing the deposits that people have to pay on their recyclable purchases, Mr. Speaker.

There's five different types of materials that are now recyclable, and which by law you have to pay a recycling fee for that purchase. Of course because we have the wonderful Sarcen system that we have here in Saskatchewan, you can return those recyclables and get your money back basically. So it's a very incentive-based system for recycling. Makes a lot of sense because you pay upfront for the fee of the recycling, and in the end we have a system in place for collecting all those recyclable materials and moving them through the recycling stream so that they're not ending up in landfills.

When I think back to when I was a kid, beer bottles . . . That was something we did every spring, Mr. Speaker, is we would go out where all the beer bottles were in the ditches and we would collect them. And it was quite lucrative actually for many of us kids because our dad would drive us down the side of the road and we would just gather these bottles and put them back in the back of the truck.

So we've been recycling beer bottles for a long, long time. I remember when they were stubbies, Mr. Speaker, and then the long-neck beer bottles came into popularity, I think in the late '70s or mid-'70s. I remember when Labatt's Lite became a very popular beer; there was no light beer before that. So those recyclables have been in the system for a long, long time.

But as we evolve in our consuming habits . . . I'm not sure evolve is the right word, but as we move along in our consumption habits, different materials have come to be valuable when it comes to recycling. And this is . . . You know, we need to know that materials that are being thrown out that do have a value, that do have a way to be recycled so that they can be reused again, that we have systems in place to do that.

We don't see that as much in other industries maybe, Mr. Speaker. And I'm thinking of methane and butane and the associated gases that come off the oil field, Mr. Speaker, because many of those . . . Even natural gas is often just burned or vented into the atmosphere, when it has commercial value, and so does butane, so does methane. But there's no incentives for the oil producers to capture those valuable products — natural gas, butane, methane — and actually conserve it and then perhaps sell it on the market.

So we have seen some initiatives on the part of the federal government in terms of methane capture, and certainly this government has announced recently that they are going to take measures to recycle that methane and to assist the oil producers in ensuring that they don't just vent it into the atmosphere, because it's pretty nasty stuff and the emissions that they emit — methane is pretty nasty. So I'm appreciative to see that this government is making moves to start conserving and actually capturing some of the methane that's being emitted.

That's an important thing and it's recycling, Mr. Speaker, much like it is when we take materials . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . much like when we recycle materials at the . . . I'm getting distracted, Mr. Speaker. Kind of like the materials that we take to the recycling at Sarcen. And again Sarcen is part of that complete cycle where there's, you know, production,

consumption, and then recycling. And Sarcen is fitting in, in that spot, and then we go again. Around and around we go.

So what's happening in this bill? We have *The Environmental Management and Protection Act* from 2010, is the most recent iteration of that bill. It's been amended a couple of times. And part VI of that bill or that Act is in regard to waste management, and division 1 is the beverage container program. So this is where by statute we have the minister establishing the price that must be paid for those containers when you're purchasing them.

It's curious for me to see these prices in the legislation and sometimes we see those types of things that, as they are adjusted from time to time, get moved into the regulations. But this is an example where it's actually in the legislation so we have an opportunity to comment on that here in the House and the public sees the bill before it's passed in order to get more, I guess, advanced warning about the changes that are being proposed.

This change was announced by this government, I believe in March. March 23rd of this year there was a press release where there was an announcement of a number of different things that are being changed. Fees and changes are going to be imposed. Now fees and charges are a form of taxation, Mr. Speaker, that doesn't really get referred to in the same way as other taxes are referred to, or levies. But in '18-19 there are a number of changes to fees and charges that are going to add a significant amount of money into the government coffers, into the GRF [General Revenue Fund], Mr. Speaker.

The environment handling charges that are being proposed in this bill are actually a large portion of what is being added into the government's coffers this fiscal year in the budget. And of the total fees and charges, I think this year is \$18 million more money coming into the government's coffers through this method of taxation. Of that \$18 million, I believe \$10.2 million of that is coming from this bill alone. So it's not an insignificant amount of money that is being gathered by the government through this bill.

So what we have right now is the five types of recyclable materials that are, currently have the fees associated with them and that is: metal cans, plastic bottles, non-refillable glass bottles, multi-material shelf-stable containers, and paper-based polycoat gable top container, and I think that would be milk cartons. I've never heard them described quite so eloquently, Mr. Speaker, but paper-based polycoat gable top containers. So there's five different types of materials.

Currently for metal cans it's 5 cents. This bill is raising it to 7. With plastic bottles, this is going up from 6 cents to 8 cents. Non-refillable glass is from 7 cents to 9 cents. Multi-material shelf-stable containers, I believe that's Tetra Paks, is going up from 3 cents to 5 cents. And then the milk cartons are going up from 3 cents to 5 cents, Mr. Speaker. So it's hard to imagine how an increase of 2 cents can actually generate a \$10 million additional revenue into the GRF, but that is the numbers that we're dealing with, Mr. Speaker.

I find it interesting that these changes to fees and levies, or fees and charges, this year is more than double what it's ever been. And in fact it's like 20 times higher than it was in '14-15, the

increases alone, Mr. Speaker. So in 2014, the extra fees that the government was gathering outside of the taxation system was about \$700,000. And in '15-16, it was just over 2 million. In '16-17, it dropped back down to over \$541,000; '17-18, we saw a huge, huge jump to \$9.5 million, extra money on the existing fees and charges that people already paid. And this year, it was a whopping \$18.303 million.

[16:15]

Now if you do the calculation in terms of how much money the government is clawing into the GRF just by these fees and charges, there's been an increase of 2,520 per cent from '14-15 to '18-19. So this is an extraordinary increase in fees and charges that the Saskatchewan people are being expected to pay. And it's a way, I think, of gathering extra funds for a struggling GRF because of poor management decisions and misspending on other areas, Mr. Speaker. So it's interesting to see this bill come the way it has.

The other piece that's in it that's kind of interesting is the retroactivity. This change is retroactive to April 1st of this month, of 2018, and it makes very clear that you cannot go out and try and claim that money back if you . . . I need to make sure I say this right. A consumer, before April 1st or on or after April 1st but before this bill is assented to, from whom “. . . an environmental handling charge was recovered in the amounts imposed pursuant to the new provisions is not entitled to a refund from the general revenue fund of the money so paid.”

So the explanatory note that explains what that is trying to do says that:

Transitional provisions are included to make the Act and environmental handling charges retroactive . . . and [to] prevent action to recover moneys remitted for the charges prior to the legislation coming in to force on assent.”

So right now people are paying those extra charges but the bill's not in effect yet. But this says once it's in effect, then they have to pay them anyways. So it's sort of dealing with the time lag between April 1st and when this bill is actually assented to. Interesting legislative technique, Mr. Speaker, and one that, I think, has been used in the past for similar reasons.

At any rate, that's basically what's in this bill. We'll look forward to further discussion on it, but at this point in time, I'd like to adjourn debate on Bill No. 124, *The Environmental Management and Protection (Environmental Handling Charges) Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 124. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 125

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Harrison that **Bill No. 125** — *The*

Saskatchewan Value-added Agriculture Incentive Act be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — And I recognize you too, Mr. Speaker. No, I'm sorry. I shouldn't joke about that. Anyways it is an honour to be able to rise today on Bill No. 125 which is *The Saskatchewan Value-added Agriculture Incentive Act*.

This is an Act that is bringing in a new tax incentive for certain groups. I think it would be a very limited number of groups or companies who are looking at getting some tax incentives for their business.

The minister introduced this bill and had a few comments about it on April 23rd, so that's not too long ago. What is this? Yes, yesterday. Sorry, he provided his second reading comments yesterday. And he's talking about companies. He says — I'm just going to quote him for a second here — on page 3978:

The benefit of this legislation is that it offers a 15 per cent non-refundable tax credit for value-added agriculture businesses that make a significant capital investment to expand production capacity . . . [And so it's] designed to be used in addition to other existing incentives . . .

And he says it will position Saskatchewan as having an “. . . attractive host of incentives for those companies . . .” I just always find it interesting when certain targeted businesses or sectors are given these types of incentives.

And one that we've talked about a lot in this House, Mr. Speaker, and where I think this government dropped the ball, was the film employment tax credit. Now that was a refundable tax credit but it was one that was absolutely necessary for the film industry to make its way here in Saskatchewan. And so we talk often about picking winners and losers, and I think that's an example of the Sask Party turning their back on an entire industry. And we still haven't sort of sussed out what exactly the problem was other than the premier had an issue with the way the tax credit was structured.

We've seen the results. We have an empty sound stage here in Regina, a world-class facility that's now empty. We see people have left the province in droves that had considerable expertise and talent and innovation in the film industry. But simply, when you wipe out an industry like that, people can't find employment and so they leave. And we know a number of people have left. So it's really unfortunate about the choices that governments make that actually do incent winners and losers. And it seems that this value-added tax incentive is another one of those.

And I often wonder what the policy decisions are around these tax incentives. And I remember talking to the former minister, who's now stepped down and we're being looked at having a by-election to replace him. But he talked about one tax incentive for the patent box. And I asked him, what sort of research did the government do? What sort of public, you know, assessments were done in terms of value for the public? And he says, oh no, the premier just ran into this guy in the

airport, and that was the impetus for bringing that tax incentive into legislation. So it seems like a bit of a shotgun approach.

And when I ask for analysis, policy analysis on tax incentives and what sort of public policy goals are trying to be met or, you know, what is the larger picture in terms of this, it's really difficult to get any sort of concrete answers about the analysis that was done to determine whether or not this type of tax incentive is appropriate.

And we also heard a whole lot about transformational change a couple years ago, Mr. Speaker, and how that was going to inform everything that is being done financially here in the House and all the bills that are being brought forward and the budgeting process. And it just disappeared. We're not talking about it anymore. And you have to wonder, with all the trumpet blowing about transformational change, where it went. It just kind of whimpered away. And it's unfortunate because I know the chamber of commerce did a lot of work with the construction association about how that needed to look.

And of course this is when the deficit was much, much, much higher than it was budgeted to be, of course, just before the election. So we didn't know about all this trouble until after the election of course, Mr. Speaker, and that's when these transformational changes were going to be put in place. But when I asked in committee about what's the analysis, what's the policy analysis, what is the thinking behind this, it was very difficult to get a sense of what thought had actually been put into that.

I went online to find out how governments do decide which tax incentives and exemptions are appropriate and in what circumstances, and I ran across basically a report that was done on it. And they asked a number of questions, and these are the kinds of questions, I think, that need to be asked in committee. And certainly I would assume the Finance officials and their policy folks are doing these kinds of assessments. So for example:

What is the policy objective of providing tax incentives and exemptions? How does a government ensure it is receiving value for money in providing tax incentives and exemptions? [And] in this context [this is a task force], how can the task force work to control and maximize the value of tax exemptions to all parties? [And] is there a need for principles [and] best practices in incentives and exemptions?

And I'm just going to go to the title of this paper for Hansard's purposes. This is an article or a PowerPoint called *Transparency in the Governance of Tax Incentives and Exemptions* and it was written by Chris Lenon, L-E-N-O-N, chair of the BIAC [Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD] tax committee, 7 February, 2012, OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development], Paris. So that's the writer of this article.

Other questions that he's asking in terms of governance of tax incentives is:

Why do governments offer incentives and exemptions to investors? Should some forms of economic activity be

incentivised? If so, how? [And] how should countries compete for investment and capital given that there is a finite supply? Which incentives [or] exemptions are most efficient? [And] why do investors seek investment agreements?

So those are just a few of the questions that I hope and assume that our policy folks in the Finance ministry have done in order to determine whether this particular tax incentive, value-added agricultural tax incentive, is one that's appropriate.

Is it appropriate at this time? Is it appropriate in terms of meeting the balance that this government has to meet in terms of bringing revenues into the coffers and ensuring that investment takes place? And I'm hoping, Mr. Speaker, that this isn't just another example of picking winners and losers because that certainly does not show a lot of foresight and a lot of policy analysis that's really needed to ensure that proper decisions are being made when it comes to taxation incentives.

And so at this point, Mr. Speaker, I haven't spoken to the bill directly itself. There's a number of different clauses that are added. It's a brand new bill. It's not amending any other bills although there are some amendments by virtue of the fact that it's coming in. They're calling it the . . . They're shortening it down to an SVAI, Saskatchewan value-added agriculture incentive, and you can get certificates and you can apply for it. There's quite a significant tax break that occurs if this company sticks around for three years or the project that's eligible has a three-year life or more.

So just different clauses that you would see in something like this: there's applying for the certificate, conditional approval, review of the application, issuance of the certificate. And then they can claim the tax credit once the certificate has been issued. Then there's a clause on change in circumstances; then a suspension or cancellation, of course, of the certificate, if needed; record keeping requirements. There'll be inspectors involved and investigations can happen as well. So offences — penalties; recovery; limitations on prosecution which is a six-year limitation period. And then of course service of notice and documents or the regulation clause, Mr. Speaker, which is a long list of regulatory authorities that are being passed on to the Executive Council.

So I know that more of our colleagues here on this side of the House are going to want to ask a few more questions about it, and certainly our critic will do a fine job in committee hopefully getting answers from the witnesses which are brought forward to provide information to the committee. So that's what we're hoping for, Mr. Speaker.

So at this point I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 125, *The Saskatchewan Value-added Agriculture Incentive Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 125, *The Saskatchewan Value-added Agriculture Incentive Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 73

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 73 — *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad my friend from Weyburn is interested in this debate here today. That's always, always fun when members opposite take an interest in what you have to say.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to wade into the debate on this particular bill, *The Insurance Amendment Act*. It's always good to look to the minister's second reading speech to just have a sense of where the government is coming from with respect to the bill. You can review the bill as well, and obviously reviewing the bill directly tells you something, but reading the minister's comments also outlines a sense of where the government's coming from with respect to any particular bill.

With respect to Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act*, as the minister pointed out in his second reading comments, this bill was passed . . . The original bill “. . . was passed in spring of 2015 but has not yet been proclaimed into force.” — which is something I'll talk about in a little bit as well, just proclamation of bills — but “It will replace *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act* and update Saskatchewan's insurance legislation to modernize the regulation of the insurance industry.” So I kind of chuckled at that language of modernizing the insurance industry for a bill that was just passed three years ago, Mr. Speaker, but not yet proclaimed.

I do have to say there is one part of the bill, I think, really jumped out at me and that I think is incredibly important and has been flagged for me. Obviously one thing that has happened since this bill was before us just a short amount of time ago was, “. . . the Supreme Court of Canada issued the Carter decision, and [as the minister points out] medical assistance in dying [or MAID] provisions were added to the Criminal Code.” So this particular bill, “The amendments will incorporate the definition of “medical assistance in dying” in the Criminal Code into *The Insurance Act* and will confirm that the section in the Act respecting suicide does not apply with respect to a death resulting from medical assistance in dying.”

I know I had a conversation with someone last summer who had flagged this as a huge issue. He had pointed out . . . We were talking about the fact that, if you choose to take medical assistance in dying, that this boils or wraps into privacy and all kinds of issues. But you don't actually have to consult with a loved one. It's between you and your medical practitioner, which I think is important and privacy issues are important.

[16:30]

But this particular individual pointed out to me that the challenge with that is if you have a spouse or a partner who has decided on his or her own to accept medical insurance in dying, without this amendment it could have rendered insurance void, which for many people would be a huge issue. So you have . . .

Let's say you've got insurance on your mortgage, you've got life insurance, all those things, and so if you accept medical assistance in dying, your partner then would not be presumed to get that insurance. But this amendment fixes it. I would like to actually just read that particular section into the record here:

The following section is added after section 8-118;

8-118.1(1) In this section, ‘**medical assistance in dying**’ means medical assistance in dying as defined in section 241.1 of the *Criminal Code*.

(2) Section 8-118 does not apply to an insured who receives medical assistance in dying.

(3) If a contract contains an undertaking, express or implied, that insurance money will be paid if a person whose life is insured receives medical assistance in dying, the undertaking is lawful and enforceable.

(4) For the purposes of this Act, if an insured receives medical assistance in dying, that insured is deemed to have died as a result of the illness, disease or disability for which he or she was determined to be entitled to receive that assistance, in accordance with clause 241.2(3)(a) of the *Criminal Code*”.

So I'm very happy to see this in place, but I am curious how long it'll take once this bill passes, as most bills that come before us in the spring session pass not long after. I would like . . . I'm wondering in committee when the Justice critic . . . or I'm actually not sure which critic will be responsible for this, Mr. Speaker, but we'll ask those questions around proclamation and a bill coming into force.

It's interesting to me the issue of MAID [medical assistance in dying] flagged in this particular insurance, or in this insurance Act, is interesting to me as the Health critic, Mr. Speaker. I have spoken to people who have very strong feelings about it on either side, but I do know if you have medical assistance in dying, the other piece, the other side of the coin that is absolutely imperative is to have a strong palliative care system so people actually feel like they have options when they're sick and in pain and suffering and need to have that pain controlled and managed. So I think this is a good change and an important change, really important change in *The Insurance Act*, to make sure that if someone chooses medical assistance in dying that his or her loved ones have access to the insurance that they've paid for.

And on the flip side of the coin, making sure that people have access . . . I'm sorry. This has been a tough slog here with my throat for the last several weeks.

People need to have access to palliative care. They need to have it in hospital. They need to have it in long-term care settings. Long-term care settings, for all intents and purposes, are palliative care settings. I know in a conversation with a former minister of Health, I remember some numbers that he had shared with me. I think the average length of time that someone's in long-term care actually is about 18 months from the time they arrive until they pass away, which is also interesting to me, thinking about my grandmother who spent

two decades I think in long-term care. So times sure have changed, or the level of care in long-term care has increased quite dramatically over the years.

I just was speaking and working with a family last week, an ALS [amyotrophic lateral sclerosis] patient, and working with the ALS Society about issues around palliative care and palliative home care in particular. And this is important, very important, particularly in rural Saskatchewan, making sure people have access to the supports they need to be able to stay home. It's better for the person, but it's also ultimately better for the system because an acute care bed is very expensive.

But I mean, the most important thing is making sure that people have the opportunity to live their final days and have a good death. That is, from all the literature I've read, from the people who work in this area in palliative care, having a good death, for the individual who is ill — as well as loved ones — is a really important piece, Mr. Speaker. So although this particular bill solves the issue around insurance, I would argue that this government has a long way to go in ensuring people have access to palliative care.

I was happy to know that they were spending some of the federal dollars this last budget on sort of a last-minute training lots of people. I can't remember. It's not at the tip of my tongue, the name of the program, the palliative care program. But making sure people have the skills in palliative care, Mr. Speaker, that is I think something positive the government has been doing in this regard. But there's a lot more work to do, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the other change with *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*, so I've talked about the new section that addresses medical assistance in dying. There's also a new section added that allows for more recovery options for victims of interpersonal violence. And there's some housekeeping changes as well.

There's a new definition for "unlicensed insurer" which is pretty basic. The new definition is, "unlicensed insurer" does not include any insurer that is exempt from the requirement to be licensed pursuant to this Act."

It adds a new subsection, makes it a requirement for licensed applicants to comply with regulations. There are changes to ensure that a managing general agent or third party administrator can only act on behalf of an insurer if they hold an appropriate licence, and it includes some changes to the penalties associated with insurance licensing.

Again I think that these . . . for all intents and purposes, a good bill. And I know when our critic gets to committee, there will be many questions asked of the minister. And I think again . . . I mentioned this at the beginning of my remarks. This first bill was passed in 2015. And it's always interesting to me, where I talk to stakeholders or other organizations who have an interest in a particular piece of legislation, and they're told by government, oh well we're not going to open up the Act for a while. We're reviewing the Act. It could be years.

But in my time, almost nine years, Mr. Speaker, in this legislature, particularly in the last few years, there's been

several bills that have come before this House that have been before the House on multiple occasions to fix things that have been forgotten or missed.

And you know, I'm a big believer in . . . I think the minister talked about ongoing consultations with insurance providers. And I'm a big believer in staying connected to stakeholders and knowing what's going on and what the impacts — direct and the unintended consequences — are of any legislation. But it's interesting to me how some legislation, if the government and the political will isn't there, it can take a long time to get legislative changes to happen. And in other cases bills come before us many times in a short period of time, Mr. Speaker.

I think one other thing I just want to comment on. I've never been in government, and I know that sometimes governments choose not to proclaim bills that they've passed for a number of reasons. And this bill had not yet been proclaimed.

It reminds me of another bill actually that's relevant to conversations we were having earlier today. In 2015, we passed *The Human Tissue Gift Act* in 2015 that actually facilitated organ donation, being able to set up mandatory referral throughout the province. It was a good bill, and people in the organ and tissue donation world . . . I know the government who worked with them to try to figure out how we change our abysmal organ donation rates. And so I'm eager to get to my Health estimates committee, because last spring I was told that that bill hadn't been proclaimed yet and wasn't in force. So I'm hoping for different information.

And now the minister has announced a point five position, donor physician position, which I might add is far less than we need here in Saskatchewan. We look at Ontario that is 120 times the number of donation physicians — 120 times. They've got 58 donor physicians in Ontario and have some of the best rates in the country, but they've done that very purposefully and diligently by implementing best practices. So hopeful to hear in estimates that this human tissue gift Act has been proclaimed, and I am eager to hear a little bit more about organ donation.

But with respect to Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act*, I'm glad to see this change around medical assistance in dying is happening. And I look forward to the critic getting some further answers about a few issues in committee. But with that, with Bill No. 73, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 73, *The Insurance Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 83

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 83 — *The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act, 2017*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into discussion as it relates to Bill No. 83, *The Environmental Management and Protection Amendment Act, 2017*. This relates to a very important area within our province, Mr. Speaker — the protection of our environment or natural environment, Mr. Speaker; the protection of our incredible lakes and rivers, Mr. Speaker; the protection of our habitat, Mr. Speaker; the prairie landscapes that are such an asset within our province but also at risk, Mr. Speaker.

We see a government that, far too often in the Sask Party, just doesn't have time to provide practical, pragmatic leadership with respect to the environment, Mr. Speaker. And far too often they're placing things like our natural habitat in our lakes and our rivers at risk, Mr. Speaker. And this is something that binds our province together.

And I think of water, Mr. Speaker. The value that Saskatchewan people — rural, urban, indigenous — place on water, Mr. Speaker, is something that really should unite us. And it's disappointing time and time again to have a Sask Party government that gives passing interest to the importance of protecting our land and air and water, Mr. Speaker.

We see changes that are brought forward here in this bill, and we'll consult on this bill, but changes that certainly decrease accountability of a government, Mr. Speaker, that should be increasing accountability on every front. We see changes here on how those are appointed to the Saskatchewan environment code advisory, and the change that makes this less transparent, Mr. Speaker, now under the full control of the minister with changes of the bill, as opposed to a level of public transparency to the people of the province by way of the traditional process of being appointed by order in council. And we see this erosion of transparency, this erosion of accountability from the Sask Party government on so many fronts.

Now as it relates to those good people that put their names forward to serve on the advisory board with respect to that code, I say thank you. And I say thank you to all those people across our province who, whether from an employment perspective or from those that volunteer, that work to protect our environment across our province.

I also recognize that there's a change here within this legislation that eliminates references to human health. And we'll want to get more around waterways and water that's being supplied. We want to get a lot more information on that front. Certainly the quality of our water is critical.

Human health should be front and centre, and it does remind me as well that we live in a time across our province where we have so many communities, so many people who are subjected to boil water advisories, Mr. Speaker, so many of them being indigenous communities, Mr. Speaker. And you know, from our perspective — the New Democrats, the official opposition — it's past time that we step up to the plate and act to ensure safe water for all across our province.

There's measures that have been brought forward here to deal

with those that are bringing in beverage containers from other provinces and redeeming them within our system here, and that seems to be probably a reasonable measure. We'll see, we'll assess its effectiveness as to what's been brought forward. But certainly I'd want to thank and recognize all those involved in Sarcan and in recycling all across our province.

[16:45]

We really do have a special model and one that can be held out as a best practice within our province. And we want to certainly make sure that any legislation and any actions of government supports all those good people in all those organizations on the ground that are working hard from an environmental perspective. And I say thanks to all those directly involved now and for many years with Sarcan.

When we look at matters of the environment, I see, certainly within this bill . . . And I just looked at it for a little bit of time; we'll be engaged with stakeholders across our province. But certainly we don't see any action with respect to dealing with the Quill lakes, Mr. Speaker, and in all the lands that have been lost, Mr. Speaker, all the lands that have been impacted by the high mineral content, the high saline salt content within that water, Mr. Speaker, and all the good producers in that region that have been directly impacted by the rising water and directly impacted by the failure of leadership by the Sask Party and the inaction by the Sask Party on this front.

And we recognize that this is a government that hasn't stepped up to the plate for many years to deal with this crisis in the way that they need to and provide some leadership, and have then always rushed to sort of quick, short-circuited processes, Mr. Speaker, that are absent of passing an environmental test, Mr. Speaker, that gives the public confidence. And I just implore this government to put some time and attention to the matters of the Quill lakes and to make sure that we can relieve the pressure on those producers in that region, that we address the threat that exists of those waters reaching those banks, and that we do it in a way that ensures that we're protecting downstream watersheds as well.

This is a government that has now twice tried to rush a process forward without due diligence, without an environmental assessment to divert waters from this region down through the Qu'Appelle Valley watershed, directly into the northern part of Last Mountain Lake, a world-class spawning ground, Mr. Speaker. And Saskatchewan people — whether they be rural residents or producers or whether they be those that enjoy the lake, fishers within our province, whether they're those in the cities or anywhere else — expect so much more from our government, and they certainly recognize what's at risk.

And you know, I've been observing in the last number of days the amount of attention that was given to Bill Boyd and his irrigation sprinkler project, Mr. Speaker, his irrigation immigration scheme, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that this individual, prominent individual in government who is scandal plagued on front after front after front, had the resources of government at his disposal, it would seem.

The fact that we had the deputy minister to the Premier directly involved in these activities, the deputy minister to the . . . well

the now Premier but the then minister of the Environment, Mr. Speaker, I find it, you know, I find it certainly inappropriate that an individual with that sort of position was getting that sort of attention with his immigration irrigation scheme, Mr. Speaker.

But I thought to myself as I was looking at all those meetings, and I thought to myself as we saw the streams of emails where deputy ministers were coming together, that if that was the kind of attention that would have been provided to the Quill lakes, Mr. Speaker, we would have probably resolved that matter.

And instead this was a government that was caught up with their political friend, the minister who was plagued by scandal after scandal, Mr. Speaker, the minister who's now been . . . I guess pled guilty, Mr. Speaker, to charges under our environmental protections.

But it takes us away a little bit from the bill, but I did find it disappointing to see nothing in this bill to indicate protection of our watershed and actions around the Quill lakes, Mr. Speaker, and resolving this matter in a way that protects the watersheds downstream, the Qu'Appelle Valley lakes, Last Mountain Lake, the Qu'Appelle Valley watershed, and agricultural land in between, Mr. Speaker.

I also see within this code no attention at all to the important action we should be taking when it comes to the generation of renewable power across Saskatchewan, distributing that generation all across our province, working with homeowners and businesses and First Nations and farms and municipalities all across our province, and municipalities, Mr. Speaker, to generate power across our province, create jobs, drive investment at this very important time, and of course, importantly, reduce emissions, Mr. Speaker. I think it's this sort of prairie progressive leadership that Saskatchewan people are looking for, Mr. Speaker, and it's absent with this Sask Party government.

We also see no action and no leadership when it comes to energy efficiency retrofits across the province. And here, just like renewable power, we have an incredible opportunity for a government to work as a partner and to set the regulatory environment in a way that will allow the creation of thousands of jobs to drive investment across our province and to work again, certainly, with public buildings and municipalities, but importantly with homeowners and with businesses and with industry and farms and First Nations all across our province.

And that leadership is needed right now within our province. We need it from an environmental perspective, Mr. Speaker. But very importantly on these practical sorts of solutions, we need it from an economic perspective, an opportunity to act from an environmental perspective but create jobs across our province, needed jobs across our province. And certainly supporting entrepreneurs and businesses all across our province, driving investment, growing our economy once again, Mr. Speaker — something that's really been threatened by the actions of the Sask Party of late.

Within the bill as well there's some measures around waterways that I read. I worry, Mr. Speaker, that this is just a further erosion of the protection of those waterways and the lakes and

rivers that we cherish all across our province, Mr. Speaker, the lakes and rivers that so many people and so many communities and so much life depends on, Mr. Speaker.

And I see within this bill, I don't see any measures around a comprehensive water management plan, something that's sorely needed within our province to assess the quantity, the downflow, the flow of our water into our province and the adequacy of that supply, the commitments that have been made from an industrial perspective, making sure that we're balancing those obligations and planning for the long term. And importantly of course, that we're assessing the quality of that water, monitoring that water and putting in place all the measures that are required to protect watersheds across our province.

Through this legislation, I don't see any changes to protect wetlands within our province, to act on illegal drainage, Mr. Speaker, and to recognize the devastating consequences of illegal drainage within our province and of wetland degradation across our province. And this is a perfect space once again to work with the stewards of the land, Mr. Speaker — the producers across Saskatchewan, the farmers across Saskatchewan, the landowners across Saskatchewan — to protect and to establish wetlands, Mr. Speaker. Making sure that we have that natural capacity to manage water in this province, but also to make sure that we support those wetlands and all the life that they support within our province.

Of course we see a Sask Party that's going in the opposite direction when it comes to the environment, so often out of touch with the reality of the world around us. So often, it would appear, to deny climate change, Mr. Speaker. And so neglectful when it comes to the practical kinds of steps that Saskatchewan people should expect of their government.

I think of the native prairie grasslands within this province, the incredible grasslands, Mr. Speaker, that certainly sustain life all across our province, that play such a vital role from an agricultural perspective as well. And so much of that being threatened and sold off by the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, putting up large blocks of land that have native prairie grassland up for sale, Mr. Speaker. And if you can imagine, on the auction website for these lands, Mr. Speaker — public lands — actually having them listed in American dollars, Mr. Speaker, when the last time I checked we still had laws in place that made sure that it was Canadians, Mr. Speaker, that were buying farm land in this province.

And it speaks to the kid gloves that I've seen from this government in dealing with the question of the foreign illegal purchase of farm land across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, a question that the people deserve answers to. And I know they deputized the minister a couple years back and I think they looked at, you know, one land purchaser or two, but the reality across . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I realize that we're getting near perhaps a recess or adjournment, but it is getting pretty noisy in here, and currently the member from Regina Rosemont has the floor. I recognize the member.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — And it speaks again to the neglect of this

government to enforce the Act, Mr. Speaker, enforce the laws right now that we need to make sure that those acquiring land are doing so with, you know, Canadian capital, Canadian dollars, that they're Canadian residents, Mr. Speaker. And far too often we've watched the Sask Party, you know, turn away from putting a spotlight on this very real challenge that Saskatchewan people have, Mr. Speaker.

And as I say, you know, this is a government going in the opposite direction. Instead of protecting our native prairie grasslands, Mr. Speaker, putting them up for sale, putting them up on a, you know, website, Mr. Speaker, in American dollars, when the actual sale of those lands . . . well for one, they shouldn't be occurring. We should be protecting our native prairie grasslands. But secondly, it would be illegal, Mr. Speaker, to be selling them to Americans or anyone else, Mr. Speaker. And we have within this province world-class producers, and those stewards of the land who deserve to have a partner in their government. And far too often we just . . . that's just simply not the case, Mr. Speaker.

So this piece of legislation, we will pull it apart and work with stakeholders. And I thank all those that work across our province to ensure environmental protection across our province, all those working in recycling efforts, in Sarcan as well, Mr. Speaker, all the producers who go out of their way for the large part, Mr. Speaker, to be the best stewards of our land.

And I implore government to finally step up to the plate and to start to step up to the realities that we're facing within our province, to bring forward practical prairie solutions, Mr. Speaker, that would create jobs, drive investment, work with producers and farms and First Nations all across our province to create jobs, reduce emissions, and protect that incredible natural environment.

The generation that we're responsible to will be looking to us to say well, what did you do in this period of time? What did you do when we knew that there needed to be action to protect our natural environment, to act on climate change in responsible ways? And I think we owe it to them to say that we did everything we could, Mr. Speaker. And that's simply not the case.

We certainly will engage through the committee process with the minister. Our Environment critic will be asking many questions. We'll be seeking clarity around who's been consulted on this front. We'll be bringing forward the perspective of so many partners in conservation, so many partners from an environmental perspective across our province, and making sure that we take the practical steps that we need to now to ensure we're protecting future generations, Mr. Speaker.

But at this point in time as it relates to Bill No. 83, I'll adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 83, *The Environmental Management and Protection Act*, 2017. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I move that, so committees may do work this evening, that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that the House adjourns. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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