



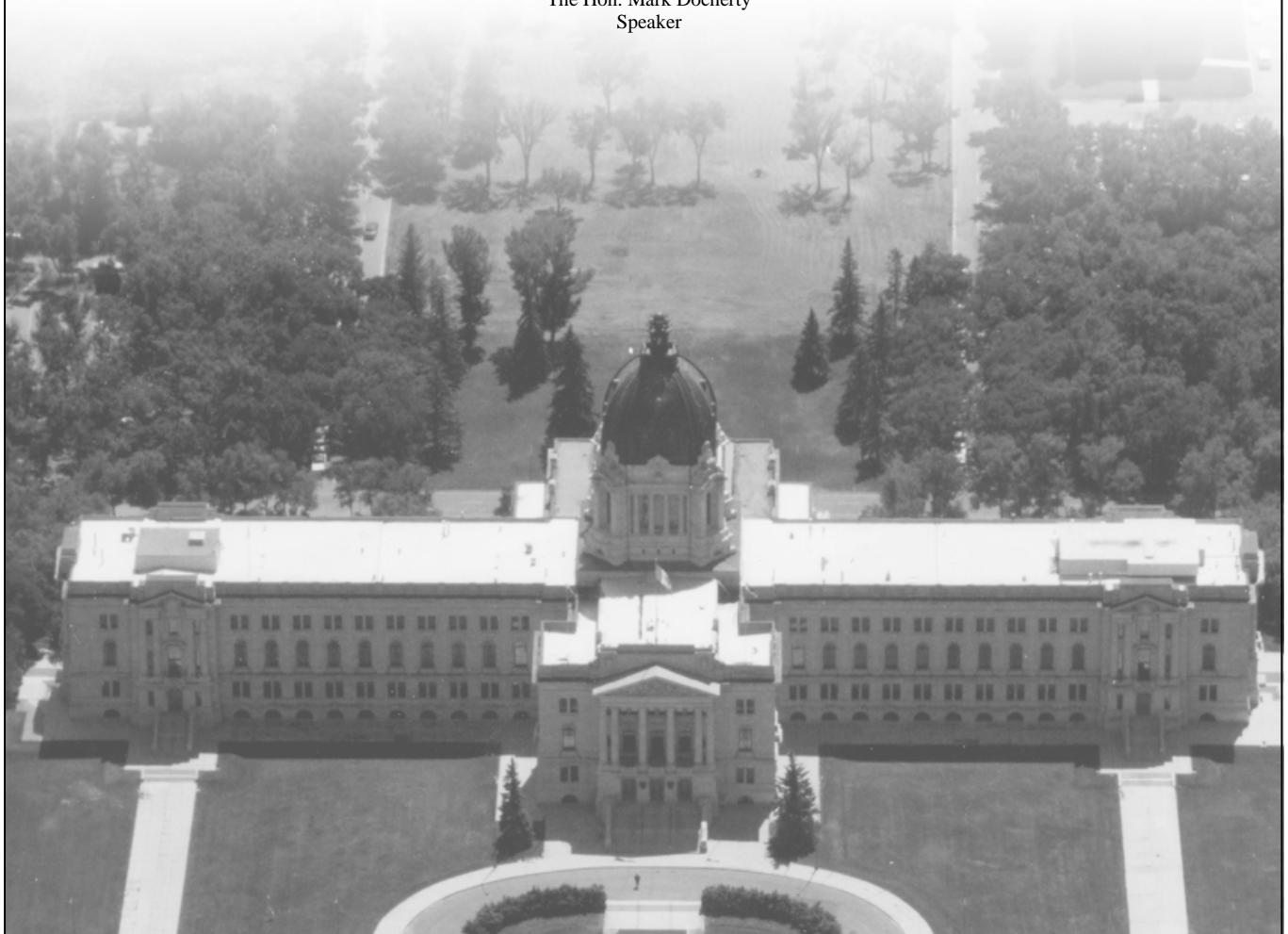
SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Young , Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Regina Northeast

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to this House, through you and through all members of this House, Mr. Speaker, someone who really needs no introduction in this Assembly whatsoever, someone who I think is a good friend to members on both sides of the House.

And with us today, Mr. Speaker, is Mr. Rod Gantfoer. Mr. Gantfoer was a former Finance minister for the province of Saskatchewan, the former member for the constituency of Melfort, Mr. Speaker. And Rod is in town for some meetings today.

Rod was also first elected to this Assembly in 1995, Mr. Speaker, as a Liberal. Mr. Speaker, Rod was a member of that renowned group of conservatives and Liberals that came together to change the course of political history in the province of Saskatchewan forever. Rod is a founding member of this party, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party, and in 2007 he became the first Finance minister in Saskatchewan Party history. Mr. Speaker, we have another one in the back, Mr. Ken Krawetz. But today we have Mr. Rod Gantfoer in the House here, Mr. Speaker.

We are so grateful for the work that Rod has undertaken on behalf of the STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society] foundation in the province of Saskatchewan as the executive vice-president, busy, Mr. Speaker, across the province fundraising and building community partnerships for that important organization, and no more important than in the last number of weeks, Mr. Speaker. STARS provided a vitally important health service to all communities across the province of Saskatchewan. We are eternally indebted to Rod's work with that foundation.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome Mr. Gantfoer to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition, it's an honour to join with the Premier to welcome Rod Gantfoer to his Assembly. You would be hard pressed to find a more decent person, Mr. Speaker, that's graced this Assembly on either side.

Mr. Speaker, we've had good debates over the years with Rod when he served as Finance minister, but he's certainly somebody who has served his province. And I'm thankful as well for his continued work and service with STARS, something that certainly benefits our entire province. So to Rod and Carole we say thank you for their service, and we welcome

them to the Assembly here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I would like to introduce some special people who are sitting in your gallery. I would like to introduce Jesse Rudge. He's one of the three partners with Avatex. Gord Dmytruk, he's one of the managers with Avatex. They're a company who's done some developments recently in my hometown. Brent Lutz, he's with the city of Melfort, an administrator, and a good friend. Also a good friend of mine, family friend, here's Eben Strydom, one of the family physicians and an anesthesiologist in my hometown who's helped make this project work as well.

And while I'm on my feet, I would like to introduce someone that you all know, who helps me stand, and one of my mentors, somebody who I stand in his shadow, and that's Rod Gantfoer. And I'm privileged to have him here and more thankful, than all the things that he's done for the province of Saskatchewan, personally what he's done for me and my town. We appreciate Rod very much. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce, from the Carnduff Education Complex, a group of grade 8, 11, and 12 students seated in the western gallery, 24 all told.

Their teacher today is Blair Beck, who is also known to someone else on the floor. He is the brother to the member from Regina Lakeview. Accompanying this group is another teacher, Trevor Geiger, also from the Carnduff school. And both Trevor and Blair took part in the SSTI [Saskatchewan Social Sciences Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy] educational program provided through the Speaker's office. I met with the students and teachers this morning for a question-and-answer period, Mr. Speaker.

While I'm on my feet, I would also like to welcome my former colleague and collaborator with the Sask Party, Rod Gantfoer.

So I would ask everyone to welcome the students to the Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As has been noted, it is my pleasure to stand up today and once again welcome my younger brother, Blair Beck, otherwise known as Mr. Beck, to this Legislative Assembly.

I realize, I think this is the third time that I have introduced him. I don't know if he likes hearing me say things on the record, nice things about him, but . . . No, I am joking, Mr. Speaker. He does a really good job of making sure that students in his classroom have opportunities to come to Agribition or this Assembly or to trips out of the province. And I had the opportunity to meet briefly with his grade 8 class today, and they asked some great questions. And I would invite all members to join me in welcoming him and his class to this

Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member of Humboldt-Watrous.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour today, Mr. Speaker, to stand to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, a very great class of 25 students from Humboldt Collegiate Institute. And accompanying them is someone who's no stranger, as he comes each and every year with a class, is their teacher, Mr. David Millette. They also have with them an EA [educational assistant], Ms. Margaret Nagy. And I want to have everyone join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Paradise Hill, Frenchman Butte, and St. Walburg. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party to stop the attacks on our already strained school system. Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition today wish to bring our attention to a few items: that the Sask Party cut \$54 million from kids' classrooms last year, and the fact that this year's budget restores only a fraction of that cut.

Of course, the \$24 million year-over-year cut means that the Sask Party is making us all pay more while our classrooms actually get less, Mr. Speaker. And, as would reasonably be expected, these cuts have had devastating impact on classrooms all around the province, leading to increases in PTR [pupil/teacher ratio], leading to reductions in support staff that children require in order to get the education that they need.

I'll read the prayer:

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 Lumsden and in Regina. I do so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the undersigned residents of the province 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 know 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, that Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people, and that the federal government and the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and now British Columbia 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 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 Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for critical workplace supports for survivors of domestic violence. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the highest rates of domestic violence in Canada, and we all know that we must do much more to protect survivors of interpersonal violence.

For many of them, Mr. Speaker, the violence will follow them to their workplaces, which is 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 interpersonal violence, and that critical workplace supports made available for survivors of domestic violence be also made available to workers living with PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] as a result of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, this is what those who are on the front line of this crisis are calling for. This is also what we've called for in our private member's bill, Bill No. 609, which is the fourth time we've tabled those provisions in this House in the last two years. It's time for the Sask Party to step up, do the right thing, and pass that legislation.

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 to survivors of domestic violence.

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to rise in my place once again to present a petition on Orkambi. Whereas Orkambi is the first drug to treat the basic defect in the largest population of Canadians with cystic fibrosis. It can slow disease progression, allowing patients to live longer, healthier lives.

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

Now, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition, and there have been many, many pages signed, and I've presented a number of petitions over time, but the people that have signed this particular page are from Lloydminster and Marshall. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Regina Doctor Helps Newcomers

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to recognize someone who is working diligently to provide health care to some of the province's most vulnerable. Dr. Razawa Maroof came to Regina in 1996 as a political refugee from Iraq, and she worked hard to gain accreditation in Canada so she could continue helping others. Dr. Maroof works as a family doctor at the Regina Community Clinic, where she specializes in working with government-sponsored refugees.

Newcomers can have a hard time communicating with their doctors, and doctors may be unsure of how to care for these patients. When Dr. Maroof became a professor associated with the College of Medicine in 2007, she was determined to educate future doctors on how to understand and respect a refugee's culture and religious beliefs.

[13:45]

Over the years, Dr. Maroof has taken note of the challenges her patients face gaining access to health care. Language is one of the biggest hurdles, especially when accessing mental health services. In a recent *Leader-Post* article, Dr. Maroof explained how her patients feel uncomfortable going to mental health clinics because they feel judged and there's no interpreters. At

conferences, Dr. Maroof has advocated for more training for health care workers and for more resources.

Mr. Speaker, I would like all members to join me in thanking Dr. Razawa Maroof for her diligence in caring for some of the province's most vulnerable.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

New Wellness Centre in Melfort

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the years the people of this province have shown their ability to create made-in-rural-Saskatchewan solutions for rural Saskatchewan challenges. In my hometown, people saw a need for some health care efficiencies and gathered residents with a can-do attitude to build what was needed for a brighter future. Over the years we ran into some roadblocks and a few dead ends, but today I'm glad to say that the people of my constituency were able to watch as their wellness centre was erected and attached to our hospital in Melfort.

The ingredients for success were a city council and staff working together with the surrounding RMs [rural municipality], willing to take on the responsibility and leadership in this project; doctors making a sacrifice for the good of their patients, accepting a rent increase and relocating to their new offices connected to the hospital; and thirdly, Avatex, a development company with a heart for Melfort, willing to take a risk and invest in what they believe is a good town with a bright future.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to be a part of a provincial government whose guiding principles lay the framework for partnership between government, private sector, and the people that they serve. That partnership has made a difference for the people I represent, Mr. Speaker, and today we have a beautiful and efficient facility housing 12 doctors as well as many other health services.

On behalf of this entire Assembly, I'd like to thank everyone involved in the success of this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatoon Promenade Named After Music Icon

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I stand today to celebrate the recognition of one of Saskatchewan's most influential artists and renowned musical icons, Joni Mitchell, who will be permanently honoured in Saskatoon, the city in which she spent some of her most important formative years. On Monday, Saskatoon City Council voted unanimously in favour of the Joni Mitchell Promenade, naming a stretch of walkway next to Spadina Crescent from 2nd Avenue to 3rd Avenue, located in my constituency of Saskatoon Centre. This section of walkway leads to Saskatoon's new Remai Modern. In addition, the University of Saskatchewan announced it will pay tribute to Joni Mitchell with an honorary degree at this year's spring convocation.

While she attained her fame as Joni Mitchell, she was born Roberta Joan Anderson in Fort Macleod, Alberta in 1943,

moving with her family to North Battleford after the Second World War, then to Saskatoon during the early 1950s.

Mr. Speaker, Mitchell has won eight Grammys, her first in 1969 and her most recent in 2015. She was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1997. Among her most notable songs are “Both Sides, Now,” “Big Yellow Taxi,” and “Woodstock.” And, Mr. Speaker, I think we all have a favourite album.

I ask all members to join me in recognizing Saskatoon’s own Joni Mitchell, and I encourage everyone to visit Saskatoon and take a walk on the Joni Mitchell Promenade this summer. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Changes Implemented Prior to Wildfire Season

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 25th, the Prince Albert Grand Council released their interim report, *Fighting Forest Fires in Northern Saskatchewan*, on the wildfire task force. The task force was launched in January 2018 to provide an independent review of Saskatchewan’s current wildfire management strategies.

The report marks the first step by the council to reform the current system prior to the new fire season. The council is comprised of First Nation elders, leaders, and technicians from across northern Saskatchewan as well as representatives from the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations. The report states there were 353 wildfires last year with hectares of burnt land impacting the treaty rights of the northern First Nations to hunt, trap, fish, and gather food. The task force has been working closely together to address and implement the needed changes to better serve local residents.

The Ministry of Environment has already introduced changes for the upcoming wildfire season, including increasing emergency firefighter crew size from five to eight, training more crew leaders, and enhanced funding for fuel projects. Living in that region, I understand the impacts of these wildfires on northern communities.

We look forward to continuing the positive working relationship with the Prince Albert Grand Council as we protect our friends. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

2018 Saskatchewan Regional Park of the Year

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Pasquia Park is being awarded the regional Park of the Year by the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association. I certainly understand why this particular park was chosen, as it’s right across the road from our farm.

Pasquia Park is host to a beautiful challenging nine-hole golf course, and not just challenging for non-golfers such as myself, Mr. Speaker. This golf course is one of the nicest in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, they also have a top-notch

minigolf course, which is more to my liking and skill set.

The park also includes an Olympic-size swimming pool, an interpretive centre which is home to Big Bert, a prehistoric crocodilian that was found close by and should have been named Saskatchewan’s official fossil. We was robbed again, Mr. Speaker. Along with the many electrified camping sites, this beautiful park runs at near capacity all summer. If you would like to come and stay at this jewel, book early.

Mr. Speaker, the regional Park of the Year selection process is very competitive. While it has been some time since Pasquia Park has won the award, they are no doubt very honoured to once again be raising the banner for this coming year.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating Pasquia Park for receiving the 2018 Saskatchewan Regional Park of the Year Award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Swimming Coach Selected for Special Olympics Summer Games

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I’d like to congratulate Swift Current’s Jackie Powell on being selected as the associate swimming coach for Team Canada ahead of the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games. This will be Jackie’s fourth opportunity to represent Saskatchewan as well as Canada on the international stage.

Mr. Speaker, Jackie has an absolutely amazing track record. She’s been dedicated to the Special Olympics swimming program for well over 20 years now. In 2007 she was named the Female Coach of the Year by both Special Olympics Saskatchewan and also Special Olympics Canada. And in 2015 she received the Saskatchewan Sport Female Coach Dedication Award, and at that time it was noted that her athletes had won 84 national medals and — get this — 44 world medals as well.

Mr. Speaker, Jackie is a passionate coach and loves being able to see her swim team succeed in sport while also adding to their quality of life. She once said:

Seeing them have an amazing race makes me speechless, and being able to transfer that into their daily lives, having them being able to get a job and live independently . . . Sport does way more than provide them with an opportunity for physical fitness. It’s also a whole life opportunity.

You see, Mr. Speaker, Jackie is not only a great swim coach. She also works for Partners in Employment in Swift Current, doing some great work in our community. Mr. Speaker, we need more Jackie Powells in the world. And I’d ask all members to join me in congratulating her on being appointed as an associate coach and wish all of her athletes the best of luck as they prepare for the 2019 Special Olympics World Summer Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Royal Canadian Mounted Police Charity Ball Supports Globe Theatre

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I had the opportunity to attend the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] Charity Ball in support of the Globe Theatre School educational development fund.

The evening was emceed by Regina-born actress, Amy Matysio. It then featured performances by some of the Globe Theatre School's best and brightest, a wonderful meal, live music, as well as silent and live auctions offering one-of-a-kind items to bid on.

The annual event attracted over 400 from Regina's community. Mr. Speaker, each year the RCMP Depot Division selects a charity to host the annual fundraising ball. This year, profits received through the RCMP Charity Ball will be allocated to an educational development fund which will offset the costs of Globe Theatre School programming on an annual basis.

Mr. Speaker, the Globe Theatre School educational development fund provides Saskatchewan youth of all abilities opportunities to participate in the arts. Some students of the Globe Theatre School programs include those with financial, cultural, language, and social barriers, as well as those with special needs. The development fund will help ensure the Globe Theatre can continue to provide these programs throughout our community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking the RCMP Depot Division for their commitment to supporting local charities, as well as the whole Globe Theatre organizing committee which is headed by Lisa McIntyre, who had a fantastic evening and raised money for a wonderful charity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Domestic Violence Legislation

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Justice minister was asked for his government's support in passing Bill 609, *The Support for Survivors of Domestic Violence Act* this session, and he declined to offer that support. And this is the fourth time we've put forth that bill, Mr. Speaker. Now this government has, I must acknowledge, taken some action on this issue, and we do commend that. So long as Saskatchewan continues to be the province with the highest rates of domestic violence in the country, it's far too early to say that enough has been done.

Bill 609 would introduce five days of paid leave for survivors of domestic violence, up to 17 weeks of unpaid leave, and supports for people with PTSD due to their experiences, Mr. Speaker. Ontario and Manitoba already introduced similar measures, as has the federal government for their employees. So the question is, why is this government dragging their heels when we're the province that's most in need of these measures? Will the Premier commit to passing this legislation this session?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question from the Leader of the Opposition and all the opposition members' conversation on what is a very important topic to, I think in fairness, all communities and all people in the province of Saskatchewan. And he is correct. We do need to do more, Mr. Speaker.

And he is correct in acknowledging that there has been work done, Mr. Speaker. But not to discount the need for more effort on this conversation and action as we move forward, which is why we do have a bill in the House here right now, Mr. Speaker, about in the middle of a number of provincial bills that are being looked at or introduced, Mr. Speaker. And it includes such efforts as the breaking of a lease, allowing the breaking of a lease for those that are affected, Mr. Speaker, by interpersonal violence, as well as 10 days for victims and families to access services, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, understanding that we have put in place a domestic violence review committee, an inter-ministerial committee to continue to work on this very, very important file to people across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, it is also important to acknowledge that there is a bill in the House, and there is work that is ongoing on this file as well.

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

Wage Rates and Affordability

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The bill that was referenced, which has already passed, is a positive step forward. But that really doesn't answer the question of why this government wouldn't be ready to take those steps that we're already seeing in other parts of the country — very reasonable and important steps to support people.

Mr. Speaker, across Canada we're also seeing workers advocating for a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. Workers in Ontario and Alberta, provinces whose economies happen to be actually outperforming ours, will be able to expect that rate very soon. However, at the current pace, Saskatchewan workers won't see a \$15-an-hour minimum wage until 2035, Mr. Speaker. My seven-month-old son will be a high school senior by the time the minimum wage is \$15 here.

And while wages are rising very slowly, cost of living is rising much more quickly, including a 6 per cent increase in restaurant meals and children's clothes because of the PST [provincial sales tax] hike from this government.

Mr. Speaker, people earning minimum wage are falling behind. That hurts them. It hurts local businesses because people have less money to spend. And it hurts people's health and their quality of life. Is the lowest minimum wage in the nation of Canada really something that the Premier is proud of?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, as we said, I think it was two days ago in this House and in the rotunda, that the government has consulted across the province of Saskatchewan on a formula

for our minimum wage, Mr. Speaker. It's a formula that has been in place now for a number of years. It's a formula that we feel is working for the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And understanding that minimum wage is but one factor in the affordability of people here in the province, of this province or any province, Mr. Speaker, again we need to take into account the fact that it had been this government that has taken action over the last decade to take 112,000 people off the provincial income tax rolls.

Mr. Speaker, there are many comparisons in this province where many of those individuals — and young, single families in many cases, Mr. Speaker — are paying little to no income tax here in the province of Saskatchewan. And their affordability index, Mr. Speaker, is much, much stronger than other areas of the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

So again, more to do, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward to ensure that people in this province are receiving the supports that they need and have the opportunity to improve their career as well, Mr. Speaker, with a strong economy. But through multi-measures, Mr. Speaker, including reducing our income tax to those people, we're in a good spot here.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, this government says that having the lowest minimum wage in Canada, having a situation where people are working full time but still living in poverty is somehow, and I quote, "working for the people of the province."

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, this government likes to present itself as fiscally conservative, but low wages result in more working people accessing public supports, more people being trapped in poverty, the numbers of people on the social assistance rolls climbing. The irony of a supposedly conservative government boasting about having more people on social assistance is astounding, Mr. Speaker. The current low rate, it hurts workers and it hurts us all. It's in no way working for the people of the province.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier commit to doing the right thing and the smart thing? Will he raise the minimum wage to a level that will help working people get out of poverty?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we've been doing that for a number of years now with a formula that we put forward a few years ago, Mr. Speaker, and we continue to follow here in the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think the member opposite should ensure that when he is talking about the affordability of Saskatchewan families, Mr. Speaker, and in particular those Saskatchewan families that are at the lower income earning levels, he takes into account all of the affordability factors, minimum wage being but one of them, Mr. Speaker. Because the fact of the matter is this, Mr. Speaker: a family of four in this province

earning with a \$50,000 income level is still going to pay \$2,300 less each and every year than they did when members opposite were on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this is a fact. Understanding there is more to do, Mr. Speaker, we need to ensure that we have a strong economy so that people have every opportunity to expand . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we also need to ensure that we have a strong economy here in the province of Saskatchewan so that people, individuals, families across this province, have every opportunity to further their career choices, have every opportunity to find a better life here in the province of Saskatchewan, a better career, Mr. Speaker, and ensure that our level of affordability is strong here, Mr. Speaker.

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

Release of Information on the Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the bad news coming out of the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] is like the Sask Party's record debt: it just keeps piling up. This of course makes the mess even harder to clean up — something the Sask Party has failed to understand.

The Sask Party has ignored our calls for transparency. But perhaps even more troubling is that they are giving the same treatment to Saskatchewan's Information and Privacy Commissioner. And their reason, Mr. Speaker? Negative media attention. That's right. The GTH has cited the potential for negative media attention as the reason for dragging its feet for almost a year on a series of CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] access to information requests at the GTH. Saskatchewan's Information and Privacy Commissioner ruled last week that this is inappropriate, but the Sask Party is still refusing to comply.

To the minister: will he finally start seriously addressing concerns at the GTH and follow through on the recommendations of the independent Privacy Commissioner and release those documents?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I know the member opposite purports to know a lot of things that we don't know on this side of the House. One of those might be that the land at the GTH was transferred into the name of the Saskatchewan Party. I am not aware of that transfer. I'm not aware of the Saskatchewan Party having any interest in that piece of property.

Mr. Speaker, I can say that the GTH is an independent entity. And, Mr. Speaker, it responds to the freedom of information requests without interference from the government. We don't tell them what to do. We don't tell them what not to do.

Mr. Speaker, my understanding is the same as everyone else's, that they had some discussions with the Privacy Commissioner about what was commercially sensitive and what was not commercially sensitive. They want to make sure that they deal with everything that is commercially sensitive and they protect that information. At the same time, they've got to reflect on the fact that they are dealing with taxpayer dollars and provide all the information that they can.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the negative media coverage is one thing, but the negative bank account at the GTH is what the Sask Party should be worried about. Now this is a troubling pattern that we see. It's the same MO [modus operandi] the Sask Party have used to bury the Husky pipeline inspection reports, and we know what the Privacy Commissioner had to say about that.

Last fall, the Ministry of Highways won the coveted Code of Silence Award for its failure to release documents as requested by the commissioner, and of course their steadfast refusal to allow Laurie Pushor to answer questions about the GTH land scandal. Now what else are they not telling us? Is it widespread practice for the Sask Party to withhold information from the public that it thinks will lead to negative media attention?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite have questions for the Sask Party, I direct them to speak to Patrick Bundrock, the executive director of the party. That's where Sask Party questions belong, and I'm sure he will give them every appropriate answer that's there.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the global . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, it's the intention of this government to proceed with the successes that have taken place at the Global Transportation Hub. I've answered questions here in the House before. There is an investment that's taken place from private sector — \$485 million. 4,800 trucks move in and out of the GTH every week. Of the 1,800 acres that comprise the GTH, over 700 acres are sold.

Mr. Speaker, the GTH is a self-governing inland port. It is similar to other inland ports in Canada and elsewhere. It benefits from a designation as a foreign trade zone. It's its own taxing authority and it maintains autonomy. Mr. Speaker, we want to sell more land out there, and we'd appreciate some support from the people across.

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

Provincial Economic Growth

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, new numbers out today show

that Saskatchewan had the lowest GDP [gross domestic product] growth outside of Atlantic Canada for 2017. While BC [British Columbia] and Alberta's economies grew 3.9 and 4.9 per cent respectively, Saskatchewan lagged behind at 2.9 per cent. Construction activity in the province dropped by over 3 per cent, and so it's no wonder that people are leaving Saskatchewan to find opportunities in other provinces to the west.

And, Mr. Speaker, things aren't looking any better for 2018 with several reports predicting Saskatchewan as one of the slowest growing economies. Heck, the Sask Party government's own budget documents show it. So when will they stop the spin, realize that we are falling behind our neighbours, and take action to make sure Saskatchewan people have opportunities here at home?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that since 2007, the GDP growth in this province has been the third highest in the entire country, Mr. Speaker, nearly 19 per cent growth. The other reality, Mr. Speaker, is RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] and a number of other private sector forecasters have predicted strong growth in the next year. RBC, in fact, predicted that Saskatchewan would lead the country in economic growth, and a number of other private sector forecasters have the rate of growth at the number two level or number three level, Mr. Speaker.

And what is also clear is the only economic policy that the members opposite have put on the table — that the member for Nutana particularly has shown strong support for through her support of the Leap Manifesto, Mr. Speaker — has been the carbon tax. We know that a carbon tax would have a devastating impact on our economy, that it would kill jobs, Mr. Speaker, and we find it disappointing that the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Nutana have taken a very weak position in supporting that carbon tax.

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

Funding for Capital Infrastructure in the Education Sector

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday we saw something quite unusual here in the Assembly. We saw the Minister for Education actually give a straightforward answer to a question. When I asked the minister at committee what the breakdown is between maintenance and interest on the \$13.5 million line in the budget for the P3 [public-private partnership] schools, the minister said, "We can't break those numbers out because of the proprietary nature of the contract with JUMP. So I can't break that number out for you." But when my colleague, the member for Regina Rosemont, asked the same question yesterday during question period, the minister was more than happy to oblige.

So, Mr. Speaker, what gives? Why were those numbers proprietary Monday night but free to share on Tuesday afternoon?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr.

Speaker, I did indicate in committee on Monday night . . . That was my answer in committee Monday night, Mr. Speaker. I went back and I had a conversation with my officials in the Ministry of Education, Mr. Speaker, and through them, conversations with officials over at SaskBuilds, Mr. Speaker.

The numbers are fairly transparent in the financial statements, Mr. Speaker, and so that's why I stood up in the House yesterday and indicated that the answer that I gave, Mr. Speaker. And it's very, very clear, Mr. Speaker. It's noted in the '18-19 Estimates, maintenance and interest was \$13.5 million, Mr. Speaker. And of that, interest was \$8.643 million, Mr. Speaker. It's quite clear on the face of the financial statements, Mr. Speaker, and I was very clear yesterday. And I was happy to stand up in the House and clear the record.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, during the minister's momentary lapse of transparency, he revealed that the maintenance for the P3 schools is pegged at \$4.8 million. \$4.8 million to maintain 18 brand new schools works out to \$267,000 per school. That's four times what's budgeted for preventative maintenance for the rest of the schools in the province. And in communities like Moose Jaw, they're feeling pressure that the underfunding has caused. With leaking roofs and out-of-date buildings, leaders in the school division have had to decide whether to spend their precious PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal] dollars fixing things up or waiting to see if there will be funding for a new school.

How can the minister justify spending so much to maintain brand new P3 schools when other schools in communities like Moose Jaw are crumbling?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, again, the members opposite don't appreciate the nature of the contracts that we've entered into, Mr. Speaker. These are maintenance contracts, Mr. Speaker, that will preserve the integrity and the state of these schools over a period of 30 years, Mr. Speaker.

Now for her to stand up and make a comment about PMR, Mr. Speaker, a number, by the way, PMR, which didn't exist when the New Democrats were in government, Mr. Speaker. That money is there to ensure that school divisions have the resources to be able to maintain their buildings, Mr. Speaker. For a school division to decide not to use PMR and risk the chance of not getting a school built or hopefully getting a school built isn't a very responsible use of the money, Mr. Speaker. It's there to make sure that school divisions can maintain their schools, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I want to talk a little bit about capital, Mr. Speaker — last year the largest education capital infrastructure build in the province's history, something we're very, very proud of, Mr. Speaker. We're opening new schools, Mr. Speaker. We're not closing them.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, boards are faced with two problems wholly caused by this government. PMR funding just isn't adequate to keep up with the repairs needed in our schools, half of which are more than 50 years old. And boards have no predictability when it comes to funding for these replacement schools, and they don't have resources needed to fix things up. And they don't have a reliable partner in this government to support the schools that boards have determined to be their top priority.

My question to the minister is this: will he commit to working with school boards to develop a transparent, predictable, and adequate capital funding model?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I've stood on my feet a number of times during this session of the legislature to talk about my commitment to having conversations with school divisions, Mr. Speaker, about what their needs are — not just capital needs, but resources in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. And that's why you saw \$30 million in this year's budget to help support children in the classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

I'm happy to sit down and continue to have a conversation with school boards, Mr. Speaker, about their priority. But the member should know — and she should know; she's a former school board trustee — the list of capital priorities, the projects that are presented by school boards, have been presented forever, Mr. Speaker. And we continue to maintain that list.

We continue to look to see where the needs are within our school divisions across the province, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to work with school divisions to make sure that students have safe places where they can learn, Mr. Speaker. That's our commitment and I'm committed to it.

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

Reliability of Health Care Facilities

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've been hearing from community members in Moose Jaw about a concerning event that took place at the Dr. F.H. Wigmore Hospital summer before last. We learned that there was a significant power outage that took place the morning of the 16th of June which led to a critical incident and disruption in people's care.

Information obtained through a freedom of information request indicates the power was out for a full 45 minutes, and that included disrupting power to operating rooms, the intensive care unit, and the emergency room. Every minute counts when it comes to the type of care provided in these settings. This is a brand new hospital, Mr. Speaker.

We recently heard this government point towards the design process as the reason pediatric psychiatry was left out of the children's hospital. We know that the Wigmore Hospital was designed by the same consultant. What has been done to investigate the role that design played in this incident?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the health system in this province is huge — there's about 45,000 employees; the budget's \$5.7 billion, Mr. Speaker. There's many factors at play, many facilities around the province, Mr. Speaker. It's not front of mind to me, the incident that the Leader of the Opposition's speaking of in Moose Jaw. It's been a couple years ago, I understand.

We trust when incidents like that happen around the province that officials will deal with them appropriately. If not, they'll be brought to my attention, Mr. Speaker. I will look into that matter, Mr. Speaker, just as we will anything. But in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we certainly trust officials to handle situations like that. And they do; they handle them appropriately. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a critical incident that did put at risk the care of patients at the Wigmore Hospital, and it's a bit surprising that the minister isn't more aware of it. Records indicate however that the minister's office didn't even learn of this issue until they heard about it from the public, a full nine months after the incident took place. During this outage, surgeries were cancelled, the central monitoring system in the ER [emergency room] wasn't working, and the intensive care unit's bedside and central monitors also were off service.

This is no small thing, Mr. Speaker, and it raises the question why the minister was not aware of such a critical incident right away. The access to information request also indicates that this minister's office has been hearing a number of concerns related to the policies and procedures at Moose Jaw's Wigmore Hospital, this incident being just one of four listed by ministerial staff. What other significant concerns are being raised by the public about this hospital, and what has the minister done to address them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, in this House I want to thank the two members that we have from Moose Jaw that represent that community, represent that community very well, Mr. Speaker. That is the reason that we have a new hospital in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's this government that has taken — in what was a very tight budget this year — a health budget up to \$5.77 billion, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the people of the province. This is a service the people of this province expect, Mr. Speaker. A two and a half per cent increase in what was a very challenging budget year, Mr. Speaker. That's up 56 per cent since the members opposite were in power, Mr. Speaker.

It includes the investment, in addition to that, in 15 long-term care facilities across rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It includes that Dr. F.H. Wigmore Hospital in the community of Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, which was asked for by the people represented by their MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] within this government, and the funding was

provided, Mr. Speaker. It includes an additional \$235 million for the Jimmy Pattison Children's Hospital in Saskatoon and an over 100-year facility in the community of North Battleford, Mr. Speaker. We're proud of our record on health care in this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There was a lot of volume in that answer, but not a great deal of content. I heard nothing that would address the very real concerns that the design consultant that built the Wigmore Hospital has also designed the children's hospital — are there any concerns there? — and we identified four concerns raised by the ministry's own staff about Wigmore Hospital. Will the Premier or the minister step forward and address what those concerns are and what is being done to make sure that that facility is able to operate safely and deliver the care that patients need?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, first of all to the member's point on the incident that happened, the issues have been fixed, Mr. Speaker. Officials took the appropriate course of action. They fixed it two years ago, Mr. Speaker. Just like many things, the NDP's [New Democratic Party] behind the times.

But let's make it perfectly clear what the NDP are doing in these instances, Mr. Speaker. They're fearmongering. They're doing it in this case because they didn't get a hospital built there, so they're fearmongering just like they did with the Jimmy Pattison Children's Hospital, Mr. Speaker.

Last week in the media, the critic, the leader, Mr. Speaker, what did they do? They throw fear out into the community. They won't be able to recruit enough pediatricians, Mr. Speaker — wrong. It's not the case, Mr. Speaker. It won't be opened on time — wrong, Mr. Speaker. They're doing that all the time. It's fearmongering. It's pure politics.

The recruitment's going on. Dr. Givelichian is doing a tremendous job of it, Mr. Speaker, certainly much better than the members opposite do in the media, Mr. Speaker. It's going to get built. It's going to be on time. The issues at Moose Jaw have been rectified. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Pilot Training Program

Ms. Mowat: — For generations, men and women at 15 Wing Moose Jaw have served our country and trained some of the best pilots in the world. Saskatchewan people are proud of this tradition of pilot training that goes all the way back to the Second World War. However, the federal government is looking to consolidate pilot training across Canada.

Although it seems that the Southport pilot training program in Manitoba is the main target for closure, the federal government has offered no clarity about the future of the Moose Jaw program. 15 Wing employs hundreds of military and civilian personnel, and these people help drive the economy in Moose

Jaw and here in Regina.

Is the Sask Party government engaged on this file? What are they doing to ensure that the air force pilot training program will continue at 15 Wing Moose Jaw?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a question that would be much better put to the federal Minister of National Defence, Mr. Speaker. But what I can say is that there is a long tradition in this province of pilot training going back to the Commonwealth Air Training program, Mr. Speaker. Tens of thousands of young men and women who have served not just our country, but served allied countries around the world, have received their flight training in this province, Mr. Speaker. We're hopeful that'll continue.

I actually spoke with one of the senior executives for CAE just yesterday about an exciting announcement that they had made with regard to an application for a joint venture to continue training pilots here in Saskatchewan. We've put on the record our support for that, and whatever engagement that would be helpful in moving that forward, we're happy to participate in, Mr. Speaker. So yes, we have been engaged.

If the member wishes to put the specific question she did, it would be better put to the Minister of National Defence.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 240 and 241.

The Speaker: — Tabled 240, 241.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 81

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 81** — *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview. Yes, sorry. Sorry for the mike.

Ms. Beck: — That's okay. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise this afternoon to enter into second reading debate on Bill No. 81, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2017*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill came before us, I believe back in November 7th of 2017, by the minister, Minister Hargrave, Minister of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] rather,

Mr. Speaker, and it proposes a number of changes. One of the first changes that is proposed here is that a driver with a blood alcohol content of higher than .04 who transports children under the age of 16 will face longer licence suspensions and longer vehicle seizures.

Mr. Speaker, this is one of a number of bills that we've seen in regard to drunk driving and impaired driving in our province and is certainly something that deserves our attention and action on behalf of the government. Of course people of this province are all too familiar with stories in the news with traffic fatalities and injuries caused by impaired driving, and that is something that simply cannot be let stand. So looking at measures for increased penalties for those who choose to drive while impaired certainly has support on both sides of the aisle in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And those who willingly transport children under 16 while drinking, I think that there is, again there is support on both sides of the aisles here.

One thing I would like to point out, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that it's not only children in the vehicle who are at risk when people get in the vehicle and choose to drive. It's children in other vehicles and children who are pedestrians. And unfortunately one doesn't have to look too far back in media coverage and news releases, news coverage in this province, to find instances where people who perhaps don't have children in their own car head out onto the highway and cause horrific injuries and even fatalities to others, including children. And that is something that I think is worth considering as well, Mr. Speaker.

I know that there were members on this side of the House who a number of years ago sat on a committee looking at the rates of drinking and driving and some of the measures. I think specifically of the member for Riversdale and the member for Cumberland and the other members of that committee, and I thank them for that time on the committee. I think at that point a number of the measures that we are starting to see come forward here were discussed. Witnesses were brought to that committee. And I guess it is perhaps . . . would have been good to see some of these measures earlier, but if we're seeing them now and they will be beneficial, I think that that benefits all people in Saskatchewan.

Another change that is being proposed with this bill is the looking-back period or the period that's taken into account with regard to repeated offences, is being doubled from 5 years to 10 years, Mr. Speaker. And of course I think there would be some support for that, that this is a very serious offence, and unfortunately many of those who are convicted are convicted several times. So we'll have an opportunity to ask how that time period was arrived at when we take this to committee.

There's also a change that allows law enforcement to offer an indefinite administration suspension, making roadside consequences for those charged with impaired driving under the Criminal Code consistent with those charged with exceeding the .08, the criminal rate of impairment, or for those who refuse to comply with the demand for a test, Mr. Speaker. This is something that I'm sure we've all heard a tale of someone who's been pulled over for suspected impaired driving and refusing to stick around or to offer a test, an impaired driving test. So that is something I'd be interested again, as always, as to who has suggested these changes and what background

research has been done in terms of the efficacy of some of these changes.

There are a few different items that are put forward in this bill. The first several, as I've mentioned, deal with drinking and driving. There is also a provision for requiring vehicles to slow down to 60 when snowplows are stopped at the side of the road and when passing other vehicles providing assistance, if the prescribed lights are in operation. Of course members of this Assembly will remember there have been some changes with regard to snowplows and the use of blue lights on plows and on towing vehicles. So I think that there is some consistency that's proposed there. I'm not sure why that didn't happen when that bill was brought in, but it's happening now.

I guess the most contentious piece of this bill, Mr. Speaker — and something that we've been hearing about on this side, and I'm sure that members opposite have been hearing about too — is with regard to operation authority certificates. So of course, Mr. Speaker, this change comes in the wake of the shutdown, the windup or wind-down of STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]. This was our provincial carrier, provided safe transportation for people around the province — regulated, predictable, safe transportation for those who perhaps had no other option or perhaps who just preferred that option to be able to move people and services around the province. Of course STC is no longer.

[14:30]

There was a period where we were told that private operators would take up that business and would ensure that there would be transportation for all, Mr. Speaker, but that certainly isn't what we've seen. We've seen this process, in this period in between, marked by unpredictability. Companies starting up; companies shutting down. Routes being unpredictable, seeing pick-up points being somewhat less than predictable. And now we're seeing a deregulation of the operation of those bus lines.

There is a proposition with this bill to repeal, I think from section 88 all the way to 95, so a whole section of the existing *Traffic Safety Act* that applies to operation authority certificates; applies to rules respecting carriers; applies to rates charged by holders of the operating authority; applies to rules of tickets; the operation of buses and trucks; the operation prohibiting the transfer of certificates; how the books are to be maintained; the supervision of those who hold the certificates; and production, falsification of certificates, which I suppose seems reasonable; and the review of certificates, Mr. Speaker, as well as how the orders are enforced.

Mr. Speaker, this is a whole section of the Act that looked at rates, background checks, and really I would suspect were put in place to ensure safety of these carriers. You can imagine when you buy your ticket on any carrier that there's a certain amount of trust that is placed in the hands of that company and that driver. And we want to ensure that there's proper regulation, proper training, proper inspection of the vehicles.

And certainly I, maybe as some other members have, I've put my children on the bus, actually sent them down to Carnduff when we still had STC to visit their cousins and their aunt and uncle. And you know, I knew that it was regulated and knew

that they would be safe as they made the trip down there. And there was a lot of trust I placed in STC and in the driver.

You know, part of the reason is that, you know, this is a well-regulated, well-run company. And, Mr. Speaker, when we're looking at deregulation of a whole industry like this, I first of all would have to ask who was requesting this change, and what the expected outcomes, and what some of the reasonably to-be-expected outcomes might be of that deregulation.

And I know that those are questions that I will get a chance to talk further with stakeholders about, and look into what it is that other jurisdictions in the country do with regard to regulation of these services. Any time we're contemplating a change such as this, I think it does deserve our attention, and that's what we intend to do when we get some time with this bill once it goes to committee. I think with that I will conclude my remarks.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion of the minister that Bill No. 81, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 81, *The Traffic Safety (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2017* be committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

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 Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and as always it's an honour to be able to rise in the Assembly here today and speak to the government's agenda and the bills that they've introduced over the last part of the last year. So I'm happy to rise today to speak about changes to *The Environmental Management and Protection Act*.

It's a bit strange to be in this space today, Mr. Speaker, because

for six years I have been the official opposition's critic for the Environment, and with the rejig of duties it's now passed on to my able colleague from Saskatoon Centre. But I'm looking forward to the opportunity to comment on this bill and just want to reflect a little bit on some of my experiences as Environment critic over the past few years, and perhaps what we don't see in this bill as much as what we do see in this bill.

One of the things that the Sask Party promised if they formed government was that they would reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent of 2005 levels by 2020. And, Mr. Speaker, I went through I think four or five different Environment ministers when I . . . Some were recycled in and out but a number of them I asked in estimates every year whether or not that was still the intended target of the Sask Party government.

And the ministers always assured me that, although they would call it an ambitious target, they were still very confident that this was something that would be reached. And that was, obviously, the member from Willowgrove and the member from Estevan, the member from Battleford, the member from Shellbrook who's now the Premier, Mr. Speaker. They all have assured me on various occasions in the annual estimates that those targets that were promised by the Sask Party when they wanted to form government were ones that were still intended to be achieved. Now we're at 2018, Mr. Speaker. We're two years away from that time frame and emissions have not gone down, Mr. Speaker; in fact they have gone up in that time frame.

So it's a bit frustrating I think for the people of Saskatchewan to see governments making these types of promises and assurances to the people of Saskatchewan that they're going to take the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions seriously. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, that's the single most dangerous environmental problem this world is facing today, is the proliferation of greenhouse gas emissions and the causation of warming of our climate or, as some people describe it, climate chaos.

So the problem with making those promises and not acting on them is it has basically lulled I think the population of Saskatchewan to think that this was being looked after, that things were being looked after, that there was no worries, no worries at all that there'd be any problems with reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and that this government had it under control, Mr. Speaker. But we see actually things going in the opposite direction. And I know my colleague's going to have a number of questions for the minister when we get into estimates because part of what we see going in the opposite direction is actual funding for climate change initiatives for the people of Saskatchewan to be incented and engaged in their own efforts to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions.

This bill talks a lot about the much vaunted Environmental Code that was introduced when this government became . . . when the Sask Party formed government. It was brought in I think around 2010 and then various chapters have been enacted. But you know what chapter has never been enacted, Mr. Speaker? The chapter on greenhouse gases, never been enacted. It's still a big, empty, gaping hole in the Environmental Code that this government has bragged about for many, many years

now.

And I think that's something we're going to be held accountable for when history looks back on how this government managed this immense challenge. And it's not a simple challenge, Mr. Speaker; it's an immense challenge. It's one that engages the entire climate. We saw promises and hundreds of countries signing on to the Paris Agreement back a few years ago when Premier Wall was in attendance with the minister of the day. That was the world coming together basically and agreeing that this is a serious issue and that changes have to be made. Canada has made very serious commitments under that Paris Agreement, Mr. Speaker.

And there is only one country that has pulled out of that agreement since it was enacted. I think you can guess, Mr. Speaker, which country that is. It's our neighbours to the south under their new leadership. But there are states in the United States and there are cities in the United States that are continuing to work towards their agreed decreases in emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, so that we will see a shift in the damage that's being created here on the planet.

We talk a lot . . . I saw a sign driving into Regina last night and it struck me as interesting. It's a public announcement saying turn in poachers and turn in polluters, Mr. Speaker. So we talk about pollution a lot when we talk about water. And we talk about pollution a lot when we talk about land. We talk about pollution a lot when we talk about air quality.

But we don't talk about pollution when it comes to greenhouse gas emissions, and yet that's the single largest polluter in the planet today. It's changing the way the oceans' currents run. It's changing the way the ice caps are operating. It's changing the tundra in the North. It's changing sea levels, Mr. Speaker. It's changing weather. All of these things are very, very serious.

And if we get to 2 degrees warming, global warming, Mr. Speaker, there is going to be a lot of serious problems for not only the planet, but for our own race because I think we're going to see displacements of populations like this world has never seen before.

So when we have a government that promises repeatedly year after year after year that this target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions 20 per cent by 2020 from 2005 levels, and no progress being made, it's cause for alarm.

And I'm embarrassed sometimes of what my children and their children are going to say about our inability today to make significant changes in the way we use fossil fuels. And I think it's something that's going to be a terrible legacy of this day and age, and not just this government, Mr. Speaker, but our entire planet. And it's frustrating as heck.

And I just think it's unfortunate we don't see that code in this chapter. We don't see a government moving forward. We see it in other . . . Other parts of the world are taking this very seriously, Mr. Speaker. They're being innovative in the way they deal with it. They are using the green economy to generate new and exciting technologies.

And we see bits and pieces of it here in Saskatchewan by . . .

For example, Brandt Industries has opened up a new plant in northern Saskatoon but they're being overlooked for contracts, Mr. Speaker, because companies from outside of the province have been further ahead in developing their industries on things like wind towers and wind turbines, Mr. Speaker. We've lost that opportunity here. We had lots of time to get on that and be a significant player in that value-added industry, but we have missed the boat.

The Conference Board of Canada said back in 2010 or 2011, they did a review of the Sask Party's bill on *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*. Now I don't know if you remember that bill, Mr. Speaker. You and I were elected after it was passed. It was actually passed in this House, received third reading and Royal Assent, but it's never been put in force, Mr. Speaker, until very recently some chapters . . . And the Minister of the Environment's correct to remind me. Well and I am aware of it actually, that partial implementation of that bill has finally happened because of this government's work with the federal government on the coal regulations that were introduced a few years ago and the need for an equivalency agreement, Mr. Speaker. So those chapters were absolutely necessary for this government to meet its obligations on the coal emissions side.

Now there are other parts in that bill though that I think are worthwhile, and we've been calling on the government to implement them — things like the Climate Change Foundation. Climate Change Foundation is one of those things that the member for Martensville was actually the minister responsible for introducing that bill, Mr. Speaker, and she didn't see it through, Mr. Speaker. There was the Climate Change Foundation, the technology foundation, all of those innovative ways for people to innovatively bring forward some interesting ways to reduce emissions. And that's what it's all about, Mr. Speaker, is ways to reduce emissions.

There were a lot of good things in that bill, Mr. Speaker, and unfortunately this government continues to refuse to implement the whole bill. And I'm not sure why they're so stubborn in not implementing that bill, Mr. Speaker, but it's something that could have made a difference in this province. And now we're faced with imposition by the federal government of forming a bill, or I guess it was introduced as a bill in the federal House, imposing on us something when we could have been so much further ahead of the game. And, Mr. Speaker, this government has dropped the ball and only being dragged kicking and screaming to implement some parts of that bill, but still large portions of it are not in effect yet.

[14:45]

And the ones that were promised in December, we haven't seen any legislation yet bringing those high emitters into compliance and actually start looking at ways for them to lower their emissions or pay a price, Mr. Speaker. And that regulatory approach is one that makes a lot of sense. So it's been disappointing, Mr. Speaker, and I think, you know, not only will this government be judged by today's standards, but I think in the future your grandchildren, my grandchildren, and the generations that follow are going to say, why didn't this happen? We knew it was happening and yet we didn't take action.

The bill itself deals with a number of amendments to *The Environmental Management and Protection Act*, and again a lot of it is in reference to some of the code chapters that were introduced by this government as an overhaul to the regulatory approach that had been used in years past, Mr. Speaker. There's several I would say housekeeping changes or changes that have been introduced because of requests by various stakeholders in the environmental management process.

So one of the things they're talking about in this bill is the Environmental Code advisory committee. One of the things that was created as another layer of administration as this code was brought in is a Saskatchewan Environmental Code advisory committee.

In the current bill, Mr. Speaker, they are required to be appointed by order in council so there has to be an executive government action in order for these people to be appointed. This is being devolved now down to the minister where the minister will be allowed to appoint these new members to the code without any order in council.

As always the concern when you devolve authorities, Mr. Speaker, is there's less accountability, and I think that's something that we're always concerned about. But the administrative ease is always of course something of interest to administrators as well, and having to just have the minister appoint them by order rather than going through an order in council does provide some flexibility for the ministry. And I can see why that's attractive to the minister.

There's referencing adverse impacts from water supplied by waterworks, Mr. Speaker. That is some of the changes that is being made, and I'll just look at the minister's comments on that part of it: "The code is . . . improving processes and removing red tape . . . [so] turnaround times . . . for water and sewage mains have been reduced from several weeks to one day."

And they're moving forward with new code chapters, so the amendment is going to improve, according to the minister: "These amendments will strengthen this group's ability to carry out this important work for the province."

I am concerned about some of the devolution of provision of safe drinking water to communities in and around Saskatoon in particular because what's happened, Mr. Speaker, is a lot of that's been privatized and they're now private companies that are providing potable drinking water to some of the subdivisions in the rural parts near Saskatoon.

But what's happened is that there's no accountability for these companies and there's no oversight on the part of Water Security Agency to ensure that the residents are being delivered adequate and safe potable water to their homes and their residences.

And I'm working with one individual who's having a really difficult time getting adequate potable water and safe potable water. And the company that's delivering it is not being, despite several attempts to have them looked into, Mr. Speaker, it simply is not happening. So the frustrations that this individual is experiencing and the concern that an entire subdivision could

be at risk because of dangerous water, dangerous drinking water or inadequate supplies of water is one I think that is not being looked at properly. And I certainly want to have some further questions about that when Water Security Agency will be in estimates, Mr. Speaker.

There's other amendments being brought in to deal with out-of-province beverage containers that are brought into Saskatchewan to take advantage of our recycling program. Mr. Speaker, as you know, whenever you bring products to Sarcan — I did that last week; I was able to get some recycling in — you have to sign your name and provide a phone number to demonstrate that you do, and you say, you live in the province of Saskatchewan. Now evidently that is not enough, Mr. Speaker, and I feel the government is now compelled to introduce some new provisions there.

And I'm just going to take a quick look to see if we can look at those clauses, Mr. Speaker, in terms of how those changes are going to unfold. And I think it's under a new section being added. It's called 45.1, the interim product stewardship program. And it seems to be imposing some requirements on manufacturers who import or sell products, that they're putting an interim product stewardship program on it. I'm not absolutely sure if that's the right section, Mr. Speaker, but that is one of the things that the minister had talked about in his comments on the second reading speech in November.

He went on to say, "The amendments will provide new enforcement tools for cross-border beverage containers . . ." So that is actually a different section, Mr. Speaker, in terms of cross-border beverage containers. And I'm going to see if I can quickly find it. Unfortunately I can't locate that clause exactly, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure it's there. If the minister said it's there, it's there. So it's just not jumping out of the page at me.

He did also talk about the waste stewardship programs where the public interest is threatened by the imminent discontinuation of the stewardship program. So in that case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the government is inserting some clauses that will allow the government to take over if a stewardship program is failing. And I don't know exactly what specific programs the government's concerned about. This information wasn't provided in the second reading speech. But any time the government creates a clause to take back power, you have to be pretty sure that there are some problems that are being addressed here. So again that's something that my colleague will be able to look at once he's in committee on this bill.

There's another part in the bill that will clarify language in several sections of the Act. The minister advised that:

. . . in regards to . . . drinking water advisories, the Act includes a reference to the environment with respect to causing an adverse effect but does not reference human health. Drinking water is now tied directly to potential harm to human health.

So, Mr. Speaker, the human health impacts with drinking water is something I think we've seen examples of all too often. You'll recall the cryptosporidium outbreak in the North Battleford water system. And Walkerton of course in Ontario, where several people lost their lives, is another example of the

adverse impact that non-safe drinking water can have on human populations, Mr. Speaker. So obviously we want to make sure that the adverse impact is tied to human health. That's an important part.

And it brings to mind of course the Husky oil spill of last summer, or not last . . . 2017, 2016 already, Mr. Speaker. It's coming up two years now on the Husky oil spill and the public still hasn't been able to see any inspection reports in relation to what happened there, why that spill happened, whether the response time was adequate, whether the company properly . . . or improperly, or how they improperly responded to the alarm systems and the warning signs that there was something seriously wrong.

And we see the result, Mr. Speaker, when . . . I forget how many thousands of litres of oil was dumped into the North Saskatchewan River, and it affecting water supplies for the people of North Battleford, and also First Nations who use the North Saskatchewan River, and of course the city of Prince Albert.

But for the quick thinking and quick acting of a lot of city officials and environment officials once the spill was discovered and reported, people were able to get back to a drinking water system. Not without cost of course, which the company has been responsible for, the expenses that it caused. But there's still questions remaining about sediment, Mr. Speaker, what kind of particulates are embedded in the sediment, Mr. Speaker, and what we can do in the future.

We know now that there are a number of pipelines in Saskatchewan that actually go underneath water crossings, and I think those need to be much more adequately reviewed and protected. And again when we're talking about adverse impacts on human health, I think when we privatize delivery, water utility delivery, so we're privatizing our water utilities basically is what's happening, in those small subdivisions that are cropping on the outskirts of the cities.

So again, human health . . . You know the damages that can happen when there's E. coli in the water system or any other kind of breach of security. And if we're not able to have the Water Security Agency make sure that our water is secure, I think this is something that needs to be carefully looked at, and whether or not water security is adequately staffed in order to have the people available for that oversight.

And again, I guess you can look at things like . . . Water Security Agency announced a moratorium on drainage in the Quill lakes area, which is a very, very large area, that basin in north central Saskatchewan, or central Saskatchewan I guess, and yet drainage has continued unabated. And I've seen examples of that in the Wadena area, Mr. Speaker, where I've seen track hoes and I've seen drainage that clearly happened after the moratorium that the Water Security Agency announced.

So it's one thing to announce a moratorium, but the other thing is to ensure that producers take that seriously. And when I see the disregard that I saw with my own eyes in terms of that blatant disregard for the law, Mr. Speaker, you have to wonder sometimes whether turning a blind eye to this is appropriate or

not. Or why bother announcing a moratorium in the first place, because it's being abused. It's being disregarded. It's being disrespected, and blatantly, Mr. Speaker.

And I think it's something that should be of concern to this government, but unfortunately the attention is not being paid. And when you see your neighbour doing something like that and the water ends up on your land, what are you going to do, Mr. Speaker? What are you going to do? You're probably going to take care of your own, because certainly nobody else is looking out for you.

So that leads to all kinds of problems, not just neighbour to neighbour. And I'm sure you've seen this in your own area, Mr. Speaker. It's not just neighbour to neighbour. All of a sudden it becomes RM to RM and then it becomes watershed to watershed and then it becomes province to province. And you know which way water goes, what direction it goes, Mr. Speaker. It goes downhill. And that's one of the biggest problems that we have with the management of water. I think it's something that has been frustrating for producers, especially those on the downside of the water systems. This isn't an easy problem, Mr. Speaker. This problem has been around for a long time, and I think it's something that we really need to find better ways.

I know that watershed associations are doing what they can do, and we're hoping that that's going to be more fruitful. And they are taking it seriously. They want to make sure they find a solution that works, not just for their own individual situation but for their community and for their neighbours, neighbourhood. I'd think it'd be really an important way for farmers to do that.

There are other different changes in the Act. There's some regarding waste abandonment and changes to the wording there, and also clarifying language for audits, inspections, and investigations to ensure environment officers have appropriate powers to carry out their duties. And finally, a further amendment for a person to request that information of any kind or nature that may reveal proprietary business or trade secret information be kept confidential beyond the original five-year time period.

[15:00]

It's a bit frustrating, Mr. Speaker, when we see today a minister that's trying to keep information from committee because of a proprietary nature and then realizing it's not that proprietary. So I think that's something we have to be really careful about when we are protecting something that is deemed to be proprietary. I think we need a better review of that. Because I've had so many FOI [freedom of information] requests looking for information from this government and not getting that information back, because the ministry has determined that it's proprietary in nature.

When you're doing business with the government, Mr. Speaker, I think we need a lot more transparency. And that's one of the biggest issues with P3s, Mr. Speaker, is the inability . . . In the past we would be able to see those records. We'd be able to see those accounts. We'd be able to understand how the money's being spent. We're not seeing that now, Mr. Speaker. So these

kinds of changes I think come with a risk to transparency and accountability, and I think that needs to be kept into consideration.

So there's other changes to waterworks and sewage mains and housekeeping amendments to make sure the Act is responsive. Our Environment critic is going to take a close look at all of this once we get the bill into committee, and he can ask those direct questions of the minister.

So I think at this point I don't have much more to add to the discussion on the bill today, and so I think I'll just close my comments.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 83 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 83, *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2017* be committed to the Standing Committee on Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — Bill 83 stands committed to the Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 88

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 88** — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise again this afternoon to enter into debate on Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act*. A nice bit of alliteration there. And a bill, of course, as the title suggests, that proposes amendments to the automobile insurance Act.

I'll just go over some of the highlights or the main measures that are contemplated in this bill. The first is to take the definition of a chargeable incident and move it into the regulations. I believe in his second reading comments, the minister noted that this was to correct an unnecessary duplication of that definition so that it would be more easily

changed in the regulations and perhaps be more nimble.

Another change that is contemplated here is changes to the appeals for driver safety ratings, that again we see movement from the Act into the regulations of the procedures, fees, and required documents — all being moved from legislation into the regulations. Of course it always bears repeating I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that any time that when looking at changing, moving sections of Acts from legislation into the regulations, that we do lose a piece of oversight.

Of course when something needs to be changed in legislation, we stand up and we get a number of hours of debate and oversight, and that is not afforded when items are moved into regulations. So always something to pay attention to, and I suppose in some instances it does make sense to be more responsive and have things moved into the regulations. But I think as we get our last chance here to have a look at those pieces in legislation, it is incumbent upon us to make sure that we do our due diligence and ensure that we've got it right.

There's also a new section in this bill that clarifies the insurer has the right to recovered money paid to an injured customer — those who have purchased insurance — or a family member of a deceased customer from an insured person who is convicted of the Criminal Code offence. Of course these are terrible circumstances, when you have an injury or unfortunately the death of a loved one, and this allows for some recovery of damages from that person who was found to be convicted of a Criminal Code offence in the accident. So I would be interested and will be interested as this moves into committee just to see where we're at with regard to other jurisdictions and how that impacts the insurance system here in the province.

Another thing that is being introduced here is it allows for insurers to collect debts that are owed in instalments. Of course, that makes some of that debt I suppose more affordable for those who are looking to pay back an amount. Perhaps it allows people to maintain their coverage, which is important, Mr. Speaker. And hopefully, potentially . . . I'd be interested to look and see if there's any evidence that it decreases the amount of folks who would be operating without insurance, which is of course something that no one wants to see. So ensuring that you have coverage for as many people as possible is something that I think is a pretty important outcome.

Just looking back to the minister's comments, going all the way back to November the 8th of 2017 on second reading, again going back to the chargeable incident. The minister stated that the proposed change would eliminate "... unnecessary duplication and will be more efficient when changes are required to the listed offences." I'm not sure if there is a certain addition of an offence, or a list of the type of offences that would be listed, but those are some of the questions that we would be looking at in committee.

I think that this Act is fairly straightforward. There is a little more input that we'd seek from the minister and his officials with regard to this bill, but I think I'll have opportunity to do that in committee. And with that I will conclude my remarks.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Crown Investments corporation that Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 88, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2017* be committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill is referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Bill No. 112

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'll just read again the title of this bill, Bill No. 112. It's my pleasure to rise and enter into second reading debate on this bill, of course as has been mentioned, the miscellaneous vehicle and driving statutes amendment Act, 2017.

Of course we'll all know in this country that we're seeing a big change at the federal level with regard to the decriminalization of cannabis, and that has necessitated a number of areas of provincial authority to enact legislation to deal with that changed world come sometime this summer, Mr. Speaker. And when I talk as the SGI critic, there is a fair amount of concern and a fair amount of questions about how we are going to deal with impaired by cannabis driving in the province. And I think obviously this is a very, very important piece of legislation. But there are some questions about how we arrived at these particular propositions here in this bill.

I'll just go over briefly what is proposed here. The bill adds new federal drug offences under the Criminal Code to various sections of the existing automobile insurance Act, as well as to *The Traffic Safety Act*. So this is a whole new world, of course, in Canada. And other provinces are grappling with this as well, as you know, how to deal with impairment under the changed federal legislation.

It adds a definition for drug to *The Traffic Safety Act*, and it

adds a new section to *The Traffic Safety Act* that outlines zero tolerance for drug provisions. It sets out licence suspensions, vehicle impoundments, and administrative fines for drivers who have been found to drive while having consumed drugs.

One of the biggest issues — and I don't think that this is much of a surprise — is just how that's going to be tested. Of course we have, over the years, developed tools for detecting impairment by alcohol by drivers. We have roadside tests. We have blood tests. There's some behavioural tests. But I'm not sure that we have reached that same level, and in fact I don't think that we have reached that same level with regard to impairment by cannabis.

Just in terms of the properties of alcohol and the properties of cannabis, cannabis is fat soluble, which means that it stays in the body longer than alcohol which is largely flushed through the system in fairly quick order. Which does lead to some questions, I guess, about exactly what that test is going to look like, what the period is in terms of having consumed cannabis, and how that's going to be enforced in terms of training and detection at the roadside. So I think that will be an area that we'll spend some time on in committee.

There's a note that drug offences will be dealt with in the same way as alcohol-related offences, except that ignition interlock can't be used to deal with the consumption of drugs, which I suppose does make sense. And I would be interested in what other devices, technology is available to deal with issues specifically of consumption of drugs.

Currently it's illegal to drive while impaired, whether that is from alcohol or drugs, and that remains the same, Mr. Speaker, as it should. I think we all can agree that we don't want drivers who are impaired out on the roadways and negatively impacting both their own health but of course of those who are on the road or on the sidewalks along with them.

And again, we are in relatively new times with this legislation. I would be looking at . . . Of course, as I've noted, other jurisdictions are also having to grapple with how to deal with impaired driving, due to the new cannabis legislation. And we'll be interested to see what type of legislation and what type of research that already exists with regard to the best ways to deal with those impaired by drugs, and how to best deal with them.

So I will again have opportunity to do that in committee, and I will take that opportunity to review further the comments of stakeholders and concerned citizens in the province. But I think with that, I am prepared to conclude my remarks here today.

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation that Bill No. 112, *The Miscellaneous Vehicle and Driving Statutes (Cannabis Legislation) Amendment Act, 2017* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

[15:15]

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To what committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 112, *The Miscellaneous Vehicle and Driving Statutes (Cannabis Legislation) Amendment Act, 2017* be committed to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Deputy Speaker: — The bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Bill No. 126

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 126 — *The Energy Export Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to enter into adjourned debates on Bill No. 126, *The Energy Export Act*. I spent some time discussing some of the ideas that are present in this Act during a 75-minute debate earlier with a number of the members opposite. And I want to draw your attention to a few points as they relate to this Act, but I won't spend too much time up here on this today, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Our number one concern as we look to some of these issues, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is jobs. And as jobs critic, that resonates with me pretty closely. It's something I am watching quite dutifully and consider it to be one of my primary critic duties.

And we know that there are 1,100 jobs at Evraz that are at stake if this project doesn't go forward. And we're also concerned about jobs that could potentially be impacted here at the Lloydminster Upgrader, the Co-op Refinery, and in the trucking sector as well. So we are fighting for all Saskatchewan jobs. We want to be cautious about unintended consequences because we know, in these types of situations, unintended consequences can arise. And we know that we will need to spend some more time going through this bill and looking it at in a little bit more detail.

Our party's position with the Saskatchewan NDP has been clear on this for years. We are supportive of this project. It's a federal project that has been approved. We believe it is in Saskatchewan's best interest for this project to go forward. We support the triple-bottom-line process that ensures that we have economic benefits, but also social and environmental benefits as a key piece of the equation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

We know that this project has been approved. The Trudeau Liberals need to show leadership to ensure that this project gets

built, as that is the responsibility of theirs on the federal stage, to make sure that the provinces are working together. So we look to them for leadership.

We certainly support the workers at Evraz who we know will be supplying 75 per cent of this project. And in speaking to some of the union representation, I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we're talking about over a year's worth of work, several months of work that are still to be undertaken on this project. So that can have a significant impact on the workers here in Regina and their families as well.

We know that the Sask Party has failed to meaningfully address climate change or have any credibility on the environment. They've cut funding for climate change and green energy. They don't have a credible plan to reduce greenhouse gases, and a lot of those pieces are still left to be determined, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which is quite disappointing. And of course they've failed to lay an inch of pipeline to tidewater in their time in government.

So we won't be signing any blank cheques. We need to go forward and make sure that we've examined the unintended consequences of this bill. So we'll spend a little bit more time doing that. And I'll let my colleagues weigh in more on some of their thoughts, and we'll have a number of questions once the bill gets to committee as well. But for now, I would like to move that we adjourn debate for today on Bill No. 126, *The Energy Export Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 126, *The Energy Export Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 129

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor that **Bill No. 129** — *The Saskatchewan Technology Start-up Incentive Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into debate on Bill No. 129, *An Act respecting the Saskatchewan Technology Start-up Incentive*. And I listened with interest yesterday as the minister gave her remarks, and my colleague in his rebuttal, and of course we do have a lot of concerns.

And I think that, you know, Saskatchewan has such a strong history of innovation, and it has been through our history. It's who we are. We are blessed with people who always look at a problem as an opportunity and a way to do things differently. And this is the entrepreneurial spirit, and I think this is what makes Saskatchewan really exciting in so many ways. That's how they've contributed to the Canadian economy, if not the

global economy.

So we look at this bill, and we're going to look at it with a lot of interest. My colleague from Athabasca highlighted about the number of files that these folks have fallen short of, and I can just think of two that I'll come back to on. The film tax credit, which even the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce commented on, about how critically important that that film tax credit was for Saskatchewan people, both in terms of work and in telling our story. And these folks managed to kill it, managed to kill it. And why? We still look back at that and say, why did you do that?

And of course the other one, and I alluded to this a bit yesterday, of course was Enterprise Saskatchewan, the great wallpaper that was supposed to change the direction of Saskatchewan. But as the business writers of the day said, this could be Saskatchewan's finest moment or its biggest flop. And we look back at it now and we know that in fact just last fall we took the Act and decommissioned the Act. I've forgotten the word for when you take an Act . . .

An Hon. Member: — Repeal.

Mr. Forbes: — Repealed the Act, the Saskatchewan enterprise Act, because . . . And how ironic, how ironic the architect of the Saskatchewan enterprise is now working in Calgary.

But so we look at this, we look at this bill . . . Now it was interesting yesterday the members opposite got very upset about this and said we should be making sure we send our best wishes to the citizen from Swift Current who's found his new work in Calgary. And I'm wondering if these folks are sending all the people who are leaving Saskatchewan best wishes; we hope to see you back; and here's a coupon for luggage. Here's a coupon for luggage, you know, and whether it's Samsonite or Swiss, or some . . . whatever it is.

You know, I don't think . . . I would think that Brad Wall would think he's treated like anybody else, anybody else. We've heard this from these folks over there. We treat everyone equal. So if we send a best wishes card to Mr. Brad Wall and good luck in his new job and his office looks over 16th Street in Calgary, or wherever those law offices are located in Calgary, we should do the same.

I don't know if this is included in the budget here this time. We're talking about a budget bill. And are they printing off cards for everybody who's leaving Saskatchewan? Best wishes; glad to know you; you did a great job when you were here in Saskatchewan. Too bad you had to move to Alberta or BC. Or was it Ottawa you're moving to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Now they're talking about, he didn't move. He didn't move but he's got a new job. I think that was what the story was, wasn't it? A new job in Calgary? And so . . .

An Hon. Member: — Better check his licence plate.

Mr. Forbes: — Yes. Yes. And we understand that Premier Notley has, in her good will, says, you can keep your Saskatchewan licence plate. We're not going to be checking your licence plates when he's outside.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm trying to talk about this bill here and these folks keep getting me off track. But I do have to say, I do have to say that I am just reminded of how these folks over there are kind of in a kerfuffle about what luggage to get as long as that matches the best wishes card.

I think that this is something that . . . We see this, the folks who were doing the film tax credit who were succeeding here in Saskatchewan, and now living in either Toronto or in Vancouver or Calgary. And in fact this law firm may actually be dealing with some of the those folks who had to leave Saskatchewan because of some of the bad choices these folks have made, some of the poor economic judgments that they have made in guiding this economy. They had record revenue for 10 years — record revenue. And what have we got? Record debt, record debt, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And what a mess we're finding ourselves in today.

And so with this bill, Mr. Speaker, this bill, we kind of have to say we're going to have to see where this goes because, I tell you, they don't have a great track record over there. Now we hope, we hope that the people of Saskatchewan can utilize this and do great things. We do think it's important to make sure you have incentives for people to achieve great things and especially when we see the new businesses that are coming up through entrepreneurship here in Saskatchewan.

But what this talks about really . . . And actually it was interesting. It was the day before the budget came out and I think one of the investors, owners of one of the tech companies that actually the minister refers to, talks about how, you know, it's great to start up a company. It really is, and this is what this is going to address. But it's also really important to keep the company here, not just start it up and have it sold to some other investor in Canada and have them move to Toronto or Vancouver.

This is not just a start-up province; this is a place where we want to see people stay and have their jobs, keep their kids in their schools, see them go to school here, and achieve here in Saskatchewan. And we see this . . . Hopefully they get a good start-up here, but we want to see the next step; we want to see the next step. And I think that's what other initiatives that these folks have killed, like the film tax credit, it wasn't about making small films. It was about making the big movies here, and they were making the big movies here, and we see what these folks have done to initiatives like that.

So this bill creates a 45 per cent non-refundable tax credit for investments in technology-based start-up investments, and that's a good thing, and talks about how this must be a business that develops novel technology or uses the technology in a novel way to create new products, services, or processes. So it's more than just hardware; it's a software. It's the applications that really make a difference, and we've seen that. And we see such incredible talent here in Saskatchewan in terms of being creative in how we can use technology to meet issues and solutions for people in Saskatchewan and across the world. So that's important.

So they have to apply to the government for a tax credit certificate, and that's fair enough. That makes it work. Have to have fewer than 50 employees and 50 per cent of their

employees have to be located in Saskatchewan, you know, the head office located in Saskatchewan, and not have previously raised over 5 million in equity capital. And the maximum annual investment for eligible investors is 500,000.

And then the other question I would have is around making sure . . . How do we make this a fair, level playing field for all, and not one where you're picking winners or losers or friends and those who just can't seem to find their way to the minister's door in a meaningful way? And so this will be a challenge. This will be a challenge for this government because, you know, as I said, their record in managing such a golden opportunity that we had in this province . . . And what are we left with?

And as I said that we had a situation where, you know, everybody was optimistic and hopeful. And we see now . . . Actually I think the CFIB's [Canadian Federation of Independent Business] new stats about optimism in small business is not that strong, not as strong as it once was. But with the paper on the economy that was presented in 2006 and '07, the Enterprise Saskatchewan and how that — I don't know how you describe this — negatively transformed.

Now we don't want to get any negative media here, but talk about a major mess that was left on economic development agencies across this province as they transformed different regional economic development agencies who bought in and were reconfigured and then at the end of the day were left holding an empty bag of hopes and aspirations. And what really was left from this new plan, this new idea, now with the repeal of *The Enterprise Saskatchewan Act*? And the minister is still there.

[15:30]

And when we have asked where did the money go, well a lot of it went to support this initiative, but it's being quietly erased from the history of Saskatchewan. And from what happened in 2007 to . . . Well it was the mid-2012 to '14 when it really ran out of steam and finally they had to admit that it was not a good idea at all. In fact, it was a bad idea, and now we are seeing the impacts of that.

And so we hope that this can do better than that. We hope that it wasn't written on a napkin, it wasn't an idea that was pitched in an airport, that it really had some solid research. The trouble is, Mr. Speaker . . . Yes, we've heard about this. This is, you know, one of the major incubators of the Sask Party is the airport lobbies, waiting for the next plane home, and so this is where some of their, apparently, their best ideas come from.

I don't know. I hope that . . . It will be interesting to see if this has been well researched and meets the needs because, right off the hopper, I have to tell you, listening to some of the folks in the industry, they are saying that we need, as I said, support, support for the industry, not just in the start-up phase. Excellent idea, but what happens once you've got it up and running? You have to maintain it. You have to maintain it. And this is where this government falls short, and that's why so often start-ups start to look around, around Canada, around the world: where can we go to get the kind of support that we need to make things really work and so they can be sustainable?

And so, Mr. Speaker, I would say that we will have a lot of questions about this in committee, about the sustainability of this idea. And really it is interesting because the minister did name several organizations that may benefit from this. Were they adequately consulted? Do they feel this is the right path? And I'm sure many of them would say, it's the right direction but it doesn't just stop at the end of this. They need more than just this to really grow their companies beyond 50 employees, that in fact we're talking about companies that might have a hundred or several hundred indeed. That's the kind of thing we want to see here in Saskatchewan. We don't want to see them moving out of province to Toronto or Vancouver.

So I have to say there is a couple of elephants in the room, and we talked about this, and that's Enterprise Saskatchewan and it's the film tax credit. What will happen when they sour on this idea? Will it stand the test of time?

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will move adjournment of Bill No. 129, *The Saskatchewan Technology Start-up Incentive Act*. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 129. 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 Prince Albert Northcote.

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's always a pleasure to add remarks to bill debate, and today I'll be adding some remarks with regards to Bill 124, the environmental management and protection amendment Act.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I saw there was quite a few bills with regards to amending environmental procedures and Acts, I was hoping to see that we would see some changes, being creative, a plan to create some environmental sustainability within the province, or a plan to promote green energy initiatives, or incentives to encourage residents to reduce, reuse, or recycle. But what this particular bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's just instead more increased costs to our hard-working residents of Saskatchewan.

And so with regards to the amendments with this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it talks about the environmental handling fee changes. This was announced on March 23rd and the changes and the increased costs were starting on April 1st, 2018. And in fact it was not an April Fool's joke but in fact some increased costs that are going to impact individuals.

We see this increased cost going alongside other costs that came forward in the last budget with regards to when people go and buy any items that they can bring forward for reimbursement. But some of the costs aren't able to be reimbursed and this is one particular cost. So last budget we saw that PST was added to some of these items as well as increased by 1 per cent. The deposit fees were also increased and now this, in fact the environmental fees. And so this is the third increase in 12 months, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and so like I said, this is going to have an impact on a lot of families.

The minister, when he brought forward the changes with regards to this bill, indicated that the changes were needed for the sustainability of Saskatchewan's beverage recycling program. The increase — it will be 2 cents on environmental handling charges for all recyclable beverage containers purchased in Saskatchewan and the deposits — he indicated are supposed to be used to fund the contract government holds with Sarcan to deliver the beverage container collection recycling program.

Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you start going through this bill a little bit more closely, it's very evident that this increase is not going directly to Sarcan. In fact, until the negotiations in 2020, they're expecting that the 1 per cent will go back into Sarcan but that 1 per cent of this increase will continue to go into the General Revenue Fund. And I do understand that it's based on two years back. That's what is given to Sarcan. But we still haven't gone to the purpose of the negotiations, and that's still two years from now.

And what's happening with that 1 per cent? If it's going into the General Revenue Fund, is it going to be allocated directly for environmentally sustainable programs or what will that be? Because my understanding will be that it'll be at least \$5 million that's going to be put back into the GRF [General Revenue Fund] and 5 million will be going back to Sarcan because it's about a \$10 million increase a year. So that's just information I got off of media outlets.

So I think the critic, when it comes time to go to committee, that that'll definitely be some questions that'll be worth asking and finding out and understanding exactly how this is because it does really appear to be a backdoor tax, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Individuals won't know that it's being directly opposed to them by this government, but their costs again will be increasing just like our utility rates have been increasing and all those other charges.

I'm going to read some of what the expected costs will go up to. It looks like in the explanatory notes that the metal cans are going to be going up to 5 cents, the plastic bottles will be 6 cents, the non-refillable glass bottles are 7 cents, and the multi-material, shelf-stable containers are 3 cents and the paper-based polycoat gable-top containers will be 3 cents. I believe that was how much they were previously, and so now that'll all be up 2 more cents, so that's quite a bit of money. And we do realize that everything is increasing and the cost with regards to recycling these items comes with a price as well. But I think the big item will be what's going on with that 1 per cent going to the General Revenue Fund.

So they also indicated that . . . In one area it said these increases

are supposed to sustain the program until approximately 2024, but I also read that they're hoping that the increase of the 1 cent to Sarcan will sustain the program till 2030. So that would be 10 years. In 10 years we know exactly how much costs have gone up here, so I don't know if that is going to be sustainable. Those are going to be definitely questions worth asking — how much the costs have gone up within these past 10 years.

But I think it's really important though, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we talk about the fact that Saskatchewan does have a pretty impressive recycling program. I do have to admit that. Travelling across the country, travelling to other countries, I'm really always simply impressed with the fact that we do do a good job with ensuring that we try to recycle as much as we can, and I hope we continue on that path. Because when I go to other countries or provinces and see all the bottles in the garbage and knowing that that's going to the landfills, it's really disappointing when we know that there is such a good option out there.

And Sarcan within our province does an excellent job with providing that service, and I believe they're one of the most successful recycling programs in Canada. So that's great, and it's I believe due to the really good and hard work of the employees that work in that agency. And I've read here that Sarcan has helped divert 49 million pounds of materials from our landfills over the past eight years and employs 600 people of all abilities, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So that is really impressive. They've done a great job to be a very inclusive workplace and we're all very proud, on both sides of the House, with regards to that.

And we know that they're regularly seeing recyclable return rates of over 80 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I think that's really quite impressive because we know some areas of the province might not have regular access to Sarcan, or some individuals might have a little bit of an issue with regards to accessing the service. But regardless, 80 per cent is very impressive. And I know some of these items do go into the municipal recycling program and the municipalities that do their best to bring those back into the proper recycling programs. So I think that's something that needs to be addressed, needs to be celebrated because we do have a good recycling program. And even how good it is, I know there are ways that we can make it even better.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we do need to ensure that we have a sustainable environmental management plan, and we have to commit to protecting our environment. That's so very important. And so I think when bills like this come for amendment this gives us a great opportunity to have those discussions. And I know there'll be more questions that the critic will have when they have an opportunity to talk at committee, and I know my fellow colleagues will have a lot more they'll want to add with regards to this debate.

But like I said before, with reviewing this information I had more questions than answers with regards to how the increase of funds will be spent. We have to acknowledge that this presents another burden to families, and we need to look at how we're supporting families within our province. And we know that this is going to be an increase, that consumers will be paying more, but they're not going to be receiving the benefits

with regards to it. So we need to be mindful of that as well.

[15:45]

So like I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have other colleagues that will want to add more remarks with regards to changes with regards to this legislation. And I know the critic will do an excellent job with discussion in committee with those questions as well. So at this time I'm going to adjourn debate on Bill No. 124, the environmental management and protection amendment Act.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 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 Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise again this afternoon to enter into debate on Bill No. 125, *The Saskatchewan Value-added Agriculture Incentive Act*. Mr. Speaker, this was a bill that was introduced with this year's budget and of course, due to it being a budget bill, there is limited opportunity with regard to scrutiny. We'll have, I guess, five hours to enter into debate and to look for details and ask questions of the minister and his officials with regard to this bill.

Of course I think the intent is fairly straightforward — to encourage investment in the value-added agriculture sector in our province. Of course this is something that we talk about often and going back probably as far as I can remember in this province, and that is the need to diversify to ensure that we grow the value-added sector in our province.

Of course we are well known in this province for our abundance of resources, for our crop-growing capacity, and the quality and innovation of our producers in this province. So I don't think that we have any debate about that in this Assembly from either side, nor do we have debate about the need to ensure that there is investment to encourage those to, not only to produce products in this province but to increase the value-added sector.

There was a news release that was released on first reading of this bill on the 19th of April of this year, just after the budget. The minister entered some comments with regard to this bill, and I quote:

Robust economic growth and new investment in key sectors is crucial to Saskatchewan's people and . . . [their] communities. To accomplish this, we must continually find

new ways to foster a competitive business environment in our province.

Of course this is a province, at the current time, in need of that investment and that growth and also the jobs that go along with it. We know that we have had some pretty difficult numbers with regard to GDP in this province recently as well as with regard to jobs numbers. And that is a concern to members on this side of the aisle and I'm sure to people across the province.

Of course producing those goods is important, and we encourage and support the growth of that sector. But part of the piece is then ensuring that we have timely access to markets, and part of that is through our rail system in this province as it is across the country but maybe a little more acutely felt here in this province, a landlocked province.

So I'd just like to enter my comments on the record about the need to ensure timely access to rail. And once those contracts are filled, that our producers or our manufacturers, our value-added manufacturers, are able to fulfill those contracts and get those goods to market in a timely manner. And I hope that some effective intervention and action on that front is also part of the broad picture in this province, Mr. Speaker. There's all sorts of opportunities in this province. I'm sure any community you go to, you can imagine places where, you know, people ask the question, well why don't we do that here? Why aren't we doing that already in Saskatchewan?

I think of a recent example. I had the opportunity to go to an evening at the Rebellion Brewing here in Regina and have a tour of their facility which was a pretty good tour. I would encourage anyone, if they're able, take a driver and go along on that tour. And we got to talking about malt barley on that tour and got asking the tour guide where they got their malt barley from.

I was a little bit surprised to learn that there's only one malt barley facility in the province, and they have an exclusive contract with one of the beer companies. So these smaller breweries have to import their malt barley from out of the province which, you know, in a province like Saskatchewan is a little surprising and perplexing. So I think that there was some comment specifically made about increasing our capacity with regard to malt barley facilities in the province. But that's just but one area that might be encouraged to grow in this province and certainly is something that we would like to see.

Other possibilities, as noted in the press release and I think are reasonable, would be the pea protein processors, oat milling operations. I know I had opportunity to listen to Ian Boxall from APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] recently give a presentation to the special committee on Bill 49 in Ottawa, talk about the oats that he grew on his farm and his son eating oats at the table, and the discrepancy in terms of what he got for a price and what he actually had to purchase those oats for. So I think encouraging that value-add in this province does make a great deal of sense.

Again, as I spoke to a bill earlier, we are in a new era in this country and one of the potential areas of growth is in cannabis products. And the news release by the ministry did note that cannabis oil processing facilities might be something that would

benefit from this type of non-refundable tax credit. We look forward to seeing what might come of that.

I can't help but note this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we have a minister standing up and extolling the virtues of the non-refundable tax credit. I, of course, represent the folks of Regina Lakeview and something that I hear frequently on the doorstep is the concern, a continued concern over the loss of the non-refundable tax credit for the film industry. So interesting that on one hand this is seen as a worthwhile endeavour by the government but yet it's the same government that basically shut down an entire industry in this province when they made that decision despite the warnings, the protests, the very reasoned arguments of folks within the film industry but also those within the chamber of commerce and from other sectors. And now we see further damage to that industry with the potential sale of the provincially owned sound stage.

So it's interesting when, you know, there's much talk of winners and losers in this Assembly as there has been, but I think that I couldn't stand in my place without noting the different treatment of those two industries. It's not a matter of either-or, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think it could very conceivably be both but for some reason this government refuses to show the same type of investment in that industry. And I think that that is incredibly unfortunate and certainly is something that I hear a lot on the doorstep.

The incentive, as noted in the news release, is designed to be used in addition to other existing incentives. What's being proposed is a redemption of the benefits limited to 20 per cent in one year after the facility enters operation — I think this is a minimum \$10 million facility, if I'm not mistaken — 30 per cent in year 2 and 50 per cent in year 3 with a maximum carry-forward of 10 years on any remaining credit. One thing I do note at the bottom of the press release is this program will be accepting applications in mid to late 2019.

So it sounds like there's still details being rolled out there, Mr. Speaker, and I think those are details that we will be keen to delve into further, as the critic will be when this bill goes to committee.

Here's the piece I was just talking about. In order to be eligible for the value-added certificate, an applicant must be able to invest at least 10 million in new capital and submit to inspections from government officials to ensure that all rules are being followed. This certainly is significant investment in Saskatchewan, a \$10 million minimum. And hopefully we'll see the details of the oversight that will be required of those making that investment. Certainly we'll be paying close attention.

I know that there have been some, you know, big projects announced with much fanfare by this government and then they have seemed to have gone off the rails a little bit. No pun intended, Mr. Speaker. But I think that's why the limited oversight that we will have here, and I guess continue to have in this Assembly, will be that much more important.

And just to continue as this bill, should it pass, the success that it has in actually encouraging that investment in Saskatchewan, again no debate from this side of the House that this investment

is much needed. And hopefully when we have the opportunity to ask questions, we'll get some further details about it.

I don't know that there's much more that I can add to this other than putting more and more of my questions about it on the record. Certainly this side of the House stands firm in support of our agriculture industry and encourages the continued innovation and investment in that sector and the value to our economy and to jobs in this province that comes with that, again. But I think that we will have more questions as this bill continues through second reading and on to committee. With that, I will move to adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 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. 89

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 89** — *The School Choice Protection Act/Loi sur la protection du choix d'école* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Join in on Bill 89, *The School Choice Protection Act*. Initially I guess on this side of the House, we support the appeal that's going forward through the process of the courts. But before I get into talking a little bit about those areas, I guess from our side of it, there are many people watching this and seeing how it's going to play out, and individuals that want to see. And they're asking for I think clarity when it comes to this bill.

Bill 89, again *The School Choice Protection Act*, legislation that's been introduced by the government and again, as I said, supported by the opposition to fund publicly public school, public funding for education for our children — that's definitely where we stand. Our support is there on that. Having said that, the process . . . Obviously, you know, one side brought an action forward to the courts. A ruling was brought down. Now there's an appeal going on.

And that appeal, you know, we have said we support the appeal to again bring clarity. But also with that clarity I think it's going to be time. And you know, at the time I believe the government, the Premier, you know, have certain tools that they can use. And they have already said, you know, they're willing to use some of those tools. But we'll see. Right now I think what needs to happen, and from my understanding, the appeal is going through.

[16:00]

Now we talk about time. To hear that appeal could take years. Maybe it could take five years, even longer. So right now my

understanding is the status quo will be the way it's being operated and the way government funds public education in the province of Saskatchewan and the funding that follows students. That's the way it will be until that appeal I guess is heard. And you know, once we get there I guess that clarity will eventually hopefully be there for individuals.

Now whether government at the day uses some different tools that, you know, they have at their disposal to use, that's up to them. But having said that, overall I guess from our point, this side of the House, we have, you know, we have talked. We've made it very clear. I know my colleagues and myself have talked about this bill and we want to make it very clear on our side where we come from, and I think we've articulated that quite well. The critic has articulated that well.

And we'll get an opportunity in committee to ask some questions and, you know, whatever . . . We're not sure of answers that we have. And when we're consulting with individuals and we go out there and we talk to certain individuals, some people understand it; some don't. You know, some are confused with it. They're not sure. But they're asking for that clarity. And I think there's going to be an opportunity to provide that once the challenge goes through and, like I said, once it goes through the appeal.

But having said that, my colleague will have an opportunity with the minister and the officials to get clarification as best we can on our side. Where does the government go on this? And if government has a plan, whether the minister, the Premier, the government of the day, what exactly is their plan? And they're willing to use some of these tools this way and that way. So I guess we're going to have an opportunity to ask some questions in committee.

And again we need . . . And I think people are asking for that, you know. The government of the day has the obligation to be clear, and the people are asking that. They want clarity on this. But even if at the end of the time, I think once the decision and the ruling comes, and whatever that may be . . . You know, I don't know what it will be. Again, it will be in appeals court. That decision will come.

But at the end of the day, however that change comes, whether it's one way or the other, I think there's time. And people are asking, we're going to need some time for everyone to adjust to whatever change and if there is changes. And people are asking for that time. What will that time be?

And you know, I think government will have to consult with people if there is going to be, you know, any changes one way or the other. If it is the same, it's going to operate the funding formula the way it is, then there'll be no changes and it'll just go on. But if that appeal should happen and be, you know, not won, I guess, or goes one way, then again I talk about the time. And the people are asking, to implement any changes if there are going to be changes, if there is changes, there's a timeline that people will definitely want to be able to have that. And I think that's what the public would ask. I think that's what school boards would ask, what, you know, probably government, at the end of the day — I can't speak for them — but they would want time to get everything adjusting because there would be some big changes if, you know, their appeal

does not go the way they want.

So I guess at the end of the day for me it's a bill that again, for some people are watching this closely, and I think will be watching it closely, and watching the tools that government has to use . . . But again that appeal process is where we're at, and until that happens . . . And like I said, that could be five years or more before that appeal is ever heard.

So at that point, I really don't have much more to say about this bill, Mr. Speaker. And I know my colleagues will have more to say on it, and in committee. As we, you know, talk with individuals, boards of education, and whoever, we can get clarification. If they have questions or concerns, they know they can get hold of us. And they reach out, as my colleague reached out to the boards of education, whether it's, you know, public or separate school divisions, she has a good rapport and she reaches out to them. I guess if they have questions from ourselves as sitting MLAs on both sides of the House, I guess those are questions we can ask of the minister and the ministry officials.

So at this point, I have no further comments on Bill 89. I'm prepared to adjourn on Bill 89.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 89, *The School Choice Protection Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 111

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

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to be able to rise today and address the Assembly in terms of the proposed changes to *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Act*. The minister, when he introduced the bill back last fall, gave fairly extensive comments in terms of the intention of the bill and some of the changes that are being proposed. And I think this is something that came as a result of a need for modernization. There's clearly some of the clauses need to be modernized, and also a call by the rural municipalities affected by this, and the urban municipalities as it affects resort villages and small towns, Mr. Speaker — so those areas around potash mines where municipalities are able to assess taxes in order to collect enough revenue to deal with the impact of the mine in their area. And that's exactly what needs to happen and has been happening for decades, Mr. Speaker.

So I think with my time today I just want to address the specifics of the bill itself and point out some of the changes that

are being made to the existing bill, which is c M-34, of the current Act. And as the minister indicated, it was introduced many decades ago. 1968 was when it was first introduced, and you know, Mr. Speaker, from then until now, the impact of the potash industry has had on our province and the significant resources that it's brought to our economy. A number of significant mines have now been built in Saskatchewan and it has a colourful history as well, Mr. Speaker. And you'll recall the actions of the Blakeney governor when it came to dealing with potash and then the Devine government changed that. So it's been an interesting history of a resource here in Saskatchewan.

But certainly it's a resource that's impacting agriculture all over the world. And when we talk about needing to feed the planet, Mr. Speaker, the fertilizer value of potash has changed so much for so many farmers across the world. And as you know we export potash outside of the country and certainly it serves our producers very well here in Saskatchewan.

So I just want to go through the bill clause by clause and just point out some of the changes that are being made. The first clause that's being impacted is the existing interpretation clause or definitions clause. And that's always found in section 2 of pretty much every piece of legislation that exists in the province, Mr. Speaker.

So pretty much all of the definitions that exist are being changed somewhat except for "board." There's a definition for area of influence and the original definition was, "the geographic areas of the province designated by the Lieutenant Governor in Council." That's being changed now as, "'area of influence' means, with respect to a potash mine, an area of Saskatchewan as determined in accordance with the regulations." So not a big change, Mr. Speaker, because if it's in the regulations, it's under the authority of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. So I imagine there's some drafting concerns about this. I think they both pretty much say the same thing.

I would have questions in committee as to exactly what an area of influence is meant to describe when we're talking about this bill. And I'm assuming that it's an area that's designated around a potash mine and how far that area of influence goes would determine who's able to . . . which municipalities are able to raise taxes in association with that particular potash mine. And I'm sure officials and the minister would be able to provide more of an explanation for that if so asked.

The definition of actual municipal mill rate is now defined rather than referring to the municipal mill rate under *The Municipalities Act*. There's an actual formula which I'll get to.

The "board" is the same, that definition hasn't changed, nor has "minister."

There's a new definition for operational mine, and it means, "a potash mine that is determined to be operational by the minister by order." So I can only presume, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there is some concern about whether a mine is operational or not operational. I'm not aware of any potash mines in Saskatchewan that are not operational, but there may be some that exist and presumably the, you know, taxation is tied to

production. So if they're not an operating mine, perhaps there are issues with regard to taxation of mines that aren't operating. So that's something the minister will be able to elucidate on when it's in committee, this bill is in the committee process.

Potash mine assessments are pretty much similar to the existing clause. I'm just looking at it, Mr. Speaker. I think it's very similar. Taxing rural municipality is also very much similar to the existing bill.

There's a new definition of tax tool and that's, "a tax tool as defined in section 290.1 of *The Municipalities Act*." It's not exactly clear to me what those tools are for municipalities, but there seems to be an impact, definitely impact on the way taxation and taxes are levied on potash development under this bill. So there's a new definition there.

Also a new definition for total municipal levy which means, "the tax revenue generated through the mill rate, mill rate factors, base tax, minimum tax and any other property tax pursuant to *The Municipalities Act*." So that's the total municipal levy is now defined.

Another new definition that's being introduced is the total municipal taxable assessment which means, "the total taxable assessments for municipal purposes for all property classes that are calculated pursuant to *The Municipalities Act*." Again it's not clear to me why this form of requirement for a definition is necessary, but that's something that the officials can provide when this bill is before the committee, Mr. Speaker.

And then the final definition is the same, urban municipality, although . . . Sorry, it's not the same. It's been specifically changed. Previously in the existing bill or existing Act, urban municipality means, "a town or village to which *The Municipalities Act* applies but does not include a resort village." And this is being changed to include resort villages. So the current proposed definition reads, "'urban municipality' means a town, village or resort village to which *The Municipalities Act* applies." The minister gave some reasons for why resort villages are now being included in those entities that are capable of raising taxes through this municipal tax sharing agreement. And the basic . . . He says the difference between then and now is that many people actually live year-round in resort villages and therefore should be entitled to raised taxes. I'm not sure if that's . . . I don't know what the percentage of permanent residents are in some of these resort villages, so I'm not sure if it's 80 per cent or 90 per cent or is it 10 per cent.

So it's an interesting policy change, but the minister didn't give a lot of reasons for why, other than some people live full time in resort villages and therefore they're now being given the right to raise taxes in relation to a potash mine.

So when you think of purposes of taxation, it just seems a bit of a strange extension of the taxation authority on potash mines. Typically, you know, authorities are given the ability to raise levies to cover costs associated with that industry. And I'm not sure how resort villages would be impacted by potash mines. So that would be certainly a question that I would have when this bill is before the committee.

The next piece is new, and this is the actual calculation for the

municipal mill rate. It's being enshrined in the legislation here. Often you see this being punted down to the regulation sphere, but this is being actually outlined here in the Act. And I'll share with you the formula. It goes as follows: AMR equals TML over TMTA times 1,000. So AMR is the actual municipal mill rate and TML is the total municipal levy for the rural municipality and TMTA is the total municipal taxable assessment of the rural municipality.

And we don't see this for resort villages. And I'm not sure if this would even apply to resort villages. So again that raises questions about how resort villages will be incorporated into this regime. And it's something that I think may need some clarity, although I could be missing something here for sure, Mr. Speaker.

[16:15]

So now section 3 in the existing Act deals with the board and this is . . . They're actually repealing an entire section, although the new section has a lot of the old section in it. But the board that's established to keep track of these taxes is the municipal potash tax sharing administration board. They will continue to be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council but it's being expanded.

So rather than just . . . We used to have two people from SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and one appointed by the minister. We now have two more people being added. One person is to be nominated by SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and the other person is to be nominated by the Saskatchewan Potash Producers Association. So I think the intent here is that the potash producers have requested that there be representation at the table where these decisions are being made and the government is responding to that request accordingly, so they will have a spot at the table on the board for the tax sharing of potash revenues.

The nominations process is also fairly similar, although we now need to include SUMA as part of the nominations process. It's not clear here how the potash producers person will be nominated, although we know it will actually be nominated by the potash producers, but there's no process or requirements there. SUMA and SARM both have to appoint a person who is either a reeve or councillor, and then a member of the executive of SARM and SUMA. So there's some requirements there in terms of who can represent SARM and SUMA.

Another new clause that I think is just housekeeping is what happens if somebody on the board dies or resigns, so there's some provision made for that. And the head office will continue to be in Regina, so that hasn't changed. And the term I think, yes, on section 4 of the existing Act, the term of the office is for one year. That's being expanded to two years, so that's a bit of a change there, Mr. Speaker. And with the former membership being three, quorum of the board was two. Now that the board is five, they had to change the quorum as well. So that's the new section 5 where three members of the board will now constitute quorum for the board.

6(2) is being replaced, and this section 6 is how the members get paid. And this is for anybody on the board who's an employee of the Government of Saskatchewan. And when I

think . . . I guess that may be the person nominated, likely is the person nominated by the minister. It just deals with . . . it seems to reword how those people can be reimbursed for services, and the only expenses that are allowable for compensation is attending meetings and carrying out business of the board — which is a fairly wide sphere — but I'm sure it wouldn't be anything more than what the requirements are for out of pocket for being a member of the board. There's a new clause that's being added . . . Oh I'm sorry, that's . . . It's basically just rewording the existing section 6(2).

The next clause that's being changed is section 8, and section 8 is about the mill rate that is to be set by the board. There's some housekeeping amendments here. You can see this is reference to days gone by because the word "miles" is still in there and that's being substituted for "kilometres." We're getting metric, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that's happening here in this bill. Little behind the times maybe, but never say never. We just keep cleaning it up as we go along.

The mill rate definition . . . Sorry, 8(3) refers to the actual mill rate applicable and that's being changed to the actual municipal mill rate applicable. And I presume that's because of the municipal mill rate definition that's being introduced in the bill.

There's new sections 8.1 to 8.3, and I think this is the real substance of the bill. It's the "Setting base date and accommodating assessment changes." So the first part of this new section talks about definitions for "base date" and a "new mine." So I guess those are important things that need to be looked at. And there's some fairly complicated clauses in this new section dealing with the new base date and if new lands are used and how the calculations will be done. So it's a fairly technical clause that will mean a lot more to officials who have to do these calculations than myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But it seems like a new mine is a concern. And one of the things that's being identified in the new clause 8.1(4) is:

If a potash mine is deemed to be a new mine in a year in which a new base date takes effect, then in that year:

(a) if the new mine's area of influence overlaps with one or more existing areas of influence to create a new, expanded area of influence:

(i) the adjusted mill rate [will be] calculated and . . . be applied to the new mine's potash mine assessments.

And then the distribution of the tax revenues would be then ". . . distributed to all eligible municipalities within the expanded area of influence . . ."

And I think we see that, you know, new mines are coming on stream, Mr. Speaker. The K+S mine recently became a new mine. I'm not sure if that's in your riding, Mr. Deputy Speaker. No, you're further north than that, aren't you? Or east. Okay. So I can't remember if that's Thunder Creek or somewhere in that area, but certainly in the Bethune area north of Moose Jaw. So that mine is obviously going to change the area of influence and expand it and also possibly overlap with some of the existing mines. So those things have to be accounted for.

There's also a new clause 8.2, which is the "Mill rate calculated for first time." So that's a new clause bringing clarity and then an exception. Of course the good old Lieutenant Governor in Council may, by order, reduce the mill rate established. So I'm not sure when the Lieutenant Governor in Council would reduce a mill rate that a municipality has established pursuant to the new formula, but there it is, Mr. Speaker.

Section 11 is also being amended with a couple of changes. The minister is now going to . . . It's required by law that the minister receive a report, identified in section 11, and that's the annual report. So it's saying not only do they have to present it to SARM and the particular municipalities mentioned, it now has to come to the minister. And that report has to be tabled in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. So we will now see, as part of the tabling of documents here in this Assembly, we will see the annual report of the board for this taxation authority.

Another change that's being made is the board is supposed to communicate the mill rate to potash mines. Potash mines were wanting better communication there. That's section 11.1. 11.2 is talking about the tax tools that I mentioned earlier. 11.3 sets a municipal deadline for tax remittance. 11.4 talks about funds of the board and how they are to be deposited. 11.5 talks about distribution of revenues, and 11.6 is a clarification on the appeal process if an assessment is to be appealed, Mr. Speaker.

They've reworked, under section 12, the immunity clause. It used to be called "Personal liability of members of the board," and it's now called "Immunity." So it's some new language there.

And then the regulation, there's a few new regulatory authorities that are being established for the Lieutenant Governor, dealing with things like expenses of the board; the date and manner how the board will provide the mill rates to the potash mines and the Potash Producers Association; additional requirements for tax revenue collection; establishing other dates for tax remission; and duties or responsibilities of the secretary-treasurer of the board. That's the extent of the new clauses in the regulatory section.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's some of the technical aspects of this bill. I think the minister's comments covered the need for these changes. And at this point in time, I'm sure that other of my colleagues will want to enter into the debate, so I will move to adjourn the debate on Bill No. 111, *The Municipal Tax Sharing (Potash) Amendment Act, 2017*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 111. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 113

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure again to rise and enter into second reading debate on this bill, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of respect for those who undertake the important role of planning, of looking at our municipalities thoughtfully and planning towards growth and ensuring the best use of the land that we share here in the province.

I note on the second reading by the minister that there were some consultations that were undertaken, going back actually a number of years. I'm just going to read a little bit of that. The minister noted that the Ministry of Government Relations consulted extensively with stakeholders in preparation of this bill, actually going back to 2014-15 and then again in 2016-17, that there were a number of engagement sessions involving stakeholders representing a full 59 different organizations. So certainly that is interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as something that we do like to see on this side of the House is that type of consultation.

In terms of who initiated the need for changes to this bill, it's not something that is revealed by the minister in his second reading comments. Some of the folks who were consulted in that session, that planning session, include the SARM, SUMA, home builders in Regina, the public and Catholic school divisions, the Ministry of Education, the Minister of Agriculture. So fairly extensive, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that I immediately thought of when I looked at this bill was the process around land acquisition with the P3 schools. Certainly that goes back a few years now, but some of the changes I can't help but wonder if they aren't reactionary to some of the problems that were incurred with that process. And I'll get into that a little bit later.

Some of what is proposed with this legislation, first of all, that there are amendments that ensure that conflict of interest provisions apply to members of the district development appeals board and member of any regional planning authorities. That seems prudent, Mr. Speaker. And of course there have been some high-profile cases with regard to conflict of interest within municipalities that certainly come to mind when reading that.

There are 10 cities in Saskatchewan that have been granted approving authority status. I'm not sure how those were chosen, but that is what is proposed here. This amendment allows the minister to modify the terms of an order granting authority status to achieve provincial interests. So this is sort of a big deal, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you look at the minister increasing powers to impose decisions on other levels of government, and it's certainly something that we have seen as a theme here. I think that we have heard some concerns about the ability, with passage of this bill, for the minister to impose that will on other levels of government, specifically cities.

I think of the whole P3 process in particular with the northwest school, P3 school that was proposed. Typically in municipalities — I'll speak about Regina which I know a little more about, Mr. Deputy Speaker — land in new subdivisions is

generally set aside for school use in a given subdivision. Typically the pattern that happens is the developer goes in, develops the land around it, and the revenues raised go towards supporting the infrastructure to that site.

Now when we had the P3 schools, the footprint of these schools is well beyond what we see with the building of a regular-sized elementary school. These are schools that house over 1,000 students when your typical elementary school would be about in the range of 400, 450 students. So much bigger buildings, which I know did present a bit of an issue in Harbour Landing, trying to find a tract of land that would fit this large P3 school.

[16:30]

But there was an even bigger problem in the northwest of Regina where there was no tract of land that was set aside, and I can't go into the reasons why that was. I actually don't know. It goes back . . . This is land that had been developed decades before. And looking for a site in the northwest, there wasn't one that was readily available that would fit a school of this size, the P3 school size. So some will remember that there was a significant amount of concern that was expressed, I suspect, in this legislature but certainly at the city hall in Regina with regard to who is going to be responsible for the costs for servicing that land.

Again, typically there would be a subdivision around that school site that would pay for some of that servicing. In this instance, the city found themselves on the hook for much of that servicing cost upfront. So that was a bit of a concern. And I understand, if I'm reading this correctly, that this bill would make that process for the province to insist on that type of development easier. And I think that that is some concern and has been a concern expressed by municipalities.

Currently the ability to apply policies for site plan control is limited to commercial and industrial land. This now expands to include institutional land such as schools and mixed-use development. So this would potentially allow the minister additional powers not currently in the purview of the minister. So anytime that that happens, of course you want to ask why, why that is. And certainly it follows along a theme that we've seen from this government, and that is a willingness to usurp powers from other levels of government.

We've seen this with municipalities. We've seen this with school boards, up to and including a threat of dissolving school boards altogether with Bill 63 last year. So I know that we have had many conversations with municipalities about their take on this and will continue to do so.

The minister had and will still have the ability to require municipalities to amend their official community plan to achieve consistency with provincial interests. That's a very interesting provision. Of course cities put a lot of effort into the crafting of their official community plan to meet the goals of their citizens and to plan long range. It would be interesting to see some instances where an official community plan would be thwarted because of some opposing provincial interests. And I'm not sure that I can think of any, but there must be some that are anticipated if we're seeing here. So I think we'd want to look a little closer into that.

A new section in this Act adds some flexibility for timelines that municipalities have to abide by minister's orders. And it requires:

... municipalities to develop their ... site policies collaboratively with the Minister of Education, any local school divisions, and any municipality(s) that the Ministry of Education determines is necessary ...

So that's interesting. You might have the requirement for more than one municipality to collaborate, if the minister does deem that necessary. And I think that's something above what we currently see.

This bill does impact municipalities in a very potentially substantial way, and it does seem to fit along the theme that we've seen from this government of increasing its centralization of power within ministers' offices. And I know that that has been a concern that I know that I've heard and members on this side have heard from every corner of this province. You know, we elect officials, certainly to this Assembly, but also at the municipal and the school board level, and we do so with the expectation that they know their communities well and that they will serve their communities well, and that they have the local knowledge of their local constituency, their local subdivision, or their local ward.

So it is something that warrants further scrutiny, just as to why we might look at undermining some of those powers of our local leaders. Certainly they have their eyes on the ground. They're the folks that probably, you know, take all of those calls and have intimate knowledge of their community. So why we're contemplating that, I guess, is a question for the critic to ask in committee.

And I know that we already have heard some concerns, not only from local governments, but from developers about this bill. And you know, again I appreciate the consultations that were noted in the minister's second reading, but further scrutiny would require us to see what exactly came out of those consultations: what was said, what the areas of concern, maybe the areas of agreement were with this particular piece of legislation. Concerns exist about the municipalities plan, just the whole lack of transparency around the P3s, I think which continues today, as we have been talking about the P3 schools and the grid for maintenance and the abilities of municipalities to plan if they have to be looking over their shoulder, that if the minister doesn't agree with their official community plan, that there may be some intervention there and apparent centralizing of power, again to impose political influence on municipalities.

And again this is power once granted in legislation to the minister that's difficult to go back on without, you know, going through the legislative process. So it's important that we make sure that the voices of those who do have concerns about this bill are heard. And I know that the critic has been doing her diligence with regard to ensuring that she has spoken to stakeholders and has a good grasp on the areas where they approve and agree with this bill and the areas where they have outstanding concerns.

I think with that I would like to allow other of my colleagues to have opportunity to speak to this bill, and of course eventually

the critic in committee. But with that I will move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 114

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

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in on Bill 114, *The Vehicles for Hire Act*. I guess initially people are going to be watching this, and I know there's certain legislation that the government has to introduce in light of ride-sharing companies that are popping up and coming around and people are utilizing. The public decides to utilize them, as that's the wish of the public, if that's what they want to do. And we know that there's cab companies that operate and have operated in many of our municipalities, many of our bigger centres. But having said that, there's ride-sharing companies that are coming up. And there's many different ones, I think, are named.

But I guess sometimes, having said that, I think about some of the people that I've seen, you know, even on Facebook. And you'll see them: I need a ride, \$5, willing to pay. And it's kind of funny how someone goes and gives them a ride. And people do that kind of stuff, I guess, when they don't have the money or whatever, choose to go that route. But I guess those individuals, you know, might put them in harm's way.

But here we have a government that has to pass some legislation. But not only that, they're going to pass the legislation. And it's important that they do, they have the obligation to do this, to protect our citizens that will ride and these companies that are starting up, but also the companies that are starting up to make sure that the workers and those operating are covered. And safety, we'll talk about that. Now I'm going to get a little bit into that as we go through some of the comments.

Now from my understanding, the government will introduce this Act, certain powers that they will have to do, and the province enacts certain powers and legislation that gives municipalities, you know, the opportunity, whether it's to create the regulations around those companies that will be operating, you know, share a ride, as I talked about that.

So those companies that are coming in, there's certain requirements they have to follow if it's legislated, this Act brought forward by government. I guess registering the vehicle, that will be important. They will have to do that. Obviously

that's going to be through legislation, that vehicle. Also the government will have . . . I'm assuming that it is either going to be the government, and we'll find out. I know we've got to ask some of this for clarification and some of that might be clear.

But I think we want to make sure that there's insurance, you know, that those individuals that choose to ride with those companies versus going in a taxi where certain regulations . . . And municipalities issue the licence, from my understanding, how many will be operating in the municipality. I know back home as well we have taxi companies, but from my understanding, the municipality, that's been granted from legislation. And government passes that on to the municipalities, to say there's certain things we'll require you to do as a municipality: certain powers, you know, that the government passes on to municipalities to make sure that those taxis are licensed, to make sure those taxis report certain things that they have to report to them.

And saying that, there could be different things. And I think about some of the bylaws that municipalities could enact, you know, is licensing around the standards, the fees, records that they are keeping, to make sure that they're providing that to the municipality should it be requested. And I guess maybe that's where someone was picked up, where they were dropped off. So there are municipalities with certain jurisdiction. The province has certain jurisdiction. And in light of, you know, sharing and ride-sharing companies that are starting up, the government's going to bring that forward.

But at the end of the day, I think Saskatchewan residents want to make sure that if they choose to do that . . . And I mean, there's times, we've seen a number of them out there. In no way — you know, I want to make it very clear from our side — are we opposed to, you know, stopping that, not allowing that to happen. Yes, it's going to happen. It's there. Government has the regulations to do that.

But having said that, we want to make sure that Saskatchewan residents, whether they choose to take a taxi that's an established taxi company or a new taxi company or ride-sharing companies that are starting up, an individual gets in there and takes it. We want to make sure that the drivers are licensed, but also the insurance. But also we want to make sure — and I think the government has an obligation to make sure through legislation — that the protection is there for the drivers as well.

And I start thinking about, you know, being injured when you're driving somebody. And we've seen in the province, some of the taxi drivers have been injured and they didn't have any coverage, some of them. And we see the families struggling, and those individuals. And our hearts go out to those individuals, and I want to say to any taxi driver that's been injured, our heart goes out and our thoughts are with the families, you know, as they struggle to go through.

But I think the industry in itself is asking for clarification, make sure that it's clear. And my colleagues have asked the minister responsible for workmen's comp and different areas to make sure that anybody who's working in this province and doing a service to Saskatchewan are protected. But we want to make sure that those residents have a choice. And I think about it this way: residents of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, have a

choice. They have a choice to decide if they're going to get in a taxi, if they're going to, you know, take one of the ride-sharing companies.

[16:45]

It's almost like when I think about members on this side, members on that side. Saskatchewan residents have a choice and they make choices. And I want to just show an example of choices that people have. I may choose to take a taxi. I may choose ride-share companies, one of the new companies. I might do that. That's my choice, right? Same with, all of us have choices: which road we're going to travel on, what choice we're going to go in restaurants. We have a choice. Saskatchewan residents also have a choice on which party they're going to vote for. And that's a good thing. We have choices.

And sometimes I'd just like to show . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I hear them. They're heckling. They got a lot more seats on that side. Go ahead and heckle. That's fine. You can heckle all you want. That's very . . . [inaudible] . . . of you. Pat yourselves on the back. Pat yourselves on the back. Mr. Speaker, they can go ahead and pat themselves on the . . . But when we see Saskatchewan residents and the most vulnerable suffering in this province, and the government backbenchers that want to pat themselves on the back for the great job because there's so many of them over there, you go ahead and do that.

I think some of you should wake up because the next election, I think, the next election, you'll be sent a message. I know you can laugh and you think it's all funny. The good people, Mr. Speaker, the good people will send a message, whether it's in Saskatoon, Regina, you watch and see. There are people talking. They're not happy, Mr. Speaker.

But I just wanted to show you, Mr. Speaker, an example of people with choices, and that's all I was trying to show is just an example with this bill, Bill 114. People will have choices on who they're going to ride, but they're also going to have choices, as I said, who they're going to vote for next election. There's choices, which restaurant . . . I was just showing the good people in this province have the choices. And if it's a good company, they'll ride with them. If it's a good government, they'll support them. If it's not a good government, they won't support them, and I think they're going to get a message.

But you know, take it for granted. Laugh, mock, that's okay. We have heard that for a long time. That's a tired old government over there, and the people of this province are starting to feel it and understand, the most vulnerable. So those individuals will have choices and they're going to send this government a message when they make that choice.

But having said that, I want to get back to Bill 114, to make it clear. But again, Mr. Speaker, I want to be clear. I wanted to just show that people of our province have choices. You know, they have choices to make. And at the end of the day the obligation will be on government and municipalities to make sure that the regulations and safety of our residents, the best care of our residents, when they're going to decide whether they're getting in a taxi or ride sharing, that needs to happen.

And this legislation will do part of that, but it also will give the tools to municipalities and the obligation to make sure that any company starting up provides insurance, to make sure the drivers are taken care of, make sure maybe criminal records are done. Making sure that Saskatchewan residents are safe — that's a government. A good government would do that, and that's all I was trying to show you, Mr. Speaker, when I showed examples of choices.

But at this point, Mr. Speaker, I think I shared enough about Bill 114, and I just wanted to give some examples of this. And I'm prepared to adjourn debate and wait for this to go to committee to do some more good work that we need to do as, you know, Her Loyal Opposition. So I thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm prepared to adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 114, *The Vehicles for Hire Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 115

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure again to rise and enter into debate on Bill No. 115 which is *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act*. As the name might suggest, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is the Act that controls rental tenancies in the province, and of course is of particular concern to both those who rent and those who are landlords in the province of Saskatchewan.

I'll just go through just a brief overview of some of the changes that are proposed in this legislation. I'm just wondering how far this . . . Originally this Act goes back to 2006. There have been a number of changes over the years. The changes that are proposed with this bill: first, give landlord new powers to make “. . . rules prohibiting the possession, use, selling or distribution of cannabis or the growing and possession of cannabis plants . . .” Of course I think this is the third bill that I've gotten up to today to talk about that is, in part at least, necessitated by the changes to the federal treatment of cannabis in this country.

I guess the first thought, well an overarching thought here is, like many bills, this is a bill that really is important to consider balance. You have two groups, landlords and tenants, who have in some ways some of the same interests, but in some instances opposing interests. And it's really important that we strike a balance in legislation to ensure legislation that doesn't tip too far in favour of one group or the other, and allows for the safe regulation of rental properties in the province. And that can be difficult, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Of course we know . . . We can all remember, I'm sure, instances where, you know, difficult tenants have caused problems for those who they rent from. I can think of some fairly recent news cases out of Saskatoon. But I can also think of instances where renters have been subjected to some pretty difficult treatment as well. And that's part of the reason why . . . well I guess that's the reason why we have the office of the rental tenancies, formerly the Rentalsman, in this province, to ensure that the relationship between those two groups strikes the right balance, I guess, Mr. Speaker.

So when we look at the first change in this bill, and that is giving landlords the power to make rules that prohibit possessing, selling, or growing cannabis plants, it raises some interesting challenges. Of course I think on first blush it's reasonable. The smoking of marijuana, or cannabis, has a particular odour that in multi-unit facilities I think, you know, it's reasonable that there might be some concerns about that similar to that with tobacco smoke. And that I think is understandable. But this is a substance that in the very near future will be legal, and is a substance that people currently possess at times with medical licence as a prescription for different ailments. And I just wonder, when I see that, about what that means for folks who maybe do have a prescription for medical, or have, you know, have the right to have . . . who legally can possess that substance.

The other thing in conjunction with some of the other pieces of legislation are before us, I believe currently under proposition, that purchasing cannabis there is a rule that you must purchase . . . go straight to your place of residence. So that precludes some, you know . . . If there's a possibility to preclude people from even possessing cannabis at home and that's the only place that they're allowed to take it to, that presents an interesting dilemma, I suppose, for folks. So I think that's something that we would have questions about, just in terms of how that will actually roll out and the enforceability of that.

This Act also gives the Office of Residential Tenancies, or the ORT, hearing officers new powers to refuse to allow an application from a tenant who is in contravention of the ORT order. I think currently it stands that they can refuse application from a landlord who is in contravention of an ORT order, so I guess that is seen as a bit of a paralleling of those powers.

This is an interesting one, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and is something that immediately caught my attention. This forces tenants to continue to pay their rent for the duration of an appeals process when appealing an ORT decision to grant the landlord possession of a rental unit for rent in arrears.

I guess I understand. I can think of a recent case where there was a lot of frustration on the part of a landlord who was continually . . . There was a particular tenant who was continually entering into the appeals process and that was, you know, causing them to be in tenancy in a particular unit for a long time.

But on the other hand, you know, this . . . What's being proposed here essentially will preclude appeals processes for folks who simply don't have the money to continue to pay their rent from having access to appeal, which is of a particular concern and is something that we've heard from people in the

community. You know, if the price of admission to the appeals process is too onerous, it just precludes a whole group of folks who simply can't afford to enter into that appeal. And I think that that is something that is worth our attention and questioning whether we've quite got the balance right there.

Another area that is of interest, this allows landlords to dispose of property worth less than \$1,500 without an order from the ORT when the tenancy ends or a property is abandoned. Lots of questions about this, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I can think back not that long ago, working in shelters and thinking of the number of women who came to us with the clothes on their back because of safety concerns, and did have to abandon rental agreements, who because of safety reasons, for a number of reasons, you know, and maybe it wasn't safe to get their things. So I guess the questions quickly here are about, who determines the value? Is it on individual items? Or you know, if someone has a collection, is that deemed to be, you know, item by item list of 1,500 or the whole item? And there's no time period prescribed . . . for prescribing.

Anyway, many questions there. I'm sure that the critic will have them as well. And I think that it bears some further scrutiny that we're not disadvantaging folks who are already disadvantaged with this legislation.

With that though, I know the critic is eager to get in and get some questions in, as are members on this side. But I think I've come to the end of my comments and will move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 115, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2017*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. It being very near to the normal time of adjournment, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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