



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

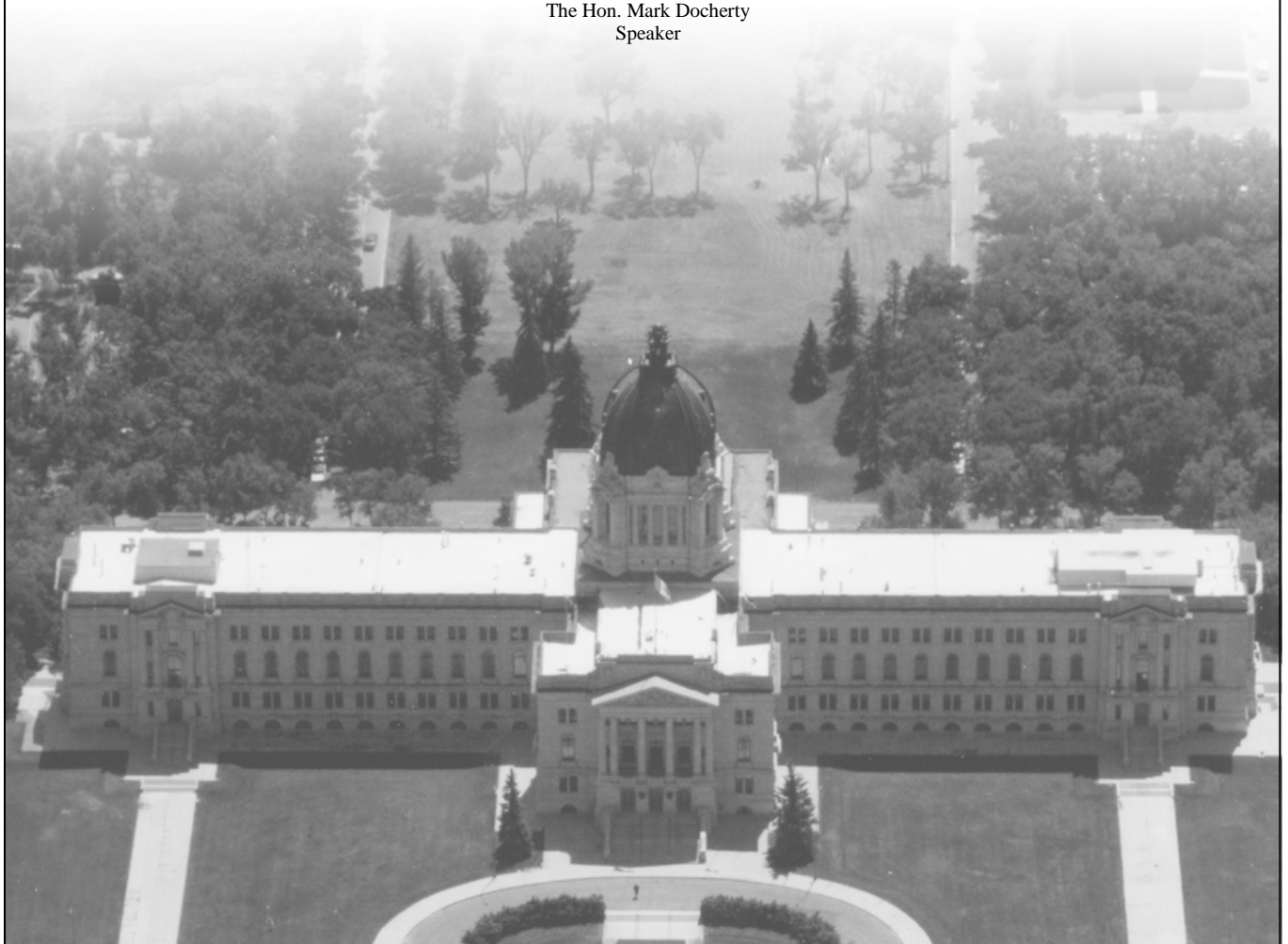
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Mark Docherty
Speaker



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

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Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Vacant — Regina Northeast

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

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you, through you to all the members of this honourable Assembly, I would like to introduce a few guests from Sikh Society of Regina, and they're sitting in your gallery.

Mr. Speaker, we call them Sikh Sangat. They are arranging another Kirtan, a Sikh parade. In Punjabi, we call it Nagar Kirtan. On this coming Saturday, it's starting from the Gurudwara Sahib up to this Legislative Building. And they're going to have free food right here on the east side of the building.

Mr. Speaker, these guests are as follows: Bikram Singh, known as Bill Singh, president of Sikh Society of Regina. We have Sohan Matharu, vice-president of Sikh Society of Regina. We have Gary Grewal, is a member, executive committee, Sikh Society of Regina. We have Inderjit Singh. We have Avtar Singh. We have Yadwinder Singh. He is my constituent as well, Mr. Speaker. We have Manmohan Singh Khuber. We have Dalvir Singh, Yadwinder Dhaliwal, my constituents, Mr. Speaker. We have Gagandeep Singh, and we have Amrinder Singh Sandhu. We also have Baldeep Singh Dhindsa. He is also one of my constituents, Mr. Speaker.

And I ask all the members of this Assembly to join me welcoming Sikh Sangat in their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join the member from Regina Pasqua, and welcome the members of the Sikh Society of Regina Saadh. Sat sri akal. Great to see you here today. I, and several of the members on this side, are really looking forward to joining you in the Nagar Kirtan this weekend, with the walk from the Gurudwara to the legislature, and for the free food, yes. As my colleague mentions, it's always a great chance to enjoy delicious food, and some great solidarity and companionship. So thank them for being here today, and ask the members to join us on Saturday if they can, and join me in welcoming these members to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, I'd like to introduce my two CAs [constituency assistant]. They can give out a little wave. Lavonne Lyke, Donna Petit have come down here today. They have the office on auto-steer and GPS [global positioning system] today.

This is, I actually believe in all the years I've been here, I think this is the first time they've actually been here through question

period. So I hope they find it very, very entertaining. And they've come to watch it live instead of watching on TV every day. So with that, I would ask all members to welcome them to their legislature.

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

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to welcome, in the west section, 29 grade 8 students from Canora. Give a wave. Along with them is teacher Colin Knight and school librarian Jennifer Bisschop. And the bus driver is lost. He's MIA [missing in action] someplace, Mel McCormick, a good friend of mine. And I'd just like . . . I'm going to be meeting with them after and, unlike most of my colleagues, I did buy ice cream for them. So I will be giving you ice cream. With that, I'd like to get everybody to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moose Jaw North.

Mr. Michelson: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's a hard act to follow. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to stand in the legislature today and welcome 18 grade 12 students from A. E. Peacock Collegiate in my constituency of Moose Jaw. This is a social studies 30 class. They're accompanied by Mrs. Carrie Kiefer. Mrs. Kiefer has brought a class to us every year and is really almost a part of the staff here at the building now. But I'd ask all the members to welcome these students from A.E. Peacock Collegiate to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — We'll go with Cumberland. I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present the petition in support of mental health and addiction services in the North. Northern Saskatchewan has some of the highest suicide rates in the country. The Children's Advocate has put out a report stating the lack of services in the North. The suicide rate is six times higher for First Nation boys than non-First Nation boys between the age of 10 and 19, and 26 times higher for First Nation girls than non-First Nation girls.

And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to treat northern Saskatchewan residents with respect and dignity and to immediately invest in more mental health and wellness programs and facilities in the North.

It is signed and supported by many good people of the North. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

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

province of Saskatchewan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens that are rising up and speaking out against the Sask Party's elimination of the Saskatchewan rental housing supplement, Sask Party government's elimination of the housing supplement, an important support for the most vulnerable, an important support for people living with disabilities, an important support for those families living on the margins with children.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to immediately restore the Saskatchewan rental housing supplement.

These petitions are signed by folks in Regina. I so submit.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to stop the Sask Party government's attack on our kids' already strained classrooms. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: that the \$54 million cut from our classrooms in the devastating 2017-18 budget had devastating impact; and that the 2018-19 budget only restores a fraction of last year's devastating \$54 million cut to our classrooms; that even though the Sask Party government is making us all pay more, our kids are actually getting less; and that these cuts have had an impact on classrooms all across the province, from the loss of busing for kindergarteners to the loss of pre-K [pre-kindergarten] programs for children with special needs.

Mr. Speaker, 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 government's mismanagement.

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed the petition today reside in Moose Jaw. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured to rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. The people who have signed this petition would like to bring to our attention the following: Saskatchewan's election Act is outdated, and it allows corporations, unions, and individuals, even those outside the province, to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties.

The people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics. So the Sask Party leader was the only premier in the country who collected a special cash bonus paid for by taxpayer-funded subsidies and a portion of the millions in donations they collect from corporations and big money donors, including from outside of Saskatchewan. Over the past 10 years the Saskatchewan Party has received \$12.61 million in corporate donations, and of that 2.87, almost \$3 million coming from companies outside of Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed this petition today come from the city of Regina. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Nurses Make a Difference

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today and recognize May 7th to 13th as National Nursing Week. Mr. Speaker, we are fortunate to have highly competent, caring nurses in our province. We've seen those qualities in action recently when our province experienced the terrible tragedy involving the Humboldt Broncos team. The response of our entire health system was truly remarkable in those difficult circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, nurses of all designations are valuable members of our health care team. They are making a difference in many lives every day. Over the past decade, our province has seen significant increases in the number of nurses working here. We have over 16,000 nurses practising in Saskatchewan; that is about 3,700 more than 2007. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has 923 RNs [registered nurse] per 100,000 people, well above the Canadian average of 796.

We've seen the roles of nurses evolving during this time, and they've risen to the challenge. Nurses are being utilized in all areas of health care. Mr. Speaker, nurses play a role in our continued work to build a high-performing health system that

puts patients first.

I ask all members to join me in applauding dedicated nurses for their service to Saskatchewan people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Non-Profit Focuses on Mental Health in the Ag Industry

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, with it being Mental Health Awareness Week, I wanted to highlight the amazing work of a movement grown right here in Saskatchewan. Do More Ag is a non-profit organization focusing on mental health in agriculture across Canada. The organization advocates for the mental well-being of all Canadian producers. They are helping to change the culture of agriculture to one where all producers are encouraged, supported, and empowered to take care of their mental well-being.

Mr. Speaker, agriculture is an industry rooted in a culture of hard work, resilience, strength, and stoicism, but these traits can also become barriers for speaking up and seeking help.

Producers are vulnerable when it comes to mental health issues. With long hours, high stakes, isolation, and so much — from world commodity prices to rail efficiency, and of course the weather — beyond their direct control, stress, anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and burnout are all high amongst producers.

Do More Ag operates under three pillars: awareness, community, and research. As a Canada-wide non-profit, these pillars drive the organization's focus, and they are making an impact across the industry and the country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the four founders of Do More Ag: Kim Keller, Lesley Kelly, Himanshu Singh, and Kirk Muyres. This is a homegrown effort, Mr. Speaker, as these founding members work in the ag industry right here in Saskatchewan. I want to thank Do More Ag for their incredible work in shining a light on the need for mental health awareness in the ag community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[10:15]

Mental Health and Addiction Services Fun Run

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise to advise that this last Sunday I had the pleasure of attending the Mental Health and Addiction Services Fun Run in Saskatoon's Diefenbaker Park. Mr. Speaker, with more than 750 participants and their families, it was truly remarkable.

This annual event, which occurs during national Mental Health Awareness Week, brings attention and promotes healthy living, which includes being active, setting goals, and eating well to assist those who are in recovery. Mr. Speaker, it was a gorgeous day, and it was a pleasure to spend it outside with generous people raising awareness to support mental health and addiction

services.

Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the need for timely access to mental health services across the province. And with a targeted investment of \$11.4 million in this budget, we're committed to improving mental health services, including supports for children, youth, and families. Saskatchewan also offers a full range of addiction treatment services, and reducing outpatient addiction services wait times continues to be a priority for our government.

Mr. Speaker, I thank everyone involved in making this event possible and to all those who participated. And I encourage everyone to join in in the Fun Run next year in Saskatoon to support this important cause. Awareness certainly is the key to help and support. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Raising Awareness About Ovarian Cancer

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Tuesday was World Ovarian Cancer Day. And tomorrow in my hometown of Saskatoon, an event titled The Ladyballs Show and Tell will be held at the Grand Salon of TCU Place to celebrate Ovarian Cancer Day. The Ladyballs Show and Tell is an evening of performance art, and will feature a live onstage musical performance by Michele Dubois, followed by a fun-filled hour of comedy by LadyBits Improv.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of women are living with ovarian cancer in Canada. It is estimated that this year, 2,800 Canadian women will be newly diagnosed with this disease. Ovarian cancer is the fifth-most common cancer for women and is the most serious cancer for women, often because of late diagnosis.

Mr. Speaker, ovarian cancer kills five Canadian women every day. Over 85 per cent of ovarian cancer cases are not found until late stages of the disease. This year in Saskatchewan, 80 women will be diagnosed with ovarian cancer, and unfortunately more than 55 will die. There is currently a national effort to gain \$10 million in federal funding for ovarian cancer research. This funding would help advance understanding of this disease and improve treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in marking World Ovarian Cancer Day and wishing all of those putting on events this weekend success as they push to raise awareness about, and funds for, this important issue, and thanking them for their efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Student Business Club Wins Award

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise in the Assembly today to recognize the outstanding achievements of a group of high school students from Swift Current.

Six grade 11 and 12 students from the Swift Current Comprehensive High School Business Club recently

participated in the Saskatchewan Business Teachers' Association competition in Saskatoon. The Swift Current group won the coveted School of the Year award, and what's impressive, Mr. Speaker, is that this is only the third year that the Business Club has been around. They don't even teach finance and entrepreneurship at the high school yet, so the students put in a lot of effort during lunch hours and after school, and do debate practice countless times too to get to this level.

Cindy Lowe, who is the business education, skills and apprenticeship teacher at the Comp High School, said:

Financial literacy and entrepreneurship are 21st century skills that our kids need. Students who understand financial literacy and budgeting have better career planning. They make goals for themselves and they are more employable.

I couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker, which is why earlier this year our government announced that financial literacy classes will soon be available in all high schools across Saskatchewan. It's an important step towards making sure that our kids have the best possible start to life after high school in whatever career path they may choose.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the students: Harshini Arumugam, Megan DeJager, Michael Orthner, Abby de Gala, Eljay Dungca, and Anthony Merkel, and of course their Business Club teacher, Cindy Lowe. Congratulations on a job well done. Thanks, Mr. Speaker.

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

Students Excel in Space Projects

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to rise today to acknowledge extraordinary scientific achievements by students at the University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic.

A team of students from these two institutions have been awarded \$200,000 by the Canadian Space Agency to design and build a satellite. The satellite will involve two cubes being attached together, approximately the size of two Rubik's cubes. The project has been dubbed SaskCube. The aim of the study is to learn more about how different materials degrade in space. It will be launched to the International Space Station in 2021.

Mr. Speaker, this isn't the only space project finding success on Saskatchewan campuses. The U of S [University of Saskatchewan] space design team has built a Mars rover prototype which has been chosen to compete in the highly competitive 2018 University Rover Challenge finals in Utah.

Mr. Speaker, the space design team was founded in 2005 and has won numerous awards for their projects, including space elevators, rovers, and rocket payloads. Their most recent rover is the Saskorpion — which I think is the best project name ever — the result of more than four years of hard work being done by dozens of undergrad students.

I'd ask all members to join with me in congratulating the students at the University of Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Polytechnic on their scientific achievements and wish them good luck in Utah this June. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Celebrating Mother's Day

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Sunday, families from across Saskatchewan, the country, and world will come together to celebrate an important individual in all our lives. Mother's Day offers an opportunity to shower our mothers in love and appreciation and reflect on all amazing mothers that we have come to know and respect.

Whether they are biological moms, step-moms, grandmothers, sisters, aunts, friends, or whoever raised you, Mother's Day is for all women who helped a child believe in themselves. They raised and nurtured us, taught us important lessons, and picked us up when we fell down.

Mr. Speaker, we in this Assembly can relate to the times when our mothers were understanding, calming, selfless, and appreciative, facing challenges with determination and heart and a supply of cookies, band-aids, duct tape, and always room for one more at the table. We owe these women a debt we'll never be able to repay. But breakfast in bed, a bouquet of flowers, a telephone call, or even a simple I love you, a hug and a kiss, can go a long way.

Mr. Speaker, I hope members of this Assembly take a moment today to say thank you to the women in their lives who love them in that special way only mothers can — unconditionally — because that's what mothers do. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in wishing mothers everywhere a happy and peaceful Mother's Day. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Funding for Education Capital Costs

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Parents of children at Argyle School in Regina are voicing serious concerns about the state of disrepair in the school that their children attend, a school that's been awaiting provincial government approval and funding for a new school for a decade.

Marlene Jackson, Chair of the Argyle School community council, understood that her daughter would be beginning kindergarten in a new Argyle School. Her daughter is now in grade 5. So a math question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker: if this government's budget train has us on track to \$20 billion in debt, what grade will Marlene Jackson's daughter be in when Argyle School is finally built?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're very proud on this side of the House in terms of what the

commitment that this government has made to education capital across the province. I've spoken a number of times, Mr. Speaker, on the floor of this Assembly. Record investment in education capital last year, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've got a quote from the school division and it says that "while the school is one of our older buildings, it continues to be repaired at a level that we can afford to without compromising the safety of anyone in the building." Mr. Speaker, safety is the most important thing that we take into account when we're looking at our capital plan, Mr. Speaker.

We have PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal] funding that's available to the school divisions, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that the schools are kept to a safe standard for the children and for the teachers that are in those schools, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to comment a little bit in terms of what the government's commitment to capital has been in the city of Regina over the last number of years, Mr. Speaker. In 2017, Mr. Speaker, six schools were open, Mr. Speaker. Six joint-use schools were open, Mr. Speaker. Traditional builds at Sacred Heart, École Connaught, and Scott Collegiate, Mr. Speaker. These are significant commitments to the education, Mr. Speaker, of our children in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, and it'll continue on this side of the House.

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

Funding for Teacher Salaries

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's worth pointing out that it's not how much you study for the test; it's whether you pass. And these schools are not passing for those students.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan teachers have been without a contract since August of 2017. Now that process is currently before binding arbitration, but teachers have good reason to doubt that this government will actually follow through with any increase that may be agreed to. Because two years ago, this government promised teachers a 1.9 per cent pay raise, but then took the unprecedented step of telling school boards that they'd have to pay half of that raise. This amounts to negotiating with other people's money, Mr. Speaker, and with school boards having to make up the \$9 million shortfall, it represented a direct cut to classrooms.

In committee this week the Minister of Education refused to say that they wouldn't repeat the same move this year. So would the Premier get to his feet and assure the 13,500 members of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation that he is as good as his word and that the province will fully fund teachers' salaries rather than pulling essential funds out of classrooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, this government is committed to negotiating in good faith with respect to the teachers, Mr. Speaker. And as the Leader of the Opposition has mentioned, Mr. Speaker, we're in arbitration at the present time, Mr. Speaker. But there's no contract to talk about, Mr. Speaker. So at that point in time, Mr. Speaker, we'll certainly give consideration to what the needs are with respect to servicing

that contract, Mr. Speaker, but it's premature to talk about this at the present time.

We're certainly in the middle, Mr. Speaker, of going through estimates, talking about our budget commitments in this budget year, Mr. Speaker. And when that contract is negotiated, Mr. Speaker, that will be a conversation that we have on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, certainly taking into account, as we always do, Mr. Speaker, the needs of the children in the classroom and always, Mr. Speaker — always, Mr. Speaker — paying respect to the teachers and the educational professionals that provide the services to those very children.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier was elected leader of his party on a commitment to invest in education. Now while that commitment has proven to be half-hearted in terms of the money returned to the system, there are other opportunities. There's a chance to reset relations with our province's teachers and school boards, but that chance won't last forever.

With binding arbitration ahead, will the Premier commit that his government won't repeat that unprecedented move in 2016 of forcing the school boards to pay half the raises? It is in no way premature, Mr. Speaker, to commit to not pulling funds out of our classrooms.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, just this year, two and a half billion dollars into our Ministry of Education, Mr. Speaker. We fully have invested in not only the infrastructure in 40 new schools and 25 major renovations across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we've invested in teachers. We've invested in our educational supports in the classrooms, Mr. Speaker, 840 more teachers in our classrooms across our great province, training and educating our best and brightest for the next generation, Mr. Speaker.

And the member opposite is correct. We committed, Mr. Speaker, to put dollars directly into our classroom, Mr. Speaker. We committed to putting \$30 million, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we can have 400 support staff in those classrooms so that each child receives the education that they have a right to in this province, Mr. Speaker. We jumped ahead with that commitment, Mr. Speaker, into the final quarter of last fiscal year, with a seven and a half million dollar funding. And it was in the budget the other day, Mr. Speaker. We'd ask the members opposite to support that budget.

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

Provincial Sales Tax on Used Vehicles

Ms. Beck: — Still no commitment to fully fund that teachers' contract.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I asked the Sask Party government why they're charging PST [provincial sales tax] on used vehicles sold before April the 11th. The minister said that anyone caught in that bind could just call a number and the PST

would be waived. Perhaps the minister could check with SaskTel to see if 1-800-doubles-tax is still available.

The exemption is welcome news, but it's news nonetheless to insurance brokers that I've been speaking with. No one working in insurance knew that they could call to have the tax waived. Will the Minister for SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] make sure that brokers selling SGI products know about the pre-budget exemption? Or is he happy to leave them in the dark and see the extra revenues keep rolling in from this unfair tax hike?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there is a need to reach out to brokers so that they have the number for Finance to call, I'll ask the officials to please check into that.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, there's an easy way for the Sask Party government to make all of this confusion around the PST on used cars go away. They could scrap it. It was their own leader, Mr. Speaker, who said that charging PST over and over again on the same used car was just "dumb."

Back in 2008, the Finance minister posted a list of her achievements on the website. That list has not aged well. Eliminating the PST on used cars? Eliminated. Creation of Enterprise Saskatchewan? Gone. New labour legislation to protect essential services and ensure more democratic workplaces? Well that trip to the Supreme Court didn't go so well for them. Stronger balanced budget legislation? We now have no balanced budget legislation. Paying down the provincial debt? It's set to triple from 2007.

Mr. Speaker, what happened along the way? How did the Sask Party government lose its way so badly?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, what the member opposite failed to also mention is our commitment to individuals with disabilities, Mr. Speaker, creating a program such as SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability], something the members opposite never did. It was our commitment to education, as mentioned earlier by our Education minister. An unprecedented number of schools have been built in this province instead of closing 176 schools, Mr. Speaker. We have a commitment to health care where we're now building hospitals instead of just promising hospitals, Mr. Speaker. And along with that, Mr. Speaker, we have decreased personal income taxes in an unprecedented level that this province has ever seen, making life more affordable for Saskatchewan citizens, Mr. Speaker. They now pay less income tax than they did when the members opposite were government, Mr. Speaker.

Those are things that we have been able to do for Saskatchewan people, and through that we've experienced unprecedented population growth. The member opposite also forgot to mention

that.

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

Funding for Wildfire Management

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, communities across the province are concerned about the risk of another serious wildfire season. Thanks to dry, windy conditions and a rapid melt, our wildfire season has already started and much of the province is at risk. Despite increasing serious wildfire seasons in communities across Saskatchewan in recent years, last month's budget didn't provide an increase for emergency management and fire safety, and actually cut wildfire management by more than \$6 million.

How can we be cutting this funding when we need it more than ever?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I provided these answers to the media just a couple of days ago. I'd be happy to provide them in estimates when we move to the Ministry of Environment estimates. But, Mr. Speaker, I'll provide the answers right now.

The operations on the wildfire branch budget on terms of operations, in terms of actually fighting fires, is up from last budget, Mr. Speaker. In fact we've doubled the dollars to wildfire mitigation programs. That includes for sprinkler systems. That includes for reducing the fuel source around communities. That part of the budget has actually increased.

The \$6 million decrease in the budget is on the capital, because the most recent CL-215T conversion program that's actually upgrading the planes, that program has now come to an end because the last plane in that program has now been upgraded. So we don't need the capital dollars because there isn't another CL-215T to upgrade, Mr. Speaker. That's why that part of the budget has been reduced. But in terms of operations, it's actually up this year.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, northerners have concerns about what could be another devastating wildfire season in the North. The communities of La Ronge and Pelican Narrows have not forgotten the forest fires that threaten their communities. And this year the wildfire season is already in full swing. Government officials say Pelican Narrows fires will burn for many years to come. The community of Pelican Narrows raised concerns about training and resources for firefighters last year. What is the government going to do to get ahead of these fires and provide supports for northern communities?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to report that we have a wildfire task force that is working in conjunction with the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] as well as the Prince Albert

Grand Council. Mr. Speaker, they've made a number of recommendations, and I'm pleased to say that not only are we increasing the operations budget this year for the branch in terms of actually fighting those fires, Mr. Speaker, we've doubled the amount of dollars for mitigation for communities to provide for additional sprinkler systems for reducing the fuel load around sources of value, Mr. Speaker. So that's good news.

As well, Mr. Speaker, the task force has identified and made recommendations in terms of the fire crews, Mr. Speaker. And what we are doing this year, Mr. Speaker, we're actually increasing the number of firefighters' crew size from five up to eight members per team, Mr. Speaker. This is, I think, something that has been very welcomed by not only our task force, PAGC [Prince Albert Grand Council], the FSIN, as well as, Mr. Speaker, communities in the area.

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

Global Transportation Hub and Freedom of Information Law

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government loves to talk about how they're the party that respects the rule of law, but their actions just don't back it up. They refuse to follow the freedom of information law when it came to a request for the Husky pipeline inspections, and they're refusing to say if they'll follow the Information and Privacy Commissioner's recommendations when it comes to the records at the GTH [Global Transportation Hub]. The recommendations are crystal clear — follow the law; release the records. These are public records, and people have a right to know what is going on at the GTH.

How can the Sask Party government claim to champion the rule of law when they won't commit to following the recommendations of the Information and Privacy Commissioner?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. I share the concerns that she has that we expect all of our agencies to comply fully with the legislation. The GTH is now compliant with the legislation. They're dealing with the periods that they've got to share information with the Privacy Commissioner. The Ministry of Justice has sent people over to the GTH with a view to trying to make sure that they do comply fully, that they deal with things in a proper and expeditious manner.

I think all of us should be aware that there are two competing interests here. One is the commercially sensitive information that exists. We want to be able to make sure that we're able to be competitive and remain in a position to be able to attract new tenants to the area. And secondly, we all have to be very mindful that this is taxpayer dollars that are being spent there, and we want to make sure that we've got the maximum amount of openness, transparency, and accountability, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas

Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Nice to hear that response for once today. The minister, however, was giving me a hard time earlier this week for calling for changes to the freedom of information law. But it's because of this government's track record of burying, blocking, and denying access to information requests that has people calling for new protections. When the commissioner says a record should be released, complying shouldn't be optional.

We believe in openness, transparency, and accountability, and that the commissioner should have the power to order documents be made public. Why can't the Minister of Justice support that? Why doesn't he believe the Information and Privacy Commissioner should have the power to force government to release public documents?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have enormous respect for the good work that's done by the Information and Privacy Commissioner in our province. The Privacy Commissioner provides guidance, provides direction, and consults with different agencies throughout government. We support, value, and respect the work that he does and want to encourage that that would continue.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the question that's posed by the member opposite, there are certain things that are commercially sensitive that deal with personnel matters and everything, and we will continue to work with the Privacy Commissioner to make sure that things are released where it's appropriate. But at the end of the day, it's the government that's responsible to protect things that are commercially sensitive or deal with personnel or deal with health records, and we're going to continue to do that. I appreciate the point the member's making, but at the end of the day the ultimate responsibility lies with government.

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

Support for Post-Secondary Institutions

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, student athletes joined us this week to fight for their programs to continue at the U of R [University of Regina], programs being eliminated due to the underfunding and cuts of that government. The minister assured this Assembly and students their scholarships would be honoured, but that just simply isn't how this is playing out. Students have been left with the choice of accessing their hard-earned scholarship support or pursuing their athletic careers. Not both, because those scholarships can't be transferred.

Students shouldn't be left with a choice to choose between following their athletic dreams, their investment in their academic program, and being able to pay for school. Does this government not understand the position years of cuts have put our institutions in and the devastating impact that they're having on students across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Advanced

Education.

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. You know, I did meet with students following their visit here in the legislature last week, or earlier this week, and I did share what I heard in those meetings with members of the university institution.

As the member opposite knows full well, the universities are autonomous institutions. *The University of Regina Act* is pretty clear in section 61 that the business and management and operation of the institution is vested in the board and in the leadership of that institution, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it is this government that has cut millions of dollars from the U of R's budget — \$6 million in less than two years — and they need to own the impact for their choices. The university had actually told that government well in advance of budget that they needed a 3.3 per cent increase to maintain status quo after the devastating cuts that they received. Instead they got zeros. The operating grant this year is lower than it was in 2014. This doesn't keep pace with inflation, salaries, or the half million extra dollars that they're paying due to the government's choice around the PST.

This government can't starve our valuable institutions and then wipe their hands of the damage that they're causing or the tuition hikes that they're creating. When will this government start seeing post-secondary education for the priority that it needs to be, an investment in our future, and stop these devastating cuts?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There was a lot in that question, so I'll try to deal with as many of the points as I can. When you compare the last 11 years of total operating funding under the NDP [New Democratic Party] to our record over the last 11 years, the government has cumulatively provided the University of Regina with \$475 million more, or 74 per cent more, in operating funds to that institution, Mr. Speaker.

I would also add that we learned this week I think — and I was glad to hear it — that the University of Regina is adding faculty positions in the Faculty of Social Work, in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies, in the faculty of computer science, Mr. Speaker, and also in the Faculty of Engineering. We're going to work very hard with our institutions over the coming years as partners in this place, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan already has the highest number of youth who aren't working or in school in Canada, and this government's making matters worse because of their cuts and their underfunding, Mr. Speaker — \$6 million in just two years.

The U of R announced this week they're hiking tuition by 2.8 per cent in response to the provincial budget. U of S has already hiked their tuition by 4.8 per cent. This is the 10th increase to tuition since it was frozen in 2008. Unsustainable for students and real barriers for so many. Meanwhile this government has slashed scholarship funding, ended the education savings grant, and cut student aid supports that could help students get by.

These persistent deep cuts will have long-term consequences for these students and the institutions, our institutions as a whole. When can they expect an end to the austerity approach of this government? When will this government make higher education and students the priority they deserve to be?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the changes that we made to the student loan program in the last year, Mr. Speaker. Those changes that were made to the student loan program, Mr. Speaker, now provide an upfront grant to students who are the lowest-income students and those who are in most need in our province. And not only that, Mr. Speaker, but I would add the number of loans to those students has gone up by 18.6 per cent and they've increased the amount of money that they're getting by 8.1 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That means we're supporting the students who need it the most, better, Mr. Speaker.

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

Crown Land Incentive

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the government's Crown land incentive has farmers grappling with skyrocketing rents on land leases. Over the last three years, the levy rent formula has increased from 15 per cent to 45 per cent as a part of the government's effort to try to push renters out. These changes hurt producers who can't or don't want to buy the land. Producers, some who have farmed the same land for generations, are seeing their rents skyrocket. In just one case, a Carlyle-area farmer saw his rent climb by over 100 per cent in just the last four years.

[10:45]

How can the government justify forcing the hand of producers by artificially inflating land rents?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. Owning agricultural land that has no higher public benefit, either ecological, sand and gravel, oil and gas, or heritage value, is not a core function of government, and not a good use of government resources. Mr. Speaker, we campaigned on selling this kind of land in 2007 and we've since, starting in 2008, we've run a series of programs where we sell land with price incentives on it to make it easier for producers. And on the other side of that, Mr. Speaker, we have continued to raise rents on certain types of land like the ones I've described that have no additional value for public ownership by increasing the rents to some extent.

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

Provincial Budget and Government's Fiscal Management

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I know that the Sask Party government is anxious to fill the big hole in their budget and to make better choices looking at the long term and climbing, tripling of debt in this province.

But, Mr. Speaker, it wasn't producers renting Crown land who wasted millions at the GTH in a land deal that saw the Sask Party government supporters profit. It wasn't producers who allowed the costs at Regina bypass to spiral out of control from 400 million to 2 billion. And it wasn't producers who chose to triple the debt since 2007. That responsibility lies solely with this Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, and producers shouldn't have to be the ones to pay the price for their bad management through higher and higher land lease prices.

How can the Minister of Agriculture justify making producers across our province pay for their decade-long run of mismanagement and failed megaprojects?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — It's not producers, Mr. Speaker, that will ever pay an NDP opposition who support a Trudeau carbon tax in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at the outset of the opening of the legislature, one of the very first questions was about doing politics differently, Mr. Speaker. We've worked very hard engaging across the province in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker. And we had the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, calling for investments into our classrooms, Mr. Speaker. Well that box has been checked, Mr. Speaker, with investments into our classrooms and into early child care, Mr. Speaker.

We heard calls for those struggling with autism spectrum disorder, Mr. Speaker. We see an investment in this budget, Mr. Speaker, in individualized funding for autism. Calls for increases in CBO [community-based organization] funding for the front lines, the services in our communities, Mr. Speaker. Done in this budget, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, further investment into a long-term care facility in La Ronge, Mr. Speaker. Other supports in the North that we heard to date, Mr. Speaker, none of those provided by an NDP government, Mr. Speaker.

We ask the members opposite: let's do politics differently here . . . [inaudible] . . . Let's stand and support this budget unanimously in this House next week.

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

Mr. Steinley: — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member from Walsh Acres has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And it's with great pleasure I take a couple minutes to introduce a guest in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. My cousin Kevin's down from Rush Lake, and we both grew up on a dairy and beef farm in Rush Lake, Saskatchewan. And there is three boys in his family, and I had a brother and two sisters, so we had seven kids. So Kevin's more like a brother to me than a cousin. And we grew up together and I'm happy he could make it down. He came down to bring his father down for a couple of appointments. And I just want to say thank you for all you've done for me in my life, Kevin. He was a good big brother, and I appreciate everything. And welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Supports for Mental Health and Addictions

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to enter this important debate today. At the end of my remarks, I will move the following motion:

That this Assembly take action to further supports for mental health and addictions across the province, but particularly in northern Saskatchewan where the rates of suicide are alarming and services are extremely limited.

Mr. Speaker, before I start out, I just . . . It's been very challenging as a member serving the Cumberland constituency, and I say that it's a tough time. And sometimes I want to say I've supported many of the families who have suffered the loss of a loved one, our youth to suicide.

In northern Saskatchewan. . . And I know in the rest of the province, our heart goes out to anyone that loses a loved one from suicide. But in northern Saskatchewan, you know, I look at the rates amongst our First Nations. And I'm going to get into some of the stats and some of that information.

But I just want to start out with saying my heart goes out to many of those families and community members who have to suffer and have gone through the loss of a loved one. Honestly, when you're meeting with families — whether it's a mushroom, a kohkom, an aunt, an uncle, a sibling, a mother, a father — and you're supporting them in the community, the loss of their loved one, it's tough to find the words. And sometimes you just need to give them the hug and let them know . . . the hand, a touch. The community shows up to support them. The leadership shows up supporting them.

And we're going to get into, you know, a debate about whether the government is doing enough. The government, you know, at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, likes to pat themselves on the back. And today, you know, I kind of been introducing and bringing forward the concerns in the petition asking for more

mental health and addictions services in the North. And particularly . . . I know the issue, addictions, is throughout the province and I don't take away from the families and those communities that are dealing with addictions, mental health, and suicide.

But if you look at northern Saskatchewan, if you look at First Nations . . . And like I've said in the petition, it's 6 times higher for First Nation boys to commit suicide than non-First Nation; 26 times higher for First Nations girls than non-First Nations girls to commit suicide. It's in the child advocate's report. It is alarming. And it is a crisis, and it's so hard to . . .

And I'm going to get through some of the concerns that have come forward from many of the leaders. They're advocating that more needs to be done. And whether it's the front-line workers, whether it's the child advocate, whether it's our northern leaders, whether it's the mayors, our First Nations leader, our Métis, whether it's families. And I've asked some of the families, I'm going to make some comments at the end because I've asked permission. I'll make a few comments.

You know, it is a crisis, and the government has an obligation and the government needs to take this serious. And you know, the government can say, oh, there's more work to be done. I've heard that. And they can read a member's statement that they gave in a few million dollars more. But it is a crisis when it comes to suicide in northern Saskatchewan. The government no longer can say there's more work to be done. There is not one family member, Mr. Speaker, not one family member that I would know that would say they would want to feel comfort from hearing the government say, we know there's more work to be done. That just doesn't cut it anymore.

When someone is looking for supports, whether they're a youth, whether they're somebody who's dealing with addictions and mental health, what they're looking for is . . . They don't want excuses to, well maybe we can get you in in three weeks. Maybe we can get you in six months. Maybe we can get you into a detox and then the treatment. Maybe we can get a mental health worker, a psychiatrist. The needs . . . When those community members are in a crisis, they're in a crisis now. They don't want excuses, and they don't want governments to say, but look, we've done so much for you.

And I want to say this to the government: they like to pat themselves on the back. But this issue is a crisis, and if they don't wake up . . . We're losing so many youth, and it doesn't have to be that way. As long as at the end of the day, as anyone, as the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] I think, leaders . . . And I can't speak for the families who have lost loved ones, but I would think as long as they know that there was the supports there when they needed them, when that young person needed it, when they needed those supports, Mr. Speaker, that they could get those supports. That's crucial, whether it was mental health, addictions, treatment. They would want to know that, you know, their loved one had an opportunity.

And the schools, I think about the schools. The schools do great work and they try their best. And every community, I give them credit, the front-line workers, the social workers, the mental health workers. Those front-line workers, they're exhausted.

You see the work they're trying to do. It cannot be easy. They know they need more resources.

The list goes on, and I think we're going to see, as I go through some of the comments that came from the child advocate in his report about the crisis that's going on, we no longer and the governments can no longer . . . We need to work on this with all the leaders, with the government, with opposition. We no longer can put our heads in the sand and wish it away and go away. This is a crisis and the government needs to respond as a crisis. We as a province need to respond as a crisis and find out what can we do better.

And I'm going to comment a little bit, Mr. Speaker, about some of the comments that in the child advocate's report, you know, just some of the stuff that . . . One area he refers to is the government should fully implement Jordan's principle. And let's be very clear. Take the jurisdiction out of it. There shouldn't be, well you're on-reserve, off-reserve. You live here; you live there. There should be no jurisdiction when it comes to this. When the services are provided, we have to provide the service.

And you know, and I think about some of the areas where I think that needs to be implemented, but it can't be implemented in a way, well we'll pick and choose how we're going to use Jordan's principle. I think it was very clear: we'll make sure we'll act on children, we'll act on the services that are needed from federal and provincial, different jurisdictions. It don't matter. We'll figure out who's going to pay the bill once we get there but we'll make sure the services are provided. I think that is so important and that was in this thing.

The government should partner with FSIN to develop a suicide strategy for First Nations. That's clear in the child's advocate report, again a recommendation he's making. I hope the government will move on that. I really do. At the end of the day, take the politics out of it, as some people have said to me, and let's do the right thing and let's get those partnerships going with the organizations that are advocating for this when it comes to many of our residents of this province.

It also stated in that report the government should partner with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan to implement their suicide strategy and to look at this. So there are many things that the report is recommending. Again this government has a choice. Government's had a choice with all the money. We're talking about \$14 billion a year that this government has to decide how it wants to spend it.

You know what? I say that this government could say, if they really wanted to say, we have a crisis when it comes to the suicide rates amongst First Nations and the North, and it's alarming and we're going to act upon that and we're going to be meaningful about that in a partnership. And we're going to sit down with First Nations and Métis and the rest of the province and we're going to target that as the crisis that it is. It is.

What does it say when different agencies and groups come forward with, I guess, suggestions to the government saying, here's a way we found that might be able to help some young people to stay focused and stay out of trouble.

I think about our trappers. They put in a proposal to try to work with, you know, at-risk youth in different areas to try to bring them on the trapline. They applied for, I think the grant was \$180, and they got refused. Like to get refused to try to work with the youth. And they said they would be accountable for the dollars and stuff, but it didn't work. The government didn't have a hundred and eighty or ninety thousand dollars at the time that . . . [inaudible].

So I just start thinking about some of the stuff and the wants that people have brought forward. And I know there are good people out there doing the good work and they're sitting around trying to find out — whether they're front-line workers, whoever they are, leaders — and they're coming with ideas and plans. Here's some suggestions that the government could take, whether to assist with this.

But again sometimes it's hard to get government to try to assist. And the frustration I've seen. And you could do, they could do certain things. I know the government could do a study and we've seen all that. I think we need some action. It's time for some serious action. No more let's talk about it again, let's have a meeting about it. The leaders, families, those that are struggling the most in mental health and addictions need help now.

If we see the crisis . . . And when I talk about addictions too, Mr. Speaker, the addictions, and we see mental health . . . It's all related: addictions, mental health. And then we see the rise in HIV [human immunodeficiency virus], hepatitis C — it's alarming. And some of the doctors are calling it out and saying, we need to respond to this. And it is the mental health; it's addictions. Let's look what . . . So they're making recommendations and I hope at the end of the day the government will take this serious because it is a crisis going on.

And government can no longer, with all the money at their disposal, say, well this is our priority. You know, this is where we're going to spend the money. This is where the money . . . When you see you have a crisis . . . And that's what I hope they understand after today's debate, Mr. Speaker. They, the government understands that there is a crisis when it comes to suicides, addictions, mental health, and that the government, at the end of the day, has not done enough and it needs to deal with this as a crisis.

[11:00]

So I think about the youth. And let's say, when I talk about this, the youth also made some recommendations and the child advocate in his report talked about the youth and, you know, the calls to action from the youth. These are from the youth in the report, and I think about that. They would like programs to stop bullying and some schools are doing that. They are. I've been to their . . . It's amazing to watch some of the schools and the buy-in to stop bullying. They're trying.

I made a member's statement about empathy, some of the programs being done to show empathy amongst students. And I did a member's statement, and it's amazing to watch that program. I got to see first-hand that program.

So these are some of the things that the youth are asking for,

increased positive emotional supports. There's different things that can come forward, you know: addressing drugs and alcohol in the schools, with giving supports to the schools and to the addiction mental health to go into the schools to make sure they are talking about addictions and drugs, so they have a good understanding.

Again we always say that we know that, you know, parents want to make sure what we're introducing, that they give permission to it. And the schools take care of that. They make sure permission slips are signed and all that to do with that. So that just goes to address . . .

The other area, you know, the youth themselves say, keep youth safe. Like youth want to be safe. They want to know they're safe. They're bullied, they feel . . . If they're not feeling safe, it is causing mental health. It causes them so much grief and sometimes we don't know why. And some people don't know why we lose the loved ones and people commit suicide. Nobody knows. Sometimes people try to . . . [inaudible] . . . and they're trying to find answers. And I know sometimes it's hard, and nobody has the answers for them sometimes.

But like I say the youth, again, they want to make sure that there's activities for the youth in communities. Every time government make cuts to any program that takes care of youth or helps the community with recreation, every time you make a decision around that big table of budget, you have issues. And it hurts. So I want to say that. The need again, as I've talked about, for so much more when it comes to mental health and addictions services throughout the province, and I think about rural, remote, urbans, there's many areas of that.

The one thing I want to make . . . And I've asked some of the parents and I said this, I've asked next time I have to go support a family of loss of a loved one to suicide — our youth or whoever through suicide because of mental health and addictions — I'm going to ask permission. I've already got permission of some to bring . . . I usually go to the funerals. I pay my respects to the family. We support them. We get funeral cards. I will be bringing those funeral cards and delivering to three members on the other side: the Premier, the two Health ministers. To understand and to see the hurt that is going on, that communities are dealing with, I think it's important to share that with them, to get permission and do that forward. I think it's important.

So, Mr. Speaker, at the end of my comments, I had said I was going to, you know, move the motion. So getting close to the time where I think it's important that I get to that. But again I think this is a crisis we have to move. So, Mr. Speaker, I move the following motion:

That this Assembly take action to further supports for mental health and addictions across the province, but particularly in northern Saskatchewan where the rates of suicide are alarming and services are extremely limited.

I so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved:

That this Assembly take further action to further supports for mental health and addictions across the province, but particularly in northern Saskatchewan where the rates of suicide are alarming and services are extremely limited.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Rochdale.

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to speak to the motion that the members opposite have put forward. And I will also read the motion as presented:

That this Assembly take action to further support for mental health and addictions across the province, but particularly in northern Saskatchewan where the rates of suicide are alarming and services are extremely limited.

Mr. Speaker, while we recognize and respect the motion put forward by the members opposite, the motion also fails to recognize that our government is taking action to increase supports for mental health and addiction services across the province, including the North.

While the motion raises an important issue and one our government takes very seriously, we cannot support the motion put forward as the members have put forward. Mr. Speaker, our government is spending 330 million within the Ministry of Health on mental health and addictions. Mr. Speaker, that is an increase of 52 per cent since 2007 since the Saskatchewan Party formed government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was elected by the residents of Regina Rochdale to speak on their behalf. And does that mean that only the residents of my riding matter to me, and their concerns, and my concerns? Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. Each and every one of us is elected and we should want to do what's best for the whole province.

Mr. Speaker, we have family and friends living across the province and, Mr. Speaker, when they are grieving a loss from suicide or know someone who is suffering from addictions, there is no geographical boundary that separates us. Mr. Speaker, each and every one of us know of someone very close to us who suffers from mental health issues or suffers from an addiction. For way too long, persons who suffer from mental illness suffered in silence, and too many of our friends have lost the battle to addiction.

Mr. Speaker, a very good friend of mine, Dave Batters, in 2009 — he was my friend, he was my MP [Member of Parliament], but he was someone who suffered in silence — and he took his life. His wife, Denise Batters, has been very, very vocal in saying we need to do more, but we need to speak out. And I've been very pleased to be able to help her with raising funds for mental health because, Mr. Speaker, many of us left behind, we also suffer. We suffer from the loss. We suffer from the guilt. Could I have done more? What could I have done to help?

Well, Mr. Speaker, today many people are speaking up, and they're asking for the help they need. And, Mr. Speaker, our government, this government, is listening. That's why we have invested in more funding for more full-time positions in mental

health and addictions. As I stated, Mr. Speaker, we have increased the funding by 52 per cent since we formed government.

We also have very close family members. My niece, Linda Joan, she suffered from alcoholism, and she died. She left behind my sister-in-law who was broken-hearted, her children who were broken-hearted because they lost their mom.

I mean, Mr. Speaker, we know that there's communities in the North, we know there's individuals in the North who suffer personally. And our hearts go out to everyone who's lost someone from suicide or mental health issues. But, Mr. Speaker, we are working to make sure that those who require support receive them. The Ministry of Health, Education, and Social Services continue to work with our federal and our First Nations partners to make sure that any response to suicide is coordinated, but it's immediately.

And the Saskatchewan Health Authority continues to provide support for young people at risk of suicide. They are working with schools, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], the First Nations bands, to identify urgent cases and how best to respond. And the Ministry of Health participates in the Embracing Life Committee, which focuses on building community capacity to prevent suicides.

A northern training and resource registry is being developed so that northern communities can find the mental health and suicide prevention supports available from all agencies in a single location. Over the past two years, the Ministry of Health has provided the former Keewatin, Mamawetan health regions with \$350,000 in additional funding to support community suicide prevention initiatives.

Suicide prevention protocols have been fully implemented in northern mental health and addiction services. To date, 93 human service staff have been trained in mental health first aid, 228 have received Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training, and 46 have been trained in safeTALK [safe tell, ask, listen and keep safe]. The Saskatchewan Health Authority hired a community suicide prevention coordinator to provide ongoing support to the Saskatchewan Health Authority, Mental Health Commission of Canada, our First Nations partners in La Ronge area.

Communities across the North are taking initiative. Just last night in Pinehouse Lake — as many know, my family lives there — 40 members from the community got together. And it was a wonderful meeting, but it was a very emotional meeting. Forty members got together from the community. These are leaders, these are just folks who said we have to do more. And they were focusing in on discussing the issues of crystal meth in their community.

So, Mr. Speaker, these members, they didn't just sit around and complain. They said, let's figure out what do we need to do. Who do we need to work with? Well they know they need to work with the schools. They know they need to work with their community leaders, the RCMP, the government. But you know who else they decided they needed to work with? They needed to work with the dealers, the drug dealers. They needed to work with the addicts.

And, Mr. Speaker, after that meeting, do you know what they did? A couple of members from that committee went and they met with one of the meth dealers. And they said to him, what can we do to help you out of this situation? Now, Mr. Speaker, that's positive. That's community leaders taking on an initiative because they know they can't do it by themselves. So what do they do? They roll up their sleeves and they are working to get the job done. Mr. Speaker, that wasn't the first meeting that community has had. That was the third meeting where members from the community, who are concerned, who want a better community, have taken action.

They also have taken action by having what they call Recovery Lake, which is a camp which focuses on the addictions of the individual. But they said, you know what, you can't just treat the individual. The whole family is being affected. So what do they do? The whole family goes to Recovery Lake and they work through the addiction issues together. Mr. Speaker, this is a positive initiative but this is coming from the grassroots, from the communities. What does this mean, Mr. Speaker? It means that people are taking control of their lives. Communities, communities are taking action.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's why it's so important that our communities like Pinehouse Lake and Sandy Bay have developed critical incident and trauma response teams. Sandy Bay has also opened up a family resource centre, focusing on early childhood development. And Lac La Ronge Indian Band is partnering with the Red Cross to develop community-safe planning and introduce suicide prevention training to the schools in the area. And the Prince Albert Grand Council is providing suicide prevention and support training for teachers, RCMP, and Family Services worker at Deschambault Lake.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, our government is focused on how do we help northern communities. Our northern communities have not been overlooked. Mr. Speaker, just this past week, we had a group of students from northern Saskatchewan that were participating in the Charles Knight student leadership program. Mr. Speaker, it's programs like this where students have the opportunity to learn leadership. And through that leadership, they have the opportunity to be mentors, mentors to their peers, because we know who best to talk to youth is youth themselves. And, Mr. Speaker, this is why programs such as this, the Charles Knight youth leadership program, is the backbone. That's how we ensure that students who are suffering in silence have the opportunity to seek help.

And so that's why, Mr. Speaker, the intention of the emotion is good, but it does not fulfill, and it does not address the issues that the government has looked at in response to suicide and addictions, and specifically, in the North. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour today to enter into this very important 75-minute debate. Mr. Speaker, I have had the honour to work in mental health and addiction services for over a decade, and so I've seen,

first-hand, the benefits of providing services to youth where they feel most comfortable to access them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, when I worked at mental health, one of my first jobs was to go work in the high schools. And so I worked with the youth there and I had, at times, about 40 to 50 youth on my caseload, which wasn't uncommon, but was very important. And the biggest thing I noticed was when you were working in that environment, the youth saw you there.

I would go and help out at intramurals. I would participate just like any of the teachers there. I would go when they had their fundraisers. I was really active in there, so the students got to know you on a personal level. They got trust you, and that is so very important when you're working with youth. They need to have that level of trust in who they're talking with. And it takes a long time to build those relationships, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And so I did that work for, I believe it was five to six years, and through the years you developed some really good relationships with the youth. And they would come, and after they were even done school, come and seek me out to come and talk to me and share some of their exciting life events.

And so when I got a permanent job with the health region, it was in forensic services. So that brought me into the outpatient department, and so I had to leave the schools. And I would tell the youth that they were more than welcome to come and see me in the outpatient services. But very few came because those youth have some issues with transportation. A lot of the youth I was working with, their families aren't in a healthy position to be able to make appointments or were unable to make those arrangements. So that's why providing the services in the schools was so important.

But with saying that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I remember particularly one youth that I worked with. And it took a long time to get the trust of that particular youth. But I was in my outpatient services and I got a phone call from the front desk. And the lady said, there's a gentleman here to see you. He says it's an emergency. And I actually had a cancellation, so I was able to bring him in. And this young man found out his girlfriend was pregnant and this was a major issue in his life at that point. And this is a particular boy that went through the foster care system and went into a lot of homes, and so didn't feel that he had anyone else to talk to other than myself.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I called all these youth that I worked with my kids. And so he said he wanted to talk to me and we worked out on what agencies were available for them and being young parents, and helped him through this experience. And we met just a few times and it was really wonderful that he came out to seek services through me and that was just through because of that relationship building that we had. And then once he had the baby, him and his partner came and had to show me the baby. So it's wonderful. Those relationships that you build are incredibly important, and I do have to say that I deeply miss that work, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But the reason why I got into politics here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was because of seeing some of the barriers that our clients have to face. And I wanted to work on a systematic level so that we could help reduce those barriers. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since I've been elected, mental health, especially in Prince

Albert area, has been greatly affected. In just two years, that work that I did in the high schools for mental health, those positions have been cut because the health region had to make some tough decisions with the lack of funding. So they pulled those workers out of the high schools and now have them working in the outpatients department. And like I said, it's really hard to get those youth to the outpatient department.

I'd like to also add that when those youth did face a crisis, they got comfortable with you and they'd come and see you. And so if they did present as being suicidal and we went with them to the hospital, we would be their advocate. And that is so very important to make sure that they get those services immediately and have that person with them. And now those services are being brought on the backs of teachers who aren't trained to do this kind of work and don't have the experience. But they do their best because they love those kids as well.

Another thing that was cut since I've been in this role is the rural mental health and addiction workers. They used to have counsellors in all the rural schools. And again because of cuts to health that was suspended, which rural kids have even less opportunity for transportation or ability to seek services outside of their community. And so that was a big loss.

Also mobile crisis in Prince Albert lost their daytime services. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they played the role of when someone was suicidal and they were deemed as a moderate risk, oftentimes they'd go back into their home. And so mobile crisis would go and check up on them and make sure that things were going all right. Well now mobile crisis is only able to do that in the evening, no longer able to do that during the daytime. So that's a big loss.

The Catholic school in Prince Albert had to cut their services with the Catholic Family Services. They provided a counsellor in multiple schools within the city, and because of the school having to make some tough decisions due to the cuts that they had from funding, they had to focus on their core services which would be educating students. And so they had to disband that service.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the Catholic Family Services was providing services within the Catholic schools in Prince Albert, they were providing services to as many as 200 children. And once they moved those services, all those families were encouraged to go to their agency to receive services, but very few families were able to do that because one, it costs to receive services there, and two, the transportation issues and all of those unable to make the allowances. Parents sometimes can't take the time off work in those situations. So we've seen a whole bunch of youth there that are falling through the cracks.

And also this year I've been hearing from educators that they've been told that in their schools, the school social workers that do provide counselling in their schools are going to be cut to half the amount of time. And so in one particular rural school that I was talking to some people there, they had a counsellor that went in two days a week and now that's going to be cut to two days every second week. And so they have a high-needs population; there's always wait times to see that counsellor there. So again, more children falling through the cracks.

So cutting these important services, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're seeing more and more crisis situations happening. And so we need to really be mindful of that. We have to make sure that we have services available for individuals when they need it immediately.

And I want to also point out to the fact that we need to be mindful that individuals who may need mental health services aren't necessarily coming to the service provider with those exact needs. They may be going to different service providers, say with regards to domestic violence, sexual assault. There might be mobile crisis attending a situation. And in the end, they realize that it is definitely mental health and addictions that is the root of the problem, you know, and needing to address that. And so, when we are making cuts to all these other agencies, we're also really having a huge impact on the mental health services provided. And so we need to keep that in the back of our minds when we're making these decisions, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to . . . I know my time . . . I could sit here and talk about mental health for hours, but I want to talk a little bit about the stigma of mental health. We're doing a good job with working on that. It's improving. And with that improvement, we're seeing more people accessing services as well, which is wonderful, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's what we want, is we want people to come to us when they need that support. But I also notice when I see the support being provided in communities, oftentimes these agencies are in the basement or they're in areas that are really hard to access. And I think we need to be mindful that these are services that are important. They're health care services, and we should respect the individuals who are receiving those services and make sure that they're in locations that are accessible.

And another thing I really want to say is, if you want to know how to do better with mental health, go talk to those front-line workers because we know what needs to be done. And so come and talk to the front-line workers and they'll give you lots of suggestions on what we can do. So thank you for letting me enter into this debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In the event that I run out of time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to state at the outset of my remarks, while we respect the motion put forward by the members opposite, it fails to recognize that our government is already taking action to increase supports for mental health and addiction services across the province, including in the North. Therefore I cannot support this motion.

There is a well-known idiom that says before you judge a person, walk a mile in their shoes. This adage reminds us that we must understand before judging. It also reminds us to practise empathy.

Mr. Speaker, I am the mother of three daughters. When our middle daughter Monique was born in 1987, a dark cloud descended almost immediately. She had jaundice and then colic but was otherwise a healthy baby. But I soon became very unhealthy. I developed severe symptoms of postpartum

depression, symptoms that presented in the hospital. Within weeks it was necessary to seek help from extended family in caring for our infant daughter while I sought medical assistance.

I was fortunate to have a very good family physician, Dr. Hugh McKee in Saskatoon. He was ahead of his time with his knowledge in this area and was a godsend to me. Thankfully we worked together in the journey back to health and he made it clear that I had to do my share of the heavy lifting needed to regain my mental health.

Fast forward three years, our third daughter Janelle was born in 1990. Dr. McKee and I put a strategy in place in the event that I might be struck again with postpartum depression. This time it took three months to arrive, but arrive it did, and with force. The road to recovery was a bit easier as I now had the confidence that recovery fully was possible. I was fortunate to have a supportive and understanding husband to make that journey with me. Needless to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was not going to be any attempt for a son after these two dreadful experiences with postpartum depression.

Dr. McKee was chosen as the Saskatchewan Family Physician of the Year in 1992, in part, I believe, because of his knowledge and ability to help his patients suffering from mental illness. Dr. McKee passed away from pancreatic cancer just last September and I was heartbroken. I had to attend his funeral. I wanted his wife and son to know just how much he had helped me over the years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I share this personal story for a couple of reasons. First, that it might be a beacon of hope for any mother who is listening today and is dealing with postpartum depression. There is full recovery. Another reason is that I had to accept my own responsibility and do the work to get better. Lastly I can relate to the people of this province who are suffering from mental illness as I have walked many miles in those shoes.

I am so encouraged, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the maternal mental wellness program through HealthLine 811 has been fully implemented by this government. I am also encouraged that family physicians are now trained to deal with depression and postpartum depression. My new family doctor told me this is a significant part of his practice, treating depression and anxiety with his patients.

But we haven't stopped with this program, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government will also be implementing a targeted physician training program to improve the ability of physicians to assess and treat child and youth mental health conditions in Saskatchewan. There is \$100,000 in the budget for this initiative. It will assist in reducing the wait times for child and youth psychiatry services. We recognize that there can be significant wait times to see psychiatrists, particularly child psychiatrists in Saskatoon, and this is just unacceptable.

[11:30]

Training family physicians in mental health is one way to improve these wait times. General practitioners now account for a large amount of mental health support and assessment in our communities but there are others: social workers; nurses

working in service areas such as the HealthLine, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, and primary health care clinics; and primary health care counsellors in a number of communities in the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I read an article written by a farmer and the co-founder of Women in Ag, Kim Keller, in the fall 2017 edition of *Farmers' Voice*. In 2014 Kim received a message from a friend that one of her neighbouring farmers had committed suicide. Then a colleague contacted her in 2017 that another farmer was lost to suicide. Kim took action. She moderated a panel on mental health just a few weeks later at an agricultural producers of Saskatchewan meeting where a resolution was passed to adopt mental health in the ag industry as an issue to focus on. In Kim's words, "Farm stress is real. Suicide is real." I note that the Ministry of Agriculture supports the Farm Stress Line, providing farmers with resources to assist with farm stress related issues.

We are spending \$330 million on mental health and addiction supports in the Ministry of Health 2018-19 budget, an increase of 52 per cent since we formed government in 2007. Over 5 per cent of the ministry's budget in this budget year, or \$284 million, was allocated directly to mental health. There was a total of 367 million in this year's budget on mental health services.

As these services are not just limited to the Ministry of Health, the Premier, the Deputy Premier, and the Minister of Health have committed to increasing the 5 per cent for mental health services to 7 per cent. On March 12th of this year, during question period, the Minister of Health responded to a question about committing funds to raise mental health and addictions funding to 7 per cent of our overall health care budget, and I quote:

Mr. Speaker, the Deputy Premier and the Premier both, in the leadership race, said it was their intention to get to 7 per cent of the budget. That is our goal. We are going to get there as soon as finances allow, Mr. Speaker.

This Sask Party government has committed \$4.2 million to hire approximately 40 full-time positions in the communities of Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, North Battleford, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Yorkton, and Weyburn to develop community recovery teams who will provide support to individuals with complex and persistent mental illness. Four hundred thousand dollars is being invested to expand addiction services in Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan, and to provide specialist consultation services to physicians and other service professionals.

The new Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford is expected to open in the fall. It includes 188 long-term psychiatric rehabilitation beds and a 96-room secure unit for offenders living with mental health issues at a capital cost of \$332 million. The Ministry of Central Services' budget has committed \$1 million to cover the additional cost of increasing beds for this secure unit.

The Ministry of Health has provided the former Keewatin and Mamawetan health regions with additional funds of \$325,000 to support community suicide prevention initiatives, including 93

staff who have been trained in mental health first aid.

In our schools, there is over 30 million dedicated to mental health staff. This pays for 236 counsellors, 70 psychologists, and 78 social workers.

In Saskatoon, a new mental health assessment unit opened just last month at the Royal University Hospital, located in the Dubé Centre.

Four hundred and fifty take-home naloxone kits have been distributed and 1,200 individuals have received training on how to recognize and respond to overdoses. Suboxone has been added to the Saskatchewan formulary to treat opioid abuse. Naltrexone and acamprosate has been added to treat alcoholism.

It is encouraging that communities in the North are taking initiative themselves. For example, the Lac La Ronge Indian Band is partnering with the Red Cross to develop its community safety plan and introduce suicide prevention training to schools in the area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this motion speaks to increasing supports for mental health and addictions across this province. Here are the facts since this party formed government in 2007. Total funding for mental health and addictions has seen an increase of 52 per cent. Mental health funding is increased by 69 per cent, while addictions funding is increased by nearly 49 per cent. This increase in investment supports 1,200 mental health positions and 300 addictions full-time positions. There has been an increase of licensed psychiatrists at 29 per cent. There has been an increase in psychologists by 27 per cent, an increase in clinical social workers by 48 per cent. And this government has reached a bilateral agreement with the federal government whereby Saskatchewan will receive 158.5 million in targeted funding for mental health services over the next 10 years.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is more work to do. We recognize this. But to suggest that this government has not increased supports for mental health and addictions in Saskatchewan is incorrect. While the motion raises an important . . . [inaudible] . . . I cannot . . .

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting that this motion . . . What this motion says is:

That this Assembly take action to further supports for mental health and addictions across the province, but particularly in northern Saskatchewan where the rates of suicide are alarming and services are extremely limited.

I don't know what part of that motion isn't satisfactory to those folks on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker. I don't think it's the place of the government, when children and youth are dying, to pat themselves on the back. Yes, they have made some investments in mental health, and as well they should, Mr. Speaker.

But you know what? The last member, she liked to use the language, "the facts," Mr. Speaker. The facts are that we as a

province spend far less on mental health than any other province across the country, Mr. Speaker. We are at 5 per cent of our provincial health budget being spent on mental health. The average in Canada is about 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and that 7 per cent actually is not even where the goal should be. I'm going to take you to an article written by Keith Doucette in *The Canadian Press*, where the number says here . . . Okay, so a quote here:

"Access to care is abysmal in most places throughout the country and of course that's linked . . . not only, but very much to funding," said Louise Bradley, executive director of the Mental Health Commission of Canada . . .

That was from August 28, 2016.

So the reality is, Mr. Speaker, other governments in Canada and the Canadian Mental Health Association is encouraging spending to 9 per cent, and 9 per cent is recognized to not even be enough, Mr. Speaker. Other jurisdictions that are doing well spend 10 to 14 per cent of their health budget on mental health, Mr. Speaker. This government's daydreaming or blue-skying is to get to 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and they haven't provided a plan. I look forward to our continued time in estimates. They've said they'd like to get to 7 per cent but they haven't moved off of 5 per cent, Mr. Speaker, despite having dedicated funds from this provincial government, or from the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

I have to point to my colleague from Cumberland's comments where he says, it is no comfort for families when they hear the comment, there's more work to do, which I think all three folks and I think the ministers often have to say that there is more work to do. You're darn right there's more work to do, Mr. Speaker, and it is no comfort to families.

I am one of those families who has a vacant spot around the table, Mr. Speaker, because of a lack of support in mental health, and I happen to come from a privileged family. I'm a MLA and my brother and his wife are strong advocates. They know the system. They are people who know how to ask questions. And you know what? They couldn't get for their son what he needed, so we have a vacant spot around our family table at every function because of a lack of mental health. So I can relate to my colleague from Cumberland who talks about having to go to funeral after funeral after funeral.

This government's record, Mr. Speaker, actions speak louder than words. There's a two-year wait-list for psychiatry, but psychiatry is only a small part of the puzzle, Mr. Speaker. Two-year wait to see a psychiatrist, but the fact of the matter is even . . . And I look forward to getting the numbers in committee next week — I asked this yesterday — but to get help for children and youth who have mild to moderate mental health challenges, Mr. Speaker. So this is about nipping the problem in the bud before you need a psychiatrist.

I've been told, and I look forward to that confirmation next week, that there are currently 300 children waiting for help in that mild-to-moderate area, Mr. Speaker. To get that help, Mr. Speaker, that would be proactive.

We have a government who . . . Actually one of the members

talked about that mental health assessment unit at Royal University Hospital, which is a great facility. And I would argue we could still continue to do things a lot differently, Mr. Speaker, but it's a small part of that. This government didn't put additional funds in it. There was a request from the then Saskatoon Health Region for \$1.2 million to support that mental health assessment unit. You know that this government did not provide additional resources. That region had to pull money from other parts of mental health and addictions to get that facility open, Mr. Speaker. So they can talk about this mental health assessment unit which will make visiting the Royal University Hospital much easier, Mr. Speaker, but I don't think that they should be taking a heck of a lot of credit for getting those doors open. And they need to recognize that when you pull resources from somewhere else, it is a problem.

You look at the Dubé Centre, Mr. Speaker. Just a couple days ago — and this is not unusual — they are always running over capacity in there. I believe it's 54 adult mental health beds, and they were at 117 per cent capacity just a few days ago. That's a number that is available every day. I understand they're over capacity almost every single day, Mr. Speaker. And as a result, people who have mental health challenges who are trying to get well don't have the access to the services they need.

We can talk about, again, actions speaking louder than words, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about a program that was put in place to support folks in rural and remote areas. There was a program that we just heard last week from the Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan, their partnerships program. They had a \$32,000 program of relatively . . . \$32,000 in the scheme of a provincial budget, Mr. Speaker, isn't a lot of money. This is a program that allowed people and supported people who are living with mental health challenges, the opportunity to travel into rural and remote areas and destigmatize and help provide presentations to community members, so a community member could see themselves perhaps reflected in that individual and see that a mental health diagnosis doesn't have to be a death sentence, Mr. Speaker, nor should it be.

But this government . . . \$32,000 and they didn't see fit to provide money for that in this budget, Mr. Speaker. This is a government when it comes to stigma around mental health . . . So we can talk about reducing stigma, but this is a government who is building a children's hospital and has chosen not to put children with mental health issues in the children's hospital.

There are 10 beds at the Dubé Centre which serve the purpose of supporting children with mental health needs. But I can tell you that talking to child psychiatrists in Saskatoon, it's heartbreaking for them to have to tell their patients.

It's a bit of a gong show at the RUH [Royal University Hospital] right now on that site because of the building of the children's hospital. Parking is difficult. So I've been told by psychiatrists, you have a family come in, a youth's family come in, and they are telling . . . they're complaining about the parking. But then they say, but you know it's really great, we'll have this wonderful children's hospital. And the psychiatrist has to say, hey, you know what, your kids aren't going to be served at the new children's hospital, Mr. Speaker.

The whole point about a children's hospital is the opportunity to

provide integrated services and to have everybody benefit from that. So I think this government . . . This wasn't an oversight either, Mr. Speaker. This is a government . . . I raised it a few years ago. I know other people have raised it. Before the children's hospital started construction, this wasn't an oversight, this was a decision not to put children and youth with mental health issues in to the new children's hospital, Mr. Speaker, which I think is an absolute, absolute shame.

This is a government who, when it comes to waiting, if you happen to detox from a substance that you may be addicted to, the wait to get into actual treatment . . . So you detox and you are waiting about eight weeks. I believe the wait to get in for men in Saskatoon is eight weeks. So you tell me how that person gets from the point of detox to treatments without relapsing again, Mr. Speaker. So again, actions speak louder than words.

[11:45]

This is a government who is moving . . . The Paul Dojack Youth Centre, there was a six-bed facility in that youth centre — and I understand it was a decision by Justice — but those six beds are moving to the Regina General Hospital which is a positive thing. It was a health facility, it was a . . . But you know what? They were told in February that these kids have to be moved and there were no resources. Yes, when the new facility opens it'll be great but there was zero support. Those six beds, those kids have to be transferred to other facilities. There was zero support to help with the transfer, Mr. Speaker, in the time that there is the renovation taking place. So again I would argue that actions speak louder than words. And this government can say all it wants when it comes to supporting mental health, but they have not put their money where their mouth is, Mr. Speaker, and that is the fact.

I will be supporting my colleague's motion as I think that it is not difficult to support, recognizing that we have a crisis in youth suicides in the North, and we should be putting those supports in place.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a bit of an awkward motion to get involved with because the suggestions of the motion are indeed accurate and can be taken in a good context. I agree with the concept; however the motion fails in a way that it does not recognize the significant advancements that have been put in place by the Saskatchewan Party government. A test to this whole fact is the fact that we are serious about health issues in this province and the way they're managed, Mr. Speaker.

And when we look at the overall health budget, of how it's increased over the years, we've got over 900 more doctors practising in the province than we did in 2007, Mr. Speaker. There's over 3,000 nurses of every designation practising in the province since 2007. We have new hospitals and we're blessed with a new hospital in Moose Jaw as well as the new hospital that is being erected in North Battleford, and the children's hospital which is much needed in this province.

So our commitment to health is very important and we're very serious about looking after it. The fact is significant that more has to be done, but we are progressing and we are investing very strategically in a lot of the aspects of health. This government has invested substantially more in health care, in medical staff, in hospitals, in care homes, in special services including mental health counselling, and in treatments, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I made the comment some time ago to one of my constituents that there will never be enough money for health, and I believe that. Well he reiterated by saying, well there is, but it has to be managed well. You know, I guess there's a medium there somewhere that there always needs to be more money. There's always more that we can do, but it has to be managed well. And I think this budget serves the health needs as best we can and we're always looking for more to do, and better ways and setting priorities.

And we recognize the priorities that are required, and mental health, by this government, is a priority. We recognize mental health and addictions is an important issue, Mr. Speaker. Just in reading the material getting ready for this debate, I was impressed with the amount of initiative and the programs that have been put in place by our government, particularly in northern Saskatchewan.

Our Saskatchewan Party government is to be commended for the increase in the funding that they have done in professional assistance and support since taking over government in 2007. And that's not a boasting statement, Mr. Speaker. There are extreme demands and always more that is required. However, we have come a long way, even knowing that more has to be done.

The Saskatchewan Party government is taking significant steps toward improving services for mental health and addiction, and will continue to keep these services a high priority.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to mental health, there have been great gains. However there's still much more to learn and to understand. I understand a little bit more about depression because there is some in my family. I recall a mother phoning me, or talking to me, and telling me about her adult daughter who called home one day about 4:30 and said, mom, I can't get off the couch; I know my husband's going to be home shortly and the dinner dishes are still on the table, but I can't get off the couch. Now what do you say to somebody like that? Do you tell them to take another pill? That doesn't do any good if they can't get off the couch.

I know everyone in this room will find it hard to understand about depression. I know it. I was like that too. But depression is a cruel illness, and there's no logic explanation that can be made.

Depression seems to be more common in our society than it used to. Perhaps it's because, in years past, depression was not diagnosed as depression. But we know it has been a factor in humankind since probably the beginning.

You know, I think of Walter Scott. The first premier of the province suffered severe bouts of depression during his tenure

as premier, yet he achieved tremendous goals in planning and creating and building our province. Today we understand more about depression and realize more has to be done. There is still much more to do. And we don't recognize depression for all it is, but there still needs to be done. When you think of taking just another pill, if you can't get off the couch and take it, it really does you no good. So there's a lot to be done.

And mental health goes far beyond depression. It may involve addictions, trauma, family violence, loss of employment. These need to be supported, and our government is committed to increasing mental health supports across the province, including the North.

In the 2018 budget, our government is investing \$11.4 million in new, targeted mental health initiatives, targeted physician training programs, continued expanding suicide prevention efforts, enhancing community access to mental health and addiction services. We're hiring 40 more full-time employees for development of multidisciplinary community resource recovery teams in eight communities to provide support to individuals with complex and persistent mental health issues.

Mental health and addiction is not limited to the Ministry of Health. And the member opposite was talking about percentages, but there are other avenues, other ministries that are involved. The Ministry of Justice provides a free one-on-one counselling service for adults and youth that have experienced family violence. There's group counselling, therapy for children exposed to domestic violence.

The Minister of Corrections and Policing has mental health court operated in partnership with the Minister of Justice and Attorney General, crime reduction strategies targeted at high-risk offenders, and mental health services in youth custody for youth in Kilburn Hall.

The Minister of Social Services contributes to it in funding provided for one and a half mental health coordinators positioned in community-based organizations used to determine the level of support required for community living services delivered to clients with disability and mental health issues.

The Minister of Education is involved with mental health for anti-bullying initiatives and a K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] mental health resource for counsellors, psychologists, and social workers. Even the Minister of Agriculture has the Farm Stress Line, so there's a lot to be involved in from across government to assist in mental health.

Mr. Speaker, mental health is a serious issue. It is a health priority that our government takes seriously and crosses many of its ministries. To suggest that action be taken is a lack of understanding on the mover of this particular motion, Mr. Speaker. And while the motion raises an important issue, and one our government takes very seriously, I cannot support the motion put forward by the members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, our government has been consistent in our support for mental health and mental health issues, and will continue to do so. We've invested a large amount of money, increasing to do so as we move forward to look after the people that require the help they need in these kinds of situations. Mr. Speaker, I

won't be supporting the motion as presented opposite. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from The Battlefords.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each year since we had the honour of becoming government, record funding numbers have been invested into our health care systems. This has resulted in more and more caseworkers being available to support people from all over Saskatchewan. Since 2007, mental health funding has increased by 69 per cent while addictions funding is up by forty-eight and a half per cent. My question is for the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote. Since 2007, can you agree that adding 1,200 mental health care full-time employee positions, 360 addiction treatment beds, as well as 1,224 community residential beds throughout the province has been beneficial in supporting people right across our province?

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

Ms. Rancourt: — I don't think the member across was listening to my comments when I was talking about how there was cuts to education, cuts to social services, cuts to health, and there's been cuts to programs everywhere. Take a look at the wait times for those beds you talk about.

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

Mr. Vermette: — The rate of suicide in our province is six times higher for First Nation boys than non-First Nation boys and 26 times higher for First Nation girls than non-First Nation girls. My question is to the member from Regina Rochdale. How can you admit that there is not a suicide crisis in the North?

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

Ms. Ross: — Well thank you very much, but the statement of my colleague from across the floor is incorrect. I have never, ever stated that in fact there isn't a suicide crisis in the North. And so for him to make that statement I find quite offensive, to be honest.

And I have a personal commitment to the North, and it's not geographically, just because I live in the city of Regina. I have family that lives in the North. We spend time in the North. And so for them to kind of indicate that in fact I don't care as an elected representative when I was elected by the people of Regina, I was elected to represent the people of Saskatchewan also.

Mr. Speaker, each and every one of us who come here, come here to hope to do the best they can for the people of Saskatchewan, not just the people of Regina. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the former Keewatin Yatthé Health Region, since 2007 we've added twenty-one and a half full-time positions, an increase of 24 per cent. In the former Mamawetan Churchill River Health Region, we've added 32.8 full-time positions, an increase of 24 per cent. Although there is much more work to do, this government has committed funding mental health services in the North.

Mr. Speaker, this question is for the member from Cumberland. Why do your members attack this government for not supporting the North when support is substantially higher than it was under the NDP government?

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me be very clear. You can say all you want about patting yourselves on the back about there's more work to be done, and you can say that. But to the families in northern Saskatchewan that are burying and having to say farewell to their loved ones, it's unbelievable that your government hasn't done more. And your government needs to do more to help northern Saskatchewan. It is in a crisis and you need to respond that way.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — To the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood: your government loves to grandstand and pick fights with Ottawa but when it comes to stepping up and matching federal government mental health funding, Saskatchewan is coming up short. Why has your government failed to match the federal funding for mental health?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, and I thank the member opposite for the question. We have talked about this in question period and I know our Minister of Health has answered this question repeatedly, but I'd like to just point out, as I did in my speech, that we are spending 330 million within the Ministry of Health on mental health and addiction support. That's an increase of 52 per cent since 2007. And currently our health budget has dedicated 5 per cent to mental health services, but the Premier, the deputy premier, and the Minister of Health have all committed to increasing this to 7 per cent. We recognize that more needs to be done and we are committed to that. Thank you.

[12:00]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Since 2007 our government has been working hard to provide increased mental health services to the people in northern Saskatchewan. In this time we have increased mental health and addiction funding by 52 per cent and mental health FTEs [full-time equivalent] by 18 per cent. My question is for the member from Cumberland: what would you do to attract mental

health and addiction professionals to the northern communities in Saskatchewan? Thank you.

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me be very clear. Here's a good suggestion: La Ronge Indian Band — and this is more work for all members on that side; you can do a lobby for it — help La Ronge Indian Band with their wellness centre. They want to partner with the government. Do that, and that's how we'll help.

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

Mr. Vermette: — Leaders in the Lac La Ronge Indian Band have proposed a wellness centre to provide mental health and addictions services in the North. Does the member from Regina Rochdale agree with me? Does she think the province should support this wellness centre?

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank the members opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, we have made a financial commitment to the North in regards to mental health and suicides. You know, this is not just specific to one area, but in fact we do realize that mental health issues are rising across the whole province.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we formed government we made a commitment to look at mental health but also that we are not . . . that we as individuals or people we know who have issues with mental health, we don't let them suffer in silence, Mr. Speaker. We encourage them to speak up. So, Mr. Speaker, that's why we increased funding by 52 per cent. Mr. Speaker, when we formed government we made a commitment and we kept that commitment.

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

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government is dedicated to addressing the challenge of mental health and addictions in northern communities, as evidenced in our current budget in which the Ministry of Health is dedicating a record 330 million to mental health and addictions supports. We are working hard to better service and support the people in the North while also ensuring we are on track to balance a budget next year. My question is for the member from Prince Albert Northcote. If you were to increase spending on these services, would you cut programs or raise taxes to pay for it?

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

Ms. Rancourt: — I would like that member to go and tell the families that lost their loved ones that they are going to continue to lose more loved ones because they can't find the money to help with the suicide rates that are up in the North.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member from Moose Jaw North: does he think that it's fair that kids with mental health challenges are the only ones who won't be able to heal in the children's hospital? Won't this further stigmatize mental health?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, you know, I said and several of my colleagues on this side have said that the seriousness of mental health is taken very seriously on this side, and we have increased the amount of funding we've done for it. I do want to say that when I first got into the legislature in 2007, the member, the critic for Health on that side was the former Health minister and he started bashing us for not building a hospital in North Battleford. And that was his home constituency and he was the Health minister, and yet for years they did nothing.

And then when they have the opportunity to bash us on it, then that's what they do but they wouldn't do anything while they were there. And yet still this government took it upon themselves to build a new hospital in North Battleford to look after mental health issues for the province of Saskatchewan. I want to put that on the record. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government is making every effort to ensure that children in the province have access to mental health services. For the four months of 2017, for the last four months of 2017 across the province, 100 per cent of children and youth with very severe mental health problems were seen within 24 hours. Ninety-nine per cent of children and youth with severe problems were seen within five working days. One hundred per cent of children and youth with moderate problems were seen within 20 working days. Ninety-nine per cent of children and youth with mild problems were seen within 30 working days. We are also building a children's hospital. And yes, there is much more work to do.

Mr. Speaker, this question is to the member from Cumberland: instead of just criticizing the government . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 2 — Opposition's Fiscal Plan

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Nerlien.]

The Deputy Speaker: — Before I recognize the member who's

on his feet, it is my duty, pursuant to rule 27, to advise the Assembly that this item of business has been previously adjourned three times and cannot further be adjourned. At the conclusion of debate or at the normal time of adjournment, whichever is reached first, every question necessary to dispose of this motion shall be put.

I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. And just to remind everybody what the actual motion is, proposed by my good friend from Kelvington-Wadena, his motion is:

That this Assembly rejects the NDP plan to increase spending by over \$2.5 billion, as it would leave Saskatchewan with an extreme deficit and increase the debt of future generations.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as everybody knows, I can't speak near as eloquently as my friend from Kelvington-Wadena. And I'm actually kind of a very quiet-spoken person, and don't get going too hard, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, I can honestly say that the opposition, when they came up with this whole grand scheme of things in their plan, \$2.5 billion, they never costed it out, Mr. Speaker. They just went and they said, this is what we're going to do; this is what we're going to do; this is what we're going to do. And some of them actually, I have to say, were some pretty good ideas.

But with all good ideas there comes a cost, Mr. Speaker. So as usual, as usual the opposition left it up to us to do the hard work and figure out what the actual costing was — \$2.5 billion a year, Mr. Speaker. And I don't know how they plan on paying for it. They didn't come up with that part. Somewhere along the line you're going to have to pay for it.

Now maybe they want to increase the carbon tax. Maybe they want to go to \$200 a tonne. I don't know. Maybe they want to go along with their federal cousins and do something like that. You know, they've got all these ideas that they come up with that nobody can actually realize and there's no rationale to it. But we all know that some of them on the other side actually support the Leap Manifesto, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, the other way they could do it is they can raise taxes on the corporations. They can raise taxes on individuals. They can chase people out of the province, which they did for a number of years, Mr. Speaker. They chased out corporations. They chased out people, chased out our kids.

Anyways, Mr. Speaker, as I continue on here, there is one thing I want to bring up that's actually a little bit . . . It's not quite on this motion but it's close. And I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that the Leader of the Opposition actually was up in the great constituency of Carrot River here just a matter of a couple of weeks ago. He was at a Nipawin fundraiser. I don't know if there were more than 10 people there but anyway. But his main focus at the meeting was on physician shortage, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I honestly, I have to chuckle at that, how he could come up with something like that.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected in 2007, there was a grand total of four physicians in Nipawin. I was fielding three calls a

day for people looking for family physicians, and they didn't have them. Now, Mr. Speaker, through the work, the good, hard work of the government on this side of the House, there are 12 physicians in Nipawin, Mr. Speaker. What a difference, what a difference from when that government was in power.

You know, we have 900 more doctors in the province now. We have — what is it? — 3,700 more nurses in the province right now. And they have the audacity to come up there and sit there and say, well we want to do more for rural Saskatchewan. Well here's the other catch, Mr. Speaker. Even if they would have had more doctors, at the rate they were going of closing down hospitals, they wouldn't have had a hospital to put a doctor in, Mr. Speaker.

Now I want to go back to some of the things that they brought up, some of these fantastic ideas that they came up with to spend this \$2.5 million. What they wanted to do, since they're all a bunch of agriculture gurus over there, Mr. Speaker, they wanted the farmers to go organic. And this was a great idea. You know, they're going to pay farmers, pay farmers \$18 million — we costed it out — for farmers to go organic.

Mr. Speaker, I come from a farm background. I have farm land. I have farm land that hasn't been summerfallowed for 35 years. Direct-till farming was actually originated in northeastern Saskatchewan. The way we can improve our land, improve our crops is to our good farmers of Saskatchewan who keep on coming up with innovative things to do on their farms, by applying good crop care products to the fields, and increasing their yields so we're not letting people in the world go out and starve.

Mr. Speaker, here's maybe what their other plan is. And maybe they've got an ulterior motive to this. We all know, we all know that if you're going to go organic farming, the one way you can eradicate weeds is you have to go out and you have to go back to cultivation. And, Mr. Speaker, when you're going back and you're running your tractors back and forth across the fields all the time to do that, guess what? You're using a lot more fuel. You're going to have to go out there. You're going to have to summerfallow. You're using a lot more fuel. Good idea on them. What they're going to do then is when they put the carbon tax on there, guess what? The fuel prices for the farmers just went through the roof. And that maybe, maybe is what their whole scheme of things is, Mr. Speaker.

Another good one they came up . . . Speaking of farms, another one they came up was to repeal Bill 63 and let the school boards go out there and set the mill rates again. So the farmers can go back, the good farmers in our area, can go back to paying a disproportionate share of the education taxes. Mr. Speaker, when they talk about rural Saskatchewan, they are so out of touch with rural Saskatchewan it's actually pathetic.

To just think, Mr. Speaker, we also have a forestry industry within northern Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Speaker, here comes the carbon tax on the forest end of it. They want us to . . . Because obviously in the forest industry we use lots of fuel. There's lots of energy being used. Well, Mr. Speaker, let's put a carbon tax on forestry. Maybe that's one of the ways they're going to come up again with their \$2.5 billion.

Mr. Speaker, our forest industry is very efficient and very good at what they do. They want to cut down on the use of energy as much as what they can, because obviously it affects their bottom line. It's the same as farmers. But, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to be providing, providing the NDP with that kind of money. Of course it goes back to their corporate taxes. If the forestry company makes money, oh well, they want to raise the tax sum.

We remember a few years ago when the NDP was back in power, how many of the lumber mills shut down within this province. Mr. Speaker, the lumber mills are doing quite well now under this government. And it wasn't just the government that made things all help on that. You know, the price of lumber was really down at that time too. But I can still remember when, on the eve of the 2000 election, 2007 election, when the NDP government went out and tried to give \$100 million to Domtar to try and keep the plant going in Prince Albert, of the people's money.

[12:15]

Also going back and looking through the various different things that they had within their ideas on where their \$2.5 billion was going to be spent, I had to take a look at Parks, Culture and Sport: \$16,880,000 on arts, on arts alone, Mr. Speaker. Like I mean, I have to admit, you know, we could use some arts, but \$16,880,000 just on art alone. Just on the arts. Mr. Speaker, this is hard to believe. I don't know how they could even come up with things like that. You know, they had nothing for parks. They had nothing for sport. This was under Parks, Culture and Sport. Nothing for parks. Of course, we all have our regional parks out there in rural Saskatchewan. They had nothing for them. Of course, they starved them back when they were in government.

But, Mr. Speaker, they also had some other really good things coming along here. They want to commission to study on producing generic drugs under a new Crown, SaskPharm. Well this is a great one, Mr. Speaker. The NDP was never really known to be all that good at running a business, and they want us to set up a drug company here where we can actually go out and manufacture drugs within the province and, I guess, hand them out.

An Hon. Member: — Only government can do it.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Only government, you're right. Only government can do something like this, Mr. Speaker.

I would like to remind him back, well in the forerunners, back in the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] days, remember they tried to run a shoe factory and they tried to run a box factory. It didn't really work out all that well for them. They tried to run the fish factory. That didn't work out all that well for them either.

Well then they decided to change the CCF over to the NDP because CCF wasn't working quite that well. So they continued on with their great ways. They, you know, they tried to get into bingo, Mr. Speaker, where they lost \$8 million. I don't know why the government wanted to get into bingo, but they did. And they decided to get into pig barns, where they lost \$26 million,

Mr. Speaker. I don't know why they wanted to do that. And of course we had the great NDP potato factory called SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] that managed to lose something like \$35 million.

So the whole thing goes back. Now they want to go in and start SaskPharm, a company that's going to go out there and produce generic drugs. Mr. Speaker, when you go through this whole listing, actually if I was them, I would be embarrassed.

But, Mr. Speaker, there's another one that they put back in there. They want to go back and restart the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] now, Mr. Speaker, even though the STC didn't make a dime since 1978. And the NDP diehards always say Tommy started it, not to make money but to provide a service. And it did make money until 1978, which leads to the question, Mr. Speaker, why wasn't the service given a cost?

But that's the past and this is now, Mr. Speaker. The new Leader of the Opposition estimated it would cost \$10 million to restart STC. But, Mr. Speaker, I think that they didn't really cost that out that well again. Mr. Speaker, we went back and started looking at what the cost would be on this, and the cost would be at least \$50 million. Then, since the fact that it was losing money every year, it would lose \$85 million over the next five years. Where is the money going to come from, Mr. Speaker? Mr. Speaker, they come up with all these different ideas.

Another one they've got, the other one they've got is the Opposition Leader wants to see a living wage, Mr. Speaker. This is really great that they want to see a living wage and everybody get paid for not working. Well, Mr. Speaker, let's face it. Humans are human. You start paying them a wage for not working, guess what they're not going to do? They're not going to work. And eventually the people who are working hard and who are paying the taxes — which would be exorbitant under the NDP because they never believed in lowering income taxes at all — when it got down to that point, Mr. Speaker, you'd have a whole bunch of people that just weren't working because they wanted the government to pay for it.

Now with all these various things that the NDP opposition wanted to do, I don't know where they're going to come up with that money to pay for it. Maybe that carbon tax is going to go to \$400 a tonne, you know. That way we can pay for people who aren't working. You know, Finland just had a great experiment with this living wage. They tried it for two years and then they said, hey this isn't working because, well, the people aren't working. Go figure.

Anyway, going back to what it actually would cost — now this is for Canada, mind you; this isn't for just Saskatchewan, this is for Canada — it would cost approximately \$15 billion a year out of the government coffers to help pay for this. Well where is this money going to come from? You've already chased the corporations out because you increased the taxes on them. You already chased out the people who were higher wage earners: the professionals, the entrepreneurs. You've chased them out. Somewhere along the line, you're going to have to find a way to get that money. Well maybe raise that carbon tax up to \$600 a tonne instead.

Then, Mr. Speaker, you know, they wanted to see a minimum of a \$15 wage. Now here's the catch. Most of the gurus on that side of the House never actually figured out or have never, ever written out a T4 for anybody. All they've ever done is received them. You have to realize that, as an entrepreneur, we have to . . . It's not just a matter of that \$15 an hour. You have to remember that in that, you have to have your unemployment insurance taken off, Mr. Speaker. You have to have your workmen's compensation taken off. You have to have your Canada Pension taken off. And I know that those people on the opposition over on that side of the House, they've never ever figured that one out.

So what it does then, it just makes it so the employers, if there's any left after what they want to do, the employers would have to pay out way more than \$15 an hour in this money, of course.

You know and we know that the NDP, especially their federal cousins and their cousins out in BC [British Columbia], don't want any pipelines either. So consequently some of the resources that we have, we can't ship. Then some of the other resources that we have, called potash and grain, has to go out by rail pulled behind an engine that is using diesel fuel. So there we go. There goes that carbon tax again. That carbon tax just keeps on coming back all the time. Okay, let's raise it up to \$800 a tonne.

Mr. Speaker, I have to say that there's got to be some members on that side really, really have to question what their leader is coming forward. There's got to be some common sense in amongst the members on the other side. And they've got to sit back and they've got to take a look at all of these promises that they made, Mr. Speaker. And how they're going to do it, I have no idea because all of their plan, their whole plan, is to raise taxes, raise taxes, raise taxes. And sooner or later, Mr. Speaker, that comes to an end. And you know what? When that comes to an end, this province may as well shut down because it pretty well did when that party was in power for 16 years. Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — Sixteen long years.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Very long years. Mr. Speaker, our budget is on track. Our budget is based on reality. There are some things we want to do, we wish we could do, and we unfortunately can't at the present time. But we are on track to get back into balance without throwing a great big carbon tax on all the people of Saskatchewan, and keeping our corporations in Saskatchewan and our people in Saskatchewan alive, healthy, and prosperous. With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm sitting down.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The item before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member from Kelvington-Wadena:

That this Assembly rejects the NDP's plan to increase spending by over \$2.5 billion, as it would leave Saskatchewan with an extreme deficit and increase the debt of future generations.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Speaker: — Those in favour of the motion please say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Deputy Speaker: — Those opposed please say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Deputy Speaker: — I believe the ayes have it. Guess we're calling in the members.

[The division bells rang from 12:27 until 12:29.]

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is:

That this Assembly rejects the NDP's plan to increase spending by over \$2.5 billion, as it would leave Saskatchewan with an extreme deficit and increase the debt of future generations.

All those in favour of the motion, please rise.

[Yeas — 45]

Moe	Beaudry-Mellor	Merriman
Stewart	Reiter	Wyant
Morgan	Harpauer	Duncan
Marit	Hargrave	D'Autremont
Cox	Heppner	Makowsky
Tell	Eyre	Brkich
Harrison	Ottenbreit	Cheveldayoff
Weekes	Kirsch	Bradshaw
Fiaz	Ross	Carr
Lawrence	Young	Wilson
McMorris	Michelson	Bonk
Doke	Steinley	Hindley
Buckingham	Lambert	Dennis
Nerlien	Steele	Tochor
Goudy	Olauson	Francis

The Deputy Speaker: — All those opposed to the motion please rise.

[Nays — 2]

Sproule McCall

Clerk: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, those in favour of the motion, 45; those opposed, 2.

The Deputy Speaker: — The motion is carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:32.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Fiaz	4259
Meili	4259
Brkich	4259
Dennis	4259
Michelson	4259
Steinley	4267

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Vermette	4259
Francis	4259
Wotherspoon	4260
Beck	4260
Sproule	4260

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Nurses Make a Difference	
Dennis	4260
Non-Profit Focuses on Mental Health in the Ag Industry	
Beck	4261
Mental Health and Addiction Services Fun Run	
Wyant	4261
Raising Awareness About Ovarian Cancer	
Chartier	4261
Student Business Club Wins Award	
Hindley	4261
Students Excel in Space Projects	
Olauson	4262
Celebrating Mother's Day	
Wilson	4262

QUESTION PERIOD

Funding for Education Capital Costs	
Meili	4262
Wyant	4262
Funding for Teacher Salaries	
Meili	4263
Wyant	4263
Moe	4263
Provincial Sales Tax on Used Vehicles	
Beck	4263
Harpauer	4264
Funding for Wildfire Management	
Rancourt	4264
Duncan	4264
Vermette	4264
Global Transportation Hub and Freedom of Information Law	
Sarauer	4265
Morgan	4265
Support for Post-Secondary Institutions	
Wotherspoon	4265
Beaudry-Mellor	4266
Crown Land Incentive	
Beck	4266
Stewart	4266
Provincial Budget and Government's Fiscal Management	
Beck	4267
Moe	4267

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Supports for Mental Health and Addictions	
Vermette	4267, 4277
Ross	4270, 4277
Rancourt	4271, 4277
Lambert	4272, 4277

Chartier	4274, 4278
Michelson.....	4275, 4278
Cox	4277
Bonk.....	4277
Wilson	4277
Young.....	4278
Lawrence	4278
PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS	
ADJOURNED DEBATES	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS	
Motion No. 2 — Opposition's Fiscal Plan	
Bradshaw	4279
Recorded Division.....	4281

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe

Premier

President of the Executive Council

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor

Minister of Advanced Education

Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Central Services

Minister Responsible for the Provincial

Capital Commission

Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan

Minister of Environment

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water

Security Agency

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Power Corporation

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre

Minister of Energy and Resources

Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Water Corporation

Hon. Joe Hargrave

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Government Insurance

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

Transportation Company

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Minister of Finance

Hon. Jeremy Harrison

Minister of Trade and Export Development

Minister of Immigration and Career Training

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Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis
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Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds and

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan

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Minister of Education