



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

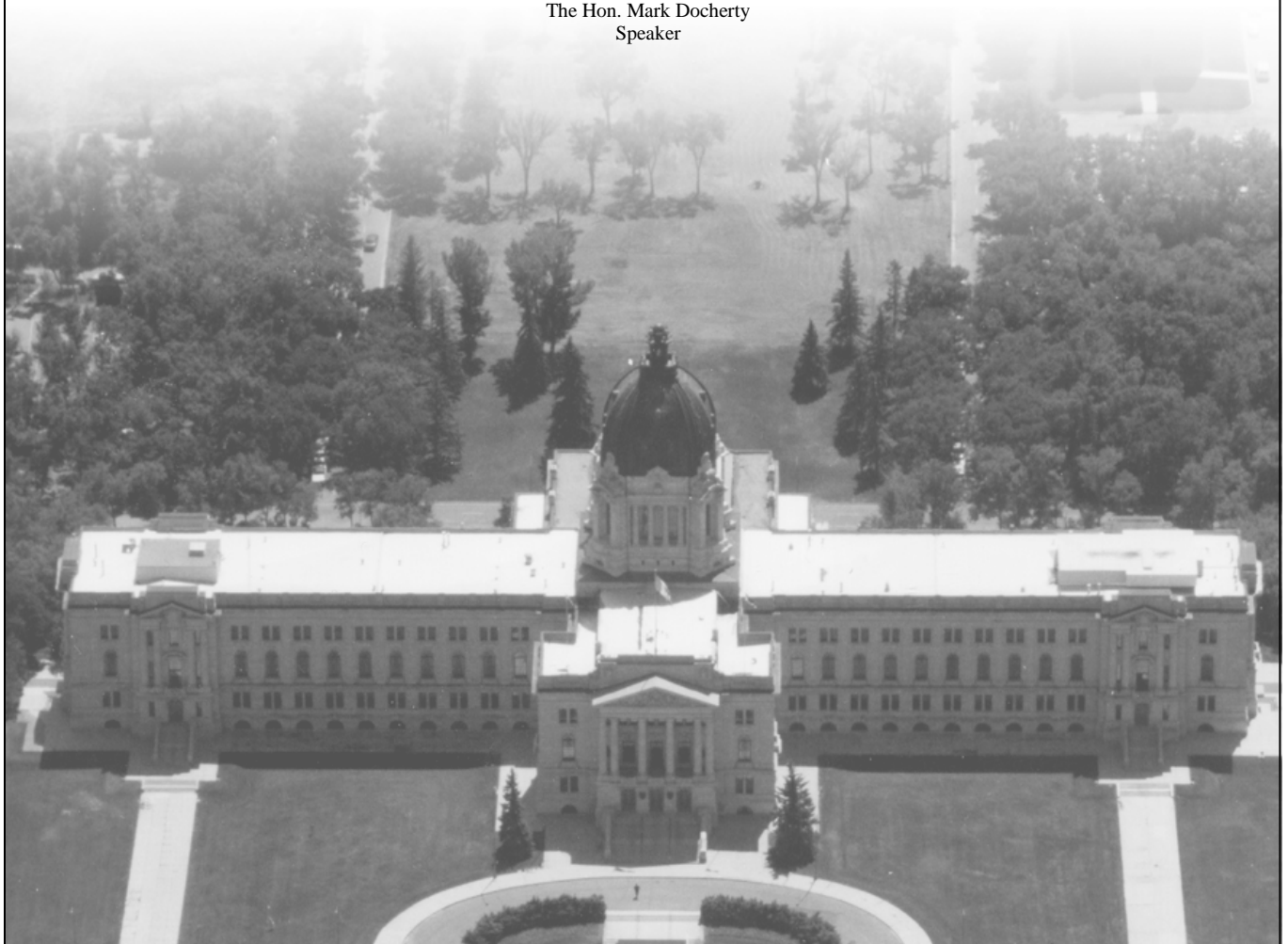
of the

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
3rd Session — 28th Legislature

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Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Wilson, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)
Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I want to introduce a couple of people that are very special to me, Mr. Speaker. And just prior to doing that, I had the opportunity . . . I know many on this side and the other side of the House had the opportunity to host people from across the province that are special to them personally but also I think special to them as they represent them in the Speech from the Throne that was delivered yesterday. I had the opportunity to have a school group here from Rosthern, which is a fair drive, Mr. Speaker, and I was pleased to host them here in the legislature during the day.

But today, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce for the first time that I have had the opportunity to do this in this legislature, most certainly as Premier but the first time even as an elected member, introduce Don and June Moe, Mr. Speaker, my parents.

My father has been involved in a number of different businesses over his career, Mr. Speaker, in the Parkside-Shellbrook area, including operating a farm in that area. My mother has dedicated her lifelong ambition to teaching our next generation as an elementary grade school teacher in the communities of Leask and then later in Shellbrook. She's attempted retirement but continues to substitute teach in the rural community of Wild Rose as well as Shellbrook and Canwood. And she has a habit of calling the Premier unannounced and unplanned from time to time to speak to the kids on the speakerphone, which we greatly enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to mention that, for the second time both of them are attempting retirement, and I just want to wish them all the best as they leave for about a month here in the next couple of weeks. And all the best in their years together.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join with the Premier and welcome the Moes to the House today. Wonderful to see you here. Of course all of us draw so much on the strength of our parents and our families to do the work that we do today, and thank you for everything you've done to raise that fine boy over there. We'll have some disagreements, but we can tell he had some good upbringing there.

Also take a quick moment to introduce a couple of folks in the gallery opposite. Mr. Speaker, we have Lorne Hill and Bill Lawson here visiting from Moose Jaw, strong members of their communities, activists in their communities, and leaders. Great to have them join us today. Thanks so much. And please join with me in welcoming 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 through the members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to, in the west side, introduce my new CA [constituency assistant] — first time in this building — Gladys Zavislak. She started October 1st. She had one day of retirement at Crop Insurance and then she jumped at the chance to work with me. So she's a good family friend, and her husband and her family farm just north of Canora. She's married to Terry Zavislak and now she gets to work with two Terrys. Anyways I'd like to welcome her to her Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce 36 students from the Indian Head High School, from the beautiful, absolutely beautiful community of Indian Head. They're seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. They're accompanied by Mrs. Laura Russell and Mrs. Sandra Klatt. I'll be lucky enough to get a picture with them on the rotunda stairs, the staircase in the rotunda later on, as well as perhaps a visit where we can try and answer the questions that they'll probably garner after question period. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I'd like to inform the Assembly that Stacey Ursulescu, one of our Procedural Clerks, is participating in a professional development program with the table officers and will be periodically at the Table throughout the session. So please join me in welcoming Stacey to the Chamber.

And while I'm on my feet, I'd also like to introduce members of Stacey's family that are in the Speaker's gallery: Shawn MacLennan, husband; Rhonda Mills, mom; Ed Ursulescu, dad; Chris and Lorne MacLennan, in-laws; and Jim and Dot Strass, Shawn's aunt and uncle. It is Aunt Dot's first visit to the legislature. Not in the gallery but watching at home are Grandma Dorothy Mills and Omie Rose Walter. Please join me in welcoming all these guests to the Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Biggar-Sask Valley.

Mr. Weekes: — 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 that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Biggar and Pinehouse. 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, people, businesses from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party foisting the PST [provincial sales tax] on construction projects across our province, the epitome of a job-killing tax, Mr. Speaker, something that's hurting our economy and that's impacting needed investment and jobs across Saskatchewan.

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 stop saddling families and businesses with the costs of their mismanagement and immediately reinstate the PST exemption on construction and stop hurting Saskatchewan businesses and families.

Petitions have been signed by people from all across Saskatchewan. The petition I'm presenting today has signatures from here 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 government to reinstate the PST exemption on children's clothes. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to some of the following points: that the Sask Party government has already hiked the PST to 6 per cent and applied it to everything from restaurant meals to children's clothes to insurance premiums; that this government removed the PST exemption for children's clothes and their decision is drastically impacting Saskatchewan families and businesses; and that Saskatchewan families have been burdened by a decade of Sask Party utility rate hikes and tax increases and can't afford another Sask Party tax.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to stop saddling families and businesses with the costs of their mismanagement and immediately reinstate the PST exemption on children's clothes and stop hurting Saskatchewan businesses and families.

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the undersigned residents of Saskatchewan want to bring to your attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals, even those living outside Saskatchewan, to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties. And you know, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics and that, over the past 10 years, the

Saskatchewan Party has received \$12.61 million in corporate donations and of that, \$2.87 million came from companies outside Saskatchewan.

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

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

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

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

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

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

For many of them, the violence will follow them to their workplace, which is why the signatories to this petition are calling for five days of paid leave and up to 17 weeks of unpaid leave be made available to workers who are survivors of domestic violence, and that critical workplace supports made available to survivors of domestic violence be also made available to workers living with PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] as a result of domestic violence.

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

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

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Burgers to Beat MS

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On August 16th the MS Society of Canada held its annual Burgers to Beat MS day at all A&W locations, with \$2 from every Teen Burger sold going

to the MS Society. Now in its 10th year, Burgers to Beat MS is the largest annual corporate fundraiser for the MS Society of Canada, and together they have raised more than \$13 million.

This campaign began in Saskatchewan, and because of the support shown by the people of our province, it now takes place across the country, this year raising \$1.9 million, the largest total to date. As many know, Canada has one of the highest rates of MS [multiple sclerosis] in the world, and it impacts every community in Saskatchewan. MS is the most common neurological disease affecting young adults and women, and women are three times more likely to be diagnosed with MS than men. On average, 11 Canadians are diagnosed with MS every day. Currently there is no cure.

Funds raised at Burgers to Beat MS helps the MS Society of Canada to fund world-class MS research here in the province and elsewhere, programs and services and advocacy efforts that aim to improve the quality of life for Canadians living with and affected by the disease.

I had the pleasure of attending the Burgers to Beat MS event in Saskatoon. And I know many of my fellow members bought a Teen Burger and supported this great event in their own communities.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members in joining me to acknowledge the continued work the MS Society does to find a cure for this disease and to support those living with MS. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lumsden-Morse.

Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm pleased to announce that once again October is Agriculture Month in Saskatchewan.

[10:15]

This year the theme is Our Food Has a Story, which is a returning theme from last year. The ministry has teamed up with three organizations: Farm and Food Care Saskatchewan, Agriculture Food Care Saskatchewan, and Ag More Than Ever.

During Agriculture Month, we aim to tell the stories of why we produce food, how it is produced from farm to table, and the dedicated people it takes along the way to deliver healthy, affordable, safe, and sustainable products. Mr. Speaker, everyone is encouraged to share their stories of farming and the production of our food.

Mr. Speaker, our province has a strong and proud agricultural identity. In Saskatchewan 98 per cent of farms are family owned and operated. Additionally, farming accounts for over 50,000 jobs within our province, which contributes immensely to Saskatchewan's strong economy.

Mr. Speaker, the province that is often teased for being flat and barren has provided a landscape for crops like wheat, mustard, canola, lentils, barley, and others to flourish, which makes Saskatchewan the literal breadbasket of Canada. I ask all

members to please join me in acknowledging Agriculture Month in our province and encourage everyone to share their stories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Access to Justice Week

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, this week is the third annual Saskatchewan Access to Justice Week. The week provides opportunities to engage new and diverse voices in the access to justice conversation and highlights initiatives that aim to improve access to justice for Saskatchewan.

I'd like to take this opportunity that this week provides to engage the Minister of Justice in this access-to-justice conversation, given the fact this government has spent the last three years cutting access to justice programs and supports across the province.

First more than half a million dollars was cut from the Aboriginal court worker program, a program that helped more than 12,000 people navigate the justice system each year. Then they cut the Aboriginal police consultation group and severely reduced funding to alternative measures programming. This government closed four circuit courts in Watrous, Carnduff, Southey, and Big River, and Queen's Bench in Weyburn. And despite calls to better fund CLASSIC [Community Legal Assistance Services for Saskatoon Inner City Inc.], an organization offering legal services to marginalized community members with barriers to accessing justice in Saskatoon, this government has flatlined funding for years.

While our neighbours to the west have recently injected \$70 million into their legal aid system, this government's approach has led to layoffs, unfilled positions, and widespread concern in the legal community. And while the minister may have suggested his government boosted funding to Legal Aid in the media last week, he knows and we know the extra million injected last year were actually federal dollars.

I call on members to congratulate the University of Saskatchewan College of Law for a successful week of events to recognize Access to Justice Week, recognize the hard work of many in this province who continue to fight for access to justice despite the cuts from this government, and call on this government to commit to expanding access to justice — not this week, not just this week, but every week of the year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. October marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Since 1990 the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency's breast cancer screening program has provided mammograms for women over the age of 50 to increase their chances of early detection. In 2016 there were approximately 720 new cases of breast cancer diagnosed in our province. Fortunately, Mr. Speaker, three out of four of those cancers diagnosed through the screening program are done so at the early

stages, which improves the prospects for some successful treatment.

Mr. Speaker, understanding how breast cancer develops and why it spreads is the key focus of research teams with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and also with the U of S's [University of Saskatchewan] College of Medicine. Mr. Speaker, the Cancer Agency's Dr. Franco Vizeacoumar is a research scientist making inroads into cancer research, and three of his research teams have received grants totalling \$1.7 million from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Mr. Speaker, the research taking place in Saskatchewan is improving care and treatment options, not just here in Saskatchewan but across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the people who are affected by breast cancer, either indirectly through a co-worker or a friend, or perhaps a little bit closer to home — a mother, a sister, a wife. It's a terrible disease, Mr. Speaker. It turns your life upside down. Finally, Mr. Speaker, I also want to recognize the important work that the health care providers do at the community oncology programs: the Saskatoon Cancer Centre and the Allan Blair Cancer Centre here in Regina. The nurses, the surgeons, the oncologists, the administrators, and the officers, they all do absolutely amazing work helping to turn victims into survivors, Mr. Speaker. Can't possibly thank them enough. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Violence Prevention Week

Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this week is Violence Prevention Week in Saskatchewan, and it creates an opportunity for all of us to focus on what we can do to reduce the harm and fear caused through violence in our society.

Our government is working with our partners to reduce violence and its damaging effects in the lives of Saskatchewan people. This year we developed a number of new tools to help those encountering violence and for those working to support its victims. Mr. Speaker, we also announced the expansion of the Status of Women office to oversee the implementation of the recommendations from the domestic violence death review and the development of a broader plan to address interpersonal violence and abuse.

Mr. Speaker, in this fiscal year approximately \$19.5 million will be provided to community-based organizations across Saskatchewan to deliver violence and support services and prevention programming. And I know my community is one of the communities that benefits from that support.

We must constantly strive to prevent violence and respond to it, effectively making this province a safer and better place for all, especially the most vulnerable among us. It's the duty not just of the government but of everyone in this province to do what we can to prevent violence, with the harm and fear that it brings into the lives of others.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all the members join me in recognizing Violence Prevention Week in support of victims, survivors, and all those who work to support them. Thank you.

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

Community Mobilizes for Amber Alert

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On September 16th the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] issued an Amber Alert in The Battlefords after a little six-year-old girl went missing in an SUV [sport-utility vehicle] that was stolen. Needless to say, her parents were frantic to find her. What ensued was one of the longest and most intense searches one could imagine.

The incident occurred around supertime and the whole community of The Battlefords responded. Mr. Speaker, our local RCMP detachment did an excellent job of mobilizing every resource available to focus on this search. Their response to this situation was truly amazing. At the same time, hundreds of volunteers scoured streets, back alleys, parks, industrial businesses, country roads, and ditches. As well, residents of surrounding communities and First Nations responded by travelling back roads. Along with hundreds of others, Linda and I spent several hours searching abandoned farmyards and little-used farm access roads. We literally met a vehicle every several hundred yards with a spotlight, hoping to locate little Emma.

Mr. Speaker, it was a cold and snowy night but the search, which was coordinated from Battleford Central School, continued despite the weather, long into the night. I would like to offer special thanks to the school's principal, Monique Sommerfeld, and her staff for doing such a great job of keeping the search organized. I was in search central until midnight, and there were still volunteers arriving to offer whatever help they could.

Fortunately this incident ended well with little Emma being found, cold but well, in the abandoned vehicle at about 7 o'clock the next morning. Mr. Speaker, I would now ask that all of my colleagues please join me in commending and thanking the hundreds of volunteers, as well as the RCMP and local police who showed up to search for little Emma. It just shows what a great community we have in The Battlefords. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Girls Self-Esteem Workshop

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On October the 21st, the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Regina Wascana Plains and myself had the privilege of hosting the Girls Self-Esteem Workshop again this year at the RCMP Heritage Centre. This was our 10th annual workshop intended to promote self-esteem and convey anti-bullying messages to girls ages 9 to 13. Mr. Speaker, we were pleased to welcome back Brie Ellard-Jedlic and Kaylan Berg to speak to the young women about the importance of strong self-esteem.

We believe that positive experiences can empower girls with confidence, strength, friendship, and leadership skills, and they can carry those throughout their life. Mr. Speaker, what a wonderful, powerful message to spread to these young women and their mentors.

Along with the topic of self-esteem, the workshop also delivered

an anti-bullying message to the girls. Mr. Speaker, it is estimated that 65 per cent of youth in Saskatchewan experience at least one type of bullying. Now bullying of any kind is unacceptable and needs to be continually discussed in order to make positive changes.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and acknowledge the sponsors of this event: Girls in the Game, Western Litho Printers, Brie Ellard-Jedlic, Tim Hortons, and Deloitte. I would also like to thank all of the wonderful young women and their mentors who attended our event. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I'd also like to take an opportunity to welcome the school from Indian Head. I'm hoping that you're going to enjoy the rest of these proceedings, and there's going to be nothing but decorum so it's going to be awesome. With that, question period.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Effects of Taxes on Provincial Economy

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in yesterday's Throne Speech we heard very little about the economy and, in particular, almost nothing about the last two years — two years in which job numbers have fallen, two years in which Saskatchewan people are struggling to pay their mortgages, two years in which people are finding it harder to afford the basics. Does the Premier recognize that Saskatchewan people are struggling and that we're facing serious economic problems?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, at the outset I just want to take a moment to welcome all of the members of this Legislative Assembly back representing their constituents from across the province, and congratulate the member from Regina Northeast on his recent successful bid in representing the people from that area.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to some good debate over the next number of weeks in this House on the 11 years of investment that this government has had across the province on behalf of the people that we represent in this province, Mr. Speaker, as well as debate on more current issues — many of which were addressed in the Speech from the Throne yesterday, Mr. Speaker, including the continued investment like the Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford, Mr. Speaker, continued conversation around keeping our communities safer, and supporting our families across the province.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to recent headwinds in our economy here, it has always been this government that has been focused on the economy and the expansion of that economy because of what it can do, Mr. Speaker, with regards to investment back into our communities, into the services that people expect their provincial government to provide.

So in the spirit, Mr. Speaker, of working together to enhance the opportunities of Saskatchewan industries and Saskatchewan jobs

and Saskatchewan people and the next generation of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all of this legislature come together with the united message to our Prime Minister and to the federal government to accept the plan, this made-in-Saskatchewan plan of Prairie Resilience, and to reject the Trudeau carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, on families, schools, hospitals, Mr. Speaker, and communities across the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Premier likes to point his fingers elsewhere. He likes to blame his troubles on what happened years ago with another government or what hasn't happened yet. But he fails to acknowledge that it's decisions made by this Premier, this government, that have hurt our economy. Our economy has slowed considerably. People are hurting, and this government is choosing to make things worse. And they won't even admit that they have a problem.

This is a government that saw the economy slowing down, and what did they do? They said, let's slam on the brakes. Let's slam on the brakes by adding the PST to construction labour.

And this week's numbers on investment and housing shows just how damaging this decision has been for our economy. Compared to last year, new housing investment declined by 33 per cent. Job numbers have fallen. People are walking away from their mortgages. Will this Premier admit that this economy is in trouble? Will this Premier commit to removing the PST from construction labour?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is quite different. This province, Mr. Speaker, continues to have the second-best job creation record in the nation of Canada, relative to the members opposite when they had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, had the worst job creation record in the nation of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

I took with great note, Mr. Speaker, that the Leader of the Opposition and the members opposite have labelled themselves a government-in-waiting, Mr. Speaker. Well when they were the government, Mr. Speaker, it was the people of the province of Saskatchewan that were waiting, Mr. Speaker. They were waiting for the government to fix the potholes and the highways leading to their community. They were waiting, Mr. Speaker, for the government to invest in their hospitals and to quit shutting them down. Mr. Speaker, they were waiting for investment in schools in their communities and teachers and all of the people, Mr. Speaker, in those facilities that provide the services that the people of this province expect their provincial government to provide, Mr. Speaker.

And thankfully today, Mr. Speaker, if we continue to engage with the people across this province, the people in Saskatchewan will be waiting a long time before those members are on this side of the aisle.

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

[10:30]

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, you know, it's often said that the first step to fixing a problem is admitting you have one in the first place. And the people of Saskatchewan are waiting for this Premier to take responsibility for his own actions. There are levers that you can use, that this Premier can use to help people today. However his government has chosen to use those levers to make things worse.

And it's not like it's come as a surprise. In December of 2016 the Saskatchewan Construction Association, the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, and 19 other groups wrote to the Premier and warned that adding the PST to construction would, and I quote, "immediately reduce the number of construction jobs." And to quote again: "Given the current economic conditions, now is simply not the time to risk jobs or growth."

Job creators in our province warned about the consequences of this choice, but this government chose not to listen. What have we seen as a result? Housing investment plummeted by 33 per cent — 1,400 fewer jobs than a year ago in construction trades. It's too late. It's too late for the Premier to avoid the damage that this PST on construction has already done in the last year and a half. But it's not too late for him to correct course. Will the Premier do that today? Will he commit to removing the PST from construction labour?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As members well know and as the public of this province well know, the focus of this government has been on the economy for the past decade, Mr. Speaker, and it's shown results: 63,000 jobs created, Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last decade, the second-best rate of job creation in the entire country.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would point out in the preamble to one of the previous questions from the Leader of the Opposition, he was completely wrong. He said that jobs are going down, Mr. Speaker. In fact, over the course of the last year, there were 2,800 full-time jobs created in this province, Mr. Speaker, not a decline, an increase of 2,800 jobs.

The hypocrisy of members opposite is astonishing. They had the worst rate of job creation in the entire country, Mr. Speaker, when they were in government. They raised taxes literally dozens of times during their time in government, Mr. Speaker. Their only economic policies that they have put forward that we have heard is to support the Trudeau carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, to raise royalties on energy companies, Mr. Speaker, and to raise corporate taxes on all companies in the province. That's all they've got, Mr. Speaker.

We'll stand with the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, on the economy and defend our record every day of the week.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the folks across the way like to say they're standing up for Saskatchewan, but the Premier keeps his seat when he's asked a difficult question about his responsibility and his failure to do his job. Mr. Speaker, this is the government that chose to impose 6 per cent PST on construction labour. They saw a slowing economy and they acted to slow it down further.

Instead of making the smart investments we need now to get our province moving forward, this government has chosen to go down a very different path, a path that has cut more than \$70 million from our schools in the last two years at the same time as teachers grapple with growing classes and fewer supports. A path that has led to worse outcomes for patients who can't get the care they need. A path that has seen millions of dollars wasted on the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] and eroded the public's trust. Saskatchewan people deserve so much better.

Yesterday's Speech from the Throne included nothing to address these very real concerns, concerns I've heard from people in every corner of this province. Saskatchewan people need the Premier to focus on what he can do right here, right now, to improve our lagging economy. Rather than pointing fingers elsewhere, what concrete actions will this Premier take to improve the economy and get people back to work now, and will that include the removal of PST from construction labour?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite asked about specific measures. Mr. Speaker, I can point to the ag value-added incentive for instance, Mr. Speaker, to encourage investment into the agricultural value-added sector — something they opposed, Mr. Speaker. I can point to the patent box initiative that was undertaken by this government to incent investment into new technology and new developments, Mr. Speaker — something again opposed by members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

The members opposite talk about diversification of the economy, something that we take very seriously. Mr. Speaker, the best way you can diversify your economy is open new markets to exports. We've worked very hard on opening up new markets to our exports, and the best way to do that, Mr. Speaker, is through trade agreements. We have worked hard on the Trans-Pacific Partnership, on the Canada-Europe trade agreement, Mr. Speaker, on the Canada free trade agreement for internal trade barriers. We're going to be doing more on that, Mr. Speaker.

Something opposed . . . Every single one of them, internal and external trade agreements that this province and this country have signed, opposed by members opposite, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite has a chance right now. What is your position on the Trans-Pacific Partnership? Your federal MPs [Member of Parliament] just voted against it, Mr. Speaker. Are you in favour? Yes or no?

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, it's fair to say that the education sector had high hopes for this Premier and that Education minister. After all, the Premier ran his leadership campaign on a promise to make education a top priority. But now we're nine months in, and children in this province are still getting less support than they were when the last guy was sitting in the Premier's chair. Mr. Speaker, that doesn't sound like a renewed approach.

Yesterday's Throne Speech had not one new idea for classrooms, and that doesn't sound like a government that understands or prioritizes education. When will the Premier recognize he's broken his promise to teachers, parents, and kids all across this province? When will he finally get it right, and at least fully restore the \$54 million cut from education?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to stand in the House today to talk about this government's commitment to public education, Mr. Speaker. And as the members know, in the last budget, Mr. Speaker, we added \$30 million into the operating budget, Mr. Speaker. But here's the facts, Mr. Speaker. There's been a 32 per cent increase in education operating grants, Mr. Speaker, over the last 10 years, over a 12 per cent increase in students, Mr. Speaker. There's been significant investments made into the education sector over the last 10 years while we've been in government, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to do that.

And if she wants to talk about commitment to public education, Mr. Speaker, I've been out talking to teachers. My colleagues have been out talking to teachers and our partners in education, Mr. Speaker, to start to understand I think a little bit more what the challenges are in our classrooms. Mr. Speaker, and that's paying off. And so, Mr. Speaker, a lot of the information that we've had, Mr. Speaker, has been devolved down to my ministry. There's been an education summit, Mr. Speaker, which has been aimed directly, aimed directly at increasing performance in the classroom and supporting teachers, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite is truly interested in supporting teachers in the classroom, Mr. Speaker, she should talk about the carbon tax. Because that's going to cost school divisions, Mr. Speaker, \$8 million, money that's going to be . . . money that we could otherwise commit, Mr. Speaker, into the classrooms in this province. What does she say about that?

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I hope that that minister, the next time he's out in classrooms, tries that line with teachers and see how far he gets. Mr. Speaker, this government's relationship with education is still estranged, to say the least, and this is due in no small part to the government's attack on public sector workers.

At a time when Crown executives were getting massive pay increases, the Sask Party was trying to reach into the pockets of teachers by demanding a 3.6 per cent cut to salaries. Teachers ended up with far less than they deserve, because this government never took their unreasonable offer off the table. And now that things have wrapped up with the teachers' contract, thousands of public servants are waiting to hear if this government is going to bargain in good faith.

The minister has said that they aren't aiming to take 3.5 out of the pockets of public servants, but will she commit to taking that off the bargaining table here in the House today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I'll remind

members of the House and that particular member, Mr. Speaker, that it was the teachers that decided to go to arbitration, Mr. Speaker. They were the ones that decided to walk away from the bargaining table, Mr. Speaker, and throw their lot in with the arbitrator. And, Mr. Speaker, the arbitrator has made his decision, Mr. Speaker, a fair arbitration award, Mr. Speaker, having regard to all the facts, Mr. Speaker.

And I'll remind the member opposite: the teachers in this province are paid above the Western Canadian average. That was part of the conversation that was had through arbitration, Mr. Speaker. So to suggest that this government doesn't respect teachers when it comes to compensation, Mr. Speaker, is not fair. The arbitrator has made a decision, Mr. Speaker. We're respectful of the arbitrator's report, Mr. Speaker, and we'll work diligently, Mr. Speaker, to work out the details of that arbitration report for the best interests of teachers and children in our classrooms.

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

Global Transportation Hub and Government Transparency

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, on the leadership campaign trail, the Premier said that he would consider a public inquiry into the land sales at the GTH in the interest of transparency and accountability. Well here we are starting another sitting with even more questions about the GTH, and still no answers. Transparency isn't making promises to try to get votes in a leadership race and then skirting accountability when you have your hands on the wheel.

Members of the Premier's front bench, including the Deputy Premier, have called for an inquiry into the GTH. Now that the RCMP investigation is concluded, the Premier can't use that as a shield against what's doing right. Will the Premier take the advice of his seatmate and finally call for a judicial inquiry at the GTH?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, earlier this year we heard from the RCMP. The RCMP took several unprecedented steps when they made their announcement that there would be no further action taken on the part of them.

What they did was they called a press conference, and they said in that press conference that they had spent 7,500 hours of investigation or 1,000 days. They said it was a comprehensive, meticulous investigation by 10 RCMP commercial crime investigators. They further said that they found no criminal wrongdoing.

One of the questions that was posed to the RCMP was this: did you need to get a search warrant? And the RCMP responded two things. One, we didn't need one because everybody co-operated fully, and secondly that there was no evidence on which to base the need for a search warrant.

Mr. Speaker, the matter was referred to Manitoba prosecutions to avoid the appearance of bias. Nothing, Mr. Speaker.

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

[Interjections]

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, this pattern of obfuscation and avoiding accountability will haunt the Premier and that whole front bench. They are on the wrong side of history on this one, Mr. Speaker.

Of all the very concerning things we learned at Economy Committee last week, nothing defies common sense more than this government's quiet subsidization of rides for employees at the GTH. Why did the Saskatchewan taxpayers suddenly start picking up the tab for this in 2013?

Until then, Loblaw was managing to take care of this without Saskatchewan taxpayer dollars. Now I'm sure Galen Weston is happy, Mr. Speaker. But what has happened to the free market? Why is the government subsidizing Galen Weston?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the contract dealing with busing has been in Public Accounts for years. Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the members opposite noticed it. I didn't notice it either.

And, Mr. Speaker, I need to be candid about this. This was something that is paid for by taxpayer dollars. It's not acceptable to have taxpayer dollars go to subsidize something that should be paid for by the private sector. I can tell the House and I can tell members of the public that conversations are under way between the GTH officials, government, and the clients at GTH to try and remove the obligation from the public purse.

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

Provision of Transportation Services

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's this government whose transformational change tag line was to focus on the core services of government. How exactly is subsidizing a bus for a business at a floundering inland port the core business of government?

The Sask Party defends these bus rides but they've callously scrapped a bus service that took the sick to oncology and dialysis treatments, that helped women flee domestic violence, and connected isolated seniors to loved ones — not to mention their decisions that forced school divisions to cut bus rides for kids. It boggles the mind, Mr. Speaker.

The minister says the GTH bus policy is under review. Well people across the province didn't get the same level of due diligence before or after this government dismantled their public transportation. So will the minister finally commit to a review of the direct and indirect social costs of the short-sighted decision to dismantle the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, as I've said many times in this House, Mr. Speaker, the decision to wind down STC was a very difficult one, Mr. Speaker. But \$85 million over five years, Mr. Speaker, was just far too much for us to subsidize . . .

The Speaker: — Order, please. I enjoy hearing all of your voices and it's nice to have everyone back, but a little order. Thanks. I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

[10:45]

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you again, Mr. Speaker. \$85 million, Mr. Speaker, was far too much to subsidize this industry. I'm so glad to hear that there's so many private enterprise companies that have stepped up and are providing transportation around this province. There was another one on the news last night that is going to take over another transportation route that Greyhound had, Mr. Speaker. And I'm aware that there's some that are even starting to provide rides for the disabled, Mr. Speaker. So I'm very, very pleased with where this is going, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to . . . once Rideshare is out there, Mr. Speaker, that there's even more opportunities for people. Thank you.

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

Funding for Children's Hearing Aid Plan

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, joining us in the gallery is Stephanie Schneck and her nine-year-old daughter Gracie. Gracie needs \$6,400 hearing aids but her parents can't afford to pay for them. Like so many in our province who are struggling with this weak economy, her mom works three jobs to make ends meet. Gracie's family has been forced to hold fundraisers to provide her with the health services she needs to reach her full potential.

The Sask Party has spent billions on the GTH and the Regina bypass, but they've cut the hearing aid plan and supports for children like Gracie. How does this make any sense? How can the minister justify this type of decision?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome Gracie and her mom, Stephanie, to their Legislative Assembly. I saw this news story, Mr. Speaker, and I was immediately concerned. Who's not going to be concerned when a little girl has hearing problems? So I asked my officials to reach out to Stephanie, Gracie's mom, and also to their audiologist, Karen Sharpe, who was identified in the news story, to get some more information, Mr. Speaker.

Adhear is the product that the member's speaking of. It's very, very new on the market. I'd never heard of it, neither had our officials. That's why they reached out. They contacted the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health, Mr. Speaker, who also had no information on it. It's very new. So we've asked them to investigate for us. We've asked them to expedite the investigation and report back to us as soon as possible so we can make a determination. In the meantime, I've also asked my officials to look at the two programs that we have, the supplementary health and the family benefit health programs, who help our most vulnerable, our lowest income families, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess to summarize, Mr. Speaker, it's very new on the market. We're going to look at it. We're going to make a determination as quickly as we can. I'd be happy to meet with Stephanie and Gracie after question period if they wish, and we'd certainly be pleased to follow up with them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, it's promising to hear those words from the minister. But unfortunately that investigation does not help Gracie with her hearing right now, today.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government's 2017 budget is still hurting families across the province. We may have a new Premier, but it's the same damaging cuts that are hurting people. They squandered a decade of record revenues. They've wasted millions on the GTH while cutting important supports like the hearing aid plan at the same time. And we don't hear the minister talking about walking back that change.

This is a program that existed for over 44 years. It ensured that the money didn't get in the way of caring for people and investing in their future. Why is the Sask Party leaving families like Gracie's to fend for themselves?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned, for Gracie we're going to make every effort to expedite that determination as quickly as we possibly can.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to clarify this. This issue has nothing to do with the budget that the member is referring to. The children's hearing aids, Mr. Speaker, we announced, I think it was well over a year ago now, that there was concern from ministry officials because of capacity in the industry for children's hearing aids, Mr. Speaker, — not adult, but for children's hearing aids. That program's continuing. Mr. Speaker, we will make very effort to deal with this matter as quickly as we can.

I should point out, Mr. Speaker, too, you know, the member talked about the length of time that the children's hearing aid program has been in place. It's essentially the same program that was under the NDP [New Democratic Party] government, Mr. Speaker. It's a serious concern: you have a little girl with hearing difficulties. Mr. Speaker, I don't think this is the time for politics. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, unfortunately the supports aren't there and that's little solace for families right now that are suffering to make ends meet and expected to foot the full cost of the bill. In its 2017 budget, the Sask Party government eliminated the hearing aid plan, hurting Saskatchewan families like Gracie's. This family is tough and resilient. They are here today because they understand the hardship of having health care supports cut. They know the challenges of a higher cost of living, and they don't want these hardships to fall on other families like

theirs.

They didn't choose for their child to have permanent hearing loss. Any one of us could find ourselves in this position. Can the minister explain to these families why he chose to cut a health service that provided audiological evaluation, hearing aids and fittings, counselling and education, all to save a couple million dollars?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, again I would clarify for the member. Adult hearing aids are . . . There's plenty of capacity in the private sector. This has been going on for some time now, Mr. Speaker. For children's hearing aids, that program's continuing, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how to make that any more clear. And, Mr. Speaker, again to Gracie, I would be absolutely pleased any time after question period or whenever they wish, I'd be happy to meet with Stephanie and Gracie. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, on a point of order.

The Speaker: — What's your point of order?

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, during the response by the Minister for Crown Investments Corporation, the member for Saskatoon Centre hollered across the aisle that the Minister for the Economy was making things up. Mr. Speaker, as you know well, that you cannot do indirectly what you cannot do directly. This House has previously ruled that that statement, "making things up," is unparliamentary language. I would ask that the member for Saskatoon Centre rise, withdraw those remarks, and apologize.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise and withdraw those remarks and apologize. Thank you.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

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

Standing Committee on Public Accounts

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to report that the committee filed its second report with the Clerk on June 20th, 2018 pursuant to rule 136(6). The report reflects the work of the committee for the period May 16th, 2017 to June 13th, 2018.

I move:

That the second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be now concurred in.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Chair:

That the second report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be concurred in.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADDRESS IN REPLY

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lumsden-Morse.

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my great honour today to respond to the 2018 Speech from the Throne delivered yesterday in this honourable Assembly by His Honour the Lieutenant Governor for Saskatchewan. At the end of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will be moving a motion.

Mr. Speaker, before I begin my remarks on the content of the Speech from the Throne, I want to thank the people of Lumsden-Morse and the former Thunder Creek constituencies for electing me, now five times, to represent them in this honourable Assembly, a responsibility, Mr. Speaker, that I continue to take very seriously. It's an honour to come to work in this beautiful, historic building where for over 100 years momentous decisions have been made that have affected our province directly and influenced Canada in most profound ways.

Mr. Speaker, recently I've been reminded that my colleagues on this side of the House are as much family as colleagues, and although we may disagree occasionally and sometimes strongly on how best to deal with issues affecting the province, all of us on both sides of this House share a common experience not well understood by those outside of this place. And I want to take this opportunity to express my thanks for the support I have recently received from colleagues on both sides of the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my family; my constituency assistant, Terry Lynn Carefoot; my constituency executive; and my many friends inside and outside of this building, Mr. Speaker, for the ongoing support.

Mr. Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne, we cover off a large number of things. This is the most detailed and comprehensive Speech from the Throne I've seen in my 19 years here, Mr. Speaker. We will deliver a balanced budget for 2019-20.

Mr. Speaker, our government will stand up for Saskatchewan

communities, families, and businesses by challenging the ineffective, discriminatory, and harmful federal carbon tax in court. We will implement the Prairie Resilience climate change strategy and introduce legislation to establish intensity-based performance standards for large emitters.

Our government will complete the new 284-bed, state-of-the-art Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford to help those facing significant mental health needs.

Mr. Speaker, to continue to improve response times and enhance officer visibility in rural Saskatchewan through the protection and response team, which has seen conservation officers and highway patrol officers assist with more than 1,300 PRT [protection and response team]-related actions since April.

We will become, Mr. Speaker, the first province in Canada to enact Clare's Law, legislation designed to provide a framework for police services to disclose information about someone's violent or abusive past to intimate partners who may be at risk.

We will expand interpersonal violence leave to include sexual violence of any kind, Mr. Speaker. Our government will amend *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* to create a new critically ill adult leave to allow family members of critically ill adults to take up to 15 weeks' leave to care for their family member. Mr. Speaker, our government will expand parental leave from 37 weeks to 63 weeks and add an additional week of maternity leave.

Mr. Speaker, our government will take the opportunity during this session to apologize to Sixties Scoop survivors in our province who are impacted by historical government policies of child apprehension and adoption.

Our government, Mr. Speaker, will introduce changes to improve commercial driving training in this province, Mr. Speaker, and we will increase funding to improve intersection safety throughout the province.

Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne outlines how we will improve cellular service in 50 rural communities by the spring of next year as part of a plan to increase 4G LTE [long-term evolution] coverage in 100 Saskatchewan communities by the end of the program.

Mr. Speaker, our government will safely regulate the sale and distribution of cannabis through a competitive private model.

This Speech from the Throne outlines how our government will amend *The Police Act* to enable rural municipalities and municipalities with populations under 500 to join regional police services. Our government will make changes to *The Seizure of Criminal Property Act* to make it easier for property to be seized if it has been acquired through unlawful activities. Mr. Speaker, introducing legislation on trespass laws to better address the balance between members of the public and the rights of rural landowners will be dealt with.

[11:00]

Also, Mr. Speaker, our government will offer free hunting licences and fishing licences to Canadian military vets.

Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne contains many social initiatives that will make life better for Saskatchewan people. Also many economic initiatives will allow us to remain prosperous enough to be able to afford the social initiatives. Mr. Speaker, since time does not permit me to discuss every item in this Speech from the Throne, I will focus on the economic issues that we've dealt with in the speech.

Mr. Speaker, our three-year plan to reduce the province's dependence on resource revenues and return the budget to balance remains on track. After a \$1.2 billion deficit in 2016-17 due to plummeting resource values, we made difficult decisions but necessary decisions in the 2017-18 budget. Those decisions reduced the 2017-18 deficit to \$303 million, Mr. Speaker. The 2018-19 budget kept the three-year budget plan on track, while also making important investments for Saskatchewan people. Moody's recently confirmed a AAA credit rating score for Saskatchewan, making our province only one of two Canadian provinces to achieve Moody's highest credit score. During this session we will deliver the 2019-20 budget, Mr. Speaker, and it will be a balanced budget.

This year, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has seen clear signs of an improving economy. Our population continues to grow, reaching 1,162,000 people as of July 1st, an increase of more than 11,000 people in just the last year, Mr. Speaker, and 160,000 people in the past 11 years. During that time Saskatchewan has enjoyed the second-fastest rate of job growth in the country with 62,700 more people now working in the province. Saskatchewan's gross domestic product has grown from \$49 billion in 2007 to more than \$60 billion in 2017, an increase of 22 per cent in a decade. That is phenomenal growth, Mr. Speaker, in spite of some headwinds in our resource sector.

Mr. Speaker, during that time, public and private capital investment grew at five times the national rate, increasing by 70 per cent to more than \$14 billion. The Fraser Institute's 2017 survey for mining investment ranked Saskatchewan second out of 91 jurisdictions in the world for mining investment attractiveness. The new four-year mineral development strategy, Mr. Speaker, announced this spring creates an incentive program to encourage mineral exploration and will increase the amount of geophysical data available. We will be expanding existing incentives and introducing new oil well drilling and production incentives, including the new Saskatchewan technology start-up incentive, a non-refundable tax credit designed to encourage investment in early-stage technology companies.

Innovation Saskatchewan will also continue to invest in the technology incubator Co.Labs, which has helped more than 50 companies receive programming support and mentorship, resulting in more than \$5 million in private investment in those companies.

But, Mr. Speaker, a very real challenge to our province is the federal carbon tax. Recent research from the University of Regina confirms a carbon tax would reduce our provincial GDP [gross domestic product] by \$16 billion by 2030. At the same time, Ottawa's plan will only reduce emissions by maybe 1 per cent.

We are taking action to stand up for Saskatchewan communities, families, businesses, and jobs by challenging the federal carbon

tax in court. Saskatchewan believes that Ottawa does not have the constitutional authority to impose a tax on some provinces but not on others, based on whether or not the federal government agrees with the province's climate change plan. A recent poll showed that 88 per cent of Saskatchewan people and 72 per cent of all Canadians support our government's decision to fight the federal carbon tax in court. The governments of Ontario, Manitoba, Prince Edward Island are also against the federal tax. Should the government change in New Brunswick, which I expect it will, the new government will join us in the fight against the federal carbon tax as well.

Mr. Speaker, we will be taking meaningful action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by implementing the Prairie Resilience climate change strategy. This great plan includes commitments to reduce annual emissions by nearly 12 million tonnes by 2030 by reducing emissions from electrical generation by 40 per cent, decreasing methane emissions from upstream oil and gas production by 40 per cent, and implementing output-based performance standards for heavy industry. This session we will introduce the management and reduction of greenhouse gases amendment Act to establish intensity-based performance standards for large emitters and enable compliance mechanisms, including a technology fund, offset system, and best-performance credits.

Our agricultural industry alone, Mr. Speaker, has annually sequestered about 12 million tonnes of carbon in recent years, and the carbon capture and storage unit at Boundary dam 3 has removed more than 2 million tonnes of carbon emissions from the atmosphere. We have taken action to increase renewable energy capacity and flare gas energy production from oil and gas facilities.

The Blue Hill wind power project recently received approval to proceed. Saskatchewan's first utility-scale solar power project will be in service next year through a 20-year agreement between SaskPower and Saturn Power. Mr. Speaker, an improved power generation partner program was recently announced to help industry capture flare gas for power production, and SaskPower and First Nations Power Authority has signed an agreement to source energy from flare gas power generation projects.

In this session, Mr. Speaker, we will also renew programming to help Saskatchewan residents generate renewable power for their own use, and we'll announce further actions to increase renewable generation projects. Mr. Speaker, these things combine to give Saskatchewan the most effective CO₂ mitigation plan in this nation.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan exports are up significantly from \$19 billion in 2007 to around 29 billion in 2017. Exports to China have tripled to 3.5 billion over the past decade while exports to India have grown by 94 per cent to \$1.1 billion last year.

But burdensome regulations being brought in by our own federal government, combined with tax reform in the United States, have resulted in a dramatic loss of investor confidence in our nation as a whole. Foreign direct investment in Canada has declined by more than 74 per cent in the past decade from \$125.5 billion in 2007 to 32 billion in 2017. Canada cannot maintain the strength of our economy with this low level of outside investment. And if our federal government doesn't develop an interest in the

economy, our standards of living will all be negatively impacted.

At the same time, the resource companies are making record investments and creating thousands of new jobs in the Permian Basin in the United States. Higher federal taxes, over-regulation, and the large oil price differential caused solely by a lack of new pipelines is causing many of the same companies to reduce their investment in our country.

While the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement will ensure continued access for many Saskatchewan products to US [United States] markets, protectionist threats from the US administration remain. Our province continues to face a threat of tariffs on Saskatchewan softwood lumber and steel, this in addition to the United States Department of Commerce's spurious investigation of Saskatchewan uranium as a threat to US national security of all things, Mr. Speaker, and possible tariffs that may arise out of that investigation. Our own federal government has poisoned the relationship around our largest trading partner, the United States of America, by taking cheap shots at the Trump administration.

We will continue nevertheless, Mr. Speaker, to work with Ottawa to support the Canadian economy and this critical trading relationship that is so important to Saskatchewan, while supporting our own customers and connections in the United States to preserve Saskatchewan's relationship with our largest trading partner.

Saskatchewan's exports to India have also taken a direct hit since 2015, declining by nearly 40 per cent. Our Premier will lead a Saskatchewan business delegation going to India this November to encourage investment and strengthen that relationship with this very large and important trading partner and hopefully mitigate some of the damage that was caused by the Prime Minister's recent junket to India.

The Premier has also recently completed a very successful trade mission to China, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately Saskatchewan remains reliant on our federal government to negotiate international trade agreements, and Canada's trade relationship with China has stalled, as our country has not started formal trade discussions as expected. The Government of Canada has also not indicated a willingness to expand uranium exports to China, an initiative that would benefit northern Saskatchewan mines and workers and particularly, Mr. Speaker, our Aboriginal workers in our uranium mines in the North.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan exports have grown by 44 per cent over the last decade with nearly \$29 billion of exports last year. Agriculture exports are the foundation of the province's economy, accounting for almost half of our total exports. In 2017, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's agriculture exports were the fourth largest in the history of our province, with total sales of \$13.6 billion.

Recently our farmers once again faced a major backlog in moving their crops. We pushed the federal government to address this problem. Bill C-49, the transport modernization Act, was passed by the federal government in May. This Act allows for rail companies to be penalized if they do not deliver promised railcars. We will continue to advocate on behalf of our farmers and ranchers to ensure what they produce reaches markets around

the world in a timely and efficient manner.

Mr. Speaker, an economist recently estimated without the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion project or Keystone XL pipeline, the demand for oil by train could increase 200 per cent by the mid-2020s. We will continue to advocate, Mr. Speaker, for pipelines as a safe, efficient, and reliable method for transportation for energy products.

This year oil producers operating in our province would've earned an estimated \$4.4 billion more if they had access to international markets, including about 300 million in additional taxes, royalties, and other revenue to our province. This is lost revenue, Mr. Speaker, that could be spent in the important programs and services that Saskatchewan people deserve.

Right now more than half of the oil in Quebec and Atlantic Canada comes from foreign sources because we don't have pipelines. Today the courts have blocked the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion, with the federal government effectively ending the possibility of any future pipelines being built in this country through Bill C-69, which will make approval of future pipelines virtually impossible. Without pipelines to get our oil across the country, Saskatchewan must sell nearly all of our oil to one market, the United States, for sometimes as low as half the world price. We will stand up for the jobs our oil and gas industry create by continuing to press the federal government to take immediate action to get the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion built and to withdraw Bill C-69.

Recently the Leader of the Opposition announced that he will be the critic for the economy and jobs. The Leader of the Opposition supports the carbon tax. He opposes pipelines, wants to phase out the coal industry, and recently called for higher taxes on Saskatchewan's business and resource sector. The NDP's only economic policies are to raise taxes and shut down the resource sector, which would kill thousands of jobs and drive thousands of people out of the province once again, like they did the last time they were in power.

[11:15]

Saskatchewan's population has grown in every quarter for the last 49 consecutive quarters, the longest period of sustained growth since quarterly records were first kept. Our population is now 1,162,062 people as of July 1st, and Saskatchewan's population has grown by over 160,000 people since they left office in 2007.

But under the NDP government, from '91 to 2007, Mr. Speaker, 56,000 more people moved out of Saskatchewan than moved in, and Saskatchewan's population stayed at just around 1 million people. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan had the third-best GDP growth rate in the country between 2007 and '17. But between '97 and 2007, when the NDP were in power, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan had the dead-worst GDP growth rate in the country. Mr. Speaker, since 2007 Saskatchewan has had the second-best job creation record in the country, nearly 65,000 new jobs created. But under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan had the very worst job creation record in all of Canada from 1997 to 2007, less than half the national rate of job growth.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has delivered record

property tax reductions and record income tax reductions. A family of four in Saskatchewan pays no income tax on their first \$50,495 of income, the highest tax-free threshold in Canada. Saskatchewan individuals and families pay among the lowest income taxes in Canada, ranging from the lowest to the third lowest depending on their level of income.

The NDP government when they were in power, Mr. Speaker, by contrast, raised taxes 21 times during their 16 years in power, including raising the PST three times, hitting as high as 9 per cent and expanding the scope once, raised income taxes twice, raised business taxes three times, raised fuel taxes three times, raised tobacco taxes seven times, and raised alcohol taxes twice.

Mr. Speaker, since the Saskatchewan Party was elected in 2007, Saskatchewan has been a have province with a sound record of financial management. The province's credit rating is AA, the second-highest possible rating maintained by Standard & Poor's, and AAA status, the highest possible rating by Moody's. DBRS [Dominion Bond Rating Service Ltd.] has recently confirmed the province's credit rating as AA. Throughout most of the NDP's 16 years — by contrast, Mr. Speaker — in office, Saskatchewan was a have-not province, relying on federal transfer payments to finance provincial initiatives.

But the NDP leader is now the economic critic, and so we look for great things, Mr. Speaker. Here is a summary of his economic policies: a carbon tax that kills jobs, higher business taxes that kills jobs, higher resource royalties that kills jobs, \$15 minimum wage that kills jobs, opposing pipelines that kills jobs. Those are the NDP's economic policies, Mr. Speaker — raising taxes, shutting down our resource sector, and killing our jobs.

They may have a different leader, Mr. Speaker, and a different critic, but they're the same old NDP and they'll do the same old things, Mr. Speaker. Who would want to go back to those dismal times? Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I proudly support the Speech from the Throne and move the motion:

That an humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

To His Honour the W. Thomas Molloy, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It's been moved by the member for Lumsden-Morse, seconded by the member for Martensville:

That the humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

To His Honour the Honourable W. Thomas Molloy, Lieutenant Governor of the province of Saskatchewan.

May it please Your Honour:

We, Her Majesty's dutiful and loyal subjects, the Legislative Assembly of the province of Saskatchewan in session assembled, humbly thank Your Honour for the gracious speech which Your Honour has been pleased to address to us at the opening of the present session.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Martensville.

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I want to start off by congratulating the new member for Regina Northeast. I know that we all have our own stories on how we got here and what inspired us to, I guess, get involved in sometimes this crazy business that we're in, and I'm sure we'll hear his when he gets to speak.

It also made me think of why I got involved and why my dad got involved. And interesting enough — and I hope this doesn't get called out as a prop because I'm not really going to do anything with it — but I found my dad's first campaign brochure from 1995 when I was going through some boxes the other day. And I probably should not talk about my dad because I end up crying, but it was an interesting read. Obviously the province was a different place in 1995. But the reasons why he got involved and the reasons I got involved, funny enough, although the issues themselves weren't the same, the ideas behind them probably were.

And one of the biggest ones was the NDP's complete neglect of rural Saskatchewan. I think that was a common theme of a lot of folks who were running in 1995, and I know it was dad's. And then the other theme, because we are often at odds with the federal government, and at the time gun control was coming out of Ottawa. So those were some of dad's things. And it was interesting, the PST at the time was 9 per cent. So thank you Saskatchewan NDP for that little gift.

And, Mr. Speaker, like I said, those same kind of themes are why I got involved — the NDP's complete neglect of rural Saskatchewan. I know when I got involved, my communities were growing and my schools were absolutely full, and the NDP had no plans to build us new ones. We now have five new schools. Just Warman and Martensville have five new schools.

The highways were, in some instances, shattered. And I don't use that word lightly; they were. You could barely drive on them. I remember driving out to Hepburn when I was campaigning, and I think I said this before — I had a little red Neon, and you can judge me for that car choice, but you literally had to drive from one side of the road to the other to find enough pavement to actually be able to drive down that road. Shattered roads and no NDP plan to rebuild them.

I can say now we have a completely rebuilt 305 that goes from Warman all up the way to Dalmeny, a new highway that was rebuilt from Dalmeny to Highway 16, and happy to report overpasses that are now being used at both Warman and Martensville.

Mr. Speaker, when I first got elected I actually had one community which I no longer represent because the boundary

lines have changed. Hepburn, they were all on wells. They had no water system. And their water was so bad that people bought water to drink, but they also bought water to bathe their children in, and the NDP had no plans to help them out. And I'm happy to report that with funding from our government, that Hepburn has a fully functioning municipal water system and they're no longer on wells.

And, Mr. Speaker, we can talk about revenue sharing. In Martensville the increase in revenue sharing under our government has increased by 235 per cent, and in Warman, 299 per cent, almost 300 per cent increase from what they were getting under the NDP.

And I know that in recent weeks and months, the NDP have, I guess, woken up from their dreaming and realize that they're disconnected from rural Saskatchewan. Well news flash, Mr. Speaker, it's been going on for decades and I don't see that turning around anytime soon.

I came across some axioms the other day and they're usually attributed to Abraham Lincoln. I was very excited. I was going to get a hold of the previous premier because I know how much he likes Lincoln and let him know that I was basing my speech on that, and then I did some research on and they're not actually Lincoln's. So I'm glad I didn't send that text, but they are from a 19th century minister. And we know that the NDP likes the words of ministers, so maybe they'll listen to some of these. I won't go through all of them, but there's a common theme in a few of them:

You cannot bring about prosperity by discouraging thrift.

You cannot establish sound security on borrowed money.

You cannot keep out of trouble by spending more than you earn.

And that brings us back to the NDP, Mr. Speaker. The drop in oil prices is over a billion-dollar hit that our provincial revenues have been affected by. No one can deny this. Even the NDP have to admit that the price of oil has hurt us. And over the course of the last several years we've sought to reduce expenditures and the NDP decry all of these. They want us to put all of that money back. And then in this Chamber every day they ask us to spend more. Not only that but the Leader of the Opposition has made a list of promises, two and a half billion dollars a year. That's \$10 billion over the term of a government, and that's just not reasonable.

And so the question is, how do they plan to pay for all of this? Well they won't tell us; they have no plan to do that. The only way that you can actually pay for all of that is to raise your own-source revenues. Because we can't control other things, but that's the one thing that we can control, which means raising taxes. So which taxes will they raise? And, Mr. Speaker, the NDP's new slogan is dream and deliver, and we know what that means. They'll dream up new ways of spending your money and deliver on tax increases for the people of this province.

Those axioms go on to say:

You cannot strengthen the weak by weakening the strong.

You cannot help little men by tearing down big men.

You cannot lift the wage earner by pulling down the wage payer.

And that brings me to the NDP's promise of a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. And I've said this before in this House, Mr. Speaker, that you can't have a conversation about income or the minimum wage without talking about the personal exemption limit that's currently in place. In 2007 you could earn just over \$8,000 before paying provincial tax. Now, Mr. Speaker, you can take home over \$16,000 before paying any provincial income tax. We have the second-highest personal exemption limit in the country and, Mr. Speaker, 75 per cent of what you make you get to keep now. When the NDP were here it was only 45 per cent.

So while our minimum wage is not at \$15 an hour, the actual take-home pay, the money that people go home when it's in their pockets, is actually higher in some circumstances than in provinces where the minimum wage is higher. And it's an easy thing for a politician to promise, Mr. Speaker, because they are not the ones paying for it.

Another one is, "You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich." I'm neither rich nor wealthy; never have been, never will be. But, Mr. Speaker, I do applaud those who have capitalized on great ideas, on hard work, on sound investments, on taking risks, and realizing the benefits. But the NDP just want to dig into their pockets too. And these are the people, Mr. Speaker, that create jobs, open businesses, and make sure that the people of this province are employed and have a good quality of life.

The Leader of the Opposition said this, and I quote:

I think what you'll see is a greater attention to making sure those that benefit the most in . . . [the] economy — the largest companies and the wealthiest — are paying their fair share.

Well that's interesting. I don't know exactly what a fair share is. They haven't said, but obviously they're going to be raising taxes. I'd like to know on whom and by how much. I went back and looked over some information, Mr. Speaker, and maybe the NDP should understand this. With the changes that we've made, those making less than \$40,000 a year represent 54 per cent of taxpaying wage earners in this province, Mr. Speaker, and they only pay 4 per cent of total provincial taxes, income taxes — 4 per cent.

So the 54 per cent earning the least are paying only 4 per cent. Mr. Speaker, those making over \$100,000 — which is not me — constitute 10 per cent of the population, and they pay 53 per cent of total income taxes in the province. So I'm not sure how much more they're going to be asked to pay, Mr. Speaker, these people who are employing others in this province, opening businesses, dedicating their lives to this province, as all wage earners do, Mr. Speaker. But if 10 per cent are paying 53 per cent, how much more is going to be constituted under the NDP as their fair share?

Mr. Speaker, we have worked hard to make sure that people have money in their pockets, and we've taken 112,000 off provincial tax rolls altogether. What are the NDP promising? To review corporate taxes and the royalty system. And we know what that

means. They're not going to be lowering those things for businesses in this province, Mr. Speaker. They'll be asking them to pay more.

And again, these are the companies and business people that are employing Saskatchewan people. They provide jobs and opportunities. They contribute to our communities. They invest in our towns and cities. But there we go again, Mr. Speaker — the NDP dreaming up new ways of spending your money and delivering on higher taxes. And, Mr. Speaker, I made one up of my own: "You cannot be pro-economy and anti-business."

[11:30]

And so congratulations to the Leader of the Opposition for naming himself Economy critic. I think that's kind of cute. I look forward to seeing exactly what his economic policies are, because from the NDP so far, about the only economic policies that we've seen are more eggs in more baskets. And fun fact, Mr. Speaker, the guy who dreamt that little gem up now markets eggs. So I don't know. It's an interesting fact.

And we know that their only support of any kind of pipelines is to randomly replace pipelines in our province that don't necessarily need to be replaced, just for the sake of doing it. I'm not quite sure what that is all about.

But here's a quick lesson on how to grow the economy. A jurisdiction needs to be able to attract investment; investment leads to jobs; jobs lead to more people having a better quality of life; and all of that leads to more taxes being raised by government because people are working more and paying more and there's more companies here. And in turn, Mr. Speaker, we can use that money to deliver services to the people of this province that they deserve and expect.

But what do the NDP want to do? They want to impose a carbon tax, hike corporate taxes and royalties, which means we are not going to be an attractive place to invest. And no investment equals fewer jobs, but I think that logic is lost on the NDP.

And on the issue of carbon taxes, Mr. Speaker, the first line of an NDP press release from this fall said, and I quote, "The Sask Party's plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions may still be full of 'to be determines.'" Or TBDs as the member for Saskatoon Centre likes to call them.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have a full plan. It's Prairie Resilience plan, and I won't go through all . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, he woke up. I guess he was dreaming for a while and now he woke up again so, welcome back.

Mr. Speaker, if you go through the Throne Speech, and I know that my colleague — I want to say from Thunder Creek because that's the best riding name ever, but Lumsden-Morse, I believe it is — had gone through all the details of these so I won't. But it's a whole page . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, I wrote my own, thanks. It's a whole page of things that we've already done, and that includes solar power and wind generation and talking about carbon sinks in the ag sector. But, Mr. Speaker, it's a full and comprehensive plan.

And other than the carbon tax, what's the NDP's plan for the

environment? To replace the windows in my 90-year-old house. So thanks? I'm not sure that that's going to get us to any kind of targets that we actually need to reach, but it is an old house.

And, Mr. Speaker, on that little idea — it's not a plan; it's more just an idea — it's incomplete. He said on October 13th, and I quote, "Piece by piece, we'll be elaborating." Okay. And then the next day, when asked on this loan program where all the money's going to be coming from, he said, well, we're a couple years away from determining how that's all going to happen. So I guess we'll just hold tight and wait to see what else they come up with other than replacing the windows in my house.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to a carbon tax, and we know that the NDP here are supportive of it, I did some snooping around in jurisdictions where there is an actual carbon tax in place because those are usually cited as places where this is working. In Sweden it's \$150 a tonne; works out to be about 35 cents a litre of gas. It's been around since 1991. Vehicle emissions are down only 5 per cent in 27 years at a cost like that. And they've been able to lower their home heating costs, but that's because they've increasingly been using nuclear more for energy.

In Norway it's \$64 a tonne. It's been around since 1990. Emissions are up by 4 per cent. For a litre of gas, it's 14 cents on a litre of gas. Vehicle emissions are up by 32 per cent since 1990, so not working so good there.

And then people like to use the Canadian example and cite BC [British Columbia] because they have had a carbon tax in place for several years and emissions are down. I think the last date that I saw was 2014: emissions were down by 3 per cent. So good on them. But Canada as a country, emissions went down by 3 per cent nationally with no carbon tax in place, so I'm not sure that you can actually use that as a fair comparison.

And where are the NDP on all of this, Mr. Speaker? Well the Leader of the Opposition . . . This is a quote from a CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] article:

Meili said that he supports the federal government's plan to put a price on carbon. The provincial NDP has said it disagrees with the provincial government's position and its climate policy but has yet to put forward its own position.

And on the federal government's position, I do like that the Prime Minister says, let me be clear; pollution is no longer going to be free, and in the very next breath says, but let me be clear; you get all your money back. I don't know. I'm not sure where the logic of that is. If a carbon tax is supposed to be an incentive to change my behaviour, why would I change my behaviour if I'm going to be reimbursed for the cost of my behaviour? It's like my husband telling me I can't buy any more shoes because we can't afford it, and then he pays the credit card bill and gives me a shoe allowance. And for the record, my husband is not buying my shoes. But the logic is still just as flawed. There is no reason to change your behaviour if you're going to get paid for it.

But let me be clear. This plan is actually not free as much as we like to joke that it seems like it will be. But it's not. It's going to hit our ag sector. It has a huge impact on municipalities and schools and hospitals. A recent U of R [University of Regina] study says it's going to be a \$16 billion hit on our economy and

it will lead to higher gas prices and heating of our homes. And that's a whole lot of pain for absolutely no gain. As I've just outlined, jurisdictions with a carbon tax — makes virtually no difference in those jurisdictions. So we don't think this is good for our province.

And we know the NDP are out of touch with rural Saskatchewan, but on this issue they're out of touch with all of Saskatchewan. Almost 88 per cent of the people in this province are on our side when it comes to going to court to defend Saskatchewan against a Liberal-imposed carbon tax, which means a huge swath of NDP voters also side with us. They're out of touch with rural Saskatchewan, with urban Saskatchewan. They're out of touch with their own voters, Mr. Speaker.

And when it comes to our plan to go to court to defend Saskatchewan, what's the Leader of the Opposition have to say? This is going to be an effort that is expensive and, worse, risky. He calls it a futile endeavour and says that it's a costly and pointless crusade. And I don't know when standing up for the people of this province has become a pointless crusade. What's costly and risky is doing nothing and letting the federal government impose their scheme in our province, and the NDP are dreaming if they think that we will back down from this worthwhile fight.

And I can also tell the NDP this, Mr. Speaker. The NDP are dreaming if they think their anti-pipeline stance is good for Saskatchewan. The NDP are dreaming if they think that higher royalties and increased corporate taxes are good for Saskatchewan. And the NDP are dreaming if they think a carbon tax is good for the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, these are all job killers and not good for the people of our province. And, Mr. Speaker, the NDP are dreaming if they think that the people of this province will ignore the NDP's anti-Saskatchewan positions and ask them to govern any time soon.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the work my government has done and I'm honoured to second the Speech from the Throne.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to provide my response to the Speech from the Throne, and I want to take this opportunity as well to thank my partner, Grayson, who I wish could be with us here today or yesterday, but he's busy teaching the young minds of the province. So I want to thank him for all the support that he provides to me in the campaign times and also after I was elected in this past year. He's been incredibly supportive and has been really a rock for me, so I want to thank him in particular.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank my full-time constituency assistant, Twyla Harris Naciri, who really keeps things going in the office. We're often away for such a long period of time, and you have to be a special kind of person to sit in a constituency office and hear about the issues of the constituents over and over again and sometimes feel like you're going at it alone. So I want to thank her in particular. And our casual constituency assistant who is looking after the office today and might be watching from the office, Austin MacNally, for his services as well.

I want to provide some general thoughts about the Throne Speech. This, as we know, is the Premier's first Throne Speech, and I have to say that we expected a lot more from him. People piled into this room, some of them travelling across the province, and they wanted to hear a speech from a government that had a vision. Instead we got the Throne Speech of a tired government that clearly no longer has a vision for how to make life better for Saskatchewan people. People are sick, and this Throne Speech offers them little assistance. People are out of work and this Throne Speech assumes everything is okay. In fact it boasts about job growth over the past 10 years. When you move the goalposts, everything looks a little rosier.

But to anyone who's been following jobs or who has stepped outside to speak to human beings in our constituencies, we know what's really been happening. Our schools lack crucial resources and they're told that there's no money to go around. People are hurting and this government is making choices that do not change these circumstances. And we know that governing is all about choices, but this government made the choice to spend our record revenues on costly and failed megaprojects, subsidizing private transportation at the GTH instead of funding our kids' schools.

It's evident as well that they're recycling their ideas. For example, 12 of the 18 bullet points on their news release are things they have already announced. Instead of getting us a fresh meal when we all gathered here together, they served up leftovers.

So let's have a look at their press release to see what some of these ideas are. Completion of a North Battleford hospital. This was originally announced in 2011. Committed to the fight on a carbon tax in court. We all know that this is all they're talking about. Commitment to implement the Prairie Resilience strategy and large-emitter standards — been hearing about this for the past session. Three-year back-to-balance budget plan. Protection and response team. Stop me if you've heard this one before: apology for the Sixties Scoop, initially committed to by former Premier Brad Wall.

Continuing phrases about expanding cell service; the private cannabis model which has already been implemented; the minister signalling that EI [employment insurance] changes would be harmonized with federal changes in the spring session. The minister signalled the introduction of Clare's Law after last fall session. There's talk about intersection safety that was announced in the spring. And trespassing laws change have already been proposed.

So we're talking about 12 out of 18 of the so-called new ideas that were previously announced, Mr. Speaker. So when we're talking about leftovers, this is what I'm referring to.

Now we've all on this side of the House been travelling the province over the summer and hearing the concerns of Saskatchewan people, including the concerns of the folks in Regina Northeast. And I want to send a special shout-out to our new colleague, the member from Regina Northeast, and thank him for all the work that he put in and all the work that was put in on this side of the House and across the province to get him to this table. I think he will be a valued team member and has already demonstrated that he has so much capacity to listen to the people of this province and to be able to move forward with some

of those ideas.

So let's talk about what some of the concerns are that we've heard. We've heard from people who are sick. This Throne Speech does next to nothing to address causes of that. We have heard from people who are out of work and heard that the expansion of the PST to construction, labour, and restaurant meals has made things worse. But all this government is doing is pointing fingers.

We've heard from parents and teachers that our schools are in trouble, but they've made no commitment to restoring the funding they cut. And we've seen that their failed and costly megaprojects are a big reason why we don't have the money to put back into our schools. It's evident that overall they have no plan, no plan to improve or invest in vital public services.

We expected more from this Premier on his debut Throne Speech but found it underwhelming. Even the energy in this room yesterday as the speech was delivered, even on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, it was not an excited space. This was not an exciting place to be. Overall I'm disappointed and I'm concerned.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I recently took on the role of Health critic for the opposition, so I do plan on taking a few moments to put a keen interest on pages 9 through 11 of the Throne Speech. That will help the people who are following along from home. I saw that it looked remarkably similar to the Throne Speech from last year, showing that we have a government who is copying and pasting, rather than demonstrating vision for this province, and a government who is taking prior commitments and re-announcing them. So let's have a look at the Throne Speech from last year, which is right here somewhere. Okay.

[11:45]

So the 2017 Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, I'm looking at pages 2 through 4. It's interesting that Health got moved further back on the list this year, and I'm not sure why that happened. I'm going to hit pages 9 to 11. But pages 2 through 4 — this is the Throne Speech from 2017 — it's talking about nurses and doctors being recruited. It's talking about long-term care facilities, the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford. So far — check, check, check — all of these things have existed in this year's Throne Speech. There's a discussion about the surgery wait times, which they're still boasting about. When you talk about the past 10 years, they neglect to mention the closer proximity here. If you notice a theme with this government, Mr. Speaker, that's kind of their overall strategy. It's not groundbreaking.

They're talking about privatizing MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] and how we should get behind that idea. The accountable care units, more accountable care units being created. They're discussing the 12 regional health authorities being amalgamated into one. I'm still on the 2017 speech for anyone who's watching. And they're talking about providing individualized funding for children under the age of six diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. This was the 2017 speech.

And when we're talking about the 2018 speech, I'm sure you will find many of these similarities as well. And this is completely on top of the press release that they provided, which demonstrates 12 out of 18 recycled ideas. So to say I'm disappointed, Mr. Speaker, is an understatement.

I have to say that there is a moving introduction in the speech. And I was quite moved by the beginning of the speech yesterday and the story about community coming together when times are tough. And on this side of the House we believe that when times are tough the government has a role as well. So I think that's what distinguishes us on this side of House from folks on the other side. To me it's the most Saskatchewan of activities — when people are struggling we get together and we help them out. And that's what compels us, Mr. Speaker, to dream bigger.

So let's talk about what some of these recycled ideas are in the Throne Speech this year and really what's missing from the Throne Speech this year. Of the ideas that are new, we heard that the interpersonal violence leave should include sexual violence. We still don't have a sexual assault strategy or paid leave for survivors of domestic violence, Mr. Speaker. The truck driver training and intersection review. Both of these have been singled in the past. There are several announcements around crime that are hardly visionary.

Performance-based ambulance contracts. We have the worst system in the country and we have for years. Will we be introducing caps and scrapping inter-hospital transfers for our ambulance patients? The pilot about mental health in schools. Divisions have had to cut already existing supports as a result of the education cuts. And on the point of income assistance changes around the threshold, this is one that we want to watch to ensure that it rolls out a way that's actually going to be beneficial for folks.

So what's missing? In terms of health and education, we're not seeing any new ideas. It rehashes Wall-era commitments and is talking about many of the same ideas. There's nothing new for the North, just a rehash of existing initiatives. There's no comprehensive mental health strategy or investment, nothing to address job training or workforce development — areas that we saw cut in last year's budget as well — to help people get back to work and alleviate those who have been impacted by this economy. And there's nothing about fixing procurement policies.

There's also a lot of things that the federal government is doing that this government is taking credit for, like expanding the employment Act and the leaves that are provided for parents. Doing this was required to harmonize with the federal government. We've been calling on them to do it for nine months now.

An Hon. Member: — Our private member's bill.

Ms. Mowat: — Exactly.

They've spent a lot of time looking at where Saskatchewan has seen growth over the past decade, but this hides many of the ways that things are actually going worse for people in Saskatchewan.

We talk about mortgages and housing starts. Saskatchewan people are having a hard time making ends meet. We can talk

about the employment rate and how there's fewer jobs in Saskatchewan, and the minimum wage, how we had this summer the worst minimum wage in the country. And we're not seeing a commitment from this government to raise our minimum wage, which we have seen from the Leader of Opposition. And I'm incredibly proud of folks on this side for having the vision to increase our minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

I think it's also prudent that I take some time looking into health as I've been announced as the new critic. So I have some comments here as well and I will keep them shorter than I had initially planned. But one of the pieces that is being promised in this Throne Speech — or just being re-announced, Mr. Speaker — is that we have more nurses and doctors. And of course we're pointing to a flat rate here.

I will also mention that if folks want to pick up the ministry's *Medical Services Branch Annual Statistical Report*, which I have a copy of here if the folks on the other side need a copy of it, but we're talking about the annual statistical report from 2017-2018. There's also some useful statistics in here that I think folks on the other side would want to see if they haven't had a chance to look at it. On page 37 you can see that although the rates of general practitioners per population have remained constant, retaining specialists trained in Saskatchewan has been a much tougher nut to crack for this government. On page 55 you see that we retained only 36 per cent of specialists we trained in Saskatchewan, begging a number of questions about why this is the case. And the fact that the minister on the other side is not talking about how we can recruit specialists and whether the program is working is a big question that I have in this case. So we maybe expected to see some details about that.

I've already talked about a couple of these pieces already: more effective administration by saving 10 to 20 million annually with one single Saskatchewan Health Authority. I do have a question about this, Mr. Speaker, because the last I saw from the minister, we were supposed to be saving \$19 million, which one would argue maybe is not enough for all of the administrative burden that's going to go into amalgamating all of these regions. But the fact that it's moved from 19 million last spring to maybe as low as 10 million raises a lot of questions about why this is the case, how it's going to be only saving us \$10 million.

There's also a discussion about how this government is committed to reducing hospital waits. And if you go into the ministry's plans, if you go back a very long time, you can see that the goal was zero waits. It moved to reducing waits by 60 per cent. And now they've moved the goal posts yet again to 35 per cent for the last two years which, by the way, they didn't meet last year. And it's very curious about how they plan to meet this goal of reducing emergency department waits by 35 per cent with, I'm assuming, is the two clinics that they've announced in Saskatoon and Regina. So the question about whether one clinic in each space can make this tremendous amount of difference, it's a good effort but it's not enough to get us there, Mr. Speaker.

And the discussion about individualized autism funding, I've been talking about this since well before I was even in this space, Mr. Speaker. This was an election promise that came out in 2016 right before the election happened — oh look, we're going to provide individualized autism funding. And we're still talking about this right now, so it hardly demonstrates vision.

There are a number of key health indicators that tell us that things aren't going so well. We have a quarter of kids living in poverty in our province and 6 out of 10 indigenous kids living in poverty. We have the highest diagnosed rate of HIV [human immunodeficiency virus]. Twenty-nine per cent of people in Saskatchewan are living with diabetes or are pre-diabetes. We are tied with Manitoba for the lowest life expectancy rate outside of Atlantic Canada, and we are tied with Manitoba for the highest infant mortality rates in the country.

Now is the time for us to be taking bold action to improve health outcomes in our province. Our infants are dying. Our kids are living in poverty. And we aren't living as long as our friends and family across Canada.

And I was most disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that this Throne Speech did not acknowledge the high cost of drugs that people are paying across the province. It's so disappointing that the Premier is willing to pick some fights with the federal government without standing up to them on an issue that would save Saskatchewan \$320 million per year, and that's only drug costs. According to the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions, we could build 23 community health clinics with \$115 million. Now that would have an impact on cutting down our emergency department waits, and that's not even half of what we would save. Imagine what we could do with the other remaining \$205 million.

If the cost of analysis doesn't compel the government to act, perhaps a moral argument will. One in four families don't take the drugs they are prescribed because they can't afford to. Think about the fact that skipping prescriptions leads people to become sicker. People are reusing needles to save money and dying of a heart attack because they skipped their cholesterol treatment. Hundreds of people die every year pre-emptively across Canada because they don't have access to life-saving medications.

And I know the Premier likes polls and to govern by public opinion, so I'll also point out that a national pharmacare plan has large support across Canada, including across Saskatchewan. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is not the first time the Premier has heard these arguments. We urged the government to call on the federal government to deliver on their promise for a national pharmacare plan last session. So to say I was disappointed by the lack of vision in the Throne Speech is an understatement.

What would vision have looked like? Taking up the cause and making sure no one in Saskatchewan has to go to sleep tonight deciding whether to pay for groceries or their needed prescription medication. Let's not allow the people in Saskatchewan to keep dying pre-emptively. Let's be a government that will fight for what's right and what's going to save us millions of dollars. Let's take this fight to the federal government, unless the Premier can say what he doesn't like about this plan.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot support this motion, and I will be moving an amendment. I move that the following amendment be added:

That this Assembly does not support the agenda outlined in the Sask Party's Speech from the Throne because it lacks vision, fails to take any action to create jobs while people and the economy are hurting, ignores the underfunding of our schools and the growing challenges in our health

system, and does nothing to restore trust and bring accountability to their costly mishandling of the GTH and the Regina bypass.

I so move. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[12:00]

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Fairview, seconded by the member for Saskatoon Centre that the following words be added after “present session”:

That this Assembly does not support the agenda outlined in the Sask Party’s Speech from the Throne because it lacks vision, fails to take any action to create jobs while people and the economy are hurting, ignores the underfunding of our schools and the growing challenges in our health system, and does nothing to restore trust and bring accountability to their costly mishandling of the GTH and the Regina bypass.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the opportunity to stand. And of course, I think that amendment makes a lot of sense, the last couple of days the kind of things we’ve been hearing. So I’m pleased to be seconding the amendment put forward by my colleague in Saskatoon Fairview.

And I want to take the opportunity here to address the House on behalf of Saskatoon Centre residents, my constituents, in terms of what this Throne Speech means to them and of course the people of Saskatchewan. And of course, when I look at the title, “Standing Up for Saskatchewan,” we could say sitting down for Saskatchewan, what we saw today. When it came to tough questions in the House, who sat down right away? That’s not for me; I’ve got to get somebody else. Who sat down? Who’s sitting down for the people of Saskatchewan?

But really, you know, I really think what the title should be, who’s standing up, out by the recycling bin, rummaging through the old papers? That’s what it is. Standing up out by the recycling bin. That’s what the debate really will be because what we’re hearing . . . We’ve heard from the member from Fairview how many ideas are tired and worn out, and they’re just rehashing stuff because they can’t come up with anything new. I don’t know. I don’t know, Mr. Speaker, what they were doing this summer, but I tell you we have a right, we have a right to expect more.

This is the Premier’s first Throne Speech. The first Throne Speech, and you would’ve thought it would’ve been much more fuller, much more richer in terms of details about what he sees for the people of Saskatchewan. And I have to ask, what was he doing this summer? Where was he? Was he in Regina Northeast? Because clearly he was out of touch with what the people in Regina Northeast were looking for.

And I have to say, you know, we’re hearing a lot about polls and stuff like that. But the polls we know that matter, the polls that matter are the ones when people go to vote. And I tell you the folks in Regina Northeast rejected, rejected what they were

saying over there. That was the riding of the former minister of Finance. That was his riding. He had won it quite handily for two times and they go like this. No, it was significant. He won it by over a thousand votes, so let’s be clear about that. He was firmly entrenched there, and the folks in Regina Northeast said, this is not on. This is not on. We’re talking about bread-and-butter issues, bread-and-butter issues.

So what did we hear? We heard a Throne Speech from a tired, worn-out, recycled government, and this is what’s happening over there. What’s happening over there, they’re tired and worn out. They can’t come up with a fresh idea, so they’re going back to their magic box of tricks that they’ve developed over the years. And you know, like the member from Martensville, she’s had experience in the federal government as well and these are the tricks that they know, the tricks of the trade. And you give them credit for it because they know how to pull these things out of the box when they need to.

But, Mr. Speaker, before I go too far, I should do what we often do and give credit to and thanks to the folks that have helped us when we are here. And of course I want to give thanks to the folks in Saskatoon Centre for their support. That’s so important. And my new CA, Graham Reid, he’s been just a real support and done some really outstanding work for the people, especially in these trying times, Mr. Speaker, when we have issues around mental health, when we have issues around housing, when we have issues around social services. So people coming in and trying to make sense of government programs, and he’s been just a real problem solver and he’s been there for the people of Saskatchewan.

And I also want to talk a little bit about my family. It was great last night. I was visiting with my mom in Moose Jaw and we phoned my brother who just, as it happened, was pulling into the farmyard, pulling into the yard with his last load. They had just finished harvest at that moment. He was just bringing the truck in. And that was it, the last thing. Today he’d be bringing in the combine. So it’s really good because I know there are many people out there in Saskatchewan are still finishing up harvest. And with the terrible weather we had in September, it didn’t look really promising. But that’s great.

The other one I want to mention is we had a family wedding this summer. And this has been talked a lot about in the House, and it was a great event. The member from Estevan’s daughter, Miranda, got married this summer. It was a very nice, very nice evening. And so Miranda and Jon I think are off to a great start, and we wish them well in the years ahead.

I want to talk a little bit . . . You know, a year ago I talked a little bit about Remail Modern and the hope for what it would bring to Saskatoon Centre and Saskatoon and actually the province of Saskatchewan, putting us on the map in terms of modern art. And clearly they did. And it broke all sorts of records. And I don’t know if, Mr. Speaker, you saw the news story that came out last week. By the number, Remail Modern’s first year, it was just outstanding. They opened last year, October 21st, and here they are celebrating their one-year anniversary — over 450,000 visits. They were planning 190,000 visits, double the number. The revenues from admissions, 484,000. They were planning 330,000. And so these are really outstanding numbers that we see, and they did a great job and they’ve been really, as I say,

putting Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, on the map and that's a great, great thing.

But unfortunately that's not all that's been happening in Saskatoon Centre. I have to say — and this is something that we're not hearing the government talk about — the service sector or the construction didn't do so well. We see the numbers are down, the numbers of people working, the numbers of companies that are not doing as well, are not very good because of this Sask Party job-killing PST that they've put on these sectors. The restaurants are not doing well in Saskatoon Centre. We've heard that, and I'm sure, I'm sure they've heard that too. Construction companies are having the same difficulties, laying off people and even closing the door. But what can they do when you see the job-killing facts?

And I find it just so ironic that these folks go back to the '90s and the '80s when we know what happened in the last two years in that dumpster fire of a budget in 2017, that dumpster fire that increased the taxes on ordinary working people. This is really, really unfortunate. And these are my constituents that are facing these problems. And then they asked . . .

Many of my constituents live on minimum wage and, as the member from Saskatoon Fairview said, we are floating around 11 bucks or 11.06 — 6 cents higher than the lowest in Canada. Next door in Alberta it's \$15 an hour, a \$4 differential, a \$4 differential. Can you really tell me that somebody who's serving on tables here or working trying to make ends meet is worth \$4 an hour less here in Saskatchewan than in Alberta? That's a shame. That's a crying shame. And here they are raising taxes, telling people to work for less. How do people make ends meet here? No wonder they lost so handily in Regina Northeast and so few of them actually worked. Here they have members over there hollering about this. But how can they expect people to live? How can they expect people to live?

Well I do want to welcome our new member from Regina Northeast since our last Throne Speech. And it's been a pleasure, it's been a great pleasure to get out and knock on doors in Centre, in Fairview, Meewasin, actually in Swift Current. I've been out in Swift Current and Melfort and Kindersley as well. But boy, I wonder if any of them actually knocked on doors and if the member who's hollering from his seat right now, if he was out in Regina Northeast and tried to sell what they were trying to sell in Northeast. No wonder they lost so handily.

What we heard, what we heard on the doorstep were the concerns around the scandals, the scandals: the GTH, the GTH, the bypass, the education cuts to the schools in Regina Northeast, and of course the PST on restaurant meals, kids' clothes, and construction.

And yet we saw a tax cut for the very wealthiest. We saw that tax . . . How does that circle get squared here in Saskatchewan? How do you say you're standing up for the people of Saskatchewan when you're doing that kind of thing? Raising taxes, keeping wages low, and then say you're standing up for Saskatchewan. Well I can see why it's so easy to sit down when you get a tough question on that.

People in Regina Northeast didn't believe in the Sask Party doomsday narrative. They see their neighbours losing jobs,

losing their house. And this is one stat that they can't deny. Here we know that notices of intention on home foreclosures in Saskatchewan increased 204 per cent in the last decade, climbing from 392 notices in 2008 to 1,192 in 2017. And if the trend for the first three months of 2018 holds, there will be this year, Mr. Speaker, 1,788 foreclosures in 2018. How can that possibly be good news?

How can they possibly say over there they're standing up for the people of Saskatchewan? How can they possibly say that when people are losing their homes, losing their homes? Not one word was mentioned in this Throne Speech about housing — not one word. I can't believe it, the nerve. And then they say they're standing up for the people of Saskatchewan. They're sitting down. Or you might see them out by the recycling bin looking for new parts for their speech.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just thought it was so rich when the member from Martensville . . . In the Throne Speech they talked about pipeline and they know that over the 11 years that they've been in power not 1 inch, not 1 inch of pipeline has been built to tidewater since they've been in power. And they've had Stephen Harper for how many years that they could've done something, but they didn't do it. And now all of the sudden here they are making this as part of their new vision. Where have they been for 11 years, Mr. Speaker? Where have they been?

Well talk about waking up. These folks are tired and worn out and I have to say, and we have out on the doorstep of this legislature . . . Now I see that there's a few empty seats. Maybe they're out there meeting with the people of SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union] right now. Because people from SGEU and from the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] and others are asking, where did the money go? Where did the money go? And I've got to tell you, the former premier, I loved when he got up every time and he said, I can tell you where the money went. And he'd huff and he'd puff and he'd talk about this and that. And it never added up.

And all you've got to look at is that the bypass and the GTH and all of that, and you've got to say, I wonder, is that where the money went? Did the money go . . . And you know, Mr. Speaker, I've talked a lot about big money in politics. Sometimes we wonder, is there a connection? Is there a connection? Because they don't want to go there. They don't want to go there at all. They won't go there. This is the wild west.

So, Mr. Speaker, some of my concerns . . . And I want to talk specifically about some of the things we see and we hear about. They have found a renewed interest in the survivors of the Sixties Scoop, and we hope that that's legitimate and they will honour that and they will do the right thing. But this government is notorious — notorious — for dropping the ball at the last moment.

We worry about this. These people have been harmed. They've been damaged and they want redress. This is a very serious issue, so let's not play politics with this, Mr. Speaker. Let's do the right thing. And of course not one mention of Truth and Reconciliation, nothing at all. Nothing about the Calls to Action — completely absent.

And, Mr. Speaker, one area that I was looking for was something to address the issue that we called out last May when it came to employment in the public sector. Mr. Speaker, if you remember, last May 7th, I raised questions in the House about the dismal numbers of people with disabilities working in the public sector.

[12:15]

And this is a headline from the CBC news story from May 7th, “Premier Moe pledges to ‘do better’ in hiring people with disabilities.” Well I tell you, Mr. Speaker, what the irony is, not one word mentioned in the Throne Speech about people with disabilities. In fact, that word was not even present in the Throne Speech — not one word.

He pledged over the summer to go back and see what they could do about that. We should be about 12, 14 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we’re at 2.1 per cent. What happened? What happened? We saw over the last five years that the numbers have decreased by 92, a reduction of 27 per cent. This is what — and I’m quoting from the news article — this is what the Premier said. I quote:

“We have targets across the government of Saskatchewan with respect to people with disabilities and I would put forward . . . [they’ve been] aggressive targets and I would also say they have not been met,” said Premier Scott Moe.

He goes on to say, and I quote:

“We need to have a discussion as a government of Saskatchewan how we can do better on behalf of people . . . [of] this province.”

Do you think, Mr. Speaker, this would be the opportunity to say something about people with disabilities? Would it not be appropriate to say, this is the time we’re going to do better, and this is the plan? So we’ll have some questions about that, Mr. Speaker, over the weeks ahead. What have they done on this front? Have they become completely silent on it? And we know there’s a federal bill before the House of Commons right now about addressing barriers for people who live with disabilities and how they access public spaces. So what is happening there?

And as I said, I was very disappointed to see in the Throne Speech not one word about homelessness or affordability for housing. That’s a big issue for people in Saskatoon. It’s as if that issue has gone away, and that’s not right.

Not one word about fixing the lobbyist registration, or registry, and the loopholes that exist. And of course every day I raise the issue, and I don’t need to get into it again but how this government takes in big money right across this country and has no problems with it, has absolutely no problems. All the other provinces are stepping up, and the federal government, about fixing what really is a problem that has become an issue in democracy, making sure that elections belong to the people of that province and that it’s a level playing field. But we’re not, we’re not seeing any interest from this government at all. In fact they’re very happy to take as much money as they can and pump out the rhetoric that they have.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I have to also say the GTH thing won’t go away. It’s a debacle that we see day after day. And now we’re

seeing the STC, the bus issue. They are subsidizing one of the most wealthiest companies in this country. And how does that square, how does that square for standing up for the people of Saskatchewan? The minister, after having this brought to his attention, appears to be interested in maybe moving on this, but we have to wait to see how fast he moves on that. He seems more interested in protecting that contract than the social contract to the people of Saskatchewan over the STC, where the question very legitimately today, so how can you say you’re standing up for the people of Saskatchewan when you’re standing up for Loblaw but you won’t stand up for people who need to go to their oncology appointment? How can you even begin to say that’s standing up? That takes a lot of gall to do that kind of thing. So, Mr. Speaker, I have a lot of questions about that and that’s why I’m supporting the amendment.

Well, Mr. Speaker, people all over this province are deeply worried. They’re deeply worried and there’s little here that really addresses their concerns. They’re out of work; they have a hard time making ends meet, particularly with this job-killing tax increase of PST to construction and restaurant meals. And while we see from this side of the House, the government side of the House is pointing fingers — it’s not us; it’s not our fault. Well it really is your fault. It really is their fault, Mr. Speaker. We’ve seen their failed costly megaprojects, and we need more money in our schools.

So in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, this Premier and this government is clearly not up to the challenge that’s facing Saskatchewan people. They’re tired, and as I say, they’re busy rummaging through the recycling bin. So I’m proud to second the amendment my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview has put forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to stand in the House today to speak to the Throne Speech. Before I start though, I will say that I will not be supporting the amendment put forward by the members from the opposition, but in fact will be in support of the Throne Speech.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I start addressing specific issues within the Throne Speech, there are some people I would like to thank. I would like to thank my constituency associate, Kelly Zazula. Kelly does an absolutely fabulous job. She’s been with me for over 10 years. And she’s the first, most of the time, the first person that my constituents have the opportunity to be in contact with. And she does a wonderful job making them feel welcome, but really going to bat and making sure that their concerns are being addressed.

So I really do appreciate the hard work that she does for the constituents of Regina Rochdale, but also the residents of Saskatchewan. It’s people like Kelly that really . . . They just kind of epitomize what employees in Saskatchewan’s all about, people who are not afraid to go above and beyond helping other people, as was pointed out in the Throne Speech.

People in Saskatchewan . . . I know there’s a very different idea of what the opposition feels that people in Saskatchewan believe and are, and what we are. You know, the member opposite right

away stated that when there was an issue with the farmer passing away that . . . I think she stated that in fact they should have looked to the government for help. That's not how people in Saskatchewan operate. That's not how we work. We automatically roll up our sleeves. We get the job done ourselves, sometimes reaching out to neighbours and friends, but that's how we think and that's how we operate. In fact that's what makes our province so wonderful, in that people in Saskatchewan do for themselves. They do not expect the government to do for them. They do for themselves.

The Throne Speech has a title called "Standing Up for Saskatchewan." Now I know some of the members of the opposition kind of made kind of unusual comments, saying that we were sitting down. That is absolutely not the case. If there's one thing that we can be very proud of is that our Premier, our Minister of Justice, our Minister of the Environment, this past week they stood up. They took the federal government to task. They are not sitting down, as the members opposite may say, but in fact are taking a very strong stance and supporting business, individuals, residents of Saskatchewan.

The federal Liberal government, Trudeau's government, is absolutely . . . They're just myopic in that they do not . . . You can tell they don't understand business and they don't understand what really happens when you stand up and you make policies that in fact don't take into account people's lives, and what happens when you bring forward something such as the carbon tax and in fact just don't even consult, just say, this is what we're going to do.

You know, it's so reminiscent of his father, Pierre Trudeau, when he was the prime minister. At that point he decided they were going to change over from imperial to metric. Now a lot of people still to this day cannot figure out why they made that change. Well they made the change because they realized gas prices were going up. And they figured that if they moved to litres instead of gallons, people wouldn't understand and be upset.

Well you know what? The people in BC today, under a provincial NDP government, they're upset. They've got a carbon tax; hasn't helped them any. You realize in Vancouver their gas, a litre is about \$1.63, \$1.64. You know if we look in imperial, that's over \$7 a gallon. I mean I think people would just like lose their mind thinking that in fact they would be paying that much. Yet we have a government there, an NDP government there, saying people don't mind paying a little bit more. Well there's a little bit more and then there's ridiculous, and a carbon tax is ridiculous. It has direct negative impact on every household, on every individual. I know it will have a very negative impact, if they are successful, on my constituency of Regina Rochdale which borders right up to Evraz Place, the steel mill. There will be . . . I mean why would any business want to conduct business with Evraz Place when they will not be able to be competitive with steel mills in other countries, to our neighbours, to the United States? So that is a direct negative impact to my constituency of Regina Rochdale because there will be massive job loss.

So when we have the members opposite saying we are not standing up for Saskatchewan, absolutely we are. We're standing up by saying unacceptable. Here in Saskatchewan we're coming forward with very smart initiatives to combat what they call, you know, climate change.

But now the Prime Minister has changed his verbiage. He no longer talks about a carbon tax which is what he was talking about. Now he's talking about pollution. And he said every polluter should be punished. Well of course people don't like the word "pollution." It's a negative word. But in fact he realized that in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick are coming out strong, saying a carbon tax is very detrimental to each and every resident of Canada, but in our provinces, and we're standing up for it. So he's had to change his verbiage because he realizes that the majority of people in Canada are not in favour of what the federal Liberal Trudeau government is doing. It's a very, very adverse effect on, like I said, each and every home.

I've had the opportunity to meet individuals and organizations from across Canada as my role as the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians Chair. And with that we've had the opportunity to do outreach along with my colleague from Saskatchewan Rivers. In fact two weeks ago we were in Alberta, meeting with women organizations. And you know, a lot of times people say well, you know, I'm sure you're just talking about women's issues.

Well we'll tell you what women's issues are. When we talk to those different organizations and those individuals, we say, well what concerns you the most? And do you know what those women tell us? It's the economy. It's jobs. It's safety in our community. It's education. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's exactly what this Throne Speech is. It addresses each and every one of those issues. So when the opposition or other people say, oh well, you know, those are women's issues, women's issues you bet they are. And it's called everybody's issues because we as women are concerned about the economy. We are concerned about safety within our communities, and that is what is being addressed by this Throne Speech.

This Throne Speech covers so many different aspects that in fact when they say it's just leftovers, that's very demeaning. I think that they should probably look at this fully and realize that in fact there is some real direct action that is being taken.

A good example is on page 8 where we've introduced . . . It was introduced in the United Kingdom, and I'm going to read directly from this, from the Throne Speech:

It was introduced in the United Kingdom and named in honour of Clare Wood, a woman who was murdered by her partner and was unaware of his violent past.

Clare's father fought for more disclosure by police to protect domestic violence victims.

This legislation will provide a framework for Saskatchewan police services to disclose relevant information about someone's violent or abusive past to intimate partners who may be at risk.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is a very positive move because we know that we have a very high incident rate of interpersonal violence. What do we have to do? Smart legislation like this that is moving our province forward. So that's what we mean by standing up for Saskatchewan, is ensuring that we have laws that directly will benefit individuals.

[12:30]

Because our high record of interpersonal violence, that's not a record that we can be proud of, but that in fact our government is ensuring that we are being very proactive. One of those things we did last year was open up the women's shelter in Melfort — very proactive in that ensuring what can we do to . . . and work with education with women.

One of the things we talk about in the Throne Speech is education, and I know they glossed over it over there. But in fact all of us know that if you have a well-educated population, the demands on our health care systems goes down. Our economy goes up. People have the ability to obtain a good job. And with that, they're able to support their families, feed their kids, and ensure that their life is better. And that's the issues that are being addressed in this Throne Speech.

This is not leftovers. This is real. This is important legislation. This is a fabulous blueprint that each and every one of us can be proud of because, Mr. Deputy Speaker, absolutely there's challenges in our province, but we are putting our shoulder to the wheel. We're not just ignoring it like the opposition would just want us to spend more, spend more, spend more. Well who do they think is going to pay for this? We have to be very prudent and make sure that in fact when we put forward a blueprint like this, that it's doable, that we are not racking up big debts for future generations. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm just so pleased that we have the opportunity to deal with real issues in the Throne Speech.

Now we talk about the new Saskatchewan Hospital. Now there's a really good example of dealing with a current . . . well not a current, but a pressing issue of mental health because for years that Saskatchewan Hospital . . . I mean I live in a 100-year-old house. Now it's been maintained and we're very proud of our home. But a 100-year-old hospital, where people are falling through the steps, where it no longer meets today's needs, there's nothing to be proud about that kind of a heritage building. But in fact what we needed to do is tear down that old structure and build a new mental health facility that meets the needs of today because we do realize that in fact there are pressing needs for a mental health facility that is going to be able to serve the population of Saskatchewan. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have addressed that.

You know, when the opposition say, well they're just sitting down — absolutely not. We have made sure that education has been addressed, such as building new schools. In my constituency of Regina Rochdale, I'm so pleased that I have one of the new joint-use schools that those students, you know, you can tell, they feel very lucky to be able to attend classrooms that are state of the art.

And also too, you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the really smart things about these new schools is that they are looking to really meet the needs of students today. As I had a member statement earlier today that talked about an anti-bullying workshop we did because we know that bullying is very . . . And there's different kinds of bullying, both physically, mental, cyberbullying. How do we address that in our kids today?

Well one of the smart things they've done in building and

designing these new joint-use schools is that the washrooms . . . Washrooms in older typical built schools were just an absolute perfect spot for bullying. Well the design of the new schools in fact does not allow that to take place. And so because of that we are really addressing how do we meet the needs of today.

So I must say, my students that are able to attend that new joint-use school that was built on time and on budget, we can be very proud of those kind of commitments that we've made to the province because for years, for years we didn't have any decent new schools being built. In fact the opposition was busy closing them. We've got a growing population. We have needs to ensure that new schools are being built and the other ones are being maintained, and we've made that commitment with very significant renovations to schools that were needed.

So I think we can be very proud of our record for what we've done in building schools so that our children can be educated. Because as we know, education is cornerstone of our province. It's the cornerstone of really what we are as society. We know that if students are educated, they have the opportunity to have a much richer life.

I know that one of the commitments that the Commonwealth has made is that every girl by 2030 will have the opportunity to have grade 12 education. Now I know when I was attending a conference, people say oh, that's so wonderful; there's going to be, you know, countries in Africa that are going to have that. And I thought, we need to focus here at home because we have so many communities and so many areas in our province where in fact we do not have graduation rates obtaining that. We need to focus in on that.

And how do we do that? By providing proper facilities so that in fact our students have the ability to succeed and be the best they can. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to say that I'm just so pleased with the strength of this government and the resilience to say we are prepared to stand up for Saskatchewan. We are prepared to stand up to a federal Liberal Tory . . . Trudeau government that in fact does not listen to the people of Saskatchewan.

I mean just this last week we had the Prime Minister out there proposing cash for votes. I thought buying votes was illegal, and I really think that, you know, to me it just makes me kind of like scratch my head and say, really? Did nobody think to call him on this because to me it . . . Like I said, whenever somebody says to me there's a cheque coming for you in the mail, I kind of wonder, did I win that cruise? No, that's a scam. Did I, you know . . . Any of those kind of . . . You get something, you know, a cheque coming to you, chances are you've been taken in. And somehow I feel that the provinces that are not taking the federal Liberals to task, well they're going to think they all got that cruise and in fact they're just going to get nothing but a lot of heartache and a lot of disappointment.

But like I said, we've got a Prime Minister that thinks nothing about buying votes, and I think people in Saskatchewan . . . I know people in Saskatchewan are a whole lot smarter than that and are not going to buy into his cash-for-votes schemes, and that in fact we have a Premier who is prepared to go to the wall for people of Saskatchewan and will not be supporting a carbon tax, and that in fact we could be very proud of our Minister of the

Environment for again proposing very innovative ideas that in fact are going to move the needle on carbon emissions.

So with that, I am going to close by saying I do not support the ill-founded amendment from the opposition, but in fact will be supporting the Throne Speech entitled “Standing Up for Saskatchewan.” Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's my pleasure to join into replies to the Throne Speech in 2018. I'm going to take a little bit of a walk down memory lane. I was reminded walking in by David Baxter that this is my last Throne Speech, so it's something where it's a bit reflective for me. I was first with these throne speeches with the Government of Saskatchewan in 2008. I worked as a researcher in cabinet planning with some very good friends and mentors. I wanted to learn how government worked before I got involved, so some good friends I met down there were Wolfgang Langenbacher and Marian Zerr, and they were mentors to me. And they really were influential, not only in my career as a public servant and then moving on, but also as I became an MLA. And Wolfgang passed away a couple years ago and I think about him a lot. He used to come over for Sunday coffees and I miss him a lot and he was one of my mentors. I want to give a shout-out to him in his memory and thank him for all his help.

Also when we look back on some of our time here, we look back at throne speeches in the past and kind of compare them, as the member from Saskatoon Fairview did, compared them to '17. I'm going to go back and compare them to a little bit further back. And I know that there's a lot of things that have happened in Saskatchewan over the past decade and I was honoured to be involved with the ones as an MLA and as a researcher in the government caucus office. That was my last job before I became an MLA in 2011.

In the caucus office for all us MLAs that aren't in cabinet, doing a wonderful job assisting us with writing speeches, doing research, helping us with any of the constituency work that we have, that we need assistance to make sure the people in our constituency, our constituents, get the best help possible . . . And for the last few years we've had John Saltasuk as our chief of staff, Paula Steckler, Hayley. There's Tayler there now, and people have come and gone. Lee Guse is there in communications, Kim Rathwell, Karalee in the front office. And they all do a great job for all of us as MLAs and I think we should thank them more than we do, and I want to put that on the record as well and thank them publicly for all the hard work they do to make sure that we can do our jobs. So thank you very much, guys.

A lot has changed since 2008 in Saskatchewan, a lot in this Chamber actually. I was thinking about it during question period. I was looking over at the member from Regina Rosemont. And when I started in 2008 as a staffer, the member from Regina Rosemont had just become a newly elected MLA. And he's been here almost, well, as long as I have, and a few things have changed. When he was first elected he didn't have hair, and when I was a researcher I did have hair. That has changed now because after three kids I've lost a bit and he's grown some after he had a kid, which is amazing to me to see that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But we also learn a lot in how you go about your business in this Chamber and how you become . . . when you first get elected you're very much . . . want to . . . I think you're more aggressive. I think you want to do everything you can as quickly as you can for your constituents, and do as much as you can for your team. And throughout the years you become more relaxed. Maybe not the member from Cannington, but most of us become more relaxed throughout the years.

And I think we can learn a lot from each other as colleagues from both sides of the House. And I think from our standpoint, I think from my standpoint I've learned a lot from all of the members in this House and I thank them for their mentorship. And from both sides of the House, you pick and choose some of the habits you see and you don't see, and I think it's been beneficial throughout our career so far.

I also want to thank a lot of people that have helped us get to where we were in Regina Walsh Acres. I know it was considered an NDP seat for a long time. We've won that seat twice, and it wasn't based on my good looks and charming personality. We had a fantastic team at both elections. And there's a lot of people to thank, but first and foremost is my wife. She has been my rock. She is looking after our children and helped out in campaigns. And she also went through and finished an M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration], had three beautiful children, and worked on two campaigns, three campaigns now, and it's been an amazing adventure with her. And she is always there and my biggest supporter and also one of my confidantes. And I respect her opinion, and if I have an issue I go to her first and foremost because she is a lot smarter than I am. So from the bottom of my heart . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well maybe, maybe she didn't choose right when she married, my colleague said, but I think she's pretty smart nonetheless. And I thank her from the bottom of my heart with everything she has helped us with. We can't do this without our spouses and I think everyone here feels the same way in that regard as well. So thank you very much, Larissa.

And our changes . . . We have three kids now, and I think I look through the lens of public policy more now as a father than ever. Very important for me to ensure my children and the children of our province have a better future and more opportunities than we have. And I think that rolls in nicely to our Throne Speech and some of the comments that I'm going to make about standing up for Saskatchewan in 2018 and beyond.

One of the things I was listening to from the other members across the way, the member from Saskatoon Centre — and I love answering this question when it comes from socialists; I love answering this question — he asked, where did the money go? And I will be sure to tell him throughout this whole speech where the money went. So that's the first question I'd like to ask, because there are a lot of things that we've invested to make sure the future of our children and their children is in good hands, Mr. Speaker.

[12:45]

And I want to first start off with answering that question. So one of the places the money went was reduced operating debt by over \$674 million, which is 10 per cent, when we came into government in 2007. That achieves \$1.2 billion in interest

payment savings. We saved \$1.2 billion in interest payments to reinvest into our province, Mr. Speaker. Tax reductions have saved Saskatchewan people \$5.6 billion, which results in 112,000 people being removed from provincial tax rolls, 4.96 billion in personal income tax cuts, 1.37 billion in education property tax savings for residents at \$100 million a year.

Mr. Speaker, that's investing in our future and investing in our province. Because here on this side of the House, and I've said it a lot, we believe that people of Saskatchewan know better to do with their money than government. And that is one fundamental policy that we'll never remove from, Mr. Speaker, and it's something that I'll always believe in. The people that earn the money and make the money know how best to spend it to make their lives better throughout their day-to-day lives.

Mr. Speaker, infrastructure. Invested \$12.5 billion in infrastructure. That's over \$1 billion a year. 1.5 billion dollars in infrastructure for our health care system, more than double the previous 10-year period. These projects include — that was mentioned in this Throne Speech — a children's hospital, which is close to the hearts of many parents, if you've ever had a sick child; 14 new long-term care facilities; Moose Jaw Hospital, the Wigmore Hospital, which the two members from Moose Jaw fought hard for and ensured that they had a top-of-the-line facility for their constituents; the Saskatchewan North Battleford Hospital, which will be opening soon.

Mr. Speaker, talking about new approaches, P3 [public-private partnership] approaches in infrastructure, building the Saskatchewan Hospital and the Swift Current long-term care home, we've saved millions of dollars using innovative approaches. And that's once again money we've saved so we can reinvest it into ensuring we have a strong future for our children in the generations to follow.

Nearly \$8.4 billion for highways. We've had some fantastic Highways ministers, Mr. Speaker, and they've invested . . . Our government has invested in 13 000 kilometres of road repairs or rebuilds. Nearly \$1.62 billion to build and repair schools: 42 new replacement schools; 23 major renovations. Over half of Saskatchewan's schools have been repaired or renovated. Mr. Speaker, that . . . [inaudible] . . . schools are pretty important to us in Regina as Regina MLAs.

So the new schools have been built in Regina, and the older ones are three joint-use open in Regina, fall of 2017: École Harbour Landing School and St. Kateri Tekakwitha Schools; École Wascana Plains School; St. Elizabeth; Plainsview School; St. Nicholas; Scott Collegiate replacement school at \$6.84 million; École Connaught Community School, replacement school, \$5.897 million. Sacred Heart Community School was \$27.4 million. Mr. Speaker, Campbell Collegiate; the North Central shared facility, Mr. Speaker, at \$31 million; Seven Stones School; Arcola School replacement; Douglas Park School replacement.

Mr. Speaker, these are all investments in one of the things that has become most important to me — our future and investments in our children. They have spaces now where learning is better. It's more conducive to a learning environment. There are more technology in these schools, so it's easier for kids to make sure that they are getting the best, top-quality education. So I believe

as a government that's one of our priorities, is ensuring our children have access to top-quality education.

Mr. Speaker, more on answering the question from the Saskatoon Centre MLA. Where has the money gone? We've invested nearly \$16.5 billion in Crown capital, which is more than double what the NDP did in that same time period. Health care, Mr. Speaker, which means top of mind, and one of our priorities is investing in people. Since 2006, 67 per cent increase in health investments; 900 more doctors and 3,400 more nurses of all designations in Saskatchewan; 11.8 million annual for autism services, which is a 2,350 per cent increase.

They used to call Saskatchewan basically an autism wasteland, Mr. Speaker. That's true. And these investments in some of our most vulnerable people and I . . . 2,350 per cent increase. Those are remarkable numbers, Mr. Speaker. And I think it's something that we know there's more work to be done, and we continue to say that. This isn't about saying that we're done with this file, but the file's been moved forward substantially over the last 10 years. And it's something that we should be able to raise as one of our priorities, ensuring vulnerable people get the services they need.

Mr. Speaker, over double funding to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency, 117 per cent increase in the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. Three billion invested in mental health and addictions since 2007. These continue to invest in our most vulnerable because I think that's what a government is judged by, is how the most vulnerable are doing in our society. And our government, throughout our decade, has ensured that the most vulnerable in our society have continued to be a top priority to ensure that they are receiving the services they need.

Mr. Speaker, education. Over two and a half times more education funding; compared to '07, a 164 per cent increase. A 33 per cent increase for school divisions in operating since '07. I mentioned earlier 42 new schools, 23 major renovations. There's 840 more teachers since 2007. Created over 7,000 new child care spaces, which is important, Mr. Speaker, because we know that parents are going to work every day, and having places that they are able to ensure that their kids are being safely looked after is something that a government should take seriously. And we've shown through our actions that we take that seriously as well.

Mr. Speaker, in social services, over 1.18 billion invested in 2008. A \$54 million funding increase since 2017, the largest social services budget in Saskatchewan's history. Funding for income assistance programs has increased by 268 million since 2007. Funding for child and family services has increased by \$182 million since '07. Advanced education since '07: investments over 9.1 billion in post-secondary; 406 million in rebates paid to the graduate retention program to approximately 69,000 graduates, the only graduate retention program in the country.

And this is one of the reasons I wanted to get involved in politics, Mr. Speaker, is to ensure that more young people stayed in Saskatchewan.

We had a brain drain in the '90s, Mr. Speaker, where most of our talented young people left for other provinces because they didn't see an opportunity to succeed in our Saskatchewan. And I think that is something that was the fault of the past government. I'm

not here to lay a lot of blame, but some of it is that they did not give opportunities to our young people. And I know a lot of members on this side of the House wanted to get involved in politics to ensure that young people stayed in their communities, helped build their communities, make our rural communities stronger, and make sure that there is another generation to keep our province strong and ensure that we are successful.

Mr. Speaker, the graduate retention program is one of the things that ensured people stayed in our province. People that were graduating took advantage of it, were able to stay in our province. They got \$20,000 back for working here for five years. And I think it's one of the good things we did to ensure that the young people stayed in our province, and it's been successful. Over 69,000 young people stayed in our province, Mr. Speaker. And I think that is one of the legacies our government's going to have is that they ensured a generation after the '90s did not leave our province to start their successful careers elsewhere, Mr. Speaker.

Advanced education in our University of Regina has received funding over the last 10 years to improve areas like the towers. We have more towers at the University of Regina to ensure that they have more residence capacity.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of other things in our Throne Speech that I'm quite proud of, but I wanted to talk about the amendment for one second, Mr. Speaker, brought forward by the member from Saskatoon Fairview:

That this Assembly does not support the agenda outlined in the [scratched out something else] Throne Speech because it lacks vision, fails to take action to create jobs while people and the economy are hurting . . .

Fails to take action for jobs. Coming from a party whose government had the worst job creation record in the country for 16 years, and they're going to give us advice on how to create jobs. That's something pretty interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that all of a sudden they found the light and now they want to become the job creators of the future.

But, Mr. Speaker, we continue to be successful in creating jobs in our province. For 49 quarters our population has grown, and it continues to grow our jobs in sectors as well, Mr. Speaker. That's not to say we're aren't facing some headwinds in certain industries. But our job creation record as a whole over the last 10 years, I would be more than willing to go out and have debates about our job creation record and their job creation record when they had the honour to form government for 16 years. And I think that the people of Saskatchewan have realized that we take the economy seriously, and we've been worried about the economy and working on ensuring that there's a strong economy in Saskatchewan for the last 10 years.

And they found the light and they started asking questions about it this question period, Mr. Speaker. I think that's what represents this side of the House and the opposition side of the House, and why the seats are distributed as they are, Mr. Speaker.

There's a few more highlights I want to talk about and some of the things that we're hitting on. And we had a chance to talk to some of the large-city mayors yesterday. And Mayor Bater actually talked about our PTR response program and how they've

been able to handle more warrants and . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . PRT. Thank you, member from Regina Douglas Park. That's the first thing you got right today. So I appreciate that. And Mr. Bater, the mayor of The Battlefords, talked about how it worked with Amber Alert, which we had in a member statement earlier today.

And the fact that a few things that we've added which they should be happy about is *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* to create a new critically ill adult leave to allow family members to take up to 15 weeks to leave for their care for a family member. Also the expanded parental leave from 37 to 63, which I think I'm done with, so I don't think that's going to affect me personally. But I also believe that we're going to work hard to ensure parents that want to take that extended leave have that actual opportunity. I think that's a step in the right direction. I would agree that I think it's something both sides of the House will agree on is changing the employment Act to ensure that parents have more time to spend before and after their child is born.

So there's a few more Speech from the Throne highlights I'd like to get through before I'm finished, Mr. Speaker. Actually there's so much in the Speech from the Throne, I wish I had half an hour.

But, Mr. Speaker, an introduction of legislation on trespassing laws to better address the balance between members of the public and rights of rural landowners. I know going around the province, there's been meetings with rural landowners and talking about rural crime. And I think it's a very important issue that we've taken seriously on this side. And having those consultations we've heard that we have to move forward to ensure that crime . . . And property owners have rights and are able to ensure that they feel safe in their own homes. Can you imagine not feeling safe in your own homes when your neighbours are so far away?

So moving forward there's going to be some legislation put in place after some consultation period with people across the province to ensure that people once again are feeling more safe in their homes in rural and remote Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, one of the big reasons that I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne is we'll deliver a balanced budget for 2019-2020. And I believe that's one the most important things we can do to secure the future for next generations is to balance the budget so that we're not off-loading our spending and then spending money that our children are going to have to repay in the future. I think that's something the federal government should pay heed of and look to our province with some guidance, because one the biggest reasons that Mr. Trudeau may be in trouble is he's spending money that our kids are going to have to repay. And I think that's something that the people of Canada are going to be very tired of, Mr. Speaker.

Also I'd be remiss if I didn't mention the carbon tax. I think the carbon tax is something that we'll continue to be on the right side of the population of Saskatchewan. They know that we have allies across the country coming on board now. Premier Ford in Ontario, the premier in PEI [Prince Edward Island]. Premier Pallister just came on board, so they will not be implementing a federal carbon tax. And our Premier has been the forefront, the leader of this file saying he will stand with the people of Saskatchewan and ensure that we are not having to deal with Mr. Trudeau's carbon tax.

And I believe that our Premier has been the leader across the country on this file. And we are proud that we'll continue to ensure that a carbon tax will not be implemented on the people of the province. It affects all our sectors, our mining sectors, our agriculture sector. All the things we do best, the federal Liberals want to tax. And it's something that every consumer, every family member, every family's going to have to pay more for groceries, for diapers, for food, for heating, for lighting, Mr. Speaker.

And I can't believe that the members opposite are not on board with 80 per cent . . . Over 80 per cent of the people of this province are against the carbon tax. And there's a group of people on that side that are not standing with Saskatchewan, and they're going to feel that in 2020, Mr. Speaker. I think that they're going to be shown once again that one of the major issues in our province is ensuring competitiveness, and they are tired of having the Liberals put taxes after taxes on them — small business tax, corporate tax, income splitting, a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker.

And I think it's time that the members on the other side get on board with our Premier and lead with example and say no to Justin Trudeau's carbon tax. I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne and not the makeshift amendment.

The Speaker: — All right, is the Assembly ready for the question? No. This House now has reached the hour of adjournment. This House stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:00.]

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