



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

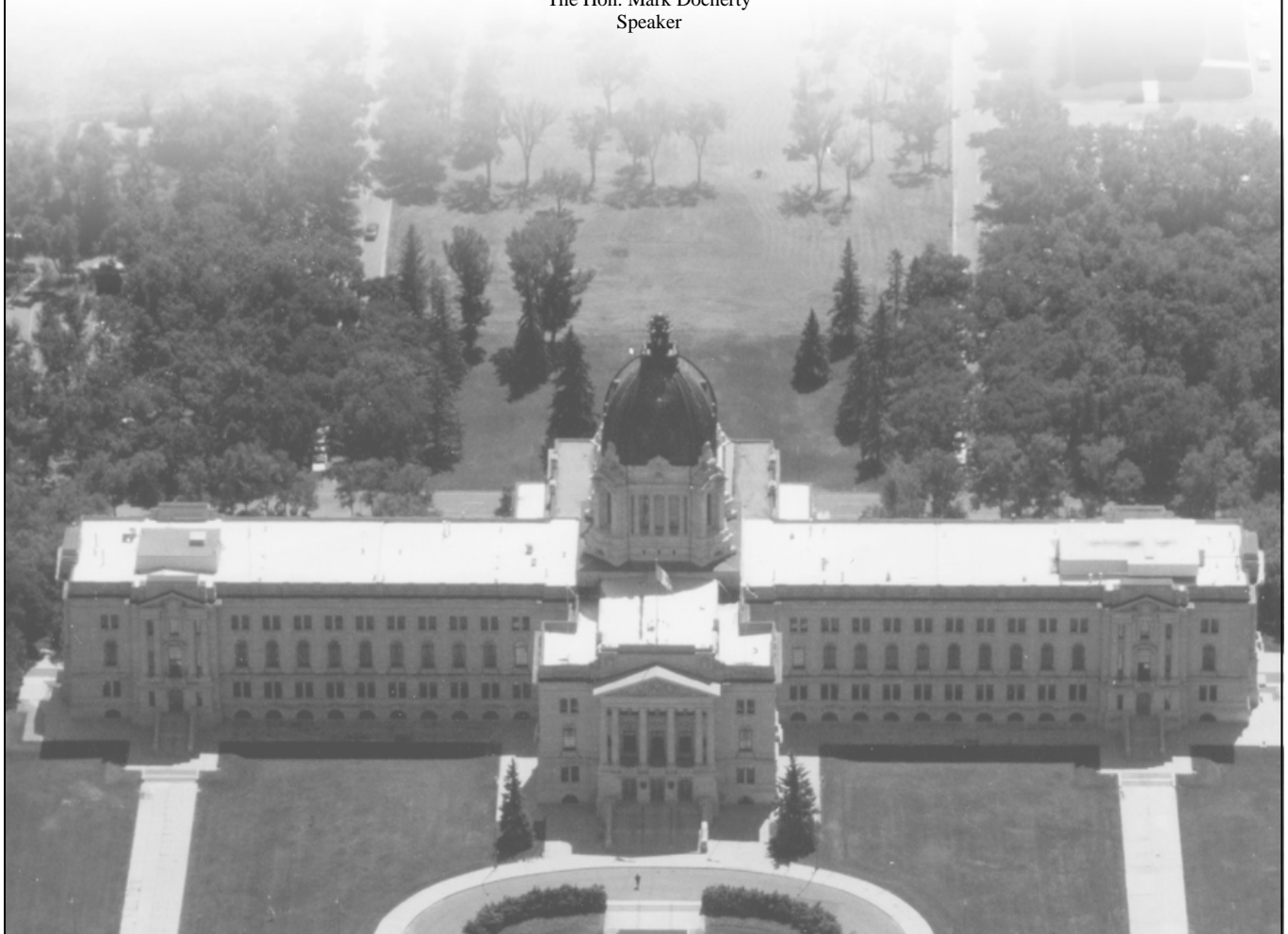
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. Mark Docherty  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**  
**3rd Session — 28th Legislature**

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

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

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

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

**Principal Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyak

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melfort.

**Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a very special guest with us this afternoon. Cadence Flaata is here today, and she's brought with her her parents, Darren and Carla Flaata from Melfort. And she has some escorts here in your Speaker's gallery. So we've got Lorne Bennett, Kelly Sinnamon, Lorne Burles.

And this is a special day. You know, Deon Marquis, a man who should be mentioned, the staff sergeant of Melfort, put this together for them today. And Cadence was actually the honorary staff sergeant in Melfort, and the one claim to fame that she has in her time of ruling the city of Melfort, she put her Aunt Jackie in prison for the day. So that was a great day. So we just want to ask if everyone would welcome us.

Oh, and I also should mention the grandparents are here with us today. I'm not sure where they're seated, but they are up here in the other gallery, the west gallery. So Dale and Iris Flaata, we want to welcome you all here today. So please join me in welcoming them all here today.

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

**Hon. Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with my colleague the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Melfort in welcoming Cadence to her Legislative Assembly. Mr. Speaker, I heard about Cadence's story a couple of weeks ago where she was the honorary chief boss at the Melfort detachment. And, Mr. Speaker, with some assistance from her family, her parents, and the Melfort RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] detachment, we were able to get them down here in a very short amount of time recognizing Disability Awareness Month, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to be able to say, with the powers that I have as Minister of Social Services, Mr. Speaker, which are sometimes limited, I would like to welcome you to your Legislative Assembly, and I would like to confer on you the honour of honorary junior minister of Social Services today. Thank you very much for . . . [inaudible].

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

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I too want to welcome Cadence and her family and everybody here to this Legislative Assembly. I'm excited to hear that you're the honorary interim minister of Social Services and you get to have the day today. We need to chat a little bit.

So I'm really excited that you got to be shown some honorary respects from the RCMP detachment in Melfort and that you were able to be the honorary chief boss there. That would have

been very exciting. Put your auntie in jail, that's pretty impressive. So you did a lot that month. And so it's really wonderful to see that the RCMP were bringing awareness to Disability Awareness Month as well. And so I want to thank them for all the work that they do and also thank you, Cadence. So thank you for being here today.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I also want to bring attention to one of the RCMP officers that are in your gallery there, Lorne Burles. Lorne is a good friend of mine. He was on our slow-pitch team. So I've told some members here that I do play slow-pitch and Lorne can, you know, verify that. He was our third-base player, and it was always fun to play ball with you. But Lorne moved to Melfort so that he could work in the detachment in Melfort and got married and is expecting a baby. So so many good things happening in your world, and I look forward to seeing pictures of the new baby coming. And we keep in touch more so through Facebook now, but it's always nice to see him. So I want to welcome you all to your legislature. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of this Assembly, I would like to introduce you to lawn bowling athletes sitting in west gallery: Jordan Kos, Brandon Watson, Janet Watson, Lois Kos, and Bo Kos. Mr. Speaker, Jordan Kos, she has represented Bowls Canada in different countries: China, Australia, United States, and Wales. Brandon Watson has represented the Canada team in California and the United States. Mr. Speaker, I ask all the Assembly to join me welcoming these athletes in their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Pedersen:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce some very important guests here today through you and to you. In the east gallery, we have Irene Mosquito, an elder from the Mosquito First Nation who led me in a smudge just before the Chamber started sitting. And in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker, we have a number of guests, some of whom are from my constituency: plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters. We have Dallas Follick, Troy Knipple, Josh Urgan, Dannen Reiss, Brett Moore, Curtis Morgan, Landon Mohl, and Cody Summers.

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

**Mr. Bonk:** — To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to welcome some special guests all the way from Hungary here today. Sitting in the west gallery, we have Szerencsés Benjamin, Szerencsés Ana, Galcsik Gyöngyi, and Ispan Csaba. And they're here for a week to look at some good agricultural practices here in Saskatchewan. And I've known them for quite a while. I've been business partners with Benjamin and Ana's father for quite a while in Hungary. They're early adopters of good Saskatchewan technology.

Also here is my wife, who is kind of helping them navigate the city and as well as a bit of the language barrier here. And I'd like all members of the Assembly to welcome them to the Saskatchewan legislature.

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

Acres.

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to recognize a new friend of mine, Stephan Richard. He comes to us from New Brunswick. He's no stranger to the Legislative Assembly. There he worked for a couple different governments, and now he's here with Imperial Oil on a three-year work term. And he's living in the north part of Regina and helping out a few good local politicians to make sure that they are going to be successful in some upcoming campaigns. He's a very hard-working young man, and I appreciate his friendship and his support, and welcome him to our Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — Well welcome, everyone. I have a few guests to announce as well. So I'd like to inform the Assembly that Robert Park, 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 Rob to the Chamber.

And Rob has brought along some of his family members that I would like to address as well. So Maureen and Garnet Park, mom and dad, where are you? There they are up there, and his wife, Kendra Beliveau. Of interest to some of you Habs fans, yes she is a third cousin of Jean. So welcome all of you.

And one last announcement. I'd like to inform the Assembly that Hannah Dove will be joining us as a Page for this session. Good to have you with us, Hannah. All right. We welcome everyone to their Assembly.

Presenting petitions . . . oops, back. Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — To introduce guests.

**The Speaker:** — Go ahead.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my honour to welcome Rob Park's partner, Kendra Beliveau to this Assembly. Kendra is an incredible educator within our community. She's been sort of legendary over at Martin Collegiate and will be missed there greatly. I know she's taken on a new role at Campus Regina Public, and I know those students will certainly benefit from her role as a teacher. So it's an honour to welcome Kendra as well as the Parks to their Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan

to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Spiritwood, Medstead, Mayfair, Glenbush, and Chitek Lake. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned people, residents, businesses from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party's actions to foisting the PST [provincial sales tax] on construction — something that's greatly impacted our economy; something that's caused jobs to be lost, for investment to be lost, Mr. Speaker; and something that needs to be reversed.

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.

These petitions are signed by concerned people from Regina. We've collected them from people all across Saskatchewan. 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 clothing. Those who've signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the following: that the Sask Party government has already hiked PST to 6 per cent and applied it to everything from restaurant meals to children's clothing. They would also like to ensure that we are aware that the Sask Party government removed the PST exemption for children's clothes and that their decision is drastically impacting Saskatchewan families and businesses.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan want to bring to your attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals — even those living outside this province, Mr.

Speaker — to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties.

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 we know, Mr. Speaker, 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 outside Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people.

[13:45]

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

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

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

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to rise to present a petition to call on the government to reinstate funding and support for the spiritual care programs in this province's health care facilities.

These citizens wish to bring to your attention that spiritual care helps patients and their families toward achieving holistic wellness, and that Saskatchewan will be the only province within Canada to not fund this support for its citizens; that spiritual care provides a compassionate listening presence in times of crisis and the ability to respond to the spiritual and emotional needs of patients; that spiritual care supports families and patients in making difficult decisions; that it meets the needs of traditional First Nation, Inuit, and Métis people.

That professional, non-denominational, non-faith-specific spiritual care practitioners facilitate patients in obtaining comfort and support from within their own faith traditions; that local clergy and volunteers are only able to minister to patients from their own congregations and denominations; and without professional, non-denominational, non-faith-specific spiritual care practitioners, some patients have no one to meet their spiritual care needs.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan reinstate funding and support for spiritual care programs in this province's health care facilities.

This petition is signed by individuals from Osler and Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas

Park.

**Ms. Sarauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand here 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 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 one of the reasons 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.

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 government to pass legislation to ensure critical supports in the workplace, including reasonable accommodation and paid and unpaid leave for survivors of domestic violence.

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

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### First Poppy Presentation Honours Veterans

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Friday I was honoured to partake in the Royal Canadian Legion 2018 first poppy presentation along with my colleague the member from Regina Rochdale, as well as several colleagues from across the way.

Being presented a poppy by the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan was very special, as the poppy holds so much symbolism to our country. The first poppy was presented to His Honour at Government House, and in turn he presented the second poppy to the Second World War veteran and community leader, Harold Hague.

Mr. Speaker, donations made through the poppy campaign assist the Legion's valuable programs in support of our veterans and their families. The poppy is our visual pledge to honour Canadians and all of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice, so that we can enjoy our freedoms today.

Mr. Speaker, during the ceremony an author named Susan Raby-Dunne gave us insight and a history lesson on the poet John McCrae, who wrote "In Flanders Fields." Hearing the history behind the poet brought us all closer to the symbolism and true meaning of the poppy as we learned who John McCrae really was and his involvement in the war.

Canada will always be a leader in the world, and this is possible because of our veterans. We will remember them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

### **Saskatchewan Federation of Labour 2018 Convention**

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This past week I had the pleasure of attending the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour's 2018 convention here in Regina at the Queensbury Centre along with, I think, nearly the entire official opposition and as well as the Minister of Labour, Mr. Speaker. Many important topics were discussed as Saskatchewan's hard-working men and women gathered for three days of convention.

One of the highlights of the convention was the passing of the torch from former Saskatchewan Federation of Labour president Larry Hubich, to new president Lori Johb. Larry has been an integral part of the SFL [Saskatchewan Federation of Labour] leadership for the past 16 years and we thank him for his hard work on behalf of men and women working in Saskatchewan. One of the things that Larry will not be forgotten for is how he, on behalf of the SFL, put forward the appeal for the right-to-strike legislation, which in turn made the right to strike fundamental and entrenched in the Constitution, Mr. Speaker.

Lori Johb may be the new president, but she is not new to the labour movement, nor to the SFL. Starting in the 1990s, she served as a shop steward; courts facilitator; unit Chair; executive board member in her union, SEIU-West [Service Employees International Union-West], Mr. Speaker. She has also served on the council of the SFL, first as a vice-president, and has been secretary-treasurer since 2010. Her experience will no doubt help her build on the good work Larry Hubich ends for many men and women of the SFL.

Mr. Speaker, I invite everyone to thank Larry Hubich for his service to the SFL, to the people of Saskatchewan; and to congratulate Lori Johb as she takes on this exciting new role. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **New Community Health Centre Opens in Regina**

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, October 25th marked the official opening of a new community health centre in Regina. Mr. Speaker, The Gardens Community Health Centre employs a collaborative model of care that enables local teams to more effectively provide health services tailored to local needs.

This is an important part of our government's Connected Care strategy which focuses on providing the best possible care in the most appropriate setting. In the case of The Gardens, Mr. Speaker, this means focusing on seniors, managing complex needs and chronic conditions with an all-around approach in a community setting, whether that be in a clinic or in their home. With this approach, we can serve patients better while avoiding emergency department visits, freeing up the capacity to see more patients there.

Mr. Speaker, \$19 million has been dedicated to Connected Care

in this year's health budget, including 4.3 million for the Gardens in the seniors house call team expansion to support this new and innovative model of care. I'd like to recognize Dr. Lok, Dr. Bouwer, and their team for their leadership and everything they're doing in support of Regina's seniors. Their approach to care is truly patient-focused, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to seeing more initiatives like this into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Philippines Independence Day Kalayaan in Saskatoon**

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the pleasure of attending celebrations for the 120th Philippines Independence Day Kalayaan that were held by the Filipino-Canadian Association of Saskatoon on June 9th. It was an exciting day that began with a flag-raising at Saskatoon City Hall where the Leader of the Official Opposition brought greetings to the crowd. In the evening, the Filipino-Canadian Association of Saskatoon held a banquet dinner where nominations and awards were given to outstanding members of the Filipino community. Congratulations to all the winners and performers.

FILCAS [Filipino-Canadian Association of Saskatoon] has been in existence for 45 years and continues to grow. Filipinos in Saskatoon and surrounding area have contributed greatly to the economics and social growth of our province. FILCAS is a welcoming and invigorating community, and I'm happy to be able to attend community events and celebrate with them.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mar Complido and the planning committee as well as all the volunteers for putting on an exciting day filled with celebrations. I would like to also thank the community members for everything they do. You all provide us strength in diversity. Salamat po.

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

### **Achievement in Business Excellence Awards Presented in Saskatoon**

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Deputy Premier and I had an opportunity to attend the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce 35th Annual ABEX [Achievement in Business Excellence] Awards in Saskatoon on October 20th. The ABEX awards are the highest awards presented for Saskatchewan businesses each year.

Mr. Speaker, this year's winners included the Growth and Expansion Award, Canadian Organic Spice & Herb Company; Innovation, InfraReady Food Products; Marketing, Luxury Granite; New Venture, Ironside Energy Services. The Service Award went to the Historic Reesor Ranch. Young Entrepreneur went to Warman Physiotherapy & Wellness. Community Involvement went to Affinity Credit Union. Priority Focus went to Orano Canada.

Chamber Builder Award, Linda Machniak from The Battlefords; Community Leader Award, Donald E. Kramer and the Kramer family; Saskatchewan Business Hall of Fame, Meridian Surveys;

Export Award and Business of the Year, Industrial Machine & Mfg.

Mr. Speaker, the Business Leader of the Year Award went to a constituent of mine, someone known to many in this House — Grant J. Kook, for his excellent leadership and philanthropy. Weigers Financial and 252 Boutique were two additional Saskatoon Willowgrove businesses that were nominated.

The ABEX Awards recognize Saskatchewan enterprises for commitment to their employees and communities as well as their long-term growth that they have achieved. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating this year's ABEX winners and nominees for their business excellence. Thank you.

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

#### **Canadian Lawn Bowling Championship Held in Regina**

**Mr. Fiaz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to rise again in this House today and highlight the success of my friends up in the west gallery on their success in 2018 Canadian Lawn Bowling Championship that was held here in Regina. The best bowlers in Canada gathered here in the Queen City to compete for gold, Mr. Speaker. There were over 200 athletes, coaches, managers, and umpires from across Canada who competed in men's and women's fours, pairs, and singles over the course of eight days. I was very honoured to attend the opening ceremony, as well as rolling the ceremonial first Saskatchewan bowl.

Jordan Kos and Brandon Watson are members of Team Canada, and have just returned from representing our country at the North American Challenge held in California in October. Jordan also represented Canada in Wales this past July. They had also competed in Winnipeg this August, where Jordan took home a silver medal for Saskatchewan, and Brandon finished with fourth place. When they are not perfecting their sport, they are keeping busy being full-time students at the University of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Jordan and Brandon, as well as the rest of the Saskatchewan athletes on their successful season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Electrical Generation**

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. It will be one year in December since we released our made-in-Saskatchewan climate change strategy. Today I would like to highlight announcements that our government has made as part of that strategy on our goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from electrical generation by 40 per cent by 2030.

In August SaskPower announced the signing of a power purchase agreement for the first utility-scale solar project in the province. This 10-megawatt facility will be built by Saturn Power, east of Swift Current. In September the Blue Hill Wind Energy Project received environmental assessment approval. This project will add 177 megawatts of renewable energy for SaskPower

customers.

Earlier this month, SaskPower announced a successful proponent of the next large-scale wind energy project. This project will add 200 megawatts of renewable energy for SaskPower customers.

And just today, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower announced the signing of a new term sheet with Manitoba Hydro that will see SaskPower purchase an additional 215 megawatts of renewable energy.

This past summer, SaskPower also announced a 20 megawatt agreement with First Nations Power Authority for flare gas projects and an improved power generation partner program.

Mr. Speaker, this is real action to reduce emissions, not a tax. And our government will continue working to address climate change through our made-in-Saskatchewan plan.

#### **QUESTION PERIOD**

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

#### **Management of Provincial Economy**

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this morning, the Premier had a photo op at a news conference in Toronto with Ontario Premier Doug Ford where they made a vague announcement about trade.

You know, it's strange that this Premier told an audience in Calgary the other day, just last Thursday, how he loves question period and that he looks forward to it every day and that he enjoys the opportunity to "straighten someone out." All this came after sitting down in the Assembly when asked clear questions about struggles in our economy and then ducking out of questions in the rotunda. And it came the day before the member for Meadow Lake, the Minister of Trade and Export Development, skipped out on a national trade conference, skipped out last Friday.

[14:00]

This government is increasingly missing in action when it comes to taking meaningful steps to address our economic troubles and growing unemployment. So my question for the Premier is this. When will he stop with the stunts and focus on the things that matter to the people of Saskatchewan? When will the Premier get to work?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well I can assure the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, that the Premier is focused on what's best for this province. I can also assure the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, that both the Premier and I look forward very much every day to our exchanges with the leader and the other members opposite in question period because it does offer us the opportunity to correct the record, which we see distorted in basically every single preamble from every single one of their questions, which is no different than what we've seen today, Mr. Speaker, with regard to internal trade.

This province has been a leader in internal trade negotiations in this country. We went through 21 rounds of negotiation and took a leading role in the negotiation of the Canada free trade agreement, Mr. Speaker. I participated in every single one of those 21 rounds of negotiation.

The meeting that the member is referencing was not an official meeting of the internal trade ministers. It was an ad hoc meeting called by the Liberal government for the singular purpose of having a photo op, of which six other ministers from across the country also chose not to attend for the same reason, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Government Procurement Policy

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, when the economy is struggling, one of the first things the government can do to help stimulate growth and get people back to work is invest in infrastructure. When it's done the right way, infrastructure investment can get people back to work and improve services. Unfortunately this government's failed approach to procurement is holding us back.

With us today in the gallery are Dallas Follick, Troy Knipple, Josh Urgan, Dannen Reiss, Brett Moore, and Curtis Morgan. They're all plumbers and pipefitters, and they're all out of work. They'd rather be out on the job site than here at the legislature, but they're joining us here today to call for a procurement system that works for Saskatchewan people.

This is a government that hands contracts to out-of-country and out-of-province corporations while Saskatchewan workers and Saskatchewan contractors are passed over. We've seen this at the Regina bypass. We've seen this at P3 [public-private partnership] schools, at the Chinook Power Station near Swift Current. Alberta, Manitoba, British Columbia — they've all made changes in recent years that look at how local communities can benefit from government projects. Does the Deputy Premier agree with me that it's time for Saskatchewan to do the same?

**The Speaker:** — I'd like to take a moment to remind our guests not to participate in the proceedings by clapping. I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The focus of this government and the north star of this government has always been growing the economy of this province, Mr. Speaker. And quite frankly, the members opposite have no credibility on the economy. They had the worst record of economic growth in the entire country, in the entire country, when they were the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. The only policies that have been put forward by the Leader of the Opposition have been to raise taxes, Mr. Speaker, have been to embrace and wave the white flag to Justin Trudeau in imposing a carbon tax on this province that we know will kill jobs, Mr. Speaker. Their only other policies raise taxes on corporations, oppose trade agreements, Mr. Speaker. We know that their prescription for the economy would be catastrophically bad.

On this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we've taken strong positions defending the interests of this province, defending the economic interests of this province, promoting pipelines, Mr. Speaker, opposing carbon taxes. We're on the side of the people

of this province, Mr. Speaker. Their policies would be exactly wrong for Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite likes to talk about things that happened over a decade ago or things that haven't happened yet. But right now people are out of work. Right now our economy is struggling. And just a few days ago, he skipped a national conference that brought together representatives from across the country to talk about trade, and he didn't show up.

You know, a few weeks ago — talking about showing up — I went out and visited the Chinook power station along with the member from Rosemont. And workers who know better than that minister whether the procurement process is working as it should . . . We spoke to workers within the building trades, workers who have worked 57 per cent fewer hours in 2017 than they did in 2012. The numbers for 2018 look even worse. And this government's damaging decision to add PST to construction labour is making things even harder. People who work in construction — union, non-union alike — they're looking for work, and this government won't even admit that there's a problem.

You can't get to work fixing a problem until you admit that there is a problem, Mr. Speaker. So will the minister admit today that we're facing serious problems when it comes to construction jobs in this province, and will he commit to doing something about it?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I know the member, the Leader of the Opposition, and member from Regina Rosemont were out at the Chinook power station; in fact, I believe, just the day after I toured it. If they had let me know, we could have invited them in, rather than standing outside in the cold, Mr. Speaker, but nonetheless.

Mr. Speaker, total awards for the contract to local companies is close to \$125 million, \$9 million in Aboriginal procurement, 16 out of 17 awarded subcontractors maintained local content, and 18 of 25 awarded site services maintained local content.

Mr. Speaker, this is just from Swift Current businesses alone: Westland Concrete in Swift Current, the Altus Geomatics branch office in Swift Current, Wheatland Machine in Swift Current, Nu.West Interiors, Kruse Glass, Len's Plumbing & Heating — those are local employers, Mr. Speaker — Flyer Electric in Swift Current, Riverside Electric Ltd. in Swift Current, Mr. Speaker. That's just Swift Current alone, Mr. Speaker. Peak Mechanical out of Saskatoon, I & M Welding out of Saskatoon, Concept Electric out of Saskatoon, Balzer's Canada out of Regina, Allan Construction out of Saskatoon, AGI - Envirotank out of Biggar, Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, 5 Star Concrete out of Estevan. And probably, Mr. Speaker . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — It's a pretty good list.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Well it's a pretty good list, I would say to the member opposite. Here's another good one: Saskarc Industries out of Oxbow, Saskatchewan that are doing prefab



work on the water filtration system, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite, if you'd like this information we'd be happy to provide it.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister talked about standing out in the cold. Well his procurement process has left Saskatchewan workers and Saskatchewan contractors standing out in the cold.

A power plant for our Crown corporation, SaskPower, is being built by a company from Kansas City. And there's hundreds of workers out of work who could be working at that project, Saskatchewan workers who aren't on the job site because there's workers from out of province who are.

Mr. Speaker, we've also got hundreds of workers across the province who aren't working in construction right now because of a decision of this government to add PST to construction labour. That's slowed down housing starts, that's slowed down building permits, and that's got a lot of people looking at the SaskJobs website instead of being on the job site.

Mr. Speaker, will this government commit to removing PST from construction labour and get us back to work?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Mr. Speaker, the reality is that over the course of the last year that there were 2,800 full-time jobs created in this province. Mr. Speaker, over the course of the last decade, over 60,000 thousand jobs have been created in Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, again today we saw the Premier signing an important agreement with the province of Ontario that's going to benefit businesses, that's going to benefit employees, that's going to give us additional opportunity to grow our economy.

Historically, Mr. Speaker, it's a truism that growing the economy means finding new markets. And how do you find new markets, Mr. Speaker? You enter into trading relationships with other jurisdictions. The members opposite have opposed every single trade agreement, both domestic and foreign, that has been entered into by either this government or the Government of Canada, Mr. Speaker.

Most recently, on Thursday in this question period, the Leader of the Opposition refused, refused to take the position on the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement which is going to create tremendous opportunity for this province. He has an opportunity right now, Mr. Speaker. He can stand in his place, say that his federal MPs [Member of Parliament] voted the wrong way, and say that his party is committed to supporting TPP [Trans-Pacific Partnership]. Will he do that, Mr. Speaker? He has a chance right now.

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

### **Global Transportation Hub and Government Transparency**

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, this government's handling of the

GTH [Global Transportation Hub] mess is pretty rich. On the one hand, the minister responsible defended the GTH's absurd subsidization of private buses for Loblaw because he hasn't been keeping track of what's going on out there. But on the other hand, he claims no further inquiry into the GTH is needed because they have it all figured out.

Mr. Speaker, during his run for the leadership, the Deputy Premier called for the opportunity to clear the air and shine, in his words, "a very bright and very public light" on what's going on at the GTH. Will he keep his word and ask his Premier to do the right thing and call a judicial inquiry into the GTH?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member opposite for the question. I answered this question last week when I indicated that we'd had an extensive review by the Provincial Auditor, a Provincial Auditor who has on her staff a forensic accountant.

Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor made recommendations. They made recommendations about how the government could do a better job of acquiring and procuring land. We accepted those recommendations and, Mr. Speaker, we openly and candidly admitted that we had not done as good a job as we should have when we did it. But, Mr. Speaker, going on from that, we had an investigation by the RCMP — 7,500 man hours, 1,000 days worth of work done by the RCMP. The matter was sent to the Manitoba prosecutor's office. They said there was no evidence to support criminal charges.

Mr. Speaker, I can add as well that when they did a press conference, something that's very rare and unusual to take place, they stood up and they said, everything was supplied to us. We did not need to apply for a search warrant. Mr. Speaker, that was the response that was from the RCMP. And absent any new information from somewhere else — which they're welcome to forward to the police, welcome to forward to the auditor — the matter is closed.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, it's obvious that the Minister for the GTH wants this closed, but that's in direct contrast to what his Deputy Premier said only a few months ago.

Now this bus mess wouldn't have even come to light if the opposition didn't have to press for a special committee to scrutinize GTH operations, a meeting where we learned that there is no end to the bottomless pit of debt at the GTH and where they again refused to disclose how much Loblaw paid for their land at the GTH.

But, Mr. Speaker, they have had no issue telling us, in fact they've bragged about how much SaskPower and Brightview paid for their land. So this is a double standard. This whole mess started with the GTH land-flipping scheme, and the people of this province need this government to stop hiding behind secretive land contracts and start being transparent. So again, to the minister: how much did Loblaw pay for their land?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite like talking about the GTH. Mr. Speaker, I'll give them some information about the GTH. It's information I've supplied before, and I'm prepared to do it again and again and again because it's important that they understand the number of jobs that are created there, the number of people that work there, the number of trucks that come in and out of that facility every week.

At the time of construction there was 1,800 jobs. So to the people in the gallery I would say this: that's the type of thing that should be supported by the opposition. Those are the type of jobs that are good quality jobs that we want to continue in our province.

Mr. Speaker, I can tell you something else. There was private investment in that project, \$485 million. Over 860 full-time jobs representing over 40 countries take place every day at that facility. Trucks go in and out of that facility at an incredible rate: 4,800 trucks every week. Of the 1,800 acres that are there that comprise the GTH, over 700 acres are already sold or in operation by clients. There's currently 12 clients there. And, Mr. Speaker, we're hoping that it continues to prosper and do well. There's more work to do there.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — I'll try this again, Mr. Speaker. How much did Loblaw pay for that land?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we're going to focus on the future. The GTH remains an important project. It's created hundreds of jobs. It's generated hundreds of million dollars in investments. It's improved market access in Saskatchewan. It's now time to focus on maximizing the potential of the GTH and what its value is to Saskatchewan taxpayers.

Mr. Speaker, I know how the members feel. They had a column in the paper last week where it talked about a science fiction movie, *Jurassic Park*. And, Mr. Speaker, it said we should be concerned about dinosaurs. Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite can talk about the GTH, but what I'd like to urge them to do is move forward, look at the jobs, look at the economic potential that's come from there.

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

[14:15]

### Global Transportation Hub and Regina Bypass

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party is seeking to divest the GTH and dump the whole mess on the city of Regina. In addition to spending hundreds of million dollars on the GTH itself, they have also spent millions upon millions to build the west bypass. Now let's not forget, part of the justification to expand the Regina bypass to the \$2 billion monster it is was to support the promise of the Global Transportation Hub in all its glory. Well we know now that the GTH has been over-promised and has definitely under-delivered big time. And given the recent track record of operations, things can only be expected to get

worse. So can the Minister of Highways tell us how much more did the Sask Party tack on to the ballooning bypass tab specifically to support the failing project at the GTH?

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

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member opposite for the question. I welcome the opportunity to be able to speak about this monumental project. To start off with, I would like to note that this project is 90 per cent complete. It is on budget and it is on time. For a project this size, that is quite astounding. And I am very proud of all of the contractors . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order please. I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very proud of all of the contractors that have made this possible for our province. But most importantly, this project addresses the issue of safety for all of our citizens. As we already know from the open section on No. 1 east of the city, this has been a welcome addition to those communities out there. In fact, first responders out there have said that since the opening of this section, there have been no major motor vehicle accidents, once again highlighting how this project has made the roadway much safer, which will only become more apparent when it is all opened next October.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Try this again, Mr. Speaker. How much has the Sask Party paid, specifically on the west bypass, to support the GTH? That's the question, Madam Minister.

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

**Hon. Ms. Carr:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and once again thank you to the member opposite for the question. I love the opportunity to be able to speak about the bypass. This is a monumental project, the largest of its kind in the history of the province of Saskatchewan. And I'm very proud to talk about the record of this. Once again, it is 90 per cent complete. It is on budget and it is on time.

And I think that's what we need to focus on, is the fact that the amount of jobs that this bypass has been able to create for our province and the safety that it brings to our province. So once again, thank you to the member opposite for the question.

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

### Government Funding for Education

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, there's an unfortunate theme here. Last week when I asked a direct question about restoring the Sask Party cuts to education, the minister gave a notable answer, and one that clearly demonstrates that he also needs to shelve the lines and actually listen to what he's hearing in the classrooms.

He said, and I quote, "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.” That is a direct quote.

Mr. Speaker, I know he’s been in classrooms, and I am certain that he is hearing what we are all hearing: our classrooms are in crisis and they need help now. So I’m going to give this one more try, Mr. Speaker. Will the government at least commit to fully restoring their \$54 million that they cut from education?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite chose to criticize the Education minister. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you why the minister made that answer and I’ll give some particulars behind it. And I’d urge the members opposite to support the government in this.

Mr. Speaker, it wasn’t just a flip answer that came from the minister. The Saskatchewan School Boards Association were the one that had done that estimate. They estimated that the starting impact of the carbon tax on Saskatchewan classrooms is at least \$8 million, money that could be spent, money that could be spent . . . The member opposite doesn’t want to listen. Maybe I’ll repeat it again.

The Saskatchewan School Boards Association said that the carbon tax will cost \$8 million in its initial year — money that could be spent on education assistants, money that could be spent on teachers, money that could be spent on roofs, boilers, money that could be spent on buses, money that could be spent on teachers, a variety of other things.

So what I’d like to do is invite the members opposite to participate in lobbying the federal government not to do the unnecessary with a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Access to Addiction Services

**Mr. Pedersen:** — Mr. Speaker, this government’s Throne Speech left a lot to be desired. In it the government mentions a review of trespass legislation to address rural crime. Now we will review that bill carefully when it makes its way to the floor of the Assembly, but we know that this government isn’t nearly doing enough to address the crystal meth crisis that fuels property crime.

Without addressing the root causes of rural crime, there won’t be any meaningful reduction in the crime and violence taking place in rural communities. Does the government recognize that people struggling with addictions to crystal meth and other illicit drugs are a key driver of crime in rural communities? And what is the minister going to do to improve access to addiction services in rural areas and reduce crime?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for, I believe, his first question in the House. Mr. Speaker, we take this issue very seriously: crystal meth, the opioid crisis. It is a root cause of so much of the crime we see,

Mr. Speaker. We recognize that we need to address this through the health care system, Mr. Speaker. We’re doing a number of things. We’re in the process of finalizing a bilateral agreement for the federal government’s emergency opioid treatment fund, Mr. Speaker. We look forward to that signing, coming hopefully soon.

Mr. Speaker, the province spends a great deal, an amount of money — I think it’s close to \$50 million — on addiction services, which is close to a 50 per cent increase since 2007. Mr. Speaker, we’ve increased the number of addictions beds since 2007 by 31 per cent. But, Mr. Speaker, we recognize what a serious issue this is, and we recognize that much more needs to be done on the whole mental health and addictions piece. Mr. Speaker, you saw us begin to address that in the last budget. Mr. Speaker, obviously we still need to go through the budget process, but you’ll see that continue in the next budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, crystal meth is not an opioid. Addictions to crystal meth and other illicit drugs aren’t just fuelling rural crime challenges across the province. The crisis has gripped our major urban centres as well.

Police chiefs spoke out about the meth crisis this week, with a representative from the Saskatoon Police drug enforcement team calling it an epidemic. The minister has said this spike in crystal meth was hard to predict, but numbers of meth charges have been steadily increasing and medical admissions into provincial health facilities have been climbing for years. Saskatchewan has been asleep at the wheel in dealing with this crisis, and Saskatchewan people are falling through the cracks. When will we see a meaningful strategy, including necessary investments, to get this crisis under control?

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

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I was speaking to the opioids, I was talking about the pending agreement with the federal government on their opioid funding. Our officials have asked federal officials to include crystal meth in that, and the federal officials have agreed, Mr. Speaker.

We recognize how serious this is across the province but, Mr. Speaker, the news story that the member opposite was referring to spoke to officers in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta. Mr. Speaker, this issue is not unique to Saskatchewan. It’s being felt, I would say, across the country, but most specifically in this news story, Mr. Speaker, in the prairie provinces.

We recognize that much more needs to be done. And again I would say, Mr. Speaker, I refer to the spending increase in the last budget on mental health and addictions. You saw that in the last budget, Mr. Speaker. You’re going to see that continue in the upcoming budget, Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

### Interprovincial Trade Agreement

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to announce that an memorandum of understanding on internal trade between Saskatchewan and Ontario was signed by our Premier and Premier Ford in Toronto this morning.

The MOU [memorandum of understanding] represents a formal commitment to collaboration on the development of an agreement that grows interprovincial trade between Saskatchewan and Ontario, creating new opportunities for Saskatchewan businesses and the people they employ. Our governments recognize the benefits that come from reducing barriers to interprovincial trade.

A report from BMO [Bank of Montreal] last week highlighted the importance of reducing these barriers. The report found that all provinces would benefit from reduced barriers to interprovincial trade and that the cost of removing these barriers would be relatively low. This MOU signifies our province's commitment to exploring the possible benefits for Saskatchewan companies of enhanced free trade between Saskatchewan and Ontario.

Our province is one that relies on trade. We have what the world needs. Saskatchewan has the highest goods exported per capita of all Canadian provinces. Since we formed government, we've seen exports increase by 46 per cent to \$28.9 billion exported last year. This is why our government created the Ministry of Trade and Export Development. We recognize the need to diversify the goods we export and the markets we export them to.

Our government will continue to take a leading role in our federation when it comes to knocking down barriers for interprovincial trade across Canada, as we did during the 21 rounds of negotiation leading to the Canadian Free Trade Agreement. Reducing interprovincial trade barriers will also allow our provinces to increase economic competitiveness in spite of the headwinds caused by federal government policy that's sending investment and jobs south of the border.

This MOU is a positive step towards reducing regulatory and other trade barriers between our two provinces. We will continue to work with our provincial partners and stakeholders in support of an even stronger, more diversified, and globally connected Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for providing an advance copy of the statement in order to allow us to prepare our remarks.

Saskatchewan's economy depends on trade and the world depends on us. It depends on us to deliver potash, oil and gas, uranium, chickpeas, wheat, lentils, canola. And New Democrats are in favour of international and interprovincial trade agreements that increase access for our markets and improve affordability for people right here in Saskatchewan.

However, it's hard to take today's announcement, Mr. Speaker, as much more than another stunt. We have a vague plan to make

a planned announcement with no details and no timelines. And it's extremely odd, given that the minister chose to skip a national meeting on trade, a meeting that representatives from other provinces and territories, except Saskatchewan and Ontario, were happy to attend, a conference much more meaningful than just two provinces coming together on their own, which begs a really important question, Mr. Speaker. It begs a really important question. Is this about trade at all?

Because as far as I can see, this is about political games. It's about our Premier hitching his wagon to the Ford circus, to another Premier who has frozen wages, for another Premier who has gone backwards on sexual education, who has eliminated sick-day coverage and has pushed municipalities around. Our Premier is so focused on owning the libs and acting as an understudy to the federal opposition that he's absent from important discussions that could improve Saskatchewan's economy today.

New Democrats strongly support international and interprovincial trade. And we urge this government, we urge this government to stop playing political games and take meaningful action to get Saskatchewan people back to work.

**The Speaker:** — Order. All I can say is, wow.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SPECIAL ORDER

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Stewart, seconded by Ms. Heppner, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Ms. Mowat.]

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to represent Cannington and to speak on the constituents of Cannington's behalf about this Speech from the Throne, Mr. Speaker, a very good Speech from the Throne.

[14:30]

And I went out on Friday and consulted with those very constituents, Mr. Speaker, at the Kisbey fowl supper. And in fact there was representatives there of every political stripe. The person who sat next to me, if I mentioned his name, would be well known to the members opposite as a member of their party. And if there was one common theme, Mr. Speaker, of the people at that fowl supper, it was that they did not want to pay the carbon tax. That was a common theme, no matter where they stood politically.

Mr. Speaker, my constituents understand that the carbon tax will have a negative impact on every individual in my constituency whether they're a farmer, whether they're a business person, whether they're working in the oil and gas industry, because agriculture and oil and gas are the backbone of the economies in the Cannington constituency.

The people there understood that when they go to buy a piece of machinery, new piece of machinery, they're going to be paying the carbon tax on the production of that piece of equipment. There is going to be no rebate on that, Mr. Speaker, because it's manufactured someplace else. So if they're buying a combine or they're buying a tractor or a high-wheeled sprayer, they're not only going to be paying the carbon tax on that, but they're in all likelihood going to be paying the 25 per cent steel tariff that's being charged on that particular piece of equipment, Mr. Speaker. So they're taking a double hit when it comes to this cost.

The oil and gas industry is going to pay a significant amount of money out because of this carbon tax on their production equipment, on their travel, their transportation costs, which also apply to farm production because if you hire a commercial trucker to haul your products to market, you will be paying the carbon tax on it because they will be paying the carbon tax on it, Mr. Speaker.

So every business, every farmer, every worker in this province is going to be paying the carbon tax, which the members opposite believe should be paid. They believe we should not stand up to the federal government in opposition to the carbon tax. They were very defeatist on this, Mr. Speaker, last spring and in this session as well. They're saying, no. Don't fight it. Give up. You're wasting your time. You're wasting your money, Mr. Speaker.

You know, last spring we were the only province fighting the carbon tax. Now there are four provinces that the federal government is saying are breaching the carbon tax regime, therefore they're going to impose it on them. Plus there's two other provinces that they haven't decided yet whether they're going to apply the carbon tax to them directly or not. So, Mr. Speaker, last spring we were on our own. Now we have allies across the country, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the opposition to the carbon tax.

I mentioned that oil and gas is very important in my constituency, and so the opposition by the federal government to moving our product to tidewater is also very important to the Cannington constituency. And the members opposite, their federal leader is adamant that none of these pipelines that have been proposed, including the one purchased by the Liberal government, should never proceed, that the oil and gas should simply stay in the ground. But, Mr. Speaker, I don't notice any of them failing to move around the province in their automobiles or their trucks. They all do it, Mr. Speaker, and yet they're saying, leave the oil and gas in the ground.

I know that there are unparliamentary words that could be used to describe that attitude, so I won't use them, Mr. Speaker. But the attitude of the members opposite has nothing to do with reality. It has only to do with their internal politics, Mr. Speaker. They should be in contact with their federal leader, Jagmeet Singh, and explain to him the importance of oil or gas production, the importance of pipelines. Rather than utilizing trucks and trains to move our product to tidewater, we should be using the safest method — and that's pipelines, Mr. Speaker.

So when listening to the various speeches and commentary made by the members opposite . . . Oh, one thing I might note, Mr. Speaker. If you could harness the brightness of the new member

of the opposition's tie and turn it into a power source, they may have an argument for getting rid of pipelines, Mr. Speaker. But until that happens, I think we still need those pipelines and the energy production in this province, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hear — listening to the members' speeches last week — they're complaining about where is the money being spent. Where is the money being spent? Well I'd like to point out, Mr. Speaker, that it seems that not repairing and maintaining buildings, provincial buildings, is part of the NDP's [New Democratic Party] philosophy. The Weyburn Souris Valley mental health hospital was built in 1921 and the NDP closed it in 2006 because it was not in shape to continue to be maintained as a hospital.

When I became the Minister of Government Services at the end of 2007, I asked my ministry, what is the worst government building in the government's fleet of buildings? And their response was, the North Battleford hospital. Well, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, including three of the members that are sitting there today — the member for Athabasca, the member for Saskatoon Centre, the member for Regina Elphinstone — were members of the cabinet, Mr. Speaker, that failed to maintain the North Battleford hospital such that it was the worst building in the government fleet.

Yes, the member opposite is saying, yes, we left you a billion dollars. But you certainly never put it into maintaining the government buildings across the province that we have had to step forward with since 2011. The North Battleford hospital is being renewed. A new hospital is being built there, Mr. Speaker, and will be opening next year — a building that the members opposite completely ignored, Mr. Speaker.

You know, they ignored the people living in that facility, it would seem, because they had no political voice. They were locked up. They weren't going to be marching in the street protesting in front of the Legislative Assembly so they simply ignored them, Mr. Speaker, and ignored their plight in a building that was deteriorating to the point it had to be replaced. So that goes to show you, Mr. Speaker, that their tears are crocodile tears, Mr. Speaker, that they have no real concern or compassion or empathy, other than how it affects their political futures, Mr. Speaker. That's the prime motivator, not the actual patients in a facility like the North Battleford hospital.

So, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that . . . We saw it today in question period, questioning agriculture in this province. Now I look back at how the NDP dealt with agriculture in the past as a government. I look at how they're dealing with agriculture today and some of the proposals put forward by the new Leader of the Opposition on how to deal with agriculture. Here's one that he has in place: encourage agricultural practices that decrease carbon input through crop choices. Sounds good, but it shows you their knowledge of agricultural practices in Saskatchewan. And I guess in part this goes back to the NDP's tradition.

So their current critic for Agriculture is a Regina downtown lawyer. Their previous critic for Agriculture was a Saskatoon federal government lawyer. Their last minister of Agriculture was a Regina United Church preacher, Mr. Speaker, you know. So maybe they have a family farm but the members sitting here do not farm. They are not familiar with the operations of today's

modern farm, Mr. Speaker. Farming has changed significantly in the last 30 years, Mr. Speaker, very significantly. And I believe the members opposite have thoroughly missed that change.

One of the things they talk about is their party opposes GMOs [genetically modified organism]. Mr. Speaker, if it wasn't for continuous cropping and GMOs, we wouldn't be producing the crops we are today with the small amount of moisture that we've had this past year in various parts of the province, except at harvest time where we had an overabundance of moisture, Mr. Speaker. But we have produced record crops after record crops because of the use of new technologies and farming practices, which the members opposite have completely missed. Mr. Speaker, we continue to feed the world because of the new technologies and the sciences involved in agriculture today.

You know, one of the areas that they talk about in agriculture is to produce for local markets. Well, Mr. Speaker, if you were to produce for local markets in Regina or Saskatoon — and I know that the chatter about that is within 100 kilometres of the centre — well from about September to June you could give up on green vegetables unless you raised them in greenhouses. And we can do that; we could raise lettuce and cucumbers and tomatoes, etc., in greenhouses, but now the carbon tax would apply. So you're driving up the cost of that food.

But if you can transport it in from outside of that 100 kilometres, you can now have access to all the fresh vegetables that the *Canada Food Guide* recommends that we have. But you cannot if you follow the NDP's policies of local crops, fewer pesticides, and diversified food production, Mr. Speaker. You can either have fresh vegetables or you can pay the carbon tax on the greenhouses or you can go without. So that's the NDP's new agricultural policy, Mr. Speaker.

You know, and I think most of the people in rural Saskatchewan, especially the farmers, recognize that the NDP abandoned rural Saskatchewan about 1995 when they called the election in August, Mr. Speaker, right in the middle of harvest . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . '99, sorry, '99. I've been elected so many times they kind of run together after a while.

[14:45]

So, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has proposed an alternative to the federal government's carbon tax, supported by the members opposite, called the Prairie Resilience climate change strategy. Mr. Speaker, this brings Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan businesses together to develop a program that works for Saskatchewan while reducing carbon production. Carbon is not a pollutant, but carbon is a chemical that is part of our atmosphere. Without carbon dioxide there would be no agriculture in Saskatchewan, which is our main industry.

I recognize that a number of people, especially in places like Toronto or Vancouver, believe that vegetables and milk and meat all come from the grocery store, that they somehow appear in those facilities by magic and are then distributed and passed out through sales to the various consumers who wish to utilize them. But, Mr. Speaker, those products are actually grown on farms someplace in the world. It's not unusual to go and look in your grocery store and see a product of Chile or a product of New Zealand or a product of someplace else in the world. And our

agriculture production, as well, is transported to other locations, Mr. Speaker, and all of that utilizes fuel for transport. That fuel comes from oil and gas production. It comes from the burning of coal. It comes from the burning of natural gas. It comes from hydroelectric or it comes from nuclear power, Mr. Speaker, all of which is part of the mix of energy production in Canada.

In Saskatchewan we utilize a lot of coal for our energy production, and because of the emissions in the coal, the CO<sub>2</sub>, we put in place the carbon capture and sequestration project which actually reduces the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> being emitted into the atmosphere. Not like the carbon tax, which is only a revenue source for government without actually causing any reduction . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, it isn't free. No, but it does reduce the carbon, whereas the federal carbon tax does not. British Columbia put a carbon tax in place and their carbon production increased, whereas in Saskatchewan we invested in a carbon capture and sequestration plant that reduces the amount of carbon going into the atmosphere by millions of tonnes. I know it's something that the NDP initially supported. And fact is they initially proposed it, but when they became the opposition, then they had to oppose it because we moved ahead and continued along with that project.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the motion put forward by my colleagues as read by the Lieutenant Governor, and I will not be supporting the amendment as proposed by the members opposite. I believe that their direction is ill suited for the province and the people of Saskatchewan and would take us back to those bad old days when they were government before. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Pedersen:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my great privilege and honour to participate in this debate on the Throne Speech. But, Mr. Speaker, I did not get here alone. There's a number of people to whom I am indebted for their assistance, for their efforts, and their guidance in arriving in this Chamber.

Firstly, my parents, who are here today, without whose support and guidance I would not have made it this far. Their unwavering commitment to making their community better, their belief in working together with others to build a better and more just and more equitable place for everyone, shaped me from an early age. Their example of being minimalists before it was cool, their example of being environmentalists before it was cool, and their example of forming a connection with the land on which we live and from which we grow food was impressed upon me.

My teachers, Donna Stewart, Mrs. Boan, Louise Beloin, Connie Lane, Patricia Einhorn, Orval Ens, Bye Braun, James and Cathy Herrick, Fred Roschker and Maureen MacDonald all played a role in moulding, shaping, pushing, and encouraging me into the person that I am today. And for their efforts I am grateful.

Over the years I've been blessed to have many peers and mentors to whose example I aspired, particularly George Nystrom, Roger Lepage, Cory Ollikka, my Uncle Ed, my Uncle John. My Uncle Ed is here today.

Then of course, Mr. Speaker, there are all the people whose very recent efforts were directly responsible for propelling me into this role — the hundreds of people who gave of their time, their

energy, and their money to help me get elected, my colleagues here in the House, people of many nationalities, ethnicities, languages, religions, but all of whom shared a belief that we are better together, that we have an obligation to help each other.

Now you'll be relieved to know that I won't mention them all by name because there was hundreds of them, but I do specifically want to mention Steven and Jacqui. And I fear I can't go down the list for fear I wouldn't know where to draw the line.

Mr. Speaker, everyone here in this room worked hard to get here and knows that in addition to the donors and volunteers, there are friends who provide moral support. Some of my friends are here in the gallery today, in the east gallery: Zoraida, Christine, Cynie, Mona, and Lesley.

Now, Mr. Speaker, all of these people that I have mentioned are living but they did not start from scratch. My ancestors who settled here and built their homes here did not start from scratch. This land has been inhabited for thousands of years, and I particularly want to acknowledge that this is the traditional home of the Cree and the Assiniboine and the Saulteaux and the Blackfoot and the Sioux peoples, as well as the Métis. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, this land on which we are located is Treaty 4 territory. Mr. Speaker, having practised law for 20 years, I can tell you that a contract, a treaty, is an obligation not lightly trifled with.

The original peoples of this land welcomed our ancestors here, helped them, taught them, so that we could share this land in peace. But as you know, Mr. Speaker, our province has a sad history when it comes to the treatment of our indigenous brothers and sisters. I watched our Prime Minister's voice crack with emotion as he acknowledged the wrongs done to the original peoples of this land. And so, Mr. Speaker, I wonder why it is that even after Stephen Harper acknowledged and apologized for these wrongs, why there is scant mention of addressing the injustices facing our indigenous brothers and sisters in this Throne Speech.

Shana Pasapa is here today in the gallery. She is a strong, proud woman and entrepreneur from White Bear. She created the beautiful beaded tie that I'm wearing today. I'm sure that she and thousands of other indigenous people around the province would like to know why fixing the child welfare system did not merit a mention in the Speech from the Throne.

Mr. Speaker, all of us are called to engage in reconciliation. Reconciliation is more than tokenism. Shana's mother says that it's not reconciliation; it's reconciliAction. In the words of Pam Palmater, if it feels good, it's not reconciliation. In other words, Mr. Speaker, reconciliation has to be more than ceremonies and ties and nice words and speeches. It requires action. It requires money. It requires learning. That learning isn't easy.

A few nights ago I watched the documentary titled *We Were Children*. It was the powerful, moving, and frankly disturbing experience of two survivors of Indian residential schools. I'd recommend that every person in this Assembly who hasn't seen it yet seek it out and watch it.

It wasn't my actions that tore children from their parents and put them in residential schools. It wasn't the actions of any of us here

in this room. But, Mr. Speaker, we have an obligation that is much higher than assigning blame. It's not our role here in this House to assign punishment like a judge presiding over a criminal trial. No, Mr. Speaker, our obligation is much higher. Our obligation is to fix things. Our obligation is to make things right. Our obligation is to build a just and equitable society, a healthy society.

Mr. Speaker, I know that our Premier is surely aware of the nasty divisions within our province that were laid bare only a few months ago. So, Mr. Speaker, I find it troubling indeed that the Speech from the Throne contained but a passing reference to the healing that is required and no mention of any reconciliAction.

I mentioned the teachers and the mentors in my life for whom I'm so grateful. I expect all of us know the value that education plays in our lives, and I hope that all of us understand just how formative and important those first seven early years in a person's life are. Over and over and over I've listened to the concerns of parents and grandparents, sisters, brothers, teachers in my constituency, concerns about the almost daily mental health challenges in our classrooms, concerns about overcrowded classrooms. I've listened to teachers share with me that they feel like they are barely holding it together. They feel like they are pulled in too many directions — the kids in their care, their own families, their colleagues — and it's impacting and affecting their personal health.

Mr. Speaker, this government left our schools \$70 million short, despite growing needs and growing population. Our Premier would like to be congratulated for putting some money back into education. But, Mr. Speaker, if a gang of thieves steals four tires from your car, does the ringleader deserve our thanks and gratitude if he returns two of them?

Mr. Speaker, it was with some considerable surprise last week when I heard Minister Morgan claim that the RCMP exonerated this government on the GTH. I was so surprised, Mr. Speaker, that I had to go back and look because I thought perhaps I had made a mistake and would have to eat some humble pie. But, Mr. Speaker, there was no pie for the eating. Mr. Speaker, the RCMP did not exonerate this government.

The RCMP said there wasn't enough evidence to support laying criminal charges. Now, Mr. Speaker, as a lawyer I know that the standard for getting a conviction in a criminal matter is high. As a lawyer I place great reliance on having a high standard of proof to make sure that we don't convict innocent people. Mr. Speaker, that also means that the police have an obligation not to pursue charges unless they have a reasonable likelihood of conviction. And that means that there are many occasions when the police do not charge someone because they don't have enough evidence. But that's not the same as having no evidence.

Mr. Speaker, if there was no evidence, then this matter would not have been referred to the Manitoba prosecutor's office. And even if by some chance there was a mistake, if there was no evidence, the Manitoba prosecutor's office would have advised immediately to drop everything. And when the announcement was finally made, the RCMP carefully chose its words and they did not exonerate this government.

[15:00]

And, Mr. Speaker, that tells me that there is evidence. There is evidence of wrongdoing or evidence of gross mismanagement or evidence of conflict of interest. There are three occasions in which the RCMP could have said that there was no evidence, and they didn't. There may not be enough evidence to lay criminal charges but, Mr. Speaker, the people of this province deserve an inquiry. They deserve to have the air cleared. The people of this province deserve to once again have faith and be able to trust in their elected representatives. And it's a disappointment that this Throne Speech did not include an announcement that there will be a public inquiry into this fiasco.

Mr. Speaker, I had hoped to hear something in the Speech from the Throne on which I could commend the government. And after having listened to the speech in its entirety, I must congratulate the Premier on his commitment to environmentalism. He truly practises the three Rs: reducing expectations, reusing announcements, and recycling tired, old ideas that didn't work the first time.

Mr. Speaker, the tie that I am wearing is from Shana's product line, The Land Is Our Matriarch. And I'm sure that she would like to know what this government is doing to protect the land and the water and the air that her ancestors shared with ours. Why does this government find it so difficult to protect that on which we are all dependent: clean air, clean water, and healthy soil? The Throne Speech is surely a harbinger of what will be the Premier's legacy — doing nothing but bluster.

Mr. Speaker, I grew up on a farm that was close to nature. We are the last farm on the road, the furthest farm from pavement and from any town in the area. We were on the edge of river hills and in the middle of pastures, hills, trees, sloughs, and wildlife. It's a wonderful place and I spent many an afternoon roaming the hills and the pastures, absorbing the peace of that natural environment.

Mr. Speaker, I'm worried for me; I'm worried for my children; I'm worried for my grandchildren. I'm worried because I haven't experienced a day since my childhood on which the thermometer dipped below minus 40 degrees. I'm worried because I recently listened to a talk by Professor David Sauchyn who showed us that Saskatchewan climate is expected to get warmer. Our winters are expected to get wetter, which will mean rain and freezing rain, and our summers are expected to get drier. I'm worried because the variability of our weather is expected to increase and the risks that our farmers will face due to climate change will increase. And as I'm sure my colleagues across the House who are farmers themselves can testify, farming is already plenty risky.

I'm worried because grasslands are the most endangered biome in the world and this government continues to sell off our Crown-owned grasslands. Those grasslands are so important for ranchers and our cattlemen, but they're also important for our biodiversity, our bees, and other native species here in this province, and they are an important carbon sink.

In the face of an urgent deadline to act on climate change, this government's plan is to dodge, duck, dip, dive, dodge. It's all bluster. And as we saw earlier, in the face of real economic pain being felt by hundreds of unemployed and underemployed tradespeople in my constituency, the Premier's response and this

government's response is to pretend that all is well and to do nothing.

Today we were joined by plumbers, pipefitters, steamfitters from my constituency of Regina Northeast. Almost half of the families who live in my constituency are blue-collar families, directly employed in the trades at Evraz, at the upgrader, in construction. Some of the gentlemen here today are out of work, and in some cases they're already out of EI [employment insurance] and they are worried about the well-being of their families.

I recall an occasion when I was very impressed by a politician. He paraphrased FDR's [Franklin Delano Roosevelt] statement that the test of our progress is not whether we add to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little. That politician was Rod Gantfoer.

Mr. Speaker, we are measured by the decisions that we make when times are tough. That's paraphrasing the words of Martin Luther King, Jr. And in the face of unemployed workers wondering about how they were going to make their next mortgage payment, this Throne Speech's insistence that everything is fine, this government's insistence that everything is fine revealed just how deaf the Premier and his bench is.

The Premier may not control oil prices, but he does set the PST. The Premier may not be able to remove Trump's steel tariffs, but he could fix the broken procurement model and get Saskatchewan tradespeople back to work. The Throne Speech shows that the Premier is not interested in helping the people who are struggling, the people who have little.

In conclusion, my thoughts on the Throne Speech are this: because of my inexperience from afar without looking in detail, you know, it sounded and looked not too bad. But when put under the spotlight and subjected to detailed, careful attention, you can see easily that it's pretty thin. It's very much like a lot of the heads of hair in this building. Mr. Speaker, this was the Premier's opportunity to make his mark, and his failure to do so speaks loudly. For the reasons stated, I will be supporting the amendment.

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

**Mr. Bonk:** — I'll begin today where I should, Mr. Speaker, by thanking the good people of Moosomin constituency. They're a hard-working, resilient lot, and I honour the trust that they've placed in me to be their representative.

I'd also like to thank my family: my wife, Candace, and daughter, Emma, for their support and understanding, as well as that of my parents. And I'd like to have a special thank you today to Tim Hovdestad, my constituency assistant, for doing an absolutely exemplary job at what he does. I'd also like to be the first to welcome his granddaughter and one of our newest residents, Georgia Lark Friesen, and wish her and her parents well and a bright and happy future here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, today I can say with pride that when the Saskatchewan Party chose this difficult course two years ago, Mr. Speaker, we found ourselves on an island of reason surrounded by an ocean of economic falling. Mr. Speaker, in only



eight years our non-renewable resource income had fallen by 32 per cent of Saskatchewan's total revenues, down to 10 per cent. A billion-dollar shortfall in these revenues has depleted the rainy day fund and we were looking at a budget deficit in 2016-17 of 1.2 billion. Tough choices had to be made. Saskatchewan had a dilemma that needed to be addressed and the Saskatchewan Party knew that this is today's dilemma, not our children's, not our grandchildren's.

Our government made a plan to deal with it. This dilemma would not be dealt with by future generations, Mr. Speaker, but by this government. All around us, Mr. Speaker, we saw governments who took the easy route, governments who were faced with the same shortfalls as Saskatchewan and who felt that the day of reckoning could be postponed. They would base their recovery on that merry-go-round of rising debt followed by higher, long-term interest rates followed by more damaging debt management costs resulting in faltering economic growth. Our Saskatchewan Party government rejected this vicious cycle, Mr. Speaker, because we had the courage and vision to realize that recovery built on debt is a recovery living on borrowed time.

Mr. Speaker, tough choices had confronted our government in the last two years. We had the courage and vision to meet them. Sometimes it took innovation. Sometimes it took creativity. At times we went back to the drawing board as this government has never been afraid to admit its missteps and to revisit those decisions and change our direction. Sometimes we appealed to the past, Mr. Speaker, but always the Saskatchewan Party government has set its sights firmly on a future that benefits all people of Saskatchewan.

And I recall less than two years ago, Mr. Speaker, speaking in this Chamber to a budget that was forecast to result in a \$685 million deficit. But by staying the course, by following a plan with courage and vision and making the difficult but necessary decisions, the deficit for 2017-18 was actually 303 million. And in this legislative session, Mr. Speaker, we will deliver the 2019-20 budget and it will be a balanced budget. Fiscal responsibility is a hard road, Mr. Speaker, and we're almost at our destination. Unlike so many around us, the Saskatchewan Party chose not to squander the opportunity to put our financial house in order. We chose not to mortgage the future of Saskatchewan children.

There was of course, Mr. Speaker, the usual rumblings by those across the floor who warned that a budget of restraint would undermine the confidence in the economy. This was answered in resounding fashion on September 11th of this year when Moody's Investors Services confirmed Saskatchewan's AAA credit rating. The announcement validated the Saskatchewan Party's three-year plan to get back to balance. As Moody's experts stated, Saskatchewan's AAA rating benefits from very strong debt affordability. They continued, the province's fiscal planning is supported by comprehensive and transparent financial reporting, and commended our government's multi-year financial planning. And keep in mind, Mr. Speaker, that Saskatchewan is only one of two Canadian provinces with a AAA credit rating.

Being fiscally responsible without undermining the programs, services, and infrastructure that the Saskatchewan people have become accustomed to has been the hallmark of our government.

We have become, and will remain, a province thriving on opportunities, especially for our youth. A province full of potential that has been overlooked for too long. A province where possibilities are explored, and the best choices are made for all the people of Saskatchewan.

The economic indicators leave no doubt. In the last year, full-time employment has increased by 1,000, while part-time employment has increased by 2,300. Saskatchewan's average weekly earnings of all industries increased by 1.1 per cent between July of 2007 and July of 2018. Manufacturing sales increased by 16.4 per cent, wholesale trade increased by 4.4 per cent, and retail sales were up 3.5 per cent in the same timeframe, while merchandise exports were up 29.1 per cent from August 2017 to August 2018.

In a decade of Saskatchewan Party government, Mr. Speaker, public and private investment grew at five times the national rate and increased by 70 per cent. In fact, the Fraser Institute placed Saskatchewan second in the world for mining investment attractiveness. These are all indicators of a vigorous economy, Mr. Speaker, and should only improve as we approach a balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, a healthy society is a productive society. Far behind us are the days in Saskatchewan, under the NDP, where we had the worst doctor- and nurse-retention rate in Canada. Since the Saskatchewan Party took power, we have nearly 900 more doctors and nearly 3,700 more nurses working in our province. Mr. Speaker, that's 150 more doctors and 700 more nurses working in Saskatchewan and reinforcing the health of our citizens since last budget. Mr. Speaker, more doctors and more nurses on the front lines of health care not only support a healthier and more productive work population, but also create additional purchasing power and tax revenue for Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, in the time of restraint, our government hasn't neglected our health care infrastructure, investing 1.5 billion in projects vital to the health of Saskatchewan people, doubling the amount invested in the last 10 years of the NDP government.

This includes 257 million to cover 90 per cent of the cost of the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, set to open next year. This project's state-of-the-art facilities and technology will not only significantly improve patient care, Mr. Speaker, but will also ensure a recruitment and retention of top-line pediatric specialists and nursing staff.

This year's budget includes \$20 million to fulfill the last instalment of our government's capital commitment to the children's hospital. The new regional hospital in Moose Jaw that will serve the people of southern Saskatchewan will be a state-of-the-art facility, allotting individual rooms that will provide the most personalized treatment possible for patients. Our government has provided 80 per cent of the funding for this \$100 million facility.

Another characteristic of a healthy and productive society, Mr. Speaker, is a commitment to better health treatment. And the new Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford is proof of our government's commitment to this vital area of treatment. This \$407 million project is nearing completion, and will be among the most innovative mental health centres in Canada. Our financial commitment is not only for construction, but also for

the cost of maintenance to keep the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford in immaculate condition for 30 years and beyond.

And the citizens of my own hometown, Wolseley, in the Moosomin constituency, are grateful to have their hospital reopened when the Saskatchewan Party SIPPA [Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment] program recruited a new doctor to get Wolseley, Grenfell, and district back to full acute care coverage. To that end, I'd like to personally thank the Minister of Health and the Minister of Rural and Remote Health for their diligence and commitment.

[15:15]

SIPPA, or the Saskatchewan international physician practice assessment, was instituted in 2011 by our government and has brought hundreds of new doctors to Saskatchewan practices. More doctors. More hospitals. More facilities. Mr. Speaker, it's a far cry from the days of mass closures of Saskatchewan hospitals under the NDP, when they gutted rural Saskatchewan. And who can ever forget the newly constructed Regina Plains hospital, standing abandoned like a cruel joke on the east side of our capital city?

Who can forget the longest surgical wait times in Canada? Since the Saskatchewan Party surgical initiative was initiated in 2010, 41 per cent fewer patients have waited more than three months for surgery, and 50 per cent fewer have waited longer than six months. Our health budget this year, Mr. Speaker, will include 3.5 billion for the newly minted Saskatchewan Health Authority, a \$71.9 million increase over the total funding required by all previous regional health authorities.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's population is not only healthy and productive, but growing. As of July 1st, Saskatchewan's population had increased by another 11,000 over the previous year, adding to the additional 160,000 over the past decade. That's 49 consecutive quarters of population growth, Mr. Speaker.

During this period, another area of growth has been employment, where Saskatchewan has registered the second-fastest job rate growth in the country, with our GDP [gross domestic product] rising to more than 60 billion, an increase of 22 per cent in the past decade. It's the fiscal responsibility of our government, Mr. Speaker, that has allowed Saskatchewan to grow in health, in production, and in numbers. Bringing our budget back to balance takes financial burdens off the backs of our taxpayers. They know their economy is in good hands. A future free from crushing debt management will be our legacy to our children.

A healthy and productive population, Mr. Speaker, needs its government to be committed to education, and our Saskatchewan Party government in this time of restraint has made sure our education system competes with the best across the country. In the past decade, \$1.6 billion has been invested in education infrastructure, including just a year ago a number of innovative P3 contracts that ensured the completion of 18 new joint-use schools with space for 11,000 students. There were also two new schools built using traditional funding, bringing the total of new schools built by the Saskatchewan Party to 40, plus 25 major renovations.

We do need to remember the record of the previous NDP government, when they averaged nearly a school closure per month for 16 years, when they critically underfunded K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education, when there were over 400 teachers who left the province, when one of our main exports was Saskatchewan graduates seeking employment outside our province.

In 2018-19, Mr. Speaker, our government will support Saskatchewan classrooms from pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to grade 12 to the tune of \$2.5 billion. Thirty million of that has already been provided to hire up to 400 teachers and support staff for the current academic year. In Moosomin constituency, both Prairie Valley and South East Cornerstone school districts will receive a 13 per cent increase in their preventative maintenance and renewal budgets.

Our contributions to enhance the growth of the province's education system include the development of new curricula to emphasize financial literacy in schools. Mr. Speaker, this is a long neglected but absolutely essential part of our young people's education. So many of our youth have had to learn the hard way about financing vehicles, homes, family budgeting, and management of credit. This program will be included in the K to 12 curriculum with the help of young people to avoid the paycheque-to-paycheque trap and to give them a head start in financial management. Mr. Speaker, we not only talk the talk of financial responsibility, but by passing what is an essential life skill on to our youth shows that we also walk the walk.

Another area of curricula development that our government will be supporting is the creation of new opportunities in coding and robotics. It's the language of our younger generations, Mr. Speaker. There are children out there who learn to code before they even learn to spell, and our government is financing the creation of a curricula that will help Saskatchewan students meet the challenges of future careers in science, math, engineering, and new technologies. A vital component of bringing all Saskatchewan youth, and indeed our entire population, into the 21st century is SaskTel's expansion in the latest gear of its high-speed Fusion internet to 35 additional Saskatchewan communities.

And let's not forget about our other areas the Saskatchewan Party government has given support to ensure our education system works for everyone. One of our greatest successes over the past decade has been the Saskatchewan graduate retention program, the only one of its kind in Canada, developed to counteract the disturbing exodus of youth after graduation in the NDP years. But this trend has been completely reversed, Mr. Speaker, by the graduate retention program, which has benefited nearly 70,000 students who have been able to stay in our province and to build not only a Saskatchewan career but more importantly a Saskatchewan life after their post-secondary education. A Saskatchewan life, Mr. Speaker, is there anything better we can offer our young people?

Mr. Speaker, our government has reversed the old NDP trends of declining teacher numbers and skyrocketing university tuitions. Northern school divisions have seen their funding increase by nearly 25 per cent. Post-secondary education has been supported by the tune of 9.1 billion by our Saskatchewan Party government, including nearly 1 billion in direct student support.

These are the fruits of fiscal responsibility. In our term of office, Mr. Speaker, over 1.2 billion has been saved in interest payments by reducing our overall operating debt. This is one of the ways we've been able to increase our education funding by two and a half times since 2007. With an education system that we can point to with pride, Mr. Speaker, we are developing an informed population that will never have to go back to those dark, dreary NDP days when our province was pilloried with the unenviable title "have not."

Mr. Speaker, we are a province with a healthy, productive, and informed population. But Saskatchewan people want to feel safe. And this is something that our government takes very seriously and which we have strived for for years. Recent events have made it necessary for our government to seriously evaluate our responsibilities in the area of rural crime. The Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities, or SARM, has recently called for an increased presence of law enforcement officers in rural areas.

One way we will respond to this is to consider changes to the current trespassing laws. Since 2009, Mr. Speaker, we've had trespassing law that makes it an offence to enter a property if the owner objects. Anyone found guilty of breaking this law is subject to a fine of up to \$2,000. The wide open spaces of Saskatchewan have attracted hunters, fishers, hikers, snowmobilers, and other outdoor enthusiasts, not only from our province but from across Canada and the world. But an appropriate balance between the rights of property owners and members of the public is now up for review. Mr. Speaker, our government will undertake that review and will make sure the balance remains as fair as possible to both sides.

Another initiative our Saskatchewan Party government has taken is to transform our commercial vehicle enforcement unit into a highway patrol. Vehicle enforcement officers, who used to be responsible for laws and guidelines regarding commercial vehicles, will now receive the appropriate training to become the Saskatchewan Highway Patrol. They will have new powers that will enable them to respond to 911 calls, investigate impaired drivers, enforce speed limits, and respond to accidents. This move is only part of our government's creation of a rural crime response team that'll include 120 RCMP and municipal police officers and 98 provincial conservation officers. We will also be amending *The Police Act* to enable any municipality, rural or urban, having a population of fewer than 500 to join regional police services.

Another area of public safety our government is committed to is response to domestic violence, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan will be the first province in Canada to address domestic violence by bringing Clare's Law to our province. Clare's Law, named for a British woman who was murdered by her boyfriend in 2009, will be the basis for a framework of Saskatchewan police services that will disclose relevant information about a person's violent or abusive past to intimate partners who may feel at risk.

Mr. Speaker, victims of sexual violence will be supported by an amendment to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* that will allow employees to access up to 10 unpaid days of leave to seek medical attention, access assistance, get legal or law enforcement help, or relocate if they or their children are victims of any kind of sexual violence.

Mr. Speaker, the safety of our citizens is of paramount importance to our government, and safety of our highways is an important component of that ongoing concern. Our commitment has been shown in more than 13 000 kilometres of Saskatchewan highways that have been built or improved and 275 bridges that have been repaired or replaced since our government came to power. In the last two years nearly 20 million has been allocated for work on roads in the Moosomin constituency.

The Regina bypass will be completed a year from now, on time and on budget. Two of the fastest growing communities in our province, Warman and Martensville, will have new interchanges completed this fall, a year ahead of schedule. These improvements are areas of heavy traffic and will allow for safer travel, especially to an expanding commuter population.

With the advent of legalized cannabis in Canada, Mr. Speaker, changes to Saskatchewan's impaired driving laws last month will significantly target drug-impaired drivers and those apprehended while transporting children. Our government has chosen a competitive, private model that is safe, regulated, and cost effective. Our impaired driving laws, strengthened in 2014 and again in 2017, are now among the strictest in Canada. It's no doubt a significant reason that alcohol-related driving fatalities in Saskatchewan had a 40 per cent decrease between 2016 and 2017.

The Humboldt Broncos tragedy will echo in our province for years to come, Mr. Speaker. And during this legislative season, our government will be introducing changes to the commercial driver training, including close consultation with other western provinces to ensure consistent standards.

This year, Mr. Speaker, our Saskatchewan Party government will dedicate \$700,000 to review more than 900 provincial intersections, which will result in the clearing of compromised sightlines. In addition another \$7 million will be budgeted for a safety improvement program which funds projects to construct guardrails, turning lanes, lighting, and rumble strips. I emphasize again, Mr. Speaker, that fiscal responsibility is the mainstay of our ability to keep our population healthy, productive, educated, and safe.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to oppose the imposition of the Trudeau carbon tax, as we feel that the imposition of this tax is more of a political decision than it is an environmental one. As the Canadian Taxpayers Federation just announced, Canadians know that climate change is a global issue, and we should not be punishing ourselves with a new tax that will have no impact on global carbon emissions. The carbon tax will impact Saskatchewan residents at the gas pumps and also on our SaskPower and SaskEnergy bills. We live in a province with long distances and frigid winters, and the federal government has chosen to impose a tax exactly on those conditions. They have assured us that some of this money will be returned in the form of a rebate, which makes me ask why then don't the feds just let us keep our money rather than playing this cynical shell game of taking many of our dollars with one hand and giving a few back with the other?

In fact the total effect of Ottawa's carbon tax plan will reduce carbon emissions by only 1 per cent by 2030 while reducing Saskatchewan's GDP by over 15 billion in that same period of

time, costing individual Saskatchewan families an extra \$1,250 a year. Our government, Mr. Speaker, is already taking significant and meaningful steps in greenhouse gas emissions management. Our agriculture industry annually sequesters over 12 million tonnes of carbon, and our carbon capture and storage unit at Boundary dam 3 has already removed 2 million tonnes of carbon emissions from the atmosphere.

Recently our federal government has accepted our Prairie Resilience climate change plan, a made-in-Saskatchewan blueprint for an approach that allows Saskatchewan to continue to grow and prosper while contributing to Canada's efforts to address climate change.

The plan is committed to reducing annual emissions by nearly 12 million tonnes by 2030. Among the projects initiated by Prairie Resilience is the construction of 10 wind turbines near Grenfell in the Moosomin constituency. The wind farm is currently under construction and should be operational in the near future.

The federal government has actually recognized Prairie Resilience as a strong, achievable plan that could take significant steps towards real emissions reductions. Unfortunately, while some other provinces have been exempted for partial compliance to emissions controls, the Trudeau carbon tax will still be imposed on the people of Saskatchewan where it hurts the most: fuel for vehicles and homes. But Saskatchewan is determined to continue with Prairie Resilience, Mr. Speaker, because as the Environment minister points out, our approach with Prairie Resilience is more effective than a carbon tax. In the meantime, our government will continue to stand up for Saskatchewan communities, families, businesses, and jobs by challenging the federal carbon tax in court.

Mr. Speaker, a fiscally responsible government is a government that can more easily respond to the needs of its people. Mr. Speaker, a government that practices fiscal responsibility is not living in a dream world where all your wishes are granted just because you have dreams. Fiscal responsibility is not for the weak of heart. You have to be in it for the long haul and stay the course.

I'm a fiscal conservative, Mr. Speaker. The world that I strive towards is one where taxes are low, public spending is under control, and government debt is minimum. I'm not like the Leader of the Opposition, whose campaign promises when running for the leadership of the NDP made him the envy of drunken sailors everywhere.

[15:30]

I reject the amendment and fully endorse the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. It's a document that celebrates the possibilities of Saskatchewan. It doesn't make rash promises at the expense of future generations. Our Saskatchewan Party government will not harness future generations with our debt. When we present a budget that is in balance, we will be fulfilling a promise we made two years ago, and we'll be ready to continue the job we came here to do. We will keep building a strong Saskatchewan for all our citizens, both present and in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Cox:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is certainly my pleasure to be able to rise this afternoon and speak, make an address to our Speech from the Throne.

Like so many people, before I begin I have to make a few very well-deserved thank yous. Thank you to my constituents in The Battlefords who continue to have their confidence in me, and I certainly appreciate that every day.

Thanks to my constituency assistant. I think we all believe that our constituency assistants are the best, but I think Lillian does a wonderful job up in The Battlefords of handling affairs while I'm gone.

And certainly thanks to my family, to my wife Linda and our family for all the support they've given me.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into addressing directly the Speech from the Throne here today, I'd just like to highlight a situation that occurred in The Battlefords here on September 16th. I alluded to it in a member's statement last Thursday, but I think it bears bringing out a few more details. This unfortunate incident happened about suppertime on September 16th, on a Sunday afternoon, where a little six-year-old girl was in the back of an SUV [sport-utility vehicle] that was stolen. And to make matters worse, this little girl could neither speak nor walk, so it was very different. And of course her parents were frantic to be able to find her.

And what ensued after that Amber Alert came out, Mr. Speaker, was truly wonderful to see. Literally the whole community of North Battleford and Battleford responded, searching almost every nook and cranny of our city and town. Local fire departments in other small centres, I know from Meota from the Cut Knife-Turtleford constituency, were out. Several First Nations were out looking in their areas to try to find the vehicle or this little girl that had gone missing. We were out searching ourselves, Linda and I, until well into the evening, until the snowstorm got so bad you could barely see. But almost every several hundred yards on the back roads around The Battlefords there was a vehicle with a spotlight shining out the window looking in ditches, looking in abandoned farmyards, trying to find, desperately trying to find this little girl.

Fortunately it ended well with the vehicle being found about 7 o'clock the next morning. Little Emma was found safe. She was cold and scared but she was okay, and after having doctors look at her she was returned to her mom and dad where she is to this day. So I would just like to thank all of the members of The Battlefords and area who participated in the search, and certainly a very special thanks to our RCMP detachment. Darcy Wolfitt, our staff sergeant, did an excellent job of mobilizing all of the resources he had available to help out with that search. So thanks to everyone involved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne highlights many of the ongoing economic initiatives of this government and also our vision for standing up for the province of Saskatchewan, and I think this pathway has proved very, very important for the confidence of the business community that we have in this province. And in my constituency, The Battlefords, unlike the huff and puff from the Leader of the Opposition opposite talking about how construction is slowing down, Mr. Speaker, I think

this year in the town of Battlefords their building permits are somewhere north of \$27 million, which is an all-time high.

North Battleford is not that far behind. We've seen two new hotels built — one we just opened here about a month ago, and the second one is just under construction right now. We've seen a new strip mall that is now fully occupied in the city of North Battleford. We have a condo project being built by a local contractor in Battleford as well as a new subdivision opening up, the phase 2 of our Battle West development. Phase 1 is completely full now I think except for one lot that isn't sold, and so now they're moving to phase 2, which is going to involve lots anywhere from 1 acre to 5 acres along the Battle River.

Mr. Speaker, this Speech from the Throne highlights our continuing efforts to reduce our government's operating debt, with the reduction . . . to reduce our government operating . . . pardon me, with a reduction of now \$674 million, which has resulted over time in a net savings to the residents of this province by \$1.2 billion in interest savings. Mr. Speaker, these savings, along with other restraints, have allowed us to provide the much valued and needed services to the residents of our province, such things as increasing revenue sharing to our municipal partners.

And I'll say in my own constituency of The Battlefords, this has amounted to a \$1.4 million increase for the city of North Battleford. We've gone from 1.15 million in '07-08 to last year's budget — it was \$2.52 million. The same holds true for the town of Battleford, Mr. Speaker, an increase of \$470,000, taking it from 407,000 in 2007-08 to 880,000 this year.

Something of course that is very significant in The Battlefords, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is our new Sask Hospital North Battleford. It's now in readiness for the grand opening. And this facility is something that had been needed replaced for many, many years and our government finally took the initiative to make it happen. It's been my absolute pleasure, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be along at various steps of the development of this new facility in The Battlefords. I remember back to August I believe of 2012, I attended, along with my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford; our then Health minister, the member from Indian Head-Milestone; and our premier at the time, when they made the announcement in the cafeteria of that old hospital to an almost astounding round of applause and thank you from all those involved, whether it was the doctors, the patients, the families, whomever.

From there we moved to the sod-turning ceremony on a cold, cold day in the fall. Subsequent to that where we did the sod-turning and since that time, I've had an opportunity to tour that hospital on numerous occasions at various stages of construction. And let me say that it is truly, truly a state-of-the-art facility that's going to provide tremendous services for the clients and for the staff working there for the next 100 years.

Another greatly needed improvement that is now a reality is our two sets of turning lanes on Highway 4 North between North Battleford and Cochin, something that myself and my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford have advocated for. And that's part of our nearly \$8.4 billion highway investments provincially that's rebuilt or replaced nearly 13 000 kilometres of highways over our time in government.

You know, I used to hear, when we talked to people who commute back and forth from the lake area or come in from the northern part of Saskatchewan, Highway 4 is definitely a main artery serving the North on our side of the province. They now talk about not what a terrible commute it was, but how safe they feel and how relaxed they are travelling on that highway because they can now use passing lanes to reduce the lines of traffic that were always on there.

Mr. Speaker, we have also been able to increase our K to 12 education spending by \$30 million which is part of our education budget this year of \$2.5 billion. Mr. Deputy Speaker, our children are the future of our province, and we're going to continue to invest in their education so that they can graduate high school and build great futures for themselves. Locally this has meant operating funding for the Living Sky School Division of \$59.7 million with an increase in preventive maintenance and renewal of 11 per cent, and \$19.95 million for Light of Christ Catholic Schools, and that includes an increase of 13 per cent for PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal].

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Speech from the Throne also highlights what we are continuing to do for those less fortunate in our province. Since 2007 we have developed 209 rental and homeowner units in the Battlefords. That's an investment of a total of \$10.6 million. And I know that from conversation that I've had, our seniors appreciate having their seniors' income plan increased from \$90 per month, which it was in '07 and had never been raised for 16 years under the NDP, to what it is now at \$270 a month.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are also continuing to make improvements in our health care system and are adding new programs to our existing programs. And I know that my colleagues have mentioned this before, but I think it bears repeating a second time — since 2007 we have added 3,700 more nurses in this province and nearly 900 more doctors that are being added to our medical teams across this province. Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are also increasing funding for individualized funding for home care to help reduce our wait times.

I am very pleased that North Battleford will be one of the centres that will see improved access to mental health services, as crisis teams that pairs a police officer with a mental health professional will be operational this winter. In addition, to help find that the root causes of some of our crimes, they can definitely help in those regards. Another initiative in my community will be a pilot program to engage youth in mental health promotion in schools.

Mr. Speaker, a very exciting program announced in this speech was the development of a multidisciplinary community recovery team in eight communities throughout our province. And I'm happy to say that one of those locations will be in The Battlefords. These teams will be made up of 40 new full-time employees, and their teams will provide support for individuals with serious and persisting mental illness. These teams will provide expertise from several specialists such as occupational therapists, peer support specialists, addiction counsellors, nurses, mental health therapists, psychologists, continuing care aids, mental health aids, mental health workers. These teams will certainly be a great addition to supports already available and will provide new multidisciplinary support to those with mental illness.

We are also fulfilling our commitment to provide individual funding for children under six who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. With a total of \$2.8 million, this will provide up to \$4,000 for each child under six years old to help parents make their choices and give them flexibility in accessing support.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Speech from the Throne reinforces our commitment to apologize to those in the province who were impacted by the Sixties Scoop. Mr. Speaker, our government wants to make this apology meaningful and respectful, and to that end we are working closely with our Sixties Scoop Indigenous Society of Saskatchewan to provide those affected an opportunity to share their stories.

I, along with our Social Services minister and my colleague from Cut Knife-Turtleford, were able to attend a Sixties Scoop sharing circle here two weeks ago and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can say it was a very, very rewarding morning. Some of the stories were heart-wrenching and compelling, but they were something that we needed to hear in order to make our apology meaningful to the people who have been affected.

But I must say, not all of the stories were bad. Some of these Sixties Scoop people it affected were in good homes. But they still had the same feeling of loss of their family and not being raised with their siblings even though they had good families that they had gone to. So I've certainly appreciated them sharing their stories, and we're going to move forward with our apology.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, as we all know, our province relies heavily on trade and exports. We have seen a significant increase in our exports since 2007, up from \$19 billion at that time to where we sit now at nearly \$29 billion in the 2017 year. And that's an amazing increase in just a 10-year period. But I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, equally as important as increasing our export numbers is diversifying our export markets. For instance, our exports to China have tripled to \$3.5 billion, while exports to India have nearly doubled to 1.1 billion in the last year. And our products now go to destinations in some 150 countries around the world.

We must continue to be competitive in a global economy. And that brings me to the very timely topic that we have heard about from my colleagues earlier as well, and that of a looming federally imposed carbon tax — a tax that will do nothing to reduce carbon emissions but will be devastating to the province as we try to compete with, for example, our southern neighbours who will not have a carbon tax. This government needs to stand united in its opposition to this carbon tax and not favour some sort of carbon tax, as our Opposition Leader suggests.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we must also stand united in supporting pipeline construction so that we can get our oil and gas to tidewater and thereby eliminating selling our products at a discounted price. This year alone, our oil producers would have earned an estimated \$4.4 billion more if they had had access to international markets. This translates into nearly \$300 million more for our province in taxes, royalties, and other revenues. Our lack of access to these markets leaves us virtually only one customer, the United States, where we sell sometimes as low as half of the global price. This just has to change, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[15:45]

I had the opportunity to chair our rural crime reduction committee some time ago, Mr. Speaker, along with the member from Regina Coronation Park, members from Cut Knife-Turtleford, Cypress Hills, Canora-Pelly, and Estevan. The results of that committee . . . We had eight recommendations, and I was very pleased to hear the response from our Justice minister and from our government in implementing the recommendations that we made. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Speech from the Throne highlights the steps that we are taking to reduce crime in our province as a result of some of those recommendations.

One of the things that we heard as we criss-crossed the province and we travelled from north to south and east to west, with our members hearing presentations, and that was the opportunity for rural municipalities and small centres to join regional police force services and share policing between those communities. Well this Speech from the Throne highlights that we will amend *The Police Act* to do exactly that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we also recommended our Justice minister request support for a guns and gangs strategy. And I'm very pleased to see that the federal government has now committed \$10 million for this very strategy to help make our communities safer.

No small part of our commitment effort to reduce crime was the creation of the protection and response team, comprised of 258 new and repositioned police officers composed of RCMP, municipal police, highway patrol, and conservation officers. The results of this combined force has been dramatic, with over 1,300 PRT [protection and response team]-related actions, including responding to 83 emergency 911 calls. The work of these members are reducing response times in our rural areas.

Another very important part of the PRT has been the addition of automatic licence plate readers to the PRT vehicles. These ALPRs [automated licence plate reader] instantly read licence plates and alert officers if that vehicle is stolen, connected to a crime, or connected to a suspended driver. These are very important devices that help make not only our community safer but also alert our officers that a vehicle poses some sort of additional danger.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned earlier our efforts to build a strong economy and stand up for the people of this province. So before I close here today, I would just like to highlight here the initiatives in building a strong and prosperous province for our citizens, such things as increasing our job force by 62,700 new jobs in this province. And yes, after a \$1.2 billion deficit in '16-17, our government made some very difficult but necessary decisions. Those decisions resulted in reducing our deficit in our next budget to \$303 million in '17-18.

Mr. Speaker, we have a three-year plan and our '18-19 budget kept that plan on track to be back to balance by 2020. All the while, we are still continuing to make important investments for the people of this province, some of which I've talked about here this afternoon. And it's interesting to see that our efforts have not gone unnoticed as Moody's recently reconfirmed our AAA credit rating and one of only two provinces receiving this highest credit rating available.

Mr. Speaker, that concludes my comments on this year's Speech

from the Throne, and it is my pleasure to support this motion. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure to stand up here today and talk about our Speech from the Throne. And I guess the first thing I want to do is I would like to welcome the newest member from Regina Northeast. I am certain that, you know, all members come in here with great intentions. And I hope he enjoys his time here; I just hope he doesn't enjoy his time here for a long time, Mr. Speaker, that's all.

But, Mr. Speaker, I also, since I'm standing up here, I want to really thank the people of Carrot River Valley who I've had the privilege of serving as a member for the past — too long some people would say — but for the past 11 years. It's really been a pleasure to serve the people and to try and get some things done for them.

I also want to do some thank yous, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank my CAs [constituency assistants] because, let's face it, around here everybody knows that you've got to work with your CAs. They do the yeoman work when we're sitting in Regina here. So I want to thank Shelley Meyer and Cindy Warner for the great work that they do.

**An Hon. Member:** — When you're away, Fred, they get all the work done.

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Yes. The member from Biggar says when I'm away they get all the work done, and he's probably right. I also would like to thank my wife, Terry, and my two children, Morgan and Gina. I especially want to talk about Gina a little bit because our daughter is a schoolteacher, Mr. Speaker, and you know, she's been teaching now for what, I think it's about five years. And I think back in the dark days of when the NDP was here, when she came out of her College of Education she would've probably had to have gone to a different province to be a teacher. And it's very nice to have her teaching right here in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank the caucus staff for all the things that they've done for me and all the antics that they've had to put up with from both me and the rest of the members on this side of the House. And I wanted to remind everybody also they do a lot of work lining things up. One of the things that's getting lined up actually tomorrow is a chili competition. I just thought I would throw that in, Mr. Speaker. And I would like to remind the people who are down testing the chili of all the brownies and butter tarts that they've received over the years.

Mr. Speaker, another thing I would like to talk about, about Carrot River Valley . . . And you know, I haven't talked about our Wildcats football team in Carrot River. And unfortunately the last time I talked about them was the hardest member's statement I've ever made in my life. But I will talk about them as of last weekend. They were playing the semifinal against this team from Cupar, Mr. Speaker. And you know, let's face it, I'm not going to gloat over this really. No, I'm not, but yes, well let's put it this way. Cupar isn't playing anymore and Carrot River is

continuing on to play Hanley this coming weekend in Hanley. And then right after they win that game they're back for the provincial finals in Carrot River. So I want to give a shout-out to the Carrot River Wildcats, Mr. Speaker.

Now there's quite a few things within the Throne Speech. I know that the opposition really didn't think very much of it; at least that's what I've been hearing from their side. But when you take a look at it, when you take a look at what was in the Throne Speech, all the good things, you know, we've decided . . . We had some tough years because at one time Saskatchewan was relying a lot on resource revenue and, you know, that went south so we had to make some very tough decisions. And I know that the NDP didn't want us to make those hard decisions that we had to do. They just wanted us to keep on spending.

But just take a look at what has happened in the past couple of years. We've kept up our AAA rating with Moody's, you know, and we're on track to get this budget back in balance in '19-20 — that's the year 2019-20 for some of the people that can't understand, but anyway . . . And, Mr. Speaker, this has taken a lot of work. It's taking a lot of . . . We've taken a lot of criticism, but the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatchewan wanted a balanced budget and so that's what we're going to do.

And I certainly support our Premier, of course, for standing up to Saskatchewan with something that could be very devastating to our economy, and that's the carbon tax. Mr. Speaker, I have never heard of anything — how should I put it? — quite so bad as this Ponzi scheme, this Ponzi scheme that the Prime Minister has where he says, look, we're going to give you back as much money or more than what you paid in. Mr. Speaker, you know, a lot of people sometimes question politicians for talking out of the side of their mouth and whatnot but that one, that one's right over the top. That one's right over the top.

It is going to be devastating to have that carbon tax put on us. We have our own carbon resiliency strategy put together by our Minister of Environment which is far, far superior — I made that member statement on the things we were doing with SaskPower — far superior to anything that the federal government's putting on. The federal government, all they want to do is tax you. They're just going to tax you. But they have no way . . . They're not saying any which way of how they will actually lower the emissions within the province or within Canada. Because it's not just our province that they're going and taxing people on. It's other provinces too.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I think our government has stood up. We were the only ones to begin with to stand up to our federal counterparts and, you know, now we have Ontario, we have Prince Edward Island, probably New Brunswick, next year Alberta, Manitoba, all starting to join in. So I think people are starting to see through the federal government's scheme.

Mr. Speaker, for Saskatchewan this would be devastating, absolutely devastating to our economy. They talked about farmers. Well the Prime Minister said that, you know, well the farmers won't have to pay any tax on their fuel, but the fuel is only one small part of it. There's all our crop care products that we buy and spray on the fields that are energy dependent. There is our fertilizer. Our nitrogen fertilizer especially is very energy dependent. The price of all of those things go up.

If you have a trucker come in and haul grain, he's still going to have to pay the tax on his fuel, the tax on his tires, everything else. The rail shipments — we don't have a port sitting here in the middle of Saskatchewan, so consequently we have to pay to have it shipped by rail. The rail companies are going to have to pay a carbon tax. It goes on and on and on. Mr. Speaker, this isn't sitting well with our farmers, and it's not sitting well with the regular people of Saskatchewan.

Now I know that the NDP, the leader, he actually wants to put a carbon tax on. He's in favour of a carbon tax. He's not in favour of pipelines, so he'd rather see it go by rail, any oil that we did have. Maybe he'd just like to see the oil just stay in the ground and let's run the economy down like they did before.

Mr. Speaker, when we go back, speaking of that, when we go back to his leadership platform costing, Mr. Speaker, he didn't even have that figured out. There was no . . . He had no figures put on. So he was going to spend two and a half billion dollars, and he actually had to ask in the House here where we came up with that number. Well all we did is we took his platform costing and we added it up.

Like there's some dandy ones in here. One of the great ones I liked, he wanted to pay . . . We figured it out. It would cost \$18 million for farmers not to spray the crops. Mr. Speaker, this is, I guess that's his way of saying, well we wouldn't be shipping as much grain then on the . . . It would get rid of our shipping problems with the grain because we would use . . . It would open it up to haul more oil I guess because we wouldn't be shipping near as much grain.

But anyway, you know, those are just a few of the odds and ends on the carbon tax. The other thing is, is we actually did a study contrary to the federal study and our study came out to \$1,250 of an extra cost to a family of four for a year.

Mr. Speaker, I would really like to see the NDP join us, join us in going out there and going after the federal Liberals, and by the way, maybe their own leader because if I believe right, I believe that he's against pipelines also.

[16:00]

But, Mr. Speaker, as I continue on, I wanted to talk a few things that we had within the Throne Speech, and I wanted to talk about some of the investments that have been going on around because the NDP loves to say, well where has the money gone, and so do some of their counterparts.

And I just want to talk a little bit about Carrot River Valley which is the people I actually represent. And when you take a look around at what's happened in Carrot River Valley in the past few years, one thing, Highway 55. Highway 55 going up to the Manitoba border. It's a very sensitive trade access for us. It's got a lot of lumber on there. Hopefully get some grain on there once the port of Churchill gets operating again, Mr. Speaker. And there's a lot of truck traffic on there. They spent seventeen and a half million dollars redoing bridges in through that on Highway 55. That was just one of the things.

There's so many different things. The school in Hudson Bay, the school in Hudson Bay — now the NDP want to criticize

education — the school in Hudson Bay desperately needed to be replaced. We replaced that school. I think the cost was \$27 million on that. I'm going by memory here.

Now let's talk about . . . They want to talk about health and they want to talk about home care. Mr. Speaker, the first special care home that was built in our constituency since Grant Devine's day was done in Tisdale under this government.

The NDP sits there and talks about losing all these beds. Where were they? Why weren't they building some? Like that's the whole catch. As our previous premier, Brad Wall, used to say, it's all talk on that side but action on this side, Mr. Speaker.

Another thing is — and very close to my constituency — the constituency of Kelvington just to the south of me, they desperately needed a new school also. And so we built a new school there.

When I first was elected, Mr. Speaker, in 2007, I can bet you we got a minimum of four calls a day on health care because people couldn't get a family doctor, Mr. Speaker. This government, this government has increased nurses by 3,700 since 2007 — now if you want to know where the money went — and 900 physicians. When I was first elected, there were only four physicians in Nipawin. Now there's 12, Mr. Speaker. People are not calling, are not calling our office anymore, saying that they cannot get a family physician.

Mr. Speaker, there's been quite a few other things that have been put in here through this Throne Speech. Like I said, we had Clare's Law come in, which gives people who have been abused better access to finding out if the person that they were with, if the . . . [inaudible] . . . person they were with had been in challenging situations before. And, Mr. Speaker, we have the Regina bypass which is going to be completed on time and on budget.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have done — like go back to health — the two for one on the MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] policy has been a great thing. And we've also gone from the longest surgical waiting times within the province down to, I believe — or within the country — down to, I believe, is third in the country.

Mr. Speaker, yes, maybe the NDP thought that this Throne Speech was mundane. They didn't think there was enough in it. But, Mr. Speaker, the catch is, is this budget speech is about getting us back on track, getting the province back on track, and standing up for Saskatchewan against the federal government and other governments who will try and put us down.

Mr. Speaker, with that I am going to be supporting the Throne Speech, and I definitely will not be supporting the amendment.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Why, thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As always, it is an absolute honour to be able to rise in this Assembly and provide commentary on the Throne Speech. I can't believe this is already the seventh time that I've done this in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. And looking back to the maiden speech that was given today by my colleague, I have to say he



did a much better job than I did on my maiden speech. But I don't want to go back to that one.

Just off the top, I do want to talk a little bit about Saskatoon Nutana, my riding, and some of the folks that live there. I always refer to Saskatoon Nutana as a triple-A riding, and why I say that is because my riding is full of academics and artists and activists. And those folks are all really involved and engaged in the political scene here in Saskatchewan, and they are a constant source of support for me.

Today in particular I'd like to recognize two of my constituents who a few years ago sponsored a Syrian family when the refugees were coming to Canada. A bunch of people in Nutana got together and got some money together and a place for a family to live, and they sponsored a Syrian family. And I'm so pleased and proud of them. Today they are actually having another family arrive from Iraq. And it's a wonderful sign of community and of strength in numbers, how people in the community are coming together.

And in particular, I do want to commend Tracy Pytlowany and Margi Corbett from Saskatoon Nutana who are two members of the group of people who are bringing this Iraqi family to Saskatoon today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I watch with interest as they go about making the world a better place for people who are coming from war-torn zones with young children, and I'm just very proud of them.

Saskatoon Nutana is the home of Oskayak School, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which is a school that has provided an opportunity for many, many First Nations students and a source of pride. I was at their powwow a month ago, and you can see that this is thriving community school in our community, right across the street from my office, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And so that's a sign of what goes on in Saskatoon Nutana.

We also have the Saskatchewan Craft Council, which is a presenter of many of our artisans here in the province. I always call them 3-D [three dimensional] artists because they focus more on craft and sculpture and working with 3-D materials rather than paintings. And they represent our artists throughout Saskatchewan in particular, but also throughout the world.

We have Broadway Avenue, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if you've ever been in Saskatoon on Broadway Avenue, but you'll note that it's full of small businesses and great, great restaurants and lots of activity in the evening. I never feel scared walking down the street in Broadway Avenue at any time of the day. And it's just a really dynamic, active part of our city and certainly the heart of Saskatoon Nutana.

And I want to commend a lot of the people who are politically engaged in my riding. There's folks like Don Kossick who has been a relentless crusader for many, many causes in our province ever since the day when he actually formed the first union in my hometown of Lafleche, in the Co-op there. My dad was on the management board and wasn't as thrilled. But certainly Don has done an incredible amount for people who are suffering from oppression, and I want to give him a shout-out as well.

I also want to talk a little about my constituency office and the folks that work here in the building. First of all to my

constituency assistant, Jaime Nicklas. She's always got my back, Mr. Speaker, looking after things when I'm not there and just quietly and competently taking care of the business of our constituency office. And she's a real delight to have around.

I also want to say a shout-out to my caucus colleagues and our caucus staff who really are a joy. I couldn't be prouder of the team that we have, Mr. Speaker. And I'll note that since I was elected in 2011 our caucus has increased in size by 44 per cent. So that's really exciting for someone like me, especially as our critic duty list gets shorter and shorter . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . For sure there is a self-motivated joy in it, but there is also just many more voices at the table all bringing wisdom and acumen and integrity to what we do here in the building.

And of course I do want to give a big shout-out to our newest member, the member for Regina Northeast. He fought a hard battle. He brought together a team, and they proved to get a message out to the people of Northeast that the former member wasn't able to do, and certainly the candidate this time around for the Sask Party. So congratulations to the member from Northeast and welcome to our team.

And finally, of course, Mr. Speaker, a big shout-out to family and friends. They know who they are and they are the ones who keep me sane. I'm very fortunate to have music in my life through the musical community in Saskatoon, and there's nothing like a good happy jig on the fiddle to make me forget about any of the troubles that we may have while we're doing our job here in the legislature. So to my musical friends and musical family, I really want to thank them for giving me that other side of life in terms of the joy of music.

Now getting to the task at hand, Mr. Speaker, as you know, we are replying to the Speech from the Throne that was given last week. I always go to Google when I want to find out exactly what it is we're supposed to be doing, and I went to Wikipedia and I looked up "Speech from the Throne." And I'm going to share with the Assembly here how Wikipedia considers the Throne Speech is meant to be. And here's what they say:

A speech from the throne . . . is an event in certain monarchies in which the reigning sovereign, or a representative thereof, reads a prepared speech to members of the nation's legislature when the session is opened, outlining the government's agenda and focus for the forthcoming session . . . [and they go on to say] . . . the address sets forth the government's priorities with respect to its legislative agenda, for which the cooperation of the legislature is sought.

And then I had to stop there, Mr. Speaker, because when I listen to the speeches that I'm hearing from across the way, I don't really hear anything about the government's priorities with respect to its legislative agenda. So I took a close look. It's a long, long, long Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. It actually goes on quite at length. And I actually went through with a marker and identified what might be described as government's priorities with respect to this legislative agenda. There wasn't a whole lot in there, Mr. Speaker. There was a lot of patting themselves on the back and complaining about things outside their control, but there really wasn't much that I could identify that would actually set forth the government's priorities with respect to its legislative

agenda.

Now I did go through it, and I highlighted a few of the things that I think are good ideas. And I always want to give the government credit when I find that there are good suggestions in the Throne Speech of things that we could look forward to, things that are upcoming. There wasn't a lot, but I do like the idea of the 4G LTE [long-term evolution] cell services being expanded in more rural communities. We know our rural communities are needing more of that service, so I was glad to see that.

I'm happy to see that the Central Services is moving to a single-procurement service because it saves money. And I think what I'm disappointed in, Mr. Speaker, is that this government hasn't seen the advantages of a single-procurement service for our pharmaceutical, for pharmacare in the province of Saskatchewan, because it's the exact same arguments that they're using in the procurement for Central Services that we would suggest would make a lot of sense on the pharmaceutical side. If you can buy in bulk and you have a single source for procurement, it would save taxpayers' dollars. And I think that's something that's near and dear to everyone on both sides of the House, so I'm disappointed that it stopped there, but maybe it's a move towards that.

Very important initiative on commercial driver training. We know how devastating and tragic a lack of training can be, and we've seen that here in our province in the Humboldt tragedy, Mr. Speaker, so I think that's incredibly important for this government to bring that forward.

The financial literacy curricula. Yes, long overdue. I think it's time for our children and our grandchildren to start understanding what financial literacy means and how to balance their own bank balance, how to balance their own budget, and how to not end up in staggering amounts of debt like we see so many people in now.

I like the idea of coding and robotics in classrooms. I think that's a great idea, helping our kids to be job ready when they go on from high school.

I'm happy to see that there's a review coming on income exemption for income assistance. I think it's long overdue as well. I get a little nervous when I just see the word "review" because it doesn't imply that there will be any action. But at least the government's looking at it, so I'm looking forward to the results of that review, and I'm hoping that there is a just transition for people going from income assistance to gainful employment. And right now I know too many people who just simply cannot make that leap without some sort of assistance.

[16:15]

It was good to see free hunting and fishing being offered to all Canadian veterans. It's an interesting, generous move. I'm not sure all Canadian veterans enjoy hunting and fishing, so I hope there will be other things to extend our thanks to our veterans, because if you're not a hunter and fisher, then you're kind of left out. So it's a good move, but I always think a little bit further, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'm looking forward to an apology for those impacted by the Sixties Scoop. As you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's long,

long overdue, and with political to and fro that we've seen on this apology, I hope that this government can come forward with a meaningful apology to the folks that were seriously impacted by the Sixties Scoop.

They noted in the Throne Speech, "... further actions to increase renewable generating capacity in 2019." Again this has been announced in the past, but the minute those energy-producing renewables are turned on, it's always a good moment for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So that's something I think that's positive.

There's some where I really do need to see more details before I can even begin to have an opinion on it, and one is the municipalities joining regional police services. I don't understand enough about that, so I think I will need more information from the government on that. Performance-based ambulance contracts, that may be a positive move but we need to know, will they be scrapping the caps? Will they be getting rid of the charge for inter-hospital transfers? Because as you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's a real problem for people who are moved from hospital to hospital without their say and then end up with a big ambulance bill.

Accountable care units, community health centres in Regina and Saskatoon, again need more information. Individualized funding for home care, again need more information. So those are many of the things that I found in the Throne Speech, but as I say, that's probably half a page where we have a 20-page Throne Speech. And others of my colleagues have talked about much of what is in there is looking backwards instead of forwards and actually patting themselves on the back. So I'm worried about that.

Now there are six references to legislation that I found and that I could tell would require legislation. Some of these others may be involved in the legislative agenda. And again I'll remind everyone that the Speech from the Throne is supposed to set out the government's priorities with respect to its legislative agenda.

So in 20 pages, I found six references to actual legislation. The first one is the legislation being introduced on intersection safety. And again, Mr. Speaker, we need a strategy on that. We've seen the devastating results when there isn't intersection safety on our highways. And so I am looking forward to that legislation and I hope it will be one that we can support, that it covers the appropriate issues appropriately. But that's one piece of legislation.

Second one, Clare's Law. It's one that's necessary when we see domestic partners being murdered by their spouse and, you know, especially a spouse with a history of violence. So that's something I think that we really need to have in this legislature. Unfortunately the legislation isn't going as far as providing women and victims of domestic violence the opportunity for paid leave, at least five days of paid leave because, as you can imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that moment when a partner has to flee because of domestic violence is probably the moment that they need support from us the most. And if it meant five days of paid leave, that would maybe make the difference in that woman's life or those children's lives.

The third legislation that I think will be introduced based on what's in the Throne Speech is, well it's two-pronged: critically

ill adult leave and extension of parental leave. Again those are moves that support families and particularly as we have the sandwich generation. I'm at the end of the baby boom, so I get to be the tail end of it, and I'm not sure that's a good place to be, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but aging parents . . .

I saw my 88-year-old mom yesterday in the care home in Lafleche, which is a wonderful facility. It was a hospital at one point, but the need in the community was for a care home. So they built a beautiful care home there quite a few years ago, and my mom is living there and getting really, really great service from the people that work there. So you know, we're as a family able to support and help each other out, my siblings and I. But critically ill adult leave is something that I hear from a lot of my cohort, desperation, because they can't help their parents the way they need to. There are so many issues dealing with elder care, so I think this, depending on the text of the legislation, is something that I look forward to seeing.

And another thing that was mentioned was that we will be enacting more of *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Act*. As you know, Mr. Speaker, that bill has been on the table for a long time and it actually had third reading several years ago. And obviously we've been concerned about the foot-dragging that we've seen to date on implementing that Act. But I think the Minister Responsible for SaskPower has been working hard to make sure that this bill becomes real. And we need to see those caps. We need to see that legislation in place, so I'm looking forward to that.

Expanding incentives on page 3 . . . I have to remind myself exactly what that is referring to. I believe it will include legislation. Oh, this is expanding existing incentives and introducing new oil well drilling and production incentives. Not sure what that means, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if it will require legislative change. So if it does, again we'll be looking very closely at that. Because, as you know, when government intervenes in the free market, that has an impact. Is this corporate welfare or is it something that is a genuine incentive that will move the industry along? So we'll take a very close look at that one.

We will need more details. They've announced changes to *The Seizure of Criminal Property Act*. We see a government that's focused on the end of the spectrum of crime. And so that's again, depending on what's in that bill, we'll have a very close look at that and see whether it meets the needs of the people of Saskatchewan or not. But we will have to see the bill for sure.

There was one line I found very interesting. And this is part of . . . You can tell the pattern of this government right now is to point a finger elsewhere. If there's problems for this government, they just try to avoid the problem by pointing a finger somewhere else. So we see it mostly right now pretty obviously in terms of pointing at Ottawa for the moves that they're making in Ottawa. But I think, Mr. Speaker, this is a saying that my mother told me many, many years ago is that when you're pointing a finger at someone, there's three fingers pointing back at you. And I think that's part of a government that's not ready to take on the problems that exist, that are within their control. And I think it is not serving the people of Saskatchewan well.

On page 20, and this is the quote I wanted to talk about, the

Throne Speech says, ". . . the courts have blocked the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion . . ." And I think that's a curious turn of phrase when you say courts have blocked. Because courts aren't in the business of blocking. Courts are in the business of following the law, and that's what has happened in the federal court when it comes to the Trans Mountain expansion pipeline. So I'm not sure blaming the courts is appropriate in a Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, when the courts are simply doing their job based on the evidence that's put in front of them.

As you know, Lady Justice is blind. She does not look at the political side of this. She does not look at the passionate arguments that aren't based in fact, Mr. Speaker. The job of the courts is to look at the facts as presented on both sides and rule on them. And I'm surprised that members of the bar, the Saskatchewan bar, are even allowing this kind of language to show up in a Throne Speech. Because courts don't block, Mr. Speaker. That's not what they do. They uphold the law and they rule on the law. So I think what we need to do is roll up our sleeves and get to work and ensure that the problems that were identified by the court are met and dealt with. And I know that's not an easy task, but it doesn't mean we avoid the law. And I'm kind of disturbed to see that kind of language in a Throne Speech.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to spend the next part of my speech today talking a little bit about what's not in the Throne Speech. And I pretty much do this every year, but there's so many things that are not even mentioned in the Throne Speech. Mr. Speaker, crystal meth, it's a scourge that's destroying communities right now. And there's nothing in the Throne Speech to show how our government will help those communities that are suffering.

I never saw the word "poverty" at all, Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech, and we know that's a reality for so many people. And I think the statistics with regards to children and poverty in Saskatchewan are appalling. So it's kind of sad that . . . Well it's more than sad. It's disappointing and it's a disservice to the people of Saskatchewan that we don't even have a reference to the situation so many people find themselves in in a Speech from the Throne.

We don't at all see any reference to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Calls to Action. Again, this is not new for this government. They've steadfastly avoided any discussion of the Calls to Action in terms of their priorities with respect to their legislative agenda, to refer back to Wikipedia. And again, a disservice to the people of Saskatchewan.

Another thing that was not mentioned at all in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, was the massive debt that this province is headed for. There's no mention of how that debt's going to be dealt with, whether it's going to be increased even more than it has been. As we know, it's tripled since, I think 2008 or '09, or it will have tripled by 2022. So we're on a debt train that's going down the mountain with no brakes, Mr. Speaker, and you would think the government would want to address that. You would think it would want to talk about how the debt is impacting our future and our children's future.

Another thing we don't see really much mention of — there is the SaskTel LTE cell services happening in rural communities — but the rural and northern transportation needs. They got rid of the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], Mr. Speaker.

They wiped it out. And now we see people in rural and northern Saskatchewan really struggling with transportation needs, but you don't see anything in this Throne Speech.

It's funny, Mr. Speaker, but we also don't see how we're going to get rid of the money pit at the GTH. This is a bottomless pit, as you've seen over and over again. It's going further and further into debt: almost a million dollars a year in interest alone at the GTH, Mr. Speaker. And yet nothing, not a word, in this Throne Speech about the priorities of this government for that authority.

You know, another thing I didn't see at all mentioned in the Throne Speech is the existence of a vibrant film community in Saskatchewan. And I thought, oh yes, right. They got rid of it, Mr. Speaker. They have decimated the film industry in Saskatchewan, losing on many, many jobs. Many, many secondary jobs, and for what? It still seems like it was a petty move because since then . . . The former premier talked about not liking tax incentives like that, and yet this government has introduced two or three of those types of tax incentives since they got rid of the film industry. So the inconsistency is baffling.

And the loss of our film industry is still being felt throughout the arts community here in Saskatchewan. And despite the good work of many of the people who stayed — there are not a lot who were able to stay and work in the film industry — it's still a fraction of what it could be if we had some sort of incentive that every other province pretty much in the country has. So again, I guess I understand why they're not talking about our vibrant film industry, Mr. Speaker, because we don't have one.

There's nothing mentioned in here either about our arts community. And we have a wonderful arts community in this province right across from, you know, symphonies to powwows, from painting, fine arts in the MacKenzie Art Gallery, to the pottery in the craft council in Saskatoon. We have a wonderful, wonderful arts community that creates jobs, that supports local businesses, and yet there's not one mention in this Throne Speech about that ministry or strengthening our arts community here in Saskatchewan.

I just got an email from SREDA, the Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority. They send out quarterly reports, so I always look at those. It's an economic dashboard, and this is their Q3 [third quarter] economic dashboard. One of the things we don't see in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, is the crisis in housing that's happening in our province right now. And if you look at the indicators for housing in Saskatchewan, we have in Saskatoon alone, the housing market has dropped, housing starts have dropped over 17 per cent. Building permits in Saskatoon have dropped over 13 per cent. Existing home sales have dropped 26 per cent, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatoon. And the average home price is now dropped. It's dropped 10 per cent from 2017.

Those are startling numbers, Mr. Speaker. And I think you will hear us talking about this more and more, is the impact of the expansion of the PST to construction, Mr. Speaker. It's causing a lot of harm. And the stubbornness of this government to not revisit that decision has completely stalled, as you can see, the housing industry in Saskatoon. I would suspect the numbers are similar in Regina.

[16:30]

So okay, I'm getting the signal to wind up. I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. In conclusion, I did want to make one comment on something the member from Regina Walsh Acres said yesterday because he stated that the operational debt has been reduced. But when I look at the numbers, in 2008 operational debt was 6.8 billion, and in 2018 it was 7.1 billion. Now the only way you could even get to that conclusion is not including the SaskBuilds portion of the debt. But, Mr. Speaker, that's operational debt. It's just now carved off neatly into another category. Even without the SaskBuilds, the operational debt of government ministries is 5.41 billion. So I don't think he understands the numbers very well, Mr. Speaker, because in my view the operational debt has not been reduced at all. And if you look at the Public Accounts volume 1, you can very clearly see that.

So people in Saskatoon Nutana, Mr. Speaker, they're still worried about many things. They're worried about rising costs in utilities, rising interest rates. They're worried about stagnant wages. They're worried about rising ocean levels, Mr. Speaker. They're worried about climate change and how we can reduce our emissions and our need for fossil fuels. They're worried about settler and First Nation relations, Mr. Speaker. They're worried about the drug epidemic and the social costs of that.

In Broadway, the small businesses and the restaurants are worried about the impact of that damaging PST increase on restaurant foods. They're worried about the crowded classrooms of their children, a lack of supports in the schools, costs of post-secondary education. They're worried about the future of our children. Worried about minimum wage, unemployment, HIV [human immunodeficiency virus], diabetes, kids in poverty, mental health and getting the supports that are needed, waiting for specialists for their kids. And detox, Mr. Speaker, there are parents in my riding that are desperate to get their kids into detox. And they can't do it and they're worried their children are going to die. Mr. Speaker, this is the crisis that is facing so many people in my riding.

So rather than talk about standing up for Saskatchewan, I think the Sask Party should be saying, they're sitting down. They're sitting down for the poor. They're sitting down for the addicted. They're sitting down on the struggles in our home towns. They're sitting down from the struggles in our classrooms. They're sitting down on the struggles we see in our emergency rooms, and they're sitting down on the needs of the seniors in our province, Mr. Speaker.

So I don't think it'll be any surprise to you, but I am not going to support the motion, and I do support the amendment brought forward by my colleagues. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Canora-Pelly.

**Mr. Dennis:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great honour to stand up here today and support the Throne Speech. It's been a busy, great year, and I promise you my speech on the Throne Speech will not be as long and windy as my colleague across the road here.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank a few people back home. My

executive staff, I've had some changes. Carol Sleeva, my CA, she retired at the end of September, so I would just like to thank her. She worked many years for Ken Krawetz and two and a half years for me. And so I'd just like to wish her well in her retirement and thank her for the past two and a half years of guiding me along.

I'd also like to welcome Gladys Zavislak, my new constituent assistant. You met her last week. And she's been with me for about a month, and we're doing well and we work really well together. I'd also like to thank my casual workers, Deb Gabora and Abby Gulka, a student who's in university. And she comes home on weekends and holidays and helps me out quite a bit. So thank you.

I'd also like to thank my old and new executive and welcome them aboard. We just had a meeting. and we've got a new staff going here. We've got some old and some new, and I'd just like to shout out to them: president Sean Wilson, vice-president Syl Hryniw, secretary Gladys Zavislak, treasurer Darryl Stevenson, and my membership Chair Melissa Johnson and provincial policy rep Kris Cherewyk. As well, I've got eight new directors from Preeceville, Kamsack, and Canora, which kind of diversifies right into my area. So thank you for keeping track of all of my area too as well, and I look forward to working with them.

I also had a busy year with lots happening in my constituency. This summer we had a P&H [Parrish & Heimbecker] opening about 10 miles north of Yorkton, a nice, huge place. And I look forward to that; especially when we get our passing lanes in from Canora to Melville next year, I look forward. It'll alleviate a lot of pressure on the trucking and our seniors going for medical appointments to Yorkton.

We had a \$15 million peat moss plant open up near Norquay and it provides about . . . It's going to get up to about 35, 40 workers. And they're looking at putting in some more money next year, so that's a big boost for our area there. As well, we had a new Sarcan building in Canora; it was the old Liquor Board store and they renovated. It looks pretty good. I was in there a few times and did the ribbon cutting.

As well, Friends of Madge Lake, they refurbished a cabin from 1940s and they opened it up with a bunch of volunteers, and now they're selling local products that they each make. And it's all volunteer residents working at this place. Also we just had a new contract at Madge Lake and they're renovating the boat launch. They're renovating the new cabins and they're spending, I think it's around \$6 million on this renovation. So it's a really good boost for our provincial park. There has also been many events in my constituency, in our province, which shows that we're thriving pretty well.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to thank the support of my children: Jasmine, Shane, Lewis from Regina. And just to let you know I will be a new grandpa on the end of November, so I'm looking forward to that. I have my other daughter, Jade Dennis. She works at the correctional office here in Regina. She finally bought a house and getting out on her own, so it's kind of nice. Also I have my son, Carson Dennis. He works in Melville as a greenskeeper there for the last seven years. In the last two years he took on a new career of ice making, and he's the icemaker at

the curling rink in Melville.

**An Hon. Member:** — Doing a pretty fine job.

**Mr. Dennis:** — Yes. Finally I'd like to thank my wife, Lorri, who is a nurse practitioner in Canora for the last seven, eight years, and then she was a nurse for 28 years too as well. She has done really well taking care of all our constituents in our area, except for me, as you can see.

Mr. Speaker, the theme of Standing Up for Saskatchewan is exactly what we have done as a government over the past 11 years, and we will continue to do so. We have some good years, and recently some years that we had some difficult decisions, but we have a three-year plan to get back to a balanced budget. In 2016-17 we had a \$1.2 billion deficit, and made a decision to reduce our dependency off resources and balance it with some consumption. Mr. Speaker, I will tell you that although we had some tough decisions, our '17-18 deficit was 303 million, and we are on track to balance the budget in '19-20 while still investing in our people of our province. This, of course, while keeping our AAA rating.

Mr. Speaker, the economy is one of our no. 1 priorities, and it is showing signs of improvement. Our population has grown by 11,000 people last year, and over 160,000 over the last 11 years. There are now more than 62,000 additional people working in our province. Saskatchewan GDP has grown from 49 billion in 2007 to over 60 billion today, an increase of 22 per cent. Our public-private sector capital investment has grown over 70 per cent to more than \$14 billion. Mining investments in Saskatchewan rank second out of 91 jurisdictions across the world for mining investment.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to expand and provide new incentives to introduce new oil well drilling production incentives. We'll continue to invest in technology, which will include the new Saskatchewan technology start-up incentive, which will be critical in continuing the growing of the Saskatchewan economy.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue our strong management of this province to make important investments for the quality life of our people, including the creation of the Saskatchewan low income . . . We tripled the senior income plan for low income for seniors and increasing personal, spouse, and child tax exemptions to the point of taking 112,000 people off the provincial income tax.

Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to invest more money into the infrastructure throughout the province. Over the past decade we have invested \$1.6 billion in education infrastructure, which includes 18 new joint-use schools last year and housing over 11,000 students. Two more schools will be built in the traditional method, that bringing the total to 40 new schools and 25 major renovations over the last decade.

Some notable investments that have been in my constituency are: in 2008, the Norquay School project was 1.1 million; 2009, Kamsack Comprehensive roof replacement, 225,000; 2010, the Canora Junior Elementary roof, 160,000; 2014, the Canora Junior Elementary school new modular, 900,000; last year, 2017, the Sturgis school amalgamation renovations to join the junior and the senior schools together; in 2018, this summer there was

a re-roofing of the Norquay School.

Mr. Speaker, government remains committed to health care with investments in infrastructure of over \$1.5 billion the last decade. This includes the completion of two new hospitals and 14 long-term care facilities. The new psychiatric hospital in North Battleford will be the state-of-the-art hospital, housing 188 medical health beds and also support correctional facility of 96 beds for offenders living with mental health challenges.

The new long-term care facility in Swift Current and North Battleford hospital, using the P3 method will save our government more than 100 million over the life of their contracts, and the money will be invested to improve the front-line services.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to invest in our highways for safer travel for people of Saskatchewan. In the last decade, we have built or improved over 13 000 kilometres of highways, and 275 bridges have been repaired. Our largest project today is the Regina bypass, which offers long-term safety for Regina and the surrounding area. Regina bypass will be completed next October, on time and on budget.

There's also been new interchanges built in Warman and Martensville that will open this fall, one year ahead of schedule. These major projects will improve the traffic and safety and support the future of our province. Saskatchewan has recently signed a bilateral agreement with the federal government to provide nearly \$900 million for infrastructure projects over the next decade.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue our strong commitment to health care, including recruiting and retaining medical professionals. Over the past 10 years, there have been over 3,700 additional nurses and 900 more doctors practising in our province.

Saskatchewan continues to use the public-private service to better aid the people of Saskatchewan. The two-for-one MRI policy introduced in 2016 has allowed 1,400 additional MRIs at no additional cost to the taxpayer.

Mr. Speaker, over the last year our province has moved from 12 health regions to one health authority. These changes expect to bring the cost savings of 10 to \$20 million of savings, while better coordinating health care. This year we have provided over 90,000 surgeries, and there are 44 per cent less patients waiting for surgery compared to a decade ago. Last week the member from across, from Saskatoon Fairview, explained about health care times. While under the NDP, the wait times were the worst in the country.

[16:45]

Our country has created four accountable care units operating in Regina and Saskatoon, and we are establishing three more. Two community health centres were established in Regina and Saskatoon to help the patients with complex needs in the hopes of reducing the emergency departments to visit . . . and hospital visits.

Mr. Speaker, we are very proud to have the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital nearing completion and expect it to open in

2019. We will continue to support the College of Medicine, which will enhance our government's ability to attract various specialists needed in this hospital and in our province.

Mr. Speaker, we'll continue to focus on increasing mental health services in our province. Crisis teams, pairing a police officer and a mental health professional, will be in operation this winter in Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Yorkton, and Prince Albert. Multidisciplinary community recovery teams made up of 40 new full-time positions will be providing services in eight different communities this year to support mental health.

Mr. Speaker, HIV rates are very high. Our government is introducing a universal drug coverage for HIV medications and provide additional funding for communities working with vulnerable populations.

Our government is also committed to funding for children under six years old who are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. We will provide \$4,000 per child annually.

Mr. Speaker, improving the . . . for the people of the province last fall, I had the privilege of joining a team here to do the crime reduction committee, which toured the province to evaluate the province, crime around the province. It was a great experience and an eye-opener. And after all the recommendations, I am happy to see the implementation of the PRT to reduce crime and particularly in rural areas. It brought together highway patrol officers, conservation officers, RCMP, municipal police officers together. Since the launch in April, conservation officers and RCMP have assessed more than 1,300 PRT-related actions.

Mr. Speaker, this province has some of the toughest impaired driving laws in the country. By strengthening these laws in 2014 and '17, we have seen a 40 per cent decrease in fatalities. In order to help this, our government is also proclaiming *The Vehicles for Hire Act* to allow a ride-sharing services to begin the operation in the communities across the province.

Also this fall, we'll be introducing changes to the commercial driving training and improve the safety in our roads. Our government is committing \$700,000 to clear lines and improve intersections.

Mr. Speaker, this session will also amend *The Police Act* to allow rural municipalities and municipalities under 500 residents to join a regional police service.

Our government will also be introducing legislation against domestic violence in our province, bringing in Clare's Law. This legislation will provide a framework for police to disclose . . . [inaudible] . . . information regarding abuse and history to partners.

Mr. Speaker, our government will continue to support the people of Saskatchewan in education. And our government has provided over \$9 billion since 2007 in post-secondary education and provided the graduate retention plan for over 70,000 students in our province which are now living here today.

Mr. Speaker, studies have shown that the carbon tax would reduce our provincial GDP by 16 million by 2030. At the same time, Ottawa's plan will reduce emissions by only 1 per cent.

This carbon tax will hurt families, businesses, and jobs across Saskatchewan. A recent poll indicated 88 per cent of Saskatchewan people are against the federal carbon tax. Ontario, Manitoba, PEI [Prince Edward Island], and New Brunswick are against the carbon tax as well.

Mr. Speaker, we also committed to SaskTel rural coverage across, and we have a four-phase plan designed to improve wireless services in rural Saskatchewan. And I am happy to see that the first two phases will be done by 2020.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard some comments from the opposition across that I would like to address. First of all, the member from Saskatoon Centre said that he's travelled across the province and is wondering where all the money went. He only has to look at the improved highways. And the potholes, that's where all the money went.

Second of all, our opposition leader has made promises over the last year that has been costed out. I think it's around two and a half billion dollars in annual funding planned, which he has no plans of how to raise the money. He kind of reminds me of a song from Supertramp. He's a "Dreamer." "Dreamer." I am wondering if these two that have been travelling around the province are like old rock stars on their final tour.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I will be supporting the Throne Speech and I will not be supporting the amendment.

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

**Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is my first Throne Speech to witness as an MLA in the government. It was a great experience and an honour to stand here representing the people from where I come from. Last year I was sitting in this gallery watching the proceedings, and well, not you, but the Speaker was sitting in one of the chairs over here. So much has changed in one year. We have a new Premier. We have a new Leader of the Opposition. And last year, Kevin and April brought my wife and I to the Throne Speech and bought us lunch. And I would've loved to have been able to return that favour. How I wish I could've had that opportunity this year. The last six months that I've served in his place have confirmed many things about him to me, but most of all that he was a great man who loved the people in his constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure why God was so good to me, Mr. Speaker, but I want to thank my wife today for allowing me to serve the people of our constituency. I married a Winnipeg girl, brought her back to my hometown. And I'll never forget the day we were in Melfort for a wedding. It was actually my sister's wedding, and we were on our way home and there was construction. And I remember sitting at the construction site and looking into the eyes of the people, wondering who they were and actually caring.

And we got back to Winnipeg, where my wife is from and where we lived at the time, and there was construction on Portage Avenue. And I thought, what on earth? Why are they . . . You know, there's always construction. And it struck me that, you know, the people that I wanted to serve, the people I wanted to be a part of their lives were the ones in my hometown. And I asked my wife. I said, Tannis, would you be willing to move back

to my home community to serve the people there? And today, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my wife because she left her parents and her family, and she moved to my town and made my people her people. And it's been a great experience every day.

I want to thank my kids . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'm not going to thank the Riders today. My son sent me a text today. Not only does God give you the right wife, but the right kids. And here's what my son, Joel, said. He said, hey Dad, I heard you're speaking in an hour. Just wanted to let you know I'm praying for you. Don't worry about the house. I promised my wife I'd build her a house if I could sell the last one, and after that my whole life changed. So my son's at home looking after my house, so I want to say thank God for good kids. I have a son named Joel. Next one's Mary, and those two are graduated. I've got Sara, Rachel, David, and Hanna. And I'm thankful for the opportunity that I have to parent kids and all the good things that they're teaching me along the way.

I didn't realize that the most important role of an MLA is the CA that you pick. Nobody told me that. It wasn't in the notes. But I'm starting to realize that the most important thing about being an MLA is choosing the right CA. And so I've got two of them, and I really want to thank them today. One is Peggy Gordon, and she has helped me understand what it is to serve the people of our constituency.

I probably had one of the most touching points in my life with Peggy. I was hoping to be able to make a difference in the lives of people. One day we had someone come into our office with a health problem and she was needing support. And so at that point Peggy took over and shared with me all the things that we had at our disposal as a government. And as we served that lady that day, I realized what an important role it is to be able to be the MLA that has the phone numbers of the right ministers in this province. And we received a letter a month ago or so, a month and a half ago, and it was from the family of this lady. She had passed away, and it was just a thank you letter for us being able to make a difference in her life. And I got to say that that wasn't me, that wasn't Peggy, but that was the people of this province. We have a great province with great support systems in place to help people through difficult times of their life.

The other CA I have is Carole Gantefoer. And I remember Carole's part, role in my life years ago when we were going to run. My wife and I had talked about running as MLA earlier on in life. It would've been . . . I would've run against Kevin at that time. And I remember Carole's words to me was . . . it actually was to my wife. We talked about the difficulties of being an MLA and Carole said, you'll have to suck it up, buttercup. So that is Carole Gantefoer in a nutshell.

But the beauty of having Carole as your CA is you get her husband with her. And you know, I just want to say — and I'm sure Rod's probably watching — what a wonderful opportunity it is to have a guy like Rod in your corner. And even across the way it was mentioned, the respect that they have for Rod Gantefoer on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

But I remember when I was in high school we had these text books. And at the back page of the text book, in our math book were . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes it was before the time of tablets, but we had an answer key at the back of the book. So

you could work on your math questions, and if you felt that you might have got it right, you could go and check with the answer key. So that's kind of how I'm an MLA these days. I do my best, see if I've done it right and then if I have a . . . I just go to Rod and say, hey Rod, how did I do? And so such a wonderful thing to have Rod Gantfoer serving.

You know, one of the other things that I see in his life is supporting people after you're done. And I think that would be encouragement for all the MLAs here today. Rod Gantfoer continues to serve the people of our constituency even after he's retired. And that's the heart of a true MLA.

So, Mr. Speaker, I enjoyed the Speech from the Throne as the Lieutenant Governor recounted what the government has done and endeavours to do for the people of this province that we love. My respect for our Premier has grown as I've witnessed the character and resolve needed in a man to lead us into the future. He has represented us well at home and abroad, standing strong for this province in what is right, even if he had to stand alone. I stood at a meeting before I was in the government and heard our Premier say to our Prime Minister that if he wanted to know how far he would go in opposing the carbon tax, just watch me. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's been enjoyable watching our Premier as he has stood up for the people of Saskatchewan.

I have a new appreciation for cabinet ministers. The sacrifices that they make for their families . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, there you go. Touchy spot there, touchy spot there. You got to be long enough to be appreciated. So I want to say that I appreciate them.

The other thing is, as it maybe comes to a surprise to some of us, I want to say that I appreciate the official opposition. And you know, it's been good for me to watch. It's been good for me to experience . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, I'm not smoking. But it's been great to see the important role that the opposition play. And sometimes it looks like they're misguided, and we disagree with you, but it's been an education to understand why we need to have an official opposition and government critics.

And the biggest role was when I got to sit in the PAC committee, the Public Accounts Committee, and seeing how the Provincial Auditor was working with the government to keep us accountable. It's not like we've done anything wrong. It's working together for the best of the province. And I just want to say, I've just got a few seconds left, that I do appreciate . . .

So this year's Throne Speech started off with a story of a community in our province that showed love for local . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh, now I'm done.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It now being 5 o'clock, this House will stand recessed until 7 p.m. this evening.

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





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