



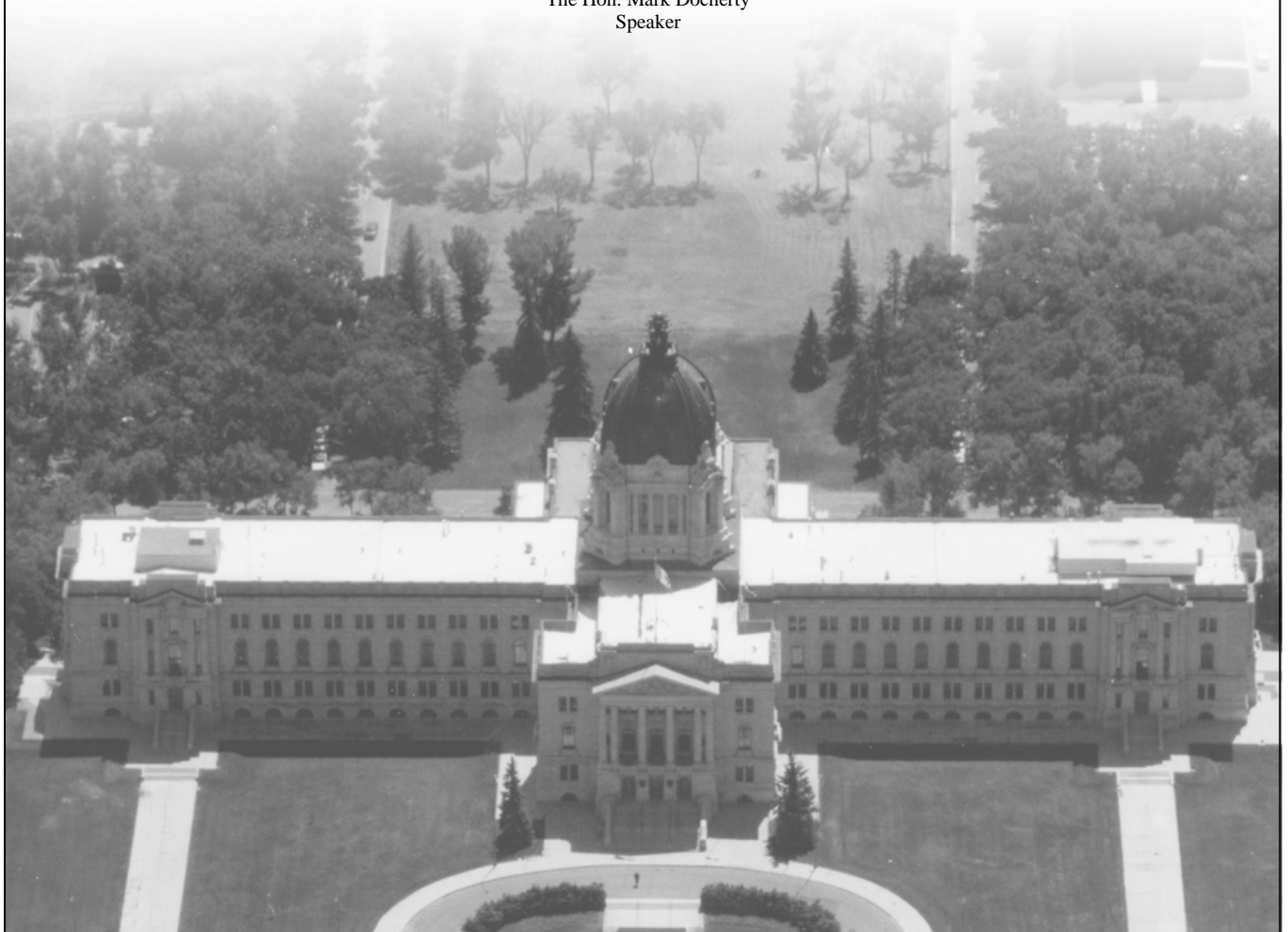
THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I would like to ask for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Maybe that'll sink in. I don't know. I'm going to try it. Joining us today in my gallery are a few people who are very familiar to this Assembly: Ms. Mary McFadyen, the Ombudsman and Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner of Saskatchewan, give us a wave; Mr. Ron Kruzeniski, Information and Privacy Commissioner for Saskatchewan.

Both commissioners have served with distinction in this province in their roles since 2014. Later this day there will be a motion presented for reappointment. I ask all members to join me in not only congratulating them but thanking them for their service, and I look forward to our positive working relationship in the future. So thank you both.

While I'm on my feet, sitting in my gallery is no stranger to Regina's faith community, my friend Rabbi Jeremy Parnes from the Beth Jacob Synagogue. There's a vigil planned for tomorrow, 5 o'clock, Regina city hall, a vigil for wholeness in a broken world. To quote the rabbi, "This was senseless hatred. It's a crime against all of us. We have to stand together and say no, we are not accepting this. This affects all of us."

Rabbi, I know you have personal connection to the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Please offer our condolences on behalf of the Assembly. Thank you for your work in bringing people together to combat hate. Thank you for your interfaith work, engaging in difficult conversations, and seeing light when the world seems dark. It's my pleasure to know you, sir. Thank you.

I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with you to introduce to the Legislative Assembly, Rabbi Jeremy Parnes of the Regina Beth Jacob Synagogue. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow evening the synagogue and the Regina Multi-Faith Forum have jointly organized a vigil for wholeness in a broken world. The service is in response, as you've noted, Mr. Speaker, to the horrific anti-Semitic attacks in Pittsburgh that killed 11 innocent Jews in their place of worship.

This tragic event occurred Saturday morning during the Shabbat service at the Tree of Life Synagogue. This senseless act of hate is believed to be the deadliest attack on Jews in American history and, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly an attack on all of us. I encourage all members to participate tomorrow in the vigil service and to join me again, as you have done, in welcoming Rabbi Parnes to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with you in welcoming the Ombudsman and the Privacy Commissioner and congratulating them on their reappointment and looking forward to working together over the years to come.

I also want to add my voice in welcome to Rabbi Jeremy Parnes and to speak for a moment about what it is that we will be talking about tomorrow night and experiencing tomorrow night at the vigil.

When we look at the history of Jewish people in this world and the way since biblical times they've been a people who have been attacked, that has continued. Pogroms, the Holocaust, and now what has happened in Pittsburgh, it is unacceptable. It's an unbearable weight that the Jewish community has had to bear, and it's been extremely distressing to watch in recent months and years that hatred be fanned within the United States and here in North America, this most recent incident in Pittsburgh obviously being the most tragic manifestation of that hatred in recent times, that we've seen so-called mainstream political and media figures fanning white supremacy, fanning anti-Semitism for political gains.

And tomorrow when we join in vigil, we will come together in mourning, but we must also come together in commitment to speak out against that hatred and recommit ourselves to fighting for a world where we take care of each other, where we treat each other well regardless of our faith, regardless of our background. And not just regardless, but because we are different and because we value each and every one of us. Thank you for being here today.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's my honour to join with you and others to welcome Rabbi Parnes to his Assembly. As you come to terms with news like we had on Saturday, it's incredibly difficult. It's beyond words. It's beyond description. To see a horrifying anti-Semitic attack like that in a place of worship shakes, I believe, all of us, but I know for sure it shakes our Jewish community and Jewish communities around our world.

So I'm thankful and heartened to have a leader like Rabbi Parnes in our community, somebody who's always sought to unify, has always sought to bring people together, and approaches things from a perspective of understanding, a leader at the Beth Jacob Synagogue but a leader that builds bridges throughout our community, as I know you know, Mr. Speaker, in the interfaith communities, and responding as well to many broader needs within our community.

I just want to say thank you so much to my friend Rabbi Parnes here today, to let him know that we'll stand together in solemn solidarity tomorrow. And that more than that, that we need to depart with that commitment to a better way forward, as expressed very thoughtfully by the Leader of the Opposition. Thank you, Rabbi Parnes, for your leadership in these dark times. It's your leadership and so many that you're working with that will help us find better days and light.

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

Sport.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Also in the Speaker's gallery this afternoon, we've got a group of folks here, Book Award winners that were able to recite some of their literature in the Legislative Library this afternoon. They're author Kathleen Carlisle and author Beth Goobie. Ven Begamudré was able to read but not able to join us in the House here this afternoon.

And from Saskatchewan Book Awards representatives, the board Chair is Donna Woloshyn and the executive director is Courtney Bates-Hardy. Thank you all for being here. The Legislative Librarian also is up there, Melissa Bennett.

So we appreciate these folks coming by this afternoon to read. The authors read from their books that were able to win awards at Saskatchewan Book Awards gala this past April. I was able to be there, and we always appreciate the good work of Saskatchewan authors in our province. So again, thank you for taking the time to be here this afternoon.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to join the minister in welcoming the guests in our Speaker's gallery, the authors who provided a fantastic reading, this time at lunch. It's the 10th year that this has happened in the library, and I want to acknowledge Kathleen Carlisle and Beth Goobie and Ven Begamudré for their fine reading. It's pretty special when we have this kind of occasion in our library.

I just want to say a little thing about Kathleen. I shared the story about how her book is about Fiery Joe, Joe Phelps, the first Natural Resources minister for the Tommy Douglas government. His widow lived down the street from me and just passed away a few years ago. She lived into her late 90s. She would watch me come home and watch me drive up, and then she'd give me a call to go get her Christmas oranges. And then she would proceed to lecture me about what David Suzuki was doing. So I would get it from both sides of the House here.

But, Mr. Speaker, these authors provide such a strong contribution to our culture. I want to thank Donna and Courtney for organizing this. And of course our own Legislative Librarian, Melissa Bennett, for her good work. Thank you very much.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce a couple of honoured guests that I have the privilege of working with in Social Services: Deb Davies and Kevin Harris. Deb's the executive director and Kevin is the Chair, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker.

Last week was Foster Families Week here in Saskatchewan. There was events all over the province. I know Deb and her team were criss-crossing the province for quite a few events which was finished in Saskatoon on Friday, which I had the honour of attending.

And the several stories that I heard, Mr. Speaker, the one that stuck out, we had one lady that had fostered for over 50 years,

Mr. Speaker, and it was absolutely phenomenal. And I came up and I shook her hand, and I said thank you. And she just looked at me and she said, I would do it again in a minute. That's the foster families that we have out there. Those are the parents that are fostering the most vulnerable here in our society.

So I want to thank Deb and Kevin for their dedicated work throughout Saskatchewan and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with the Minister of Social Services and welcome Deb Davies and Kevin Harris to the Assembly. Deb and I have had the opportunity to have meetings when I was previously the Social Services critic, and now that I'm back in this role I look forward to working with both of you with regards to making sure that foster families in Saskatchewan have all the supports that they need.

I know Deb has been involved with foster families for many years. She has a lot of valuable experience with opening up her own home as well and being a foster parent. So she has the experience and she provides good knowledge and advice to individuals who are also foster parents in this province. So thank you for everything you do as well.

We know, Mr. Speaker, that foster parents have big hearts and open up their homes to children at need. And it's not an easy job, but it's incredibly rewarding, just like the minister was saying. So again I want to thank these individuals for being here at the legislature. Thanks for everything you do for foster parents in the province. And I'd ask that everybody welcome them to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce two very hard-working staff members from the Ministry of Government Relations. I'd like to introduce my MA [ministerial assistant], Tennille Olson, who I think has had the pleasure of serving with a number of members on this side; and Kelly Deck, who brings youthful enthusiasm to our office. We were able to secure her from Energy and Resources. And I'd like to thank them very much for the support that they've given me as Minister of Government Relations, and I appreciate all their efforts that they've put into the ministry. I'd like to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to give a special shout-out today to Donna Woloshyn. She's a good friend of mine and she has given her entire career, life of her career to literacy here in Saskatchewan. And then as soon as she retires she gets involved with the book awards. So she's a continuous . . . now a volunteer in literacy, and I really appreciate her work there.

But particularly I want to commend her on her good taste in

music because I recently converted her to the dark side of fiddle music, and we've had a number of good adventures recently on the road listening to great fiddle music here in Canada.

And also just a quick mention of the work her daughter, Roxanna Woloshyn, is doing when she was here at CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] with the iTeam a few years ago, and now she's doing the same good work in Toronto. I had the chance to meet with her this summer as well, and Roxanna is doing great work with the CBC.

So fine citizens of Regina and a good friend. So please welcome Donna Woloshyn.

[13:45]

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for a public inquiry into the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal. The people who have signed this petition want to bring to our attention the following particularly: the Sask Party has refused to come clean on the GTH land deal, a deal where Sask Party insiders made millions flipping land and taxpayers lost millions. The Sask Party continues to block key witnesses from providing testimony about the land deal, and it is Saskatchewan people who footed the bill for the GTH land deal and deserve nothing less than the truth.

So I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party to stop hiding behind partisan excuses and immediately call for a judicial inquiry and a forensic audit into the GTH land deal.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who have signed this petition today are from the communities of Peebles and Regina. I so submit.

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

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

And the prayer reads as follows:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Regina Gardiner Park that I'm honoured to represent in this House. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon

Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of in-house security services at Saskatchewan health care facilities.

These citizens wish to bring to our attention that front-line workers have the solutions to address increased violence and safety concerns in public health care: more in-house staff, proper equipment and training; and improved incident reporting and follow-up; and that safe, quality health care means having an adequately staffed, properly trained and equipped in-house security team, not cutting jobs and contracting out to the lowest private bidder.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to commit to maintaining quality publicly funded and publicly administered security services.

This petition is signed from individuals from Saskatoon that live in Saskatoon Fairview, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to restore public control over Wascana Park. Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: Wascana Park is a treasured urban park and conservation area that had been responsibly managed through an equal partnership between the city of Regina, the provincial government, and the University of Regina for more than 50 years. The government unilaterally gave itself majority control of the board of the Provincial Capital Commission through the changes brought on by Bill 50, *The Provincial Capital Commission Act* in 2017. The city of Regina and the University of Regina both expressed an openness to return to a governance model based on equality. More and more people in Regina are becoming very concerned with what is going on with the park.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to restore the governance structure of the Wascana Centre Authority and end the commercialization of Wascana Park.

Mr. Speaker, those who've signed this petition — we have pages and pages of this petition — are particularly concerned with how quiet the Sask Party Regina MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] have been on this particular issue. Those who have signed this petition today, the pages I'm submitting today, come from Regina but more specifically they come from the constituencies of Regina University and Regina Walsh Acres. I do so submit.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to present a petition calling for the restoration of the rental housing supplement. The individuals who signed this petition, Mr. Speaker, want to draw your attention to the following: that the Sask Party cut to the rental housing supplement shows more of the same for the Sask Party, whose cuts continually hurt the most vulnerable in Saskatchewan; that the rental housing supplement helped people living with disabilities and low-income families pay their rent; that this cut comes after previous Sask Party cuts to the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program have already affected hundreds and left people living with disabilities with fewer supports; and that the Sask Party continues to throw hundreds of millions of dollars at their pet projects like the GTH, and it is wrong and unfair that at the same time they continue to cut the most vulnerable and make life harder for so many Saskatchewan families.

I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition come from the city of Saskatoon. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Disability Employment Awareness Month

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This October was proclaimed Disability Employment Awareness Month in Saskatchewan. This month is meant to spread awareness and to promote the individual, economic, and societal benefits of diversifying Saskatchewan's workforce.

Mr. Speaker, there are numerous employers in Saskatchewan who take steps to be inclusive and hire people of all abilities, which brings great benefits to both employer and employee. This month is meant to celebrate and see the ability in disability.

In fact in 2015 our government released Saskatchewan's current disability strategy. This strategy highlights the economic benefits inclusion in the workforce can have. Through the support of the employment transition initiative administered by Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, we provide community-based organizations across the province with seed funding to develop employment programs to help individuals with disabilities find meaningful employment.

SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres] also allows employers to connect with talented and skilled individuals. Mr. Speaker, our goal is to expand the opportunities for individuals with disabilities to gain meaningful employment and to contribute positively to the economy. Our government is pleased to support such great opportunities for both employers and employees of all abilities. Together we can spread awareness and continue to promote inclusion and diversity in

Saskatchewan's economy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Vinyasa Yoga for Youth

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize a special group that has worked with Saskatoon youth for the past three years. Vinyasa Yoga for Youth is a registered not-for-profit organization that was founded in 2008 by Ryan Leier and Kristine Divall, a former constituent of mine. One of their goals is to build meaningful connections with youth through the practice of yoga.

One interesting program they have is their yogi-in-residence program. This partnership puts one of their teachers in a school or organization to form an understanding of the values and practices of yoga. One organization that benefited from this program is the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op in my constituency. CNYC is an organization that provides a safe space for inner-city and marginalized youth in Saskatoon. They focus on helping youth develop life and employment skills through hands-on programming and curriculum-approved classes.

From 2015 to 2018 the yogi-in-residence at CNYC provided the youth with access to yoga, both on and off the mat, eight hours a week. Yogi-in-residence Lauren Scruton led youth in introductory yoga classes, breathing exercises, and seated meditation. Yoga off the mat introduced such exercises as a daily offering of everyone's gratitude prior to their lunchtime meal.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in acknowledging the important work that the Core Neighbourhood Youth Co-op and Youth for Yoga have been doing to help Saskatoon youth improve their skill set and develop confidence. Thank you.

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

Police and Crisis Team Launch in Prince Albert

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A launch event was held for the new police and crisis team, or PACT, for Prince Albert. Mr. Speaker, PACTs fundamentally change how law enforcement responds to people experiencing mental health crises. Mental health workers are paired with police officers, creating a mobile team that can get the right kind of care to people when they need it the most.

By diffusing these situations, we can avoid emergency department visits and entry into the criminal justice system, and connect people with resources that better meet their needs. Mr. Speaker, we also have the added benefit of reducing the amount of time police spend in the emergency department so that they can be out helping more people.

This innovative approach would not be possible without the collaborative work done by the Saskatchewan Health Authority and the Prince Albert Police Service. I would also recognize the team members themselves for the good work that they are doing in my region and home community of Prince Albert, keeping us

safe and caring for our most vulnerable.

We have already seen great success with PACTs in Saskatoon and Regina, Mr. Speaker. Additional PACTs are launched in North Battleford, Moose Jaw, and Yorkton this fall. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Cumberland House Islanders Win Northern Saskatchewan Football Championships

Mr. Vermette: — October 20th was a beautiful fall day in Prince Albert. And there were two northern football teams, the Cumberland House Islanders and the Sandy Bay T-Wolves, who battled it out on the field for the Ralph Pilz trophy. They were cheered on by many friends and family. Congratulations to the Cumberland House Islanders on your 44-14 victory. They are the northern football league back-to-back champs.

I would like to thank and acknowledge Northern Lights School Division's superintendent, Mark Williment, and all who helped organize the northern football league, including the officials, coaches, and volunteers, like those who hold the chains on the sidelines, work the clocks, and do announcing for the games.

The northern football league is creating a space where young girls and boys can be part of something special and help them build character, perseverance, and sportsmanship. Congratulations to both Sandy Bay T-Wolves and this year's NFL [northern football league] champs, the Cumberland House Islanders. Thank you Mr. Speaker

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Wood River.

Assiniboia Powerlifter Wins Western Canadian Championships

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past September a member in my constituency competed in the 2018 Western Canadian Powerlifting Championships in Edmonton. Tammie-Lee Ballinger from Assiniboia won top overall points in her age group and weight class. She competed in the Master 1 class category, ultimately besting the other 13 competitors in three categories: bench pressing, dead lift, and squats.

Mr. Speaker, Tammie currently holds numerous provincial powerlifting records including two provincial bench press records. This is especially impressive because 16 years ago, Mr. Speaker, Tammie suffered a severe shoulder injury and doctors told her she would never be able to regain full function, or lift anything ever again. Tammie also suffers from fibromyalgia and has credited her training and competitions for helping to improve her condition. In response to her successes she simply said, and I quote, "Don't let anyone tell you, you can't do something. Follow your heart. Follow your dreams."

Tammie's next competition will be in March where she will be competing for gold at the national finals in Ottawa. I ask all members to join me in congratulating Tammie-Lee Ballinger in her tremendous record-setting successes and wish her good luck at the nationals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Three Saskatchewan Artists Win Western Canadian Music Awards

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on October 13th, the Western Canadian Music Awards were held in Kelowna, BC [British Columbia]. They were held in conjunction with the BreakOut West festival and conference, an annual event that showcases the best in music, recording, and performance. Mr. Speaker, the event showcased Saskatchewan talent alongside the best from Western Canada, and not only did they hold their own; they excelled.

The 2018 winners from Saskatchewan were Jess Moskaluke, for Country Artist of the Year; Alexis Normand, Francophone Artist of the Year; and Saskatchewan's The Dead South won in two categories: BreakOut Artist of the Year and Roots Duo/Group of the Year. Mr. Speaker, the last time I checked, their breakthrough video "In Good Company," with scenes shot in Regina and southern Saskatchewan, had more than 79 million views on YouTube. All three award winners have achieved great success with their music in the province, across Canada, and internationally. While doing so, they have maintained their connections to the province and acknowledge its influence on their music.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend congratulations to this year's award winners and to all the Saskatchewan nominees. They have been working hard at their craft, writing, recording, and performing great music throughout the past year. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in recognizing our remarkable Saskatchewan musical talent. Thank you.

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

Light of the Prairies Gala Celebrates Successes and New Initiatives

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the pleasure of attending the Light of the Prairies autumn gala in Saskatoon on behalf of the Minister of Energy and Resources as well as our Premier. This year's event was a very special anniversary for Light of the Prairies as they continually provide safe environments for people with intellectual disabilities for the past 30 years.

[14:00]

Light of the Prairies strives to allow individuals a sense of purpose and a place to interact with others, gaining the skills and confidence they need to succeed. Mr. Speaker, with the organization's Do Love First philosophy, I feel that success is endless for this amazing group of individuals. Their success and efforts to give individuals with intellectual disabilities the platform and important skills truly connects us as a community and as a province.

Mr. Speaker, the evening was a testament to the spirit and strength of our community leaders. The Light of the Prairies unveiled their newest initiative, Entoto, a cutting-edge, North American first inclusive sensory project. Entoto will

revolutionize how those with different abilities invite us into their spaces and share with us their experiences through an interactive sensory display set in a forest.

I look forward to the next 30 years for Light of the Prairies and cannot wait to see the even bigger impact they can make in the years to come. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members please join me in congratulating Light of the Prairies on a successful gala as well as 30 years of service to the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Support for Education in the North

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the Premier's first posts in cabinet was Minister of Advanced Education, and shortly after starting that role he signed a new five-year funding agreement with NORTEP, the northern teacher education program.

Less than a year later, he walked away from his signature and eliminated funding for that program, a program that had been successfully training teachers, role models for northern youth, for over 40 years. Now just a year after that decision, we're already seeing teacher shortages in northern Saskatchewan, teacher shortages that will only get worse in the absence of NORTEP. Given the clear evidence of damage already done, does the Premier regret his decision, his choice, to scrap NORTEP?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. You know, it has to be reiterated that the reduction in the availability of teacher education programs in the North, Mr. Speaker, is not as a result of consolidating those programs. You know, government continues to fund programs in La Loche as well as in La Ronge.

I personally visited the colleges in February and heard, for example, Mr. Speaker, that all the students had adjusted very well to the transition. I also heard, Mr. Speaker, that they were very pleased about the consolidation of programming that has gone on at Northlands. I also heard that they were very pleased with the campus life that resulted as a result of all of the students being able to coalesce at Mistasinik Place, Mr. Speaker. And I have a lot more to add in terms of the investments that we've made in northern education in this part of the province, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier continually says he's standing up for Saskatchewan, but he won't stand by his own decisions. He won't stand up and answer questions. Cutting NORTEP was a short-sighted decision that will cost us all more in the long run. It destroyed a program that was a huge success: 90 per cent of graduates stayed in teaching and stayed in the North.

The Premier was warned, as minister, that cutting NORTEP would hurt education in the North, but he chose to ignore the voices of the community. It was his signature on the funding agreement, his signature on the cancellation letter, and his decision that has today's consequences.

We're already seeing the impact of this decision to cut NORTEP. Along with the teacher vacancies, there's also a decrease in the number of people enrolled. The minister talked about their satisfaction. What about the people who aren't in school anymore, who left those programs? Because fewer students are being trained, fewer students who will return to their home communities to teach the next generation, will the Premier admit that his decision, his decision to cut NORTEP was a mistake? Will he commit to rebuilding the program?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I've already addressed this issue. But I would add that, you know, students from La Loche are now able to take their first year of university without actually even leaving home, Mr. Speaker, which I think is very, very important and something that we heard over and over again when we were in Northlands, Mr. Speaker, in February of this year.

I would also add, Mr. Speaker, that we have made a number of investments in indigenous education across the board. And we're seeing a tremendous result from those investments, Mr. Speaker. We have more indigenous students enrolling across the province of Saskatchewan. In 2017 alone, Mr. Speaker, there were 16,300 indigenous students enrolled at our institutions, which is a 34 per cent increase. Not only were there more enrolling, Mr. Speaker, but more of them were also receiving credentials; for example, Mr. Speaker, 35 per cent in the last couple of years are now receiving credentials. I can also go on about the average weekly earnings of indigenous people with degrees.

And I'll be happy to answer further questions on this issue, Mr. Speaker. It's an area I'm quite proud of.

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

Provision of Bus Service

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know why this Premier appears to have such a difficult time accepting when he's made a mistake, accepting responsibility, but it's a troubling trend, a troubling trend that we've seen under this Sask Party government, an unwillingness to admit that they have a problem, an unwillingness to work to improve things to make things right.

We've seen this with NORTEP, with their broken procurement strategy, and with the short-sighted decision to scrap and sell off STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]. STC used to connect people all over the province, helping farmers get parts, seniors get to appointments, and young people get to higher education. This government scrapped STC and left people in rural and northern communities stranded.

This morning we've heard that the federal government is offering funding for rural busing in Western Canada. Will the Premier be

working with the Prime Minister on this program? Does the Premier see how much more, how much greater that federal support could've been and how much better Saskatchewan people would've been served if his government had not cancelled STC?

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

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the opportunity to respond to that question. As I've said many times, the decision to wind down STC was not an easy one, but it was felt necessary. STC served less than half the province, Mr. Speaker, and it was costing \$85 million over the next five years.

And we did find out today that the federal government is considering support on a cost-shared and transitional basis, you know, for transportation. And we recognize the importance of identifying the options that will encourage private sector operators to take over routes that will no longer be served.

Saskatchewan is not interested in participating in heavily subsidized provincial bus service, but we do encourage additional services on transportation from the private sector. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for Mental Health and Addictions Services

Mr. Meili: — Sounds to me like this government is once again going to be leaving money on the table and leaving people on the side of road.

Mr. Speaker, joining us today in the gallery is Dr. Wendy Gore-Hickman, a retired anaesthetist and full-time advocate for people struggling with addictions. Dr. Gore-Hickman has lived experience with this struggle and is joining us here today to call on the Premier to act when it comes to mental health and addictions.

We've heard talk from this government when it comes to addictions services, but next to nothing in terms of results. For too many who are struggling today, help getting free of addictions is so hard to reach, it may as well not exist. Patients are waiting. We're all waiting. We've seen no reports, no recommendations from the provincial task force. And this government is completely missing in action when it comes to the crystal meth crisis. People are dying. Our communities are suffering. This government is sitting on the sidelines.

Does the Premier have a plan to address the rising number of overdoses and the growing addictions problem in Saskatchewan? When will we see action on addictions?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the visitors to the gallery. Mr. Speaker, for addictions, on opioids, on crystal meth — in fact we discussed crystal meth in this Assembly the other day — we recognize how serious this issue is, not just in Saskatchewan but across, I would

say, most provinces, but specifically the prairie provinces. One of the members opposite quoted a news story the other day about the crystal meth crisis affecting Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, we have increased the amount of spending on addictions and on mental health in general. We've increased the number of addictions beds, Mr. Speaker, but we recognize that much more needs to be done. Mr. Speaker, I'd be pleased to speak with the doctor after question period if she so wishes. I'd love to hear her perspective on it.

Mr. Speaker, we do take this very seriously. As I've mentioned many times, while we're in the middle of the budget process, I'm comfortable saying we're going to see more spending on mental health and addictions in next year's budget. Mr. Speaker, we're going to do everything possible to help address this crisis. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to know Dr. Gore-Hickman as a colleague, proud to hear her use her powerful voice to raise these issues. I've heard from her the same kind of stories that I've heard in my own practice, stories of someone struggling with addictions, someone who seeks out help, has a moment of readiness for change. And we have to tell them, well that's great, but come back in six weeks. We want to help right away, but there are no beds, no facilities. Maybe they can find help if they have the money to go out of province. But our province is unequipped to deal with the addictions problems that we're facing today.

When someone is in the throes of addiction, Mr. Speaker, someday might as well be never. But someday is all we hear from this government. When will the Premier find his feet and use his voice, use his power so that high-quality, timely, evidence-based addictions treatment is available for everyone who needs it? Our future depends on it, and someday won't cut it.

The Speaker: — I remind the members of the gallery to not participate in debate by clapping. Thank you. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again we recognize the seriousness of this situation. We've increased the number of addictions beds by 31 per cent since we were given the privilege of forming government, Mr. Speaker. We've increased funding for addictions. In the past 11 years, we've increased funding for mental health. There's much overlap between the two, Mr. Speaker. Again we take this very seriously. You're going to continue to see increased funding in this regard, addictions and mental health, Mr. Speaker.

And I would remind the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, this isn't an issue unique to Saskatchewan. The newspaper story that I was mentioning earlier, Mr. Speaker, talked about officials in both Manitoba and Alberta having very similar difficulties dealing with this, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue, going to listen to the experts. I look forward . . . I hope I do get the opportunity to speak to the doctor, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to make every effort to improve this situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, the fact is the Sask Party government spends far less on mental health than any other province in this country. They currently spend about 5 per cent of our provincial health budget on mental health. The average in Canada is about 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and other provinces are aiming for 9 per cent, knowing that that isn't even enough.

So my question to the minister is simple. When will this government stop with the talk and start with the action and get serious about properly funding mental health and addictions services here?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to correct the record. While the member opposite says about 5 per cent on mental health, it's about 5 per cent of the total health budget . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, well if the member would actually listen to the answer, she'd get what I was trying to correct.

Mr. Speaker, there's also a number of other ministries that spend money on mental health services. The Ministry of Education, for example, Mr. Speaker, has a number of mental health programs; in fact a new one that's going to be kicked off very soon that we announced in the last budget, Mr. Speaker, a pilot project for four schools across the province that's seen great success in Alberta. We're very optimistic about what that can do for mental health for students in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we've continued to increase — you saw it in the last budget — the spending for mental health. You'll continue to see it in the next budget. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, we sure as heck better see money increased on mental health and addictions because they are getting increased dollars from the federal government, Mr. Speaker, just to be clear.

We have both a Premier and a Deputy Premier who, during their leadership race, committed to getting to 7 per cent, and the Deputy Premier even thought 9 per cent was a good idea. But everyone on that side of the House has walked away from that commitment. Advocates like Dr. Wendy Gore-Hickman are tired of watching people with whom they work suffer and sometimes even die, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: when will this government take the concerns of people like Dr. Gore-Hickman and others very seriously? Or at the very least, when will we see this government get to 7 per cent? And I can assure the minister, people aren't interested, Dr. Gore-Hickman isn't interested in hearing, when finances allow.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

[14:15]

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as I already explained, if the member opposite would stop and consider this instead of heckling from her seat constantly during the answers, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of expenditures on mental health in other ministries. Would the member be happier if we transferred those to the Ministry of Health and the percentage would increase?

Mr. Speaker, we're increasing . . . We've continued to increase mental health spending. We recognize the seriousness of this situation. But, Mr. Speaker, we also recognize that we need to put programs in place. I mentioned the one in the schools. There was a member's statement earlier today on the PACT team in Prince Albert. We've expanded that. We've announced a CRT [community recovery team] team. I'll be kicking off . . . You'll see an announcement very shortly in the next few weeks.

Mr. Speaker, we've also added more psychiatrists. We continue to enhance the capacity in the province, Mr. Speaker. We recognize that much more needs to be done but, Mr. Speaker, we're definitely moving in that direction. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Management of Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government that's failing to provide the mental health and addiction support that so many need all across our province, making it harder to understand how this government can justify the limited access to needed supports, given the massive tax increases this government has stuck working families with. Their unfair billion-dollar PST [provincial sales tax] hike has raised the price of nearly everything for hard-working families across Saskatchewan, all while cutting taxes for the very wealthiest.

And by expanding the PST to construction labour, kids' clothes, and restaurant meals, they're leaving hard-working families struggling to make ends meet, with less and less left over at the end of the month and many not able to make ends meet.

So my question to the Finance minister is this. How can she justify this unfair PST tax hike for families when our government is failing so badly at providing needed supports?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, it's rather interesting because if you really listen to his question, he answered his question right within itself. Resource revenue fell by \$1.2 billion, Mr. Speaker. We have three main sources of revenue in order to sustain the programs for this province, the programs that our citizens expect, programs that we've been asked questions about from the members opposite. Those are through taxes, through resource revenues, and through federal transfers. That's our three main sources of revenue, Mr. Speaker.

Resource revenues have fallen by \$1.2 billion, which is why we had to make the very difficult decision to raise taxes. Those taxes are what pay for the health care, for the expenses for the areas of priorities that the members opposite keep asking for more spending. There is no magic wand, Mr. Speaker. There is no pot

of gold at the end of the rainbow. We had to make those difficult decisions. If they want to be the government-in-waiting, where are they going to find the money?

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, no one's buying it in Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan people know that the PST hike is a direct response or a direct result of the mismanagement of this government, who didn't save a dime during the best days. Mismanaged project after mismanaged project.

The government's damaging decision to unfairly raise and expand the PST isn't just hurting families, it's hurting our economy too. It's killing jobs. Just look at the decision to add PST on to restaurant meals. In Saskatchewan, growth in restaurant sales has flatlined — less than 3 per cent since the Sask Party introduced this tax. That's far behind the national average with growth of 9 per cent, three times more than here in Saskatchewan.

Will the Finance minister admit that adding the PST to restaurant meals is hurting our restaurant sector and costing our economy much more?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have met with restaurant owners and there was two factors that come into play, quite frankly. One of them was the changes in drinking and driving, and that also impacted. And I think all members of this House support those changes, as does society. So it isn't just PST on restaurant meals that made a difference.

However I'm happy to say that the latest statistics from Stats Canada show an increase now in restaurant meals. And so it is recovering somewhat, but it is also dependent on the economy. And we know that, again, there is a downturn in the resource revenues that is affecting the province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government that saw a slowing economy and chose to put on the brakes. And we see that as well with their choice to push the PST onto construction labour. Building permits are down. Construction jobs are down. Tradespeople are feeling the pinch, and so many without employment.

The impact of the PST on construction labour is felt by local businesses, by home builders, by contractors, and by municipalities that are looking to invest in infrastructure. It's the epitome of a job-killing tax at a time where our province needs nothing more than jobs. Why can't the Finance minister admit that it was a mistake to push the PST onto construction labour, and will she finally do the right thing and reverse that damaging decision?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — This is an area, quite frankly, that this government will take absolutely no advice from the members opposite. There has been no government that has put more

investment into infrastructure and construction than this government and these members on this side of the House. We have built 40 schools, Mr. Speaker, while they were closing schools on the average of one a month. We have built hospitals on this side of the floor where those members closed hospitals.

They criticize any construction project that we have, Mr. Speaker, and yet they sit there and they're going to say, well there needs to be construction. They closed everything in sight when they were in government. So we'll be taking no advice from them whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

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

Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we aren't getting clear answers from the Sask Party about their overbuilt west bypass to support the GTH. The Sask Party bent over backwards to accommodate the Loblaw business model, and Saskatchewan taxpayers are now paying for business infrastructure built specifically to cater to Loblaw's business needs. We know we have catered to Loblaw from the get-go. What we don't know though, Mr. Speaker, is whether the Sask Party's red carpet treatment extended to Loblaw's land. We're talking 86 acres of farm land expropriated for a public purpose, Mr. Speaker. Based on their refusal to answer today, we can only assume that they got it for free. Can the minister clarify?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has had this file for some extended period of time. She's asked this type of question in committee. She knows full well that there is a non-disclosure agreement. Loblaw operates in a highly competitive environment. They are concerned about all of the costs of their input, that those are not known by their competitors, and they have chosen to ask for that to be included in their contract at the time it was entered into, Mr. Speaker. It is a commercial reality and it is done in many types of contracts like that. The members opposite know that.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite do nothing but criticize Loblaw, an entity that is providing, has got 4,800 trucks per week going into it, that employs nearly 1,000 people at that facility, and the members opposite want to do nothing but complain. If they had their way, Mr. Speaker, if they had their way, do you know what they'd do? They'd probably put a toll road into it. Mr. Speaker, they are nothing but punitive towards something that creates thousands of jobs during the construction, nearly 1,000 jobs now for new Canadians, people that are taxpayers, people that are putting their kids in school. That's what they'd do. They'd put a toll road in if they had their way.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I think the only takeaway I got from that answer is that Loblaw got the land for free. So we're going to have to move on. No answer there and no answer on ballooned west bypass costs to support the GTH.

Yesterday the minister told reporters the cost of bypass sections can't be broken out. But she knows there were multiple studies

conducted on the bypass sections that include costing. The west bypass had several, and with each one the project grew to accommodate the demands from the GTH. One on the ballooned scope pegged the cost of the west Regina bypass at more than a quarter of a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker, and that doesn't include the Highway 1 interchange. This is a far cry from the Pinkie Road overpass and Dewdney-widening project that the minister referenced yesterday.

So again, to the minister, what did the final expanded scope cost taxpayers, and how much did the costs grow from the project's humble beginnings?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the Highways minister gave advice yesterday and answered the question about what the total cost of the bypass was. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite don't want to talk about the bypass because they made a mistake on it, a fundamental mistake. They criticized this project, just went ahead in spite of the fact that the member from Regina Rosemont stood up day after day after day presenting petitions to get the trucks off of Dewdney.

Well, Mr. Speaker, now that the trucks are being taken off of Dewdney, you know what you should do? Stand up and say thank you to the contractors that did this, and thank you to the government that did this. Because if it wasn't for that process, those trucks would still be going down Dewdney. If nothing else, that would give the member the ability to present some more petitions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we're pleased that that process has taken place. The members opposite do nothing but talk about the number of trucks that are coming and going. Mr. Speaker, we'd like to see more trucks, not less trucks because, Mr. Speaker, that's what's going to make our economy grow. That's what going to get food and groceries into our province. And, Mr. Speaker, we won't apologize for having more economic activity. The members opposite probably would like to shut it down.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we're seeing a whole lot of pinch-hitting happening here on the front bench today. But now that this minister is so anxious to get up and speak about this issue, maybe once again we can ask him will he clarify how much did Loblaw pay for the 86 acres that you expropriated from farmers in 2009?

The Speaker: — I recognize the . . . Minister, excuse me. You haven't been recognized yet. And actually you could address your comments to the Chair. Thank you. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. The message is heard. I will direct the answers to you.

Mr. Speaker, had the members opposite been listening earlier rather than chirping from their seats, they would have heard that there is a confidentiality agreement. We are unable to disclose that. Mr. Speaker, if the members opposite would have thought about things a little bit yesterday, they would have realized that

Loblaw was a company that closed their store in Saskatoon. Why did they close the facilities in Saskatoon? They outgrew it and they were going to move to Calgary.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's a vulnerable area for those members opposite because during their time in government, thousands and thousands of people went to Calgary. And, Mr. Speaker, we want to stop that. We want to have businesses and people in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, because of the Loblaw project, 850 full-time jobs from 40 different countries right here just outside of Regina.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 133 — *The Legislative Assembly (Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2018/Loi modificative de 2018 sur l'Assemblée législative (dates d'élection)*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 133, *The Legislative Assembly (Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2018* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 133 be now introduced and . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Minister, I apologize on behalf of everyone. I couldn't hear exactly what's going on. Apparently that's more important than, you know, the business of bills. But could you reintroduce, Minister?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Certainly, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 133, *The Legislative Assembly (Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2018* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has moved by the minister that Bill No. 133 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 134 — *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 134, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2018* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 134 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 135 — *The Local Government Election
Consequential Amendments Act, 2018/
Loi de 2018 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Local
Government Election Amendment Act, 2018***

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 135, *The Local Government Election Consequential Amendments Act, 2018* be now introduced and read a first time.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 135 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be read a second time? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — To ask leave to introduce two motions pertaining to independent officers.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked for leave for motions. Is leave granted.

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Go ahead, Minister.

MOTIONS

Reappointment of Officers of the Legislative Assembly

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I move:

That pursuant to subsection 38(5) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, Mr. Ronald J. Kruzeniski, Q.C., be reappointed to one additional term of five years as the Information and Privacy Commissioner, effective July 1st, 2019.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader:

That pursuant to subsection 38(5) of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* that Mr. Ronald J. Kruzeniski, Q.C., be reappointed for one additional term of five years as the Information and Privacy Commissioner, effective July 1st, 2019.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I move:

That pursuant to subsection 3(5) of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*, Ms. Mary McFadyen be reappointed for one additional term of five years as the Ombudsman; and

That pursuant to subsection 28(2) of *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, Ms. Mary McFadyen be reappointed to one additional term of five years as the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner; and further

That the said appointments be effective April 1st, 2019.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader:

That pursuant to subsection 3(5) of *The Ombudsman Act, 2012*, that Ms. Mary McFadyen be reappointed for one additional term of five years as the Ombudsman; and

That pursuant to subsection 28(2) of *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, Ms. Mary McFadyen be reappointed for one additional term of five years as the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner; and further

That the said appointments be effective April 1st, 2019.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[Nays—46]

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: — The question before the Assembly is the proposed amendment moved by the member from Saskatoon Fairview and seconded by the member from Saskatoon Centre:

That the motion be amended by adding the following after the words “present session”:

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Those in favour of the amendment say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — Those opposed to the amendment say no.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 14:35 until 14:36.]

The Speaker: — All those in favour of the amendment, please stand.

[Yeas—12]

Meili	Chartier	Vermette
Wotherspoon	Beck	Sproule
Forbes	Belanger	Mowat
Sarauer	McCall	Rancourt

The Speaker: — All those opposed to the amendment please stand.

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

Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 12; those opposed, 46.

The Speaker: — I declare the amendment lost. The debate will now continue on the main motion. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Westview.

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to reply to the Throne Speech. First, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the constituents of Saskatoon Westview for giving me the honour and the privilege to be in this Legislative Assembly. Serving as an elected member has responsibilities that we should not take lightly. We are elected to represent our own constituents' specific needs but also we represent the province as a whole. Representing our constituents is also facilitated with the utilization of our constituency offices and our staff. I want to thank my constituency assistant that plays a large role in helping to find solutions that people may need from time to time.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is important for us to thank our families and especially I want to thank my wife, Karen, for the role that she plays and that they play in helping us to fulfill our legislative duties.

The Throne Speech delivered on October 24th, Mr. Speaker, positions Saskatchewan in a very balanced position of staying on track to our three-year plan to balance the budget while also providing the social programs that are very important to Saskatchewan people. During this session we will deliver the 2019-20 budget, and it will be a balanced budget.

After a \$1.2 billion deficit mainly due to a significant reduction in resource revenue in 2016-17, very difficult but necessary decisions were made to put us on a path to balance. Those tough decisions reduced the '17-18 budget deficit to 303 million and the 2018-19 budget kept that three-year plan to balance. And I think it is very important to point out that Moody's recently reconfirmed our AAA credit rating for Saskatchewan, making Saskatchewan only one of two Canadian provinces to achieve Moody's highest rating.

Saskatchewan continues to grow and as of July 1st, 2018 reached a population of 1.162 million people. Mr. Speaker, that is an increase of 160,000 people in the past 11 years, and 11,000 in the

last year. During that time frame Saskatchewan also enjoyed the second-fastest job growth in Canada. Population growth in Saskatchewan has grown now for 49 consecutive quarters which is the fastest and the most sustained period of growth in 86 years.

Mr. Speaker, as of last month, employment numbers show that 575,300 people were employed in Saskatchewan, and year-over-year employment increased by 3,300. Saskatchewan's weekly earnings for all industries increased by 1.1 per cent from July 1st, '17 to July 1st, 2018.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech includes the announcement this spring of a four-year mineral development strategy that creates an incentive program to encourage mineral exploration and will increase the amount of geophysical data available. This is another great investment in Saskatchewan's mining sector. The Fraser Institute 2017 study for mining investment ranks Saskatchewan as the second-best place to invest out of 91 jurisdictions around the world.

Innovation Saskatchewan will also continue to invest in the technology incubator Co.Labs which has helped more than 50 start-up companies receive programming support and mentorship which has resulted in more than 5 million in private investment for those companies.

Two new schools will be built using traditional-build models contributing to the 1.5 billion invested over the past decade. This is in stark contrast to the NDP [New Democratic Party] that closed 176 schools in their 16 years in office. And that's almost one a month. And they completely underfunded K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education, resulting in significant property tax increases which eventually led to a tax revolt.

Since 2007 we have built 40 brand new or replacement schools and 25 major school upgrades. We have increased K to 12 funding by 35 per cent since 2007 while at the same time delivered record education tax reductions to homeowners, farmers, and businesses. Mr. Speaker, we have hired 840 more teachers, and again in stark contrast to the NDP who lost 400 teachers between 2001 and 2007 which was their last year in government.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, this government is also committed to health care by modernizing health care infrastructure with approximately 1.5 billion invested over the past decade. This includes completion of two new hospitals and 14 long-term care facilities, and ongoing capital contributions to the construction of two additional hospitals.

Mr. Speaker, the new provincial psychiatric hospital in North Battleford is nearing completion. And once complete, this new state-of-the-art hospital will be amongst the most innovative mental health centres in our country, something we can be very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that people in Saskatchewan love to do in the summer is to go to our provincial parks. And this government on this side of the House has invested a lot of money into upgrading those parks, and it has doubled capital funding to expand and upgrade electrical service and add new serviced

campsites, and repaired and rebuilt facilities, and because of that, visits to our parks have increased substantially. And again in stark contrast to the NDP that left so many facilities of our beautiful province's park systems in disrepair, and then of course when that happens, you lose revenue because no one wants to visit them anymore. Not the case today, however. Mr. Speaker, our parks are busier than they have ever been and I love, personally, myself, visiting our parks.

I'm proud to say that this government has invested infrastructure that is extremely important to the future of our province and made record investments in important infrastructure projects like highways, schools, and hospitals in communities all across our province. And these investments in infrastructure have been about \$12 billion, which is more than double what the NDP invested in their time in government. Over their 16 years, they only invested \$5 billion in infrastructure projects.

Mr. Speaker, another investment in the Throne Speech is the SaskTel's high-speed Fusion internet to 35 rural communities in phase 1. High-speed internet becomes more and more important every day for all residents in Saskatchewan. As phase 2 of the plan, SaskTel is working to improve 4G LTE [long-term evolution] cellular services to 100 rural communities, with 50 expected to be done by next spring.

Investments in highways has and will continue to be an important investment in Saskatchewan. More than 13 000 kilometres of highway have been built or repaired since 2007, and these are important investments in the safety of our highways. And let's not forget what the NDP had left us with — a billion-dollar pothole in our highways. And we know on one occasion, we were told to just go ahead and fix them yourself if you want them fixed. Well I take offence to that. I spent most of my working career on the highways in Western Canada, but a lot of it in Saskatchewan. And I can tell you that as of today, our highways are in better shape since I've been around, and probably forever in this province.

The Regina bypass will be a welcome addition to our highway network and very much welcomed by the trucking industry. There also will be a huge benefit to the residents of the city of Regina with reduced truck traffic and improved safety. And this project will be finished in October of 2019, on time and on budget.

Other important highway investments have been the overpasses at Warman and Martensville, which are two of the fastest growing communities in Saskatchewan. And these overpasses are open a full year ahead of schedule. And I can personally say I've used both of them already. The city of Saskatoon will also benefit from the new Chief Mistawasis bridge — it opened just recently — which will reduce commute times and reduce traffic volumes, and that will lead to more traffic safety.

Another important project the Ministry of Highways is implementing is the intersection safety strategy to reduce the potential for collisions at highway intersections. Highways has already conducted a preliminary review of more than 900 intersections and has dedicated 700,000 to improving sightlines and improve intersection safety. Highway safety is very important to us in this government, on this side of the House, and the budget for the safety improvement program has increased

from 1.1 million in 2007 to 7 million in 2018. This funds projects like turning lanes, lighting, guardrails, and rumble strips. Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to increasing funding for these safety initiatives in next year's budget.

Mr. Speaker, this session we will be amending *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* to create a new critically ill adult leave. This change will enable family members of critically ill adults to take a 15-week leave to care for a family member in their time of need. Another amendment we will make to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* is to expand the parental leave from 37 weeks to 63 weeks and add an additional week of maternity leave, providing up to 13 weeks prior to the expected date of the birth of the child.

Mr. Speaker, our government will stand with our Premier to fight against a federally imposed carbon tax, a carbon tax that will cause real challenges for our province. Although the federal government refuses to recognize the research on the impact of a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan, we must. A study by the University of Regina has confirmed that a carbon tax will reduce our GDP [gross domestic product] by \$16 billion by 2020, and at the same time, Ottawa's plan will barely reduce emissions.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has a plan to reduce emissions by implementing its own plan — Prairie Resilience climate change strategy. This made-in-Saskatchewan plan will reduce emissions by nearly 12 billion tonnes by 2030 by reducing emissions from electrical generation by 40 per cent and decreasing methane emissions from upstream oil and gas production by 40 per cent and by implementing output-based performance standards for heavy industry.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is also important that we recognize the impact of the changes in farming technology that have already sequestered nearly 12 million tonnes in recent years. And the carbon capture and storage unit at Boundary dam 3 has removed more than two million tonnes of carbon emissions. We have taken action to increase renewable energy capacity and flare and gas energy production from oil and gas facilities.

Mr. Speaker, these actions combined with wind and solar projects and other projects will have meaningful contributions to reducing greenhouse gases, which is much more effective than a job-killing, economy-killing, ineffective carbon tax.

Mr. Speaker, trade exports in Saskatchewan are extremely important. In 2017 Saskatchewan exported 29 billion in goods and services, up significantly since 2007 when it was 19 billion. However Saskatchewan faces challenges from trade agreements and tariffs to regulations brought on by our own federal government, combined with tax reform in the US [United States], have resulted in a dramatic loss in investor confidence in Canada. Foreign direct investment in Canada has declined by more than 74 per cent in the past decade, from 125 billion in 2007 to only 32 billion in 2017.

But for my city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the investments in our important city and get them on the record. In the area of government relations, revenue sharing in Saskatoon is now, for the '18-19 budget, \$43,381,601. And that is up 144 per cent from 2007-2008, when it was only 17.8 million. That is unrestricted money that they can use for a project

that they deem to be in their best interests. That is very significant money, and as a former mayor of a small community, I can tell you that is extremely important to have that revenue-sharing money.

In the area of advanced education, funding of 87.8 million for the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan to ensure a successful college that provides quality medical education; 470 million to the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina and the federated and affiliated colleges. New onsite campuses at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], a \$15 million project which was funded through Social Services.

The technical and building upgrade at SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies] for 1.07 million. University of Saskatchewan, the College of Veterinary Medicine renovation, a project of 4.9 million. The U of S VIDO-InterVac [Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-international vaccine centre], which provides us with our vaccines and is recognized right around the world for their important work. That was funded of 42.5 million by the Government of Saskatchewan. U of S academic health services, health sciences construction, which is in-progress construction of new wings and renovations to older sections for academic faculty and research use, and that was another 120 million of Government of Saskatchewan funding.

Innovation Saskatchewan grant to the University of Saskatchewan to deliver advanced research computing resources to researchers, \$452,000. Innovation Saskatchewan grant to the University of Saskatchewan to establish advanced microbeam capacity in understanding atoms and crystalline solids, another \$575,000. These important investments will contribute to our knowledge-based economy.

And in the area of justice and corrections, policing and public safety, Saskatchewan remand initiative, expanding the early case resolution from weekends to weekdays at a cost of 1.11 million; municipal police funding of 4.9 million; correctional facility security enhancements of 1.9 million.

In the area of the economy, provincial training allowance for Sask Polytech, an investment of 6.155 million; Saskatchewan trades and skills centre, the work readiness youth and adults training program for \$720,000. I've personally been there and visited it and know the important work that they do there.

And highways, billions and billions of dollars investments over the last 10 years and a lot of it spent right in Saskatoon. There is several things that I could highlight; however, I just want to say that there has been a lot of investments. And 15 million to complete the government's commitment to the Saskatoon north commuter parkway bridge.

And with all those investments and with all the directions that the Premier is leading us through this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the Throne Speech. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to wade in on the debate on this year's Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

But before I start, I just actually would like to thank Congregation Agudas Israel in Saskatoon last night. I wasn't here in the evening. I had the opportunity to attend the vigil there for the 11 people who died at the Tree of Life Synagogue.

And I have to tell you, I've been feeling pretty lousy about social media lately. I tend to go down yucky rabbit holes where I'm reading negative comments, the worst of the worst. And my response to that has been, like I just need to stay away from it. So I was feeling pretty miserable and horrified by recent events and the tone in the last few months and recent years that we hear more and more from people fomenting racism and hatred for others, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

But having the opportunity to attend the vigil last night, an interfaith vigil where there were people from across the city of Saskatoon, it was wonderful to see, from all faiths, all walks of life. And I had some great conversations after, and I have to say that I felt heartened by that and really took to heart the call to action that I can't remove myself from social media. It's our responsibility not to step away but to ensure that we do the hard work of challenging and calling out hatred when we see it, Mr. Speaker.

So I was very much appreciative of Congregation Agudas Israel for inviting the whole community to their vigil. I went to support folks and to offer my deepest sympathies for the 11 people who were murdered in cold blood, Mr. Speaker. But I think I got more than I gave at that event last night, Mr. Speaker.

But moving on here, one of the things we have an opportunity to do when we speak to the Throne Speech is acknowledge some of the important people in our lives. My kids, Hennessey and Ophelia. Hennessey is 20 now and Ophelia is 10. So Ophelia was one when I was elected, Mr. Speaker, so she's really lived her whole life as the mom of an MLA. My kids are the reason that I am involved in politics. My goal is to create a better world for them and for all the other little people their age and onward, Mr. Speaker, but I do recognize my kids have had to sacrifice an awful lot so I can do this job. But I think they've become interesting young women I think in part because of me doing this work.

I have to say thank you to my sister Michelle and her husband, John. I literally could not do this job without my sister's support. When I'm here in Regina my 10-year-old stays with Auntie Mich. Actually Auntie Mich comes to stay at my house and is like a mom — I've said this in the House before — is like a mom to my kids. And so I'm very grateful. I couldn't do this job as a single parent without her support and the support of her husband. Shout-out to Uncle John who puts up with his wife moving into my house basically for six weeks and he holds down the fort at his place. And he's made a lot of sacrifices for his sister-in-law too, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank my best friend Moe who knows what I need even when I don't know that I need it, whether it's a hug, a laugh, or a well-timed text or a phone call or him dropping off a coffee for me, Mr. Speaker. Those are people for whom I'm very grateful.

My parents, my mom and dad . . . There's been so . . . I've lived

four blocks from my parents or three blocks from my parents for many years now, Mr. Speaker, and just this past summer I moved across the street from them which was really great. But my parents have been a huge support. And it's only been in the last, since the last election actually, my dad, when he broke his hip . . . And he suffers from dementia and just moved into a long-term care facility. And sorry. And it's very quiet in here now. I'd be quite happy if everybody just kept talking.

My parents have always been a big support and also are the reason I'm in politics. I grew up in a really political household where my parents gave us the message that we all have values. Political parties have values. It's your job to know which political party best represents your values. And if there's things that you don't like about it, you get involved with that party and you fight to make things better in the party but also in the broader world, to make sure that your values are reflected in the broader society. My parents really drove home the point that it's our job to plant a tree under whose shade we will never sit, Mr. Speaker. In fact that is my dad's favourite saying. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I'm grateful for everything my parents have provided me as an MLA and just as a kid. They are both pretty awesome people, Rusty and Georgie Chartier.

I want to just thank my staff in my constituency office. Dan and Judy do a great service to the people in Saskatoon Riversdale, and I'm grateful for the work that they do.

I actually just want to give a shout-out to our universal health care system as well, Mr. Speaker, because I don't know if you've noticed, but I have a voice. A little bit shaky here today, but I had no voice this time six months ago, and it was a real struggle. It started out as a cold at the beginning of March right when session started, and by the end of session I could barely speak. And I wasn't quite sure what was wrong. So multiple trips to my GP [general practitioner], multiple . . . well three trips to a specialist, a trip to the emergency department, several months in speech therapy, and I am back.

But I am eternally grateful for universal health care and to the people who came before us to make sure that health care shouldn't . . . being sick shouldn't bankrupt you, Mr. Speaker, and that we should all have access to that care. So for that I am grateful. I will continue to advocate for universal health care and to fight to maintain what we have and to improve the services that we have, Mr. Speaker.

I also just want to thank my colleagues who are sitting in here today and who aren't in the House at the moment. My period of illness here was pretty challenging, Mr. Speaker, and we're a small caucus, and they picked up my slack, Mr. Speaker, or picked up the slack. And I am grateful for that, that I never once felt like I shouldn't take care of my health. They all, everybody was really great at that support. So for that I'm grateful to have really fabulous colleagues, Mr. Speaker.

Getting on to the meat of the discussion here, the Throne Speech. So just recently . . . I've had the privilege of being the Health critic for five years, but in recent months I'm no longer the Health critic, but I'm quite excited to be the mental health and addictions critic. This is something new that our leader and our caucus are doing to make sure we put the focus on mental health and addictions, that the focus that should be there is there. We can

look to NDP government in BC. They actually have a minister responsible for mental health and addictions.

So I think the goal really is to help everybody understand mental health care is health care, full stop. There's nothing more to add. Mental health care is health care, Mr. Speaker. So in my response here I think that I will touch a little bit on health care on a couple of little things, but I think I'd really like to focus most of my comments on mental health and addictions care here in Saskatchewan.

I have to say with the Throne Speech, a Throne Speech as I always see it — and I've been in this place for nine years — it's an opportunity to lay out your vision for the coming year, for the coming years actually. It should be a visionary document, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to mental health and addiction services here, much about the health announcements, not just mental health and addictions, were just repeats. Re-announcements over the last several years. Re-announcements from the budget.

There was one new thing in health, I believe, which was two community health centres. I'm certainly looking forward to seeing what that's about. And that's to deal with wait times in emergency departments, which I'll touch on here too. But around mental health care there was absolutely nothing new announced. They were all, they were all pre-existing budget items, Mr. Speaker.

And it's not that these things aren't good things, but what I really want to point out — and we had this discussion here in the House a little bit earlier — so when I talk to mental health advocates and in Saskatchewan, and when I hear what the conversations that are happening in other parts of Canada, that the struggle of mental health and addictions care really is about resources. You can't build services unless you properly fund it, Mr. Speaker. And here in Saskatchewan we are at about 5 per cent of health dollars spent on mental health, Mr. Speaker. The national average is 7 per cent and other provinces recognize they need to increase that to 9 per cent.

So in the last year and a half there's been a bilateral agreement signed between provinces and the government on mental health, Mr. Speaker. And so when the minister gets up and says in question period that the government is going to be increasing spending, well again, as I said earlier today, they certainly better be increasing spending because they're getting more money for mental health and addictions from the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

And that amount . . . Right now we've only received approximately \$12 million from the feds in the first two years of the 10-year agreement, and there's I think — let me see — about 148 more million dollars to be rolled out in the next eight years. So when the minister uses that as a justification for his own government not increasing provincial . . . increased provincial spending, I think that that's unacceptable.

He also goes on, often will say, well the percentage, we're only talking about mental health dollars here. He'll say it to me and to everybody else, which is true, Mr. Speaker. But do we think . . . So we're comparing apples to apples and we've got the percentage of provincial money, provincial health money spent

on mental health and addictions. But does he not think other jurisdictions do what we do and have other spending in other areas as well? So for him to say that, but, Danielle — he doesn't say Danielle — but will the member opposite admit that we spend money in other areas? Yes, we do, but so do other jurisdictions as well, Mr. Speaker.

But the bottom line, the bottom line is we need to do better. People are literally dying, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Wendy Gore-Hickman attended a funeral two weeks ago of a young man, Jordan, who couldn't get into treatment. He had to wait six weeks to get an in-patient bed. He made it to his fifth week, Mr. Speaker, and overdosed.

I've had the opportunity to visit the Dubé Centre in Saskatoon, which is an acute psychiatric centre — really wonderful people who work there. But that facility, the last three years for which I have numbers, it has been over capacity every single year, Mr. Speaker. That is a facility that when they're over capacity, you know what they do with folks, Mr. Speaker? There's an electroconvulsive therapy unit in the basement. There are six beds in that unit, and what ends up happening is if they're waiting for beds, if people are backed up in the emergency room, they put people in what they call the pod in the ECT [electroconvulsive therapy] suite, which is fine.

It's not fine actually. It is a new facility, or a newer facility, so it's not like the conditions are bad, except there's not a private room in the ECT suite, Mr. Speaker. So you have up to six people in that unit who, when on a regular day, when they're over capacity, they will be woken up at 5 or 6 in the morning to go upstairs to the common area because they don't have their own room. They're in a room designed for 6 people for day treatment, not to have a regular room. So they go upstairs to the common area to try to get some sleep. They can't come back down during the day to their bed. And it's not a private bed because it's a day unit, or for day treatment, Mr. Speaker. That is not uncommon.

I was chatting with someone just at the end of August. There were eight people waiting in RUH [Royal University Hospital] hospital to get into the Dubé on that particular day that I was at the Dubé, and so they were opening up the pod. I had the opportunity to talk to a woman this summer who did some media to share her story. Her name was Candace Middleton. And Candace spent nine weeks at the Dubé, and she talked about how she was only up on a unit or had a real bed in a real room for four of those days, Mr. Speaker. Four of those days, of nine weeks in an acute psychiatric facility, did she only have her own room. The rest of the time she was in the ECT suite.

I was told by the minister and the officials in the spring when I asked about over capacity at the Dubé and other psychiatric facilities, I was told, well the Dubé is a new facility and only the least ill get triaged and put into the ECT suite. Well Candace was in there for nine weeks, Mr. Speaker, so I would argue that anybody in an acute psychiatric centre is not well and may be stable, but needs the best possible supports, and you don't get that when you don't have the opportunity to rest during the day, when you're woken up so the bed can be cleaned for the ECT suites.

So the reality is, again, spending on mental health and addictions, getting up to that at least 7 per cent, Mr. Speaker, will allow for

the opportunity to create better services. And I would argue, when you spend on mental health and addictions, you decrease costs in social services, justice, and in health care, Mr. Speaker. There are ripple effects. I think my challenge is to . . . I know what I'm hearing from people, so I actually thought that this Throne Speech would double down on mental health and addictions. I thought there would be bold statements on mental health and addictions in this Throne Speech.

[15:15]

We know what's going on with crystal meth here in Saskatchewan, and that's not new. That is not new here. I remember a conversation with the former Saskatoon police chief, Chief Weighill, two-plus years ago or so, and his comments were, crystal meth was fuelling . . . So crime statistics that had been trending down for the last 15 or 20 years, in the last 5 years or so all started to tick up. Progress that we'd made we started to lose. And the reason . . . So violent crime, property crime — you name it — any designation of crime, those stats have started to go up. And Chief Weighill, the former chief, said that it was due to crystal meth and that is something that we hear from elsewhere as well, Mr. Speaker. In recent days advocates have spoken out, police chiefs actually. I'm sure you saw the story where I think they referred to it as crisis or epidemic.

So I expected that we would see things in this Throne Speech on mental health and addictions around opioids and crystal meth, Mr. Speaker, both growing problems in our province. And we didn't, so that was surprising to me. But it tells me that this government is less inclined to make the real investments in the long haul, Mr. Speaker, despite having a 10-year mental health and addictions action plan. Is it four years old now? I think it's four years in December, but it has basically sat on a shelf, Mr. Speaker.

I looked actually, I think it was the 2014 Throne Speech that talked about . . . In 2014 there was a quote from page 9 that we need to do more to help people living with mental health and addictions problems. So that was the 2014 Throne Speech by this government. And I can tell you people are getting sicker. They are not getting better generally in health, but particularly around mental health and addictions as well, Mr. Speaker. That's been incredibly frustrating to not see spending there.

I can talk a little bit more about the state of mental health care and why I thought this government would have invested more and really, really saw the benefit. This government really should see the benefit of investing in mental health and addictions. Everybody else does, Mr. Speaker.

So I talked about the pod at the Dubé, but why does that pod, that six-bed unit in the ECT suite get opened up? Well because there are waits, people waiting in the emergency department. The whole emergency department stuff I'll talk about in a moment. But they are consistently overcapacity. Recent numbers actually have the Dubé overcapacity or over census the last three years in a row, Mr. Speaker.

One thing that I really would have liked to have seen . . . and I've talked about this with the minister in committee, which I think is really disappointing. So a new children's hospital which this government is very proud of will be opening up next year, Mr.

Speaker. And instead of addressing stigma, I believe this government is entrenching stigma for mental health and addictions with the new children's hospital.

So there are eight . . . or is it . . . sorry, 10 beds, 10 youth beds at the Dubé Centre. The only kids who will not be benefiting from that new children's hospital will be children who have mental health issues, Mr. Speaker. Yes, the Dubé is a newer facility, but those 10 beds at the Dubé for children could have been moved to the children's hospital. So that addresses the stigma piece, Mr. Speaker, because we simply continue to entrench stigma for mental health. We're getting better at talking about mental health and addictions, but stigma is very real. It is alive and well, Mr. Speaker. So we could have moved those 10 children's beds from the Dubé over to the children's hospital to address stigma.

But you know what else that could have done? So all the overcapacity that we experience at the Dubé, we could have taken those 10 beds and converted them to adult beds. So instead of people staying in the ECT suite, they could have been in a bed in a room, Mr. Speaker.

Or this might have been a novel idea. How about a geriatric psychiatric unit? We don't have one in the province. We have an aging population. That could have been something that we did as well, Mr. Speaker.

A suicide crisis in the North. I have two colleagues who spend far too many days going to funerals of young people in their constituencies, Mr. Speaker. We have an opportunity to put in place a suicide prevention strategy. The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations put together . . . did a ton of work and put together a suicide prevention strategy this spring. We could take that, we could build on that, and we could really get serious about making sure that all people see that there is hope and goodness in the world, Mr. Speaker. I can't imagine when you hear stories about 12-year-old children choosing to die by suicide. We need to do better as a society, Mr. Speaker.

The North Battleford hospital in Saskatchewan warranted a message in the Throne Speech and it will be, I understand, officially open in November, December. I think they're starting to take patients now, I believe, but aren't officially open. They're ramping up. The 188 phased . . . There are 188 phased-in beds. So it'll be a wonderful new facility. I have some concerns that I've raised in the past about how this facility is funded and the contract itself.

But the one thing to note, there are 188 rehab beds and then 92 offender beds. So of those 188 beds — so they're adding I think it's 32 new beds, Mr. Speaker — but the challenge there, they will be open, fully open here in the next month or two, and will already be overcapacity.

So people who go to Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford are those people who have profound and persistent mental illness, Mr. Speaker, so folks who need longer rehabilitation services. So we have people who stay in our acute psychiatric facilities for longer than 60 days, Mr. Speaker, and those centres are hospitals, Mr. Speaker. They're not designed for people to live for months and months on end. They are noisy, bright; they have hospital food. They're just not homes, Mr. Speaker, for people to stay in for long periods of time, those acute psychiatric centres. But in

fact we have people who spend months and months and months there because there are not enough rehab, rehabilitative beds at Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford now, and nor will they have enough beds when they fully open their 188 beds in the coming months, Mr. Speaker. And that was confirmed by questions that I asked in committee around how many people stay longer than 60 days, how many readmissions are there.

That doesn't meet the need. So what was part of that plan of the North Battleford hospital that this government has completely dropped the ball on was community step-down housing. So when the plan for the North Battleford hospital rebuild came about, it was recognized that a key part of that plan was making sure that there was additional housing in community for people transitioning out of that kind of facility. So you've got supportive step-down housing. So you've got caseworkers and then supports for people to have in place, Mr. Speaker.

So we have a brand new facility that will be overcapacity. This government needs . . . On day one it will be overcapacity. This is a government who needs to seriously invest in other housing options as well, Mr. Speaker, and in committee last spring I was told that, by the deputy minister, that that looked like that might be a possibility or they were going to take some of those proposals to treasury board on housing. So I do hope to see that in and I will be watching for that and many people will be watching for that in the next budget.

But you'd think, Mr. Speaker, that you would have put it in your Throne Speech. As I said, I know what I'm hearing from people in the community around mental health and addictions, and they are crying out. I can't believe this is a government who either isn't hearing it, which I find hard to believe, or ignoring what they're hearing, Mr. Speaker, or just choosing not to act. I don't know which is worse, Mr. Speaker.

There are many, many things, so I would like to chat a little bit about . . . I know that one of the things in the Throne Speech is the take-home naloxone kit program, which is good. But I believe that there's only been \$50,000 that the government has allocated for spending, and from my understanding they have already overspent. The Saskatchewan Health Authority takes money from other parts of their budget to make sure that there's enough naloxone kits because people are demanding it.

There's naloxone training, actually, at the U of S in the next week or so. I've seen it advertised on Twitter. And it actually is overprescribed. I think she might be doing another training session because people want this training, want access to naloxone.

But aside from that harm reduction, people want treatment, Mr. Speaker. And when you're waiting an average of eight weeks to get into treatment, it is not acceptable. And that is the wait time to get into treatment on average here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

But the other thing to think about, in a former health region like Saskatoon — so the area of Saskatoon — I think that there's about 250 addictions counsellors, so . . . Or pardon me. For every one addictions counsellor, there's 250 clients, Mr. Speaker. So you tell me how that is possible to manage and to get ahead of that list.

There are so many things that we could and should be doing better when it comes to mental health and addiction. And I was going to talk about emergency wait times and all kinds of other things, but I know that I've used up more than my fair share of time here today, Mr. Speaker.

Again I just want to reiterate, I really thought there would be something visionary on mental health and addictions in this budget. I know what I'm hearing in the community. I know what I'm reading. I know everybody else in this room is reading the same things. But I know what I'm hearing from people with lived experience with mental health and addiction. I honestly thought there would be some big, bold pronouncements in this Throne Speech, the vision laying out where we should be going, Mr. Speaker. So that's incredibly disappointing. People are getting sicker and not getting the help they need.

But with that, I would conclude my remarks. And I will be not supporting the Throne Speech.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure to enter into the debate on the Speech from the Throne, Throne Speech. And as I was doing my research, I was reminded of the fact that there's an anniversary coming up. There is a date of significance, certainly in my life, and I know in several members of the House. Back on November the 5th, 2003 was the date of the Saskatchewan provincial election and the date that I was able to be successful in that election, and following that very shortly to take my seat in the Legislative Chamber.

I know we all remember that date and it is something to herald because it is indeed a real privilege to take your seat in the House. I know we had a new member that did that not too long ago here, but we all remember that day. But this coming Monday, it'll be 15 years. So when you look at the average career of people in the province now, it is indeed something to be able to say that you've gained the confidence of the people to bring you back to this wonderful institution time and time again.

Of course it's been said by many members and I certainly echo that we don't get here by ourselves. We don't have the opportunity to take our seat without the help of many friends and family and constituents and people who share our ideas and our vision for the province. And I want to start by thanking, of course, my family: Trish and Carter and Paige. They are instrumental in what I do every day here and certainly they are my guiding lights.

And it's a little bit different for us in Saskatoon this year. Our daughter Paige has moved to Hamilton, and she's going to school at McMaster University. She's a swimmer and she loves swimming, and the best fit for her to pursue swimming was in Hamilton, so she's there. She's taking kinesiology and in first year and enjoying it very much from what I understand. We FaceTime on Sundays with her, and certainly it's good to see her there.

Our son Carter is still at home. He reminded me. He said, Dad, I'm not going anywhere any time soon. So he certainly, I think,

enjoys living 10 minutes from the university that he attends, the University of Saskatchewan. And he's in the College of Commerce, the business school there, the Edwards School of Business, and also taking a finance major and involved in track and field. So both kids are combining academics and athletics. I think it's a good fit, and we're very, very fortunate.

Trish is running her own business and doing very well. Her primary client is Jubilee Residences, and she's working very hard to ensure a quality of life in our long-term care homes in Saskatchewan. Continues to be something that we value very much, and those residents who are in there, that have built our province.

[15:30]

I also want to recognize those in my constituency office who help me each and every day, who answer the phone, who have a bright smile when people walk in the door, and do the communications work that we so value as members of the Legislative Assembly.

So to Barb and to Jenny and to Jacquie, thank you very much. They continue to do excellent work for the constituents of Saskatoon Willowgrove and beyond because if you happen to get a call or a question from outside of the constituency, we're happy to deal with that as well.

Jacquie does my weekly newsletter that now goes out to almost . . . Not almost, over 14,000 people across Saskatchewan and really across the country and North America as people move around, and it's a way to communicate again. And so I thank Barb and Jenny and Jacquie for the work that they do.

And I'm very privileged to be a minister in this government and to have staff in my ministerial office as well. And to Michael and Elaine and Kirsten and Carly and the many others who have come and gone, summer students and others who have gone on to various other offices, thank you for what you do each and every day for the ministries that I have the privilege of representing — Central Services, Public Service Commission, and the Capital Commission as well. So thank you to the ministerial staff. And I hear my colleagues, you know, echoing that sentiment as they benefit from excellent staff, and I know members opposite do as well.

Saskatoon Willowgrove has always been . . . It's a brand new name, but the majority of the area that I represent is the same. As we know, we change from time to time with redistribution, but it's always been an exciting area of Saskatoon and an exciting area of the province. It's where a lot of the growth is taking place in Saskatoon and it's always very interesting to represent the people of a growing area.

There's many challenges as well, you know, as you need infrastructure. You need new schools but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is a privilege to have represented that area for quite some time and to be able to deliver on that infrastructure. You know, four new schools in my constituency alone, this is the constituency of Saskatoon Willowgrove, and we're certainly very, very pleased to see that.

And you know, I was looking at what I should do in early fall this year as far as reaching out. Every year I like to reach out to

constituents. I pick those very brand new areas to go door knocking, and one area is called Brighton. It's a brand new area and it's going to be a very large area in our province. It's going to have 15,000 residents just within that community itself. So it's just getting started. There's about 500 homes but those 500 homes weren't there when the last election took place. So they're brand new people. And another area called Aspen Ridge as well where I had the opportunity to interact and to door knock with them.

And it's so invigorating for a member of the legislature to hear directly from people and to go door knocking in a non-election year. So you know, a little bit of what I want to touch on in my speech is what they're telling me and how it relates to the Speech from the Throne.

There are many changes infrastructure-wise, and I guess the biggest one right now is the new interchange at the corner of College Drive and McOrmond. McOrmond goes into the Chief Mistawasis bridge and over to the northwest part of the city. And it is indeed, you know, a game changer for people that have to drive to work every day and the commute. And with growth comes some challenges as well as on taking in that commute. But I am very pleased to say I had the opportunity to participate in the opening of the Chief Mistawasis bridge and now very recently the new interchange. And it changes the lives of my constituents for the better, for sure, and I'm very, very pleased to be able to take part in that.

You know, the Throne Speech, it centres on fiscal management. And certainly I'm very proud to see our AAA credit rating is intact in spite of the challenges that we have faced as a province and as a government with resource revenues. But it's so important.

And the growth that is taking place and continues to take place month over month, quarter after quarter, year after year. It's a number that we talk about and it changes to the positive all the time, but 1,162,000 people in our province. And I was here, as I indicated earlier, back when we were in opposition, and we heard from members opposite how it would be statistically impossible to grow the province at such a rate. Well, we didn't listen to any of that, and it certainly continues to work in our favour as far as the growth plan that we've had.

Infrastructure is very important. I touched on, you know, the schools in my constituency, but also the schools around Saskatoon and around the province. One stat that really, you know, impresses me is 11,000 students in our province will be entering a new school for the first time in this past year. So I think that's something that certainly we can celebrate.

Many members have touched on it here, and I remember when I was first elected and some of the first speeches that I gave in this Legislative Assembly. We talked about the need for a children's hospital in Saskatchewan. We talked about the fact that Saskatchewan, along with PEI [Prince Edward Island], were the only provinces without a dedicated children's hospital.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, granted it's been a long time coming and certainly, you know, we are very, very excited as we look towards 2019 and the opening of that children's hospital, welcoming new medical professionals in as they look to treat the

children of Saskatchewan and be part of a network of children's hospitals across Saskatchewan as well. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is indeed a privilege to be able to now stand in the legislature 15 years later and talk about it and be rest assured that that children's hospital is indeed coming along.

When we talked about infrastructure, many of my constituents that I saw this summer, they were, you know, complaining a little bit about the drive to Regina and the highways. And I'm very, very pleased that my colleague and my seatmate is the Minister of Highways. And you know, I kind of smile when I hear complaints about, you know, taking a little bit longer for a drive to Regina, say, from Saskatoon because at the end of the day that you're going to have beautiful highways and beautiful roads and ones that are safe.

And you know, being from Saskatoon I look at the bypass here in Regina and say it's absolutely the right time and the right thing to do. And Saskatoon will have to do something like that in the future as well. But it's something that's, you know, from an urban perspective, maybe you're not as close to it as some of my rural colleagues. But you sit back and you look at 13 000 kilometres of new highways in the province and just wonderful, safe roads to travel.

Health care's very important. When I was door knocking in my constituency, certainly, we talk about the 3,700 more nurses in the province, the 900 more doctors, the 90,000 surgeries that take place with 44 per cent of the patients waiting less than three months. And we're certainly very, very pleased to have those stats.

And there's more work to do. And, you know, I continue to marvel at some of the programs and some of the areas that we've been working on — the two-for-one MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging], for example. When I talk to constituents they say, you're on the right track doing that. Why don't we do more of that here in Saskatchewan? So I have to thank our two Health ministers and colleagues that have had input into programs certainly like that.

When we talk about our constituency and our home areas, my home city, it's an area that has benefitted tremendously from revenue sharing. And it's something that again, you know, I go back when I first took my seat in this legislature. The government of the day, the NDP government, said that they were going to get around to revenue sharing. They were going to get to it at some point. Year after year, in those first four years, we heard that they were going to get around to it. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they didn't get around to it. And certainly we had to wait till after '07 to have a revenue-sharing agreement in place that has benefitted my home cities by increases of 144 per cent in the dollars that they have to establish the priorities and to look at what we have as far as infrastructure.

You know, we look at River Landing that has taken place in downtown Saskatoon and it's just wonderful. It's a beautiful area — the new Nutrien Tower that's coming up and the Remail art gallery. The Remail art gallery has attracted 450,000 people through its doors, and indeed that's an astronomical amount by any stretch or any measure.

And certainly, you know, I'm one that believes that we work hard

to grow our economy so we have money for health care, education, and social services. But we need a quality of life as well, and that's where the increase in funding to the arts community and to the sports communities are very, very important. You know, I look at what's happening in Saskatoon with the Gordie Howe Sports Complex and the new Merlis Belsher arena, and it's something that governments have been supportive of — municipal, provincial, and federal as well.

But the philanthropy of individuals coming forward, and Mr. Belsher is a constituent of mine, a neighbour of mine. We live on the same street. And he donated \$12.25 million. When we look at the Gordie Howe Complex . . . And what those facilities do is they create an atmosphere of a positive lifestyle for children certainly and for adults as well in our province. So we're very, very fortunate in Saskatoon to be able to have those facilities because of the priorities of governments, but certainly more importantly I would say, by those philanthropists that are putting their hard-earned dollars towards those programs.

In my constituency I also have many people who have come to Saskatchewan and come to Canada for the first time, many immigrants. And when we look at the numbers, Saskatchewan has benefited by immigration by a great extent. And certainly I have a great interaction with those people because they're very entrepreneurial. They not only want to be Saskatchewan residents and contribute to the economy, they want to be business owners. They want to be able to employ others.

So just this last Saturday, I had a chance to meet with 50 people that have lived in China and have come to Saskatchewan, people from China, and they're all wanting to create jobs and start businesses here. So I had a chance, with the representatives from the federal government as well, to talk to them.

Mr. Speaker, I told my colleagues I wouldn't be very long, but it's certainly, once you get up here you realize there is more and more to talk about and many things. So I want to talk a little bit specifically. You know, the Throne Speech talks about the global goals of our government. And I want to talk a little bit about, you know, things within the Ministry of Central Services and the Provincial Capital Commission and the Public Service Commission as well.

And you know, to do that I want to talk about a couple of individuals, I guess. And you know, this is something that was very, very hard to learn of, the news a couple of weeks ago, the passing of Richard Murray, who was the deputy minister — somebody who I worked with directly for eight months. And I know members on this side of the House have worked closely with him and I know members opposite as well.

And I remember back to estimates. There is a great relationship there as well. And you become very close, as a minister, with your deputy minister. You meet with him very often. You learn about their talents. And each of them have different talents. And Richard was one that was able to bring leadership and humour together and to inspire others. So I certainly enjoyed working with him. He was a public servant for 30 years. Very recently he was appointed as the deputy minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety. But prior to this he was the deputy for Central Services and had worked in various capacities in that area. So he was a man of many talents.

This summer he had the opportunity to engage with the media, for example. And we all know that that sometimes can be difficult, but he was able to articulate the position of the government very, very well, and I certainly, you know, admire him for that. He had a unique ability to negotiate, and he was considered by many of his colleagues as one of the best at closing the deal. And you know, in Central Services when you have many leases, you have many buildings that you're operating, that indeed is a very important characteristic to have. So to Richard Murray.

And you know, I know the member from Martensville-Warman did a member's statement talking specifically about him, but I want to echo those thoughts to his family. I had a chance to attend his celebration of life, and I know the family was very, very pleased when they saw the number of members of this House, the people from the public service, and the friends from across the province that were able to reflect on the wonderful life of Richard Murray.

[15:45]

And I want to talk a little bit more about Central Services and the real priorities that we've had over the last little while. Certainly, you know, looking at the central vehicle agency for example, that's an area where we've saved a lot of money and an area that we've said that we can do better in the operation of vehicles across the province for government employees, and for us as MLAs when we need a vehicle as well. We've saved some \$5 million in that area, and I think that's something that can't be overstated. Because really, I believe in providing the services that Central Services does to all of the government employees, we need to do so in an efficient manner, and we need to constantly be challenging ourselves in how we can do that better.

You know, another area, a topic of some concern and some debate here, was the changes that were made, and this was prior my time as minister of . . . the cleaning services. The taxpayers are now saving more than \$3.5 million a year through the new operation. But more importantly, I think, 11 Saskatchewan companies are now supplying those services to government buildings, and 49 former employees are now entrepreneurs and are leading those businesses as well. Five of the thirteen contract businesses are indeed employee owned.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could go on and on, but I know it's very important that all my colleagues get a chance to talk and to enter into this debate. But I want to very quickly talk about something. Last night I had the opportunity to go to the Hill School of Business and to hear a speaker. Dominic Barton was his name, and he was with McKinsey, the worldwide firm centred in Toronto that, you know, conducts management and is able to advise companies and governments around the world.

And he talked about leadership, and when I was listening to him, he was a type of person that he had the ability to, or the company wanted him to go around the world and to talk to different leaders and to see what leadership really was and how people implement leadership. And not only political leaders, he had a chance to talk to the Chilean miners that were trapped underground, and when they came up, to talk to them about the leadership that took place in an instant down there. And it was a very interesting story.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know my time is limited, but I wanted to talk about leadership in this Legislative Assembly as well. And I want to talk about how impressed I am with our leader, the Premier, the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook. He's nine months into the job and he's just done a fantastic, fantastic job. He's somebody that I think all of us are seeing his talents on a daily basis and how he relates to people, how he understands people, how he really comes from that fabric of Saskatchewan.

And I know in the last nine months he has worked so hard to get to every part of the province. And I know it pains him to not accept an invitation. He wants to get to every invitation that he can and meet as many people as he can. I don't know if he can keep up the pace, but he's done a wonderful job in the last nine months.

So to our Premier and to our leader, I want to say that when I was listening last night to the speaker talk about leadership, and the speaker talked about the qualities that 3,600 leaders from around the world have and was reflecting on them. And you know, one of the main qualities of leaders is selflessness, and I see that in our Premier each and every day. And I just wish him well as he leads us forward. Mr. Deputy Speaker . . .

[Applause]

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Yes, let's give him a hand.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my time is coming to an end, and I want to thank you again for the opportunity to, you know, to talk about the Throne Speech. The Throne Speech ended by saying Saskatchewan people are determined. Saskatchewan people are resilient, resourceful, and tenacious. Fifteen years ago when I entered this Legislative Assembly, I had an opportunity to learn more about my province, and in the last couple of years I had an opportunity to visit every corner of this province. And I think this couldn't be more true — determined, resilient, resourceful, and tenacious.

I think what this Throne Speech does is enable our government to put those words into action, to listen closely to what Saskatchewan people are telling us. You know, it's not a right wing or a left wing. It's what's important for the future of our province. And right now we have a document in front of us. It's not perfect, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It certainly isn't, and it talks about more work to be done. But I think for today, when I saw the people from across the province that were here to witness the delivery of that Throne Speech, people were nodding their head and saying, right on.

So I want to tell you today that I'm very, very pleased to be part of this team, to have the privilege to have been here for what will be 15 years on Monday, November the 5th, and an opportunity, I hope, to continue that work forward as we continue to grow this province. I'm very proud to be part of this team, and I will certainly and most assuredly be voting in favour of the Speech from the Throne. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to support the motion moved by the

member for Lumsden-Morse in support of the Throne Speech.

This is a speech centred around solidity, around stability. It's message that we are on course, that we are staying on course and on track, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to a balanced budget as we continue to promote sound, strong economic leadership and common-sense policies for the people of this province.

There have been some suggestions that the direction laid out in the speech is too rural focused, which to me sounds mightily condescending. The Leader of the Opposition has also suggested that it lacks vision, that somehow two brand new hospitals in North Battleford and Saskatoon; new schools; new cellular service; new highways and infrastructure, including the Regina bypass which future generations will wonder how they got around without; a renewed focus on crime reduction, including amending *The Police Act* to allow municipalities with populations under 500 to join regional police services; an ongoing, simply seamless transition to a single health region; expanded parental leave; two new community health centres coming on stream, that all of this is somehow old hat. We beg to differ.

Former UK [United Kingdom] prime minister Tony Blair once said, the only chance of peace is your readiness for war. And similarly the only chance of maintaining a strong economy is a readiness for those who come along and threaten to spend us out of it. We are ready.

The Leader of the Opposition appointed himself Economy critic this summer. Command Economy critic would be more like it. His first order of business was a pipeline replacement scheme that would cost SaskEnergy alone \$50 billion. Pipelines, Mr. Deputy Speaker, naturally have a lifespan of up to 100 years. The 2016 Husky spill isn't even considered to have been caused by aging pipelines. It was caused by geotechnical sloping. The Economy critic himself admitted that his pipeline scheme was untested and untried. Nevertheless this was his economic headliner right out of the gate: \$50 billion for SaskEnergy ratepayers alone.

Then came his proposed royalty review and increase, this at a time when the Saskatchewan royalty structure is widely considered to be stable and fair. And at a time of uncertainty in the energy sector, an Ed Stelmach-like overhaul such as the one the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Regina Northeast are proposing is the last thing the sector needs. Let alone the Environment critic has also mused openly about how government should get back into the business of owning oil wells.

As for renew, another NDP economic headliner, rewind would be more like it. A green retrofit loan program, or a climate Ponzi scheme as the Premier has called it, what could possibly go wrong?

As we all know, the Leader of the Opposition has questioned the economics of pipelines. He tells us he's a critical thinker, that he favours an empirical, fact-based approach to issues. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the facts are these. If the current oil price differential were to continue, because the federal government has killed two pipelines and stalled a third, if that differential were to continue over the course of an entire year, there would be a \$500

million impact in Saskatchewan on royalties and a \$7.4 billion impact on the oil and gas sector. And that has a direct impact on highways and hospitals, social services, and schools.

Of course we hope things will turn around, but in this province last year oil production was down by 6 per cent since 2014. The value of oil was down by 42 per cent. Oil well drilling, down 30 per cent. Employment, down 10 per cent. Investment, down 40 per cent. Capital spending in the oil and gas sector in Canada has also dropped significantly, down 44 per cent since 2014, with the majority of that capital flowing to the US. And provincial total oil revenues between 2014 and 2017 were down 49 per cent. Let's call it 50.

What we are seeing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the perfect storm of no pipelines, regulatory overkill from the carbon tax to Bill C-69, and massive deregulation south of the border. Across Canada, 100,000 workers have been laid off in the sector, and of course Saskatchewan has not been immune to that.

So I would suggest that the Leader of the Opposition lay off the 1 per cent talk because that's just an old cliché about the oil and gas sector and has nothing to do with the province we live in now, and that he lay off the wealth redistribution talk, the same wealth redistribution talk the new member for Regina Northeast expressed back in 2009 that, "My objective as a democratic socialist is not to build a strong economy." Remember those comments, because they casually overlook that real people, real workers are affected by those numbers I just mentioned when projects such as Trans Mountain and the rest continue to stall or die. Jobs die too. Those are the simple economics of the situation.

And everything we do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from passing *The Energy Export Act* last spring to taking the federal government to court over the carbon tax, to making our case against Bill C-69 and for Trans Mountain and other pipeline projects, it's all about protecting jobs and attracting job creators and protecting the impacts on people's pocketbooks.

When I bought flowers for my mom at Thanksgiving, the lady behind the counter was complaining somewhat about the high price of gas. That's here. Think of what she'd be saying in BC and imagine what she'll be saying if the federal carbon tax is allowed to kick into gear. Real impacts on people.

Earlier this summer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we announced what would be — what could be — the lowest SaskEnergy commodity rate since 1999. It was a proud day. But it turns out that decrease will end up being dwarfed by the carbon tax, which will increase costs to the average home by at least 10 per cent on the commodity side and wipe out any benefit of the rate decrease, a decrease that even the former SaskEnergy critic, member for Prince Albert Northcote agreed would be "beneficial to the people of Saskatchewan."

But of course no benefit at all will be realized with the carbon tax, which the members opposite support, or certainly their leader does. And any so-called Economy critic should be all over that impact to people's pocketbooks every single day. In terms of Energy and Resources, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as stated in the Throne Speech:

[We] . . . will continue exploring ways to maintain and

improve the competitiveness of our oil and gas industry . . . by expanding existing incentives and introducing other new oil well drilling and production incentives.

Areas we are looking at are around R & D [research and development], technology, environmental management, extending the lives of wells, and making production more efficient.

Let's not forget that non-renewable resource revenue now accounts for just around 11 per cent of the province's total revenue, down from a high of 32 per cent in 2008, which is significant.

[16:00]

To that end — and also referenced in the Throne Speech — the mineral development strategy is a diversification incentive that we hope will increase the amount of mineral exploration around the Creighton, Denare Beach area for ground-based exploration of metals and diamonds, to expand exploration focus beyond potash and uranium.

Of course, all energy and resource sectors, including potash, uranium, general mining, and of course oil and gas, would be heavily impacted by Bill C-69, a benign enough sounding bill but in the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association's words, "would make ever building another major pipeline project in Canada unimaginable."

What's the critic of the Economy's views on that? Is he concerned that we have yet to see the regulations for the bill, that projects and consultations could be extended for years or killed at will? Will he take a stand on the growing feeling that Canada is in clear and present danger of not being open for business? Perhaps as a "democratic socialist," his job is not to build the economy. Maybe that's it.

But we feel it is our job to not be ashamed of the oil and gas sector or the uranium and mining sector and the people they employ, including First Nations. Cameco, for example, has traditionally been the largest employer of First Nations in Canada. And the local businesses they patronize, the local contractors they hire, the contributions they make to communities and charities — everything from the māmawêyatîtan centre right here in Regina, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service] air ambulance — real contributions.

The economy isn't the enemy or something that runs separate and apart from everything else. The Economy critic should look around because this province has changed. He hasn't, though. Just two years ago, two years ago — this isn't some foolish, youthful episode — he stood behind a poster that read, "Keep the oil in the ground." For real. And I'm wondering today, as the Economy critic of the province of Saskatchewan, will the Leader of the Opposition apologize for standing behind that poster? Will he apologize to the people the oil sector employs?

Of course he's equally set against uranium. We know his views on coal. But he never takes into account the people. Somehow he thinks they'll always be able to retrain for some green economy scheme. Perhaps he should consider doing that. It's the people at

the heart of our economy that make this province run. And there are faces behind glib, city-slicker dismissals of entire resource sectors as quote, low-hanging fruit.

In contrast, Mr. Deputy Speaker, here's to the continued economic well-being and momentum of this province under the leadership of our Premier. I support the motion and will not be supporting the amendment.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm so gratified to have the support of all my colleagues here. I wish . . . Don't you have something better to do, I think. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to just first by thanking a number of people in my constituency. Then I'm going to talk a little bit about the Speech from the Throne. Mr. Speaker, I have 20 minutes. And then I'm going to talk a little bit about what they've had to say on the other side. And if I could get through all of this really quickly, I'll spend more time on that latter, Mr. Speaker, which is certainly the most interesting.

I did get a little bit of razzing a year or two ago from a new member, that said, oh that's how you speak for 20 minutes. You just say thank you to all the people, everyone of your constituents, and then the last 10 minutes talk about whatever it was, a budget or whatever it was. So I'm going to keep the thank yous fairly short, as short as I can.

It was interesting. I think there is one thing that we agree with the NDP on and the NDP agrees with us on, is the most important person in our political life is our constituency assistant. And I would have to agree. So many people here have talked about theirs and we all think our constituency assistant is by far the best and I do too. So I guess that means we've got 61 amazing constituency assistants out there or more because some have more than one. Nicole Entner-McCullough runs my office and does just an absolutely amazing job, has since 2007 when we became government. And has really, as all of us know, takes a lot of pressure off of us as MLAs and is kind of a traffic controller for us within the constituency because we're not always able to be there. So thank you very much.

Again the constituency itself. I can't tell you how amazed I am with the support that I get anytime I'm out and about, from corner to corner to corner. So I can't thank them enough. They have been amazing.

Family quickly: Cindy and the boys. It's an interesting life to have when your sons are as busy as they are because really the number one issue that I have facing me everywhere I go is, oh how are the boys. That is what I seem to have to talk about all the time. And it's really kind of interesting in the age of social media with Instagram and everything else, Twitter, but mainly Instagram. I have a lot of people coming up and saying how are the boys doing. And first I have to say, are you on Instagram? Because you probably know how they're doing better than I know how they're doing. Because a lot of people phone them and they say, oh they're in Switzerland. And I go, yes I guess, yes oh yes they are. So they're usually more in tune with what they're doing. But they've had a great summer. Neither one were injured and that's kind of the first time in about three years that they

haven't spent the summer trying to recoup and rehab in a gym to get ready for the winter activities. So we're blessed on that side.

I also want to congratulate the member from Northeast on his by-election. I think he's going to have a very, very long and productive career in opposition, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of members on that side I know that were elected in 2007, and I believe that their whole career will be in opposition, which is kind of a shame because certainly the saying goes that the worst day in government is better than the best day in opposition. And I would tend to agree with that. And so they're going to have a lot of not really great days in opposition, Mr. Speaker, but they're going to have a lot of them. And I think some of them, perhaps their whole career will be there.

Okay, that was not pretty quick for my introduction. I think what I want to do first of all is touch on the Speech from the Throne, and it was a good Speech from the Throne. I will say it was a long Speech from the Throne, but it was a good Speech from the Throne. It covered an awful lot of topics, and I really do want to touch on the first story that was talked about in the Speech from the Throne because it is relevant, especially to my constituency. But it's relevant in every one of our constituencies, I think, and especially rural Saskatchewan because of the story that it told.

And this one was of course about Brian Williams who was a community pillar in Milestone, was at the rink, was instrumental when they built the new rink in Milestone, was at I'm sure every Flyers hockey game, helped out on the curling side, helped out in the canteen. He has three boys, Brad, Chris, and Steven, who I know very well, played hockey with them. Brian passed away relatively suddenly prior to harvest, and so that leaves a family not only mourning but of course having a huge workload in front of them to take off the harvest. And it was just amazing how the community came together.

I know Jeff Brown quite well. Jeff is no stranger to this place. He's been here a few times before at the budget speech. Actually it was not very long ago last session where his brother was here with his son, Jeff's nephew, who made those splints for young kids that were suffering from osteoporosis.

And they're a family that's very, very into helping. And so Jeff thought this would be a great idea to phone a few of his neighbours to come by with combines to help take at least a section of wheat off for the Williams family. And much to his surprise, but really in retrospect and when you look back, it's probably not a surprise. There were 20 combines there that came from all over, from Gray and all over the area, not just in Milestone but a wide range which speaks to the impact that the Williamses' dad, Brian, did have on the community. And they took that crop off, took that section off just in no time flat, as you can imagine. And it was interesting because I do remember him as a big Case IH guy and having the Case IH lead the way, it had to slow the John Deeres down a little bit to get to the end of the field. Sorry. Anyway, I digress.

But it really was a fitting story, and certainly a lot . . . It does tell a story, and there are those stories each and every year. Maybe not exactly like this, but it really does talk about the attitude that we have in the province of helping each other when the time is there, Mr. Speaker, when the need is there. Whether it's on the agriculture front, whether it's on many other fronts, fundraising,

you know, for people that have medical issues and fundraising for people that lose everything in a fire. You know those incidents happen almost every month within our province, somewhere around the province, and it was really fitting to start the Speech from the Throne with that story from Milestone.

As I go through the Speech from the Throne though, I certainly do see that it does relate an awful lot to people that I talk to in the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone. You know there have been a number of successes and there are some challenges moving forward, and that's what the speech talks about.

It first talks about financial management and how important that is. And I can tell you on a regular basis, you know, people aren't really happy with increase in PST and some cuts in services. They're not happy with that. But when you tell them it's going to be so that we can reach a balanced budget within three years or in the next provincial budget, they are accepting of it because they realize that we all . . . Just like the story at the start of the Speech from the Throne where you all have to pull together to tackle an issue, you all have to pull together in order to balance a budget. And that's exactly what this Speech from the Throne talks about, and the past two years have been all about, in order to balance the budget.

And I can guarantee you that there are provinces . . . Most of the provinces that are in deficit position are looking at us very enviously because we've done the tough work in order to get to a balanced budget. And once we get to the balanced budget, that doesn't mean it's all over. It still means some very tough decisions moving forward, I'm sure. Every budget process has to go through that. But, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province realize . . . And I am really looking forward to the next budget when we can stand up and say, it's a balanced budget. And I think it will be applauded across the province. It may be not by the members opposite, but I bet you by a lot of their membership and a lot of their party members will say, yes, a balanced budget is far better than running deficit after deficit with no plan to balance, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to quickly go over a few of the things that . . . it talks . . . One of the main sections is infrastructure spending and what we have done over the last number of years, and it really has been absolutely amazing. You know, I know the opposition has said a couple of different times in their speeches that, you know, this is just re-announcing what you've already announced. You know, we have talked about 18 joint schools and then two others that weren't part of the P3 [public-private partnership] process — 20 schools in the last 10 years. That's an amazing growth record and an amazing investment into infrastructure. And they get tired of announcing it, whether it's the 14 new long-term care facilities — and I know they get tired of this, but I'm going to say it again — whether it's the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, whether it was the new hospital in Moose Jaw, whether it was a new hospital in Maple Creek, whether it's a new hospital in Leader. And I can go on and on and on, and they get tired of us announcing them over and over and over again.

But I can tell you what people got more tired of, Mr. Speaker, is when the opposition would announce a new hospital in Preeceville seven years running and never built it, Mr. Speaker. That's what people got sick and tired of and that's why they're

sitting . . . In fact, you know, I don't know where he is right now, but the former member from Canora-Pelly has in a file somewhere, he has all seven years of those press releases that the NDP released on a new hospital in Preeceville and never got it done, Mr. Speaker.

The hospital in North Battleford. I remember the former minister of Health, Len Taylor from North Battleford announced it and announced it and announced it and never got anything done. You know, it's interesting their motto after their convention was dream and deliver, but their record was dream and drop the ball, Mr. Speaker. Over and over and over again, they dropped the ball. So if people are skeptical of the NDP, I think it's a very positive thing.

So lots of infrastructure spending, I've talked about that a little bit. I was amazed at how many members on our side did such a good job on recapping the infrastructure spend in this province, because it is huge. There are 20 minutes on each one of those projects if a person wanted to and how needed they are. You know, the long-term care facility. I'll never forget going to Watrous and it happened to be raining that day, and they had a run on the Co-op hardware store for 5 gallon pails because the roof was leaking over in so many of the different rooms that they couldn't get enough 5 gallon pails in there. And that's the infrastructure that we were left when we became government in 2007.

[16:15]

So if we talk a lot about infrastructure spend, it's because the province needed it. We need a lot more into the future. This is not done by any stretch of the imagination. But it's good to look at what has been done and continue then to look forward at what will be done. Because the people of the province don't expect seven years of press releases. They expect a press release and the facility built. And if you want to talk about it for a few years after, I think the people of Saskatchewan are okay with that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we talk a lot about connectivity and SaskTel. Great work by the member from Melville when he was the Legislative Secretary on expanding SaskTel into a number of different communities. The cell service, as well as high-speed Fusion, is extremely important.

Mr. Speaker, the bypass — hugest infrastructure project in the province. Now the opposition are very, very critical of it, and that's fine. That's I guess what opposition has to do. But I can tell you, when I'm out in the constituency, people are very positive. They may not always agree exactly with the location or anything else but, Mr. Speaker, they realize the benefits of that overpass. Now it's very frustrating when the opposition keep talking about a \$400 million project because the opposition knows better. They're absolutely misleading the public when they say it's a \$400 million project that has just somehow ballooned to \$2 billion.

And what's even more frustrating is when we have some of our media and one of our columnists who, if he would just come on a tour . . . I've been on a tour a couple of times of that bypass. All you have to do is go on a tour of that bypass and you see the difference between a \$400 million project and a \$2 billion

project. Starting in Balgonie, 400 million, no overpass in Balgonie. Starting in Pilot Butte, \$400 million, no overpass in Pilot Butte. There was an interchange because I remember looking at the plans — that \$400 million plan — when I first had a look at it as minister of Highways. It exited at Tower Road and it came right back in at where the old Plains hospital was. It didn't go around the city. It was just simply to divert traffic off of Victoria to get them back on to No. 1 by the Plains hospital.

Speaking of the Plains hospital, you know, I was at a fowl supper on Sunday night in Milestone and I was standing around talking to a few guys. And you know — I'm going to refer to this in a little bit — but the member from Regina Lakeview in her speech yesterday said we shouldn't look back to 20 years and 40 years ago. We shouldn't point fingers. So I didn't bring it up. And I'm standing there and they start talking about the Plains hospital and everybody just, you know . . . There have got to be five or six people around, and they were getting madder and madder. And you know, it's 20-some years since the Plains hospital closed, and they were getting madder. And finally one guy said, it's the stupidest thing the NDP did. And I said, hold on, you guys. They've done a lot dumber things than that. I couldn't believe that in Milestone, lobby of the rink, I'm starting to hold them back on the NDP. And you know, it was just what they were thinking. But that's the Plains hospital.

Now on the bypass. The bypass, the 400 million would have it coming in and then having to navigate the No. 6 overpass, which is dated, probably needs some work. This goes completely around the city. It takes traffic from Winnipeg to Saskatoon without slowing down. It takes traffic from Moose Jaw to Winnipeg without slowing down. It's a marvel and when it opens in 2019 — on time, on budget — people are going to get a full look at it. Because some of us have been very fortunate enough to take that tour and see what the bypass is all about and the difference that that will make.

Unfortunately so many people don't know the full scope of that bypass and when they do, I'm going to be very interested to know what the member from Regina Rosemont has to say, when he petitioned 80 times to get traffic off of Dewdney. The \$400 million bypass he talks about didn't come anywhere close to Dewdney, Mr. Speaker. So when it opens, what I would really like that member to do is to start out, kind of on the east side of the city. Don't go out as far as Balgonie or Pilot Butte because there's overpasses there, and you shouldn't see those because that's not part of the \$400 bypass.

But I would like him to start coming into Regina and exit off on to Tower Road where the bypass exits off and then start going around and see that next kind of bypass. But there's a low dirt road that he can take because that's where the \$400 would have ended. He can take that low dirt road and come in past the Plains, no, the Sask Polytechnic, and come in that way into the city and get on to the Ring Road and get the rest of the way around the city, and feel satisfied when he criticizes the \$400 million project, that he's driven on the \$400 million project. The rest of us will take the \$2 billion project and get around the city safely, Mr. Speaker.

How am I doing for time? Really quickly, I do want to talk, I really want to talk a little bit about Uber and . . . not Uber, I mean ride sharing. It's legislation that's coming in. I do want to touch

on that because I've had a number of experiences down in California, in Denver, in Toronto, with the use of ride sharing — be it Uber or Lyft. And I've also had a number of experiences here in Regina and Saskatoon on the use of the cab services that we have.

Now these are my strongly held views. It's not maybe always the position of the party or where the position of the party will be. But I heard, and I know some of the taxi operators fairly well in the city, and I heard one of them say to me is that, well as long as the Uber drivers will match the standards of our taxicab system we have in the city right now, then she'd be okay with it. And I have to say to her, heaven forbid that the Uber standard drops as low as our standards are in Regina.

And I am not kidding. I have probably taken 100, 50 to 100 rides on ride share both in Toronto, in California, and Colorado. And you rate. So for anybody that doesn't know, as soon as you're done that ride, you rate the driver, you rate the vehicle. In the last four or five years I've never rated below 4 on a vehicle and in the last five years in Regina, if I was to rate those vehicles, I would never rate them above 1.

Mr. Speaker, there is a huge difference. They talk about safety. There is no money. There are no credit cards by the drivers. You get into the car. There is no money that exchanges hands. You get out of the vehicle. There is no money that exchanges hands. There is none of that fear factor for the driver that's carrying cash or receipts or whatever — that is gone.

Mr. Speaker, the market takes care of itself because not only am I rating the driver, but the driver is rating me. And if I am a rider that has had trouble in the past, that has been abusive, you can wait a very, very, very long time to get an Uber ride, Mr. Speaker. So it corrects itself. There is surge pricing, absolutely. But, Mr. Speaker, we are missing a great, a huge opportunity.

You know, I don't ever want to ever quote the Prime Minister, but when he was talking about equity in his cabinet and talking about how many women he has in his cabinet, he said, well it is 2018. Well I would say that about Saskatchewan and ride sharing. It is 2018. We need to start getting up with the technology. You know, the receipt will be on your phone before you walk the first block. You know how much you paid. It's just an amazing service.

The last time I used it I was in Toronto and a number of us — there was four of us — we went golfing and we went quite a ways out of Toronto to this golf course called Greyhawk. It was a beautiful course. It was a par 5 right on number . . . No, I won't get into that. Beautiful golf course and we're quite a ways out of Toronto, and we took a ride share. I don't . . . Uber or Lyft, whichever. And I'm thinking, now this is going to be a test. How are we going to get back home because that guy was going back into downtown Toronto to take people around. And you punch it in and you say where you are, and it picks up the spot. And it said there'd be a car there in four and a half minutes. And you watch it and the car was there in four and a half minutes. We got into it. We drove all the way back into Toronto, dropped two people off at one hotel and ourselves off at the other hotel and just walked away. There was no exchange of money. Whoever had called it, it was on his tab which was the guy beside me, which was really . . . That's even some of the better things about Uber. I got to

walk away and never had . . . No, we did put some money in.

So I really, you know, am thankful for the minister for moving this legislation ahead. You know, there's some other roadblocks ahead because the cities still have to do some of their work. And I understand it's very difficult for the cab industry because it has been a supply-managed industry. And when it's supply managed, it distorts the market, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what our cab industry is in our major centres. And so this is going to certainly shake up the apple cart. But, Mr. Speaker, it is an opportunity that we cannot pass by, so I can't speak more strongly than that to ride sharing and what needs to go forward.

Mr. Speaker, I think I'm going to skip that now and I'm going to go to some of the things that the opposition has had to say. And I just want to read . . . There's just a small paragraph here that I want to read and, you know, I guess for members on this side. It's pretty quiet on that side.

It is directly from *Hansard*. I'm going to read this small paragraph and I want people to see whose side of the House this was said from and then I'll be glad to talk about who said it. So I'm not a great oral reader but here we go:

I have to say that there is a moving introduction in the speech. And I was quite moved by the beginning of the speech yesterday and the story about community coming together when times are tough. [Very good. We all agreed with that.] And on this side of the House we believe that when times are tough the government has a role . . . [to play].

Talking about the story in Milestone, that the government has a role to play. Now I've got to find where I was here:

So I think that's what distinguishes us on this side of the House from folks on the other side. To me it's the most Saskatchewan of activities — when people are struggling we get together and help them out. And that's what compels us, Mr. Speaker, to dream bigger.

Mr. Speaker, I was dumbfounded when I heard it and then when I read it. Because that is exactly . . . There's one thing that I could not agree more with and one thing I could not disagree more with on that short sentence. Mr. Speaker, I couldn't agree more that when times are tough, communities pull together. But I'll guarantee you there wasn't one person in that community, not one person in that field that ever expected the government should be part of it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that is a philosophy over there and it has been the philosophy over there — it's no good unless government has its fingers in it. Mr. Speaker, they don't have a rural seat and they're talking that way. You know, if it was to ever go back to the NDP, I'm sure they'd love to start up land bank, Mr. Speaker. That was a program that the NDP was in. Can you imagine? Just the philosophy right now and the way agriculture's going that the NDP, God forbid, would ever get put back in power and start trying to buy land and going . . . competition against the people that are out there doing it right now.

Mr. Speaker, I haven't heard one person in my constituency talking about the Canadian Wheat Board: oh man, do I wish that

Canadian Wheat Board was back. And every one of those members defended it, Mr. Speaker.

What they want is government control, Mr. Speaker. And what people — I think the vast majority of people — in this province want is the government to back away. Set some regulations, back away, and let us do the work that we want to do, whether it's in Milestone, whether it's Indian Head, or any other community in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that member was from Saskatoon Fairview that had that great line, that government should be involved. Those members are dead set against any sort of GMOs [genetically modified organism] and advancements in seed. We have come through one of the driest years, and to a farmer in my area, they'll say, I cannot believe, between the innovation and the GMOs advancing the seed technology, that we would have had the best crop that we ever had. If this was 1980, we would have had 5 bushels an acre and then been begging the Wheat Board to sell it for you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely ridiculous.

So, Mr. Speaker, the NDP, the socialists, believe in socialism, Mr. Speaker. They believe in having government involved and, Mr. Speaker, that isn't the case on this side. And I honestly, truly believe that isn't the way the people of the province think, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I did touch on the member from Rosemont wanting a bypass for \$400 million. And he can have it. He just has to exit a little bit earlier than everybody else. Even after reading 80 petitions, Mr. Speaker.

The member from Regina Lakeview, the Education critic, I listened to her the other day in question period and she had the . . .

An Hon. Member: — Audacity.

[16:30]

Mr. McMorris: — Okay, audacity. I was thinking something else. Thank you, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, she had the audacity to say — now I will agree that there are more pressures in our classroom than ever before because there are more needs within the classroom than ever before — but she had the audacity to say that our classrooms are in crisis in this province. Not too far off of what the Health minister used to always say about long-term care was in crisis, in crisis, in crisis, until the 2014 election and the crisis went away over those 28 days because they haven't raised it since.

But she said that it was in crisis here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I will tell you what crisis in education was under the NDP. Under the NDP, in seven years, 400 less teachers in this province, Mr. Speaker. That's putting education into crisis, Mr. Speaker.

I can tell you as the member for Indian Head-Milestone, in 2007 before the election, a press release came from Prairie Valley School Division. We're shutting down eight schools. Mr. Speaker, they were. And I need to read this because I think it should ring very clearly to the Education critic. She thinks it was

crisis then. Mr. Speaker, think what these teachers were thinking when the school division said they're going to close Wilcox, Earl Grey, Francis, Drake, Lang — where that member is from, Mr. Speaker — Glenavon, Odessa, Kronau, and they're discontinuing high school services in Kennedy and Sedley.

Mr. Speaker, talk about crisis. The teachers today are guaranteed work. There is more work because there are more people in school than ever before, Mr. Speaker, and that's going to continue under a Saskatchewan Party government. What is crisis, Mr. Speaker, is crisis management by school divisions because the NDP chased people out of the province, fired 400 teachers, Mr. Speaker. That's what crisis is in education.

Just in closing, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to . . . I didn't have to be here last night and so I was not. No truer statement could be said, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, but you know I was out and I came back and I guess I mustn't have a good Netflix series to watch or something, and I turned on the legislature channel, and oh my God. The member from Athabasca was speaking, Mr. Speaker. And I just can't let that go without, you know, having a little bit to say.

And honestly, Mr. Speaker, they talk about recycling. If I can beg the caucus staff in the NDP office to do one thing, dump that blue bin. Because the member from Athabasca keeps picking up his speech year after year after year. If I've ever heard of recycling before, it's the member from Athabasca.

You know it's really been interesting, his semi-transition. It really hasn't been in transition too much because in 2007, for anybody that was here, he was, you know, it just went over and over. He said, you guys are just lucky. You guys won government on luck. You're lucky and just wait four years. We'll be back. And his favourite line is, don't screw it up too much, you guys, because we're going to be back. Well it didn't work so well in 2011 because government grew, government members grew, opposition members decreased. And he came back in here and said, well, you're kind of lucky again. Things are going to change.

You know, it's the same speech over and over again, and after the last election he was still saying the same thing last night. He was saying, just don't ruin it too much because when the NDP get back in power, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that they may like him in Athabasca, but I can tell you that story does not resonate around the rest of the province. This government is here for a long time because it's a strong government under strong leadership, Mr. Speaker. I'll be supporting the motion.

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to rise in the Assembly to speak to the Throne Speech. In the spirit of Halloween, Mr. Speaker, I'll say it's always a treat to be in the House when the member from Indian Head-Milestone speaks. It's a little bit of a trick to follow after him, so I'll do my best. I'll try not to keep the members for too long, but I did want to make some comments on the Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, first I want to thank my wife, Amanda. I want to

thank our boys, Jack and Ephram, who are at home getting ready to do some candy collection. Jack is going to be — just so everybody knows; I know this is important — Jack is going to be a police officer. But within minutes of him getting his uniform about a month ago, he put it on and we had to take the billy club away within the first 10 minutes.

We had to take . . . For some reason it didn't come with a gun, which is probably good, but it came with a knife. But so I'm not sure if police officers carry knives around, but we had to take the knife away a couple minutes later than that, and eventually the handcuffs. We had to take those away as well because his little brother, who is about 18 months old, kept finding himself getting handcuffed, which was making it hard for him to walk around.

So Jack had a solution to that. He just handcuffed him to the leg of a chair so there was no way that he was going to fall over, Mr. Speaker, so we're having a great deal of fun. And I think most members know we're expecting early or I guess later in the spring of next year, so we're really looking forward to that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . We're doing our part. I think that's as far as we go though, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to talk a little bit about the Throne Speech. I actually . . . So I actually was not here when the Lieutenant Governor was delivering the Throne Speech. That morning I flew to Calgary to deliver an address to the CanWEA [Canadian Wind Energy Association] conference, the Canadian electrical, the wind electricity association, Mr. Speaker, and flew back not long after delivering that speech. I understand it was a long speech and it was so long that when I arrived back in Regina, the Lieutenant Governor was still reading the Speech, Mr. Speaker. Not quite; when I came through the building I could hear the students singing so I knew that the speech had finally ended, Mr. Speaker, but certainly it does chart the direction for the province.

I want to talk a little bit about . . . And I won't talk a lot about the bill. I know the members are going to look at *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act* that we've introduced, the amendments. And we're certainly hopeful that they will seriously consider passing the bill this fall, Mr. Speaker.

But I do want to talk a little bit about not just that bill, but the plan and where we're at as a country, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the irony of all this . . . For months and months and months while stakeholders in this province, while the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Resources, of Government Relations, of Agriculture, a number of government ministries, were working very hard to ensure that Saskatchewan had a plan . . . And we announced Prairie Resilience late last year. And in a short amount of time a significant amount of work had gone into that. We made some announcements earlier in the spring. We made some announcements on the performance standards that the legislation will now put into statute, Mr. Speaker. We made those announcements this summer. There's more that we need to unveil and we'll be doing so.

And the members opposite in the spring were, you know, I think a little bit critical to say that there was a lot to be determined, that in fact that showed up because we had acknowledged this is . . . We've been working at this for months and we're trying to ensure

that we have a plan in place that will see the federal government not impose a carbon tax in Saskatchewan.

And at the same time, through all of these months, everything that you heard from the federal government, the Prime Minister, Minister McKenna, other ministers, was that — and this is their words — conservative politicians (a) don't believe in climate change, (b) they don't believe in climate action, (c) they don't have a plan, (d) they're a bunch of knuckle draggers. Well they didn't quite say that but that's basically what they were saying, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, so we just diligently were going about doing our work. But every time they talked about Saskatchewan, they said that we didn't have a plan. And then last week when the Prime Minister announced that the carbon tax would be imposed on Saskatchewan, you know what they didn't announce is they actually accepted Prairie Resilience. They actually accepted the province's plan for heavy emitters in the province, which we believe is the best way to actually achieve reductions while ensuring that we are competitive, moving forward, Mr. Speaker. This has been . . . We're working hard at this, Mr. Speaker. I think earnestly putting forward a plan for the people of Saskatchewan that does reduce emissions, more so than a carbon tax ever will, while also trying to ensure that we're competitive, Mr. Speaker.

Frankly, I think that the federal government is making this up as they go though, because here are some things that we should know. When the federal government introduced their plan, there were all sorts of side deals that we're now finding out about. Prince Edward Island, they are allowed to put in place a carbon tax, but they're able to reduce their provincial gas tax by 1 cent a litre so long as their reductions don't equal what the carbon tax will cost the drivers, the people that are paying for fuel.

Well why didn't we all get to know that that was an option? Because the options that we were given, every province, either you do a carbon tax or you do cap and trade. There wasn't an option that you could reduce your fuel tax so long as it didn't equal exactly what a carbon tax would be on fuel. All sorts of provinces are getting exemptions. Bunker fuel . . . There's certain exemptions for heating fuel, for folks in some provinces that use heating fuel rather than natural gas to heat their homes.

We're now finding out just in the last couple of days, after we said that a carbon tax is going to cost SaskPower customers \$141 million in the first year alone that the company can't absorb, even though we're already being regulated under the coal-fired regulations which are going to drive a 40 per cent reduction in emissions, so we're good. We thought we're good on that. But now we're also going to be charged on the fuel. So that was \$141 million in the first year, a billion dollars between now and 2022. What do you think SaskPower's going to do with that? They're going to pass it on to their customers. Look forward to your rate increase, everyone.

So while we find this out, Mr. Speaker, now all of a sudden what's changing is the goalposts are moving. And they're moving up so that more of the fuel costs for companies like SaskPower are going to be exempt, which, good news. Might not be \$141 million; might only be \$65 million in the first year, but guess what? Because they've moved those goalposts, New

Brunswick, New Brunswick Power company, the goalposts have shifted so much that almost all of New Brunswick's coal-fired electricity is going to be exempt. Pretty good deal. Too bad we didn't get that deal.

Here's another one. The Saskatchewan government submitted Low Carbon Economy Fund applications. We asked for projects totalling \$200 million. The federal government was going to set aside \$62 million. We weren't going to sign on to the pan-Canadian because we disagreed with it. We agreed with the Vancouver Declaration. We disagreed with the pan-Canadian, but we submitted our projects.

If this is all about reducing emissions . . . These projects, \$200 million; \$62 million would come from the federal government and over the life of the projects would reduce emissions by 188 million tonnes. Great for the environment because that's what all of this is about. And I know sarcasm doesn't always translate over into *Hansard* but this is what it's all about — reducing emissions, 188 million tonnes of emissions reductions. The federal government says no because you won't sign the agreement, you won't sign on to the pan-Canadian framework. Because we disagreed with the carbon tax.

Mr. Speaker, now what we're finding out is that other provinces, for example, Manitoba . . . Manitoba had a \$25 a tonne carbon tax. That was the plan for Manitoba. Great, if you think that works for you, fill your boots. They announced a couple of weeks ago they're not going to go through with their carbon tax. And they have \$66 million at risk through the Low Carbon Economy Fund, which we're not going to get our 62. Despite what Ralph Goodale says, because he's wrong, we're not going to get our 62 through the projects we applied for.

So what does the federal minister say about Manitoba? Because the federal minister McKenna is asked, what about the \$66 million for Manitoba? Is that at risk? She says, Manitoba's \$66 million share is not at risk because Manitoba has other elements of its climate plan that fit with the fund.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we have Prairie Resilience, which the federal government has accepted. You would think that that fits into the fund. That fits into the plan. It's enough of the plan. More of what we're doing in Saskatchewan meets what the federal government has set out than Manitoba, yet they're going to get \$66 million. Other provinces are going to get their money, Mr. Speaker, and yet the federal government has decided that that's not going to be the case for the province.

Here, I think for me, is the capper. So the Paris climate agreement says that Canada must reduce emissions by about 170 to 180 million tonnes. And when the federal government announced a carbon tax for the country, they said that a carbon tax would reduce emissions by 80 to 90 million tonnes, 80 to 90 megatonnes. So naturally everybody thought, well okay, that's halfway there. Where's the other half? Well we don't know that at this point. Nobody knows.

[16:45]

But even on the 80 to 90 megatonnes, that was all going to be through a carbon tax. So now the federal government expects that carbon pricing — that's what they want to call it — across all

provinces and territories will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50 to 60 megatonnes by 2022, down from their estimate earlier this year of 80 to 90 million. You're wondering like, from April till now, like how do you lose 30 megatonnes? How do you lose 30 million tonnes?

Well, Mr. Speaker, and I'm quoting from somebody, the Canadian Press, October 16th, 2018:

The reason its estimate has dropped so dramatically has a lot to do with Ontario and, perhaps surprisingly, a lot to do with emissions reductions in California that Canada can no longer count as its own.

So our plan in this country, the half that we even knew about — which it's debatable whether a carbon tax would actually see those reductions — but the half that we even knew about in this country, a big chunk of that was due to the fact that we were going to be able to count California emissions reductions.

If that's the case, then why are we not being able to count the emissions reductions from all the uranium that's taken out of Saskatchewan, from northern Saskatchewan, and is being used in nuclear power plants around the world and displacing coal and other forms of fuel? Why can we not count that? Why can we not count the exports of implements that go from this province, that go around the world, that help advance carbon sequestration through zero-till agriculture?

Because if Ontario, under the Wynne government — which might have something to do with it — but if Ontario was allowed and Canada was allowed to include the emissions reductions from California and count that in as our total, then there's lots in Saskatchewan that we should be able to count, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I do want to acknowledge and I want to thank the Saskatchewan Mining Association, who expressed their disappointment that the Government of Canada was still going to impose the carbon tax despite accepting Prairie Resilience.

I want to thank APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan] for what they said publicly in terms of the fact that the carbon tax ignores the reality of Saskatchewan, which I tried to point out during our press conference, particularly to Ralph Goodale, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank our stakeholders for the amount of work that they've done on this.

Mr. Speaker, we have a plan in Saskatchewan. Don't let anybody tell you otherwise. We have a plan that works for our economy. It works for people that are employed in this province. It works for people that want to be employed in this province. It works to ensure that those things that we do well in this province — we feed the world; we provide fuel to the world; we'd do more if we had more pipelines; we provide fertilizer to the world — this helps those industries and will help them in the long term.

And don't forget that the work that's been done, the most comprehensive independent academic work that's been done in this country on the impacts of a carbon tax on Saskatchewan indicate that it will reduce less than a million tonnes of carbon dioxide and cost the provincial economy \$16 billion in GDP, Mr. Speaker. So it's clear that our plan will work for the province. If this is all about reducing emissions, our plan will work. And we

are still opposed to what the federal government is doing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome the member, the new member from Regina Northeast. I look forward to working with him and some debates that we'll have in this Assembly. And, you know, I also do though want to point out that his comments from the Throne Speech of, and this is his quote, "Why does this government find it so difficult to protect that on which we are all dependent: clean air, clean water, and healthy soil?"

I will remind that same member that when he was running for the leadership of his party in May of 2009, he said this in Estevan, and I quote:

We came out of government for the past 16 years and we hadn't reduced carbon emissions or reduced poverty, and we are the socialist party. That's supposed to be our priority and instead emissions and poverty increased.

Mr. Speaker, I will also remind members opposite — not him because he wasn't here — but when we formed the government in 2007 there were mobile monitoring labs, air quality monitoring labs, Mr. Speaker, that were sitting in parking lots because there was actually no money in the Environment budget to actually operate them. There wasn't money for operational dollars, so the most that they were monitoring was the air in a parking lot, Mr. Speaker. And that's being very generous because they were just sitting there.

Mr. Speaker, I will also say it's this government that has introduced, a number of years ago, a boreal lake monitoring program because we had no baseline information, particularly on what the impacts could be of the oil sands on our northern lakes. It was not those members that looked after that. That was this government that made sure that that work was done.

So, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the environment, we will stand on our record. We will point out where the members opposite were deficient in that, where they are still deficient. And I don't have time to get into that today.

Mr. Speaker, and I know that there perhaps are other members that want to get into this, but I will say this. I just want to reiterate, we have a plan to get to a 40 per cent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by SaskPower. We have a plan on our heavy emitters. Our plan will not impact the economy, Mr. Speaker. It will actually reduce emissions. We will fight the federal government in this House. We will fight them in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker. We will fight them in the courts. We're not going to give up on this fight, Mr. Speaker. It's too important for the future of this province, too important for future generations in this province. It's too important for the environment because it's an actual plan that will help the environment, Mr. Speaker.

And with that, I am very pleased to support the Throne Speech.

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

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What a true honour it is to be able to stand in my place and address the first Throne Speech to be brought down by our new Premier. The title of this speech exemplifies exactly what our

Premier lives on a daily basis, and that is standing up for Saskatchewan.

To quote our Premier:

While our economy and the province's finances are showing signs of improvement, we are still facing challenges due to the threat of a damaging federal carbon tax, continued sanctions from the United States on our steel and uranium industries, and a deeply discounted price for our oil caused by a lack of pipelines. This Throne Speech outlines our commitment to stand up for Saskatchewan by growing our economy and continuing to deliver important programs and services for the people of the province.

So before I talk about the details of the Throne Speech, I'd like to give you just a little bit of an update on what's been happening in my life. First of all, I'd like to give a big shout-out to my constituency assistants. As the member from Milestone said, his constituency assistants are the best, but mine are the best and I have three of them. So to Rosalie Story, Susan Colbow, and Gail Hilstrom, thank you to all three of them for holding down the fort and doing a great job in the constituency office. Once again, to my partner Bart for continuing to . . .

[Applause]

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Everybody loves Bart, and he keeps reminding me of that actually. So to my partner Bart for continuing to support me as I travel back and forth from Estevan to Regina as well as other destinations now that I have my new role as Minister of Highways. And I'm so thankful that I have the opportunity to be able to do this job.

So it truly is a year of firsts for myself. We had our first wedding this summer. My oldest daughter, Miranda, who is a school teacher in Saskatoon, grade 1, got married to Jon Forbes. And the member across the way actually talked about that during his address to the Throne Speech, and so I had mentioned before that we might be one big happy family. I guess officially we are now.

And then my middle child, Mercedes, who is 26 and is a school teacher in Estevan of grade 7 students, her and her partner are going to have their first baby this November. So I get to be a grandma, and I'm pretty darn excited about that.

And my youngest child, Wyatt, who is 22, and I've mentioned him before, he's a farmer. So they were very fortunate down in the south to have good weather early, so he was able to get his crop off in early September. So that was perfect for him. He is still single, but hopefully by the time I have an opportunity to address another Throne Speech, I'll have an update on that front. But until then, he's just going to enjoy the single life.

So I guess, really enough about what's been going on in my life. To the topic at hand, given the fact that I am now the new Minister of Highways, I just want to talk about that for a little bit. As you're all fully aware, safety is a very high priority for our government. That is why we have conducted a preliminary review of more than 900 intersections and have dedicated \$700,000 this year to clearing sightlines and improving intersection safety.

The budget for our safety improvement program, which funds things like turning lanes, rumble strips, and guardrails has increased since 2007. In that year, the budget was 1.1 million; in 2018 it was up to 7 million. So we're doing a lot of good work on all of those intersections and safety for the residents of the province of Saskatchewan.

So when we talk about safety, I'm excited to talk about stuff that's happening in my constituency and on the way to Regina. That's the passing lanes that are going to take place on Highway 39 and 6 as you go from Estevan to Regina. I've had the opportunity to travel this road on a weekly basis, sometimes more often than that. And my family, whether it be my parents or my children, travel this road on a regular basis.

So the fact that there are going to be up to 16 sets of passing lanes put on this stretch of highway is just an exciting opportunity for that roadway and the safety of our residents. That's an international corridor that brings truck traffic up from the US border, travels into the city of Regina to do business. Pretty soon it'll be able to get around the city of Regina very easily. And it's important that we have those there for the safety of everybody that's travelling on that road, whether it's your family, just to go visit other people, or whether it's business that's going to be conducted in the province of Saskatchewan.

So I'm not sure how many of you have actually had a chance to drive on passing lanes, but I have. A few years ago, myself and a girlfriend drove from Estevan all the way to Montreal. Now my girlfriend actually was the one who did all of the driving because she's a really good driver. You can just ask her. And she just let me sit back and take in the view. And she also likes to use speed limits as a bit of guideline, so she liked to pass a lot.

So this is actually the first time I encountered passing lanes, as we were going through some of the terrain that they have there. And we went through the first set and it was like, oh well, that was kind of convenient how we were able to, you know, have an opportunity to pass and it was pretty safe.

And then we started paying a bit more attention, and then there was a sign that said, well there's going to be a passing lane in 2 kilometres. So we're like, oh well, that's kind of nice. And then we realized they're actually pretty regular, and we don't have to take any chances in between these other sections. We know that just 2 kilometres up the road, or in another seven minutes from now, there's going to be another set of passing lanes. We didn't even start watching for the sign telling us where they were going to be because we knew that they were going to happen regularly. And the patience level just set right in and she didn't take any more chances passing. My trip became much more relaxed after that.

So I just want to encourage people that haven't used them to take the opportunity to embrace them and to be able to know that they are a viable option for our highway system that will keep everybody safe.

Okay. So I have a bunch of stuff in between here. I'm excited that we're on our three-year balanced plan. By next year we're going to be able to stand here and say we have a balanced budget. And then all of that stuff that we did to ensure that the people of the province don't have that heavy debt load to carry on for

generations to come, all of that work that we did will have paid off.

So once again, in the words of our Premier, "This Throne Speech outlines our commitment to stand up for Saskatchewan by growing our economy and continuing to deliver important programs and services for the people of this province." He is standing up for Saskatchewan, and everybody on this side of the House is standing there with him.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just want to let you know that I will not be supporting the amendment that was put forward, but I will most definitely be supporting the motion that was put forward by the member from Lumsden-Morse. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being the time of adjournment, this Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister of Advanced Education
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water
Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Joe Hargrave
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor
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