



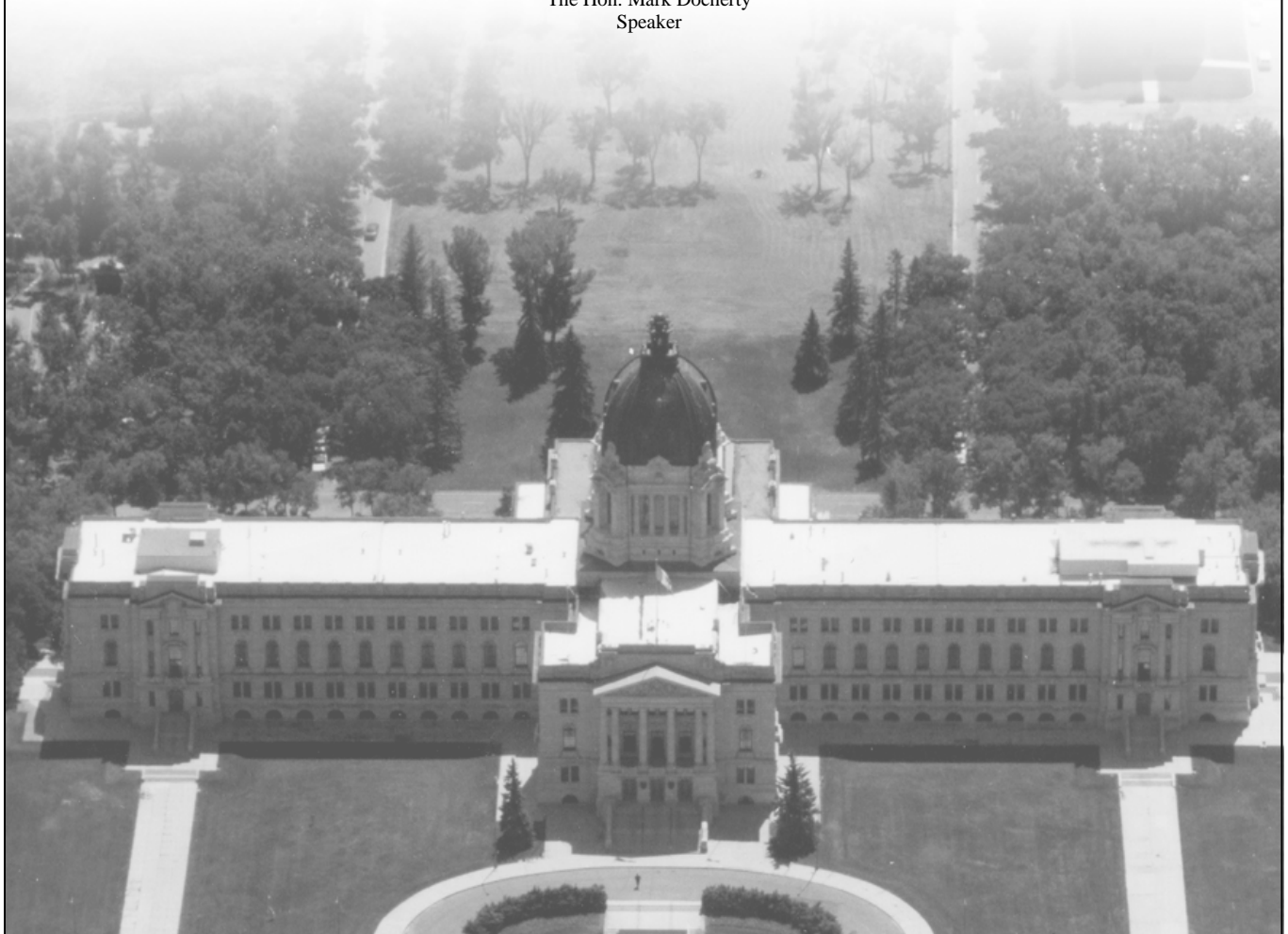
THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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3rd Session — 28th Legislature

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Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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 recognize the Minister of Corrections.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to recognize a long-time family friend, Frances Olson, who is seated up in your gallery. Frances was the first female real estate mogul here in Regina at a time, I must add, that it was not all that common.

Today, even at 90 years young, Frances continues to be actively involved in our community, including the Regina Women's Network. I'll touch on more of Frances's incredible story later in a member's statement. It is an honour to have you here today, and of course the friends that accompanied you. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming Frances to her Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with my colleague and welcome Fran to her Legislative Assembly, and her friends that are accompanying her: Alison, Nancy, and Jackie.

As many of you know, I was a real estate agent for 23 years, and I have to say that Fran was a trailblazer. She set a wonderful example for businesswomen in this community, and I think each and every one of us can be so proud to have strong leadership like Fran in our community. So thank you very much, Fran, for your leadership, your kindness, and your friendship. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to join with the two members opposite to welcome Frances Olson to her Assembly. Frances Olson is legendary in the business community. She is known as a mogul, known to all within our community.

I had the opportunity a few years ago to see a tribute to her at Junior Achievement where she was being honoured with a lifetime achievement recognition, and I thought that tribute spoke to a real leader, a real trailblazer within the community. And certainly we want to welcome Frances here today. On behalf of the official opposition, I do that.

I want to welcome as well Nancy McEwan, a friend and a very good person, to the Assembly, and the other two guests to the Assembly here as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

While on my feet, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, it's an honour to introduce some friends and leaders that are seated within your gallery. I want to welcome and I guess also say sat sri akal to four guests that are here today. A good friend, Mr.

Bhajam Brar, a leader within the Sikh Society of Saskatchewan, a leader within our province, a leader within the NDP [New Democratic Party]. I also want to welcome, seated with Mr. Brar is a guest to Canada from India, who is a principal of an engineering institute in India, and that's Dr. Swarnjit Singh, who's here. Give us a wave. I'd also like to welcome Mr. Harbins Gill to his Assembly and Mr. Lahora Singh-Brar to his Assembly.

These individuals do a lot of work in engineering and around electricity generation. They have a lot of expertise, and they're real leaders within our community. And of course right now is a very special time for Sikh people within Saskatchewan and all around the world, with that special time of Diwali that we're celebrating, the festival of lights, an important festival recognizing the important victory of light over darkness, of knowledge over ignorance, and of hope over despair. So at this time I welcome these leaders to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery we have a number of students, 47 students from Vanier Collegiate in Moose Jaw, which is in my constituency. I'd like to welcome them all here along with their teachers, Terry Marak and Brendan Fedoski.

Mr. Speaker, Vanier Collegiate is a great school in Moose Jaw. Both the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow and my children both went to Vanier, and I understand the member from Wood River also attended Vanier. So you can tell it's a great school. They do a lot of great things, the school. I understand they have a play coming up next week. So I'll ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am 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. Mr. Speaker, the current federal government doesn't recognize the unique economy of Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan industry, agriculture, and consumers all understand the devastating impact the carbon tax will have on our economy.

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens of Blaine Lake, Shellbrook, Saskatoon, and Big River. Thank you. I do so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to bring forward petitions speaking to the concerns that Saskatchewan people and businesses and families have with respect to the Sask Party's expansion of the PST [provincial sales tax] — in many ways the epitome of a job-killing tax at a time where we need investment and job creation — spreading that PST at 6 per cent right across the construction industry, hurting investment, hurting our economy, and doing the same with restaurant meals, Mr. Speaker, hurting jobs, hurting small businesses across our province.

The prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents from Regina. I so submit.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition calling on the Legislative Assembly to bring back the STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] as a public Crown corporation. The people who have signed this petition want to bring to our attention the following: the Sask Party unilaterally eliminated the STC, an important Crown corporation that provided a crucial service to people across the province who depend on it for travelling, accessing medical services, and shipping important packages.

And the Sask Party didn't inform the Saskatchewan people prior to the 2016 election about their plan to scrap the STC. That closure left 224 people out of work and communities across the province isolated from one another; and that the private sector has not provided services where the STC used to, and this has worsened due to Greyhound's announcement of ceasing operations in Western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to build a new and innovative STC to service people who need it most as a Crown corporation.

And the individuals who have signed this petition today, Mr. Speaker, are from the communities of Canora, Yorkton, Kamsack, and Buchanan. I so submit.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to rise to present a petition advocating for access to gender reassignment surgeries in the province of Saskatchewan. And I think the members opposite should listen closely, as we saw this as a front-page issue in the *Leader-Post* today.

These citizens wish to bring to your attention that the Government of Saskatchewan states it is committed to meeting the health needs of all residents, that gender reassignment surgeries including vaginoplasties and phalloplasties are deemed medically necessary, that Saskatchewan patients seeking vaginoplasties and phalloplasties must seek out-of-province care, that the out-of-province approval requires approval from one treating psychiatrist and one recommendation from a ministry, leading to an over two-year-long wait-list, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan direct the Ministry of Health to delist vaginoplasties and phalloplasties as specialized surgical services and remove the requirement to seek a recommendation from a ministry-authorized health or psychiatric authority.

The individuals signing this petition reside in Regina, Regina Beach, and Yorkton. I do so present.

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 for restoration of the rental housing supplement. The individuals who signed this petition wish to bring the following points to your attention: that the Sask Party cut to the rental housing supplement shows more of the same from 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; and 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 [Global Transportation Hub], 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 Sask 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 Centre.

Rallies to Recognize Sign Languages as Official Languages of Instruction

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about a very special rally held here at the Legislative Building on September 22nd, 2018. People gathered together, including my

colleague from Regina Lakeview, to call for American Sign Language, ASL; Indigenous Sign Languages, ISL; and Langue des signes du Québec, LSQ, to be all recognized as official languages of instruction here in Canada.

Achieving official status would allow access for deaf people for their full participation as citizens. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities mentions sign languages in its five articles, and of course Canada ratified this treaty in March of 2010.

Nine legislative buildings across Canada, including Saskatchewan's, were the site of these rallies held in support of this common goal. This campaign argues that recognition would mean more legal rights for ASL, ISL, and LSQ users; better access to public services; better education for deaf individuals in elementary and high schools; training in post-secondary schools and better employment opportunities; better mental health; and better interpretation. While this issue is a federal one, Mr. Speaker, many observe that Saskatchewan needs to improve its access for services for deaf and hard of hearing.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion, I would ask all members to join me in supporting this very worthwhile mission of ensuring ASL, ISL, and LSQ become official languages of instruction here in Canada and someday here in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Dragoons Replacement Guidon

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday it was an honour to attend the presentation and consecration of the Saskatchewan Dragoons Replacement Guidon. Mr. Speaker, the meaning behind the guidon cannot be overstated. It represents our current serving members, the brave men and women who came before them, and embodies all the battles fought by this regiment to secure the freedoms that we all enjoy today.

Mr. Speaker, the battle of Valenciennes took place 100 years ago this week. Valenciennes was one of the last battles of the Hundred Days Offensive, which helped secure victory for the Allies leading to the signing of the armistice on November 11.

Another battle honour was added to the guidon on Saturday — Canada's operation in Afghanistan. This is Canada's longest armed conflict in our history, representing the largest deployment of Canadian troops since World War II. Receiving the Afghanistan Theatre Honour is a testament to the critical role members of the Saskatchewan Dragoons had in the conflict and the dedication and sacrifices that were made.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, we thank everyone who has served and fought for our freedoms. We thank them for their service, and we remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

100th Anniversary of the Canadian Mental Health Association

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Canadian Mental Health Association. It is one of the oldest voluntary health organizations in Canada. Each year it provides services and supports to more than 1.3 million Canadians through the combined efforts of more than 11,000 volunteers and staff in over 330 Canadian communities.

It was founded by Dr. Clarence M. Hincks and Clifford W. Beers in 1918. Hincks saw a growing need for mental health supports in his work at the psychiatric outpatient clinic in Toronto. He also noticed no one was helping soldiers who came back traumatized from war.

In Saskatchewan in 1948, volunteers from Saskatoon began visiting patients in the psychiatric hospital in North Battleford. In 1950 the federal government suggested CMHA [Canadian Mental Health Association] set up a pilot division in one province. Saskatchewan was chosen. Since then, the Saskatchewan division of CMHA has been committed to a threefold mission to provide advocacy, public awareness, and services to patients in the Saskatchewan mental health hospitals and to consumers of mental health services living in the community.

CMHA has branch offices in Prince Albert, North Battleford, Saskatoon, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current, Weyburn, Melville, and Estevan. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating CMHA in reaching this remarkable milestone and to thank them for being a nationwide leader and champion for mental health. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Wascana Plains.

Celebrating a Trailblazing Regina Businesswoman

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not every day that we have a pioneer visit us here in the Legislative Assembly, but today is one of these days. However I cannot think of a better term to describe Frances Olson and the incredible career and life that she has led.

In the 1960s Frances Olson was, like many other women at the time, a homemaker, busy raising four children. However when her husband lost his job, Frances realized that she had to go out and find a job to support her family. The field she looked at was real estate.

At the time the real estate industry was completely male dominated and not one firm in the city wanted to hire women as agents. So in typical Fran style, Frances went out and started her own firm. That's the Frances that we know. She hired women agents and within two years her firm was the largest in the city. Her firm became known for their distinct bright signs and revolutionized the real estate market here in Regina and across the province.

Frances retired from the real estate business over 30 years ago, but she has continued to be an active member of our community. In fact her life and her accomplishments have been so significant

that a documentary about her life, *Up the Ladder in High Heels*, was released last year.

Frances Olson's story is one that reflects the very best of our province, and we are very lucky to have her with us today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville-Warman.

Martensville and Warman Roadway Projects

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2016 construction began on the overpasses at Martensville and Warman, and I am proud to say that this project will be complete and open to traffic this fall. Mr. Speaker, that's one year ahead of schedule.

In total, this \$60.6 million investment allows drivers to safely travel over the highway, as well as providing safer access onto the highway in both directions.

The completed Highway 11 project near Warman consists of a new two-lane overpass for Highway 305, on- and off-ramps, 5 kilometres of new four-lane divided highway. This project also made improvements to the rail crossing and significant safety upgrades at Highway 11 and Central Street intersection.

But that's not all. Mr. Speaker, this investment also includes construction of 3 kilometres of new four-lane divided roadway for Highway 12 at Martensville, and the new two-lane overpass for Township Road 384 with on- and off-ramps which are already open to traffic. Additional improvements include the reconfiguration of Centennial Drive and Main Street intersection at Martensville, and a new Highway 12 exit ramp and signalized intersection at Centennial Drive and 4th Street.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank Peter Kiewit Sons for overseeing this project and for completing it on budget and ahead of schedule. Thank you.

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

Grand Opening of Langham Care Home

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past summer I was delighted to attend the grand opening of the new Langham Care Home. This day marked a new chapter in the care home's 46-year history when a new community-based organization officially purchased the home. The grand opening was truly a celebration of community and was held in conjunction with the Langham Days community fair weekend.

Mr. Speaker, I was honoured to cut the ribbon to the new care home alongside Langham Care Home board of directors Chair Marg Balzer, administrator Conrad Jantzen, Carlton Trail-Eagle Creek MP [Member of Parliament] Kelly Block, and Langham mayor John Hildebrand. The care home is crucial for families in Langham as it is important that their loved ones stay within the community and continue to receive the best quality of care.

Currently there are 28 residents enjoying their home, including married couples who are able to live together in the same quarters

despite having different levels of care. This is what makes the new care home so unique to our province. This proactive approach to seniors' care will serve as a model of excellence for other care homes across Saskatchewan, and I was happy to support and help the community-based group open its doors to our community. Mr. Speaker, I now ask that all members please join me in congratulating the Langham Care Home on their grand opening. Thank you.

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

Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission Apprenticeship Awards

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Friday, November 2nd, I was invited to attend the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission Apprenticeship Awards night. This event is held annually in recognition of the men and women that display dedication, hard work, and excellence in their craft. Woody Reaume, radio personality from 94.5 Jack FM, emceed the event.

These awards are a fantastic example of the work ethic the people of this province possess. It is because of these individuals that our province has been able to continuously grow and maintain economic prosperity. Our government is committed to developing a workforce that is industry trained and certified and that meets the needs of our labour market. It is incredibly promising, Mr. Speaker, to have such strong representation of skills and trades right here in Saskatchewan.

Last year in this province 1,566 people received their journey person certificates. I would like to thank all the partners who make positive contributions to the apprenticeship and certification system, including employers, instructors, and technical training providers. I'd also like to offer a special thank you to the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission and to all the event organizers that made the evening such a success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Long-Term Care

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, today we're joined by Brenda and Bill Cromwell. Brenda and her family have experienced first-hand the challenges of getting a loved one adequate long-term care in Saskatchewan today. Brenda's father, John Gruell, was diagnosed with dementia in 2015, and despite his doctor's opinion that he needed to be in a secure ward, she had to fight tooth and nail to even get him to qualify for long-term care.

Brenda cared for her father in her home for two and a half years but began to really struggle last year. Once John was finally put on the list for a long-term care bed, it took another eight months just to get a placement. By this time, John could no longer find the washroom, and he required a great deal of assistance. He was leaving the house unaccompanied without proper clothing and shoes. Mr. Speaker, an eight-month wait.

And this isn't just a Saskatoon issue. We have lost more than 100 long-term care beds in Regina alone, and seniors in the North are still waiting for the government's promised long-term care facility in La Ronge. So my question to the Premier: what is the plan to add capacity to the system so that seniors and their families don't have to go through a terrible ordeal like this family did?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the visitors to their Assembly. Certainly I'm sorry to hear about the difficulties they experienced in the long-term care system. I'd be happy to meet with them after question period if they'd so wish.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that at times there are wait times that are too long in the long-term care system. Mr. Speaker, we have added capacity to the system. We've built a number of long-term care facilities around the province. We've increased funding for long-term care, Mr. Speaker, but we also recognize we have an aging demographic in this province and there will continue to be some strains on the system, Mr. Speaker. But we will make every effort to meet those demands. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Though Brenda expected to be relieved once her father was finally offered an emergency placement, she was horrified by the conditions in Luther Special Care Home. The facility was deteriorating. There was no air conditioning in the rooms in the summer, and the family even had to scrape ice off the windows in the winter.

Staff worked incredibly hard to meet the needs of residents, but there were too few of them and they struggled to manage the complex needs of residents in their facility. Two care aids supporting 25 high-needs residents is simply not enough. She described residents falling with no staff available to help them up and no one to assist them to the washroom.

We know this pattern repeats itself facility after facility, and the family's experience around short-staffing has been no better since their father was moved to Oliver Lodge. What is this government's plan to improve staffing levels so seniors can spend their final years with the dignity and the care they deserve?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we do have some aging facilities around the province. That's why, as I mentioned, we built a number of long-term care facilities around the province. I think it's 14 right now.

Mr. Speaker, we know we need to add some capacity to the system. We're looking at various ways of doing that. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite frequently goes to staffing issues and always uses the term understaffed. I would respectfully disagree with that, Mr. Speaker. There are, I think it's about 800 more long-term care aids than there were 11 years ago when we were given the privilege of forming government, Mr. Speaker. If it's truly understaffed, what does that say about the staffing levels at that time?

Mr. Speaker, this is a serious situation. When a loved one's affected, obviously, as I said, I'd be happy to meet with our visitors in the gallery, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to make long-term care a priority for this government.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, instead of coming up with solutions to improve staffing and care, this government tries to explain the shortfalls away. In Brenda's own words, "The people who are in charge of running the system should be ashamed of themselves." She called on decision makers to visit long-term care homes. I just might add that the minister doesn't seem to have visited one in a very long time. She called on decision makers to visit long-term care homes to see the undignified conditions in which the men and women who built this province are forced to live.

John's experience is heartbreaking, and it is but one example illustrating a broken seniors' care system that has people struggling in every corner of this province. When can Brenda and her family, and frankly seniors across Saskatchewan, expect long-term care improvements that they so deserve?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, that's just wrong on so many levels. This is a reasonable debate and discussion to have. This is a serious issue. And to make a snide comment that somehow I don't visit long-term care facilities, I have family and family friends in long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker. I recognize how serious this is. This impacts everyone in the province, Mr. Speaker.

And we have been taking steps. As I said, we've added capacity. We've built a number of long-term care homes. We have more beds than we had before, Mr. Speaker. The number of beds for population on a per capita basis, I think we have the second-most in the entire country, Mr. Speaker. We introduced the personal care home benefit in 2012 to help seniors.

Mr. Speaker, again, seniors are incredibly important to this province. They're a priority for our government, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to look for innovative ways to provide long-term care for our seniors in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — If the minister gets even half the calls that come into my office about short-staffing in long-term care in the province, or if he would listen to his own government reports or those of the independent officers, he would know there is a desperate need for more staff.

While John is lucky to have family to fight for him, not every senior has that kind of support, and so many seniors across the province continue to fall through the cracks. This government finally admitted they have a long-term care staffing problem when they made an election promise to cut executive salaries and redirect those funds to long-term care, \$7.5 million to be exact. But that's a promise that has gone unfulfilled.

[14:00]

The minister told me at committee this was, “Because of the . . . [financial] situation . . . there’s been some campaign promises we’ve had to defer.” Will the government admit that they broke their campaign promise to seniors and commit to redirecting all that funding to long-term care today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we have increased the amount spent on long-term care in this province. We have increased the number of staff in long-term care, as I said, by hundreds of people, Mr. Speaker, just as we’ve increased across the board in health care. We’ve increased spending in health care by over 50 per cent since we formed government. Mr. Speaker, we have more doctors. We have more nurses, and we have more long-term care workers than were ever under the previous government. Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, this is a priority. It certainly has some challenges and, Mr. Speaker, we’ll continue to make it a priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Condition of Regina Bypass

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last summer Saskatchewan people started sounding the alarm about the Balgonie roundabout that wasn’t designed to fit Saskatchewan farm vehicles and semi-trucks. And the community of Balgonie has not only had their Main Street access taken away, they were forced to deal with absolute mayhem after a semi got stuck on the Balgonie roundabout last fall. Other semis couldn’t get past the blockage and instead flooded into Balgonie. Those trucks, like the Balgonie residents, were trapped because this government took away their Main Street access, and nobody defended them. Eventually semi drivers dismantled the Highway 1 blockade themselves to get back on the Trans-Canada road.

In a letter to the minister on the incident, a community member says, and I quote, “We feel like we are in jail and the new overpass is the gatekeeper.” How on the earth did the Saskatchewan Party’s studied-to-death bypass get the design so wrong?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. I believe that when that incident happened, there was work done on that bypass and on that roundabout. And all of the issues were fixed, and within the contract at no extra cost to the government. So I would argue that in fact we did do good work on that area.

And as we were working on that project in the Balgonie area, discussions were had. And the best solution for safety is exactly what this government did with regards to that roadway to ensure that it works well for everybody involved, every resident. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the minister can try and

minimize the situation, but these are a community member’s words, not mine, and I quote, “With the chain link fence in the ditch you can make it also look like we are in the P.A. penitentiary. We do not have a lot of time before there is a revolt.”

Less than a week after the roundabout opened, in response to a CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] story titled, “‘Waste of money’: new Saskatchewan overpass meant for big vehicles is too narrow,” the Highways minister’s chief of staff, Jason Wall, who is now the Premier’s right-hand man and senior adviser wrote, and I quote, “So why did RBDB not plan for these?”

Good question, Mr. Wall. How was it in all the stages of the bypass design, bypass approval, and the bypass construction process did this government fail to catch the fact that they accepted a design from a foreign conglomerate, a foreign corporation, and it can’t fit farm equipment and semi-trucks on this bypass? How did they manage to mess this project up so badly, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you once again to the member opposite for the question. We all know that this is a good project. We all know that this project will bring safety to every community around Regina, not only safety around Regina, but safety within Regina.

We had that government ask us, on more than one occasion, to get heavy truck traffic out of the city of Regina, to make things safer for our children, to make things easier for our businesses. And that’s exactly what this government on this side of the House has done. I will never apologize for putting safety first. This is a good project: 90 per cent done, on budget, on time.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, this is just the tip of the iceberg. We have obtained records that show that the conglomerate responsible was missing in action when this whole crisis unfolded last September. Documents show that the first call to the bypass conglomerate was made at 6:40 p.m. and again at 7:40 p.m. Semi-trucks piled into the community and were trapped there until they had to take matters into their own hands. Twelve hours later, there was still no response from the conglomerate.

A ministry official expressed frustration, saying, “Those responding to these types of events must be available.” And he went on to say, “For example, I have personally attended operations and issues in the middle of the night to deal with calls such as debris on the road,” as he should, Mr. Speaker. So what exactly did this government sign us up for? The bypass was supposed to make Highway 1 safer, not leave communities in the lurch because our P3 [public-private partnership] partners can’t bother to answer the phone. So how on earth does this make any sense?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank, once again, thank the member opposite for the question. You know, this is a great project, and I would think that they would be more

interested in the safety that it brings.

It would appear there's a great deal of confusion when it comes to the infrastructure project and how important it is for our province. Last month I actually offered the members opposite an opportunity to tour the project. Unfortunately, they did have prior commitments on that day, so they were not able to attend. Earlier that day, the press actually had an opportunity to attend, and I believe they found it very useful.

I understand the sheer magnitude of this project may be a bit overwhelming. There are so many good things to be seen here. The mobility it will offer around the city of Regina, and the safety it brings will be tremendous. So I would like to extend the offer of another tour to the members opposite. And they're saying, no thank you, across the way. They're not even willing to look at this project in its entirety. So they can feel free to contact my office and we can arrange a good time for everybody to go on that tour. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think the people of Saskatchewan deserve better answers than what we're . . . [inaudible] . . . now in the aftermath of . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. I recognize the member.

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, in the aftermath of this incident, Ministry of Highways officials reached out to the conglomerate for screening information on oversized vehicles and got “no results.” They reached out to the Regina bypass partners and basically told they were too busy and wouldn't be getting Highways any information for months.

If this was a traditional build managed by Highways, there would have been someone to respond to this community in their timely need. Instead this government approved a design from a foreign conglomerate that doesn't meet Saskatchewan's needs and has left us on the hook, relying on private companies that aren't keeping their end of the bargain.

How can the Sask Party justify saddling Saskatchewan people with a \$2 billion bypass that is overpriced, poorly designed, and managed by a private corporation that's asleep at the wheel?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And once again I thank the member opposite for the question. I actually would like to mention to her that there are several Saskatchewan companies that worked on this project. She keeps mentioning that this is a conglomerate from a different country, though we had over 70 per cent of the contractors come from the province of Saskatchewan. So these are people within our provinces that pay tax dollars here that worked hard on this project.

I'd like to remind her that this is a massive project. And we actually fixed the issue she was talking about, at no cost to the taxpayer, because it was exactly what was built into the project with the P3 model that we're using. And once again I'll go back

to safety, because this is exactly what this project was all about, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what it brings to our province. Thank you.

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

Development in Wascana Park

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, people across Regina have spoken out against this government's short-sighted decision to seize control over Wascana Park. The province, the city, and the university all used to share power over our treasured park, but changes the Sask Party rammed through last year have left the provincial government with total control of the board. Before the Sask Party made these changes, with no consultation and no mandate to do so, the government needed to get the support of at least one of the other partners to implement its plan for the park.

This is a system that worked well for all of us for decades. Now a cabinet minister from Saskatoon is calling the shots for Regina's most valuable asset. How can the Sask Party justify this decision? And why won't they listen to the people of Regina and restore control to the university and the city as well?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Central Services.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much for the question. To the hon. member, I think she's using the talking points from her seatmate from last year when he called me a minister from Saskatoon. I would like to make sure that members opposite understand that I'm not a minister from Saskatoon. I'm a minister for the entire province of Saskatchewan and I take great pride in the work that the Capital Commission is doing.

Mr. Speaker, any decisions that are made are done on a consensus basis. They are done with the input from the city of Regina, which approved the project, the University of Regina, and the Government of Saskatchewan. It's working very well, and it will continue to do so despite what the members opposite are trying to say.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister needs to correct his facts. He knows the province has control over that board now, and what was once a consensus-basis board is no longer the case. The Sask Party has shown, through their actions, that we can't trust them with the things that matter for our province.

We can't trust them with our Crowns. Just look at STC. We know we can't trust them to give us the straight goods about what went down at the GTH. And it's clear we can't trust them with Wascana Park either. Earlier this summer the city of Regina voted unanimously to oppose future commercial development in Wascana Park. This is something people across the Queen City and across the province agree with.

Will the Sask Party put the will of Regina citizens ahead of their own and ensure there is no future commercial development in Wascana Park? And how does the minister expect to be trusted at just his word?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Well, well, well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has to get her facts straight. The city of Regina voted unanimously in favour of the very project that she's talking about, Mr. Speaker.

You know, the NDP are trying to play both sides on this, Mr. Speaker, because when we go back to their history, Mr. Speaker, in 1955 the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] approved the CNIB [Canadian National Institute for the Blind] building, Mr. Speaker — the predecessor to the NDP — and the NDP approved the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] building back in 1976.

So which way do they want it, Mr. Speaker? Indeed we are following the plan that was put out in 1913. We continue to do so. We continue to do so with consultations with the mayor of Regina, with councillors from Regina, with the president of the University of Regina, and all those involved, and decisions are made on a consensus basis. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — What do you say to that, Mr. Speaker? This government continues to struggle with basic math, Mr. Speaker. The Premier and Deputy Premier ran on restoring funding to schools after their devastating cuts in 2017. They took out \$54 million and they put back 30, leaving a gap of over \$78 million over two years. The result, classrooms are more crowded. Teachers are left to do more with less, and students who need extra support are left to struggle through.

Teachers who played pick a premier a year ago to put the focus on education are still waiting for this government to restore the millions that they cut from classrooms. Mr. Speaker, when will the minister finally concede the damage that these cuts have done and restore the \$78 million that they have cut from our classrooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I stand day after day in this House and explain this, Mr. Speaker. We're out having conversations with teachers and school boards, Mr. Speaker, and parents. We've added \$30 million to the budget, in the spring budget, pursuant to the Premier's commitment, Mr. Speaker. We're continuing to have these conversations with respect to funding public education.

[14:15]

And I'll remind the member, Mr. Speaker, that 12 per cent increase in enrolment since 2007, followed by a 33 per cent increase in funding for public education, so the commitment to public education by this government is clear, Mr. Speaker.

But I've asked on a number of occasions what her views are, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the effects of the carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, on public education. Eight million dollars, Mr. Speaker, an existential risk to public education funding, and I haven't

heard a word from that member as to what she's going to do and what stand she's going to take from respect of defending public education. I hear her speak about defending public education funding, Mr. Speaker, but when it comes down to it, when it comes down to it, Mr. Speaker, she won't stand and tell us where she stands.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, with all of the dialogue that the minister is doing, I'm wondering how he's presenting this to teachers in the classroom, if he is telling them that they've got more than enough money and what they really should be concerned about is the carbon tax, because I would be delighted to be a fly on the wall for that conversation. Mr. Speaker, with answers like that, the teachers may very well play pick a premier again, only this time, October 26th, 2020.

There's no wiser investment that a government can make than in its next generation of leaders. Mr. Speaker, some might even say that no wheel in the economy turns without education. But by cutting the supports that our kids need to succeed, this government is doing a disservice, not only to teachers, to students, and parents today, but to every single one of us in the future and the long-term good of our economy.

And I'll challenge the minister to this: how can he justify to future generations the \$78 million cut from this crucial investment in our future?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, if the member wants to talk about teachers, Mr. Speaker, the application of the carbon tax to public education in this province will be 100 teachers, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to have a conversation on this side of the House with respect to the funding of public education. And, Mr. Speaker, I have never stood up and said that the amount of money that we put into public education is enough. I think we need to have conversations about how we're funding public education, look for efficiencies . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . look for efficiencies, look for efficiencies and effectiveness in the delivery of public education in this province, Mr. Speaker.

Thirty-three per cent, Mr. Speaker, is the increase in public education funding since 2007, Mr. Speaker. And we'll continue to have conversations with all our partners in education, Mr. Speaker, with the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation], the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], in terms of looking to ensure that we're properly dealing with public education funding.

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

Domestic Violence Legislation

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the government introduced new legislation that could help people learn more about their partner's history of violence. And while there are more details to come about how this legislation will work, this

could be a positive step in addressing our province's terrible record when it comes to domestic violence. But it's just one step, Mr. Speaker, and there's much more this government should do to address domestic violence in Saskatchewan. Advocates have been calling for paid leave from work so that survivors can take the time they need to get help, meet with lawyers and police, and access needed supports.

The federal government announced its plan for paid leave this summer, as did New Brunswick. When will the Sask Party follow suit?

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. As the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, I'd like to weigh in because it's our office that is coordinating a lot of this work.

You know, I want to thank both the former and current ministers of Justice and Attorney General for their advocacies on these issues. As the member opposite knows, we did a number of consultations at their request, and we have looked at some of their submissions. In some cases we've asked for further clarification around some of the stakeholder submissions that we received.

In the meantime, comparisons show that the opposition's bill has some definitions that are a little bit more restrictive than we have, Mr. Speaker. One example is the definition of interpersonal domestic violence, where their bill refers to emotional and physical abuse, where ours talks about the deprivation of necessities and harassment as well.

So a lot of work of has been done and continues to be done, and we look forward to having further discussions about what more we need to do, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 141 — *The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol (Clare's Law) Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol (Clare's Law) Act*. For many members of the legislature, they remember Lisa Strang, an employee of the Saskatchewan Party office, who was herself a victim of domestic violence.

I want to give special thanks to my former chief of staff, Drew Dwernychuk, for bringing this important tool to my attention and for his ceaseless efforts to find new and innovative solutions to complex problems. His late father was a Saskatoon city police officer who has a strong family tradition of helping others.

As explained in the Throne Speech, Clare's Law is a risk-disclosure protocol that was introduced in the United Kingdom and named in honour of Clare Wood, a woman who was murdered by her partner and was unaware of his violent past. Clare's father fought for more disclosure by police to protect domestic violence victims.

This legislation will establish a statutory framework for Saskatchewan police services to disclose such relevant information about someone's violent or abusive past to intimate partners who may be at risk. If we are able to identify such risk and inform those at risk how best to manage and to respond to that risk then maybe tragedies, like those with Ms. Wood in England, can be prevented. Mr. Speaker, in my view this alone makes this bill worthwhile.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will provide a legislative framework for police services to disclose relevant information to applicants through the right-to-ask process and to persons at risk through the right-to-know process. It will authorize the establishment of the interpersonal violence disclosure protocol that will set out procedures for the disclosure of information by a police service to applicants and persons at risk. It will set out who can make an application for disclosure, including interpersonal violence support workers. It will provide for good-faith liability protection for police services that disclose information. It will require the disclosed information to be kept confidential by all parties and require the disclosed information to be limited to prescribed information.

This bill and subsequently the protocol are being developed in conjunction with the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police and representatives from the shelter community, as well as the Ministry of Justice. Mr. Speaker, we are not suggesting this bill represents a solution to interpersonal violence. We do however view it as another potentially important tool to seek to address or, in some cases, even prevent acts of violence before they occur.

Furthermore by providing an avenue for personal risk information to be disclosed to information . . . who do not feel safe in their own homes, we can also provide access to other assistance and information for those individuals from our experts in the shelter communities and through our police-based victims services teams.

Mr. Speaker, getting information to those at risk is the foundation of an informed and effective response to interpersonal violence in Saskatchewan. We think this bill is another step in the right direction. With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol (Clare's Law) Act*.

The Speaker: — It's been moved that Bill No. 141 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to stand in my place today to offer a few comments about Bill 141, *An Act respecting the Disclosure of Certain Information in accordance with an Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol*, 2018.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as we've indicated — and our critic certainly has been leading the charge on the particular perspective from the opposition benches in the sense that she's championing many of the issues that have been raised over time — there's no question that there is needed support in the event that there is a situation where lives are being threatened and that there is some serious concerns, and inquiries are necessary at certain times of a relationship.

And, Mr. Speaker, prior to this there was an issue around confidentiality, and obviously that wasn't the intent was to protect people that may be prone to the violence, Mr. Speaker. So as a result of the challenges in trying to determine, especially in a new relationship, and I think it goes both for particular in the women as we've indicated here, but certainly men are also some of the . . . They were also part of the process of protecting and disclosing information that may be of concern to them. So, Mr. Speaker, while the focus certainly has been on women, and in this particular case I want to point out that men are also allowed information that may assist them in this regard.

I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that we look at the five paid days off. There's no question that we've been pushing for that. We don't think 10 unpaid days is enough for the victim who may be subjected to these kind of challenges and, Mr. Speaker, it has certainly put . . . It's very important that we put in perspective that there's a healing process that is necessary. There's counselling services that may be a needed step for some of the victims.

So it's really important that we look at this legislation, that we review it, we speak to a number of people in impact groups and see their perspective as well. It's something that is going to take a lot of thought, Mr. Speaker, because obviously it is something that we would, you know, within the NDP, certainly want to see some improvements to this particular bill. So this is the reason why we have this process that's unfolding today in a sense of it gives the opposition time to consult, as I've indicated. It also gives the opposition time to speak to a number of different groups that could give us some very, very good perspectives on how we can strengthen this bill, and that's part of the process that is necessary.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I want to quote our current Justice critic, which I think is really important, that the concern that she has raised on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker, and I quote, “. . . Clare's Law puts the burden back on survivors to go out and get that information about a prospective abuser.” Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure that this process is fairly streamlined, that it's being very effective. And that's one of the reasons why, as the opposition, we take our time and we certainly take our duty to ensure that we reach out to different groups to make sure that this is intended to achieve what we hope it is, Mr. Speaker. And that's part of the process, as I've indicated, that the Assembly goes through.

So I know that there are many people within our caucus that are going to have a lot of discussion and matters that they're going to raise as a result of this bill. I look forward to discussions and the sharing of some of their ideas, and that, of course, Mr. Speaker, will happen over the next several weeks, if not months.

So on that point I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill

141, *An Act respecting the Disclosure of Certain Information in accordance with an Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol*, 2018. I so move.

The Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 141. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 132

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 132 — *The Management and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm honoured today to stand and bring my remarks with regards to Bill No. 132, the management and reduction of greenhouse gases.

Mr. Speaker, when reading this bill and thinking about the environmental changes within our province and needing to be more environmentally conscious, I think about when I was a younger child and being raised. And we did a lot of things when I was a kid that are things that we're talking about here today, you know, with regards to ensuring that we were mindful about how much we used electricity or gas, as we had one vehicle in our family. And for the most part, though, we walked wherever we could go.

I don't necessarily do that much anymore, Mr. Speaker, and I think a lot of us are probably in that same boat. I was raised in a small town, so walking to places wasn't a big deal. But if we needed to get to the city, if our parents weren't going we would ask others or we would take the bus, because at that time we had a bus to get to the city. And so we would look at those different options. And I didn't even actually own a car, Mr. Speaker, until I was 21, and so I was very used to just finding rides and being very versatile with that.

But also growing up, we had a garden and we composted, even though at that young age I never realized what composting was, and I just knew that you would throw your leftovers or your orange peels in the bucket that was underneath the sink, and then that went outside after. And we were really mindful of how much garbage we maintained. And we did a lot of things with reducing how much waste we would have, and we would reuse a lot of things.

[14:30]

And I just remember, even like with wrapping papers, my mom would always reuse the wrapping paper from year to year, or she

would wash the plastic bags and we would reuse them, or saran wrap. And we would use our margarine containers, as I would now my Tupperware containers, but instead of wasting it or whatnot, Mr. Speaker.

But from the way we were so resourceful back at that time, and I sit and think about how even my household runs now. We're not as mindful. We use power much more. All of our devices require power and every person in my household has their own vehicle. And like I said, we don't walk where we could, you know, and we tend to use our vehicles often.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm one of those individuals that do make New Year's resolutions. I think it's really good to have goals and every year to have a goal on how you're going to improve your lifestyle and move forward. And those New Year's resolutions, I try to make them so that they're very attainable so I don't have to be one of those individuals who within a few weeks have broken it.

And one year I decided to make my New Year's resolution, was to be more mindful of waste in my house and find different ways on how to be resourceful with regards to that. And so I know I always was really regular with recycling my newspapers or recycling bottles and such, but I didn't think about all the waste that I was producing within my own home.

And so I started becoming a little bit more mindful of that, Mr. Speaker. And because I did that for a whole year — and every month I tried to focus on a different aspect — I'm hoping that that has improved what kind of waste that we have in our home and on an ongoing basis. And I hope that will have an impact on the environment if we continue to do this onwards, but I think we have a lot more to do with regards to that, Mr. Speaker.

And I was just on Facebook the other day, and on my news feed there was a post about how bad plastic is for our environment. And Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that I never really thought about it. Like I guess if you don't . . . You don't know what you don't know. Right, you know? And I have always been really used to using saran wrap or whatever to cover food, and I just talked about, you know, being more mindful about using your containers, your Tupperware containers or glass containers that you have, with regards to leftovers or your lunches. Or margarine containers as well — oftentimes those go in the garage and Darren uses them for his stuff that he has in his garage.

But the little suggestions they gave were really simple, you know, and I thought like, I just never really put a lot of thought into that. And so I think when we talk about reducing greenhouse gases and emissions, Mr. Speaker, I know that the things I'm talking about aren't on the scale of what potentially the federal government has been talking about and what we've been discussing. But if everybody does a little bit of that, everybody becomes a little bit more mindful, that could have a huge impact, Mr. Speaker.

And I think if someone who is in my level, where I'm doing a lot of this type of research, didn't know about that, I'm thinking how many people don't know about that, you know? And so I just wanted to share that, Mr. Speaker, because I think it's so important that we have these discussions. And we know, Mr. Speaker, that scientists all over the world have been saying for

years and years and years that we have to be more mindful about our environment and our carbon footprint. And so they've been advocating for this change, but they're now even saying that we don't have a lot of time to work on this and we've got to get moving on this because it's so very important.

And so we know that there's a lot of reduced costs if we put attention into improving our waste. We know there's a lot of reduced costs once we go into renewables, renewable energy or renewable resources. And it might take some investment, Mr. Speaker, and it definitely will, but it definitely will have a long-term impact and long-term savings.

And I went and I heard an individual talking about climate change and advocating for us to focus on climate change. And he indicated that he had solar panels on his house, and in the past three years he hasn't paid a single penny to SaskPower with regards to power bills. So I went home and I had that discussion with my partner, Darren, and said, like wow. I know the initial investment is a lot, but the long-term savings is so very important. And plus we have the solar energy. We have all these resources. Why are we not using them to the full capacity that we can, you know?

And potentially, maybe I don't have as much solar power as may potentially maybe he does because he's from the southern part of the province and I'm more so from the northern part, but even if it saves half of what we're spending in the long term, like I'm hoping to be on this earth for much more, many years, Mr. Speaker. And I know I'm sitting here being really mindful of what my environment's going to look like for my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren.

And so if we start investing this into our homes and providing this, using the environment that we already have to reduce how much emissions that we're producing, how wonderful would that be? Plus I would always like to save some money on some power bills or any kind of bills. I know I bought a car that is a bit more efficient because I want to save money on paying for gas, but in the long term it is also helping with the environment.

And so again, Mr. Speaker, it's about really being more mindful about that and having the information to make those decisions. And when I say that, you know, the importance of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and looking into climate change, we know that there's quite a bit of potential impacts to our economy and environment and our overall quality of life if we don't pay attention to this.

We're already seeing more frequent and severe droughts and floods. There's more risks of tornadoes and hailstorms, dust storms, insect infestations, and forest and wildfires, Mr. Speaker. And I think we've been seeing a lot more of that over the years, plus some areas are experiencing higher-than-average heat waves, you know, and so that's also having an impact.

If we don't address climate change we're going to see lower water levels in our rivers and lakes, and more dangerous floodings in other areas. And that's going to have a real impact of our environment, of where we live. And so these rapidly changing ecosystems are going to produce a loss of plants and are going to have a big impact on the animal species, Mr. Speaker, as well.

And so we already see that with the migrations of some animals. They're going more south because in the northern area we've had a lot of forest fires. So with regards to moose and elk and deer, they're more so coming to the southern part of the province, which is going to have a huge impact on some of the northern people. That is what they live off of, is the wildlife, and so it's so very important that we address this.

It also has a big impact on human health, Mr. Speaker. When I was doing some reading with regards to this, like, we know that pollution will have an impact on asthma or anyone who's having some issues with their breathing. But we also see that in areas that pollution is a little bit higher or they're having a lot more issues with regards to greenhouse gas emissions, we see that there's premature deaths. Again heart attacks are higher in those areas, and hospital admissions, and you can see an increase in missed school and work days. You know, so again this has an extreme amount of pressure on the economy with regards to that.

We know, Mr. Speaker, as well that there are some major challenges with regards to ensuring that we reduce the greenhouse gases within our province. We know that we rely on the coal and natural gas industry to produce the majority of our power. And so that's been a real challenge with our province when we talk about having legislation that's going to really have an impact on the reduction of greenhouse gases. But I know with some discussion with individuals who rely on the coal industry with regards to employment and jobs and stability, that they're feeling really at risk and worried about how they're going to have employment and how they're going to provide for their families. And so, Mr. Speaker, it's really important for us to also be mindful of that when we are working towards a way of moving forward so that we can have potentially renewable energy, or go a different direction. We've got to ensure that when we have this plan that we're taking care of these families and we're providing them an opportunity to still be employed and provide for their families. So that's something we need to ensure.

And like I said before, a big part of this will be about promoting and educating residents on how to reduce the carbon imprint. And when I talk about that, I mean like a meaningful difference with reducing and relying on power also, Mr. Speaker. And I think as a government, we have a responsibility to ensure that we can help individuals get to that point and have programs, so that when individuals want to potentially make their homes more energy efficient with regards to changing their furnace or air conditioners or water heaters or any appliances, or improving their doors or windows, and that we have potentially programs that individuals can apply for if they need some support with regards to that.

I know there was a program before. I'm not sure if it's still offered, but if you bought a programmable thermostat, you could ask for a rebate with regards to that. And we know that with having one of those programmable thermostats, that does make a big difference with making sure that you lower the amount of energy that you're using. So you could lower the temperature at night while you're sleeping or when you're away, and it would automatically do that, so that could save a lot on your energy consumption or lowering the temperature of your water heater as well.

I know in Prince Albert we have a really good system with

regards to recycling. We have a lot of programs there with recycling, and it's being really promoted by the city. I think that would be wonderful if we offered that throughout the whole province, maybe even expanding that, you know, and again, really promoting that residents utilize that so that we'll have less waste going into our landfills.

[14:45]

And so we could do a lot of these things, and as a government we could ensure that we have programs so that we can help residents, you know, improve with regards to reducing their energy consumption.

So when we talk about environmental protection, again like I said before, it's very compatible with economic growth, and environmental policies have delivered huge benefits to individuals. We look at different countries who might be doing a bit of a better job than we are with regards to this front, and you could see the huge benefits those countries are seeing with regards to the economic growth with environmental protection.

If you have well-designed policies that can reduce emissions, it will provide overall net benefits to public health, and it will also provide direct financial benefits to businesses and consumers. So people will see those benefits. But, Mr. Speaker, it's really important for us to have policies. Good policies are necessary to unlock these opportunities, Mr. Speaker. So again the solutions typically lie in improved efficiency and energy use, cleaner fuels, and new technologies and processes — solutions that often create net economic benefits.

So, Mr. Speaker, I really want to emphasize that: how important it is for us to get this right, you know, and our future depends on it. And we know that we want to make sure that this province is better for our grandkids, our great-grandkids, and everyone coming after that. So we have an opportunity here, Mr. Speaker. We can show some leadership on this issue and provide innovation to climate change or we could just be left behind other provinces while they develop solutions.

So, Mr. Speaker, on that note, that is about all that I wanted to put on the record with regards to my discussion with regards to this bill. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 132. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 132. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 133

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 133 — *The Legislative Assembly (Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2018/Loi modificative de 2018 sur l'Assemblée législative (dates d'élection)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into debate on Bill No. 133, *The Legislative Assembly (Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2018*. Of course, Mr. Speaker, what we have in front of us is the government's proposal for changing their fixed elections date legislation and presuming that the date of the next provincial election would be October the 26th, 2020.

Going back a few years, Mr. Speaker, when the Sask Party was first elected in 2007, I believe this was one of the first pieces of legislation that they undertook and with, to much fanfare, the need for fixed election dates . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, I think there are some others on the other side who would like to enter into this debate, and I'm sure they will get their chance at some point. Or maybe they're not being heard enough on their bench over there. But you know, we've got to have a little sympathy for that, those who have to resort to sitting and chirping from their seats.

Anyway, back to the bill. I will talk about this bill in front of us. There is the suggestion that somehow in all of the dates that are available to us, that this government needs to set the next election date for October the 26th, 2020. Of course, Mr. Speaker, going back to 2011, that would give them a total of nine years with two elections of governing in the province. So I guess you eke that out where you can. But that, to my math, Mr. Speaker, and I know they've been having some problems over there lately, is an extra year of governing without having to go to the people of the province.

So here is some of the issues that we have, Mr. Speaker, with that suggestion. First of all of course, Mr. Speaker, we are set to have a municipal election in 2016 as well, Mr. Speaker, in fact just a mere two weeks after this proposed election. I'm not sure if members opposite remember the last time we overlapped. Last election was the case with the federal election. By the end of the provincial campaign, I know there were certainly signs of voter fatigue out there, people who were a little bit frustrated with the number of calls that they were receiving perhaps, or the number of times that people were knocking on their door generally.

And I think we did see, we saw a reduction in the number of registered voters who actually voted. When we look at that number in 2016, the number was about 57 per cent, and that is down from 84 per cent in 1982, so nearly 30 per cent reduction, Mr. Speaker. And I think when we're looking at any legislation, certainly dates that are advantageous to certain folks and maybe add a few months to the mandate is one thing to look at.

But I think also the rate of voter turnout is a real problem in this province, not only the turnout with the provincial election, but the municipal election, Mr. Speaker. Last municipal election was a low point for voter turnout in the whole province. We saw a mere . . . numbers reaching around 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker, which is not a sign of a particularly healthy democracy.

And I think it's incumbent upon all of us, certainly here and at the municipal level, to be very curious about the reasons that people are not coming out to vote. I would, you know, I would like to hear from those voters who stayed home, you know. Was it voter fatigue? Was it a lack of engagement? Mr. Speaker, I certainly do fear that with having a municipal election a mere two weeks after a provincial election, that we might be courting even

lower numbers. And that would certainly be a very alarming number, if we were to fall under 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Of course as I said, in 2007 when this government was elected, one of their first bills was around the election dates, Mr. Speaker. The next election, and they did manage the next election in 2011 was exactly to the day four years after the election in 2007. But again April 2016 because of the federal election, there was an extra six months added on to that mandate. And again what is being proposed here is an extra six months from that October 2016 date of moving us all the way up to October 2020.

Not only is that adding six months, Mr. Speaker, that's adding six months to a government that has had a change in leadership, a government that has brought forth a number of items that they did not campaign on. The closure of STC comes to mind. The attempted closure of our provincial library system certainly comes to mind, Mr. Speaker. Cuts to education, this government did not campaign on the cuts to education. Loss of the rental housing supplement is another one.

Wascana Park, I know a lot of folks in Regina Lakeview would like to have a chance to register their concerns about what's being done to Wascana Park right now. But certainly were this bill to pass, they won't have that chance at the ballot box until 2020. Again that's another six months after we would expect, or six months rather, Mr. Speaker, after that four-year mandate.

Another thing with the municipal elections, you almost wonder if there wasn't such an almost ridiculous proposal put forward . . . I think at one time the government was proposing that the municipal elections be moved to 2021, which would give the municipal mandate politicians, elected officials, a five-year mandate, Mr. Speaker. And that's been in a real change. In 2009, up until 2009, we saw three-year terms for municipal elections. We saw a change in 2012 that moved those terms up to four years, Mr. Speaker. You could count four years and four years on a calendar and pretty easily arrive at 2016 when we saw the last municipal election, which again was under that four-year terms. And then to suggest bumping them up to five-year terms, Mr. Speaker, as we all know in this Assembly, there wasn't a lot of appetite for those five-year terms.

So instead of I think having a more robust and thoughtful discussion with the people of the province, Mr. Speaker, we have this proposed date of October the 26, 2020. Certainly it would've made sense at least to look at a June 2020 election that would just be slightly over the four months. And in the history of the province, half of our elections have happened in June, so this isn't something that would be without precedent and again would be closer to the stated goal of having four-year terms for governments in the province.

It would be interesting, and I look forward to further debate on this issue about, you know, exactly why October was chosen, what the anticipated impact is going to be on voter turnout, both at the provincial level and municipally. And again I've already registered my concerns that I fear there may be some detriment to both. One of the things that my colleague, the member for Regina Douglas Park, mentioned the other day, is not only are we dealing with election fatigue with Canadian elections, that there will be a US [United States] election at the same time. And I know talking to a number of people yesterday, there is a lot of

focus in Canada, even though it doesn't impact us directly right now, there is a lot of focus being placed on what's happening south of the border. And that will be in people's minds as well, and I think we have to count that as a factor when we're hopefully being concerned about voter fatigue and voter engagement.

What I'd love to see is, you know, some curiosity, some attempt to address those low rates of voter turnout and to look at increasing them. I'm afraid, as I've said here, that this is a measure that may just further dissuade people from the ballot box. I do hope that I'm wrong, sincerely I do, but I do fear that that wasn't given due consideration when this bill was being put together and now that we see it before us. Anyway I look forward to further discussion on this and further justification, but with that, I will conclude my remarks and adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 133. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 134

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding that **Bill No. 134 — *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, well, well, here we go again, Mr. Speaker. We are talking about *The Local Government Election Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker, in which this particular government decided, once again, to try and find ways to gerrymander the electoral process of the province of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I was sitting and explaining to my young granddaughter how politics works. She was a bit interested. It was part of her class. And she said to me one day, who is this gerrymander guy, grandpa? she said. I said, gerrymander is not a person, my girl. Well what is that? I often hear that in politics, she says. No, gerrymander is a process that conservatives use when they're in trouble. That's what they do. It's not a person. It's a process, my girl.

[15:00]

So I explained to her how, in 1991, Grant Devine was forced to call an election, Mr. Speaker, because he ran the province of Saskatchewan for a year and a half without even presenting a budget. And this of course, Mr. Speaker, is information I received from my very learned colleague, the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's really important to note that as you look at the process for electoral reform . . . And we often watch very carefully what the conservatives across the way do, Mr. Speaker. One of the things they do, Mr. Speaker, is they have voter suppression tactics. They go to the Republicans in the States and

they say, hey you guys, how do you do that over here? We want to do that in Saskatchewan too. So what happens is they make the voting process even harder for people to vote. So they come along and they put really tough stipulations in place to actually make it more difficult for people to vote.

An example I would use is the photo ID [identification], Mr. Speaker. We have on many occasions gone to an election booth and we have voted. And I was actually a candidate once and walked into a voting station and I said, I'm here to vote. And the clerk at the desk . . . I have shared this story once before, so please excuse me if you've heard this before. But the lady at the desk who used to work for me said, well I need to see your photo ID. I said, well I'm actually the candidate here, and you know me, so can I vote? No, I can't give you that unless I see your photo ID. So I had to reach in my wallet and give her my photo ID, Mr. Speaker, in order for me to vote. This is their Act. This is their bill, Mr. Speaker. This is their bill.

So I was thinking about an older gentleman in my particular community that walked through some pretty cold streets of Ile-a-la-Crosse and he went to vote. When he got there, Mr. Speaker — he walked several blocks — and when he got there he didn't take his photo ID with him and they told him, sorry, you cannot vote. And so the older guy went back home. He walked back home. And he'd had some trouble with gout, Mr. Speaker, so difficult for him to walk. He had no ride, but he walked to the polling station. And they said, sorry, you need your photo ID to vote. So this elderly guy got back onto the . . . left the building and went back to his home to get his photo ID, Mr. Speaker. And again, everybody in the room knows that this individual was the guy that was there to vote. They all knew who he was. And he had to go back and again he had to get his photo ID, come back, produce that ID, Mr. Speaker, and then and only then was he allowed to vote.

Now that, Mr. Speaker, was amendments brought in by that government, Mr. Speaker, and their intent is to suppress voting patterns, Mr. Speaker. As you look at some of the elderly people that don't have photo licence ID, Mr. Speaker, well tough luck for them. If you look at the people that may be new to Canada, the immigrant community, if they don't have their licence yet, they may not be able to vote, Mr. Speaker, since they have to have photo ID. Mr. Speaker, many of the Aboriginal people themselves do not have photo ID, Mr. Speaker, and many occasions they go to vote and they are not allowed to vote.

The intent of all of this process, Mr. Speaker, goes back to my granddaughter's point: who is gerrymander, Mr. Speaker? And we see it once again with the fixed election date. Once again the Saskatchewan party is gerrymandering the process. They have eked out an extra year of governing based on their last two four-year terms, Mr. Speaker. For whatever reason, Mr. Speaker, we will certainly find out what the purpose and what the plan is behind these dates.

So what did they do, Mr. Speaker? The NDP proposed that we have an election in June of 2020. And that's a reasonable time frame, Mr. Speaker, because the fall is when the municipal and school board elections would occur. And that's roughly a six-month separation between a provincial election and a local municipal and school board election. That makes sense, Mr. Speaker, because it's a good separation, and thereby it'll give

people exactly what we're trying to avoid with all these election processes: the relief from voter fatigue, Mr. Speaker. But no, while the NDP were proposing the June date, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party came along saying, no, we're not going to do that. We're going to actually have a two-week separation, Mr. Speaker. And that's a crying shame because the fact of the matter is, is that the whole process is to encourage voting, encourage people to come out and vote, Mr. Speaker. That's so very important.

We're seeing in the States today, it's Super Tuesday today. There's mid-term elections going on. And I was listening to the radio. I was travelling into Regina this morning, Mr. Speaker, and there was a lot of discussion on how we could encourage more and more people to vote. And, Mr. Speaker, the Republicans were famous for not letting people vote. They had all these tactics in place, and that's exactly the playbook that the Saskatchewan Party employed, Mr. Speaker.

And it all goes back to the Grant Devine days. And I shared with you the date of 1991 when they were forced to call an election, Mr. Speaker, despite a year and a half without a budget. Now the Saskatchewan Party's saying, oh, we're not Conservative. Oh yes you are, okay. Let's not try and kid ourselves.

Now because they are who they are, they can't help themselves, Mr. Speaker. They tried the process in the last election. I think it was April 2016 when they decided to call an election. Their former leader, Mr. Wall . . . well let's call an election before the budget because Grant Devine did this in 1991, but we'll call it before the budget because we don't want to tell the people of Saskatchewan the true financial shape that the province is in. We're not talking deficit, Mr. Speaker. We're talking debt here. And when you're looking at \$23 billion by the time this government's finished their work in the province of Saskatchewan, that's what they wanted to avoid, Mr. Speaker.

So again today we talk about *The Local Government Election Act*, Bill 134. We tell people it is important to understand why they do certain things. It's all about gerrymandering the political process. They've done it to us for years. They have really taken much of the playbook of the Republicans in the States to try and make sure that they continue thwarting democracy, Mr. Speaker. And that's one of the reasons why I think people need to pay attention to what exactly some of these bills, and the intent of some of these bills are meant to do, Mr. Speaker.

So I say to the people of Saskatchewan — the aged that don't have a photo ID; the new Saskatchewan people, the new Canadians, Mr. Speaker; the young people that don't have a licence yet but can indeed vote; the indigenous community; the many that don't have their licence or a proper photo ID — these are the people that can make a significant difference, and yet these are the people that I know that are being targeted for voter suppression tactics employed by the Saskatchewan Party, as they've learned from their American counterparts, the Republicans.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's really, really important to note there is a reason why they did not take the advice of many people — including the NDP — to, say, have the next provincial election in June of 2020. There's a good separation between the municipal elections. For the fall of 2020 . . . They got advice from SARM

[Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]. They got advice from SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association]. They got advice from SSBA.

And the Saskatchewan Party once again said, no, we're not taking any of that advice. We're going to do what we can to allow voter suppression to happen. And guess what? We're going to gerrymander the dates of this election again so we can try and eke out more and more support from the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I think people have had enough of that ridiculous practice. It's time that people get up and speak. And we encourage . . .

The Speaker: — Why is the Government House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — A point of order.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I've listened to the member opposite and I've heard accusations that this piece of legislation is basically using the word gerrymandering, which is saying that it's to manipulate the election, and making accusations that I think are unparliamentarily. And I would ask the member to apologize and withdraw them.

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

Mr. McCall: — With leave to respond to the point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Okay. Let's hear it.

Mr. McCall: — I've been paying somewhat close attention to my colleague's remarks, Mr. Speaker, and I would submit that, while he's certainly using tough language, I would submit that that language is well within the parliamentary traditions of this House, and that I would urge you to find his remarks to be in order. And hopefully he can return to his remarks to continue what is, I think, a fairly compelling speech on the work of this government.

The Speaker: — The member's remarks are certainly along an edge. I wouldn't say that they're well within parliamentary democracy in terms of language. You know full well — you've been here long enough — you know full well how far and how close you are to the line. Could you please just adjust your remarks slightly in order to reflect the impugning of members and government, please. Thank you.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The whole point I'm trying to make today is that it is important to get as many people to vote as possible, Mr. Speaker. It is very important. And governments throughout the world have always had the ability to do a number of . . . or to dig into their tool kit to try and do things like fixing election dates, voter suppression tactics . . . I'm just sharing with the people of Saskatchewan some of the issues that are an affront to democracy.

And the reason why this is important, Mr. Speaker, is because, as

I've said in the Assembly before, in several days from now we're going to be celebrating the Veterans Day. And, Mr. Speaker, my father was a World War II veteran, and I've often shared in the Assembly the incredible pride that I have as a young son in knowing that my father fought for our freedom.

And when I see a number of my family members that served in the military . . . My sister Donna served in the army. My older brother Wally served in the air force. My younger brother served in the army. My daughter almost joined the navy, went to the Bold Eagle program, and her mother stopped her. So I look at my uncle's service and my cousin's service, Mr. Speaker, my siblings, and they really went forward to serve their country because we have a good country, because we have a good system of democracy. That's why they went, Mr. Speaker.

And so when we see that kind of activity happening, it is really a disservice to all the people that fought for democracy. And that's my point today, that we should not go down that slippery slope of trying to follow what the Republicans are doing in the States, Mr. Speaker, because that is not what Saskatchewan is about.

And that's why I look at this particular date, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act*. There were solutions presented to this government, Mr. Speaker, to make sure there was good separation between the provincial election and the planned municipal and school board elections in the fall of 2020. And they disregarded that advice from SSBA, from SUMA, from SARM. They disregarded it because it was not in their intent to listen to the advice of those organizations, because they had an agenda at play, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to quote from the paper, Mr. Speaker, and this is an article about this particular matter. And this is certainly something that I think the people of Saskatchewan ought to hear. And the quote, it's an article by Murray Mandryk and the headline says, "Mandryk: Moe's October 2020 election date about the Saskatchewan Party — not the voters." And, Mr. Speaker, I say to them, enough of that practice. Enough of the manipulation. Give the people the opportunity to vote.

Let's get as many people to vote as possible. Let's make it the best turnout ever. Let's make it very convenient for the voters to come out and vote in great numbers, in great numbers. The new Canadians, the indigenous people, the elderly, the young people that don't have the photo ID, Mr. Speaker. Get them out to vote, and they will learn from that process on how they can make a difference in this world.

But as long as we have a tired, old government that practises the tired, same old routine, Mr. Speaker, it does a great disservice to this great province and the future of this very hall of democracy, Mr. Speaker. They are thwarting that possibility and the dream that we can have 80, 90, and even 100 per cent turnout of voters in the province of Saskatchewan. We can lead on this front, Mr. Speaker.

And we have much more to say on this particular matter. That's why I want to move that we adjourn debate on Bill 134.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 134. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 135

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding that **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*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, I think it's important that the people of Saskatchewan know that this particular bill, Bill 135, is actually attached to Bill 134 because obviously there are consequential parts of the legislation that are being impacted by the new dates elected by the Saskatchewan Party. I think it's important to note, as I've indicated time and time again, that the municipalities, that the school divisions . . . And certainly when I talk about the municipalities, I'm talking about SARM. I'm talking about SUMA as well.

[15:15]

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I was a fairly young man, younger than I am today, I was fortunate to be elected as the mayor of my home community of Ile-a-la-Crosse. And I've told many, many people that it wasn't hard work or vision, it's just that my dad and . . . We had a big family, so I was successful in winning that race. And the other gentleman that I ran against was a very, very fine man. He was a very good man. He had very good intention and he was certainly someone that I had a lot of respect for and I certainly admired in many ways.

But during the whole process, Mr. Speaker, the gentleman that was there before me had these dates set up, and they let the people know exactly what day that the municipality was going to hold their election. Because, Mr. Speaker, the government at the time gave the municipalities options of two or three days. They said, you can have it this day or you can have it that day or you can have it a third day. There was options given to the council. You could have an election earlier or you could have an election later. And what they did at the time is they opted for a later, or the middle-of-the-path day so people would know. And then, Mr. Speaker, this was done in accordance with the process that the town councils are guided upon, and that is having a consensus and a debate within the council. So at the end of the day, the council agreed on a certain set date for the municipal election.

And we knew four or five months before when this election was going to happen. And of course we got out and we worked very hard and we talked to all our friends and all the relations in the community. And we just managed to win because we had a larger family, as I indicated. It had nothing to do with brilliance or vision or hard work, Mr. Speaker. Just the luck of the draw.

So I think it's important to note that the process itself — this is what's really important — the process itself was not manipulated with. It was not gerrymandered for any specific purpose. It was

an agreement established by the council at the time. They all had broad consensus. They said, this will be the date. It'll ensure that we have enough time for debate. It'll ensure we have enough time for different people to come forward. We will announce the nomination close date. It was a great process. It was a democratic, principled process, Mr. Speaker.

Now when I joined provincial politics and I watched what happened in 1991, I watched what happened in 2016, now I'm seeing this legislation coming forward where there isn't separation that would make common sense, would make great, great sense despite all the advice. We see now what's happening with Bill 134 and Bill 135. And I say again to the people of Saskatchewan, it is a sham and it is a shame that all the advice given to this particular government, that they chose to ignore it and put their own political agenda in place.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan will speak on that day. Because once again we are going to tell the people exactly what the intent here is. And I think the people of Saskatchewan will frown on the fact that somehow this government eked out an extra year of governing without going back to the people of Saskatchewan. And that again, Mr. Speaker, is a crying shame.

So on that note I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 135, *The Local Government Election Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 135. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 136

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Harrison that **Bill No. 136** — *The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour as always to enter into having my remarks with regards to the bill debates here, and today with discussing Bill No. 136, *The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill hasn't been adjusted for a couple of decades. It looks like in 1999 this was put forward. So as always, I think it's important that we go through legislation that we have and ensure that it's accurate and up to date. And so it looks like this particular bill is being brought forward for that purpose.

We know, Mr. Speaker, how important the trades and the industry provide a lot of employment opportunities in this province, and we've seen first-hand the impact, that decisions made in this House have an impact on those industries, with especially the increase of the PST and eliminating the exemption and how that had a huge impact on employment within our province.

And so we have to be very mindful, when we're making decisions with regards to individuals in these particular employment job opportunities, that we make sure that the decisions we're making are done with regards to consultation with the stakeholders and making sure that they are well aware of it and that we get their information. And so it's really important, like always, when we make decisions in this House, that we consult stakeholders.

So, Mr. Speaker, we know that when individuals are getting training with regards to their trades, that apprenticeship is very important — that we know the individuals that are trained, they have specialized skill sets. And so the standardized training and industry standards are so important, you know, with regards to their apprenticeship. They learn from individuals on the field there the safety requirements with regards . . . It's one thing to learn through books but it's another thing to learn right from experienced individuals.

And I know with regards to my training, when I've done my practicums, I think that's where I learned the most, was doing front-line work and just getting right into it and having people who have the expertise sitting right there and being able to provide you that guidance. So that's why it's so important that we have these apprenticeship opportunities and the trades certification.

So it also provides the integrity of the service and it enhances the safety for not only the employee but also for Sask residents, because if we have people who are properly trained with regards to these trades then our facilities are going to be properly established so people will be more safe.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to talk a little bit about the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission. They have four main roles. One is to train apprentices, certify them, and also regulate and promote the field. So they hold a huge responsibility with regards to what they do with advancing the trade industry within our province. Again like I said, having these apprenticeship opportunities allows for learners to work in their field while they advance their skills, which is so very important. So the training happens on the job.

So some of the changes within this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, will be with regards to exactly how the commission will evaluate what services are being offered. And one of the . . . According to some of the minister's remarks here, one of the changes is work cessation orders that they're going to be implementing. And that'll be on projects from the four compulsory trades. And currently those four compulsory trades are construction electrician, plumber, sheet metal workers, and refrigeration and air conditioning mechanic.

And so with the changes to this legislation, this allows that when they evaluate one of the workplaces, if they see that an apprentice is not being supervised by an on-site journeyman, that they can enforce a work cessation order, Mr. Speaker. So this is something I believe that is going to be new in this piece of legislation, but according to the minister's remarks, it doesn't look like it's been an issue. So I'm not quite sure why this came about as being something that they felt was important. I know it's really important that we have 100 per cent compliance with regards to this legislation and workforces, but it seemed like that was

something that was deemed as being important to put in this legislation. So like I said prior to this, Mr. Speaker, I hope this is something that was consulted with stakeholders so that they could have a say with regards to this.

A few other things that I was looking and wondering with regards to . . . Since we are already making changes to this piece of legislation, I was wondering, is there an official registration that people in the public can easily be accessible with regards to finding out who is certified, the certified trades, subtrades, and occupations, and so when a person might be looking for having someone do some work with them, their home, if they could ensure that person is certified? So I think that would be something that's important to establish.

The website, also they talk about . . . When you look at the website from the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission, they describe the apprenticeship as a demand-driven system, but I didn't see too much information with regards to that description. So it will be important to have that defined on what they mean by demand-driven system. And it's really not clear too how this legislation is going to enforce a compulsory apprenticeship trade.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of information in this, and I think there's still a lot of discussion that needs to be had about this piece of legislation. Again I know how important it is to consult with stakeholders. I know the critic with regards to this portfolio, he will do his due diligence and ensure that he contacts stakeholders and has that discussion. And so I'm confident he'll have the research when he goes forward into committee with regards to the discussion. And I think there'll probably be a lengthy discussion with regards to some of the information that's being put forward with regards to this piece of legislation, at committee.

So that I can allow my other colleagues to add their points of discussion with regards to this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, I conclude my remarks and I move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 136, *The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 137. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion . . . 136. I would like to take her back. Bill No. 136. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 137

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 137 — *The SaskEnergy (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and enter into adjourned debates on Bill No. 137, *The SaskEnergy (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act, 2018*. I want to say

that this is my first opportunity to enter into adjourned debates since we came back in the fall here and apologize if I'm a little bit rusty as we move forward.

When we're talking about Bill No. 137, I see that the minister had a chance to engage in her second reading yesterday. And she highlighted a couple of different amendments, and we see that there are a couple of specific amendments that are being made in this Act. And she says there are two amendments to SaskEnergy's Act in this bill: section 24, which involves SaskEnergy gas distribution and transportation franchise; and section 42, which deals with an expansion of SaskEnergy's debt limit.

[15:30]

In the discussion about section 24, in the justification for the change here, she states that:

The change will establish a framework to allow SaskEnergy to continue to protect its distribution and transportation franchise while also supporting the innovation that will allow our energy sector to continue to play a vital role in our economy.

And further goes on to say, "The proposed amendments would allow the corporation to request a single order in council to approve a new program."

In talking about the second amendment, she spends a little bit less time talking about this amendment, and I'm probably going to spend a little bit more time talking about this amendment, Mr. Speaker. The second amendment in section 42 is to increase SaskEnergy's debt limit from \$1.7 billion to \$2.5 billion, which is a pretty substantial increase, Mr. Speaker. In talking about the justification here, the minister additionally highlights that SaskEnergy is projected to exceed its current debt limit by the 2021-2022 fiscal year and argues that increasing this limit will help them to be able to continue to meet demands into the future.

I was reading through this particular change here, Mr. Speaker, and looking at what some of these changes are. And I want to note that I definitely agree with what my colleague from Saskatoon Centre said, that you know, sometimes we're looking for a Trojan Horse, and in this case it seems that's there's one right in front of us, Mr. Speaker.

We're talking about a Crown being able to go into a lot more debt than it was in before. We're talking about the fact that the ratepayers will end up bearing the brunt of this, Mr. Speaker. We look at what our SaskEnergy bills are. We can be assured that those will be going up and that we'll be the people who are paying for it.

And we know that it's our job to be cautious about when we see this type of legislation, Mr. Speaker, on the opposition side, to be that voice and to be the oversight for this type of legislation when it comes forward. And that really is our job, is to raise these concerns.

And there's also questions that we can raise about accountability and transparency here when we talk about the changes to the order in council, so the fact that in the minister's office, or at

SaskEnergy, there's going to be approvals without that additional level of oversight. And it's concerning when we see this coming through our publicly owned Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. So I think it's worth noting that those are concerns that we have and putting those on the record.

I also had a look, Mr. Speaker, at the annual report for SaskEnergy for 2017-2018 and was looking through . . . It's quite a hefty report here; we're talking about 90, 95 pages. I was looking through to try and find a mention of the fact that this expansion of debt was required or that they were required to hold back on capital expenditures as a result of their inability to expand their debt. Didn't find anything of that sort, Mr. Speaker.

Of course there's a number of references to debt in the report, but in terms of the actual overhead discussion that takes place, it doesn't seem like this is something that's directly being called for by SaskEnergy. So I have additional questions as a result of that and think that I do have some further questions. And I know that our critic is going to be delving into this closely as well.

So the real question here is, why is SaskEnergy increasing its borrowing limit and why is this happening at this point in the fiscal year. We are definitely going to have more questions that we have in relation to Bill No. 137, but with that I'd like to move to adjourn debate on this particular piece of legislation today, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 137. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 138

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Kaeding that **Bill No. 138 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Enforcement Measures) Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my great honour to be able to rise today in the Assembly to enter into the adjourned debates. I note that it was seven years ago today that I got elected to represent the people of Saskatoon Nutana. So I can't believe seven years have gone by so quickly and I look forward to future years here, Mr. Speaker.

But here we are back at adjourned debates and today I'm talking a little bit about *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Enforcement Measures) Amendment Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly housekeeping-style bill. There are some changes being made to penalties and enforcement measures for a number of Acts that relate to public safety. So I'm just going to share with the Assembly the list of the Acts.

First of all we have *The Amusement Ride Safety Act, The Boiler and Pressure Vessel Act, The Electrical Licensing Act, The Fire*

Safety Act, The Gas Licensing Act, The Passenger and Freight Elevator Act, The Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan Act, and The Uniform Building and Accessibility Standards Act. So as you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, these eight pieces of legislation affect all aspects of our lives, and particularly, many aspects of safety in our lives.

And the Minister of Government Relations gave a fairly lengthy and hefty second reading speech on this bill, Mr. Speaker, and as a result, we got a very deep look into what's being intended here, which is appreciated. I think it's good to have those on the record and allow us to sort of try and understand. Still a few questions that I have, despite his fairly lengthy speech.

One of the things he said is the bill is supposed to be doing two things to deal with the realities of non-compliance. So apparently there are issues with compliance, and that should raise public concern, Mr. Speaker. Today we talked about the safety in relation to the roundabout in Balgonie, on the bypass and having semis stuck on it, backing traffic up, and having semi-truck drivers taking down barriers so they can get out of Balgonie. I mean those kinds of things are nightmares, Mr. Speaker, and scenarios that nobody in the public wants to see.

And I mean when you look at *The Amusement Ride Safety Act*, the last amusement ride I was on was in Saskatoon, down at Kinsmen Park, their really nice, brand new roller coaster, or not roller coaster . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Ferris wheel. Thank you. And I want to know when I get on that thing that I'm going to be safe. So obviously these kinds of bills are really important.

Boiler and pressure vessels, for anyone who has steam heat in their homes, or many, many industries in Saskatchewan have boiler and pressure vessels, so we don't want those to blow. As my colleague from Regina Elphinstone says, don't blow it, Mr. Speaker.

Electrical licensing, is the wiring safe? Yes, we want it to be. Fire safety, gas licensing — all those things that can be dangerous. We've seen the problems we've had with power meters, for example, Mr. Speaker, in homes here in Regina that are starting on fire, or things like that. So we want to make sure the inspection is being done properly.

But it worries me when the minister tells us that there's realities of non-compliance. So one of the first things he says is that by having these enforcement measures consistent across all the statutes, that will help with compliance. I'm not sure I understand how having similar language will cause people to comply more. But maybe that's some . . . I think it'll be easier for the officials to enforce because the language will be similar. But I'm not sure how that first statement will ensure more compliance with the law.

And we see a lot of troubles, even with the water security Act, something I'm more familiar with, where there are very definite penalties and procedures for non-compliance. But time and time again, Mr. Speaker, if there's anything I've received more calls on in the last seven years, it's about illegal drainage and people just taking backhoes and track hoes and shifting the water onto their neighbour. If we want to talk about trespass in this province, I think water is the biggest issue of trespass, and yet we have a government that seems unable or unwilling or unmotivated to

pursue compliance for that bill. So whether or not you make the penalties stiffer or whether you have uniform language, I don't think that actually guarantees that there will be more compliance.

One of the good things though I do see in this bill is an opportunity for the chief commissioners or chief inspectors to have alternative forms of penalty. Prosecution is one way, but now there's things like compliance orders, or they could even order someone to take additional training. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I think in many cases when wiring is done completely . . . if you watch *Holmes on Homes* on the home channel or whatever it's called, you will see just people that didn't really know what they were doing. So additional training might be indeed the best way to resolve the non-compliance issues.

So there's different things that are being brought in to allow more a consensual and collaborative option to resolve non-compliance issues. So it's less adversarial, I guess, in many ways, and perhaps that will help. People who are unsure, you know, but scared of being prosecuted, that may be . . . they might reach out a little bit more too and say, I'm not really sure if this is the right way to do it, and maybe you could help me out. Who knows?

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's a fairly lengthy bill, but it just sort of rinses and repeats for each of these eight Acts the type of performance and the compliance mechanisms. And in many ways it's just sort of streamlining it across the board, many technical- or housekeeping-type amendments too that we've seen in the past.

So at this point I think, you know, we're going to maybe have some questions. The minister talked about reaching out to potentially affected stakeholders and directly contacting them, and he talked about the responses received. But I would want to know in committee exactly how many responses were received because maybe they didn't get very many responses. So we would have more questions about that as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this point that is the extent of my comments in relation to this bill. I know that our critic will have many more once we have an opportunity to examine this with the officials, and certainly many of my colleagues will want to comment as well. So at this point I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 138, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Enforcement Measures) Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 138. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 139

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 139 — *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise again today to enter into debates on Bill No. 139, *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Amendment Act* of 2018.

Any time we have discussions about the rights of temporary foreign workers, I think we have to have a very close eye on these legislative changes. We know that these are very vulnerable persons who come to our country looking for opportunity and looking to find work, and that in many cases it's to the economic benefit of our country that these folks decide to make employment here. And we want to make sure that the contracts and the arrangements and the recruiting that takes place are all done in a way that respects the rights of those workers, which can often fall through the cracks, often have confusion about who they even work for, what their rights are. And we know that closely guarding the rights and the responsibilities in this case are of tremendous importance.

So this is something we are going to be looking very closely at because this type of oversight is extremely important. And the minister argues that this does protect the workers. He argues that the key amendment, in his second reading speech here:

The key amendment is to establish a new appeal process based on the principles of administrative fairness. All appeals will be heard by an independent, third-party adjudicator.

The amendments . . . in the bill are the result of a review conducted by the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety after it assumed responsibility for the administration of the Act in the 2017-18 budget.

So I'd be interested to see what that review looked like, who had an opportunity to provide input in that review, and what the results were, what the recommendations were, and whether those are being followed in this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

The minister also identifies that the Act, it was introduced to protect vulnerable workers, and that this amendment strengthens that Act. So that's what we want to ensure is happening as well. So we'll be looking to make sure that that is the case.

[15:45]

A couple of the changes that take place here . . . So this bill is amended to update the reference to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and other Acts that may be used in this type of regulation. It allows the sharing of information between government institutions for inspections, investigations, and enforcement of the Act, and changes the procedures on hearings and appeals.

Some of the pieces that have been changed . . . It's helpful to look at the explanatory notes in some of these cases. When we're talking about some quite substantial Acts that are being changed, it helps to sort of follow along with which sections are being changed and what the implications are of those sections and the rationale for those changes.

So there's about 13 pages of explanatory notes here, so I won't go through all of them, Mr. Speaker, but there's many references

to the appeals process being changed and the subsequent Saskatchewan employment Act being changed to make sure that it follows through with these regulations.

I see that section 34 is no longer necessary as the Act isn't co-administered by the former ministry of the Economy and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety. Section 35 has been amended to remove references to the "Director of Labour Standards" and "*The Labour Standards Act.*" Section 39.1 is added.

There's some other housekeeping amendments that take place here: "A new subsection (6) has been added to continue to allow the director to reconsider a matter and alter a decision if new information becomes available."

Section 49 is also new. For the folks who are following along at home, it establishes a list of independent adjudicators to hear appeals. And we have some more housekeeping amendments that take place, as well as clauses that have been amended to allow for regulations to be made respecting procedures for appeals.

So we think there should be more focus on violations of the Act, as opposed to strengthening the appeal process. We want to make sure that the recruiters of foreign workers are held accountable in these situations. We also want to make sure that there is a transparent recruiting process for foreign workers. You know, we see in the news quite frequently, Mr. Speaker, that temporary foreign workers become an easy target.

And I did a quick news search in preparation for my debate here today and found on Global News, March 7th, 2018 there's a headline: "Many temporary foreign workers still paying thousands of dollars to work in B.C.," says a report. So here this report found that folks are paying as much as \$8,000 to be able to work in the province. They're not clear on who their employees are. They're used to paying fees and there is a lack of clarity and transparency in the process, and this is the exact type of thing that we need to be protecting against. So we need a robust approach.

This particular news article suggests education for workers in terms of their legal rights as workers in Canada, creating user-friendly websites, and establishing a hotline that temporary foreign workers can use to be able to understand what their legal rights are. So I think these would be useful protections to be looking at when we're taking the opportunity to open up this Act, and that we should be really talking about a focus on the violations in addition to looking at this appeals process.

I know that the critic will have a lot more to say about Bill 139, but with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on this piece of legislation today.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 139. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 140

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Marit that **Bill No. 140 — *The Animal Health Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise again this afternoon and enter into debate on Bill No. 140, *The Animal Health Act*, 2018.

Mr. Speaker, this is a bill that pertains to animal health and the prevention, control, and eradication of diseases amongst animals, and certainly governs a very important industry within our province, and is a piece of legislation that has not been updated for quite a long time, Mr. Speaker.

I believe in the second reading comments by the minister that this bill was introduced in the '60s and last substantially updated in the '70s and perhaps the early '90s. So it is quite a significant change, Mr. Speaker. The previous Act totalled, I believe, five pages, and the new Act, the proposed bill is 37. So certainly much more robust in terms of prescriptions and definitions.

Just for example, Mr. Speaker, I will note the definition of disease. In the old Act, disease would in the . . . The 1966 bill refers to, disease means any condition that adversely affects the health of an animal. Certainly in this new proposed legislation, we see a much-expanded definition of disease. For the purpose of this new Act, disease means any condition, syndrome, or a group of characteristic symptoms, or behaviours that are generally recognized by the scientific community as resulting from a specific cause, for example, organism, poison, toxin, or other agent, or have some of the following characteristics: they cause an animal or animal by-products derived from a diseased animal to be unsafe for consumption.

So there's a notion in this new legislation of protection of not only the animals and the producer, but also of consumers. They are reasonably considered to pose a threat to the health or well-being of the affected animals or other animals, or the economic interest of the animal industry. They are reasonably considered to pose a threat to public health, or otherwise pose a threat to public health.

And then there's an expanded definition from there even, Mr. Speaker: has a condition or syndrome that exhibits a group of characteristic symptoms or behaviours whose cause cannot be identified. So this would be in the case of emerging pathogens or diseases, Mr. Speaker. A condition or syndrome that exhibits a group of characteristic symptoms or behaviours that are generally recognized by the scientific community as resulting, or likely resulting, from again an organism, poison, toxin, or other agent to which the animal has been exposed, and has residues that exceed the maximum limits set out pursuant to the *Food and Drugs Act*, so the Canadian, the federal legislation with regard to residue limits that might be contained in those animals.

Mr. Speaker, of course this type of legislation has huge impacts. One need only think of the BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] outbreak of 2003 that cost Canadian producers, between 2003-2004 alone, over \$5 billion. Three cases of BSE,

and almost immediately the border to the US was closed off, thus thwarting what used to be a million-head trade, now without market in Canada.

So these are important pieces of legislation that have far-reaching implications in this province, of course, but right across the country. And it's very important that we get it right, Mr. Speaker. So I think certainly the need is well established for more robust legislation. I know going back, the auditor back in 2017, I believe it was, had published an opinion urging better monitoring of animal diseases.

So whenever you see new legislation before us, I think it's a good practice to be a bit curious about why we're seeing this legislation now. Of course this is legislation that has been relatively untouched for decades. I suspect that the auditor's report was part of that. At that time the auditor had suggested that the ministry keep better records of livestock diseases and found that the ministry at that time wasn't always following its own protocol. So, Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is more stringent requirements contained in this new bill, and I do think that is likely a very good thing.

Currently in the province there are 14 diseases on the provincial notifiable disease list. The ministry maintains full response plans for three of these major . . . anthrax, rabies, and porcine endemic diarrhea. So I believe under the new legislation that the notification or the designation of those diseases moves from the hands of the minister and into the hands of the chief veterinary officer for the province. Certainly we are well served there, Mr. Speaker. Dr. Althouse is a widely known and renowned veterinary medicine officer both in this province and in the country. I believe she won a public service award earlier this year, and well deserved, Mr. Speaker.

So some of those decisions have been moved, not only for the sake of expediency, to be able to respond more quickly to threats as they emerge in the field. Not only within different livestock operations in the province but also as the science emerges, I think that the chief veterinary officer is likely in a very good position to be on top of that type of updated knowledge and be more responsive. So that does seem to be a positive development with regard to this legislation.

There's some other pieces to this bill again. It's expanding by over 30 pages, includes a clause on the licensing of people or establishments that sell veterinary drugs. So increased regulation of veterinary drugs, Mr. Speaker, which I think does seem to be something that is worth pursuing. It repeals again the former bill, *The Diseases of Animals Act*, that five-page bill, and replaces it with this larger piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of pieces that the minister mentioned when he was introducing this bill back on November the 5th. "It assigns the authority to prevent, control, and respond to animal disease outbreaks to [again as I mentioned] the . . . chief veterinary officer, rather than the Minister of Agriculture," allowing more quick and swift action and aligning us with other jurisdictions. So it appears that other jurisdictions have updated their legislation with regard to animal disease.

As I mentioned previously, it allows the chief veterinary officer ". . . the authority to add or remove a disease from the list of

provincially notifiable diseases." I think there's also provision for those to be prescribed in regulations, leaving some of that authority with the minister.

There's also a new . . . dealing with the "emerging issues such as antimicrobial resistance," certainly something that we see as a big problem within the health care system, also a problem within livestock. When we have the prescription of antimicrobials, we also see resistance build up in livestock. So it allows some updating of the legislation that way.

I believe that the minister noted that the former fines for contravention of the legislation were capped at \$500, hardly more than a speeding ticket. I don't know what kind of speeding ticket that is, but certainly a large speeding ticket. The new penalties move up to a maximum of 25,000 and the maximum term of imprisonment has moved from six months to a year. So certainly increasing those penalties to reflect current dollars and also the potential seriousness of contravention of this legislation.

[16:00]

I always like to ask about who the minister had consulted with, who the ministry had consulted with. There is an indication from the minister that there were consultations held with SARM, with APAS [Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan], the Ministry of Health, and Environment, as well as the colleges at the University of Saskatchewan. And certainly in Saskatchewan we're blessed to have such an institution as the College of Veterinary Medicine up in Saskatoon, really world leaders in many ways on many of these issues around livestock detection, disease, prevention, and treatment. So I know that the minister would be well served by consulting with the folks up at the college.

I know that our new critic, my colleague from Regina Northeast, will have a lot of additional questions for the minister on this bill, but I think I've come to the end of my remarks here. And with that, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 140.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 140. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Assembly be now adjourned. It is the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly now stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:02.]

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Minister of Justice and Attorney General
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Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
Workers' Compensation Board
Minister Responsible for The Global
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Hon. Christine Tell
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister of Education
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds and
Priority Saskatchewan