



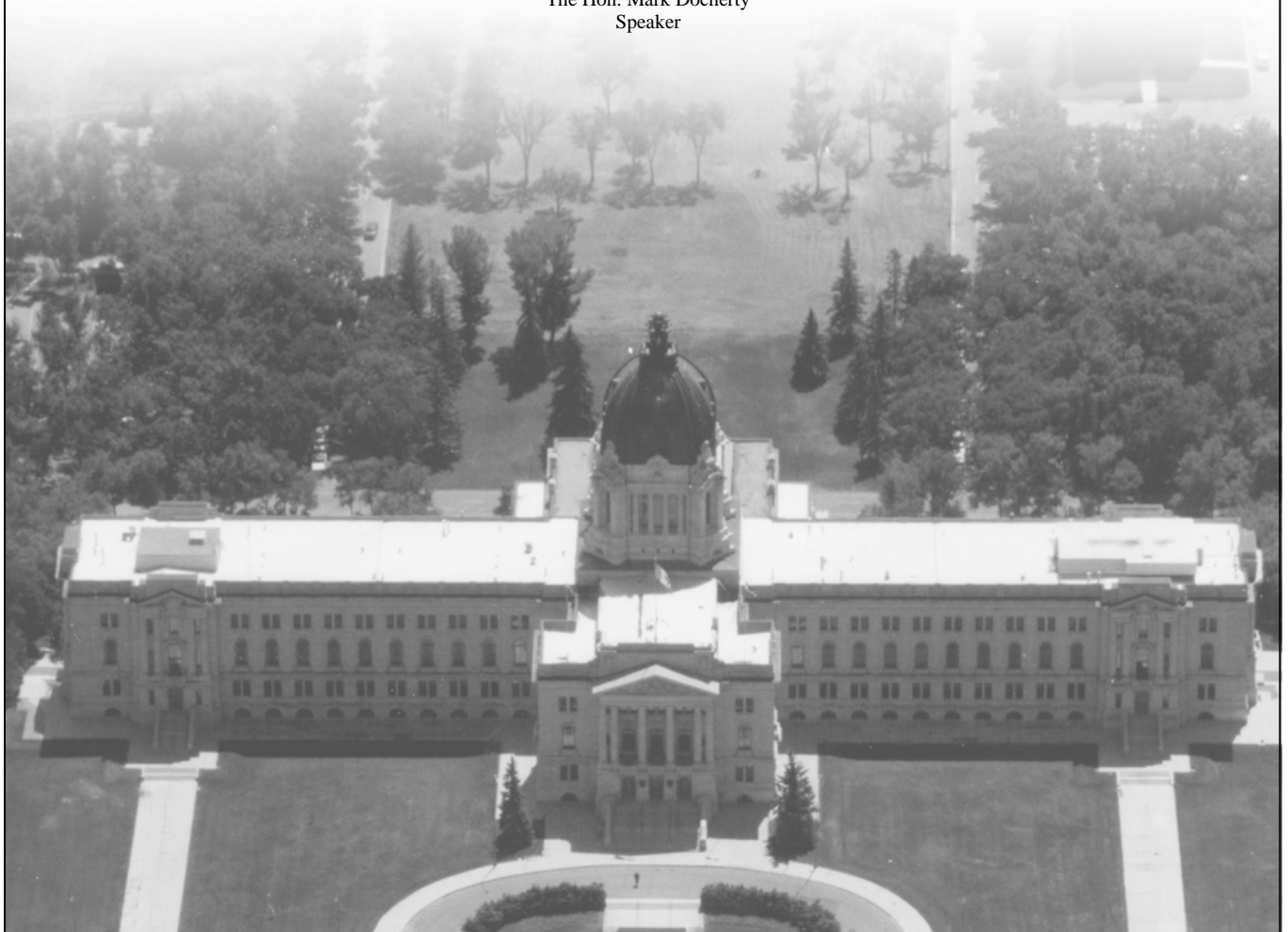
THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the Chamber, I'd like to introduce a young entrepreneur who's visiting the Assembly today. Miguel Catellier is in the gallery. And also joining Miguel is Derek Robinson. Many on this side certainly have a pretty good idea of the great work that Derek does for sure with us.

But Miguel was recently recognized by CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] as the 2018 Future 40 winner, Mr. Speaker. Miguel is the founder of two different companies, TruGreen Metal Recycling and TruGreen Energy, based out of Emerald Park. I'm going to have much more to say about Miguel and the companies that he has in members' statements, but right now, Mr. Speaker, I'd like all members to join me in welcoming both Miguel and Derek to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to join briefly with the member to introduce these very impressive young entrepreneurs to their Assembly, Miguel and Derek. Thank you so much for being here today. And both of these are impressive entrepreneurs. It was interesting. I learned more about Miguel here recently, and it's really an amazing company that you've been growing. So the future looks bright with entrepreneurs like this in our province, and on behalf of the official opposition we offer a warm welcome.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with great pleasure I introduce three individuals in your gallery, family members in fact. One of them actually gave birth to me about 55 years ago. My mom, Pat, is up in the Assembly. Pat Ottenbreit currently resides in Regina; as well two of my cousins, Denise Exner and Celine Ottenbreit, formerly of Grayson and now residing in Regina as well. So I ask all members to welcome my family members to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Up in the far gallery today we have some students from one of the schools in my constituency, École Massey. We have 26 grade 6 and 7 students, Mr. Speaker. They're accompanied by their teacher, Cassie Clement. I'm really looking forward to spending some time with you following question period today for a picture and really, I'm sure, what will be an engaging discussion. Could everyone join me in welcoming these students

to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education in welcoming these students, but in particular one of them is Graydon McGovern, who is attending the proceedings for the first time with his teacher, Madame Clement. He enjoys science and history, baseball, swimming, and this year has started playing the bassoon in the band.

But more significantly, Mr. Speaker, he is the son of Darcy McGovern, who is one of the Ministry of Justice lawyers and has done a remarkable job for many years in preparing documents and everything else, and is somebody that I think is regarded as a competent professional as are many of the people — all of the people — working in our civil service. So I would like to use this as an opportunity to thank all of our civil servants and to recognize Graydon and welcome him to his legislature today.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of the legislature I'd like to introduce a dozen grade 5 and 6 students from École Ducharme in Moose Jaw today, our French school. They did ask me a couple of questions in French that I struggled through, but we made do. Along with their teacher, Madame Marie-Chantal Poulin, as well as Ms. Nicole Cochrane, who happens to be Minister of Social Services' wife's cousin. So I'd like to welcome them to their legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the job-killing, Trudeau-pushing carbon tax that will cost every producer, agriculture producer, every businessman, and every individual in this province money.

I will 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.

This petition is signed by the good citizens from the town of Davidson and Bladworth. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present a petition on behalf of concerned residents, businesses all across our province as it relates to the hike and the expansion of the PST [provincial sales tax] onto construction labour. This quite simply is the epitome of a job-killing tax at a

time where we need nothing more than jobs and investment, Mr. Speaker. It's devastating businesses across our province. We see permits down all across our province, and it's forced job loss impacting so many and forced many to leave our province, Mr. Speaker.

And the prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions are signed by concerned residents from Regina and Yorkton. 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 for a public inquiry into the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal. The people who have signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: the Sask Party has refused to come clean on the GTH land deal, a deal where Sask Party insiders made millions flipping land and taxpayers lost millions; the Sask Party continues to block key witnesses from providing testimony about the land deal; and it is Saskatchewan people who footed the bill for the GTH land deal and deserve nothing less than the truth.

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 to stop hiding behind partisan excuses and immediately call for a judicial inquiry and a forensic audit into the GTH land deal.

And, Mr. Speaker, the individuals who have signed this petition today are from the good city of Moose Jaw. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the concerned residents of the province of Saskatchewan want to bring to your attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals — even those living outside Saskatchewan — to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties. And we know that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics. But, Mr. Speaker, over the past 10 years the Sask Party has collected \$12.61 million in corporate donations, and of that, 2.87 million came from companies outside Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatoon, and Cowessess. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for pharmacare for Saskatchewan. These citizens wish to bring to our attention that Canada is the only country with a universal health care system that doesn't include prescription drug coverage, and this oversight results in unnecessary illness and suffering and costs us billions; that over 90 per cent of Canadians agree that we need a national pharmacare program, which makes sense as one in five Canadians don't fill necessary prescriptions because the medication costs too much; and when we cover essential medications we improve people's quality of life and save millions in downstream costs.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to immediately support the establishment of universal pharmacare for Saskatchewan people and advocate for national pharmacare for all Canadians.

The people signing this petition come from Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling for a restoration of public control over Wascana Park. Mr. Speaker, the petitioners point out that Wascana Park is a treasured urban park and conservation area that had been responsibly managed through an equitable partnership between the city of Regina, the provincial government, and the University of Regina for more than 50 years until the province unilaterally gave itself majority control of the board of the Provincial Capital Commission through the changes brought on by Bill 50, *The Provincial Capital Commission Act* in 2017.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people concerned about the well-being of the park. They want this Sask Party government to get their mitts off the park. And:

In the prayer that reads as follows, the petitioners respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the government to restore the

governance structure of the Wascana Centre Authority and end the commercialization of Wascana Park.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by good citizens in the fair city of Regina. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Law Firm Wins National Pro Bono Award

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am honoured to rise today to recognize the team at Norsasklaw in North Battleford. At the recent National Pro Bono Conference in Vancouver, BC [British Columbia], Norsasklaw of North Battleford won the Canadian National Pro Bono Firm Award. This award recognizes a Canadian law firm that has made an outstanding contribution to the provision of pro bono services. Norsasklaw was able to beat out some steep competition against many law firms across Canada and internationally.

Norsasklaw is made up of three lawyers, owner Richard Gibbons, Robert Feist, and Benedict Feist. Since 2015 Norsasklaw has dedicated a large portion of their lawyers' time and attention to participate in the North Battleford Free Legal Clinic and provide additional time to take on full representation of files. Norsasklaw currently makes up approximately 80 per cent of the volunteer pool in the North Battleford area. The team at Norsasklaw has shown itself to be a crucial part in creating a more accessible justice system in North Battleford and surrounding area.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Norsasklaw for their commitment to improving access to justice in Saskatchewan.

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

Campaign Spotlights Struggles of Women and Children

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the House today to bring awareness to Unite to End Violence against Women and Girls orange campaign, and our government's continued support of such a great cause. This year, Mr. Speaker, the campaign begins November 25th. This campaign will span 16 days and it will conclude on December 10th, which is international Human Rights Day.

The orange colour has been chosen for this campaign meant to symbolize a bright future. Everyone is encouraged to wear something orange throughout the 16 days of this campaign. Business and Professional Women of Saskatoon has partnered with Grandmothers Advocacy Network in Saskatoon to start a conversation and to shine a spotlight on the struggles of women and children affected by violence and abuse, both locally and internationally.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, violence and abuse against anyone is appalling and needs to be addressed. This campaign has started that

much-needed conversation. I encourage all members to show support for such a meaningful and well-worth-it campaign. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre Celebrates 50th Anniversary

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre on its 50th anniversary. Celebrations were held this past Thursday, and I was pleased to be able to attend the evening program.

The Friendship Centre has had a long and successful history of working with and for Métis and First Nations citizens of Saskatoon. They provide recreational and cultural programming and social services for people of all ages.

Colleen Whitedeer, the SIMFC [Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre] Chair, remarked, "Whether it was access to a telephone, a hot meal, or learning how to dance traditional powwow, we have made a difference and will continue to do so." Sandra Youngchief, executive director, said, "The centre's come a long way since it first opened its doors in 1968, and we are proud of the journey." Senator Elder Nora Cummings, the only surviving member from the early days, was present, as well as May Henderson, long-time executive director. Both helped so much along the way.

A beautiful wall mural and the naming of the Paul Koo Gymnasium was the highlight of the evening, in recognition of Paul Koo, an employee of nearly 40 years. Mr. Speaker, in marking the friendship centre's 50th anniversary, 50 painted lady butterflies were released by children and elders in Saskatoon's Reconciliation Park on National Indigenous Peoples Day, June 21st.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in congratulating the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre on reaching this remarkable milestone of 50 years of service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Young Business Owner Reflects Province's Entrepreneurial Spirit

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to have such a young and driven entrepreneur here in the Legislative Assembly today. Miguel Catellier is only 29 years old and has accomplished so much already in his young life. From a young age, Miguel was ambitious and always knew he wanted to create something new. So he set out to teach himself all the ins and outs of business by reading hundreds of books on business.

Miguel started his business venture in the networking market world, and by the age of 25 he had founded TruGreen Metal Recycling. TruGreen Metal Recycling is a mobile metal recycling company which focuses primarily on cleaning up industrial metal recycling projects, as well as obsolete farm

equipment. Since 2015, the company has recycled over 200 million pounds of steel product in both Saskatchewan and Alberta.

But Miguel didn't stop there. He also was the founder of TruGreen Energy, a full-service solar energy engineering, procurement, and construction company serving the people of Saskatchewan. Not only do Miguel's companies put millions of dollars back into Saskatchewan's economy every year, but they also provide around 40 full-time jobs for Saskatchewan people. It's incredible the contribution that Miguel has made to this province already, and that's why he was recognized by CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] Saskatchewan as a 2018 Future 40 winner.

Miguel's story reflects the great entrepreneurial spirit here in this province. We are lucky to have him here. Thank you.

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

Government Support for the Manufacturing Sector

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand to announce that our government has proclaimed this week as Saskatchewan Manufacturing Week. This proclaimed week provides the opportunity to highlight the economic significance of the sector to Saskatchewan and to showcase the success achieved by businesses and communities.

Manufacturing plays a key role in Saskatchewan, making up 7 per cent of the provincial GDP [gross domestic product]. Our manufacturing shipments have increased by 54 per cent between 2007 and 2017, totalling 16 billion last year alone. The sector employs about 28,000 people who work across the province, manufacturing products from the agriculture, oil and gas, mining, and technology sectors. Saskatchewan manufacturers have achieved many world firsts in everything from satellite communications technology and dryland farming equipment to inroad scales for the trucking industry.

Mr. Speaker, our government continues to support this sector through initiatives that offer competitive advantages such as a corporate income tax as low as 10 per cent on manufacturing and processing exporter and processing profits; the Saskatchewan commercial innovation incentive, which is the first patent-box style incentive of its kind in North America; manufacturing and processing exporter hiring tax incentives; and provincial tax exemptions for eligible machinery, equipment, and materials.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing Saskatchewan manufacturing. Thank you.

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

Saskatchewan Film Week

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week, communities across the province came together to celebrate the 2018 Saskatchewan Film Week, which was held from November 17th to the 23rd. It was a great chance to celebrate the industry, as well as provide an opportunity for learning, exploration, and

personal development. This year, Saskatchewan Film Week was hosted by the Saskatchewan Media Production Industry Association in collaboration with other Saskatchewan-based film and art associations. The celebrations kicked off with industry workshops which were held in Saskatoon and Regina throughout the week. This was an excellent opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to showcase the industry that contributes so greatly to the culture in our province.

I'd like to recognize a few of the winners who took home hardware from the Saskatchewan Independent Film Awards held by the Saskatchewan Film Pool Co-operative on Friday night, including *Beta Test*, a film by Joel Makar and Kenton Evenson; and *SuperGrid*, directed by Lowell Dean, which took home Best Feature Film.

The Government of Saskatchewan is proud to support the Film Pool through funding from the Saskatchewan Arts Board and SaskCulture. I'd like to recognize and thank everybody involved in planning this year's film week, as well as congratulate Friday night's winners on their accomplishments and recognitions. Because of your hard work, the film community has an exciting week with lots of events to look forward to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Police and Crisis Team Launch in Moose Jaw

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Two weeks ago I attended a launch event for a new police and crisis team in my home community of Moose Jaw, along with the Minister of Corrections and Policing. Mr. Speaker, the police and crisis team, or PACT, pairs mental health workers with police officers so they can better respond to people in mental health crisis situations. The goal is to diffuse these situations, avoiding emergency visits as well as entry into the criminal justice system.

Mr. Speaker, we have already seen great success with PACTs in Saskatoon and Regina. From April 2017 to September 2018, the Saskatoon team responded to 1,183 calls, 287 of which avoided an emergency department visit. Over the same period, the Regina team responded to 1,039 calls, 261 of which avoided an emergency department visit.

Mr. Speaker, bringing this innovative approach to Moose Jaw wouldn't be possible without the hard work and dedication of the Moose Jaw Police Service and the Saskatchewan Health Authority. The Moose Jaw police and crisis team has already responded to 35 calls in its first 15 working days.

I would like to say a special thank you to the Moose Jaw team for everything they're doing in my hometown, keeping us safe while caring for our most vulnerable. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Review of Vendor-Sponsored Travel

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When a problem arises,

a responsible leader takes ownership and gets to the bottom of the issue. When it comes to how this government is responding to the vendor-sponsored travel scandal, we get evasion and a different answer every time we ask.

Though they stopped pretending it's just fine or that it never happens, this government's new line just won't cut it. The Premier's only committed to releasing what travel was, and I quote, "... in violation of the government policy."

That kind of careful language is all about hiding behind ambiguous choices of words. It's about avoiding responsibility. It's about a review designed to find what we've heard so many times from this government — no conflict of interest, no wrongdoing, not rampant, not criminal in nature. Nothing to see here because we didn't look.

Will the Sask Party stop averting its eyes and commit to reviewing and releasing the full list of vendor-sponsored travel across all Crowns, ministries, and agencies?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've made it painfully clear that the deputy minister to the Premier will be conducting a review on vendor-sponsored travel across executive government, Mr. Speaker. And he'll report back on vendor-sponsored travel, and to the extent that that violates the policy of the government, Mr. Speaker, then that will be reported.

We're not going to prejudge the work that the deputy to the Premier is doing, Mr. Speaker — will certainly inform the next steps of this government — but we're going to let him do his work, and once that work is done, Mr. Speaker, we're happy to report back.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's worth noting that the Sask Party members weren't always satisfied with the notion that an investigation by the Premier's deputy minister into government mismanagement would be sufficient. A 2003 article from the *StarPhoenix* quoted Brad Wall, saying "... Brad Wall said a judge should be appointed to head up the probe. He said it's not appropriate for the premier's office to investigate ..."

The Sask Party complained then. They complained then that a more independent review was needed, but ironically they now think that level of oversight is just fine, Mr. Speaker. It's like the member for Martensville-Warman asking about the perils of vendor-sponsored travel at SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] years ago, but now being part of a government that's not willing to get to the bottom of what's really happening.

Mr. Speaker, to be clear, just to be clear, we don't mind the deputy minister looking into this. What we do mind is the idea that he would be the one who judges the validity of the question. That, Mr. Speaker, is up to a fully informed public, Mr. Speaker ...

[Interjections]

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

Mr. Meili: — I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that, Mr. Speaker, because by determining the scope of this investigation, this government is determining the answer. And so I'm asking the Deputy Premier if he will make it clear that the scope of this includes reviewing and releasing all vendor-sponsored travel, not just that which this government deems was not okay.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — The deputy to the Premier, Mr. Speaker, is the head of the public service. I can't think of a better individual to do the review on whether or not there's been any violations of policy by members of the public service, Mr. Speaker. These are dedicated individuals, Mr. Speaker, individuals who have great respect for the rules. And in the off chance that there's a violation — and we've seen this, Mr. Speaker — there's significant consequences that flow to anyone that violates that policy.

We have full faith and confidence in the deputy to the Premier to do the investigation as the head of the public service, Mr. Speaker, and we'll look forward to his report. We're not going to prejudge it, as I've said, Mr. Speaker. But we're going to wait for his report, and that report, to the extent that there's any violations of policy, Mr. Speaker, that will inform the next decisions that the government needs to make.

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

Provincial Economy and Minimum Wage

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do want to clarify that that investigation, or those questions about SLGA were from the previous member for Martensville-Warman and I apologize for any lack of clarity there.

Mr. Speaker, last week we heard from the Minister of Social Services that "any concern from poverty is real within Saskatchewan," Mr. Speaker. His recognition that people are struggling, and struggling in a time that our economy is struggling, is a remarkable and refreshing departure from the usual line of a government that doubles down on denials and distractions, that refuses to admit that everything is not just fine in our economy. This government has doubled our debt, doubled the PST, all while Alberta's economy grows at double the pace.

Mr. Speaker, the austerity approach of this government has left Saskatchewan people with fewer services, higher costs, and a sluggish economy. Will the Premier join the Social Services minister, admit that his government is failing Saskatchewan people in need, and tell us the plan to correct the course for our economy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has been very reluctant lately to talk about the economy and I think I know why, Mr. Speaker. The last jobs report showed 9,400 jobs created in this province, Mr. Speaker, the largest job gain since 2014. The urban housing starts increased by 19.4 per cent in

October 2018, ranking second in growth in the entire country, Mr. Speaker. In September 2018, wholesale trade increased by over 11.4 per cent, second in percentage terms amongst the provinces. In September 2018, the value of building permits in Saskatchewan increased 19.6 per cent — third amongst the provinces, Mr. Speaker.

And I can also tell you how this province will continue to move forward. That will be with a pipeline being constructed, Mr. Speaker, a carbon tax not being imposed on this province. We would encourage the members opposite to support a pipeline being built. They refuse to do so, Mr. Speaker. And also to say no to Justin Trudeau's carbon tax rather than being his biggest cheerleader.

[14:00]

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Facts are facts. Statistics Canada shows that our province's GDP growth is the worst outside Atlantic Canada. Alongside our growing debt, that poses a risk to our future growth and it poses real risks to our people. It has resulted already in rising social costs, Mr. Speaker. More children are being apprehended. More people are living in poverty. And the minister boasts about spending more . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Sorry, I'm having a difficult time hearing. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Under this government, more children are being apprehended. More people are living in poverty, and the minister boasts about spending more on income supports than ever before.

We know that the best way for people to leave poverty is to enter the workforce. But with our rock-bottom minimum wage, people find themselves facing a terrible decision, having to decide between scraping by on social assistance or scraping by on poverty wages. This makes life harder for those in need and costs us all more in health, in justice, and in social services.

My question, Mr. Speaker: do the so-called fiscal conservatives across the aisle actually prefer that people stay on social assistance rather than being able to work for a living, or will they step up and support our bill to phase in a \$15 minimum wage?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, we know what their policy would do, which is kill jobs. We know what their record on jobs is, which was the worst in the country, Mr. Speaker. We also know what our record is on jobs. The second-best rate of job creation in the entirety of Canada over the course of the last decade. The number one job rate growth over the course of the last month since we've had since 2014 — 9,400 jobs created. I actually agree with the member opposite that the best way for those to move forward economically is by engaging in the labour market. And we've been tremendously successful on this side of the House over the course of the last decade, and recently, Mr. Speaker.

And that member wants to talk about the economy. Mr. Speaker, that member has no credibility on the economy — zero. And his own party supporters know it, Mr. Speaker, half of whom would vote, who think that this side of the House does a better job in managing the economy than they would.

We also know of their tiny handful of economic policies that they put in the window. What are those, Mr. Speaker? Raise royalties; chase out companies that are creating jobs in this province; support a carbon tax; oppose pipelines. That is the wrong prescription for this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Use of Land at Global Transportation Hub

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear that Bill Boyd and Laurie Pushor didn't do their homework when they were closing the deal for the east parcels at the GTH. It turns out that that land was an even worse deal than we previously thought.

And they weren't the only ones who didn't do their homework. Last week I asked the minister about a new report from a forensic appraiser that notes 14 acres of the east parcels land cannot be developed because pipelines are under the surface. And the minister told this House, "There is nothing new with that article." Well minutes later the minister told reporters he hadn't even read the report.

So here's the Coles Notes, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan people seem to be on the hook for \$1.4 million for several acres on the east parcels that can't be developed and that no one in their right mind would buy. So is the minister now up to speed? Exactly how much land at the GTH cannot be developed, and can he explain why the Sask Party paid \$103,000 per acre for that land that no one can develop?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, for the benefit of the members opposite, our province is in the energy business. We have pipelines going throughout the province in a number of different places. Mr. Speaker, the pipelines that they're referring to are on all the maps. Anybody that looks at the maps, they see the lines going across. Anybody that's a developer would certainly look at that, Mr. Speaker.

There are in fact four pipelines running through the east lands described. Two of them are Kinder Morgan pipelines. One is a Spectra Energy pipeline, which runs parallel and diagonal from the northwest as it . . . And the remaining pipeline is owned by TransGas and runs from northwest to southeast.

Mr. Speaker, there are pipelines running underneath land all across the province. Mr. Speaker, there are setbacks; there are buffer zones. Mr. Speaker, appraisals have been done. People have looked at the land since and that has never been an issue. It's shown on all the maps, even on the maps that were used and are on the CBC website when they're talking about Brightenview, Mr. Speaker. That's what the business of our province is, is energy.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Without even having read the report, the minister tried to sweep the findings under the rug. But here's the thing: the auditor did not canvass the fact that 14 acres of those east parcels were unusable as the minister has suggested.

These findings have a direct impact on public dollars. You can graze cattle or grow canola over top of pipelines, but the GTH minister might have trouble convincing anyone to purchase those 14 acres to build a megamall or an imaginary head office for Brad corp.

This government is bending over backwards to deny Saskatchewan people the answers they deserve. Considering new details emerge every week and the minister himself doesn't appear to know what is going on, will this government finally, today, call a judicial inquiry into the land acquisition at the GTH?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have municipal reserve. We have setbacks. There are a variety of different ways that people work in and around pipelines. It's part of our province's history. And, Mr. Speaker, I've got an example. White City, which is just to the east of Regina, has got in fact five Enbridge pipelines that deliver varying amounts underneath it. Mr. Speaker, those pipelines deliver, on a daily basis . . . have a maximum capacity of 2 million barrels per day. That's what goes under White City, and we don't see the mayor of White City or anybody else from White City coming out and saying, we can't live here. We can't build here. We can't develop.

You can build roads. You can build parking lots. There's a variety of things you can do on top of them. You may not build a building under it; you build the building next to it, Mr. Speaker. That's how things are done. A large development such as there is at GTH is bound to have some pipelines underneath it. No surprise here, Mr. Speaker.

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

Review of Library System

Ms. Beck: — On Thursday I received a letter from the Minister of Education that asked me to share with him information that I was given regarding the ministry's behind-closed-doors library engagement panel. Now I appreciate irony, Mr. Speaker, as much as anyone else. And I know that the best way to promote good behaviour is to model it, so I gladly did so.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think that it's only fair that the minister does the same. Will the minister share with the public the questions that the library engagement panel is asking? And since not one but two sets of minutes are being taken at these meetings with stakeholders, will the minister commit to sharing those minutes with the public?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, last week in question period, the member asked me a question attributing to the panel work that's being done by the Legislative Secretary, the member from Canora-Pelly, with regard to committing to maintaining head

offices, Mr. Speaker, with respect within the library system.

Now she well knows I sent her a letter, Mr. Speaker, advising her that that was not a question — notwithstanding the fact that she attributed it to us — it was not a question that we were asking, Mr. Speaker. There are certainly minutes being taken of these meetings, Mr. Speaker. Those minutes are going to form the basis of the report, the public report, which we will table with this legislature once all that work is done, Mr. Speaker. But it would be premature to table those minutes at this point in time. They will form part of a final report, Mr. Speaker.

And contrary to what the member has asked, Mr. Speaker, there will be public consultation with respect to the work that's being done by the committee. We want to be transparent about this. We understand the importance of the library system . . . [inaudible] . . . the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And we'll continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to have our engagements. The report will be made public and there will be public consultations.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, in his letter of last Thursday, the minister asserted that the public library engagement panel had not asked participants to comment on the possible closure of headquarters and was not in fact using a survey.

The minister has now had several days to review the documents that I provided to him, including the headquarter questions and a survey attributed to the public library engagement panel. So if there is confusion, Mr. Speaker, about who said what and when, there is a simple solution. Get this process out from behind closed doors and show your work.

Again, will the minister table the questions being asked, commit to making public the meeting minutes, and also make public all submissions to this panel?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I've already said, the minutes will form the basis of the report that's being prepared, Mr. Speaker. It would be premature to release those minutes now, Mr. Speaker. I've confirmed with the member opposite that the survey questions that were asked were not from our committee, Mr. Speaker. They were from a third party who's been participating in this, but I'm not going to take credit for those questions, Mr. Speaker.

We're having an open conversation with respect to the future of libraries in Saskatchewan. We've committed to doing this work. There will be public consultation, Mr. Speaker. I invite the member and the members opposite to provide their . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, I invite them to provide their comments with respect to their views, with respect to the future of public libraries in this province, Mr. Speaker. Everybody's opinion is important, Mr. Speaker, and it will form the basis of the public report.

Well, Mr. Speaker, they don't want to hear the answer because it doesn't fit their narrative. It doesn't fit their narrative, Mr. Speaker. The work that we're doing in terms of engaging with participants, with stakeholders in the library system is fully

public, Mr. Speaker. They can participate if they want, Mr. Speaker, but the report will be made public after public consultation.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Condition of Airport in Fond-du-Lac

Mr. Belanger: — Well, thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The community of Fond-du-Lac is one of the many communities suffering from the neglect of this government. Fond-du-Lac needs upgrades to its northern airport, and this government has done nothing about it for over a year, since a very tragic plane crash.

Leaders of the community have been constantly raising their concerns for urgently needed upgrades to handle the size of aircraft landing on their sites, and more so, to ensure the safety of their community members. But this government has simply ignored their demands. These upgrades are needed, and the community members shouldn't be made to wait years for federal dollars that might not even come.

When will this government commit to the necessary upgrades that are desperately needed at the Fond-du-Lac airport?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. Firstly, my condolences go out to the family of the young man who tragically lost his life in that plane crash last year. As always, our thoughts and prayers go out to the family members, passengers, and the community that experienced this incident.

This airport is a vital part of the community of Fond-du-Lac, and we are committed to maintaining this facility in its current service level, which is similar to upgrades that were recently done at other airports. We currently have an application in to the federal government, Mr. Speaker, regarding the upgrading of this runway. These improvements would make the Fond-du-Lac runway similar in size to Buffalo Narrows, Meadow Lake, and Hudson Bay. This would be a great benefit to that community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, there is significant difference between maintenance and upgrades, Mr. Speaker. This community has been through enough. We've had the tragic plane accident, and we ensure the government hears the message that we don't need tragic accidents in Fond-du-Lac to ever occur again.

This community also suffers with children, kids, taking their lives because they have no hope left. Any substantial support towards this community would be very much appreciated, Mr. Speaker. If this government can spend on mega projects like the GTH and their carbon capture project without blinking an eye, it should be able to invest in infrastructure that is vital to the life of this community.

Mr. Speaker, people put their lives at risk each and every day

when they board these aircrafts. So again my question to the minister: park the maintenance argument. We need improvements; we need upgrades. When is Fond-du-Lac going to see a portion of this government's lavish expenditures extended to them?

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. Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear we are investing in the North. This past fiscal year we're investing in those northern transportation systems, over \$61 million.

As I've already mentioned, we currently have an application in to the federal government to partner on Fond-du-Lac airport, and we have been working actively with the communities that are there to try and advance this project.

[14:15]

I was speaking with my assistant deputy minister earlier today, and he informed me that he has inquired . . . Actually he spoke with them this morning and he has inquired about this, and he's looking for a status on the application. So we're not letting this lie. We're actually looking to see where this sits on their plate also. And let's be clear, Mr. Speaker: since 2006-07 we have increased funding to northern transportation system by 97 per cent. I would call that investing in the North. Thank you.

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

Neonatal Care in Prince Albert

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we learned last week that one of the few options for expectant mothers in Saskatchewan's Northeast is to travel to Prince Albert for deliveries. But we know this is not only a burden to pregnant women, but it will also put pressure on an already strained department in the Prince Albert hospital.

Doctors have been sounding the alarm about capacity pressures in the Victoria Hospital neonatal unit, comparing the tiny 375-square-foot NICU [neonatal intensive care unit] to a telephone booth. They say the space hasn't grown in 16 years, despite more deliveries, to support rapid growth in our northern communities. We know there's a fundraiser ongoing, but physicians, mothers, and sick babies shouldn't have to wait up to three years for a safe and appropriate unit. What is this government's plan to add capacity to the neonatal unit in P.A. [Prince Albert]?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Officials from the Saskatchewan Health Authority and the Ministry of Health have been in constant contact with members from the Prince Albert Victoria Hospital. We know that there are pressures and struggles there, but we've been assured that they can deliver the services that are needed for the time being — that, in consultation with the individuals from Flin Flon and area,

Creighton, that are currently under a little bit of a struggle with their obstetrics department, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the issues in Flin Flon are not a cutback. They're an issue that derived directly from a difficulty in attracting and retraining professionals, Mr. Speaker. We know that those services have been interrupted from time to time in the past. Professionals from the Manitoba health authority and Saskatchewan Health Authority didn't feel confident in delivering those services for the meantime in a safe manner. Our number one priority is of course to keep the mothers in the area for those services if possible. If not, Mr. Speaker, our priority is to make sure that they have safe delivery of their children and safe care for the mothers.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, these conversations only go so far. This unit only has gas to support four babies, even though there is consistently between 11 and 8 premature babies in the unit at one time. It's a recipe for disaster and one that needs fixing immediately. The provincial head of the department of pediatrics knows this, telling media last week that nurses and physicians are "in desperate need of a better space," adding, "These babies have the need right now."

The mantra of this government is to focus on core services of government, but what is more core to government operations than properly supporting the care of sick and premature infants? Does the minister agree with those on the front lines and in pediatrics that the need is now, not when finances permit or when fundraising goals are met? And will he commit to fully funding an expansion today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Victoria Hospital Foundation identified this as a priority some time ago, and we agree that it is a priority and we appreciate the work they've done to make it happen up to this point. We understand that their plan is to expand from the existing four-bed-level acute care unit to a 10-bed space with private facilities and spaces for family and new, upgraded equipment.

As committed by our Premier and I know other individuals on this side of the House, my fellow minister, that we will 100 per cent fund any upgrades to the facility, including the new Prince Albert Victoria Hospital when that plan is finalized and comes to fruition, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 157 — *The Education Amendment Act, 2018* *Loi modificative de 2018 sur l'éducation*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 157, *The Education Amendment Act, 2018* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 157 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 158 — *The Youth Justice Administration Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 158, *The Youth Justice Administration Act, 2018* now be introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that Bill No. 158 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 153 — *The Saskatchewan Employment (Leaves) Amendment Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to move second reading of Bill 153, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Leaves) Amendment Act, 2018*. As stated in the Throne Speech, this bill creates new leaves as well as increases the length of existing leaves based on recent changes to the federal *Employment Insurance Act*.

We are introducing a new critically ill adult leave to enable

employees to take up to 17 weeks of leave in a year for a critically ill or injured family member.

Parental leave is being expanded from 34 weeks to 59 weeks if the mother takes both the maximum maternity and parental leave. If the partner is taking parental leave, it increases from 37 to 63 weeks. This change is to ensure that new parents have job protection while accessing employment insurance benefits.

I am also pleased to say that this bill increases maternity and adoption leaves from 18 to 19 weeks. With this change, Saskatchewan leads all jurisdictions in Canada. Changes have been made to the maternity leave provisions to enable employees to start maternity leave a week earlier: 13 weeks before their due date instead of 12 weeks.

Mr. Speaker, these changes to parental and critically ill family leaves align our leave position with benefits available through employment insurance, allowing workers in Saskatchewan to fully access those benefits.

Finally, we have expanded interpersonal violence leave to include sexual violence committed by any person regardless of whether or not the survivor had a relationship with that person. Mr. Speaker, all of us in the House are aware of the high rates of interpersonal violence in Saskatchewan. We recognize that much more work is needed to address this issue. In the meantime we hope that expanding an interpersonal violence leave and introducing Clare's Law will provide much-needed support for those who need it immediately.

We also have some amendments to the Act unrelated to employment leaves. Section 6-82 is being amended to enable a health sector employer to also be the designated employer's organization. This is precipitated by the creation of the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill 153 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to give our initial comments around Bill 153, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Leaves) Amendment Act, 2018*. And as the minister alluded, there's a number of changes to leave being allowed from the workplace, Mr. Speaker. And it is something that a number of my colleagues have worked on for a number of years, and certainly they understand that some of the pressures, as we deal with day-to-day challenges, impact all people. And certainly those that are holding down full-time jobs, this is something that obviously that would be of huge interest to them as well, Mr. Speaker.

So as we look at the economy, we look at the balance between home life and certainly balancing children's needs, and you can see many parents start work early in the morning and then they go late at night. And you look at some of the challenges that many working people have as they attempt to balance their work life and of course their home life, Mr. Speaker.

And as you look at some of the provisions around *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, the Act that is being discussed — 153 here — it talks about a number of initiatives that would basically recognize those challenges. And it's something on this side of the House that we've spoken about at great length. There's been a lot of work, a lot of discussion, and we had a lot of general meetings amongst ourselves on how we could strengthen this particular aspect of trying to balance that home life and of course the challenges and the effort needed to hold down a full-time job as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, I look at some of the challenges around taking care of critically ill adult people in our lives. I see a lot of people back in my particular community that have taken a leave from their job to take care of their parents. And one of the challenges that I see is that we don't have enough facilities available to look after the elders that come into our community from other communities to have their critically . . . Well I shouldn't say critically ill, but certainly some of the other challenges, whether it be the onset of Alzheimer's or some of the other health challenges of the mom and dad because of the age factor. We're finding a lot of gaps in the care for our elders in some of our northern communities.

And as you look at some of the examples of the children of these critically ill adults, they've really come through. They oftentimes on weekends and on evenings, they generally take care of their critically ill parents or their aunt or their uncle or whomever their family member is. And I really admire that because certainly from our perspective, we do that as a family. We see other families do this. And this is really something that is always . . . Some say it's expected, but really, Mr. Speaker, a lot of families do this on their own, out of their own love and will for their loved ones.

And it's nice to be able to see that some of these suggestions being proposed in this particular Act are finally being heard by the Saskatchewan Party, as we echo the sentiment that there has to be recognition of the role of people that are holding down full-time jobs and some of their additional roles besides their volunteer work in the community or raising children — being on a number of committees and boards and so on and so forth — that there's a lot of stress on the people that are holding our province together, holding our families together, and of course holding our towns, villages, and RMs [rural municipality] together, as well as the cities.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we talk about recognition that many people that are involved in this wide variety of community activity and looking after their kids and holding a full-time job, what happens if they have additional pressures placed on them? Does that mean that they have to give up their job? And from our perspective in the opposition, we have long maintained and we have steadfastly fought the argument that there has to be recognition of those challenges. And this particular bill certainly does part of that, Mr. Speaker.

We want to again look at some of the opportunities involved with this bill: extends maternity leave from 18 to 19 weeks; extends from 12 weeks to 13 weeks the time period allowed for maternity leave prior to the estimated date of birth, obviously that's certainly self-explanatory; extends adoption leave from 18 to 19 weeks; expands the maximum combined maternity and parental

leave from 34 weeks to 59 weeks; extends the maximum parental leave from 37 weeks to 63 weeks; extends from 12 weeks to 13 weeks the time allowed for parental leave prior to the estimated date of birth.

Mr. Speaker, this list goes on as to some of the areas in which we as the opposition worked very hard to put into the Act itself, again recognizing that many families, many communities, many people have an incredible challenge of balancing not only their home life but their work life, and the additional strain put on them if there's a critically ill child or if there's a critically parent in their lives or people that are connected to their family. So it's really important that we look at the ways and means in which we can support these families and support these individuals.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is nice to be able to reach out to them and applaud them on their effort, but the bill has not been fully incorporated. Some of the challenges around, for example, the teachers in our province, does this Act apply to them? And obviously, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan federation of teachers have already indicated on their website that teachers will not automatically have the option to take advantage of this 18-month parental leave, and I quote, ". . . unless corresponding changes are made to provincial labour laws."

[14:30]

So what is this government's plan to address these concerns? And that's why it's important, as we've indicated, the opposition has done their part to raise these issues, raise these concerns, and get the government to recognize that people that have these extra stressors in their life, that we should accommodate some of their issues and to point out that extra stress, that it does matter to us as legislators in the province of Saskatchewan to recognize some of these additional strains and challenges that they may have and encounter in their lives.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that we have to do all we can to protect the wage earners, the breadwinners, if you will, Mr. Speaker, because these folks have a lot of strain and stress on them already. And this simply recognizes that at times when they do have additional stresses, that we shall certainly do all we can to accommodate them.

So, Mr. Speaker, again as I've indicated time and time again, it's important to explain what the bill's about, to explain the positive impact on the people that we're trying to recognize as a result of some of our work on this file, but to also point out to the government the gaps and the misses that they may have in their legislation. Because we all know the Saskatchewan Party loves to go to war with the working people, and it's our job as the opposition to make sure that we balance those interests as we embark on this process of enacting this bill.

So I would point out, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot more work to be done on this bill, a lot more research, and we're asking those that are involved with this particular bill to come forward and give us advice if they so wish. And always, Mr. Speaker, advice is critically important to the opposition. It's always a matter of just simply making the connect with the opposition office, and we'll certainly hear some of the concerns.

A lot of people are very, very aware of what's going on here, Mr.

Speaker. We need their advice. We need their input. And I encourage them to contact us at their earliest convenience so we can get their perspective on this particular bill. So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 153, *The Saskatchewan Employment (Leaves) Amendment Act, 2018*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

**Bill No. 154 — *The Intestate Succession Act, 2018*
*Loi de 2018 sur les successions non testamentaires***

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Intestate Succession Act, 2018*. When a person dies, the executor is responsible for ensuring the deceased's estate is distributed according to their will. This can often cause tension among family members and be stressful for the executor, who is trying to follow through with the deceased's wishes.

When a person dies without a will, it can create even more complicated situations with many competing interests. In this case, the administrator likely has no knowledge of the deceased's wishes respecting distribution of his or her estates. In Saskatchewan, intestate legislation has been in place for over 100 years to alleviate these tensions and address opposing interests by establishing a system for distribution of an estate where an individual dies without a will.

Mr. Speaker, this bill will repeal and replace *The Intestate Succession Act, 1996* with a new Act to incorporate recommendations made by the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan in its report titled *Reform of The Intestate Succession Act, 1996*. That report was released in March of 2017.

The commission's report made several recommendations for amendments to update the Act to ensure that the distribution of estates passing outside a will is clear and easily followed. Mr. Speaker, the new Act will clarify when a spousal relationship has ended, for the purpose of distribution of an estate, and ensure former common-law spouses are treated the same as former married spouses.

The revised spousal separation revision will maintain the prohibition of a spouse who is co-habiting with another person in a spousal relationship from inheriting part of the estate. It will also add provisions that the surviving spouse will take no part in the deceased's estate where, at the date of the death of the spouses, they have been living separate and apart for two years, have started family law proceedings against each other, or are parties to an agreement distributing family property.

The commission recommended, and the new Act will include a revision, that the entire estate shall pass to the intestate's spouse if all the children of the intestate are shared with the spouse, especially where there are young children of the spousal relationship. This will ensure that the surviving spouse has access

to all available funds for the continued care of any children. This will also mirror current drafting principles for wills, as in most wills, the entire estate passes to the deceased's spouse.

Mr. Speaker, the new Act will also adopt a parentelic model of distribution, replacing the existing next-of-kin model. If there is no spouse, children, or grandchildren of the intestate, the parentelic model involves exhausting the parental line by distributing to parents, siblings, nieces or nephews, or great-nieces or -nephews. If there is no one in the parental line, the administrator would distribute the estate to the grandparents of the intestate or his or her descendants, namely aunts and uncles, or first cousins of the intestate. Differences between the two models of distribution arise where potential inheritors become more remote. The parentelic model permits relatives of the closer, common ancestor who are, in most cases, closer in age and relationship with the intestate to inherit before a most distant familial lines.

The new Act will also not carry forward current section 19, which has to do with "legitimacy" of birth, where a child was born within a marriage that was later found to be an invalid marriage. Whether a child is born inside or outside a marriage is no longer tied to inheritance, and this provision can now be removed from the Act.

Mr. Speaker, the new Act will also remove the spousal preferential share amount regulations and eliminate the doctrine of advancement. The doctrine provides that advances given to a child during the lifetime of the deceased may be deducted from the amounts to be distributed to that child from the estate. The doctrine covers only specific types of payment to children and was intended to make the decision of the estate fair. The commission recommended that the doctrine be eliminated, as it can create uncertainty surrounding which types of advancements should be considered as preventing a child from taking part of the estate.

Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to move second reading of *The Intestate Succession Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 154 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again it's my privilege to give the initial comments around Bill 154, *The Intestate Succession Act, 2018*. Now, Mr. Speaker, just for the lay people like myself, certainly intestate is all about how we deal with people that may have not had a will and yet have since passed away, and how do you deal with that person's estate. There's a variety of laws that obviously come into effect.

And before I get into the bill itself, what I typically do, Mr. Speaker, is when people come to talk to me about some of the challenges that they have as it pertains to drafting up a will — it is a fairly complex procedure; it's not something that is very easy to do — and obviously my advice is always, to many people that do come to see me, is to seek legal advice and say, I'm not a lawyer, Mr. Speaker. As I've indicated time and time again, I'm merely a hockey player from the North. So I make absolutely certain, make absolutely certain that I explain to them that I have no legal background, no legal training.

So one of the things that I often want to do is find some means or mechanism as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] to either direct people to the right individual that could do these wills, obviously legally and binding, but more so, affordable. And we find many of the older people don't have any assets, and they come to see me and they're not prepared to pay 2,500 or 3,500, whatever the case may be, as the costs for the will. I imagine the costs get greater as the will becomes more complicated. However, Mr. Speaker, there is a cost to these elders doing a will.

So even though they know it is right to do a will, many of them cannot afford to do the will. And this is why, I think, a lot of times when they come to see me, I encourage them to get legal advice. And sometimes they just simply want me to write out a letter saying that in the event upon their death that they just ask that they go to this person, and so on and so forth. And while it's not a will, Mr. Speaker, it does give some indication as to what the person intends to do.

And we've done that on three or four occasions, all the while reminding people that we're not a lawyer, all the while reminding the people that because I'm not a lawyer that you don't have the protection that they would . . . that a lawyer from a different part of the estate could probably tear apart my letter that I've written on their behalf. So, Mr. Speaker, it's important that I explain that to them as well.

But clearly, I think one of the things that I'll point out is that, to pre-empt this particular bill from coming into effect and to avoid the confusion, I think we need to find the means and mechanisms to encourage wills being done by many people in and around the province.

And while I'm more specific to my constituency, Mr. Speaker, we find that a lot of the elders in our community do not have the financial resources to hire a lawyer to do a will. So is there some kind of workshop? Is there some kind of effort? Is there something that could be done to try and help them as best they can to put together a will?

Because, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, doing up a letter or indication of their interests on how they want their assets to be distributed upon their death, Mr. Speaker, it's a very emotional time. I've had to be very patient at the kitchen table with some of the elders as they think about their children and their grandchildren, and they begin to break down. It's a very tough, emotional time for them, and as always we're very patient.

And that's the point, Mr. Speaker, is that during this critical time that they have to decide these things, they're in a very vulnerable state. And I've seen it on many occasions, Mr. Speaker. And again I reiterate, I tell them I'm not a lawyer, but I could write down what you want. You could sign it and you can keep it, and upon your death, then you can certainly have it become part of your intent following your death.

So, Mr. Speaker, we try our very best to assist in that regard. And like I said, it's a very vulnerable time for many of them, and there's a lot of emotion and certainly a lot of thought on their part. But, Mr. Speaker, because it's not done by an accredited lawyer, Mr. Speaker, I fear sometimes that even a letter that they've signed that I've drafted up on their behalf could have

some weakness in its intent. And I always make sure I explain that first, Mr. Speaker.

So that takes us to the initial comment that I have on this particular bill. It would be wiser to encourage the creation of wills, especially those that are under-represented when you look at the whole notion of who's doing wills.

And I'm assuming that in the North many of the elders are probably a huge group that are not getting their wills done. And I would even hazard a guess maybe 60, 70 per cent of our seniors in northern Saskatchewan, based on my experience, Mr. Speaker, are simply not getting a will done for a variety of reasons. But the number one reason of course is the cost factor; many of them do not have the resources to do a will properly. So we need to reduce the need for this particular Act by doing a series of promotion of developing wills for people that have not traditionally been involved with this activity.

On the bill itself, Mr. Speaker, it just basically says that if an individual dies leaving no descendants, that the entirety of the estate goes to the spouse. And if the individual that dies leaving the spouse and descendants, the estate is distributed amongst the spouse and the descendants, Mr. Speaker.

So the bill itself repeals *The Intestate Succession Act, 1996*, and it updates a few definitions. And one particular definition that it's updating, it's removing the term "issue" to replace it with the term "descendant." So, Mr. Speaker, there's obviously some legal upgrade of some of the language. We need to know what the effect and impact of that is.

And, Mr. Speaker, it talks about the determination of a spouse's preferential share. In a case where the individual that passes away, they call that individual an intestate — left a spouse and one or more descendants who are not descendants of the spouse. Well that again, Mr. Speaker, is important to incorporate on how this bill is being presented.

It sets out the terms of the distribution of the estate if an intestate dies leaving no spouse or descendant or parents. It also sets how degrees of relationship between an individual and the intestate should be determined. And that of course, Mr. Speaker, is going to be a very interesting read because obviously there's all kinds of people that get involved with our lives in general, and how do you recognize them through a simple fact that you didn't do a will and your estate's up in the air. And of course many people are impacted by some of these estates. And then you get the claims and the counterclaims, and it becomes a very, very murky and often frustrating process.

[14:45]

The bill itself sets out the terms of inheritance regarding posthumous births, Mr. Speaker. A good example of that is that if there's an individual and the couple are about to have a child and the father dies and the child is born several months later. Mr. Speaker, then obviously that child would have rights to the estate as well. Well this bill incorporates that particular aspect as well, so posthumous births are a part of the bill itself.

It sets out terms of inheritance in the event of separation or divorce. It, of course, Mr. Speaker, includes a French version of

the bill. So the bill itself has a lot of different moving parts to it. As I mentioned at the outset, my preferred choice is to encourage people, as many people as we can, to get their wills done by a proper professional, and in this case a lawyer, Mr. Speaker. And obviously it would be in their interest to be very thorough and legal on that front.

Secondly, in the event that they don't do a will, and then you end up with these particular bills coming into effect because you haven't done a will, and then all of a sudden you may have a common-law spouse. You may have children of the common-law spouse. You may have separate children of your own. There could be posthumous birth of children as well, Mr. Speaker. So all these factors are incorporated in this bill.

It's an incredibly challenging time for families after they lose a loved one. What adds to the challenge, Mr. Speaker, if there's not a will being done, there's no clear rules, then obviously it just becomes a problem for the family in their journey of healing.

So obviously this is a very important part of what we do within government. And we obviously are going to pay a lot of attention to this particular file. As I mentioned before, I have colleagues that are trained in law. And they're much more advanced than I am, so they would have a lot more to add to this particular process. And on that note, we encourage people to participate in the process if they so wish. Give us advice if you have some very good, compelling advice. And we look forward to opening up the opportunity to hear those concerns and to also seek advice.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 154, *The Intestate Succession Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 155 — *The Legislation Act* *Loi sur la législation*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Legislation Act*. Mr. Speaker, this legislation replaces *The Interpretation Act, 1995* with a modern new Act that implements the Model Interpretation Act of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada and adopts the most recent drafting standards.

Mr. Speaker, the Model Interpretation Act was approved by the Uniform Law Conference of Canada in 2015. The model Act is a result of a comprehensive review of the various interpretation Acts currently in place across Canada and other common-law jurisdictions and reflects the most recent case law and drafting standards.

Mr. Speaker, this new Act will adopt the modern principle of statutory interpretation, which was adopted by the Supreme Court of Canada in the *Rizzo & Rizzo Shoes* decision. This new Act will also expand the rules around gender-specific references

to confirm that those references include persons of any gender.

Mr. Speaker, while the new Act will adopt the Model Interpretation Act, it will retain several Saskatchewan-specific provisions, including the presumption that an enactment does not bind the Crown unless specifically provided for in the enactment. The Saskatchewan-specific revisions related to the appointment in terms of public officers are also being continued.

Mr. Speaker, the new Act will also move the revisions of *The Regulations Act, 1995* and *The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act* into the new combined Act. Mr. Speaker, the revisions of *The Regulations Act, 1995* will be carried forward to this new Act without many significant substantive changes. The authority to revise regulations will be expanded to support the correction and updating of multiple regulations at once, which will simplify the process of updating cross-references and correcting minor errors in legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the provisions in *The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act* will also be carried forward without many significant changes. The revision powers will be expanded to confirm that the revision committee may revise and alter language to achieve an open, clear style which will provide flexibility when preparing revisions.

Mr. Speaker, this new bilingual Act will combine all of the revisions related to the drafting, interpretation, publication, and revision of Saskatchewan's laws into one modern, efficient, and accessible Act.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of *The Legislation Act*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 155 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, on Bill 155, *The Legislation Act, 2018*, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out at the outset that this is an important legislation, that we need to review this particular Act very carefully because if there's any change brought to the previous legislation, then we ought to know what the effects are, what the impacts are, and how the shift of roles and responsibilities might occur as a result of this legislation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that the bill itself repeals *The Interpretation Act, 1995*; *The Regulations Act, 1995*; *The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act*; and these are fairly significant Acts, Mr. Speaker. And what really concerns us is the fact that when we have the Saskatchewan Party looking at changing Acts, and certainly as the minister alluded to, it talks about procedures governing the enactment of laws. It talks about interpretation of the Acts, appointments of public officers or persons who may act for a minister, management and the control of a corporation, revision and consolidation of the Acts and regulations of many other impacted parts of the legislation that governs many of the activities at government, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure what those changes are, and this is where the trust factor comes in. And certainly from the perspective of the opposition, we want to see exactly what is being intended with this particular bill. There are many other aspects of, as I

mentioned, legislation that are going to be impacted. We need to find out what they are.

And we often tell people throughout Saskatchewanland that some of the things that we watch for with government is not so much the Act they put in front of people because many times they'll put in an Act that seems innocuous in many ways. However where the devil in the detail is, Mr. Speaker, is how the rules and regulations of that particular Act could really advance the Saskatchewan Party in many ways. And so we need to find where that connection is.

So I tell the people, when you have legislation of this sort coming through the Assembly, it's really important that you pay attention to see what is being done. Always look under the process of rules and regulations of any Act, Mr. Speaker, because again that's where the detail is. And as we all know, when you have any kind of agreements or any kind of Acts, the devil is always in the detail. So we have to make sure we look very carefully at what is being proposed and what changes are being enacted as a result of this particular Act.

Now . . . [inaudible] . . . we look at the name of the actual bill itself, Bill 155, *The Legislation Act*. What exactly, what part of the legislation are they impacting with this Act? There's rules, regulations, there's processes, there's . . . You could actually, as I mentioned before, you can appoint public officers to act on behalf of a minister. But the list goes on as to some of the changes that the minister alluded to. So we need to know why some of those changes are made, to what specific Act of government and what particular law of government.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons why you've got to keep focus on what legislation is coming forward from this government, more in particular from the minister himself because we've seen evidence in the past . . . And I made reference again, Mr. Speaker, on *The Election Act* where they got three new MLAs, and certainly some of the things that they put in place that would prevent people from voting. This is a bill that I still find some very fundamental democratic problem with, Mr. Speaker, as you put more hurdles for people to cast their ballots. And this was the same minister that's proposing this legislation that proposed *The Election Amendment Act* in which we saw a lot of people could not vote as a result of the rules that he put in place.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons why, from the perspective of the government itself, the Saskatchewan Party, from this particular minister, there's not a lot of trust in terms of what is being proposed in these bills, and that's why it's important that we really examine what is being done.

And obviously, Mr. Speaker, we would encourage people that watch the proceedings that, if they have any particular issue with the Act itself to please come forward and share information with us. Because it is the people out there that are being impacted and as they share their experience and voice their concerns it makes our job easier as the opposition and holds the government to account better. And in the long run that serves the people of Saskatchewan overall much more efficiently and certainly much more fairly.

So on that note I move that we adjourn Bill No. 155, the

legislation 2018 Act.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 156 — *The Legislation Act Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of *The Legislation Act Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*.

Mr. Speaker, this Act accompanies *The Legislation Act* and makes consequential amendments to a number of English-only Acts. Mr. Speaker, three statutes are being repealed and replaced with one new bilingual statute. *The Interpretation Act, 1995*; *The Regulations Act, 1995*; and *The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act* will all be repealed and replaced by *The Legislation Act*. References to the titles of the old Acts in several English-only statutes will be updated to reference the new title of *The Legislation Act*.

Mr. Speaker, there is no change in substance to any of the Acts that are being amended in this bill. A total of 18 Acts will be amended to reflect the new Act title and to make other housekeeping changes as required to adjust cross-references to the new bilingual Act.

Mr. Speaker, it's my privilege to move second reading of *The Legislation Act Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 156 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again it's my pleasure to stand in my place to provide initial comments on this particular bill. Now, Mr. Speaker, on the outset or at the front end of the bill itself, it just basically says *The Legislation Act Consequential Amendments Act, 2018*, and the title is short and so is the summary of the bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these consequential Acts and attachments to other main priority bills are important to pay attention to as well. And as the minister alluded to, this particular bill has an effect on a number of other particular Acts throughout the province. So again you've got to be very careful as to what you're actually passing and what is being presented in some of these bills.

And I want to point out that this particular bill, Bill 156, the effect on the following departments is going to be part of the process of this particular bill. What's being impacted is *The Aboriginal Courtworkers Commission Act*. What other area is being impacted? *The Community Planning Profession Act*; *The Election Act*; *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act*; *The Executive Government Administration Act*; *The Land Surveys Act*, Mr. Speaker.

The other notion is *The Lobbyists Act*. That's also being affected, Mr. Speaker. The preamble of *The Métis Act* is amended as well. The Municipal Financing Corporation is also being impacted by this, Mr. Speaker. *The Planning and Development Act*, Mr. Speaker, is also being impacted. *The Provincial Court Act*, the provincial health authority, *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act*, and *The University of Regina Act*.

These are all the Acts that are being impacted by this consequential amendment Act and that's why it's important, Mr. Speaker, that you pay attention to some of the matters that these bills and some of the issues that these bills will make an impact as it pertains to the operation of our province. So I think it's really important that we explain that to the public in general, that these consequential Acts are pretty important to pay attention to, as I indicated, but more so is to let the people of Saskatchewan know that even though at the outset the bill looks small in terms of number of pages, the impact could be great. The effect could be huge in the sense of how things are being delivered now throughout the province. So it is important to pay attention, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

So we are going to do exactly that. As I mentioned, Bill 155 and 156 are connected, and there's legislation to make the French language accommodation that we must make and should make. And it's important to note that we also want to point out to people that their advice is necessary, their input and certainly their ideas on how we can make this legislation more effective and certainly keep its intent pure and make sure that the objective is achieved in the sense of making sure that the service is there for the people that need it and that there's no ulterior motive on behalf of the Saskatchewan Party in trying to hide some of the things that they've been known to hide over time through bills of this sort.

So again, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have a very close look at what the impacts of all these other Acts are. There's obviously some minor changes to some of the core Act, but there's a lot of Acts being impacted by this particular bill. So we need to assess that. We need to judge that, keep the doors open for a communication for any stakeholder that might have an interest. And obviously that's a long-standing order from the opposition perspective because we want to do a good job in representing the people of Saskatchewan's interests, but more so protecting those people who are being impacted by this particular bill.

So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 156, *An Act making consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Legislation Act*.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 142

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 142 — *The Proceedings Against the Crown Act, 2018/Loi de 2018 sur les poursuites contre la Couronne*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour as always to, on this Monday, enter into debate on Bill No. 142, *An Act respecting Proceedings Against the Crown and making consequential amendments to other Acts*.

And it's been interesting to read some of the debate that's gone before us because we really rely on our legal resources within caucus, and they've made some comments. And of course it's a very interesting piece of legislation before us. And as one of them alluded to, the historical claims of the fact that at one point there was in common law the inability to sue the Crown. It was just something that a commoner did not do. You weren't, you know . . . The rule of the Crown was almighty and there was no point in trying to do so.

And so here we have a refining of that process, and of course it is an important process. It's one that, you know, we think everyone is equal before the law. No one is above the law. No one. And especially those who make the law, that there should be a recourse before the courts. Because the courts are perceived to be fair and balanced and wise in their rulings, and I think particularly in Canada we see this as a norm. And this is an important thing.

But the question remains, so what are the changes? And of course the minister did talk about the state-of-the-art legislation. The drafting was done, and that was all done to ensure that it was up to the current standards. And that is fair enough. That is something that we should ensure is the case.

And so I just want to take a minute to review the minister's comments. And he did talk about the fact that it is now bilingual, and of course that is a very important issue here, that we have the legislation, and as much legislation as possible, being translated into French. And so that is bilingual. And so that's a new thing, ". . . a new modern bilingual Act that reflects the most recent drafting standards," the minister says. So fair enough; that's a good thing.

And we have seen and we think about in the past, the speeding tickets that were I think issued just outside of North Battleford towards Cochin, that were challenged because they were not bilingual and the person felt that his rights were not being respected. And in fact that went quite a ways through the court system. And I believe, but I could be wrong, but that in fact that person did win.

He also talked about, "The new Act will remove the option for jury trials in proceedings against the Crown." Now that's an interesting one, not one that we think of very much. And you know, what's the difference whether you go before a jury or before a judge? And you know, he doesn't explain what are the positives of going through a jury system. And of course the positive is that you're being heard by your peers and the case you

make would be understood on a common-sense process, of course within the limits of the law.

Now he does say, the minister refers to the reason, two reasons. One, that not many people have used the jury process, only once in the last 20 years. So that would be in the late 1990s and so I'm not sure what the case was and what the process . . . why they didn't use juries. But he doesn't talk about the positives. And I would like to know what would have been the good reason. Why would somebody select a jury system if they could? Is it more cumbersome? Is it, you know . . . We always think on TV. We watch the process — and particularly in the American system — of going through the jury selection process.

In fact we had quite a controversy here, Mr. Speaker, in the case surrounding Colten Boushie. And we hope at some time to deal with the issue that came up in the news around health cards, where First Nations may be identified on their health card by the simple letter R, which we haven't really dealt with, and I think that's something we need to, Mr. Speaker. So if you're making notes about things to think about, the health card system that we have now apparently has a major flaw, and this was something that was reported on CBC radio in the summer.

But I digress here, Mr. Speaker. We had a situation where people felt that jury was not well balanced. In fact there were issues with it, one that we continue to hear concerns about, and in fact, even though that was a criminal court and not involving the Crown. But it still shows a major flaw. But I would like to know the pros and cons of why we use a jury system.

He said the second reason why it would be better to not have a jury system, of course, or be tried by a judge only, is the judge has to give reasons for their decision, in fact has to have a document, so that if there is an appeal, you have something to go back to. And I think that's very important. And so now I'm not, as my colleague from the North confessed, he's not a lawyer, and neither am I, so I feel a little bit like a fish out of water. And I'm not even a decent hockey player from the centre of Saskatoon. But, Mr. Speaker, I feel that there are some questions that would need to be answered because as we streamline this, I think that there is often a thought about why is this.

So you know, the minister has talked about the fact that we need to update these things, and I always get a little nervous when any of the ministers over there feel they need to update or modernize because I worry that that's code for something else happening. And in fact, we will have lots of reasons for thinking about what is really behind all of this, and are there going to be unintended consequences. You know, one of the things we value so much in Western democracies are our strong judicial systems and how they are kept separate.

But the courts are very important. We see today that in fact it's this government's record was used in the courts. In fact, going to the Supreme Court is not that stellar. And in fact I have to say that the one about the right to strike was a very interesting one and the minister at the time assured us that they had done a lot of good work, good work at this, but, Mr. Speaker, you may be interested in this stat. That ruling about right to strike, in the three or four years since that case has been ruled, has been used some 180 times in court cases across Canada. So Saskatchewan really contributed. In fact I understand that the debate in the Senate this

Saturday about the post office focused largely on that Supreme Court ruling which was brought to you courtesy of Brad Wall and the folks over there. I'm not sure that was their intention, to play such a pivotal role in the Senate debate, but in one way or other they are going to be the centre of attention here.

And so, Mr. Speaker, these things do matter. They do matter because they kind of work their way up. And at the time, we told them that it was foolhardy, and had they done their work? Did they really know what they were biting off? But they were driven ideologically by a world view that people did not have a right to collective bargaining. And here we have a situation where in fact it is entrenched now in the court ruling as part of the constitution, and it may not be what they thought they were doing, but be careful what you wish for.

So in this case I do wonder if they really understand the ramifications of their simple modernizing of this. So I just have to say that as someone who's been an observer, a keen observer of how the courts and this government in particular work, and that in fact sometimes their drive in their ideology gets them into trouble, gets Saskatchewan in trouble, gets . . . It is something that you'd better be careful what you wish for, as I said, because there are issues here.

But we do support the idea of modernization in terms of bilingual bills. That's a very good idea. Obviously modernization in the drafting of the language is very, very important. But I'm just going to be interested in hearing what others in the judicial system have to say about this because we have to be careful around individual rights and how they are treated by government or, as some might call it, by Big Brother. And if you can't have your day in court with Big Brother over there, then we better make sure that we understand what we are truly doing here.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know many will want to get into the debates on other topics here, and I would move adjournment of Bill No. 142, *An Act respecting Proceedings Against the Crown and making consequential amendments to other Acts*. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member's moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 143

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 143** — *The Proceedings Against the Crown Consequential Amendments Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very honoured to be entering debate on Bill No. 143, *An Act making consequential amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Proceedings Against the Crown Act, 2018*. And of course this really just focuses on amending some of the other legislation so that it all fits into line. *The Correctional Services Act, 2012*, section 111 is being repealed and section 23(3)(g) of

the freedom of information protection Act is being repealed.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, and of course then the proceedings, they're adding 2018, so not much change to the provisions listed in schedule 1. So, Mr. Speaker, I won't go into my earlier comments early about be careful what you wish for. That stands for 142 and all of that stands with 143, because I know many people want to get into the debate today.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, we will listen intently for the questions and others to enter into this debate. But at this time I would like to adjourn debate on Bill No. 143, *An Act making consequential amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Proceedings Against the Crown Act, 2018*. I do so move.

The Speaker: — The member's moved to adjourn debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 144** — *The Real Estate Amendment Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As ever, glad to take my place in the Assembly and join debate, in this case, on Bill No. 144, *The Real Estate Amendment Act, 2018*.

Mr. Speaker, this is an industry that does a lot of great work throughout the province and has a significant history of self-regulation and co-operation with the government — be it municipal, provincial, even federal in some circumstances, Mr. Speaker — and certainly does a good job of articulating and advocating on behalf of the issues important to the industry. And I know that for a fact, Mr. Speaker, having long been a witness to the good work of the various levels of real estate associations. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, this legislation is in response to the industry.

And again, Mr. Speaker, there's an evolution that is undertaken in various pieces of legislation, but in this particular case it builds on the work of *The Real Estate Act*, which was enacted in 1995. It's a hybrid model of regulation of realtors with the semi-autonomous Saskatchewan Real Estate Commission in combination with the oversight of the superintendent of real estate, an official with the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan.

And again the rationale was put forward by the minister in his second reading speech that given the date of that legislation being enacted, it was time for an update and to see what they could do around efficiencies and streamlining, Mr. Speaker. And again this would certainly seem to be the case here.

We'll be looking to follow up with the industry and their representatives, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the measures contained in this updated edition of the Act. But, Mr. Speaker, that will take some time and we'll make sure that work of diligence is done in good, vigilant style, Mr. Speaker.

I don't have much more to say on this bill at this time, Mr. Speaker, but I know that again we've got that work of consultation and due diligence to undertake. So with that I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 144, *The Real Estate Amendment Act, 2018*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 145

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Merriman that **Bill No. 145 — *The Residential Services Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into debate this afternoon with respect to Bill No. 145, *The Residential Services Act, 2018*. Of course this replaces a bill that was brought forward in 1985. Certainly a lot of change does occur in 30 years.

I've read the minister's comments that this bill is required to ensure flexibility for the types of care and options out there, to ensure care for many vulnerable people within our community, and certainly that's important. It's important we get it right with a bill like this, Mr. Speaker. And sadly, all too often with the Sask Party government we have witnessed a government that has been unwilling to do the good faith consultation that's needed with stakeholders to make sure that legislation that's brought forward is indeed an improvement.

And when we look at a bill like this, we're talking about some of the very most vulnerable within society: those that are fleeing domestic violence; those that are in need, as children, of protection; those in need of residential care, Mr. Speaker. And so we owe it to them to make sure that the legislation that's been brought forward is as strong as it should be, as effective as it should be in meeting the needs of those people, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it's fair to say as well, I know the minister has identified that there's growing needs to respond to those in these urgent and often crisis circumstances, Mr. Speaker. We see that all of the time in our work, and it's important that we have the adequate care for those people and children at a time when they need it, Mr. Speaker.

It's also so critical though, Mr. Speaker, that the root causes of so many of the challenges are addressed, Mr. Speaker. And that's where we see sadly this government really sitting on the sidelines, Mr. Speaker, not moving forward the meaningful action when it comes to a province-wide suicide strategy, Mr.

Speaker. Not fixing our broken mental health and addiction services that are leaving far too many, Mr. Speaker, without the services and supports they need when they need them most, Mr. Speaker, at times when minutes matter in the life of someone, Mr. Speaker. And there's real consequences to not ensuring support and services at those critical times in the life of a person, Mr. Speaker. And the costs are sadly tragic in far too many cases, Mr. Speaker, but have a real cost from a social perspective and from an economic perspective as well, Mr. Speaker.

I noticed that the licensing requirement of government has been shifted from one year to three years with this legislative change, Mr. Speaker, and I would have questions for the minister on that front as well as with stakeholders to ensure that that's appropriate. Ultimately when a child is in protection by the choice of government, Mr. Speaker, we owe it to them to make sure that government is ensuring their care. And so that means there needs to be rigorous oversight, Mr. Speaker, of the care. There needs to be oversight to ensure that there's accountability in place. Too often, Mr. Speaker, we hear of stories and circumstances where that hasn't been the case. And, you know, this is a very important place for government to fulfill to the people of the province when they are responsible for the care of a child or a person, Mr. Speaker.

I think we are witnessing real serious concerns of this nature right now in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. And it's just critical that the types of care that are provided have accountability brought in, that children and their needs are put first or those that are needing services are put first, Mr. Speaker, and that government understands that even though they might have another provider for that care, that government has the ultimate responsibility to ensure their safety and their care, Mr. Speaker. And I'm not sure that this Act goes far enough to ensure that level of oversight and that level of support with the important care providers across the province, who are incredibly strained for resources as well, Mr. Speaker, too often not funded by this government.

Too often we hear of stories and real examples when it comes to shelters, for example, Mr. Speaker, where literally hundreds and hundreds of those needing shelter are turned away, Mr. Speaker. In some cases thousands are turned away in one year, Mr. Speaker, and that fails everyone. And that needs to be addressed.

But as I say, Mr. Speaker, it's important we get this Act right. It's important that those care providers and that all in this sector, all stakeholders were involved in the drafting of this legislation. And we'll be certainly interacting with and consulting with stakeholders across the sector. We'd invite those involved in this very important work to engage at this time. We'll be looking, as the official opposition, at every opportunity to strengthen this piece of legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we've learned, as Saskatchewan people have long ago, to not trust the Sask Party government with legislative changes, Mr. Speaker. Too often it's done in a vacuum without an understanding of the impact on those that they're responsible to, Mr. Speaker. And of course I'll push again, Mr. Speaker. It's critical that when we're looking at the circumstances that we are here, the most vulnerable within society, it's critical that we see a government step up to the plate to address those very serious root causes and broader systemic and social issues that exist.

And it's past time that this government got off the sidelines and to work on moving forward a province-wide suicide strategy, Mr. Speaker. It's past time that they stepped up to work to fix our broken mental health and addictions services across our province, Mr. Speaker, leaving far too many that are suffering in despair and darkness or without the supports that they need. And it's past time, Mr. Speaker, that this government got to work on meaningful action around poverty, Mr. Speaker, leaving far too many children, far too many people across our province without the basics in life, Mr. Speaker, food.

Another report that came out here recently puts a spotlight on the incredible crisis that is child poverty, child hunger, Mr. Speaker, within our province. And you know, as a teacher before coming to this legislature, I've always known, Mr. Speaker, that it's those basics — the stability in a home, the basics in our fridge, the basic food in the fridge, the roof over one's head — that has a major impact on one's ability to learn. If you don't have food in your belly and if you don't have a safe roof over your head, good luck when it comes to learning, Mr. Speaker.

So there's all that important work. There's the important actions that we continue to call this government on with respect to domestic violence, Mr. Speaker. There's just so many critical areas that require leadership and action within this province, too many of these critical areas. The Sask Party government is sitting on the sidelines and not getting to work with the good people within our province. And the solutions, Mr. Speaker, are known to us, so there's no excuse for a government not to be addressing these major issues that are costing many people their lives, costing many people basic security, Mr. Speaker.

So with respect to Bill No. 145, we'll continue to consult with stakeholders throughout the province, Mr. Speaker. We invite those involved in providing care to connect those involved in, those that have received care, those that have been in vulnerable circumstances with lived experiences to be a part of this important conversation, Mr. Speaker. I thank all of those people and organizations that are out there working day to day with incredibly tight resources, often insufficient resources, working to meet the needs of people across our province.

And we'll make sure that this legislation is strong enough. For example, Mr. Speaker, at a time when we need to ensure improved accountability and improved oversight for those that are the most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker, you know, I question decisions like shifting from one-year licensing to three-year licensing, Mr. Speaker.

At this point in time, though, I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 145.

[15:30]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 147

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 147 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2018*** 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 this afternoon to rise and enter into debate on Bill No. 147, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this bill was introduced by the minister going back to November the 13th, so I guess a couple weeks ago in this Assembly, and she had a fairly lengthy explanation in her second reading comments.

One of the things that the minister noted was that the most significant changes in this proposed legislation are in support of the government's Prairie Resilience plan, Mr. Speaker, something that of course we have a lot of concerns or questions about for sure, including around the targets and the timelines there, Mr. Speaker, and the adequacy of that particular document.

She described it as "... a made-in-Saskatchewan climate change strategy." Certainly that is something that we on this side of the House have been advocating for a very long time, that any measures that we undertake in this province take into account the very real situation of people in this province, from industry to environmentalists to of course the children of this province, and ensuring that what we do in the end is effective, is not disruptive, and is enforceable and is something that we can get broad-based support of. So that is something very clearly that we have been in support of despite characterizations perhaps to the contrary, Mr. Speaker. So I wanted to make sure that I got that clearly on the record, as have other members on this side.

The minister also noted that the changes laid out within this bill are intended to help the Ministry of Energy and Resources and the Ministry of the Environment move forward on the Prairie Resilience strategy, including "... the development of regulations which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the flaring and venting of methane by 45 per cent by 2025."

Mr. Speaker, of course this comes at almost the ... or past the decade mark of this government. And despite at various times producing documents and then shelving them and having ministers stand up and then shelving the ministers and different things like that, we haven't seen a lot of progress here. And in fact emissions have continued to rise. And the public demand to take this issue seriously so that we move forward in a way that not only protects industry and the needs of our province but also protects our land and our air, our water, and no less than the future of our planet.

Here we stand yet again in 2018, thankfully in some ways contemplating some changes, but wondering, is this adequate? And is it ... It is certainly very late in the game. I don't think I need to ask whether it's late or not, Mr. Speaker.

The minister also noted that this was a "results-based program" that includes penalties on those who exceed emissions "... by operators who fail to meet the emission reduction targets." Again, as we've been saying, targets are important. And not only to have those targets, but to have some mechanism of enforcement of those targets is also very important. So that is something that we have been in support of for a very long time

on this side of the House. I know members such as my colleague from Nutana and many others, the current critic for the Environment, have also reiterated those concerns in a very articulate way many times over the years.

“The proposed amendments also provide the basis for the negotiation of an agreement with the Government of Canada . . .” Mr. Speaker, again, this is 2018. And something we’ve been calling on this government for a very long time is to put forth a plan that meets the needs of the people of Saskatchewan. The government, as we’ve seen probably too frequently, Mr. Speaker, seem content to play the political messaging side of this argument, but not so much the getting down to the details and actually proposing alternatives. So I’m thankful to see a little of bit of that here, Mr. Speaker. But again I question the timing and just why we’re seeing this so late in the game.

I know that this government was cited in the most recent Provincial Auditor report as recently as this year. This is volume 1 that I am reading from. There were a number of concerns as outlined in chapter 4 of that most recent auditor’s report citing concerns around the activities — or non-activities — of this government.

I read from the audit conclusion, page 42 of the 2018 report volume 1 of the Provincial Auditor. One of the audit conclusions was:

We concluded that for the 12-month period ended September 30, 2017, the Ministry of Energy and Resources had, except in the following areas, [for the most part] effective processes [which is important] to regulate that oil, gas, and pipeline industry [with some exceptions] . . .

The Ministry needs to:

Set expectations for documenting its key activities for regulating reported incidents.

One thing that we did see in the key findings on the next page is a very sharp drop in the number of reported incidents. If that is indeed the case, that the incidents have been reduced, that is of course something that is desirable, Mr. Speaker. But if it’s the case that the incidents simply aren’t being reported, then that is something very different.

Another concern that the auditor raised was the ministry’s need to “Document its classification of risk of reported incidents, and its expectations on the nature and timing of its involvement to regulate reported incidents.”

Mr. Speaker, I believe later on in this report the auditor found that there was a very big difference in terms of the field offices, how they reported incidents, and that was brought up as a concern.

In the final audit conclusion on this page, page 42, the Provincial Auditor noted the need to “Consistently inform industry operators when it is satisfied that industry operators have resolved reported incidents.”

So there was this level of limbo, for example. Of course we all remember the 2016 Husky oil spill that caused a great deal of

upheaval and expense in the province. It also disrupted the drinking water of I think it was about 70,000 citizens in the province and drew a lot of unflattering light onto the issue of pipeline spills, Mr. Speaker. We have stated categorically that, you know, there is support here and that we need to ensure that oil and gas from this province and others is able to get to market, but one of the things that this government doesn’t talk about much is how that negative press negatively impacts the industry.

So the boosterism is, you know, is one thing, Mr. Speaker, but you also have to have the confidence of the people of the province, and I think that is something that has not been given due diligence. And you know, sometimes taking all voices into account and finding a solution, as I said at the beginning, that works for all people or a broad base of people in the province and is something that we can get behind and support, that works well for industry and also has the support of the broad population, is something very important and, I think, something that we should strive for with public policy again and not simply making light of concerns that are brought forward.

Another recommendation that came out of the auditor’s report, in chapter 4 on page 48, was the recommendation:

. . . that the Ministry of Energy and Resources document its classification of risk [as reported] . . . in relation to oil and gas wells, facilities, pipelines, and flowlines, and its expectations on the nature and timing of the ministry involvement.

As I noted before, there was a wide variance with how these risks were reported, and there was a need for some clarity here. So I hope that we do find some clarity with this bill, Mr. Speaker.

Some other changes that are proposed with Bill No. 147, it changes some of the terms used in the previous legislation and adds new ones. Like I said, it’s certainly reasonable when you are updating. I think there was some questions about why some of the wording was changed uniformly throughout. I think the change of “when” to “if” in a lot of the subsections in this Act’s proposed changes, something that the critic will have further questions about and probably other of my colleagues.

This bill also redefines the role and responsibilities of the minister. It sets out new rules for inspection and investigation of incidents. I think it puts some new regulations around the flaring of methane gas.

I don’t know if anyone has had the opportunity to travel. I think most clearly of driving down to my brother’s in the Southeast and at night. And I hadn’t been down there at night for a long time, I guess, and seeing all of the flare gas. It’s quite a noticeable sight on your way there and, you know, has also been raised as a concern for air quality and just the sheer amount of emissions that come from that flare gas. So I look forward to, you know, hearing more about the regulations and how it will deal with that flaring of gas.

Another facet of this bill is that it sets out the procedures governing the pooling interests in drainage unit and drainage area. Mr. Speaker, I have to admit that that is not an area that I’m particularly familiar with, but we’ll sure be paying rapt attention to hear about how that works. I’m sure it’s an important thing for

people to know. It also changes the procedures governing a pooling order. Again, Mr. Speaker, this will be something that my colleague and colleagues will have more to say and ask about.

The bill also adds a new clause on the reduction of greenhouse gases. Again, Mr. Speaker, something that is welcomed. It is curious the time lag that we've seen here, and we'll have questions about the efficacy and the adequacy of those measures as outlined in this bill.

Again this is something that we've seen in numerous bills before us over the last little while. It changes the penalties and provisions, expanding fees to 50,000 for individuals and 500,000 for corporations per day of the offence. Again seems reasonable, Mr. Speaker, that as the cost of everything goes up that those penalties would keep pace and would serve to act as a deterrent, the greater the penalty, that potential penalty that could be imposed.

Again I know that this is something that many members or all members on this side are paying close attention to. I know that there are many people in my constituency and all around the province who want to make sure that we get this right. And we'll have questions again about the efficacy and the adequacy of the measures contained herein. It's important that we see something, but again I just want to register my concern at the late date of these proposed changes. But I think I have come to the end of my comments and questions. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 147.

[15:45]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 148

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 148 — *The Pipelines Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter the debate today on Bill No. 148, *The Pipelines Amendment Act, 2018*. Mr. Speaker, this particular Act grows out of a couple of things. I believe some ongoing work that the auditor had done. But also, we just have to cast our mind back to the summer of 2016 and the Husky oil spill into the North Saskatchewan where we saw a considerable number of people without drinking water for quite a lengthy period of time, and some issues around, well what happens when you've got a pipeline leak into a body of water, Mr. Speaker?

So the work here . . . The minister points out that this pipelines amendment Act comes out of the March 2017 Government of Saskatchewan's funding for their multi-year pipeline regulation enhancement program, again coming out of the 2016 oil spill.

And the goal of that program was to accelerate improvements to our pipeline regulatory system here in Saskatchewan. A bill and some amendments had passed last spring, I guess a year and a half ago now, some first introductions on changes, and this is an additional one, Mr. Speaker.

These particular amendments . . . Well what's grown out of that pipeline regulation enhancement program? There are improvements and expansion to the integrated resource information system, or IRIS, which is operated by the Ministry of Energy and Resources. And IRIS is being expanded to include the issuing and administering licences for pipelines and flowlines. It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, I think we have about 30 000 kilometres of pipelines here in Saskatchewan, which was . . . I remember learning that a few years ago when I had the privilege of chairing PAC [Public Accounts Committee], and some of these chapters, the auditor's chapters, were before Public Accounts.

As the minister points out, “. . . expects to implement its new online pipeline licensing system in 2019,” so in the not-too-distant future. And the minister points out that, “During consultations on the development of the new system, industry representatives expressed support for two business improvements,” which require changes to the Act. So hence the reason we're discussing Bill No. 148, *The Pipelines Amendment Act* today, Mr. Speaker.

So one of the first changes is the establishment of IRIS as a legal online registry rather than just a data system for issuing and administrating these licences. So IRIS becomes the sole legal record of the existence of the licence as well as the terms and conditions applicable to that licence. The information in IRIS also trumps any other document that might exist outside of the system. The minister points out that this “. . . licence registry system is modelled after Saskatchewan's land title systems, as well as other electronic registries operated by the ministry for oil and gas leases and mineral claims.”

My colleague from Saskatoon Nutana, who has a great deal of experience actually with ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan], asked the question in her debate, Mr. Speaker, wondering why the information corporation of Saskatchewan system isn't being implemented or used entirely for this registry, because they do . . . that corporation has a lot of experience in this area, Mr. Speaker, around registries. But I guess that'll be a question that comes up in committee.

The second change is the establishment of a legal mechanism for the minister to acquire historical flowline and pipeline surveys directly from Saskatchewan land surveyors. The new online system [the minister points out, is] being developed . . . [and it includes] the use of modern geographic information systems to map flowlines and pipelines. In order to build this system, the ministry requires original survey information to [be able to] create an electronic map of a pipeline or flowline infrastructure.

And I think again my colleague pointed out that this was very difficult information to be found, so hopefully this online registry will be helpful. My colleague from Saskatoon Nutana pointed out at about the time of the Husky oil spill she attempted to find that particular pipeline licence online and it was very difficult to track

down, Mr. Speaker. So hopefully that makes it easier for landowners, for all interested parties who may want some information in regard to where pipelines and flowlines are, Mr. Speaker.

And the minister also points out that there is a housekeeping amendment as well. The minister is proposing for this change to “. . . align the regulation-making powers in section 25 related to administrative penalties with those found in *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*,” Mr. Speaker, the bill to which my colleague from Lakeview just spoke to, Mr. Speaker. And I know that one of my other colleagues has pointed out that these two bills are really the yin and yang of each other, Mr. Speaker, and would be good to go to committee together at the same time.

But with respect to Bill No. 148, *The Pipelines Amendment Act, 2018*, speaking of committee, I know that folks, the critic responsible will have many questions to ask once this bill makes it there. But for today I believe, Mr. Speaker, that ends my comments on Bill No. 148, and I would like to move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 149

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 149 — *The Police (Regional Policing) Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill No. 149, *The Police (Regional Policing) Amendment Act, 2018*. I guess initially some of the comments from my understanding and probably concerns that have been raised throughout, I think, rural and, you know, communities north, urban centres. We're seeing quite a concern, I think, in the rural. We've heard from a lot of rural leadership, residents of rural Saskatchewan, about policing, about some of the issue of crime.

And obviously the government has said it's gone out and went through a process to get information on how to deal with rural crime, I believe is what they're . . . It might have been a committee of members of government side that went around, or members. I'm just not sure of the process because I never got invited or went to any of those meetings. If they were open to the public, I don't know.

But anyway if I have my facts straight, Mr. Speaker, they identified some areas of concern from residents in the rural area about rural crime, and they're trying to find different ways. And I think from what I get from the minister's comments, it was talking about smaller communities that have maybe 500 residents and coming up with, I guess, this amendment gives certain powers from the existing legislation. So they're bringing some changes, and from my understanding what those changes are, is

they can have regional policing.

Now you might have a community that has 4 or 500 residents while one in another area they're not, you know, rural area or even . . . I think about La Ronge, Air Ronge. They're a bigger community but they could do some regional policing, I guess, is what I've got from this. Now I'm not sure if it's limiting how many residents, and I know we'll ask about that as you go through in committee. We'll find out those details. But I guess at the end of the day when I think about it, the idea is to try to help when it comes to lessening the crime or having a quicker response maybe. I don't know if that has been something that, you know, was raised and why government is saying they want more of a response.

And the government refers to different things that they saying they're trying to do and they're trying to do with changing with resources, making teams. And I listened to some of the stuff and some of the changes as the minister, you know, has talked about and the reason why and I think they're under a lot of pressure from the rural residents saying they want more protection or a quicker response time if they phone in and saying they're seeing something suspicious.

And I know there's Rural Crime Watch and residents looking out for one another. They've done that for years as on the farm. When I think about grandpa and back home, they did the same thing. They looked out for one another, homesteads. We did that. You know, you looked out for your neighbour and if you seen things going around, you know, grandpa or one of my uncles, one of us, somebody would have went over and tried to see what's going on just to, you know, as neighbours. And some were family. You knew your neighbours.

So having said that, but at the end of the day I see that it's going to take resources. And municipalities, you know, they're doing what they can with the limited resources they have. Now if they're going to have regional policing and they're going to be responsible for paying for that, you know, and those are the questions that need to be asked. And those are the concerns I think people are going to want to make sure it's clear in committee when we go to committee. It's fine to debate the bill, just looking at it. And some of the minister's second, you know, his response, second reading responses, he gives a little detail into, you know, why and what this might do and change. But having said that, it is a process to make sure, you know, we have a quicker response time, a presence that you see.

Maybe it's for individuals out there if they're thinking about going to rural areas or areas where they think, oh well they can do more crime or get away with it or whatever. Maybe more of a police presence puts . . . Maybe it's another set of eyes. And I think some of the things that residents are doing is really helpful but also a regional police would give them an opportunity to partner. And that's what I'm trying to understand. So you might have three or four areas where they'll partner, and maybe they have two officers or an officer. I'm not sure what type of training will go into this.

And I know we're going to have more questions. Will it be a retired RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] member? Will it be somebody who's currently police, a member in the city, an RCMP, or is it somebody who's trained, you know? And I don't

know. And that might all come out when you're talking about regional police. And it will be somebody that will be armed? Like I don't know, and I know we're going to have more questions. Is it an individual . . . Will they have all the training that the RCMP have, or city police? So those questions we'll have to work out, and maybe in the regulations that will all come out and come very clear.

Mr. Speaker, as we go into committee and as we find out I guess government's, you know, getting pressure by the rural areas, residents and leadership asking for more of a police presence, a quicker response time. People want to feel safe. But people want to feel safe, of course, as we say, in rural, north, urban. So you want a response time, and I think in northern Saskatchewan as well. Sometimes, you know, people call in for emergency or someone suspicious. They want somebody to respond as quick as they can. And when you're in a situation like that, you definitely want to have, you know, if you think you're feeling unsafe, you want to make a phone call. You want someone to respond as quick as you can, being with your family, your loved ones, and to make sure they're safe.

So I know that my colleagues will definitely have more, more questions or more information to share. And I know that we have to do our work on this side. And we do talk to individuals out there and share their concerns and saying, when legislation comes forward, who do they consult with? And we'll find out that. And if it's the best . . . And sometimes, you know what? We can make recommendations, suggestions for changes to legislation to improve it, working collaboratively in that sense, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So having said that, as we go through the process . . . And I know in committee we may have more questions. And we'll be able to get some of the details from the minister and officials in committee, finding out some of those details that are needed. Sometimes we're unsure and you go through that process where you can make sure, you know, how's this going to work? Is there going to be resources?

And I think the key here would be, a big part of it is going to be funding resources. Because you can do all the regional police, like I said. You can do certain things to try to deal with the rural crime but you have to have the resources and, you know, making sure at the end of the day, everybody will look at government, provincial and federal, for those resources. That's where it is. Or you go to your taxpayers. And right now, I think with all the taxes that have been put on many of our Saskatchewan residents when it comes to PST on everything, the way they went last budget, just about a billion dollars, that has caused a lot of the . . . So really, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think residents can afford, can afford more tax on them to pay for policing when they're already being taxed heavily, as they are in this province.

[16:00]

So having said that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, we'll watch that and see what resources will come out to assist those communities that decide to go into regional policing, what resources will be there to assist them. And I'm sure they will call on the government, the leadership, to ask this government to provide some resources to that. So on that note, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 149. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 150

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Tell that **Bill No. 150 — *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Well thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I recognize you too. Anyways, it's interesting, this Bill 150 that I'm speaking on today, *The Act to amend The Seizure of Criminal Property Act, 2009*. The notion of being able to forfeit people's personal property or actually real property, their homes, in terms of proceeds of crime and actually taking people's belongings because they have been found convicted of criminal activity that would lead to profits, basically.

And I remember this back in my days with the federal government in our law office with the Crown is that quite often in drug proceedings, when people are being charged with possession and trafficking of drugs, quite often the grow houses, for example, the grow ops, the actual homes where they were growing their product illegally were . . . You know, it made sense, I guess, that there would be forfeiture proceedings added to the law so that you weren't able to make a, you know, a million dollars doing criminal activity. You might get charged and do your time but you wouldn't be able to keep those profits. So the whole idea is finding balance here in terms of when people are profiting from criminal activity, what is it that we as the government, we as the people of Saskatchewan, can seize back from those proceeds of crime.

Now it's not clear to me that this bill is specifically related to proceeds of crime, but it talks about criminal property. And as the minister indicated in her brief opening comments, there's a number of changes being made to sort of beef up the ability to forfeit or take back people's personal belongings if indeed they can make a connection between that and criminal activity. So my familiarity with this is really in relation to proceeds of crime, and it's not clear to me that this bill provincially deals with proceeds of crime. I know it was the federal bill for sure.

But I'm a little concerned about some of the provisions that are being added to the existing bill to tighten up or make it easier for law enforcement officials to seize belongings of individuals. And I think one of the biggest concerns I have is the new sections 16.1 to 16.4 that are being added to section 16. And if you want to look at the existing section 16, Mr. Speaker — I'll just pull that up quickly — the marginal note says it's the "Presumption for instruments of unlawful activity."

So this Act currently sets up all sorts of presumptions. There's presumptions regarding proceeds of unlawful activity, and that's

section 14. There's section 15, gives you a presumption for members of criminal organization, and then section 16 talks about presumption for instruments of unlawful activity. Following that is section 17, presumption re: criminal organization offence.

And so this seems to go much beyond the proceedings of crime, making money from doing criminal activities, and it goes beyond that into just simply being involved in criminal activity. I think the problem here, Mr. Speaker, is the nexus between criminal activity and ownership of property, and I think this is something that we have to be very, very careful about. And I'll be very interested to . . . I know my colleague for Regina Douglas Park will be looking into this because what is the defence, criminal defence association, the lawyers that defend people for accusations and charges against them. Are we going too far on this one?

And I would think . . . You know, there's an example here of presumption regarding vehicle-related offences, and this is where you can actually take somebody's vehicle, Mr. Speaker. So you can go and take somebody's vehicle or get an order to do so, and I'll just read section 16.2(2) which says:

In an application for a forfeiture order, or for an interim order pursuant to section 6, respecting property that is alleged to be an instrument of unlawful activity, evidence of the following is admissible in evidence as proof, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that the property is an instrument of unlawful activity.

So let's say I have a truck, Mr. Speaker, that's licensed. I bought it. I paid for it. It's in my name, but if . . . Here I'm going to read on. Section 16.2(2)(c). It says:

[If] the vehicle is owned by, and is in the care, control or possession of, a person:

(i) whose driver's licence has been suspended pursuant to *The Traffic Safety Act* at least twice in the preceding 10 years for a vehicle-related offence.

So right away, Mr. Speaker, there could be any number of people that are not conducting themselves in criminal activities that may have had their licence suspended twice in the previous 10 years. Maybe too many speeding tickets, maybe driving under the influence of alcohol. I mean there's all sorts of ways your vehicle or your licence could be suspended that may have absolutely no nexus to criminal activity. And I really wonder how you could suggest that if I had too many speeding tickets and a DUI [driving under the influence] that somehow my vehicle is now assumed to be part of criminal activity.

And I think that raises a lot of red flags, Mr. Speaker. And I think the criminal defence bar is going to have a serious look at this because I think these are things that may push the pendulum just a little bit too far to the side of overzealous enforcement, Mr. Speaker. And certainly we'll look forward to comments from the defence bar here in the province.

Another thing, a new section: presumption regarding sexual offence, 16.4. And if there's anyone that has a conviction, not even a conviction, but . . . I just want to make sure I get this right.

A "specified sexual offence" is identified as a number of criminal offences under the Criminal Code. And it says, "In an application for a forfeiture order," and this is section 16.4(2) in the proposed bill:

In an application for a forfeiture order, or for an interim order pursuant to section 6, respecting property that is alleged to be an instrument of unlawful activity, evidence that a specified sexual offence occurred on or in the property is admissible in evidence as proof . . . [that it] is an instrument of unlawful activity.

So I'm not sure what kind of property we could be talking about here, but assume it's a house. And you know, you may have a situation where the parents bought and paid for the house. They own it. And maybe one of their children was charged with some of these sexual offence charges, and that means that their house could be now subject to an investigation for forfeiture.

Mr. Speaker, it just seems to really stretch the boundaries of people's rights, and I think there will be a lot of questions about the extent of this. I know that when the government introduced this bill they made some connection to rural crime. That's really a stretch, Mr. Speaker. I don't see how this would help at all in terms of some of the situations that my family on the farm is facing when it comes to, you know, gas theft out of the gas tank. I mean, you would have heard those stories several times in your own riding, Mr. Speaker.

Making property subject to forfeiture because you have some nexus to a criminal offence like a DUI seems to not be something that would help with the situation that rural folks, that my family is facing in rural Saskatchewan. So I think we'll have a lot of questions about this in committee. We need to understand clearly what the government is intending on this bill. But I think they may have missed the mark a little bit, and certainly in terms of their public announcements reassuring rural folks that they're looking after them, I just don't see how this bill will advance that at all.

Now I might be missing something obviously, but certainly we will use the intervening time here after the session is over to explore this more carefully. And I know my colleague from Regina Douglas Park will ably do that before we actually get to the committee stage of this bill. So at this point I would move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 150, *An Act to amend The Seizure of Criminal Property Act, 2009*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 150. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 151

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 151** — *The Personal Property Security Amendment Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate with respect to Bill No. 151, *The Personal Property Security Amendment Act, 2018*. This bill is actually very technical in nature, Mr. Speaker. It's an important area requiring effective legislation, Mr. Speaker. But it's critical that we get this right, and this is an area that certainly I'll defer a fair amount to the legal community and stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, certainly to our Justice critic, the fine member from Regina Douglas Park who will be leading consultations, Mr. Speaker, on this front.

Certainly, you know, the reality of electronic transfers and how securities are registered, Mr. Speaker, is important that we have a system that has integrity and that we have legislation that is reflective of modern realities, such as improving the law around recognition of electronic chattel paper, for example, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we have realities in today's economy and with respect to how we do business and e-commerce, Mr. Speaker, and the internet that require updates to legislation.

And the critical thing is that when legislation like this is brought forward, that all the impacts are understood, both the intended consequences but possibly unintended consequences as well, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how much you've thought about electronic chattel paper, Mr. Speaker, but this bill . . . Getting prepared for entering in here today has caused me to want to do a little bit of homework on this front. Mostly it meant that I was picking the minds of the member from Regina Douglas Park and the member from Saskatoon Nutana briefly before entering into conversation here today, Mr. Speaker.

The bill also, as told by the minister, aims to clarify perfection rules, where goods are removed from one jurisdiction to another. And certainly that's important. You think of the mobility of goods, Mr. Speaker, as well as again the way that business is done and the role of the internet and e-commerce, as well, determining the rules governing a prior security interest and the location of a debtor. These are all very important.

We have to make sure that we're standing up for Saskatchewan people on this front, that we're thinking of consumers, Mr. Speaker, making sure that, you know, that this doesn't disadvantage the average person across the province, making sure that their rights are protected in *The Personal Property Security Act* here, Mr. Speaker.

There's also some changes to the rules governing the protection of transferees of negotiable collateral, Mr. Speaker. It also sets out the rights of assignees and sets out the rights of a secured party on default where the collateral is a licence, Mr. Speaker. So there's a fair amount of change here, Mr. Speaker. A lot of it is technical. It's certainly legal, Mr. Speaker.

[16:15]

Certainly we need to ensure that in this bill there's basic values of fairness and respect for individuals, for people across the province; that this puts Saskatchewan people in a world of e-commerce and in the new world that many navigate; that it puts them in a position of strength; and certainly when it comes to

their personal property, Mr. Speaker, the security of that personal property.

Too often we've seen from this Sask Party government, a government that rushes forward without consultation with stakeholders, far too often have rammed forward legislation where unintended consequences weren't fully thought through, Mr. Speaker, and I'll say too often aren't looking out for the average person in Saskatchewan — the everyday person, the underdog, Mr. Speaker, the person — and often are looking out for big-moneyed interests that are often out of province as well, Mr. Speaker.

And it's critical in a piece of legislation like this that we get it right from a technical perspective, that we get it right from a legal perspective, and that the values behind it are values of fairness and that look out for the everyday consumer, the average person across this province — rural, urban, or otherwise, Mr. Speaker. And those are questions that aren't answered from the very brief entry by the minister into what's a very substantive and technical piece of legislation and a very technical sphere.

The minister did recognize someone who's been an adviser, an expert in the field, Mr. Speaker. I'm certainly aware that that individual comes with a lot of respect, and that in a way is heartening, Mr. Speaker. But we need to make sure that all stakeholders have been engaged meaningfully across this sector, Mr. Speaker.

With that being said, and at this point in the day, with respect to Bill No. 151, *The Personal Property Security Amendment Act, 2018*, I'll adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 151, *The Personal Property Security Amendment Act, 2018*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 152

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 152 — *The Builders' Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Good to join debate this afternoon on Bill No. 152, *The Builders' Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act, 2018*.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say right off the top here that there's a significant amount of work that was undertaken by the Saskatchewan Construction Association here in the province and by other folks in the various construction-related industries. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, there are different places you can drive to in this province where the absence of this kind of legislation and the wicked penalties that get exacted from the hard-working men

and women, hard-working contractors, hard-working subcontractors gets exacted around this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, in terms of where the sector is at right now in terms of new builds and housing starts and the like, you know, I don't know that the member from Meadow Lake, I don't know that his speech this afternoon during question period about how great everything is going, is going to pay a whole lot of bills out there — promptly or otherwise, Mr. Speaker — in terms of what's happening in the construction sector. And I would suspect that it is not the case that that's going to help out the folks in the sector.

But, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what's happening with the sector . . . And again this particular measure in and of itself, you know, has a lot to recommend it, Mr. Speaker, and of course sets up the administration of it and the different sort of appeal processes and the adjudication that goes along with it. But the bottom line being that people should be paid promptly and on time for a job that is done makes all kinds of good sense, Mr. Speaker, and it recognizes the fact that the margins are always pretty tough and demanding, but now more so than ever.

So while this government, on the one hand they've got, you know, a bunch of self-congratulatory speeches that don't pay too many bills out there in the real world, Mr. Speaker, in terms of this particular piece of legislation, it would seem to be a positive thing. It would seem to be responding to a need that is demonstrated quite thoughtfully and intelligently and forcefully by the sector itself.

And would but that the government had responded to the same sort of protestations around the expansion and the doubling of the take that went on with the PST, Mr. Speaker, and the way that it was applied to construction labour in a way that, you know, for decades had been fought off. But it has seen fit to expand it of course, Mr. Speaker, and then scratch their heads and wonder what's happening with the various decreases in building permits, housing starts, and the like, Mr. Speaker, the way that that ripples through the sector both in terms of employment and in terms of the dollar volumes of business, Mr. Speaker.

So again it's, you know, for a measure in and of itself, we're glad to see this being responded to by the government. And we know that we'll have more consultation to do in terms of getting out and around the sector and making sure that things are as they seem to be, that the reality measures up to the billing, Mr. Speaker. But again in the main, it's too bad that they can listen in this one instance but not pay closer attention to the fact that we've had some terrible impacts on the sector, on tradespeople, on contractors, and subcontractors when it comes to the sector as a whole, Mr. Speaker, particularly as it relates to the expansion of the PST to construction labour.

So, Mr. Speaker, as ever we've got our work cut out for us when it comes to this government. It's sort of like, you know, how do you know you should . . . Any time they say something's great, you know, we'll take that with a grain of salt, Mr. Speaker, and do the work of consultation and diligence to make sure that this is the case. And I know that we've got some sharp minds and sharp pencils on this side that'll be undertaking that work.

But I guess at this stage of the game, Mr. Deputy Speaker, no

need to further prolong the magic, as the saying might go, on Bill No. 152. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 152, *The Builders' Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 152. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Once again thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to address the debate on Bill No. 133, *An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007*. Mr. Speaker, this really is quite a short Act, but I think it speaks volumes in terms of this government's inability to fix an election date. And you know, there's a significant bit of history that goes along with this.

Basically the bill is fixing the next election on or before, of course, Monday, October 26th, 2020. This doesn't preclude an earlier election if the Assembly's dissolved by order of the Lieutenant Governor, so we know that the government could actually call an election prior to that date. But this bill goes part and parcel with another bill that's fixing the date for local municipal elections, which this government has now fixed for two weeks following the provincial election. And that's obviously going to cause a lot of problems for folks in the province in terms of the timing of those two election dates.

But I think, Mr. Speaker, it would be helpful to go back actually to the 1980s on this, because in the 1980s we had two terms that went beyond four years. The sort of unwritten norm in Saskatchewan has been around the four-year mark. But when Premier Grant Devine failed to hold an election after four years and he actually extended it to four and a half years in one instance and went to the full five years before his government was defeated, that obviously raised a lot of issues.

So there were changes made to *The Legislative Assembly Act* back in the early '90s to deal with some of the fallout of that. In particular, what happened in the '80s is that there were some ridings that actually went without an MLA for more than two years because of the way that the Act was set. There was no law saying you have to have a by-election six months after somebody steps down from their seat or may pass away or whenever a seat is vacated. There was no law at that time requiring a by-election to be held. So the government of the day introduced changes to *The Legislative Assembly Act* which required that there must be a by-election six months following the vacancy of a seat.

And so that seemed to be all right for a while, but there was a problem with that, Mr. Speaker. And what was happening then if you think about it, let's say we're well into the legislative term. We're expecting an election in November but someone steps down in March so there is only a few months before the next general election is anticipated to be held. Then a by-election has to be called. What happens then is you have a by-election and then two months later you might be having a provincial election. So that was causing problems because of the six-month term that was imposed in the early '90s.

So there was a bill brought forward I think in 2004. And it was really instructive to read the debates, Mr. Speaker, at that time in terms of what the Sask Party members and opposition were saying about this. Because there was definitely some very serious concerns raised by the member from Lumsden-Morse and the member from Cannington about the idea of going too long because the bill was proposing 36 months, that you don't have to have the six-month by-election after 30 months in the term. And I know it sounds kind of confusing, but what ended up happening is the government passed a bill that said, okay, 40 months into the term because we almost always have elections after 48 months, we will say no by-election needed.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we now see . . . and we've actually introduced a private bill to fix this problem. It should have been brought into this bill, No. 133. And hopefully the government will do that because they know it's the right thing to do. And I think members opposite would support it because they certainly supported this in 2004, that there should be an amendment to Bill 133 to ensure that no seat in Saskatchewan is left vacant for 12 months or 14 months, as the case will be when the member from Eastview and the member from Regina Walsh Acres step down in August of next year.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, they've both accepted a nomination for the federal Conservative Party and there's going to be a federal election, so they're going to have to run at some point. But if they step down before August, there would be a by-election triggered. And that would be the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker. In fact they could step down any time and allow themselves to do the proper campaigning, but also ensure that there's a by-election so that the members from Eastview and the members from Regina Walsh Acres don't have to sit unrepresented in this House for 14 months, Mr. Speaker. And that's what's going to happen.

When those two members step down their people will be unrepresented for 14 months. And if anybody thinks that's acceptable, I want to have that discussion. If members opposite think that's acceptable, why did they change their tune from 2004? If they think that's acceptable, are they going to be able to tell the people from Eastview and the people from Regina Walsh Acres, you don't deserve an MLA for 14 months? You don't need one. There's no point having one. My colleague suggested they barely have one now, Mr. Speaker. That may be debatable. But, Mr. Speaker, I think what is happening here is this government is supporting the notion that constituencies can be unrepresented for up to 14 months.

[16:30]

And why is that, Mr. Speaker? Because with all the talk about

fixed election dates that this government has put on the record, they've only managed to get a four-year term once, out of three — once out of three. The first time in 2007 when this government brought in a fixed election date, they fixed it four years following, and that was when I was elected, in November of 2011.

But now, 2016, four and a half years; 2020, another four and a half years. They've effectively not been able to do what they bragged about doing at least two times out of the three times that they've managed to call an election, Mr. Speaker. So there's a problem with fixing the election date obviously. They can't fix it because something else always happens so they can't fix it. But the fact of what they're doing, Mr. Speaker, is they're creating a situation where constituencies in this province can be unrepresented for up to 14 months.

And I want to remind the House that this isn't the first time that this has happened, Mr. Speaker. I have an article here from CBC on February 13th, 2015. You'll recall this, Mr. Speaker. We were both sitting at the time. And there was a Sask Party MLA. His name was Darryl Hickie. And he picked . . . He was tired of being here. He didn't want to be here anymore, so he thought, well I'm going to go back to my policing work. He enjoyed policing way more than he enjoyed being in this Assembly. So what did he do? He announced . . . He set the day when he would formally quit the legislature to return to his job as a police officer — March 9th. And this article goes on to tell us that Saskatchewan's last general election was November 7th. Adding 40 months to that date, one arrives at March 7th, 2015. So Mr. Hickie did the math. He figured out when he could get out of here without triggering a by-election because that's hard, you know, like it's hard on the people. And plus we know what happened in that seat, Mr. Speaker.

So that was an important choice, I think. And what happened . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, we know what happened in that seat. I was thinking of another seat, Mr. Speaker. I realized as I said it. Unfortunately I do know what happened in that seat. But I think come 2020 we're going to see a very different result, Mr. Speaker — October 26th, 2020 which is the fixed election date — because they're trying it again with this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Now what's really interesting then, Darryl Hickie resigned March 9th. The next election if you all will recall was in April of 2016. So that riding was without an MLA for 13 months. And these guys seem to think, no problem; that's perfectly fine. But if they really did care, they would support the private member's bill that was introduced in the House last week, which would say, if you can't fix your election date within 48 months, then we go back to the six-month rule.

If you guys can't get your act together to deal with the fixed election date problems that you have, the Act needs to be amended to deal with the fact that there are several ridings in this province where . . . If we're going to have fixed elections, Mr. Speaker, we need fixed by-elections. We have several ridings in this province where . . . Darryl Hickie has chosen to resign because he wanted to go back to police work. We've got two members currently sitting in this Assembly who have decided they'd rather be involved with Andrew Scheer's Conservatives. Well, Mr. Speaker, where's their heart? Where's their soul? I'm

not sure. And how can they effectively represent, and especially if they step down in August, which is the 40-month trigger that's currently in the legislation? Their ridings will be unrepresented for 14 months. And I know there are members opposite who are on the record that say this is unacceptable.

And so here's a chance for this government to do the right thing. They could do the right thing by amending this bill to incorporate the changes that were suggested in the private member's bill. And I think there are members opposite who understand what I'm talking about, and they're thinking, you know what? That is the right thing to do. And I hope they talk to their colleagues, and I hope they think about the fact that Eastview, Walsh Acres could be without an MLA for 14 months, that Darryl Hickie's riding, Prince Albert Carlton, was without an MLA for 13 months. And, Mr. Speaker, that's a gap that's not acceptable to the people of Saskatchewan.

So I'm going to call on members opposite in the government to think about this and to make it right, and that if there's going to be a vacancy for more than six months, there really should be a by-election, regardless of what point in the legislative cycle we're in.

Now we know in this case it is 54 months, Mr. Speaker. We actually know it's going to be 54 months because they fixed the election date. So they can absolutely move the 40-month period up to . . . Let's add six months to that. It should be 46 months, or 48 months, Mr. Speaker, in which case the members from Eastview and Walsh Acres would have a problem, because if we amended the bill as it should be amended, and add that extra six months after the 40 months, they wouldn't be able to run federally, or they would trigger a by-election, Mr. Speaker.

And I think there's some mockery perhaps, Mr. Speaker, or maybe some misunderstanding of what's actually being discussed here, Mr. Speaker, by the actual members that are going to be vacating their seats after 40 months so that they can run federally. Maybe some of their colleagues might want to school them a little bit on the impact of what they're doing and also what they're calling into question when it comes to *The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007*, because that's where the problem is, Mr. Speaker. If these guys can't get fixed elections within 48 months, they should change that section of the Act and make sure that that 40-month period be extended to within six months of the fixed election date. That would be the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker, and I'm counting on these people to do the right thing.

So at this point I don't have anything else to add to the debate, but it's an interesting debate, Mr. Speaker, and I look forward to the members opposite and government making those changes that are needed to make this legislature work. So I move to amend the debate on Bill No. 133, *An Act to amend The Legislative Assembly Act, 2007*.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise again this afternoon and enter into debate on Bill No. 134, *The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2018*. Mr. Speaker, I'm going to borrow, I'm sure, many of the arguments that my very talented and capable colleague from Nutana has already made with regard to the timing of the decision by this government to propose timing for the next provincial election and also their proposed changes to the timing for the municipal elections.

To recap, what is being proposed is that the next provincial election be held in October of 2020 and that the municipal election be held a mere two weeks later in November of 2020. As has also been mentioned several times, not only is that a very tight timeline for two elections in and of itself. We also would throw into that mix the fact that the US [United States] elections will take place on November 3rd of 2020, Mr. Speaker.

I'm sure many of us here will recall door knocking during the last provincial election and the level of voter fatigue that was experienced by a number of voters, people who were frankly frustrated with the amount of times that they had been contacted and people were on their doorstep. And I'm not sure that it did much to bolster the provincial election numbers. I know that numbers were largely down.

With regard to municipal elections, they were the lowest in record if I'm not mistaken, Mr. Speaker. We have an issue with municipal election turnouts. The most immediate form of government that we have, making decisions about things very local to our communities, but yet we had a very high percentage of those positions going uncontested and a very low voter turnout, Mr. Speaker.

And I would hope that the government would turn its mind to the question of how we improve voter turnout in municipal elections and provincial elections. And I'm not sure that this decision and the timing of these two elections is going to improve that. In fact I'm quite concerned that it's going to actually lead to lower municipal turnout and potentially fewer candidates to run for municipal elections.

There is a requirement that is proposed around criminal record checks for candidates that will have to be submitted 90 days before running for municipal election. Certainly not a problem with a requirement to have a criminal record check. It is important that we know the kind of backgrounds of people that we are electing or appointing in the province and if they have any concerning criminal charges. But the timing of the provincial election followed so closely by the municipal election I think will select a number of people out of that process. Often we've seen people move between municipal elections and provincial elections. That will be something that will be precluded by the

timing proposed in this bill.

The last time that the terms were changed for municipal elections, school board elections, between the 2009 elections the terms were three years. I know between 2009 and 2012 and prior to that, municipal terms were three years and then it was changed to four years. That's why it was a little surprising that one of the proposals that was put forth by this government, or at least floated in the media, was moving the municipal election to 2015, so making that a full five years, Mr. Speaker. And sometimes you wonder if trial balloons, sort of ridiculous trial balloons are floated like that as a bit of a straw argument, and that this was perhaps the plan all along.

Of course what this also does, the timing of these elections, is to, for the second election in a row, give the government an extra six months of governance despite the fact that they are on record numerous times talking about the importance of four-year terms. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that that is important again to point out that there is an extra full year of governance when you combine the last, potentially, the last two elections.

Something that my colleague again from Nutana pointed out, and I'd like to read into the record because I think it is very important that people are aware of this proposed change, is a new clause that's being added, or proposed to be added, with this bill. And it's subsection (2) that will read, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations respecting any other matter necessary for determining a person's eligibility as a candidate."

Mr. Speaker, I share my colleague's concern with this proposed clause in that this allows, without benefit of oversight of this Assembly, allows for the regulations of who can and cannot be a candidate for local governance to be made outside the scrutiny of this Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, that's deeply concerning actually.

And I would like to know why that decision was made and why that type of information wouldn't be made readily available to the whole population of the province well in advance of any election, and why the government thinks that that — the type of scrutiny that we are applying to this bill today — shouldn't apply to further changes to eligibility for candidacy. And I know that that will be something that the critic will also have some questions about. And hopefully we will hear some answers.

I guess overall my comments distill down to this: it's curious, the timing of this proposed change to the election timing in the province. I fear that it will actually hinder both the voter turnout and the number of candidates that will come forward, particularly with regard to the municipal elections. I think that that is more than unfortunate. It is actually a bit of an affront to democracy, and we should be looking to improve those numbers rather than doing things that, whether intentionally or not, might reduce those numbers.

[16:45]

One of the other things I noted just as . . . And I wanted to make comment on it. At the very beginning of the bill there were a number of changes. So the last change to this Act came in 2015. And there will be those at home and in this Assembly that remember that some of the changes that were proposed in 2015,

prior to the 2016 election, were around voter eligibility. And there were some very significant and I think borne-out concerns at that time that some of those changes would actually make it more difficult for people to vote.

Certainly at that time I was managing a women's shelter and there were a lot of concerns amongst the women in the shelter who often either left their ID [identification] at home or didn't have access — and the cost of getting ID is prohibitive for some people in this province — that they would have more difficulty voting. And when I noticed the amount of changes that had to be corrected in this bill, I wonder, you know, how quickly that was put together and what the reason was for that bill in the first place. And again I think that is another example of democracy moving in the wrong direction. We should be looking to ensure that people have not only the right but the ability to exercise their right to vote, and that we should be encouraging at every turn the participation in the democratic process.

And you know, this is a concern here. It's a concern across the country and certainly on the continent. So it's something I think that this government would do well to turn their minds to, you know, instead of looking for what is politically expedient, looking at what is good for our democracy and what is good for the people of this province and their representation and their ability to participate in elections.

But again I'm sure that my colleagues and the critic will have all of these questions and more when they move to provide more scrutiny to this bill. But for now I think I will conclude my remarks and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 134.

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

Mr. Bonk: — With leave for an introduction, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce four guests from the Moosomin constituency, seated in the west gallery. We have Ryan and Lauren Maurer and Owen and . . . Sorry, Owen, what's . . . The Pehruls. Sorry, I just met her today. They're good farmers from north of Grenfell and they do a lot of work in this province on furthering the development of C & D [conservation and development] projects. And I'd like all members in the House to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Being so that committees may work this evening, I will move that we adjourn the House.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved to adjourn the House. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly

to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:50.]

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