



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

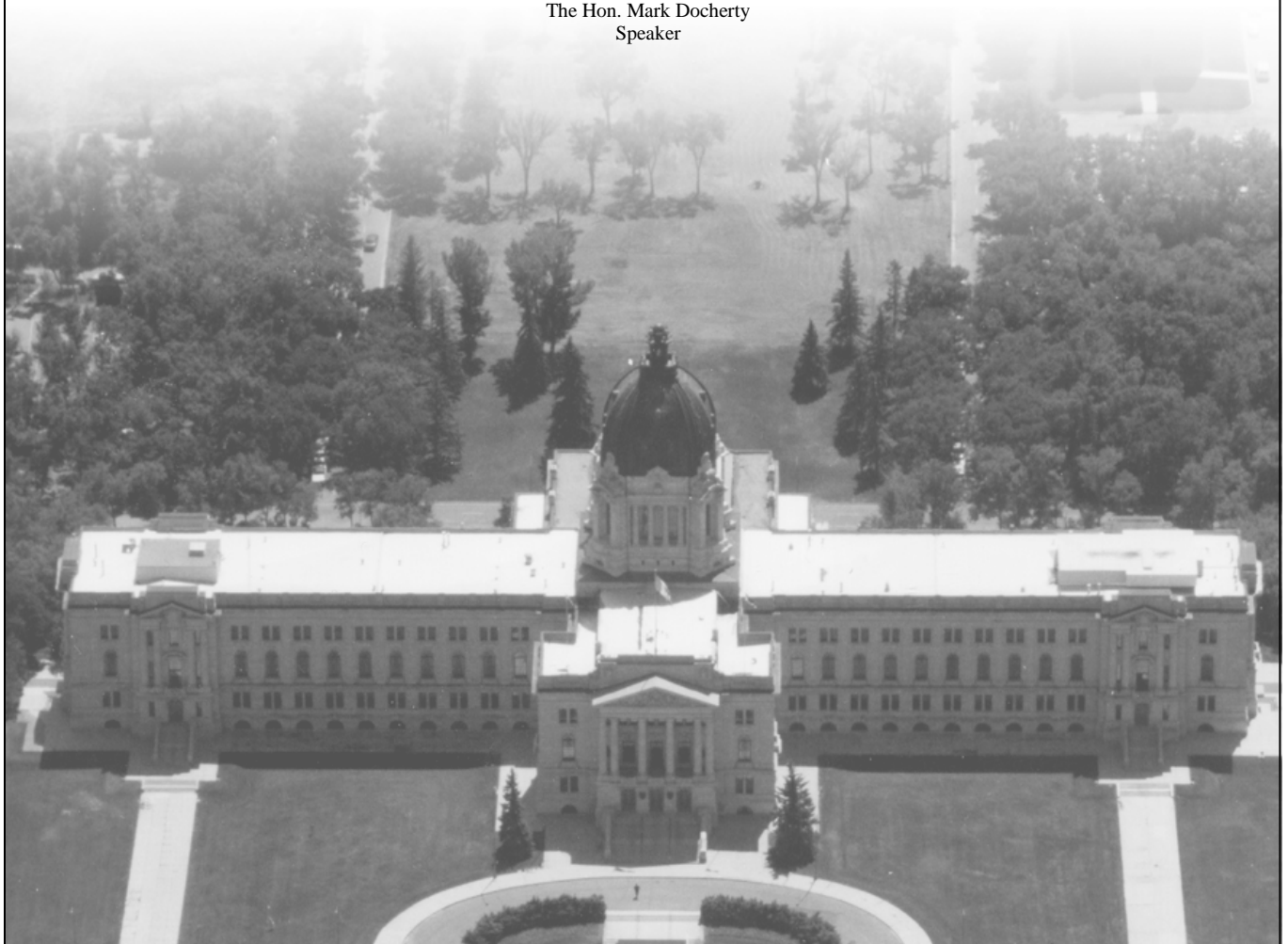
of the

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

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

Beaudry-Mellor, Hon. Tina — Regina University (SP)
Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)
Belanger, Buckley — Athabasca (NDP)
Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)
Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)
Brkich, Hon. Greg — Arm River (SP)
Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)
Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)
Chartier, Danielle — Saskatoon Riversdale (NDP)
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)
Cox, Herb — The Battlefords (SP)
D'Autremont, Dan — Cannington (SP)
Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)
Docherty, Hon. Mark — Regina Coronation Park (SP)
Doke, Larry — Cut Knife-Turtleford (SP)
Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)
Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)
Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)
Forbes, David — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)
Francis, Ken — Kindersley (SP)
Goudy, Todd — Melfort (SP)
Hargrave, Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)
Harpauer, Hon. Donna — Humboldt-Watrous (SP)
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)
Hart, Glen — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)
Heppner, Nancy — Martensville-Warman (SP)
Hindley, Everett — Swift Current (SP)
Kaeding, Hon. Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)
Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)
Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)
Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)
Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)
McCall, Warren — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)
McMorris, Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)
Meili, Ryan — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)
Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)
Michelson, Warren — Moose Jaw North (SP)
Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)
Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)
Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)
Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)
Olauson, Eric — Saskatoon University (SP)
Ottenbreit, Hon. Greg — Yorkton (SP)
Pedersen, Yens — Regina Northeast (NDP)
Rancourt, Nicole — Prince Albert Northcote (NDP)
Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)
Ross, Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)
Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)
Sproule, Cathy — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)
Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)
Steinley, Warren — Regina Walsh Acres (SP)
Stewart, Lyle — Lumsden-Morse (SP)
Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)
Tochor, Corey — Saskatoon Eastview (SP)
Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)
Weekes, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)
Wilson, Hon. Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)
Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)
Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

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

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

Hansard on the Internet

Hansard and other documents of the
Legislative Assembly are available
within hours after each sitting.

<http://www.legassembly.sk.ca/legislative-business/legislative-calendar>

[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I welcome students from A.E. Peacock Collegiate in Moose Jaw, seated in the west gallery. Peacock is the largest high school in Moose Jaw, and they offer a variety of different courses like business and home economics, industrial arts, technologies, vocal training, physical education. And tonight is their premiere performance of their school play, *The Wizard of Oz*. So we'll look forward to that in Moose Jaw.

There are 600 students that attend A.E. Peacock Collegiate, and today we have 32 of them attending with us today along with their teacher, Ms. Carrie Kiefer, who is really no stranger to the Assembly. She brings her class here every year, and we appreciate that. She's very dedicated to the democratic process and the legislative procedures, so we welcome her. Along with Ms. Kiefer is the student assistant, Mark Gilliland.

They'll be watching the proceedings, Mr. Speaker, and then they'll be touring the legislature. We'll have a picture taken on the steps. And then I get to meet with them and answer a few of their questions, and I may have a couple of questions of my own. So I ask all members to welcome A.E. Peacock Collegiate to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I want to join the member from Moose Jaw North in welcoming Peacock school. My cousin Cassandra Loucks is up there. Where is she? How are you doing, Cassandra? Slightly embarrassed. Anyways, Mr. Speaker, I wanted to welcome them and their class to their Legislative Assembly. Cassandra's mom Nicole was in last week, Mr. Speaker. And welcome the whole class from Peacock high school in Moose Jaw. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, I would like to introduce, sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, Birju Patel. Birju Patel is the founder and CEO [chief executive officer] of a Regina-based tech start-up, Deliverr.ca, which is allowed to deliver everything online through a website or through a mobile app. Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to join me to welcome this smart businessman in his legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to join with the member opposite and welcome Mr. Patel to his Assembly and thank him for his work as a local entrepreneur.

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

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce someone that's seated in your gallery, actually hiding behind the clock so I can't see. It's a young lady . . . Oh, there she's moved over here. Okay. She's moved over here. It's a young lady I've had the pleasure of hanging around with for about 27 years. And I don't know why she hangs out with an old guy like me, but she does. But anyway, I think we've only been married 22, but we've been hanging out for 27.

So, Mr. Speaker, my wife is here. I'm very pleased to have her here, and I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming her to her Legislative Chambers.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again here today to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens, people, local businesses all across our province as it relates to the Sask Party's hike and then expansion of the PST [provincial sales tax] onto construction labour, Mr. Speaker. Of course the consequences of this have been devastating. Permits are down across the province. Jobs have been lost. Local businesses have been hit hard, Mr. Speaker. Really this is the epitome of a job-killing tax at a time where we need nothing more than jobs in this province — jobs being created, investment being made, Mr. Speaker. And it's all to pay for the Sask Party government's mismanagement, Mr. Speaker.

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 here today are signed by concerned citizens of Regina. I so submit.

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

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the citizens of Saskatoon.

I do so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I'm rising to present a petition calling for a public inquiry into the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal. The people who have signed this petition want to bring to all of 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 those millions; the Sask Party continues to block key witnesses from providing testimony about the land deal; and it is Saskatchewan people who footed the bill for the GTH land deal and deserve nothing less than the truth.

So I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

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

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wanted to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals, and even those living outside of the province, to make unlimited donations to our province's political parties.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, that the people of Saskatchewan deserve to live in a fair province where all voices are equal and money can't influence politics. But over the past 10 years the Saskatchewan Party has collected \$12.61 million in corporate donations, and of that, \$2.87 million came from companies outside Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan politics should belong to Saskatchewan people. We know that the federal government and the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, 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'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition today come from the communities of Lumsden, Regina Beach, and Assiniboia. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased 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 that this oversight results in unnecessary illness and suffering that 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 medications cost 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 Sask Party government to immediately support the establishment of universal pharmacare for Saskatchewan patients and advocate for national pharmacare for all Canadians.

This particular petition is signed by individuals from Saskatoon, Edenwold, and Regina. I do so present.

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

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today come from Rosthern, Hanley, Cowessess, and Regina. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Movember Team Raises Funds for Men's Health

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well I am sure there

are a few spouses out there who will be happy to see their husbands' moustaches laid to rest for another 11 months. Movember has come to a close and it was a great month of raising awareness for men's physical and mental health. I'm happy to announce that Team Mo raised over \$4,100. The funds from our campaign will help the Movember Foundation's goal in saving and improving men's lives through projects focused on prostate cancer, testicular cancer, mental health, and suicide prevention.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank my teammates. Thank you to our team captain, the Minister for Rural and Remote Health, as well as the Minister of Agriculture, the member from Lumsden-Morse, the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow, the member from Saskatchewan Rivers, and Grant McLellan. Thank you for your campaign efforts and for bringing awareness to this important charity.

I would also like to thank Adam Kletchko, Movember Regina, Regina firefighters, and members from both sides of this House for joining us on November 19th as we raised the flag in support of the campaign.

I would also like to thank each member in the House for their kind donation, as well as our staff and families for joining our efforts in this year's campaign. Thank you.

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

Shelter Director Awarded Protective Services Medal

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate my friend and Regina Lakeview resident Maria Hendrika. Maria is no stranger to the community, nor to many in this Assembly. Not only has Maria ensured that thousands of women fleeing domestic violence were safer and more supported through her work at Regina Transition House, she has also worked to change the stigma in society and break the silence surrounding domestic abuse. Maria has selflessly shared her own experiences as a survivor to break through some of the shame that many women feel and keep silent around domestic violence, and she made it her life's work to improve opportunities for women seeking safety and a new start.

Maria spent much of the past four decades prior to her retirement working for the shelter in one role or another but was best known as the executive director and the driving force behind the House with Heart. Maria oversaw a 3,000 square foot expansion to Transition House, which doubled the bed capacity ... sorry, increased by 50 per cent. She advocated for years along with colleagues to have the shelter workers eligible for the Protective Services Medal for the work that they do on the front lines. 2017 was the first year that shelter workers were eligible for this award, and at a ceremony this fall, Maria Hendrika was counted among the deserving recipients.

I invite all members to join me in thanking Maria and congratulating her on receiving the Protective Services Medal 2018.

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

[10:15]

Saskatoon Roadway Project Wins National Infrastructure Award

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This fall the city of Saskatoon received a National Award for Innovation and Excellence in Public-Private Partnerships. The city of Saskatoon's north commuter parkway and traffic bridge project received the 2018 Infrastructure Award. Mr. Speaker, this award is very well deserved, and solidifies a strong, positive impact that a P3 [public-private partnership] project partnership can have on our infrastructure.

The council said that the project was more than about improving infrastructure and reducing commutes. It was also about building a more inclusive community. The name of the parkway bridge pays tribute to Chief Mistawasis, the Cree chief who signed Treaty 6.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to mention that the design of the traffic bridge used complex engineering to preserve the historical character of the replaced bridge while meeting today's safety standards. This project is the largest infrastructure project ever delivered in the city of Saskatoon, and is the first bundled transportation P3 in Canada. The cost savings by using the P3 delivery model saved millions, compared to conventional project procurement.

Mr. Speaker, thank you to the partners — city of Saskatoon, Graham Commuter Partners, ASL Paving, BBGI, Buckland & Taylor, Clifton Associates, National Bank Financial, Tetra Tech, and Urbaser Environment. Thank you for your commitment and the work on this project, and congratulations on the award.

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

World AIDS Day

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark World AIDS Day this Saturday, December 1st, which is acknowledged each year to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS [human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome].

Saskatchewan has the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in the country, a rate that is almost three times the national average. For a third straight year, new cases of HIV have increased in Saskatchewan. This is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. It's embarrassing that Saskatchewan has the highest rates of HIV/AIDS in Canada and we still don't have a comprehensive plan to address this crisis from the provincial government.

This week I spoke at two HIV flag raisings in Regina. Although we've made progress in terms of access to medication to treat this disease, there has not been an HIV strategy in Saskatchewan since 2014. Until we have a strategy, we won't see these numbers go down.

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the incredible work done by advocates and in front-line care on this issue across the province. It's not easy work and we thank you for what you do. I call on all members to join with me in thanking these organizations and care workers for all that they do, and to commit to deliver on a comprehensive plan to address this crisis

in Saskatchewan. Thank you.

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

Gabriel Housing Corporation Announces New Project

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In October I had the privilege to attend the announcement for the new 12-unit housing initiative that will be constructed by Gabriel Housing Corporation. These 12 new units will provide safe and secure housing for hard-to-house single parents and their children. The building will be leased to the Eagle Heart Centre, formerly known as Aboriginal Family Services, and will include addiction counselling, employment supports, parenting and relationship counselling, and cultural activities.

Mr. Speaker, this is a remarkable project that will truly make a difference in the lives of people who live there. Mr. Speaker, the project is a result of joint investment from our government, the federal government, and the city of Regina. Mr. Speaker, an investment like this ensures that the most vulnerable people in our province are not being left behind.

I wish to thank the Government of Canada and the city of Regina and all those involved for supporting this project. I also commend Gabriel Housing Corporation for their vision, hard work, and sheer determination. Each and every day you touch lives of many. Most importantly, to the families who will be living in these homes, we wish them continued success and hope that they will enjoy their surroundings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Prince Albert Raiders Top of the League

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With football season winding down, that can only mean one thing: it's hockey season. I'm pleased to stand in the House today and announce that the Prince Albert Raiders are currently sitting in first place in the WHL [Western Hockey League] and on their sixth straight week of being the top team in the CHL [Canadian Hockey League]. With a total of 24 wins and one loss, the P.A. [Prince Albert] Raiders are doing their community proud.

Just last Tuesday, Mr. Speaker, Brett Leason recorded his first WHL hat trick against the Lethbridge Hurricanes, upping his goal count to 22 in the current season. The Raiders have pushed their winning streak to now 14 games . . . I think that's 16 games, featuring a pair of shut-outs and a first career goal from goaltender Ian Scott. Yes, Mr. Speaker, you heard me correctly. This Maple Leafs prospect recorded his first ever career goal and was named the Vaughn CHL Goaltender of the Week for the regular season ending November 18th, posting a 3-0-0-0 record with two shut-out victories.

Now it may be too early to call but I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this team could truly be a Memorial Cup contender. Mr. Speaker, I now ask this Assembly to join me in congratulating GM [general manager] Curtis Hunt and head coach Marc Habscheid on their fine leadership, as well as wish the boys best of luck as they continue to dominate the league.

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

Saskatchewan Music Week Features Awards and Industry Summit

Mr. Olauson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is proud to proclaim Saskatchewan Music Week from November 25th to December 2nd. On Sunday evening I had the great honour to bring greetings on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan to the first ever Saskatchewan Music Awards held at The Exchange in Regina. The event featured performances by artists Andino Suns, Megan Nash, Eekwol and T-Rhyme, Chris Henderson with Poor Nameless Boy, Natural Sympathies, and Factor Chandelier.

I'd like to highlight Sask Music and thank them for their efforts in making this week a success and wish them well as they host their Very Prairie: Saskatchewan Music Summit. This event will welcome industry professionals from across Canada and abroad for an intensive four-day conference.

Mr. Speaker, music is such an important part of our culture here in Saskatchewan. Our music industry contributes to our economy and enhances the quality of life we cherish in this province. The Saskatchewan Music Awards was a great opportunity for myself to be introduced to some awesome local bands who I look forward to seeing again.

Mr. Speaker, congratulations to all the winners and nominees on Sunday, especially Saskatoon's The Sheepdogs, who won Rock/Pop Artist of the Year Award. Thanks for the great evening filled with music, celebration, and community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

West Texas Intermediate Differential

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The West Texas Intermediate price differential has heavy crude at \$10.29 a barrel. This deep discount is costing Saskatchewan millions of dollars a day. We know that a major element of that differential is export pipeline capacity, which all agree is the safest and most effective way to get Saskatchewan product to market and get a fair price for Saskatchewan oil.

The pipeline capacity isn't the only factor contributing to the WTI [West Texas Intermediate] differential. Lack of refining capacity, regulations around sulphur content, and production backlogs are influencing this discount as well.

Mr. Speaker, Alberta's Premier has appointed three envoys to "dig in" in a more systematic way with industry players to determine what kind of short-term solutions can be brought to the table, as well as establishing an energy upgrading unit to look at options for refining and other value-added production, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Trade has dismissed these efforts but offered no alternative measures. Added export pipeline capacity is of course

necessary, but even with the best possible timeline, it's still years away. This is an important issue for Saskatchewan right now, for the whole country right now. What steps is this government taking to explore all options and address the discount facing Saskatchewan heavy crude today?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Of course we watch what Alberta is doing with interest. But desperate times of course call for desperate measures. This is a case of, it's the economy, stupid. And more to the point, it's pipelines.

Our point has only ever been that if the current differential were to continue because the federal government has killed two pipelines and is stalling a third one, that that, over the course of a year, right now would have a \$300 million impact on royalties and a \$5 billion impact on the oil and gas sector, Mr. Speaker. And that has an impact on social services, and schools, highways, and hospitals.

More to the point, will the Leader of the Opposition explain standing behind a poster that read, leave the oil in the ground? Does he regret questioning the economics of pipelines?

In this province, Mr. Speaker, provincial total oil revenues between 2014 and '17 fell 50 per cent. What we are seeing is the perfect storm of no pipelines, regulatory overkill, and massive deregulation south of the border.

The member of Regina Rosemont pays lip service to pipelines when the cat is away, but where was he when a motion supporting pipelines at their recent convention was defeated?

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

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, the minister likes to wave a photo around and put words in my mouth, but what she never mentions, what she never mentions is what I said that day, Mr. Speaker. What she never mentions is what I had to say . . .

[Interjections]

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll say it again. The minister likes to wave around a photo and put words in my mouth, but what she never mentions is what I had to say that day. After the Husky oil spill, I was invited by indigenous leaders to speak, as a doctor, about the importance of clean water for our health, Mr. Speaker. I didn't decorate the stage, and I sure as heck didn't say anything about keeping anything in the ground.

I know how important oil and gas is in our province. But I sure as heck believe, I sure as heck believe — and I don't see much evidence of that belief on that side — that we need to keep that oil out of our water and off of the ground, Mr. Speaker. And when we put forward evidence-based, reasonable approaches to replacing pipelines, keeping water safe and keeping people working, they refuse to even consider it, Mr. Speaker. That minister would rather play gotcha games . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — All right. Question period isn't an opportunity to see who can yell over top of each other more, all right? You've got microphones; it's all good. Finish off your question, please.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That minister would rather play gotcha games than get to work and find solutions to the discount that's costing us all so much. Will this government smarten up, see how much this is costing us, and speak with Alberta's envoys, industry, and federal government representatives to explore Saskatchewan's role in short-term solutions?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, there is no need to play gotcha games when the material speaks for itself, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have had no clear answer from that Leader of the Opposition until this very day about anything relating to pipelines. It's his own words, Mr. Speaker. He has questioned the economics of pipelines and today he finally says that he supports them.

Well that is something to be congratulated, Mr. Speaker, but the point is that he has been absolutely silent when it comes to Bill C-69, for example, a major threat to our energy and resources industry in this province, Mr. Speaker. He's never asked. He never answers. Perhaps he will today, or over the course of the summer. Perhaps he could have got off his skateboard long enough to actually weigh in on some of the issues facing this sector because they are major, Mr. Speaker.

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

Effects of Taxes on Provincial Economy

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, this is a pretty sad response. This is a serious issue facing Saskatchewan, facing the whole country, costing us millions of dollars. And rather than being willing to get to work and address the real issues, they want to point fingers, stomp their feet, make partisan political games.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this is a real shame. Because in this province, what are we seeing? More poverty, more crime — the downstream effects of austerity. Our economy struggling and people suffering. The mid-year update shows that the government is set to spend \$23 million more than planned on social services because there are more people living on the margins. More kids in care. \$10 million more for jails and the courts because more people are coming into conflict with the law. And \$20 million more in health care because more people are sick, with Saskatchewan having the dubious distinction of some of the worst health outcomes in the entire country.

We warned this government repeatedly that their austerity approach would end up costing more, and now we're seeing those costs stacking up in the mid-year report. They like to tell us they'll take no lessons from the opposition; they're committed to making their mistakes on their own. Well, Mr. Speaker, the question is, will they learn from those mistakes? How much illness, poverty, and crime will it take for this government to

change course from this failed experiment in austerity?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have to say I am almost speechless at the hypocrisy of the member opposite asking about pipelines, asking about the energy sector. Mr. Speaker, this is a party opposite and a Leader of the Opposition opposite who gives a speech standing in front of a sign saying, keep it in the ground. This is a party opposite and a Leader of the Opposition opposite who claim today to support pipelines. Mr. Speaker, they claim to support pipelines but they just never found one they can support yet, Mr. Speaker. They voted against pipelines.

This is a Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker, who has donated money. To whom has he donated money, Mr. Speaker? Jagmeet Singh. Five hundred dollars he donated to Jagmeet Singh, his federal leader, Mr. Speaker, whose position is no pipelines; keep it in the ground; support the Leap Manifesto. That's the position of the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker. Everybody in the province knows it.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question was about illness. It was about poverty. It was about crime. About what's really affecting people in this province. And what we heard, instead of any commitment to action on any element of the economy that would help deal with that, we heard partisan "gotcha" nonsense, Mr. Speaker.

Key services have been pulled away. Taxes have increased for regular people and been cut for the wealthiest and the most well connected. It's a model that's been shown over and over again, here and around the world, to hurt people in the short term and slow down our long-term economic success. And the result isn't, as we see today, it isn't lower spending.

With added utilization pressures in health, in social services, and corrections, the need for new spending in today's mid-term update is a direct result of this government's failure to invest in people and needed services. And it's not just hurting our finances. It's hurting our overall economy, Mr. Speaker. The fiscal update shows that we're now expecting less economic growth for this year than previously predicted, and the growth projections for next year have been cut in half.

Will the Sask Party keep digging this hole? Or will they realize that when you're going in the wrong direction, the answer is not to go faster?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I find it rather interesting that those members opposite think this is going in the wrong direction when we're going to balance the budget. Those members opposite think it's going in the wrong direction when we're going to balance, when we've had increases in our social services budget year over year over year, while we're still reducing the deficit. They feel that's the wrong direction.

They feel that having a AAA credit rating, quite frankly, is the wrong direction. They think having the third-lowest debt-to-GDP [gross domestic product] ratio is the wrong direction.

Mr. Speaker, they are no economist. Quite frankly, what are their economic policies, Mr. Speaker? Well they think the carbon tax is okay. That will kill jobs in our province. They think we should have higher resource revenues. Mr. Speaker, that will kill jobs. They think we should have \$15 minimum wage. That will kill jobs. They oppose pipelines. That's killing jobs. They would have higher business tax. That kills jobs. That's the NDP [New Democratic Party]. There is no difference. New leader, same old NDP.

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

Management of Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Today's fiscal update affirmed what we already know. This government failed to save a dime during the best days and is now being hit by forces that should have been planned for. A rainy day fund would have helped us weather the impacts of this very resource downturn without the damaging cuts, without burdening families and households with the PST on kids' clothes, restaurant meals, and insurance, and without putting the brakes on a slowing economy by slapping the PST on the construction industry.

This mid-year update shows us the cost of going down this path. Saskatchewan's growth in 2017 was the lowest outside the Maritimes, and it's set to be the same next year as well. And if you can imagine, this update shows that the Sask Party government is adding \$2 billion of debt in this year alone. How can this government justify not saving a dime during the best days and now sticking people and our economy with the costs of their mismanagement?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, again the members opposite want to hold Alberta up as the poster child. If you look at the cumulative GDP growth or lack thereof over three years, Alberta is a net negative whereas Saskatchewan is a positive growth, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to hear that, Mr. Speaker. They just want to take a moment in time and use it for their political agenda. When they actually look at the overall big picture, Saskatchewan is growing, albeit maybe modest right now. We know the oil industry is hurting, Mr. Speaker. We understand that.

But what did the NDP do when times were tough, Mr. Speaker? They closed schools and they fired teachers. They closed hospitals and they fired health care workers. They kill jobs every time they have a chance to govern, Mr. Speaker. And our families moved out of our province by droves. They don't want to admit that our population's growing and that our economy is still strong. And we will get back to balance.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the fact is this Sask Party government is set to triple the net debt in this province, net debt-to-revenue. And even the former premier's favourite

measure, net debt-to-GDP, are all tripling as well in just a period of four years, Mr. Speaker. And now they're forcing costly short-term measures on Saskatchewan people at the cost of growing our economy and creating jobs, all while saddling people with the costs of their choices.

Let's remember, it's that government that created this mess with mismanaged projects and through their failure to plan. This year alone the mismanaged bypass and its massive overrun blows another hole through the budget to the tune of \$330 million, equivalent to the so-called deficit. And the GTH was supposed to bring \$6.5 million into the treasury. Well instead it's booked a big fat zero, Mr. Speaker. Why won't this government own up to the fact that it's their mismanagement that's costing people and our economy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — It's rather interesting that that member opposite would weave the bypass into his question when it was that member opposite that read petitions 88 times asking for the truck traffic to be taken off of roads in his constituency. Eighty-eight times, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it's kind of interesting because they have sat there and they criticize day over day over day. And even their criticisms are contradictory, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to see debt rise, but yet they want more money for mental health. They want more money for ambulance services. They want more money for libraries. They want more money for education. They want more money for early years. They want more money for addictions. They want more money for sexual assault. They want more money for legal aid funding. And the list goes on and on and on.

Mr. Speaker, I even hate to think what it would cost for what the Leader of the Opposition was asking for yesterday, which is to have roundabouts on all our highway intersections around the province. The price tag on that would be absolutely enormous, Mr. Speaker. What is their plan to pay for any of it? Because they don't approve any debt either.

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

Support for Mental Health and Addictions Services

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, this session we have seen families step forward and share their stories about the ongoing addictions crisis in Saskatchewan. These family members want to see action from the government. Mr. Speaker, if you're sick, you're sick. Mental health and addictions must be treated like any other chronic illness. We must allow the medical professionals to manage this crisis, but they currently lack the resources to effectively fight this battle.

People are dying. Families are suffering. The status quo is unacceptable. When will this government stop with the talk and start with the action and get serious about properly funding mental health and addiction services?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We recognize the serious situation with mental health and addictions. Mr. Speaker, it's been discussed many times on the floor of this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, we realize the situation. It's across the country, Mr. Speaker. It's not just unique to Saskatchewan.

We have increased funding for mental health and addictions by, I think it's about 60 per cent since we formed government, Mr. Speaker. But we recognize the demand's increasing. We recognize that more needs to be done. We've taken steps in that direction, Mr. Speaker. On the addictions side, just a couple of weeks ago there was a signing that I was privileged to take part in with the federal government on accessing money from the opioid emergency fund, Mr. Speaker, which we asked the federal government to expand to include crystal meth because of the huge problem with crystal meth in our province, indeed across the Prairies. Mr. Speaker, they agreed to that.

Mr. Speaker, we also announced a number of initiatives in last spring's budget and increased spending for mental health and addictions, Mr. Speaker. We did harm reduction announcements in the last number of weeks, Mr. Speaker. And you'll certainly see more spending, more resources in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we know it's been discussed several times on the floor of this Assembly. The reality is, is that the care is not there. And this minister knows that that opioid fund was federal dollars, and we didn't see the province contributing the same.

Mr. Speaker, today we're joined in the gallery by someone who knows how difficult it can be to get access to care for a loved one in our province. Kelly Csada's son Tama died three years ago from complications related to this addiction. He fought his addiction for over 10 years, and Kelly witnessed his struggle in a health system that couldn't provide him with the support he so desperately needed. Raising three children, Kelly didn't have thousands of extra dollars to pay for private treatment which made accessing treatment so much harder. Tama hit brick walls at every turn, from hospitals to social services detox treatment. It kept him stuck in his addiction.

My question to the minister: when can families like Kelly's expect this government to bring forward more treatment options and resources to properly help people battling addictions in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome Kelly to her Legislative Assembly. If she'd like to meet after question period, I certainly would be pleased to do that.

Mr. Speaker, as I said in the previous question, we recognize that more needs to be done. Governments right across the country, Mr. Speaker, are grappling with this issue. That's why you see the federal government also participating. I've spoken to a number of Health ministers across the country, Mr. Speaker.

Recently the Minister of Rural and Remote Health and myself had a telephone conversation with the Minister of Health in Manitoba.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, all governments are grappling with this issue, the entire mental health and addictions piece. Mr. Speaker, as I said, we've increased the number of addictions beds by over 30 per cent since we've formed government. We've increased spending. But, Mr. Speaker, we recognize that more absolutely needs to be done, Mr. Speaker, as I've said many times on the floor of this Assembly. You'll continue to see announcements from this government, and in the next budget you'll certainly see more dollars going towards this cause as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, talking about someday is not good enough. We need that money now to help people with addictions. Mr. Speaker, Kelly lost her son and is watching another loved one face many of the same obstacles accessing treatment. Kelly's sister lives in rural Saskatchewan, and there's nothing in terms of supports.

As with most people living with addictions, if they reach out for help, there is usually a small window. And if there's no help then, they'll go back to using. She will call detox and is told they'll hold a bed for her for two hours, but that's not much help when she lives two hours away and must rely on someone else to drive her. Her sister has a very small window to access the treatment she needs. When people fighting addictions want help, it must be there for them. Unfortunately, it's too late for Kelly's son. Her sister still has hope.

What is this government's plan to address the severe shortage of addiction services for people in every part of our province who are looking for help today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully disagree with the member opposite saying that we're saying someday. That's not the case at all, Mr. Speaker. There's been a number of initiatives were announced in the last budget, a number of initiatives been announced over the past number of weeks and months.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that more needs to be done. Mr. Speaker, we're certainly committed to doing that. Mr. Speaker, this scourge of drugs that's flooded across the country, Mr. Speaker, opioids, it's a crisis across the entire country. It's not unique to Saskatchewan. Crystal meth is probably more prevalent in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba. We recognize that. That's why, as I said, we've asked the federal government to recognize that in some of their funding.

Mr. Speaker, we've announced a number of harm reduction initiatives. Mr. Speaker, we've put more money into mental health. We announced a number of initiatives in the last budget, including PACT [police and crisis team] teams, which you saw some announcements recently in a number of cities around the province, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Measures to Improve Highway Intersection Safety

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was asked some questions that we took notice to, and I would just like the opportunity to be able to answer them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

Yesterday we were asked some questions regarding the Humboldt accident and the corner in question. The questions were, has an investigator been hired? And I think I did address that a little bit in my answers yesterday, but yes, we hired an independent consulting firm named McElhanney Consulting. He also asked, when will this be made available? We're just waiting for the final report so we're hoping to release that soon. And he also asked, how many complaints has our office received prior to last April concerning the Armley corner? So, Mr. Speaker, since last April, since our government actually formed, we're not aware of any specific complaints to this corner, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much for your time.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Surface Rights Legislation

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In 2013 the former Energy and Resources minister launched a review of surface rights legislation, noting that the current Act was introduced 50 years ago and, quote, "... has remained largely unchanged since that time," despite the fact that, again, quote, "The agriculture and oil and gas industries have experienced many changes over those years ..."

Now in 2015 the government engaged a number of farm groups in discussions about updating the legislation, but the resulting bill was never introduced. Now it's three years later and the producers in our province are looking for this government to look good on their commitment to update *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Act*. Will this government commit to opening up the surface rights legislation to make sure that farmers are fairly compensated when oil and gas companies are coming onto their land?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite who like to barrel in and propose command economy solutions ... Let's increase royalties and upset the stability in the energy sector. Let's replace every pipeline in the province and cost SaskEnergy alone \$50 billion. Let's keep the oil in the ground; that makes surface rights easy, Mr. Speaker. Or as the MLA for Regina Northeast has mused, let's get government back in the business of owning oil wells.

In contrast to a rational action, Mr. Speaker, we feel we must tread carefully, tread carefully when it comes to considering new legislation in this area. We know the issues. They were raised during the review of *The Surface Rights Acquisition and Compensation Act* a few years ago. And we remain open of

course to discussing potential changes with stakeholders. But we must ensure the timing is right for both producers and land owners. The recent challenges, the current challenges that the oil and gas sector face, particularly around the differential, Mr. Speaker, these challenges emphasize how important it is to fully consider changes before any new legislation is considered. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Mr. Speaker, back in 2015 at the time of that review, the president of the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan gave the example of the out-of-date cap of \$1,000 for damage caused by an energy sector operator. And the Saskatchewan Stock Growers Association said they wanted to see land valued as industrial rather than agricultural when oil and gas development takes place. They also wanted pipelines and flowlines removed from the surface rights Act.

Richard Gibbons, a lawyer with years of experience in the area, said that the Surface Rights Board "... has been inadequately compensating the landowner." This is a system that doesn't work for producers or landowners and it needs to be revisited. Why won't the government listen to these valid concerns and update the surface rights legislation?

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

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I refer back to my previous answer, Mr. Speaker. We are listening; we do listen. I've met with several, several groups on both sides. It is a complex issue and we remain open to having those discussions in an ongoing way to get to a solution on this, but timing is of the essence and I think the members opposite know that.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Introduction of the Saskatchewan Climate Resilience Measurement Framework

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, throughout this past year Saskatchewan's Prairie Resilience climate change strategy has moved from plan to reality with many related regulations, commitments, and specific goals achieved in 2018. We're already doing our part to reduce emissions in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, with a plan that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12 million tonnes by 2030 from industry, electricity, and upstream oil and gas.

But our government is also taking action to prepare for and adapt to changing environmental and economic conditions that result from climate change. Prairie Resilience commits our government to track and report across all areas to convey progress in making our province more resilient to climate change. Today we are honouring that commitment by releasing our climate resilience measurement framework, a milestone achievement that will help Saskatchewan monitor its progress on climate change into the future.

Resilience is the ability to cope with, adapt to, and recover from

stress and change. In Saskatchewan we are acutely aware of our exposure to changing climate, which is why climate change resilience is critical. Resilience is a much stronger indicator of effective climate action because it measures our ability to adapt, innovate, and even thrive in changing environmental conditions.

The resilience framework includes 25 measures and goals that will help the province prepare for the effects of a changing global climate in five key areas: natural systems, physical infrastructure, economic sustainability, community preparedness, and human well-being.

Some examples of specific measures in the framework are the percentage of agricultural land with a nutrient stewardship plan, which matches the right source and rate of fertilizer to the right time and place of application; GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions from government-owned buildings; provincial forest harvest designs; flood plain mapping for at-risk communities; and wildfire fuel management work on Crown land. The province will report on these measures every year.

The five key resilience areas are interconnected and promote resilience through interactions that benefit each other. For example, responsible management of our natural resources sustains habitat for plants and animals while also providing ecological goods and services that support the province's economy and quality of life.

This framework is an example of innovative, comprehensive, and forward-looking government-wide climate change action. Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that it is the first of its kind in Canada. This is a government-wide approach that requires engagement, ownership, and collaboration across ministries, agencies, Crowns, and stakeholders, making it one of the most comprehensive policy approaches we've developed.

Today's announcement of the climate resilience measurement framework delivers another significant commitment in Prairie Resilience. Mr. Speaker, our government remains steadfast in our opposition to a federally imposed carbon tax. However, as we have demonstrated, this does not mean that we do not believe in climate change action.

That is why we introduced Prairie Resilience and the associated output-based standards for heavy industry. That is why we have a plan to reduce emissions by 12 million tonnes by 2030. That is why we continue to increase our renewable electrical generating capacity. And, Mr. Speaker, that is why we are pleased to announce this climate change resilience framework.

This is a comprehensive plan that is broader and bolder than a single-policy approach such as a carbon tax and, Mr. Speaker, it will achieve more meaningful results in the long term. There are some who don't believe we in Saskatchewan have a climate change plan, and they could not be more wrong. Today's announcement is another concrete example that we do indeed have a plan, and it goes far beyond emissions or federal taxation. And, Mr. Speaker, it will keep Saskatchewan strong. Thank you.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's about time. More and more we're seeing, as was confirmed by the mid-year update,

that our provincial financial position and the well-being of our people of this province are being affected by weather events. Now Saskatchewan weather has always been . . . there's always been a bit of unpredictability about it. But what we're seeing, what the trend is, Mr. Speaker, is greater extremes, more unpredictability, and more hardship.

Now when Prairie Resilience was first introduced, it was filled with TBDs — to be determined, TBD, TBD, TBD. Mr. Speaker, climate change isn't new, but this government is old and tired, and so while it's 11 years late, this is a step in the right direction.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 162 — *The Irrigation Act, 2018*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that Bill No. 162, *The Irrigation Act, 2018* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 162 be now read and introduced a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

TABLING OF SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day, it is my pleasure to submit supplementary estimates accompanied by a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — Would you please rise for the message from the Lieutenant Governor. The message is as follows:

The Lieutenant Governor transmits supplementary estimates — November of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2019, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly. Hon. Thomas Molloy, Lieutenant Governor, province of Saskatchewan.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon

University.

Investment in Education Infrastructure

Mr. Olauson: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and it's a pleasure as always to rise in the Assembly and enter into debate in the 75-minute debate, and at the end of my remarks I will be reading my motion.

But I always like to start with thanking the people that truly make this happen and help our jobs be a little bit easier. And as is customary when I stand to make my remarks, I always like to include the member from Saskatoon Centre. He always seems to make it into my remarks and so I wanted to make sure that I kept the tradition going. And we, you know . . . At one point in our debate he had made the comment that our researchers were lacking in ability. And so I just want to make sure that we recognize those people that make us look good and provide us with the best information that they can.

So in our government caucus office we have Hayley Cattell, who's a senior researcher, as well as Tayler Kosloski. They look after making sure that the member statements are all written precisely and that we can enunciate them clearly, and they do a fantastic job of that. Karalee Croissant, she's our executive assistant. She looks after all of us and makes sure that we appear smarter than we actually are. Kim Rathwell is the director of communications. She looks after all of the things that you see and our constituents can see in the communications world. Lee Guse and Keenan Boutilier are both communications officers who help us make sure that everybody in our constituencies knows what's going on. We've got Paula Steckler, the director of operations, which means exactly that. She looks after most of the things that happen in that office.

Of course they're all under the leadership of John Saltasuk, our chief of staff. And John has been a valuable resource for me as I entered in my journey as the government caucus Chair this last term. And he's a wealth of information and I can assure you that any nuggets of good information that come from me actually come from him and that office. So I want to thank all of them for what they do every day to make us look good.

Do you know, Mr. Speaker, day after day we sit in this place and we listen to question period. We listen to the debates and, you know, it's quite interesting most of the time. And I think anybody that's watching on TV would also consider it interesting. But it always astounds me about the . . . how much misinformation or half-truths or fake news, as you want to call it, Mr. Speaker, come in these walls. And mostly, you know — I have to be fair — it comes from the other side, you know, from the members opposite. But you know, they can take credit for all of that.

[11:00]

But you know, right after, about a year and a half ago in 2017, right after the budget, all of a sudden everything bad was happening. It was as if the world had stopped on its axis. And you know, I think it's time that we actually took a look at what the facts are and how things have changed in Saskatchewan since then and, quite frankly, in the last three years.

You know, everything was being cut. If you listened in this place

to every debate or every question period, it was all being cut, cut, cut. You know, the public service was being gutted. Those of us that drive on Highway 11, every day see billboards saying essential pieces are being torn away, you know. It was catastrophic and, you know, it was almost like an apocalypse.

But, Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth. We made some hard decisions in 2017 and yes, we walked some of those back. But you know, next year we're going to be back to balance on our budget and that's a good thing. We have a AAA credit rating. People are investing in our province. People are still moving to our province, and you know, that's a pretty good indicator that they're believing in our message.

We increased the health budget by 2.9 per cent, almost 3 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That budget now is almost \$6 billion. That's an incredible investment in health care and an incredible investment in the people that look after us when we're sick.

If you listen to the rhetoric that goes on both in here and outside of here, you would think that we were slashing social services, we were cutting services to the most vulnerable in our society and in our province, but yet that budget increased by almost 5 per cent. Now you could listen to the opposition and you can listen to the rhetoric that, you know, we shouldn't be increasing the budget because there's more people that access those services. That's why we increased the budget. It's not that we're providing more services or better services to those people. But you know, that just doesn't cut it. Mr. Speaker, that budget is almost \$1.2 billion in the last budget. That's a lot of money.

We hear it time after time, day after day that these things are happening and that our province is failing. And it's just not true, Mr. Speaker. Recently there's been billboards in Saskatoon asking where did all the money go, asking us where did all the money go? And you know what, Mr. Speaker. We're proud that we have an answer for that. Since 2007 we've provided record income tax relief for those who are in the lowest scale of our income tax. That's 112,000 people that we've actually taken off the tax rolls. They pay no Saskatchewan income tax, Mr. Speaker. The money went to new and improved infrastructure to support growth and reverse, quite frankly, the years of neglect under the NDP when our population was declining, people were moving out of Saskatchewan. "Last one here, turn off the lights," was something that we heard over and over again.

In Saskatoon we're looking forward to the new Jim Pattison Children's Hospital opening next year. It's been a much-anticipated event that's going to happen. You know, we talked about it for 20 years prior to our government being formed, and it never happened. We weren't big enough. We didn't need one. It was a waste of resources. It would take away from other resources. You know, that was a small way of thinking, Mr. Speaker. And now we are going to open a new Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in Saskatoon, and our investment in that is over \$250 million, Mr. Speaker.

I could go on and on about the way that things were under the NDP but, you know, when you ask where the money went, the important things are an investment in our people. So the money delivered more than 900 new doctors to Saskatchewan. It delivered more than 3,700 new nurses and lower surgical wait times for Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, there's just no

comparison to the way it was before 2007 and the way it is now. And the member from Carrot River just reminded me of the new hospital in North Battleford. What a fantastic facility. The old hospital over 100 years old. We needed a new one, and so here we go. There we go.

Now we want to talk about education infrastructure funding, Mr. Speaker. And that's going to be the focal point, as the member from Saskatoon Centre reminded me, that's going to be the focal point of the motion that we're going to put forward here later today.

So since 2007 when we formed government, just 11 short years ago, Mr. Speaker, our government has invested \$1.62 billion on education capital. Mr. Speaker, \$1.62 billion is a quite substantial investment. I find if we contrast and compare, Mr. Speaker, in the last 10 years that the NDP had the opportunity to form government, they spent \$295 million. Mr. Speaker, \$295 million. We increased that budget in the last 10 years almost 450 per cent. Mr. Speaker, that's incredible. And how did we do it? We did it with the people of this province.

Since 2007 we've opened 40 new schools and two more are on the way, one in Weyburn and one in Rosthern. That's 40 new schools, Mr. Speaker, in the last 10 years. And we've also completed 23 major renovations, some of which are in my constituency in Saskatoon.

So we've got 18 new joint-use schools in Regina, Saskatoon, Warman, and Martensville that opened on September 5th, 2017. I had the honour to be a part of those openings, Mr. Speaker, for two of those schools, and they are fantastic. You talk to the principals. You talk to the teachers. You talk to the students, talk to the students especially . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member from Regina Lakeview is providing comments as well. But you talk to those students, and they are just fantastically enthusiastic about their new schools. They're bright. They're clean. They're innovative. They have many sharing spaces that they can sit with other students in their classes. And you know, there's smiles all around, Mr. Speaker.

So those schools will provide 11,000 students with new spaces. So that's 3,300 in Regina, 5,700 in Saskatoon, and 2,100 in Warman and Martensville. Those schools, Mr. Speaker, are 100 per cent owned by the school boards. The total cost was \$635 million, and we're saving over \$30 million on construction and \$100 million over the life of the contract. So don't take my word for it, Mr. Speaker. I trust KPMG. This is what they do and this is what they looked at.

So the project was built six years earlier using a P3. Seventy-three Saskatchewan-based businesses were involved in the project, which is 72 per cent of all the labour was involved in that project. Twenty-three hundred construction jobs were created. Mr. Speaker, that's a pretty sizable amount of jobs for construction alone.

Now besides the new schools that we built, we also started a preventative maintenance renewal plan — fantastic idea. Everybody can agree that it's a fantastic idea, Mr. Speaker. So it was under our government that it was implemented in 2013 and '14. Prior to that there never was one. There never was one under the NDP and I don't know why. I think maybe it's because their

preventative maintenance, Mr. Speaker, was just to close the school. That's how they prevented them from having to actually maintain the schools.

So since that time in 2013-14, we've invested over \$175 million in preventative maintenance and renewal, Mr. Speaker. It allows the Ministry of Education to assist boards of education in addressing rehabilitation and maintenance projects. And it provides greater autonomy to boards of education and ensures a strategic approach to maintenance — not willy-nilly, not ad hoc, but a strategic approach to maintenance.

We also started the relocatable classrooms program, which deals with space crunches as they're kind of plug-and-play classrooms. So as they're needed at one school or another, they can go back and forth.

One of the most important parts of these new schools, Mr. Speaker, I have to say, is the child care spaces that were created. It's very important that, as part of a community space, those child care spaces are there to help the parents who might have a kid, a student in grade 2, but also one that isn't quite ready for kindergarten yet, that they have a place that they can take that child as well. And since 2008-2009, we've invested over \$566 million in child care as well, Mr. Speaker. We've added almost 6,900 child care spaces, which is an increase of 73 per cent.

Licensed child care is affordable in Saskatchewan. Saskatoon and Regina ranked 8th and 10th among 28 large Canadian cities for lowest child care cost as well, Mr. Speaker. And you know, I think the numbers just really speak for themselves.

Just yesterday, Mr. Speaker, Statistics Canada came out with a report and it shows that remarkably — no matter what the members from the opposite side say — remarkably Saskatchewan spends the most on secondary and primary education out of all the provinces. Saskatchewan spends the most of all. So that would be information that they should know as well.

So, Mr. Speaker, I could go on and on but I'll let others enter the debate. But I will move:

That this Assembly recognizes the government's investment in education infrastructure to reverse the damage done by the previous NDP government after years of neglect.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon University:

That this Assembly recognizes the government's investment in education infrastructure to reverse the damage done by the previous NDP government after years of neglect.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise this day and enter into this 75-minute debate. As has been read, "That the Assembly recognizes the government's investment in education infrastructure . . ."

Mr. Speaker, these motions are never subtly worded, and I suppose there is some truth to the fact that this government has invested in infrastructure for education, as have governments of all stripes, going back to the beginning of this province, back to the one-room schoolhouse, Mr. Speaker. It is also the case that governments of all stripes need to understand the very real role that school boards in this province play with regard to capital, with the maintenance of buildings, and in terms of responsibility.

I'm just going to look up a piece from the Saskatchewan School Boards Association website and listing the responsibilities of boards of education in this province:

Boards of education are responsible for designing, constructing and determining the location of a school facility and playground; providing plant operations and maintenance . . . determining priorities around school facilities needs; closing school facilities; determining the attendance areas.

And so on and so on, Mr. Speaker. Although with this government, and I'll go back to 2009, exactly who holds responsibility? The capital funding model itself and funding for education in the province, more broadly, has been a bit of a guessing game, Mr. Speaker. I know that this government likes to talk about the number of schools closed by previous NDP governments, Mr. Speaker. The reality is that it is school boards who make that decision in this province. So that's, I think, one thing that is important, that has been pointed out to me from others, that that wording is problematic.

[11:15]

The other thing that's problematic is their methodology. The member noted a school in Rosthern that is to be completed. It's a consolidation of two schools into one, and that means that they will be closing one school. So I wonder about their methodology there.

Certainly my own school in Lang was closed in 2007. And it was, as I've mentioned before here, something that was unfortunate and was sad for the community. But I believe there were 11 or 13 children in that school at that time, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And I hear the member from Cannington. As I've noted, there have been governments of all stripes. Thousands built under the CCF-NDP [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation-New Democratic Party], thousands of school facilities including a new innovative school in Carnduff, Saskatchewan that has K [kindergarten] to . . .

The decision, as I noted, is made for priority, or has been prior to 2009 in this province. The school boards themselves have been tasked traditionally with the responsibility of identifying the school stock in their school division and prioritizing those based on local knowledge, local need, which schools they want to have built.

And that again changed somewhat in 2009 when this government took away the ability of school boards to set their own mill rates, promising at that time to bring clarity to the funding model within a short period of time, I think it was within three years. And we still have a lot of questions, and none of those questions really have been answered with regard to capital funding in the

province.

What has been answered is that there has been a decided retreat from transparency within the capital funding model in this province. There was a time, back in 2009 or prior to 2009, that you could look up online a full listing of all of the school major capital projects that were in the queue. It was searchable. It was, as I said, online. You could look at the submissions that the school boards put in, the cost, the priority within the queue, not only that priority but also by section or by category. Was it a health and safety concern? Was it a capacity issue? Was it another capital request need?

If you look now, you would have a very hard time. In fact, I had to enlist the help of the Legislative Library even to look for a B-5 or a capital prioritization list. All you can find now is a 10-year capital list that is not prioritized. It's alphabetized. There are no monetary amounts set to it and of course no promise that any of those schools will be built.

I received in my office just this week, and I know the minister did as well, hundreds of letters from only one school in Regina, requesting, you know, at desperation, a new build for their children. There are asbestos tiles, tiles that are falling in, a building in great disrepair and over capacity. And this is something that continues to this day in the province. So, Mr. Speaker, not all has been rectified in the province. This is an ongoing issue. Preventative maintenance certainly, as the member alluded to, was brought in in 2013-14, Mr. Speaker. I'm on the record — I think many of us are — as saying, you know, that is an important investment in that preventative maintenance.

What the member opposite failed to mention was why that was necessary. Prior to 2009 boards had the ability to set their own mill rates, and how they funded preventative maintenance at that time was through their own funds. Often boards would have reserve funds. They would look through their capital assets, and they would have their own priorities that they would address through their preventative maintenance in-house.

After 2009 they no longer had that ability. The reserves were frozen, were in limbo. There was a lot of confusion about what could and couldn't be used by school divisions. And so finally in 2013-14, that PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal] measure was brought in. And as I said, I credit where it's due; it was important, but I think the history of why it came in is important as well.

Also important in history, in 1991, this is . . . I think that there were some very lean years after that. In real dollars, Saskatchewan had a \$15 billion debt. The second-highest spending item on the budget — now it is Education — at that time, when the NDP inherited that debt, the second-highest cost was debt servicing. It was higher than all of the money spent on education.

The concern is that we see this government putting us in a similar position. We look at the P3 schools — Mr. Speaker, I could do a whole 75 minutes on that process alone — where we have, instead of looking at amortizing the cost of these schools at our borrowing rates, we have kicked that cost down the road to our children who will be paying for these schools for the next 30 years, Mr. Speaker, and thus increasing that debt, which is now

forecast to be public debt at almost \$23 billion by the end of 2021.

So, Mr. Speaker, they have spent money. I'm not sure they've spent it in always the wisest places. I'm not sure that they've always spent it in a way that gives us the best value for money. In fact I'm convinced that they haven't. And they certainly haven't fixed what is needed in education.

Again they want to talk about the buildings, but they don't want to talk about the actual quality of education in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, which I think is extremely problematic. This is a government that cut \$54 million from our classrooms and they chalk it up to having to make some difficult decisions. Mr. Speaker, that's really rich. And I look forward to the questions as we move on here. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I drive back and forth between Regina and Lloydminster, travelling along the Yellowhead highway and Highway 11, I see these big billboards, giant billboards. And they read, "Where did the money go?"

Well, Mr. Speaker, the NDP seem to have this notion that since 2007 this government has been very frivolous with the taxpayers' money and on some wild spending spree. My colleagues and I have stood in this House on many occasions and repeatedly provided the answer to that exact question. We have spoken to the billions of dollars we have spent on a variety of capital projects, from new health care facilities, long-term care homes, new hospitals, thousands of kilometres of highways rebuilt, new bridges, and yes, new schools. But, Mr. Speaker, I guess that just isn't enough for the opposition.

So I too will endeavour to explain and elaborate to them, as my colleague has from Saskatoon University, on where the money went and in particular the 1.62 billion spent on education capital projects in this province.

I know the people of Saskatchewan get it, and especially the students, staff, families, and citizens of many of our communities that now have new schools open or major renovations done, or even minor maintenance that would have deteriorated, I'm sure, if the NDP were still in charge, causing further problems.

Mr. Speaker, in the last 10 years of NDP government, they struggled to answer the call from school divisions for help in replacing very old and aging schools. Many were unsafe, had problems with heating as old boiler technology stopped working and parts were no longer available. Some schools had windows they couldn't open and classrooms became unbearable during hot days and very cold in the winter. And schools began utilizing rooms that were not built as classrooms, as some classrooms had structural problems and were unsafe for staff and students.

Mr. Speaker, in their last 10 years in government, when school divisions were in crisis and crying out for help, the NDP had no plan or strategy for addressing the much-needed demand for more new schools. They had no capital plan, no emergent funding, no PMR funding, and no relocatable plan available for

school divisions to access. Mr. Speaker, the opposition's answer to all of this was to close 176 schools.

There was a letter in the April 24th, 2007 *Regina Leader-Post* titled, "Rural voices ignored on school closures" written by a parent, Michael Cobbe, that speaks to the anger and frustration in the education world at the time the NDP was in power. And I'd like to quote him:

We have delivered dozens of pages of research on cost savings and education. We have presented studies and anecdotal reports on the effects of busing on students and families. We have defended the high standard of education in our school. We have promoted the value of our community and school, and the economic potential of communities with schools.

All our submissions to government and school divisions are met with evasive responses, polite, but dismissive responses, or not-so-polite accusations.

We are accused of being obstructive, misleading and emotional. Everything we have said is ignored, derided or dismissed. We have no voice.

The minister of the day? Deb Higgins.

Mr. Speaker, imagine the morale and frustration of students, parents, staff when the NDP was threatening to close schools. And they did, 176 schools. Imagine and realize now what it did to those communities. Many of us grew up in small town communities where the school, over and above being the place where students and teachers engaged in learning, where the school was the hub of many activities, from Christmas concerts to home and school meetings, local sports tournaments, fundraisers, and even served as banquet halls for grads and weddings.

Schools were and still are a gathering place that provides opportunity to bring families and communities together. They are a vital part of communities. So just imagine, when a school closes, the decisions families have to make as to where and how their children can get their education. Some maybe even uprooting from where they grew up and having to move to a larger centre for the sake of their children's education. Think of the changes families had to make in their daily lives to add additional travel and time to their schedules to get children to another school outside their community.

Mr. Speaker, prior to 2007 these changes did happen for families when the opposition chose to close 176 schools in this province. I have the list of the 176 schools that were closed right here with me. And it's shameful to see the many communities in our province that suffered because of the NDP's lack of vision and strategy for the future generations of our province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm happy to say since 2007 this government's plan for growth has worked: a growing population now reaching nearly 1.2 million, with our young people finding job opportunities here and raising families. The need to invest in the infrastructure necessary to support a growing population is imperative, and with that came a commitment from this government to build new schools and provide funding for

maintenance and renewal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also have the list with me here of this government's educational capital projects, which includes the building and opening of 40 new schools since 2007 with two more on the way, along with the completion of 23 major renovations. That's 65 major capital education projects in the last 10 years. The total spent on this: 1,073,586,871. That's where the money went.

Add on to this, Mr. Speaker, this government's additional funding support of 175 million PMR funding since 2013-14, with 44.1 million of PMR in the '18-19 budget; 25 million of emergent funding since '13-14, with 5.5 million in the 2018-19 budget; 47.8 million since '13-14, and 3.1 million in '18-19 for the relocatable classroom program; and since 2008-09, 566.82 million for 6,839 child care spaces, some of which are located in the new schools. That's where the money went. Two new schools and one major gym renovation in my constituency are part of this list.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, besides infrastructure needs and in support of investment of education in this province, we increased pre-K [pre-kindergarten] programming by 161 programs and 2,576 spaces. We increased early years funding from 50.92 million to 119 million. And in '17-18 we invested 55.8 million for licensed early learning child care in the form of grants.

[11:30]

Our government has increased operating funding to school divisions by 33 per cent, has hired 925 teachers as opposed to losing 400 teachers under the NDP, and this year alone we've added 177 new educational teacher assistants to the system. Our total pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] funding is 2.5 billion, the highest ever in the history of this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's where the money went.

I believe school divisions know, see, and understand what this government has been doing for education since 2007. And school divisions get a strong sense of the commitment from our government in ensuring their students, staff, and families have safe, caring, and welcoming learning environments in their communities and neighbourhoods.

I'm not sure the opposition can comprehend all the amount of money this government has spent and is committed to spending on education infrastructure, but here's one more fact they should hear. Stats Canada just released a 2017 report yesterday in which they broke down the share of provincial, territorial, and local government spending on public services. And guess what? It shows Saskatchewan spends 22 per cent of total government expenses on education, the highest in Canada. And it states that Saskatchewan has the highest per capita spending on primary and secondary education of any province.

Mr. Speaker, our government has met the challenge and has worked hard to repair the damage left behind by the NDP government when it comes to infrastructure in this province and particularly when it comes to schools. Do we have more to do? You bet, and we're on it, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're committed to investing in schools and the educational system in our province to provide and ensure that our students, families, staff, and

taxpayers can be confident that our future generations all have the very best facilities and educational system in the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting the motion put forward by my colleague from Saskatoon University.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into this debate today and probably comes as no surprise that I will not be supporting the motion that is put forward. Sorry to remove the suspense from my speech, but I will not be supporting this motion.

I think there's a significant question around credibility as the motion stands, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I have a few different reasons for saying that. First of all, I think the concept of a self-congratulatory motion is not one I can get behind for a couple of reasons, but the nature of this motion I think is particularly problematic when it comes to the Sask Party government's track record on supporting education. We know that it was this government that made the decision to cut \$78 million from education funding over the last two years. And this is a reality that folks in the sector have reached out to us repeatedly to talk about. And there's a lot of concern for what this means for kids in classrooms today. So I think that the spirit of a self-congratulatory motion in light of this fact is perhaps not well placed.

We have consistently asked the government to fully restore that funding that they've cut from education over the past two years. We know that this funding shortfall has meant that school boards are in very difficult decisions in terms of managing resources. It has led to cuts that have impacted classrooms, teachers, and EAs, educational assistants, not being able to give the attention and resources to students who require that.

And I know folks on that side of the House must be hearing these stories as well. People come into our constituency offices and talk about, my child needs this, my child needs this that. He needs this attention in the school. And unfortunately the care is not there for them when they need that attention. And I know that can't be isolated simply to folks on this side of the House.

There was an effort to put some of that money back into education after the 2017 budget. And we saw the Sask Party putting back \$30 million into education after cutting 54 last year and then expecting everyone in the sector to say thank you and to be overly appreciative when there was still a huge funding shortfall. And we saw what those shortfalls meant.

I spoke with folks on doorsteps who said, you know, I'm in the sector. I work in education so I'm very concerned about what these cuts are going to mean, right after the 2017 budget. And she said, I'm not going to lose my job, but I'm concerned that I have the seniority to bump someone else and I have to walk around with the guilt that I didn't lose my job when someone else lost their job. So putting people in these positions where they're in competition for jobs, where they have to feel they have to bear that burden of guilt, is just . . . And she's in tears telling me this story.

And I know for a fact that folks on that side of the House had to have heard these situations as well, had to have experienced the fact that parents are coming to them saying that their kids don't have the resources they need, that they don't have the preschool that they need for special needs. You know, seeing what these cuts have meant on the everyday level, hearing about the class sizes that have resulted, and the lack of EA assistants, you know, getting one EA for a couple hours a week for kids that have really intensive needs. And any reasonable person would expect they would get more attention within our education system, but that's what they're being left with.

So I certainly cannot support this motion. Our operational funding is still below levels from 2016. Teachers are working in these increasingly complex classroom environments. You know, there's multiple diagnoses that they have to deal with, with high-needs students, and they simply do not have the resources to be able to cope with that.

And really we've seen this pattern of disrespect toward teachers who are in the classrooms as well. And we know that in terms of the teachers' contract, not only where it ended up being settled but the fact of having to go to arbitration after so many years, the fact that it was settled at zeroes and 1 per cent increase that haven't even kept up with our cost of living, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just shows a fundamental disrespect for teachers. And then the fact that the Premier will show up and speak to a room of teachers and expect them to applaud when he commits to funding the contract that he's legally obligated to fund, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It just shows a disrespect.

Now I approach this from a few different perspectives, and one of the angles that I approach this from is as critic for the Status of Women. We know that a number of these cuts disproportionately hurt women in the education field, and we know that this had a significant impact on their employment. And I rose in this House last year to talk about that.

I also approach this as critic for Health. We know that education is a social determinant of health. That means it plays a major role in the person's overall health and well-being. It's shown to increase healthy behaviours, improve healthy outcomes, including obesity rates, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this is especially true for the early years in early education, but also the more education a person gets, the longer they live. So we know that it is a key contributor to a healthy society overall.

And because of that, folks on this side of the House, we view education as a social investment, not an area that should be slashed, not an area that we should see repeated cuts from. And so I think that there is a fundamental distinction in terms of the way education is perceived on this side of the House.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to talk a little bit about the infrastructure argument. We know that this government has been quite attached to the notion of public-private partnerships and P3 schools. They seem to be of the opinion that this is the greatest way of building that has ever existed, are not willing to learn from other provinces who have stepped away from P3s, are not willing to listen to media stories that talk about some of the concerns. And if they're so great, why aren't they willing to show their work on this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and show us all the savings that exist from these partnerships?

And it's almost a point of pride where we're not allowed to question it. They can stand up and give members' statements about the fact that they should be . . . they're winning awards as putting out the most P3s or something to that effect, earlier today, but we haven't seen the evidence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They haven't shown their work on that. And the approach has also garnered scrutiny from the Provincial Auditor as we have seen.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this week I was invited to participate in a career fair at a couple of high schools in my riding — Tommy Douglas Collegiate and Bethlehem. And this is a joint initiative called the Blairmore Integrated Facility. It's a great initiative. There's two high schools in the area. It filled a much-needed . . . it filled the need for high schools. It also filled the need for a lovely sports centre, sports facility in the riding that has brought a lot of community toward it.

I didn't have access to this facility when I was in high school, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was at E.D. Feehan. And you might look at this wonderful building initiative and think, oh that must be something we can attribute to the Sask Party, but actually no. In 2007 this was an initiative of the NDP government at the time — in building this infrastructure, in filling a need in Saskatoon's west side for more high schools — and certainly an initiative that we can stand behind here on this side of the House.

So seeing this type of partnership I think speaks to the fact that we can stand proudly on our past and also think about what our future is in this province, and what potential we have to keep building education in this province, which I look forward to doing on an NDP government in 2020.

And just to reiterate, I do not support the motion, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Wow, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I wasn't quite sure what I was all going to speak about on this motion for 10 minutes. But that last line from the member from Fairview . . . I know she hasn't been here that long, but making the assumption the NDP are going to form government in 2020 may be a bridge too far, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a little bit too far. And I think she may have not been in here that long.

But there is a lot of conversation to have on education, about where we have come from and where we're going that I'd like to discuss. So I'm going to speak to the motion for the next little while and then maybe get back to that comment from the new member from Fairview about forming government in 2020, which I think they may have to have a conversation about that in regards to some of the comments I'll make about some school closures they had in rural Saskatchewan, for about 16 years, that provides some reasoning why they don't have a member from rural Saskatchewan on that side of the House.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the motion reads:

That this Assembly recognizes the government's investment in education infrastructure to reverse the damage done by the previous NDP government after years of neglect.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to lay this out, I think that we can look at the record of the NDP for 16 years in government. And I will give the member from Lakeview credit. Her speech was rational for the first 10 seconds when she said there is some truth to that motion, which I give her credit for, because there is. And she realizes that, you know, the neglect that the people of Saskatchewan felt under the NDP was mostly in rural Saskatchewan, that as my friend from Cannington said, all they wanted to do . . . their policies for rural Saskatchewan was gravel the highways, close the hospitals, and level the schools. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that's how the people of rural Saskatchewan felt when it came to the NDP government during the '90s and early 2000s. And once again, that's probably a good reason why they don't have a member from rural Saskatchewan sitting on that side.

Mr. Speaker, they took a lot of opportunities to close schools and my colleagues have canvassed this well. But I'd like to talk about a few of the schools that were closed because there is 176 of them, and we do have the list. And the member from Lloydminster said she couldn't go through the whole list but I'm going to go through part of the list, Mr. Speaker: Neville School, Admiral School, Piapot School, Lang School — which the member from Lakeview talked about for a few seconds — Earl Grey School, Gray Elementary, Wilcox Public, Francis School, Odessa School.

[11:45]

They're all pretty much around rural Saskatchewan — Sylvania School, Griffin School, Golden Prairie School, Windthorst School. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this list probably is too long. Gainsborough School, the member from Cannington talked about that. Willowbrook School, that's where my wife comes from, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so they felt that at home as well. Willow Bunch, Theodore, Leader, my colleagues are helping out with a few names of schools, Mr. Speaker, but I think I'll move on from there.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I believe that when it comes to the infrastructure that this government has invested in, it really speaks for itself, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, it's ironic that the member from Lakeview actually joined this conversation about infrastructure because there maybe hasn't been a member that has had as much infrastructure put into their constituency than the member from Lakeview, which I sometimes . . . And I appreciate her speeches mostly. They're well thought out but sometimes she does go off on a bit of a tangent, one might say. And when it comes to education she's passionate; she's very passionate.

But there are a few schools in her riding that I think she would appreciate. I believe there's a list here from Regina Lakeview: École Connaught school, which is a lovely new school which ironically wasn't a P3 because the member from Fairview said, they're all P3s; P3s seem to be the silver bullet. But their crack research team over at the NDP don't realize that we're also building schools in the traditional model, not just P3s. So P3s aren't a silver bullet, but at some point in time they do save taxpayers dollars. I think around \$80 million was saved with the bundling of the P3 schools, the 18 joint-use schools which the member from Fairview once again said, there's nowhere you can see how much money. Why can't it be transparent?

Well on the internet there is a value-for-money report for the P3 schools. It's a big secret, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but there are a lot of reports done on how much money has been saved through the joint-use, 18 P3 schools. So there's some transparency there. There is a lot of transparency on the new P3 schools, which 21 new schools opened in September. Is that not amazing in our province to have 21 new schools open at the beginning of school year?

And what does that mean, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 21 new schools? That means our province is growing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there's more kids enrolling in school, that our population continues to grow, that people continue to choose to live in Saskatchewan because they know that's where they can make a good living, raise a family, and have safe, happy communities. That's one good thing about having to build schools, which I know the NDP did not have to go through that difficult transition because the reason they closed 176 schools is because people were leaving in droves. Our province population dwindled each and every year under an NDP government because people did not see opportunity in this province, which is shameful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because our province has the most to offer I think of any province in the Dominion of Canada and I believe we have the ability to attract people for the next 20 years as well, as long as we continue to be government on this side of the House. And I think that will continue despite the best efforts of the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

I believe that we will continue to be a successful province, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I hear the member from Regina Douglas Park who I also appreciate some of her comments during speeches. She should also be a very happy MLA because schools were built in her riding as well, the Arcola School, the Douglas Park School. They might consider crossing the floor, Mr. Deputy Speaker, quite frankly, because this government's doing more for their constituents than any other government before that. And the member from Douglas Park, the member from Lakeview should really see some progress in their communities because of these new schools. They'll have kids going in very innovative new schools. I got to tour the Douglas Park School when it opened, along with the École Connaught School. It has been beautiful.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, that there is a bit of an attitude on the other side of the House that they really care about education and this side doesn't. Like they are so committed to education. They are parents. Like no one on this side of the House is parents so we must not care about education. And I think it's ingrained inside of the NDP's philosophy is, just by the divine right of Tommy Douglas, we have control of education and health care, although budget after budget, as our members canvassed on this side, 22 per cent of our whole budget goes toward education. Stats Can just came out with that number. That's the highest number in Canada, of any province, committed to education.

So for them to stand up every day and doubt our commitment to education when we put 22 per cent of our budget towards it is disingenuous possibly, one might say, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Also the fact that we have put in \$1.6 billion towards infrastructure, which is a pile more than the NDP put in their last 10 years of government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that speaks for itself, the fact that we do continue to invest in our schools across the province, not just in one area. Because I know the member from Cannington sometimes gets a bit partisan and believes that

perhaps the members on the other side have neglected rural Saskatchewan, which possibly is fair as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I do believe that we have continued to invest in all corners of the province, in the North, in urban, in rural Saskatchewan. And we have had . . .

Don't get me wrong. Not everything's perfect. I don't want to seem like all the work is done, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But we have continued to work hard with our educational stakeholders to ensure that the children of Saskatchewan — which is our greatest asset, our greatest resource, Mr. Deputy Speaker — that our kids have a safe learning environment and they have dependable funding.

I know, Mr. Speaker, that we've had challenges in the past, but our economy continues to show signs of recovering, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And with a strong economy . . . That's why we need a strong economy: so we can invest in things like our children's education, invest in social services, invest in health care. That's why it's so important for us to continue to work hard and, like our Premier is doing right now, open trading markets so we can continue to sell our goods to markets across the world so that we can have that money to reinvest into the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And we will continue to do that for as long as we have the honour of being in government, which I think will be a very, very long time. Because the members of the opposition continue to say crisis after crisis after crisis. They're saying the sky is falling in every sector of our province, Mr. Speaker, but there is only 13 people that believe that. And we will continue to work hard and keep Saskatchewan strong.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm happy to rise and join in on the 75-minute debate today. Frankly I have to say I was pretty surprised when I saw the debate topic chosen by the Sask Party government today, applauding themselves for doing such a fantastic job in education, especially at a time when the education sector feels very strongly that they're under attack by this government. It's certainly not a back-patting exercise that this government should be taking this opportunity to spend time on. Instead it should be reflecting and listening to what parents, students, and teachers are saying who, you know, are experiencing the devastations from the Sask Party cuts in this area, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It's one of the areas that we hear strongest in terms of constituent concerns when we're doing outreach, when we're doing door knocking. And I know my colleague from Regina Lakeview, the critic for Education, speaks very passionately on this issue. And she's been doing constant outreach in terms of speaking to school boards, speaking to teachers, speaking to parents across the entire province who are incredibly concerned about the direction this government has taken in education and the lack of care this government has had in this area and the impact that's had on students, Mr. Speaker.

I want to specifically open my remarks today by talking a bit about the Public Accounts report, or the provincial . . . my apologies, the Provincial Auditor's report in 2017 that spoke

specifically on this issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on capital asset planning for schools and more accurately the provincial government's lack thereof of capital asset planning and the impact that that was having on our school system.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2017 they made . . . Or back actually — my apologies — back in 2013 and then again 2015 and then 2017, in this report the auditor made recommendations:

that the Ministry of Education develop and use a capital asset strategy that co-ordinates overall capital needs for schools in the provincial Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 system, [Mr. Deputy Speaker].

So that was flagged as a concern by the Provincial Auditor back in 2013 and then again in 2015 and then again, "Status — Partially Implemented," 2017. So still not done, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Although a few steps were taken, it was still quite a bit left to be desired in terms of the sector, in terms of having a sound capital asset planning schedule for the sector's confidence.

Another one that was again recommended in 2013, again in 2015, and then here only partially implemented in 2017 was the recommendation:

that the Ministry of Education develop and implement measures and targets to monitor the success of its capital asset strategy across the provincial pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12 system.

So again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a failing of this government. But they still put forward this motion applauding themselves for the great work that they've done.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is pretty on par for what we're seeing with the Sask Party, how they often tend to ignore the criticisms that are being issued at them loud and clear by the public, instead focus on what they see as what they've done.

It's odd considering it was this Sask Party government that cut \$78 million from education funding over the last two years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that was done at a time when student enrolment was growing. So for example, operating funding is still below the levels that we saw in 2016 even though we have 5,000 more students than we had at that time, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So schools, school boards are being forced to do more with less because of the Sask Party's cuts. Not only have they flatlined funding. They haven't even done that; in fact they've cut funding, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The reality is that the Sask Party is refusing to see that teachers are working in increasingly complex classrooms, and because of this government's cuts to our schools they're unable to give the students the proper attention they need. And we've seen that the cuts that the government has done in this area has directly impacted the level of educational assistants that we have in our classrooms. Not only are student enrolments on the rise and classroom sizes are getting larger in many of our schools, but teachers have to deal with students with increasingly complex needs, with less staff in the classroom. So when the ratio of who was able to be in the classroom to assist with students was higher

before, it's less now.

We have a growing population of English as additional language students that need the supports that they need so they can properly integrate into our classrooms, be able to partake in society, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they are being, like so many other students, largely forgotten as a result of the Sask Party cuts.

And when we bring this up in question period, and the critic does such a great job of bringing this up in question period, that talks about these challenges, what does the Sask Party do? They blame the school boards. They say it's a school board allocation decision, and they've made the wrong allocation decision. That's coming from the government that's also gutted power to school boards and centralized power to themselves. So not only did they take away autonomy, take away ability to make decisions from the school boards, centralized it in Regina, but then they blame the school boards for when supports aren't there anymore because of the decisions that the Sask Party has made, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Most recently we saw, as a direct result of the Sask Party cuts . . . Most recently, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we saw cuts to busing services. And the impact that that's had on families has been quite huge. And we heard quite a few families who were incredibly upset over what that meant.

We saw a cut to specialized pre-K programs most recently. The government was quite excited to announce a new pilot project and funding for that. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that funding didn't come from the province; it came from the feds. So it's again Sask Party applauding themselves for reinstating something that they cut, and that they're not even funding, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's absolutely shameful.

The Premier and the Sask Party have shown nothing but disrespect to teachers throughout the province, and we see that in the lack of proper funding for education but also in the Sask Party's hand being forced by an arbitrator to offer teachers a contract that doesn't even cover the rising cost of living. So needless to say, teachers are feeling ignored, teachers are feeling unhappy, and teachers are feeling disrespected.

[12:00]

And teachers are very important in our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and they should be treated with more respect. They're responsible for overseeing and shaping and growing our most important future resource, Mr. Deputy Speaker — our children. It's absolutely shameful the way they've been treating them.

According to the government's education sector staffing profile, fewer teachers and support staff are in the classroom. And there is 742 fewer, which is really quite alarming, as I said, especially because of the growing number of student population and the growing number of students with extra needs.

Teachers have, as I said, faced a two-year freeze on wages, which is falling behind as the costs of living increase. And it shows again not just a lack of respect for teachers, but a lack of respect for the education sector at large. Left to their own devices — and this was a decision that was made by the arbitrator — but left to their own devices, as we saw from what we did hear about the

negotiations, likely that outcome would have been even worse, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Saskatchewan students deserve so much more. They deserve to have a government that is ready to put the long-term best interests of students and our publicly funded education system above their own short-term political interests. They like to applaud themselves and say that they're the only government that's ever built schools. I am a graduate of St. Josaphat elementary school, which just experienced its 40-year anniversary. Guess who was in power at that time? Premier Blakeney and the NDP, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I will not be supporting the motion.

The Deputy Speaker: — Time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Regina Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've heard a lot of self-congratulations about the P3 schools, a lot of unsubstantiated claims about value for money and savings. I'd like to point to a 2018 August 16th press release from Manitoba that found that they could, in that province under a Conservative government, build five schools at the traditional build model for the cost of four under the P3 model.

To the member for Saskatoon University: will he agree with the opposition and commit today to building all future buildings in the province, school capital buildings, under a traditional design model?

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

Mr. Olason: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. And the short answer is no. No, we won't. We're not married to any certain ideology on P3s. We're not married to certain ways of building schools. We're going to do the best thing for the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, absolutely.

Mr. Speaker, I find it, you know, it's funny. We have increased spending in education, in operating spending, Mr. Speaker, by 33 per cent. And we hear all the time that we don't value our students, we don't value our teachers. Enrolment's gone up 12.7 per cent in that time, Mr. Speaker. Thirty-three per cent of the operating budget has gone up over that time.

Mr. Speaker, we won't commit to building a school a certain way. We won't commit to building anything a certain way. We're going to find the best way that will save the taxpayers of Saskatchewan the most money. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last year 18 brand new joint-use schools were opened, accommodating 11,000 students in our province. These projects were built with a P3 model, which ensured that they were on time and on budget. Taxpayers saved over \$30 million on construction and \$100 million over the life of the contract. Seventy-three Saskatchewan businesses worked on these projects.

The members opposite voted against those new schools, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the member from Regina Lakeview. Why would Saskatchewan people ever vote for your party when you opposed 18 new schools that saved taxpayers money and created 2,300 construction jobs? Thank you.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, as I've just noted, most recently in Manitoba in 2018, the decision was made to go with the traditional model of build because it actually saved money in the long term, in fact the cost of a whole school.

Mr. Speaker, I was at those tables when these P3 schools were proposed. And those who sat there in fact have a significant amount of concern about the government overtaking and usurping the ability of boards to decide where their schools go. In fact you get decisions like a school built in the bald prairie, Mr. Speaker, ahead of schools that are actually seeing their gyms falling in. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I know we all have a personal tie to issues within education, and there is an issue that has hit some people who are quite close to me. And I would like to ask the member from Saskatoon University whether he will commit to supporting programming for high-needs preschoolers once the federal pilot runs out.

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

Mr. Olason: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member opposite for the question. You know, Mr. Speaker, we support education. We support our educational sector. We support our teachers. We support our students. We support our parents as well, Mr. Speaker, and that's indicative. We have increased funding to schools by 33 per cent while the enrolment has only gone up 12.7 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

I'll tell you what shows disrespect, Mr. Speaker. I'll tell you what shows disrespect for the teachers and the students in this province, and that's cutting 400 teachers. When they were last back in power, Mr. Speaker, cutting 400 teachers, closing 176 schools — that's showing disrespect, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kindersley.

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our government on this side has made record investment over the past 11 years since taking power: investments in highways, investments in health care, and certainly investments in education.

The members opposite continue to struggle to understand their lack of support in rural Saskatchewan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they locked the doors on 176 schools. That's one school every month for 16 years, Mr. Speaker. That's their record.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is for the member from Saskatoon Fairview. When you have such a jaded history of closing schools all these years, putting kids on buses for extra hours, eliminating hundreds of teaching positions, why should any rural community or otherwise ever support the NDP?

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I do want to briefly just mention to the member from Saskatoon University that I did ask him a very specific question about high-needs preschoolers. I did indicate that there was a close personal connection to that issue, and he didn't even seem to touch on that or really acknowledge the question that I asked. So I just want to say that I'm disappointed with that answer.

In regards to the question that I just received, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I do want to identify that I was in high school when that happened. And so I do want to say that I was in high school when he was talking about this.

Right now there is a significant need in education sector — right now, today. And that's what we've been talking about. They've been in government for 11 years. It's time for them to look in the mirror and say, what have we done and what kind of credibility do we have on the education file right now? I'm sure they'll find that it's not as high as they think it is.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the member from Regina Walsh Acres. Does he think it's fair to take credit for supporting education, as he clearly just did, while cutting \$78 million — \$78 million, Mr. Deputy Speaker; those are real teachers, real educational assistants — over the last two years?

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I want to thank that member for the question. And I'd like to respond by saying, does that member think it's fair that they keep on championing education when they closed 176 schools? Does that member think it's fair that they're champions of education when they fired 400 teachers? Does that member think it's fair that they want to be the champion of youth when they chased them all out of the province for 16 years?

I'll continue to stand by this government's record: \$1.6 billion in infrastructure, 21 new schools built this year. I'll stand with this government on our record of education every day of the week. And I'll continue to fight to make sure that we have better education for our youth going forward. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since 2007 our government has increased education funding by 33 per cent,

while the enrolment has only risen by 12.7 per cent. That is the commitment of this government, to increase education spending to ensure our students and our teachers are given all the opportunities to succeed in this province.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the member from Douglas Park. If almost three times the growth in funding over enrolment growth is not enough for the NDP, what is their number? How much would they spend?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's a real rich kind of question coming from members opposite considering they cut, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I'll say they cut \$78 million from education funding over the last two years. That leaves operating funding below the levels from 2016, even though our classrooms now contain in excess of 5,000 additional students.

Members opposite can quote whatever statistics and whatever they want to say. The truth is, the reality is that means serious impacts in our classrooms. That means less teachers. That means less educational assistants, which is a serious detriment to our schools.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, to hear members opposite, you would think things are rosier than ever in our classrooms all around the province. Yet we see the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] undertaking a Re-Imagine Education endeavour that has brought up concerns from every corner of the province. To members opposite: why do they think teachers are so upset?

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 2 — Inquiry Into the GTH Land Acquisition

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Ms. Sproule.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I enter into debate this afternoon on just a very disappointing topic that hasn't yet been resolved, Mr. Speaker, and that's the land assembly at the GTH, Mr. Speaker: the wasted dollars, the taxpayer dollars, public dollars; the nuns that were ripped off, Mr. Speaker, by the Sask Party government; the fact that those connected very close to the Sask Party were enriched to the tune of \$11 million, one to the tune of 6 million, one to the tune of 5 million; and the fact that there just hasn't been adequate answers to this scandal that's cost so many people so much

money.

I'm going to be speaking in favour today of the motion put forward by the member from Nutana. That motion is as follows:

That this Assembly calls upon the Sask Party government to immediately launch a judicial inquiry into the land deals associated with the assemblage of land for the Global Transportation Hub.

I'm thankful to the member from Nutana for the motion she's brought forward, the call to action and the aim for accountability finally on this deal that's wasted so much public money, Mr. Speaker, and that's filled with so many outstanding questions. You know, of course when it relates to the GTH in general, with the Sask Party government we've had a government that has failed to do a value-for-money presentation ever as to how the money that they were putting into this venture was going to perform for the people of the province.

There was a lot of promise in the concept of the hub, Mr. Speaker, but it really went off the rails with this government. And we've seen no accountability, no accounting for the total dollars put in, Mr. Speaker, and nothing but shirking of responsibility when it comes to the very poor performance of this hub that held out a lot of promise, Mr. Speaker, that received untold millions of dollars from taxpayers. And certainly that's something we're going to continue to press for.

[12:15]

Of course we see the consequences of this kind of behaviour, Mr. Speaker. In this deal, as I say, the nuns were ripped off; landowners were ripped off, Mr. Speaker, while those connected very closely to members opposite, Mr. Speaker, made out with millions of dollars. And that comes at a cost to the public. The public lost money. And we see how that all adds up when we look at the financial report, or the update that we see here today, with the mid-year update, an update that highlights the hurt and damage being caused by the financial mismanagement of this Sask Party government.

Mr. Speaker, we see it continue as well. Of course we know there was the \$11 million that the friends of the Sask Party made out with, Mr. Speaker, but we also know that there was the \$25 million that SaskPower swooped in with in a very convenient way to cash flow the deal, Mr. Speaker. And of course that all comes at a cost to Saskatchewan people by way of debt, by way of the costs of their bills.

And when we look at this GTH, day in, day out we've seen the case being made about how there's just not accountability or transparency on this front, and not performance. When you look at what the targets were for all sorts of truck traffic, Mr. Speaker, that were supposed to be going to that hub, we see a tiny fraction of that. And that weakened economy, Mr. Speaker, an economy that's been weakened by the choices of this government.

And when we look at that mid-year report again here today, we see that in the budget of this year, the Sask Party government was predicting \$6.5 million in land sales out at the GTH, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And if you can imagine, Mr. Speaker, they didn't miss it by just a little bit, which might be, you know, something that

you could excuse. They missed it by a whole bunch, Mr. Speaker. Instead of \$6.4 million as projected, Mr. Speaker, they got a grand total of zero — a big, fat zero, Mr. Speaker, being booked into the revenues of this year. And if that's not dismal performance, Mr. Speaker, then I don't know what is.

Of course this is a government that hid from accountability on this every step of the way, and what we're calling for is a judicial inquiry to get to the bottom of this. We had a premier that wanted to pretend that nothing had happened, Mr. Speaker, that had misled the people of the province on this front, who had pretended, going to voters, that he had an appraisal that justified this land purchase and these scandalous deals that filled the pockets of friends of this government. And as the auditor exposed, Mr. Speaker, nothing was further from the truth.

In fact that assessment or appraisal that the premier was holding up as his big grand defence, Mr. Speaker, was bogus. The methodology was out of line with the methodology used on these fronts, Mr. Speaker, and in fact had never even been reviewed by government before they signed the deal. So for the premier to pretend that he's going to hide behind that appraisal was simply wrong, Mr. Speaker.

And of course we go back in that deal, Mr. Speaker, a deal that's wasted so much public money. We go back to the fact that we had the then minister who was plagued in scandal on file after file after file, Mr. Speaker, but that was doing an end run on the Ministry of Highways at that time. The Ministry of Highways was trying to go out and acquire the land out at the GTH. They were using tools like expropriation, Mr. Speaker, and they were actually fighting Saskatchewan farmers and landowners and businesses in court to settle land deals for a fraction of what Bill Boyd doled out under Brad Wall and the Sask Party government at that time to these couple friends.

And so Highways was trying to acquire land at that point in time — this land, Mr. Speaker; had tools of expropriation; was also settling deals for a fraction, as I say, of the cost. But Bill Boyd was doing an end run on Highways and was in fact was even working with his special adviser and sidekick on this front, Laurie Pushor, Mr. Speaker, and was acting outside of the knowledge and the support of the GTH at the time, Mr. Speaker.

So you've got somebody doing a side deal of sorts, Mr. Speaker, who ended up bringing — if you can imagine — a deal forward to cabinet where the owner of the land, who had acquired this land, where now the government was going to be acquiring the land from was in fact his landlord, Mr. Speaker, in fact in a business relationship with that very minister, renting, I believe, thousands of acres of land from that very corporation or that individual involved in that corporation, Mr. Speaker.

Of course what we've learned is that was never disclosed to cabinet, Mr. Speaker. And what we've also learned is that they really went out of their way to conceal the identity of that owner, Mr. Speaker. And you know, what we've learned through some of the investigation, like the auditor's report that was a scathing report, that exonerated no one, Mr. Speaker. What we learned from that, Mr. Speaker, is that that deal was brought forward and that had a concealed identity. And it was in fact I think the Deputy Premier now, the then minister of Justice who, I'm told or I think we've learned, has intervened at that point to say, hey

we shouldn't be proceeding with this; it's shady stuff to do so when you don't have the knowledge of who you're purchasing the land from. And so that deal went away, Mr. Speaker.

And in a, you know, in a strange way, all of a sudden, without ever being listed publicly is my understanding, that land then was sold to another friend of government, a donor to the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker. I don't know how those two ever connected. That hasn't yet been answered for, Mr. Speaker. It's one of those outstanding questions that a judicial inquiry would also get to the bottom of. But all of a sudden he acquired that land from Bill Boyd's landlord, Mr. Speaker. And Bill Boyd's landlord of course made, I believe, \$6 million in that transaction.

And you know, it's pretty interesting that it was felt to be such a safe move for that other purchaser to then come in, step in and buy that land. But sure enough, all of a sudden that deal arrives back at cabinet, Mr. Speaker, and this time they get the job done. They do the deal, Mr. Speaker. And on top of the exorbitant sum that Tappauf had paid for the land, and then the exorbitant sum that the other purchaser paid for the land, government came in and paid \$103,000 an acre, providing a profit of \$5 million more for that friend of government, Mr. Speaker, that donor of the Sask Party.

And if we follow back those channels at that point in time, we had of course a premier who was suggesting that he had an appraisal. Of course that wasn't the case. He was suggesting that there wasn't political intervention on this front. Well of course we've learned that wasn't the case. This was all being organized out of the office by Bill Boyd along with Laurie Pushor, in fact acting without, you know, on their own without the support of the GTH, doing an end run on Highways, Mr. Speaker, who were working hard on this front.

And it's a circumstance that, you know, of course went to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] where they investigated these deals, Mr. Speaker, and all of the serious questions that exist there, Mr. Speaker. And I'll tell you this: the RCMP don't embark on a file for fun, Mr. Speaker. They only do so when a serious threshold of concern is in place. And certainly in a case like this where we have the facts that taxpayers were ripped off, paid way more for the land than they should have, where we know the landowners and the nuns were ripped off, Mr. Speaker, and those friends of government made out with millions, you can understand why the RCMP dug into this file.

When I hear the Minister for Social Services shouting across saying, well what did they say, Mr. Speaker? And I guess what the RCMP . . . And I don't want to ever characterize their words in an inaccurate way, so without having their exact words I'd want to be very careful. But at the end of the day they never found the threshold requiring charges, Mr. Speaker. But that's a pretty low standard for a government, especially for a Social Services minister who has some of the very most vulnerable that he's responsible for, Mr. Speaker. And we have untold millions of dollars that have been taken from Saskatchewan people on this front, that have been wasted by Saskatchewan people, that could have gone a long way in very effective deployment, Mr. Speaker, to address things like the addictions crisis or mental health challenges that our province faces.

I'm going to just go through a few of the questions that remain

on this front and I'll reference the . . . What is it? I guess it's a piece done by the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation]. I don't know if the member from Prince Albert has anything disparaging to say on this front, but this is from August 9th this summer. And these are the outstanding questions that he's identified based on extensive research. The taxpayers federation is engaged on this file, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if the member . . . I hear the member from Cannington making some noise. I don't know if they're going to say disparaging things about the taxpayers federation as well, Mr. Speaker. I think that'd be disappointing.

But a few of the questions that exist are, and I quote, "Who made a mysterious call to Bill Boyd in May 2012, offering to sell the 204 acres?" Pretty good, pretty good question, Mr. Speaker.

No. 2: "How did Robert Tappauf buy the 204 acres at just the right time?" Mr. Speaker, what was it that caused this individual to be so confident that he could pay more than any of the other deals in a large way, Mr. Speaker, knowing that he was thinking that he would, you know . . . I guess confidence that he was going to make out just fine. Of course he has a business relationship with the minister who was running the show on this front.

You know, and why was, another quote here, "Why was John Law dismissed?" So of course John Law is a long-serving civil servant, well respected, Mr. Speaker, who was the CEO of the GTH. And he was canned or let go, Mr. Speaker, by Bill Boyd right after, I think, some serious questions were being asked around the deal that Boyd was putting together, that he was cooking up on this front, Mr. Speaker.

Another question here, Mr. Speaker, was and I quote, "Why did Donna Harpauer tell the Crown Investments Corporation to help pay for this land?" Good question, Mr. Speaker. And that's our now-Finance minister, Mr. Speaker. You would expect a level of accountability and stewardship for public resources from your Finance minister to be like few others.

Another question: "Why didn't the government learn who owned 139 Land Corporation?" This is the concealed identity. This is the entity that Boyd was trying to do a deal with, Mr. Speaker. And you know, my friend across the way from Martensville seems to be getting worked up here. Of course, I think she presided as the Minister of Highways on this front, I think has a fair amount of answering to do on this front through a period of this time, Mr. Speaker.

And another quote: "Why didn't Robert Tappauf reveal he was the owner of 139 Land Corporation?" I don't know why that was concealed, Mr. Speaker. I have no idea.

No. 8: How did Robert Tappauf and the other purchaser connect?"

Mr. Speaker, I think the member from Martensville is heckling that she wasn't the exact minister at that time. I'm not sure when she was minister exactly, Mr. Speaker. We know she was Minister of Highways, Mr. Speaker, for a period of time and she presided over, I know, the bypass mess that we're seeing, the biggest overrun in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker. But she would have some ability to answer some questions on this front. And I do respect her getting worked up. I do know she's a good

friend of Bill Boyd, who's at the centre of this sordid tale, Mr. Speaker.

I guess no. 9 here is, "Why didn't Laurie Pushor tell cabinet or the GTH board about the Ministry of Highways lower value appraisal?" You know, really the questions go on and on, Mr. Speaker. What we don't have answers for is answers to those questions and many more. What we don't know is who or how information was flowing.

[12:30]

What we know is that there was very casual emails going, Mr. Speaker, between the one owner of the land and Laurie Pushor on behalf of Bill Boyd, Mr. Speaker, but we don't have answers. All we know is this: we know that \$11 million of taxpayers' dollars have certainly been wasted. We know that the one entity, the business relationship with Bill Boyd made out with \$6 million. We know that another entity or another person, business person with a very close relationship to this government, a donor of the Sask Party, made out with \$5 million.

And we know we have a Sask Party government that's tried to hide the truth on this matter all too often, Mr. Speaker. It comes down to public resources. It comes down to public dollars, Mr. Speaker. It comes down to decency for Saskatchewan people, and that's why I strongly stand in favour of the motion put forward by the member from Nutana for some final accountability, for a judicial inquiry as was called for by the deputy premier when he was running for leadership, as was called for by the member from Regina University when she was running for leadership, Mr. Speaker. And certainly the public and taxpayers deserve nothing less.

With the hour being what it is, Mr. Speaker, I'll adjourn debate on this motion. I fully support this motion, and we need to get to the bottom of this mess.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that the Assembly adjourns. Is that the pleasure of the Assembly? Is this agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. The Assembly stands adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:31.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Michelson	5073
Merriman	5073
Fiaz	5073
Wotherspoon	5073
Hargrave	5073

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Wotherspoon	5073
Eyre	5073
Sproule	5074
Forbes	5074
Mowat	5074
Sarauer	5074

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Movember Team Raises Funds for Men's Health	
Weekes	5074
Shelter Director Awarded Protective Services Medal	
Beck	5075
Saskatoon Roadway Project Wins National Infrastructure Award	
Buckingham	5075
World AIDS Day	
Mowat	5075
Gabriel Housing Corporation Announces New Project	
Fiaz	5076
Prince Albert Raiders Top of the League	
Lawrence	5076
Saskatchewan Music Week Features Awards and Industry Summit	
Olauson	5076

QUESTION PERIOD

West Texas Intermediate Differential	
Meili	5076
Eyre	5077
Effects of Taxes on Provincial Economy	
Meili	5077
Harrison	5078
Harpauer	5078
Management of Provincial Economy	
Wotherspoon	5078
Harpauer	5078
Support for Mental Health and Addictions Services	
Mowat	5079
Reiter	5079
Measures to Improve Highway Intersection Safety	
Carr	5080
Surface Rights Legislation	
Pedersen	5080
Eyre	5080

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Introduction of the Saskatchewan Climate Resilience Measurement Framework	
Duncan	5081
Pedersen	5081

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 162 — <i>The Irrigation Act, 2018</i>	
Marit	5082

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TABLING OF SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

Harpauer	5082
----------------	------

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Investment in Education Infrastructure	
Olauson	5082, 5091
Beck	5084, 5091
Young	5085

Mowat	5087, 5091
Steinley	5088, 5092
Sarauer	5089, 5092
Nerlien	5091
Francis	5091
Fiaz	5092
PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS	
ADJOURNED DEBATES	
PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS	
Motion No. 2 — Inquiry Into the GTH Land Acquisition	
Wotherspoon	5092

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe
Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor
Minister of Advanced Education
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure

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

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

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

Hon. Joe Hargrave
Minister of Crown Investments
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Finance

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Trade and Export Development
Minister of Immigration and Career Training

Hon. Warren Kaeding
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis
and Northern Affairs

Hon. Gene Makowsky
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor
and Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Paul Merriman
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Don Morgan
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
Workers' Compensation Board
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Greg Ottenbreit
Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Health

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Corrections and Policing
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Deputy Premier
Minister of Education
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds and
Priority Saskatchewan