



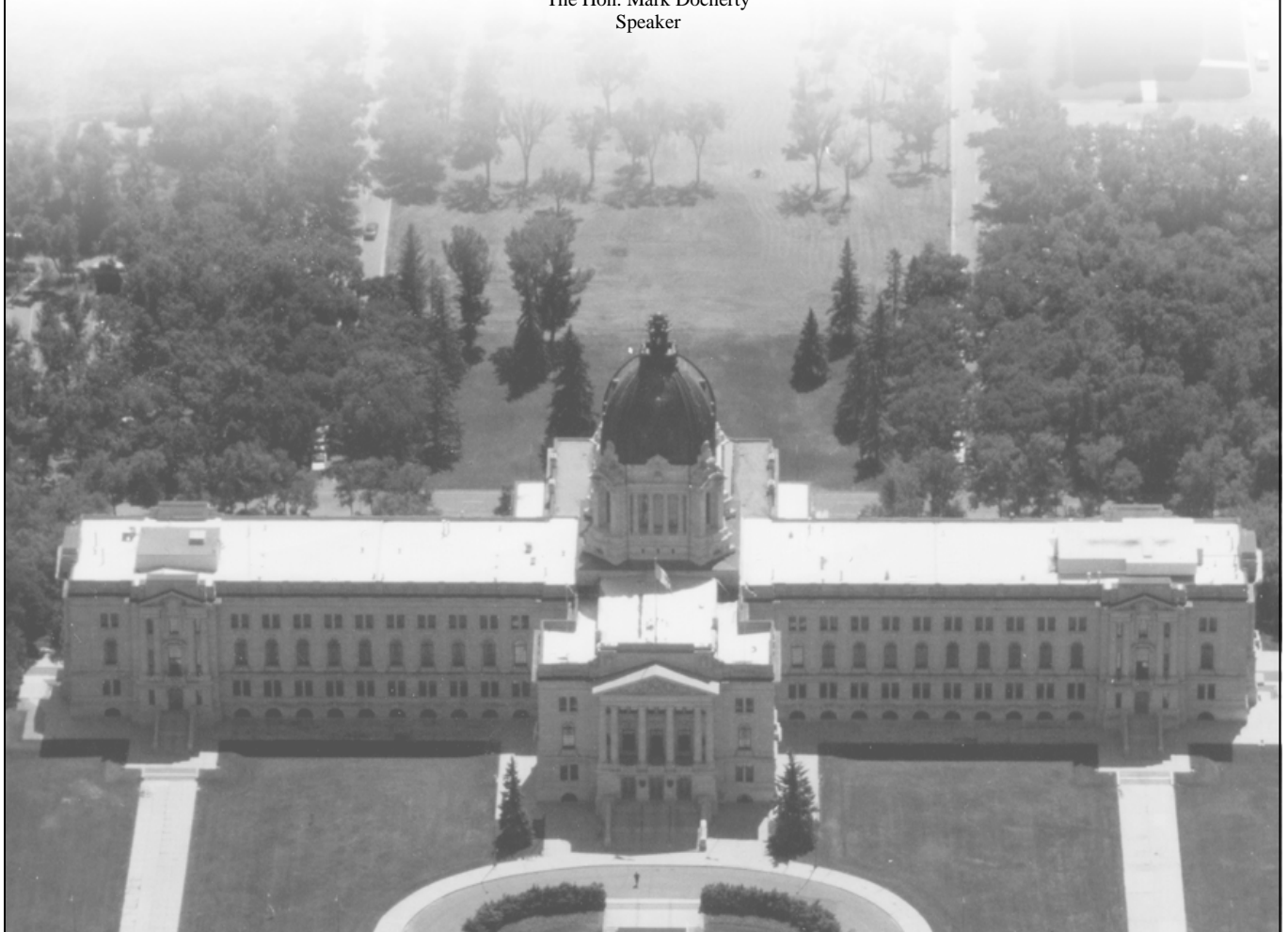
THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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

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Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	

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

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of this Assembly, I would like to introduce my friend sitting in the west gallery, Waheed Sadiq-sahib. Waheed is a very successful businessman in Saskatchewan and in Alberta. Mr. Sadiq is owning about 32 Burger Kings, almost all in Saskatchewan and a few in Calgary. And thanks to him, Mr. Speaker, he calls me as a younger brother and treats me as a younger brother. I ask all the members to join me, welcome Waheed Sadiq in his Legislative Assembly.

While on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to one of . . .

The Speaker: — Yes, please continue.

Mr. Fiaz: — While on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to this Assembly my best friend, Waqar Bukhari. Lots of my colleagues know him very well. Waqar is my constituent, my neighbour. This is him I can call a real friend, Mr. Speaker, and a perfect example of friend in need is friend indeed. I ask all the Assembly to join me welcome Waqar-sahib in his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members. I'd like to introduce my dear wife, sitting in the west gallery — my wife of quite a number of years and the mother of three absolutely wonderful children. Please join me in welcoming her to her Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of Saskatchewan people, businesses, and communities all across our province as it relates to the Sask Party's job-killing tax, the PST [provincial sales tax] expansion, the PST that's been placed onto construction labour, a decision that has really harmed our economy and has impacted many across the province. Permits are down; thousands of jobs have been lost; so many Saskatchewan people have been forced out of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, skilled labour that had been built by businesses across this province for a long period of time. And the prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that read as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to stop saddling Saskatchewan families and businesses with the cost of their

mismanagement, and immediately reinstate the PST exemption on construction and stop hurting Saskatchewan businesses and families.

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

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, 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 citizens of Biggar, Saskatoon, and Regina. I do so present.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party to stop the cuts to our children's classrooms. Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to the fact that over the past two years we have a \$24 million deficit to classrooms across our province even though our classrooms are growing both in size and complexity every year.

Mr. Speaker, they want us to know that even though the Sask Party is making us all pay more, our kids are getting less, and the cuts have meant that students have lost much-needed supports in the classroom, including funding for buses for kindergarteners and programs to help children with special needs.

I'll read the prayer:

We, the undersigned, call upon the government to reverse the senseless cuts to our kids' classrooms and stop making families, teachers, and everyone who works to support our education system pay the price for the Sask Party's mismanagement, scandal, and waste.

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed this petition today reside in Warman. I do so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. And the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan want to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan's outdated election Act allows corporations, unions, and individuals, even those living outside this 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 we know, Mr. Speaker, that over the past 10 years, the Sask Party has received \$12.61 million in corporate donations and of that, \$2.87 million came from companies outside Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we know that the federal government and the provinces of Alberta, Manitoba, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and now 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 Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government 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.

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

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

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

This petition is signed by individuals from Regina, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Telemiracle 43

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past weekend the 43rd annual Telemiracle was held at TCU Place in Saskatoon. I'm happy to report that, thanks to many generous donations

across the province and beyond, this year's telethon brought in over \$5.6 million.

Mr. Speaker, all the money raised in the telethon will go towards Kinsmen Telemiracle Foundation which provides critical support, equipment, and access to medical assistance to support the people of this great province. The event was filled with wonderful entertainment as well as special presentations by corporations and families, all in the support of the telethon.

Mr. Speaker, this year there was a special tribute to the members of the Humboldt Broncos hockey team. Maddy Christianson, a young performer, dedicated a heartfelt dance to her late billet brother, Logan Schatz. He was a positive role model in her life, and to remember him she decided to set a fundraising goal of \$1,000, but with the help of the community she ended up doubling that donation. The family of the late Jacob Leicht, another Humboldt player, also made a donation of \$11,000 in his memory.

Mr. Speaker, this event would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of hundreds of volunteers, performers, and supporters who spent the weekend cheering on Saskatchewan to ring those phones. As a past Kinsmen, I would now ask all members of this Assembly to please join me in congratulating the Kinsmen Telemiracle on another successful telethon. Thank you.

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

Family Donation to Victoria Hospital Foundation

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Victoria Hospital Foundation of Prince Albert recently received a wonderful donation from Dr. Lalita Malhotra and her family. Mr. Speaker, the Malhotra family donated \$800,000. Their donation to the foundation's campaign of raising 2.2 million for a new neonatal intensive care unit means that the goal was met in under six months rather than the anticipated three years.

Dr. Lalita Malhotra made the donation in memory of her husband, the late Dr. Tilak Malhotra. The Malhotras arrived in Prince Albert in 1975, and Dr. Tilak Malhotra was the first and only pediatrician for nearly 20 years. Dr. Lalita Malhotra's specialty was maternal care, and she delivered thousands of babies. Together they cared for mothers and children in Prince Albert and the North for almost 42 years.

Mr. Speaker, Victoria Hospital serves Prince Albert, its surrounding area, and the North, and is quickly outgrowing the need. Over 1,500 babies are delivered at the hospital each year. The current NICU [neonatal intensive care unit] is just 375 square feet, and it is often at double its capacity or more. This generous donation will change all that, and the people of Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan are eternally grateful to the Malhotra family.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in thanking Dr. Lalita Malhotra and the late Dr. Tilak Malhotra for their years of service, and to the Malhotra family for their very generous donation. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for

Humboldt-Watrous.

Quilts for Humboldt

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to bring light to a wonderful cause created by a fantastic individual from my constituency of Humboldt. This past April, Humboldt, and indeed the entire province, experienced a heartbreaking tragedy. And in times of extreme tragedy, Mr. Speaker, sometimes the smallest of gestures can make the greatest amount of impact.

That was the thought behind Quilts for Humboldt. Wendy Toye, owner of Haus of Stitches in Humboldt, felt compelled to help those affected by the tragedy in any way she could. The idea was to have local quilters make 29 quilts for each person who had been on the bus that fateful day. But soon the idea blossomed to include other individuals directly impacted by the bus crash.

The original Facebook message created by Wendy calling for quilts was met with an unexpected response. Like a giant patchwork quilt, communities across the globe came together to stitch a blanket of comfort over the Humboldt community. Mr. Speaker, as of January 1st the group of quilters has received an estimated 5,000 quilts and another 1,000 unfinished quilt tops from areas as far as Qatar, Brazil, and Scotland, indeed covering Humboldt in a remarkable expression of love and support.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank everyone near and far who has contributed to the Quilts for Humboldt cause. We are incredibly grateful.

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

[13:45]

Fundraiser Helps the Poor

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In December I attended the ANCOP [Answering the Cry of the Poor] One Voice Christmas Carol fundraiser. It was held at the St. Patrick's Parish in my riding in Saskatoon and was hosted by the Filipino-Canadian Association of Saskatoon.

The One Voice Christmas Carol fundraiser is a benefit concert and dinner that raises funds for the ANCOP shelter and child sponsorship program. ANCOP stands for Answering the Cry of the Poor, and the organization is recognized for their work helping families, children, and people suffering from homelessness across Canada and all around the world.

Worldwide, ANCOP provides clean clothing and shelter to more than 3,000 children. In Saskatoon, ANCOP coordinates a local food program and provides company to seniors living in nursing homes. We're lucky to have an organization like ANCOP in our community, reminding us of the importance of faith, family, and social justice.

It was an honour to attend the event and listen to the wonderful performances. I want to congratulate ANCOP, the organizers, and everyone who performed. In particular I wanted to recognize Jun and Helen Florida for a successful, well-attended event.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this legislature to join me in congratulating all who were involved in hosting the ANCOP One Voice Christmas Carol fundraiser, and wish them as much success in the years to come.

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

Fight for World's Tallest Moose

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since being completed in 1984, Moose Jaw's beloved Mac the Moose has been a staple in our community. Standing 32 feet high, he was the tallest moose in the world until 2015. Mr. Speaker, standing only 50 centimetres taller, a moose across the world named Storelgen has sparked an international war between the city of Moose Jaw and Stor-Elvdal which is northeast of Oslo, Norway.

Mr. Speaker, Norway has come forward with offerings of peace and songs of celebration, but we here in Moose Jaw are not going down without a fight. There's nowhere to go but up. A GoFundMe page is set up to increase the height of Mac the Moose, and so far it has received over \$14,000. On top of that, a generous donation of \$25,000 has also been made by the Moosehead Brewery. Whether it's a larger set of antlers or a pair of stilettos, Mac the Moose will reclaim the title as the world's tallest moose again.

Mr. Speaker, I think Mayor Fraser Tolmie said it best, and I quote:

You don't tell Canadians that *Hockey Night in Canada* is a chat show. You don't tell Canadians that you can't put syrup on your pancakes. You don't water down Canadian beer. And you don't mess with Mac the Moose.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Donation to Prince Albert Hospice

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to announce that, with collaboration between the Rose Garden Hospice Association and a very generous local philanthropist, Prince Albert will soon be home to a free-standing, state-of-the-art hospice.

The Rose Garden Hospice Association will open a high-quality facility focused on compassionate care for its patients at the end-of-life stages, a project this government proudly supports with the \$2 million annual operating funding. It will serve patients' physical, emotional, and spiritual needs with efforts in making this difficult stage a little more pleasant and peaceful for both patients and families. This hospice will be accessible for families in Prince Albert, the North, and neighbouring communities.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Mr. Malcolm Jenkins and thank him for his generous \$500,000 donation to the hospice campaign. Malcolm came to Canada 50 years ago from the United Kingdom. Back in the UK [United Kingdom], he has seen

how hospices are providing high-quality end-of-life care for so many communities, inspiring him to make this donation to his community. I'm very grateful for Malcolm and the Rose Garden Hospice for taking on such an important cause, and I trust the community will continue to be very supportive.

Malcolm owns Canadian Tire in Prince Albert and is very well known in our community and the province for his philanthropy and generous spirit. I now ask all members to please join me in thanking Malcolm Jenkins, the Rose Garden Hospice Association for their fundraising efforts. Thank you.

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

Opposition's Position on Carbon Tax

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a new year and a lot has happened since last session. We braved one of the coldest winters. Saskatchewan was announced the host for the Grey Cup in 2020, and our government made its case in court on behalf of the people of this province against the federal carbon tax.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know what hasn't happened yet? The members opposite have yet to join Saskatchewan in fighting the carbon tax, even though 88 per cent of people in Saskatchewan and 72 per cent of all Canadians support our government's decision to fight the carbon tax in court. The members opposite are truly out of touch with the people of this province.

On February 12th, the Leader of the Opposition said, "Our position is very clear. We think that a price on pollution is a reasonable thing." You will note the change in terminology, Mr. Speaker. He's shifting his language on a carbon tax to "price on pollution," just like Prime Minister Trudeau has.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP [New Democratic Party] supports a carbon tax that would be a hit to Saskatchewan's jobs and a \$16 billion hit to Saskatchewan's GDP [gross domestic product], a carbon tax that would have virtually no impact on emissions. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite are clearly out of touch with Saskatchewan and its residents. This side of the House, our government will continue to stand up for Saskatchewan and stand up against the Trudeau carbon tax. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I think everybody's been waiting for the last three months. Yes, it is time.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Film Industry in Saskatchewan

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's great to be back here for what is named the spring session but doesn't feel much like a spring session yet. And in the spirit of democracy, what we've done as New Democrats, we've asked people across the province to share some of their questions that they have for the government with us.

Our first such question comes from Jason Rister of Regina. Jason

points out to us the boom that's going on in the Canadian film and television industry right now. Across the country, so much activity is going on in production of film and television, except here in Saskatchewan where we have a purpose-built sound stage that sits idle most of the time and we have people here in the province having to leave to find work elsewhere because that industry has been totally starved. In fact this one hits my family. My brother's in film and would love to be working here in Saskatchewan, raising his family here, but instead he can only find work in Toronto.

Mr. Speaker, we've lost so much money, so many jobs, and so many opportunities to tell Saskatchewan's stories. Will the Premier, in this budget, reintroduce the film tax credit and get us back to work in Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Here we are in 2019 and we're talking about the creative sector in our province, Mr. Speaker. Of course in Saskatchewan we have Creative Saskatchewan, which does support the film industry, Mr. Speaker. Now certainly there's been lots of good work in that area, as recently at the Science Centre where we saw the premiere of *SuperGrid*, Mr. Speaker. I know members from across . . . on both sides were at that premiere. We have great production happening in Saskatchewan. That was one such iteration of what's being done with Creative Saskatchewan.

There's new screen-based media grants, Mr. Speaker. Granted, we have capped that. That is one area where we have had to make some tough choices on this side, Mr. Speaker. We notice on the other side of the House, they don't make choices. Of course, they're in opposition; they can say they're going to spend a whole bunch of money on whatever they want. I know the member opposite, the Leader, has promised billions and billions of unfunded spending, Mr. Speaker.

So we'll continue on with Creative Saskatchewan. There's good work being done by, not only the film sector but other sectors — book publishing and others. I'm sure if there's other questions, Mr. Speaker, I will get to those in the next question.

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very disappointing that we don't hear a commitment to reinstate that tax credit and get us back to that source of revenue, source of jobs, and a way to tell our stories.

Mr. Speaker, one story we've been hearing from this government for the last three years is that they plan to introduce a balanced budget this spring. But then we've been hearing different rumblings, different stories from the Minister of Finance and the Deputy Premier — rumblings, musings that well maybe it'll be a balanced budget, but the operating debt will increase. And so I don't really understand what that might mean, Mr. Speaker. So I'll put that to the Premier. Will he make it clear? Which will it be? Will the operating debt increase, or will it be a balanced budget? Or does he think there's such a thing as a balanced

budget where the debt goes up?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, three years ago this government set out on a path, a path to balance the budget on behalf of the people in this province, Mr. Speaker. And we are a government that does what we say we are going to do. We've been on track to achieve that balance, Mr. Speaker, and we continue on track to achieve and introduce a balanced budget this spring, Mr. Speaker.

And I would put forward that what we will see this spring will be the right balance on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, be the right balance of supporting our economy, Mr. Speaker, supporting the growth of our economy that we have experienced over the last decade so that we can continue to make investments in communities right across this province — investments in education, investments in education infrastructure, and investments in the people that are offering that education to our next generation, Mr. Speaker, and continue our investment in health care infrastructure in a children's hospital in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

And this Friday we'll be happy to be in the city of North Battleford, Mr. Speaker, to open up that replacement facility of that 100-year-old facility. That represents the largest investment ever in mental health treatment in this province, Mr. Speaker, in the opening of the Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was a pretty convoluted answer to a pretty simple and straightforward question, so let's try it again. You know, imagine if I went home tonight and I said to my family, hey I've got a great plan to balance our budget. We're not going to make any more money. We're not going to spend any less. We're just going to take a second mortgage out on the house. I can imagine what kind of a response I'd get from the family for that idea.

Well the answer I just got from the Premier doesn't respect the intelligence of the Saskatchewan people, and I'm asking him to do so and give us a simple answer. Which will it be? Will it be a balanced budget or will the debt go up?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to stand here and explain the difference between debt and deficit. I'm going to allow the members opposite to figure that out for themselves, Mr. Speaker. The fact of the matter is, in this spring we are going to introduce a balanced budget on behalf of the people of the province. That's what we committed to three years ago, Mr. Speaker. That's what we, in fairness, have made some very difficult and challenging decisions in the interim.

In the essence of being able to make these types of investments, Mr. Speaker, the types of investment and services that people of this province expect, not just today but to continue to make those investments into the future. Investments in mental health treatment, Mr. Speaker, in the replacement of that facility in North Battleford, investments in a children's hospital, a service

that this province, quite frankly, has not had over the last . . . ever, Mr. Speaker. And continue with our investments in education. Forty-two new schools have been built there, Mr. Speaker, and more to come in the days ahead.

We will balance the budget this spring, Mr. Speaker, a commitment that was made by this government three years ago and we'll follow through on that shortly.

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

Development in Wascana Park

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The most interesting part of that answer wasn't actually what we heard from the Premier but what we heard from the Finance minister yelling that we didn't understand the difference between debt and deficit. Well I understand this: if your debt grows, that means you ran a deficit. Anything else is simply magical math.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's a development under way in Wascana Park. And the Premier recently said, and I'll repeat his quote to him. He said that we should be thankful that we have a private industry that's willing to make that kind of investment in our city and our province. Well when you've got a company that's receiving essentially free land — the best commercial land, best commercial property in the city — and really an opportunity to make millions a year renting that out, Mr. Speaker, well what industry, what private company wouldn't want a deal like that? It's a great deal for the company but it's a terrible deal for Saskatchewan.

Will the Premier actually take a serious look at this issue and understand that this is the wrong way to go? Stop that sweetheart deal for a Sask Party donor and start a new process where we get a new CNIB [Canadian National Institute for the Blind] building that keeps the integrity of Wascana Park.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, two questions there. Just to begin with, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask this question: how much the deficit and the debt would increase with \$10 billion worth of uncontrolled spending that's been committed to by that member, Mr. Speaker, through his leadership campaign and since. Mr. Speaker, \$10 billion over four years committed to. It would increase both the deficit and the debt to the province of Saskatchewan, something we're not willing to do.

With respect, Mr. Speaker, with respect to one proponent coming forward with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind and the infrastructure that they are looking to replace here in the park, I'm happy to say that we've looked into this, Mr. Speaker, and there are processes in place across government. But most notably there are processes in place with respect to development, Mr. Speaker, any development, whether it's replacement development in what is the jewel of this province, Mr. Speaker — the Wascana Park.

[14:00]

Those processes have been followed with the replacement of infrastructure, for example the Conexus project, the CBC

[Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] building, Mr. Speaker. They've been followed with respect to the replacement of the infrastructure for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Mr. Speaker. They've been followed. They are followed today and they'll be followed in projects in the future, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has been spinning this project as somehow charity or philanthropy. When you've got a company that's getting free land, getting free land that they can rent out and make a fortune on each year, that, Mr. Speaker, that's not philanthropy. That's business. And it's private business in a public park. It's very lucrative private business.

But when you've got a process . . . The Premier talked about the process. Well this is a really interesting process. When the architects on the committee don't agree with it, you fire them. That's the process. When you've got the rules of the park don't allow this to go forward, well let's change the rules. That's the process. When you've got the biggest corporate donor to the Sask Party who wants to build it and have this opportunity, you make that happen for them. That's the process, Mr. Speaker.

And that is not charity. That's not philanthropy. As far as I can see, that's corruption, Mr. Speaker, because this hurts the reputation not just of this government, not just of the choices that this Premier's making, but of our entire democracy. And that's why I ask the Speaker: will he make the right decision? Will the Premier make the right decision and start over and get us a new CNIB building without ruining Wascana Park?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a real pleasure to stand in my place and correct the Leader of the Opposition. Proper processes were followed, Mr. Speaker. Indeed when we look back to 2011 and the need for the CNIB to have a new building, the project was tendered, and it was tendered at the request of the Government of Saskatchewan. Absolutely it was.

Now the project . . . What happened was the CNIB, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, they went out and needed a new building. They asked the Regina community for philanthropy and they got together with Brandt. And Brandt came, as they do on many occasions, to help in that regard. As they went forward, the government said you have to have a tendering process. That tendering process was in place. Six companies took out the information and only one came forward with a proposal, which was Brandt. So it was tendered and all processes were followed correctly.

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

Donations to Political Parties

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, it's no surprise that this Premier won't do anything that might hurt his friends. After all, this is a company that donated \$229,358.11 to the Premier's war chest since 2006.

The Premier and every member of the Sask Party caucus over there had a chance to get big money out of politics once and for all last spring, but they all voted against our reasonable bill to do just that. I know the Sask Party doesn't like being asked questions about who they're really working for, but there's an easy solution, Mr. Speaker: end corporate and union donations once and for all. Why won't the Sask Party do just that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm surprised the members opposite are still raising this issue. The issue that they've got to deal with, Mr. Speaker, if they want to start talking about it, perhaps they want to send John Horgan from the British Columbia NDP \$7,519.60, which was given to them in 2016. It was their 21st largest donation that was received.

They don't seem to mind receiving donations from the unions. They received \$81,000 from UFCW [United Food & Commercial Workers] provincial council; \$54,000 from Unifor; \$37,000 from United Steelworkers; \$35,000 from the Canadian Labour Congress.

Mr. Speaker, let's not forget that 12 wealthy individuals donated almost 5,000 each to the leadership campaign of the Leader of the Opposition, well in excess of the \$1,200 limit that the members opposite are suggesting. Mr. Speaker, we're not going to be taking any lessons from the people over there.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, that member should take some time and read the media. Mr. Speaker, there shouldn't even be a question about who we are working for in this place. But no matter how hard we try or how many times we ask, the Sask Party just can't quit their addiction to big money and their corporate donors. I think it's time we had an intervention. This is bad for the health of our democracy. How much worse do things need to get before the Sask Party will see the light and finally get corporate and union donations out of Saskatchewan politics?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, for the past 10 years the Saskatchewan Party has received 90 per cent of its donations from Saskatchewan. All registered parties must publicly report donations. The information is available online. We don't hide it anywhere. It's on the internet, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite can look it up. They can find out who gave what, who gave it when, Mr. Speaker. There's no secret there. There's no issue of transparency.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite, if they don't like it, they can stop taking union funds. They can stop taking it from out-of-province people like John Horgan, and then they might come forward and say, we're not taking any more money. But as long as they're taking money from out-of-province people, Mr. Speaker, we're going to take money. And we're going to disclose it. We're going to be open. We're going to be transparent about it, and it will be available on the internet to anybody that wants to see it.

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

Third Quarter Financial Report

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's become crystal clear that Saskatchewan people can't trust this government to give them the straight goods. They won't come clean about who they're working for and they won't be straight with Saskatchewan people about the state of our finances.

Yet again, Saskatchewan people find themselves in the dark when it comes to how this Sask Party government has mismanaged our finances. It's March and there's still no third quarter financial report before this Assembly. By this time last year, we had the third quarter report from the Finance minister. The last time that the Sask Party kept this report under wraps was just before the devastating 2017 budget.

My question for the Finance minister is this: when will that government deliver the goods and present the third quarter financial report?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, perhaps that member . . . And I know he has been elected for some time, but perhaps he forgot. It's been a number of years where we table our third quarter report on budget day along with our budget. And last year we delayed the budget, so therefore the third quarter report came out earlier than the budget.

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

Construction Industry and Provincial Economy

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, although they've hidden the report and the state of our finances from Saskatchewan people, the damage that they're doing to our construction industry is plain for all to see across our province. For months the PST on construction projects has harmed this vital, job-creating industry. Housing builds are massively down in communities all across Saskatchewan. Tradespeople are out of work and so many Saskatchewan tradespeople have been forced to move far outside Saskatchewan. And yet this government does nothing to alleviate the harm that they're causing with this job-killing tax. In December wages were down 9 per cent in construction. This government saw a struggling economy and made things so much worse by slamming on the brakes.

Will this government not do the right thing and simply admit their mistake and scrap the damaging decision to foist the PST on construction labour?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, this government is well aware that all taxes have an impact on people and have an impact on the economy. And we also have stated a number of times there were very difficult choices that we needed to make when we had such a significant downturn in the oil industry.

However, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the members opposite contribute absolutely everything to the PST. Perhaps that member should listen to the previous member and when he said that that member should take some time to read the media, Mr.

Speaker. If he did take the time to read the media, he would find out that the federal stress test, the changes to mortgage rates, has had a significant and far more damaging effect on the housing market. And if he doesn't believe that, then why is used housing not moving, Mr. Speaker? Why do we have a large inventory of used housing? Because there is no PST on used housing, Mr. Speaker.

I've got a stack of news articles — I could read them all into the record — of what the stress test has done to the housing market, Mr. Speaker. If we want to have a conversation, it can't just be what fits the NDP's critical narrative. We should have a wholesome conversation on what is impacting the housing market.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people deserve so much better than they're getting from that Sask Party government and that Finance minister. The PST on construction is hurting our economy in so many ways, certainly on the housing front but right across the entire construction sector, Mr. Speaker. It's forcing Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan tradespeople, far outside our province, a massive and serious loss when it comes to the skilled labour that will build Saskatchewan. Wages are down 9 per cent. The value of building permits was down \$30 million in December alone, 13 per cent. That's the entire construction sector, Mr. Speaker.

Adding costs at a time when our economy is hurting makes no sense. There's a simple solution. It's time for this government to do the right thing and scrap the PST on construction labour. Why won't the Finance minister or the Premier do the right thing and commit to that today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that the member opposite wants to talk about jobs, because the NDP have not talked about jobs in the last six job reports that we have had that have showed growth in this province, Mr. Speaker. We have created over 7,000 jobs in the last year, over 73,000 jobs since we had the privilege to form government in 2007, Mr. Speaker — one of the best rates of job creation in the entire country.

Mr. Speaker, I would contrast that with their record. Their record, when they were in government, was the complete opposite, the worst job creation record in the entire country, Mr. Speaker. And if they want to see jobs created and this economy grow, the absolute worst policy that could be pursued is a carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, which they support, which they support.

The Leader of the Opposition repeatedly has gone on the record and said that he supports a carbon tax. However he wants to characterize it, however words he wants to use, he supports a carbon tax. I think that member from Rosemont doesn't support a carbon tax. I actually would take his word. He said across the floor on occasion that he doesn't. The Leader of the Opposition would impose a carbon tax if he ever formed government and the people of this province know it, which is why he will never sit on this side of the House.

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this government celebrated Staff Appreciation Week last month, but no educator that I've spoken with appreciates the fact that per-student funding in our province has decreased each of the last four years. That means that year after year, teachers are forced to do more with less. Our teachers want nothing more than to see every student succeed, but underfunding makes that job so much more difficult. Teachers deserve better, students deserve better, and parents deserve better. Will this government commit today to ensuring that funding meets the needs of students right across this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, with the first day back in the House, it gives me the opportunity to remind the member opposite of some numbers. Since forming government in 2007, Mr. Speaker, operating funding has gone up 33 per cent in the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system, and over that period of time about a 13 per cent increase in enrolment. That's a significant investment that this government has made in public education, Mr. Speaker. Combine that with the \$30 million which was added to the budget last year, clearly demonstrates that this government is committed to funding public education, Mr. Speaker.

Now the member opposite knows the rules, Mr. Speaker. She only has to wait two weeks to see what's going to be in this year's budget. But I can tell her this, Mr. Speaker: I've been out speaking to teachers. I've been out speaking to trustees. I've been out speaking to parents about what kinds of commitments the government needs to make to improve public education.

There's certainly more to do, Mr. Speaker. We acknowledge that. But certainly I don't think that the opposition can be critical of the commitments that this government has made to public education on the operating side and, Mr. Speaker, without going on to the next question — I hope she asks it — on the capital side, which has been significant.

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

Ms. Beck: — That minister is very fond of saying that . . .

[Interjections]

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

[14:15]

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister is very fond of saying that he's been out in classrooms, and I know that he has been. But with answers like that, it's very evident that he's not been listening to what is going on in classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, our schools have seen a \$74 million shortfall over the past two years — that, in spite of rising enrolment. All across the province, individualized support for students simply isn't there as our classrooms have become more crowded and more

complex. School divisions and teachers are raising the alarm about the Sask Party's cuts, with the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] president telling the *StarPhoenix*, and I quote, we're still short 24 to \$26 million.

Will the minister promise today that Saskatchewan kids won't be asked to pay the price for this government's mismanagement any longer? Will the Sask Party restore the dollars that they took from our kids in the upcoming budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, the member knows that I'm not going to disclose the elements that are in the budget. But I can tell you this: when she says I'm not listening, when she says I'm not consulting, that's wrong, Mr. Speaker. I've been speaking to hundreds and hundreds of teachers around this province, listening to the stories, listening to the issues that they're having, experiencing in their classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

It's clear classrooms are getting more complex. We understand that, Mr. Speaker. And the needs and the demands on our teachers are increasing. Those are the kinds of conversations we're having, Mr. Speaker, meaningful conversations with teachers and other educational professionals, including the STF, who I met with, had a good meeting with just last Friday, Mr. Speaker.

I'll be meeting with the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association] again, meeting with boards of education, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that what we do on this side of the House meets the commitment that we made to support classrooms, Mr. Speaker. We've got one of the best education systems on the continent, and we plan on keeping it that way, Mr. Speaker. A continued commitment to public education — that's what this member can expect, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — To make a point of order.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition has said he wanted to do politics different, but in the first few minutes of the first question period he accused this government of corruption. I would ask the member to withdraw and apologize for that remark.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was listening intently to question period and we feel that the question was well within the rules of order. We'd ask that you review the record and find that the point is not well taken.

The Speaker: — I heard the comment and I know full well in terms of Beauchesne and what's allowable, what's not allowable. It does speak to the word "corrupt" as being unparliamentary in past rulings by Speakers. I would say that on the first day it's

under advisement. You can withdraw if you'd like, but we'll keep going. It didn't cause any more disorder than would have been usual in this place. So let's leave it at that and we'll keep going. But know full well that it's on the list.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 142

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate around Bill No. 142, *The Proceedings Against the Crown Act*. Several of my colleagues have had the opportunity to already enter into the debate with respect to this bill. I do have some questions for the minister and I'm looking forward to having those questions answered by him and his officials at committee.

Based on my understanding of this bill, it lays out essentially, as the title indicates, the proceedings against the Crown as well as some limitation periods and some allowances . . . or limitations and allowances as well that allow for individuals to enact proceedings against the Crown, which can be quite an important piece of information for many, Mr. Speaker. The Crown is one of the few parties who have the ability to limit their liability in terms of what sort of proceedings can be made against them as well as what sort of rules can be created around the framing of that. So I want to ensure . . . And I will be asking questions at committee around the consultation that's happened with respect to that bill as well as how this compares to other jurisdictions.

There was a change in the bill that I do want to highlight, that it states that any trial against a Crown must now be without a jury. I know this is a change from what is current practice right now where parties can elect to have a civil trial against the Crown done with a jury. Now my understanding is this legislative change will state that any civil proceeding against the Crown will have to be conducted by a judge alone.

My question is whether or not this is being done because of concerns around recent jury trials that have happened against the Crown and some large awards that have been made by juries, Mr. Speaker. Whenever we're limiting the ability of parties in their actions against the Crown, we want to ensure that it's being done thoughtfully and it's being done under proper consultation and it's in lockstep with other jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker.

So those are the kinds of questions I'll be asking about this bill at committee. So at this point I'm ready to allow this bill to proceed to its next steps.

The Speaker: — Second reading. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt that motion?

An Hon. Member: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 142 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 142, *The Proceedings Against the Crown Act, 2018* be committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice committee.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 143

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate around Bill No. 143, *The Proceedings Against the Crown Consequential Amendments Act*. Mr. Speaker, this is a companion legislation to the bill that I was just speaking of. It makes some consequential changes as a result of Bill 142. As such I don't have much more to add in debate on this bill. I'm looking forward to asking questions about this at committee. So as such, at this time I'm prepared to allow this bill as well to proceed to its next steps.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the member that Bill No. 143 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 143, *The Proceedings Against the Crown Consequential Amendments Act*,

2018 be committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice committee.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 144

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into the debate around Bill No. 144, *The Real Estate Amendment Act*. I know several of my colleagues, I believe, have had the opportunity to enter into debate with respect to this bill. I've had the opportunity to review this bill as well as consult with several of the stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, around the background of this legislation and how this legislation came to be because, to be frank with you, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't very attuned to the workings of the Saskatchewan Real Estate Commission until I had the opportunity to review this bill. And I've spoken with some experts in this area, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for their expertise.

As I understand it, the bill is reflective of some work that the Saskatchewan Real Estate Commission has been doing in partnership with the government. It has been in the works for several years now. The last time this legislation was changed, I believe, was in 2005. Largely this legislation will harmonize Saskatchewan with what are the national requirements for similar organizations throughout the country, Mr. Speaker, which makes it easier for those who are doing this work in Saskatchewan to be able to carry on that work in other provinces.

From what I understand and from reading the bill, there are a lot of details to be left to the regulations, which I understand are still being worked on. My hope is that they continue to be worked on in partnership with those who are experts in this area, and done in a way that is reflective of what the industry needs as well as with consumer protection always at the forefront, Mr. Speaker.

I understand that the bill makes a few changes that I want to highlight. It authorizes the appointment of either one or two members sitting at the commission. It allows the commission to post its annual report on its website to make it available to everyone without a need to specifically request it. It allows the commission to maintain an electronic register. It changes the bylaw procedures. It raises the fine amounts payable to the commission, which I think is interesting and, from what I understood, is important to do to ensure that the Real Estate Commission has the teeth that they need to ensure that those who are working within their framework are doing so . . . are following the rules, Mr. Speaker, which is important in terms of ensuring that the customers are protected, Mr. Speaker.

It does also change the appeal process somewhat. It expands the amount of the assurance fund from \$250,000 to \$350,000 and it changes the notice period for claims on funds. Mr. Speaker, I'm

looking forward to asking further questions of this bill to the minister and his officials at committee. So with that in mind, at this point I am ready to allow this bill to move on to its next stages.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 144 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — I designate that Bill No. 144, *The Real Estate Amendment Act, 2018* be committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice committee.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 163

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 163 — *The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud once again to stand in my place to give a few comments on Bill 163. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the bill pertains to *The Legal Profession Amendment Act* of 2018, and certainly we've had a number of people scour through the bill to see exactly what the bill entails. And as we indicated in the past, it's important to note some of the changes for people that may be watching the Assembly.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, Bill 163 adds new definitions, revises and removes some definition such as the definition of "certificate," which is replaced by "licence" because lawyers will now be granted licences. So, Mr. Speaker, it's something that may be administrative in nature; however, we need to see what the ramifications of the bill is all about. The bill also sets out the requirements for the society to issue a licence to all lawyer members. It provides a definition of "practice of law" and the requirements to practise law.

Mr. Speaker, the bill also allows the issuance of limited licences to persons who are non-lawyers and student-at-law so they can provide legal services, legal information. And, Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that we also want to point out that the bill authorizes the society . . . the legal society, Law Society to make rules respecting the issuance of limited licences and the regulation of limited licences. So it's really important that there be organizations involved with this process; that they also have

the opportunity to participate. And, Mr. Speaker, the Law Society is an important form of our governing structures across the country, so their role and their input and their advice is certainly valued.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the last two things it does, it allows for the summoning of witnesses or the submission of evidence within the context of a hearing and amends the procedures governing specific committees. So, Mr. Speaker, there's other housekeeping amendments that are minor in nature throughout this bill, and that's why it's important that we continue paying attention to some of the changes because obviously this bill will have some ramifications overall.

So I think it's important that we describe the bill as often as we can so people out there that are involved in the legal profession and those that are taking an interest in these particular bills and the changes within the legal profession overall, that they are given ample opportunity and time to review the bill and certainly see what the contexts are and see what changes are being proposed. So, Mr. Speaker, it is again something that we have to pay attention to.

So on that note I'll move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 163, *The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2018*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 164

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 164 — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018 (No. 3)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. As ever, it's always like a basic level of pleasure to join debate in this Assembly. But sometimes it's even greater pleasure than one could imagine or anticipate. And I have to say this is not one of those occasions.

Bill No. 163, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018* introduces housekeeping amendments for a great number of Acts, ranging from *The Agricultural Implements Act* — where I believe one of the amendments is to make clear the financial institutions and anticipates both credit unions and banks, Mr. Speaker — on down to *The Dental Disciplines Act*; *The League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents Act, 1991*; *The Provincial Sales Tax Act*; *The Public Health Act*.

Just moving back on that provincial sales tax Act measure, Mr. Speaker, normally when we see them going for the PST, Mr. Speaker, we're thinking, you know, there's going to be a hike in there someplace. But in this case it is just a matter of housekeeping, I do believe. I think that we'll see what happens on the budget. We'd hope that they would take measures to

reduce some of that billion-dollar tax grab that they brought in in expanding the PST and the disastrous effect that's had on our construction industry. But I guess the proof will be in the pudding on that, and we'll see where that all lines up.

But, Mr. Speaker, it goes on through a number of other Acts, and again in terms of housekeeping, we'll be certainly doing our due diligence to make certain that things are as they are stated to be by the minister in his second reading speech. But for the time being, there comes a time in the life of any piece of legislation where some housekeeping is in order.

This is spring, and so it makes some good sense in that regard as well, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if they're going to shovel the walk as well, or build a new garage. But again, *The Time Act*, that the time has come on *The Time Act* to do some housekeeping . . . Well, we'll see where this all works out and if things are as they seem to be.

But again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the great number of Acts that are involved in this particular piece of housekeeping legislation, as statute law amendments Acts generally can be, we'll be following the good work of the Justice critic when this gets to committee with close attention, and going over it with that finer toothed comb and the work that the committee process allows. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 163, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 164. I've got it as four, 164. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 165

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 165 — *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill 165, *The Workers' Compensation Amendment Act, 2018*. Initially I just know they're making some changes. And there's been a number of proposed changes to this legislation, and they're making some amendments. And I know government have members, the labour group has people who come together, and my understanding, if I get it right, it's a committee. They make recommendations, go back and forth and try to come up with some ideas and try to change legislation that, my understanding, to take care of our labour force, our workforce out there in the province, to give them the protection that they need. And this makes some changes, and I want to talk a little bit about that.

But I guess when we look at fatalities in our province right now, work-related fatalities, it looks like, from the labour movement, they're . . . [inaudible] . . . and they're saying the numbers are so high that they're concerned. They want some action taken on that, and they're asking government to work on that. So I want

to, you know, focus on that and thank those men and women who have worked hard for the province — whether it's government or private sector out there, working for a company — to those, thanking them.

But unfortunately, you know, the sad reality is there are fatalities, and they talk about how high and the number of them in the workforce. So I just want to acknowledge that. I know that they're moving forward and trying to bring that attention to government, asking government to work on that. That's just one area I wanted to talk a little bit about that.

The other area they were referred to, giving more protection, I think and I give credit, our firefighters, they come to the legislature to bring concerns and to raise those concerns and some of the challenges they face in the workforce. And we see that there's some changes coming in where it's going to give extra coverage. And I guess it's to do with cancer and maybe some of the fires, you know. I don't know all the details of it, but for some reason they put their health at risk, and they want government to recognize that there is some exposure to certain things that maybe cause cancer in firefighters that do the good work that were asked.

We're all running out of buildings when they're on fire, and the good men and women who work on their fire departments are the ones that are going in to save people and do what they need to do. So I want to thank them, you know, for what they do and their professionalism in the work that they do and the challenges that they're faced with.

So this is taking in and giving some changes and more protection, and I think is the right thing to do. And again I tell them and I say to the firefighters, continue to lobby government. Get what you need to get to protect yourselves and your families, and come forward and do what you need to do. And again, I think more people need to do that: work with governments and let governments know when they're not doing right. And when there are things that government can improve, that government has the power to change and make better for Saskatchewan residents, the government should do that.

So having said that, there's a few other changes that they're looking into legislation. And I look at the workman's compensation board, there was a group that, you know, brought concerns that maybe we needed more members on there. They've asked government to look at that, so government has looked at how many members on board. It sounds like . . . Again we always say that who are they consulting with. From what I can get from some of the comments the minister said, they tried to reach out. There was a number of people, I think 26 different organizations or group that consulted, putting forward submissions, that's my understanding of it, to say how you could improve the workman compensation board to more members.

Now they're doing that, and that'll go to a process. We know that. And I know at the end of the day changes come forward, and sometimes it takes a long time. Sometimes it's short. Sometimes we can work together. But there are some points in here that, like I've referred to, Saskatchewan Federation of Labour, the labour movement talked about some of the concerns that they have, and they raised them. Back and forth they'll go.

So there's some good changes in here. Some of them might be small housekeeping stuff that need to be done. And some of that's in there as well to make those amendments. But there are some good changes, and again I say, for those groups that have lobbied the government and advocated for their workplace and their safety, you know, I say thank you for doing that. And I've said that.

You know, Mr. Speaker, at this point, you know, I don't have a lot more comments. I know in committee we'll have more questions with my colleagues, the critics. They will have more questions. So at this point I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 165.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn on Bill No. 165. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 145

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

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to enter into adjourned debate on Bill 145, *The Residential Services Act, 2018*. There's a few things that I do want to say as I look through the changes that are being suggested here, Mr. Speaker.

So we know that what's being proposed here is that the current Act is being repealed and replaced with this new Act. And of course we're talking about facilities that provide residential services to people of this province, particularly serving some of the most vulnerable people in our province, so definitely deserves some oversight in making sure that we are doing this right.

There are a pretty wide range of different types of residences that are covered under this bill. So they've listed all of those there. We haven't seen any, so this is a concern, we haven't seen any mention of consultation coming from the minister and whether the operators of those homes have been consulted prior to those changes. And obviously those are the folks who are on the ground, so we should be listening with close attention to their concerns.

So a substantial difference between this Act and the current one is that it expands the types of homes that may be licensed under the Act. So it actually changes the definition of a care facility, creates a new definition of care facility. And it looks like the intent here is to broaden this definition to allow for other providers to act as service providers or residential services in the province. So we have to make sure that this is being done with the best intentions and do some consultation to figure out what the implications of this change will be.

Of course one of the concerns, when we start to hear the ministry

talking about innovative options — and my colleague from Regina Northeast was talking about this in his response in entering into adjourned debates here — that it immediately raises the flag and makes us think that we're talking about privatization. And that is a concern that I share as well.

When we talk about more broadly opening up definitions, this government doesn't have the best track record for just changing definitions and it not being impactful. So we need to watch closely and have a look at that and make sure that folks are consulted in removing what appear to be regulations and red tape.

[14:45]

There may be unintended consequences, so we need to look at what those consequences might be and make sure that . . . As we said, this Act does impact a wide variety of home operators in the province, and making sure that those vulnerable populations who often can't speak for themselves are protected in this process.

So those are some of the concerns I wanted to raise, Mr. Speaker. With that I will allow the critic to engage further. I know that there'll be a lot of questions that my other colleagues will have and then once the bill goes to committee. But with that, I would like to move that we adjourn debate on this particular bill for today.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 145. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 147

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 147 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into the debate today on this bill. Mr. Speaker, I think as many members of the House here know that the oil and gas industry is a very important industry in Saskatchewan. There's over 35,000 oil wells in Saskatchewan, and we're producing over 450,000 barrels of oil a day in this province. We are the second-highest oil producer amongst Canadian provinces, and we account for almost 15 per cent of Canada's oil production.

This bill amends *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*, and the purpose of *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act* is to protect the environment, to protect property, and to protect the safety of the public when it comes to the operations of oil and gas industry.

One of the things that this law does, Mr. Speaker, is it talks about reportable incidents. And reportable incidents, in reading here from the Provincial Auditor's report, "A reportable incident is an event that oil, gas, and the pipeline industry operators must report by law." So this includes the uncontrolled release of substances

which might be a spill or a release of gas or leaks, might be fires, or it could be damage or malfunction of equipment.

And of course, that's very important, Mr. Speaker, because oil, gas, and pipeline incidents have the potential to contaminate our air, soil, and water. They can pose a threat or risk to human health, to public safety, to property, to the environment, as well as domestic and wild animals. So this is a very important piece of regulation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, over time this government has moved to more of a self-regulation model of the industry, and it's moved to let the industry police itself more. This ministry has approximately 30 field office staff. But you know, as you might expect with a move to regulate incidents by the industry itself as opposed to the ministry doing it, the number of reportable incidents has gone down. There's approximately 25 per cent less, or 25 per cent fewer reportable incidents from 2012 to 2017.

And so I'm going to refer now to the Provincial Auditor's report. The Provincial Auditor noted several concerns, and one of the things that we have, that we're wondering about is whether the ministry has actually acted to address the concerns that the Provincial Auditor raised.

So one of those concerns the Provincial Auditor raised was whether the ministry was actually . . . had any sort of written documentation classifying the risks of reported incidents. The Provincial Auditor was concerned about whether the ministry was consistently letting operators in the industry know when they had done enough. And the Provincial Auditor was also concerned about whether the ministry was keeping sufficient and complete records of its actions and decisions to regulate reported incidents.

One of the things I note, Mr. Speaker, is that while we have approximately 30 ministry field office staff, they are expected to police over 35,000 oil wells in the province, not to mention all of the kilometres and kilometres of pipelines and the gas wells. So obviously, Mr. Speaker, that's a lot of work. That's a lot of work for the few field office staff that the ministry has, and that's a concern, Mr. Speaker.

Now we know how important this industry is to our province. We know how important it is that we get our resources, most of which are exported, to the world. And for that, Mr. Speaker, we have to have access to tidewater. We need pipeline capacity to move our oil to tidewater. And although this government likes to make noise about pipelines, the reality is we still don't have any new pipeline moving Saskatchewan oil to tidewater during the entire history of this government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's also been a new development in this industry over the past few months and that's the Redwater case, Mr. Speaker. It was a Supreme Court of Canada case that basically ensured that provincial environmental protection laws would prevail in the event of a bankruptcy or a receivership of an oil and gas operator. Now that's important, Mr. Speaker, because that should be the fundamental ground rules by which all operators are playing by. And if they don't have to comply with those laws, then it makes it pretty easy for them to walk away. So we're happy to see that decision in the Redwater case.

But where I'm going with this, Mr. Speaker, is we have a lot of

inactive wells in this province. And where there hasn't been enough ministry involvement is actually making operators actually take those inactive wells and either get them back on production or go through the abandonment process. And so there's thousands of inactive wells in this province that are kind of sitting there in limbo.

An Hon. Member: — Like government MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly].

Mr. Pedersen: — Like government MLAs. And, Mr. Speaker, that's a problem. We need to make sure that there is a regulatory framework there, making sure that these inactive wells are not just sitting there in limbo, that operators are either following through getting them back on production or going through the process to abandon them safely and within the rules.

Now, Mr. Speaker, another point that we noted about this bill was that the minister felt it was necessary to bring this forward because the old legislation hadn't been updated in 10 years. And while we're very much in favour of making sure that our legislation in this province stays up to date, of course one of the pieces of legislation in this sector of the economy, the oil and gas sector of the economy, that hasn't been kept up to date is surface rights legislation, Mr. Speaker. And surface rights legislation in this province is 50 to 60 years out of date. And I asked the minister about this in our last sitting, and the minister ducked the question. Our surface rights property owners need more up-to-date legislation on the issue of surface rights, and that plays into this sector. It's a very important issue for this sector.

The last thing that the minister mentioned in bringing this bill forward that I applaud is that this bill was required to address climate change and to address fugitive methane emissions from the oil and gas sector. And, Mr. Speaker, that's an important objective. I expect that most of us here in the House know that methane is an extremely potent greenhouse gas. It's approximately 30 times more problematic than CO₂ as a greenhouse gas. And so methane represents one of the low-hanging fruits in our province's . . . in the list of objectives that our province needs to address in tackling our own greenhouse gas footprint.

Now my concern, Mr. Speaker, is that while this bill introduces this to the law, it gives the ministry complete leeway to ignore the problem because all of the action on methane will be in regulations and nothing in the legislation. So instead of actually putting the target in legislation, instead of putting the fine in legislation, instead of putting the enforcement there, everything is deferred to the regulations so that it will be there and not subject to the scrutiny of this House when the regulations come forward. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a problem.

Greenhouse gases and climate change is one of the most significant global problems, challenges that we are facing in this generation, and this government's action or rather inaction on climate change has been a significant problem. Here we are 11 years into this government and still next to nothing in terms of action on climate change. And so we have a fair bit of skepticism that this government really means it. Unfortunately when they put this into the regulations, it kind of makes us wonder if they aren't just waiting for a change in the federal government so that they can once again say, we're not doing anything, as this

government has in the past done so frequently when it comes to the issue of climate change.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, in conclusion I just want to say again that pipelines, the oil and gas industry, is extremely important to this province, extremely important to my constituency. But as well, clean air, clean water, clean soil are also vital to our province and to my constituency. And this bill is supposed to be striking the right balance, Mr. Speaker. We're not convinced that it actually does that. But with that, I'll move that we adjourn debate on this bill.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 147. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 148

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate or discussion here this afternoon as it relates to Bill No. 148, *The Pipelines Amendment Act, 2018*. Certainly I've done so reading the intentions stated by the minister with respect to this piece of legislation, talking about the new environment that this provides to IRIS, the integrated resource information system, Mr. Speaker, that's so important to Energy and Resources, as well as the changes that's brought forward around acquiring historical flowline and pipeline surveys directly from Saskatchewan land surveyors, Mr. Speaker.

And she lays out the reason for that, and certainly it seems to make sense, and as well notes that 90 per cent of the costs of this process will be offset by an annual administrative levy against the holders of oil and gas well and pipeline licences. So certainly we can engage in, you know, further questioning of matters like this through the committee process.

[15:00]

I would invite certainly stakeholders in this important industry to our province to connect at this time. Certainly the official opposition wants to make sure that any amendments, any changes to *The Pipelines Act* are in the best interests of this province and that they'll serve us today and for generations.

We have thousands and thousands of kilometres of pipelines and flowlines within our province. And it's important that we have legislation that reflects modern realities for those operators, for those pipelines and flowlines, and that we make sure we have integrity of that system to protect certainly our land and our water, Mr. Speaker, and that we're looking for opportunities to improve the performance of these important pipelines, Mr. Speaker.

It's also important for us as we're talking about pipelines in this Assembly here, it's important for us to speak to the importance of pipeline capacity, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that there's just clearly insufficient export capacity in place to serve our economy, Mr. Speaker, and to get our resource to market to ensure a fair return to the owners of the resource — Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker — to ensure that we get fair economic value from our energy resources.

And clearly this is a critical file, an important file to this province. It's incredibly important that export pipelines are built, that market access is added, Mr. Speaker, to address the completely unacceptable differential that hurts Saskatchewan people, that hurts Saskatchewan businesses, and that hurts Saskatchewan workers, Mr. Speaker.

And it's worthy to note that . . . You know, I've served as a member of the opposition for some time, Mr. Speaker, but unfortunately during the duration of the current government, Mr. Speaker, we just haven't seen the needed progress and the needed action to improve market access and get pipeline capacity to tidewater, Mr. Speaker. In fact, not an inch of pipeline to tidewater has been built under the long tenure, Mr. Speaker, of the Sask Party.

But this is something that, an issue that's important to this province, that requires all of us to rise above any partisan debate and focus on the best interests of our province and to be united in advancing the important case of pipeline capacity, Mr. Speaker, in getting market access developed, new opportunities, and to get a fair price for our resource, both for the owners of the resource, Mr. Speaker, and the companies that are involved in this very important sector.

At this point in time, I would ask all involved in this important industry to engage at any point, of course with the minister and the government but with us as well, as the opposition. When we have a piece of legislation before us, it's really important that we have the chance to get it right. And where there's opportunities to strengthen a piece of legislation like this, that's very important. It's critical that the legislation governing pipelines and flowlines is as effective as it can be in managing these thousands of existing pipelines and flowlines across our province, but also there to give confidence to the kind of new pipeline capacity that we need to have built out as a province, Mr. Speaker.

It's an important time in the energy sector, a sector that's so important to this province and to this nation, Mr. Speaker, as was identified by my colleague from Regina Northeast. We are the second-largest energy producer in Canada, and we have a responsibility to act in the interests of our province and the public's interest on these fronts, Mr. Speaker.

And while we talk about pipelines and the importance of making sure that we have integrity to the system that transports our resource, Mr. Speaker, it's critical that that system has integrity to protect our land and water and that we recognize that this is only one mode of transportation, a very important mode that has to be expanded, Mr. Speaker. But it speaks to me of the failure of our underperforming rail system as well, Mr. Speaker.

And we talk about being an exporter in this province and wanting to build new markets, Mr. Speaker, and grow our trade. It's

critical that we not only finally get some pipeline capacity built out, Mr. Speaker, so we can get our product to tidewater and ensure new market opportunities, but that we also really lean into the underperforming rail system, Mr. Speaker, that holds back exporters in this province on so many fronts.

And of course producers know the underperformance of that system full well, Mr. Speaker, whose livelihoods are on the line and put all their efforts into bringing incredible crops, you know, together and growing incredible crops and getting them to bin and then to market, Mr. Speaker. But our rail system really has failed producers for years, Mr. Speaker. It's incredibly evident at these times. And it's clear as well that our rail system is failing so many within our province and in other sectors as well, manufacturers and other businesses that are moving product, Mr. Speaker.

And we know when it comes to oil on rail, Mr. Speaker, that's just not . . . We would prefer for that resource to be placed in a more safe and efficient pipeline, Mr. Speaker. So as we're talking about transportation in this province, it really requires a government that's going to look to the future and do all it can to make sure that our transportation system, our network performs for the people of the province.

This is something that's been, you know, too often an afterthought by the current government when it comes to building out or effectively building out pipeline capacity, Mr. Speaker, actually getting the job done, but also making sure that we lean into the underperforming rail system and that we ensure that it's built out to, of course, make sure that a great crop gets to market, that exporters can get their goods to market, but that we build out to make sure that at a time of a more robust economy and of new markets that I hope that we're establishing, that we're providing confidence to businesses and to investors and to producers that we'll be able to get the job done on those fronts, Mr. Speaker.

At this point in time, you know, I don't have much more to say about Bill No. 148, *The Pipelines Amendment Act, 2018*, and I'll adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 148. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 149

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to be here in the spring session and get back into the swing of things. And here we are debating the bills. I won't say the good work, because I'm kind of nervous about whether it's

good work of the government, but it is work and we have to debate it, and here we are. So I'm up today on Bill No. 149, *An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990 respecting Regional Policing*. And this is an interesting thing that we're having put before us, and it will be interesting as we move forward into committee in the weeks ahead and hearing more about this.

Of course this is something that, you know, everybody can get behind safety. And particularly we understand that some areas are more vulnerable for that because of isolation, the population density. That type of thing is really a concern. And so we want to make sure that we do the right thing and we look, Mr. Speaker, at the root of the crime. What are the root causes? It's not that we want to load up our jails even more. And particularly in Saskatchewan we see the jails already overcrowded and underfunded, and the situations that can happen in our jails, particularly when we get talking about the gangs and induction into gangs and where people first meet their . . . or are introduced to the gang life. So we want to make sure we keep our community safe and that's right across the province and I think this is very important.

And I also just want to make sure that we talk about it, and I appreciate the wording is correct when we talk about police service. It's funny how we used to call it the police force, but now we talk about service because it's really a community service that they provide. And I think of our colleague from Riversdale and her dad, Rusty Chartier, who was such a fine police officer, really had the idea of service and community service. It was so, so important.

And there will be lots of questions about this that, as we move forward, of course there are concerns about where the resources, the government . . . Now I'm not sure. It is interesting when we look at the comments that were made by the minister responsible for this piece of legislation, and that's the Minister of Corrections and Policing. And she made these back on November 19th and she really didn't talk about the rural task force that was put into place by the member . . . many members over there were on it, but it was headed up by the member from Battlefords. And they came out with this idea of a protective response team and it would include about 260 members. They would be taken from different areas and 30 new positions would be created.

The cost overall is \$5.9 million. At the time that was what the Minister of Justice was talking about. And this speech, my colleague from Nutana talked about how it was very sparse in terms of what it would be doing and very short, very short on details. But didn't really talk about that PRT [protection and response team] and what was going to be happening. You would think that would've been a big part of that and part of the branding that those folks love to do over there.

She does refer to the caucus committee, but not about the PRT. And so we're not sure where that is right now, and so that will be a big, big question.

And as I said that even though in rural Saskatchewan, you know, the population — and they talk about population of 500 or less — might be small, the issues are still complex. They're still dealing with a whole host of issues, whether they be domestic violence, whether they be addictions, whether they be petty crime and theft, unemployment. All of that leads to situations where we

have a situation that leads to crime. But what's the solution? What's the solution, and we have to work towards that. And so it will be interesting to see.

I think we're now into 18 months, two years away from when the folks had done their work. And how have things moved along? Well of course we look at the good works of some stats to see what some of the results might be. But what we really want to make sure is that people feel safer, that in fact they feel like they have a strong community, a viable community, and whether it's an RM [rural municipality] or whether it's a First Nations reserve or whether it's a small community.

Myself, Mr. Speaker, I grew up in a village of 250 people. We utilized the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] but, you know, times were different. We still had challenges back then. And we want to make sure that we have as strong communities as possible.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment of Bill No. 149, *An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 150

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To speak on Bill No. 150, *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2018*, going through the initial bill and some of the changes that they're proposing, it's making it, I think, from my understanding from looking at the bill, easier for an agency to seize property. And I guess identifying that property, there's a process they go to, you know, if property and assets that someone has is to do for illegal activities, crimes, different things that have gone on. It gives that.

[15:15]

Now I don't know why this bill is coming forward, the changes, the amendment, and the changes to the Act is because it was harder for government to . . . And the agencies that could seize property and assets of, you know, of someone who's in the act of a crime and they seize them, I don't know if there was an issue with that. I don't know why they've brought this in and why they're asking to give it . . . I don't know if it's strengthening it, making it easier for that process, Mr. Speaker, to seize those assets and take them.

But as you go through that, that's just one area, you know, I want to see. The other area I think some questions might be, will this

change to the legislation, will that maybe deter, and is there any thought to deter crime that if someone is doing illegal business, whether I guess it's, you know, dealing drugs, doing whatever it is, crime from different . . . And I know they comment a little bit in here in different sections that they talk about the way you would actually get these assets from a crime that has been caused and if that's where these acts . . . [inaudible].

Now they also talk about, and I don't know if that's going to deter it, but in there, they also talk about the process. And there is a process that if somebody does not respond and if the person doesn't respond in a timely manner, and I think it's something about 10 days the administrator of the program and the legislation gives, they can go online. And if the person doesn't respond within a timely manner to that, then I guess that it falls back automatically that they show no interest, is what I'm getting from this. And they haven't shown an interest, didn't want the property for whatever reason, so it automatically goes to the government or the civil community, whether it's police officers, I don't know if it's RCMP that's seizing it, I don't know if it's city, whether that's provincial police.

So having said that, we know we're going to have to have clarification. And I know my colleagues will ask for clarification. And there's some of those areas, you know, we have some concern with, and I think that needs to come through the committee and the critic to ask them questions and clarification and sometimes assist in, you know, doing what they can do to make this flow a little easier, and understanding. And maybe there are some clarifications that the minister and their officials in committee will have to explain to our critics and to some of us that are wondering exactly what this means.

But overall I think anytime that, you know, you can give our police and those that are, you know, in the sense that somebody is doing illegal stuff and they seize property, it makes it easier. And like I said, we're not sure why but we'll get a chance to ask those questions. Then we can have a good understanding of why and if this will assist. And like I said, I'm hoping it will deter people from getting into that type of a situation where, you know, they're having assets frozen, because it's proven that it's from, you know, illegal activity, and so be it whatever illegal activity. Now they have to prove that, and I guess that's a process.

And so like I said, Mr. Speaker, we do have some concerns and want clarification, and in committee we will have a chance. You know, initially we got an opportunity here to talk a little bit about it, and I know there's individuals who have probably been consulted and talked with about this legislation and coming forward, and why it's coming here. And I think we're going to have to . . . and we will want to ask some of those questions at committee.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I don't have a lot more comments or, you know, words to say on this bill. And like I said, once it goes to committee, our critic and those that have questions from committee can ask that of the minister and his officials, or her officials, at the time that it's going before the committee. So at this point I am prepared to adjourn on Bill 150.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 151

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to enter into debate with adjourned debates here. And so today I'm going to be speaking with regards to Bill No. 151, *The Personal Property Security Amendment Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill was particularly very interesting. The minister, when he provided some of his remarks, indicated that some of the changes with this bill will allow for lenders and sellers to secure payment of a debt and establish priority over other creditors by registering their security interests in the personal property of a debtor in the personal property registry.

This bill is . . . The last time I saw that there was a lot of changes with regards to this bill was established in 1993, Mr. Speaker. So as we know, there's been quite a bit of advancement of technology since then. That's actually the year I graduated high school, so it was well over 25 years. And when I sit and think, at that time we had no cellphones and we didn't have access to the internet as regularly as we do now. And so we know that this day and age that we're doing a lot more things electronically, and so it's important that we have legislation that represents the changes of how we're managing business.

But I am a little bit mindful too of the times right now, Mr. Speaker, when individuals are struggling financially. We see it everywhere that people are having a tough time in this downturn in the economy, and we know that there's been an increase of bankruptcies. And so I'm sure that lenders and sellers are also wanting to protect their interests with regards to this and the troubling statistics that we see here with regards to bankruptcies. So I'm wondering if maybe some of these changes are to reflect that as well.

So like I said, Mr. Speaker, that with regards to the changes of how we manage business, electronic payments and transfers are quite common now, and so some of the changes within this piece of legislation will address some of the security interests with regards to exactly that. And so this will change to facilitate operation of the secure lending provisions, and there's a lot of important changes with the advancement of technology.

So when we're looking at ensuring that more business is done through technology, Mr. Speaker, it's also very important that we think about the security of the technology. Because as we know, as we start to advance with regards to business that we could do with regards to technology, there's individuals out there that are always looking for loopholes or always looking for ways to potentially get in there to get some information. So I think that's also something that's very important, that we ensure that

individuals' personal information is always secure.

But also one thing I was . . . When I was talking to some stakeholders with regards to this particular issue, they indicated that there are some forms of technology so that you could confirm that someone's signature is indeed their signature, because when you don't formally see that done right in front of your eyes, a person could just do that from a distance away, maybe not necessarily be providing the right person's signature. So we've got to make sure that there is a level of security there, Mr. Speaker. And all of this technology stuff is something that's way advanced for myself. I am surprised I can manage even my cellphone. But we know we have some people out there that this is a specialty of theirs and that they could provide that level of guidance for us with regards to it.

So with saying that, Mr. Speaker, I really hope that when there is these changes within this legislation, that stakeholders were completely engaged with regards to that. And I know when I talked to some agencies that they indicated that they were looking for some changes. It's really important for them to have some changes so that they could do more of their business through technology so that they could be fully engaged and ensure that they can be competitive and be able to engage with business outside of the province or even the country. And so my understanding is that changes in here allow for business to be done between jurisdictions in Canada and the United States. So this is very important that we can continue to stay competitive, Mr. Speaker.

So I know like whenever we review any piece of legislation, it's always very important that we look for updates of language and ensure that we have it standardized to reflect the times. And so there's some updates with regards to the language in this piece of legislation as well, and it also introduces some new definitions. There's also a lot of changes with regards to the rules and rights of borrowers and lenders, and also new rules and expectations.

So this is a very important piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, and so I know that my colleague, the critic, will consult with stakeholders and ensure that this is being done in a responsible manner. Because like I said, this piece of legislation wasn't looked at for over 25 years now. And so we want to ensure that when we're making these changes that it's going to be updated for as long as we see as possible. We don't know what the technology is going to look like in 25 years from now.

But the due diligence that we could do on this part right now in ensuring that we have more competitiveness within the technology industry for businesses and ensuring that individuals' information is kept confidential and safe, and security is really important. So I know the critic will ask the questions that will be very important to ask in committee and my other colleagues probably have a lot more to add with regards to debate with this bill. So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 151. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn on Bill No. 151. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 152

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

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into adjourned debate today on Bill 152, *The Builders' Lien (Prompt Payment) Amendment Act, 2018*.

So this bill allows for prompt payment under construction contracts, and specifically it establishes timelines for the payment of a proper invoice by an owner. But it also establishes, and importantly, it also establishes timelines for the payment of a subcontractor by a contractor and/or between subcontractors.

So it sounds a little bit complicated, Mr. Speaker, but basically what it's doing is ensuring that folks are paid in a timely manner throughout the construction process. And I'm sure you can appreciate that these types of . . . leaving these things open means that smaller companies are put under a tremendous amount of pressure because they simply don't have enough money to be outstanding throughout the process. So it advantages larger corporations who can be out that money and puts a tremendous amount of pressure on smaller contractors and subcontractors.

We know that this has been in the process for quite some time. I remember consulting with folks last year when I was the jobs critic, and they said that the ministry was out shopping around the idea of prompt payment. So the question just becomes, Mr. Speaker, why has this legislation about prompt payment not been brought forward in a prompt fashion?

So this is the call that we have today, and I know there's a lot of different consideration and that there have been concerns that have been raised by Saskatoon & Region Home Builders' Association about what they call a policy-stacking issue.

[15:30]

So those concerns need to be certainly considered, but I think that there is a huge amount of potential to add a little bit of clarity to the industry here. You know, we've heard from folks in the industry who are very enthusiastically supportive of this legislation and want to make sure that there's fair and clear expectations that are set out for folks in the industry. Because we know it's not often the case that there's one contractor doing all of the work from A to Z anymore. It's simply not a feature of our modern construction industry. So this will modernize the process, and we really have questions about why it's taking so long for it to come forward.

I will leave it at that for this legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We will have more questions. My other colleagues will have more questions. And certainly we'll have some questions in committee, but with that I would like to move that we adjourn debate today on Bill No. 152.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on

Bill No. 152. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 154

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 154 — *The Intestate Succession Act, 2018/Loi de 2018 sur les successions non testamentaires*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into my first second reading debate of the new session on Bill No. 154, as noted the short title, *The Intestate Succession Act* of 2018, the larger title being *An Act respecting the Distribution of Estates of Intestates, repealing The Intestate Succession Act, 1996 and making consequential amendments to other Acts*, Mr. Speaker.

As the critic for Education and the critic for Advanced Education, I spend a lot of time thinking about the importance of lifelong learning, Mr. Speaker. And I certainly have had a bit of learning around this bill as I've been preparing to make my statements today. I was able to confer with my real-life legal adviser behind me, with the member from Regina Northeast — and the person who actually wrote my will, Mr. Speaker.

What is important about this bill is that this replaces existing legislation. And it's a bill that is important . . . comes into effect in cases where a person passes away without having a will in effect, or a portion of their estate is not described in their will.

So, Mr. Speaker, as one can imagine, it's always the case that in times of mourning such as when someone passes away, it can often bring about very strong emotions and can be a very contentious time for families, and even more so I think when the deceased has not left prior instructions.

I think that has always been the case. What might be more the case today than when a lot of this legislation was first put in place is that we see a higher incidence of blended families or maybe what some might call non-traditional families or non-nuclear families. In the case of blended families and ex-partners and common-law spouses, it's ever more important to clarify what happens with property, what happens with estate, portions of an estate when someone has passed away without having a will in place.

I know the minister rose to speak to this bill on November the 26th of last year, of 2018; in those remarks noted that this bill follows recommendations made by the Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan. I think that's something important that the critic has noted and that we will pay attention to when this bill does go to committee.

There are a number of . . . As has been said, this fully replaces the prior piece of legislation from 1996. While that bill was from 1996, a great portion of the sections refer to dates on or before

1960 and 1978, also prescribing, or laying out in legislation, values of estates. So we can imagine that much has changed since 1960 and 1978. The new legislation or this bill proposes to put those amounts and dates as prescribed amounts or amounts that will be set out in regulations rather than in legislation, Mr. Speaker, and that does seem to be reasonable that some of those numbers might change over the last 40 years or so. The bill repeals, as I've noted, *The Intestate Succession Act* of 1996. It updates the definitions and removes the term "issue" and replaces it with the more commonly used term "descendant."

It sets out if an intestate dies leaving no descendant, that the entirety of the estate goes to the spouse. And if the intestate dies leaving a spouse and descendants, if the descendants are from both the intestate and the spouse, the estate is distributed amongst the spouse and descendants. It also notes that . . . It determines the spouse's preferential share in a case where the intestate left a spouse and one or more descendants who are not descendants of the spouse. So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's clear by some of those sections, the need for a precise or a certain amount of clarity when dealing with these cases of estates that have been left without a will in place.

It also sets out the terms of distribution of an estate if an intestate dies leaving no spouse or descendant or parents. It sets out how degrees of relationship between an individual and the intestate should be determined, Mr. Speaker. Again this might be straightforward in terms of the deceased and their spouse and their surviving children. There might be instances of half-siblings and blended families, Mr. Speaker, that I think it's reasonable to understand why updated legislation might be required in those cases.

It also sets out the terms of inheritance regarding posthumous births. So these would be children that were conceived while the deceased was still alive but born afterwards. I believe that it prescribes that they would have an equal share as to those children who were born prior to the person in question's death. It also sets out the terms of inheritance in the event of separation or divorce.

As all Justice bills, it also includes both a French and an English version of the bill, Mr. Speaker. I know that our critic has had some time to look at this bill and has also noted that the recommendation of this bill was made through the Law Reform Commission, notes that it does update and clear up the language and perhaps makes it more clear in terms of the realities that families face today in the province, and in light of updates of similar legislation in other provinces.

And I think that there you'll find, Mr. Speaker, that members on this side of the House are largely supportive, but I'm sure that there will be questions that will be asked in committee when we have that opportunity. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude my remarks on Bill No. 154 and move that debate on this bill be adjourned.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 154. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 155** — *The Legislation Act/Loi sur la législation* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and as always it's a great honour to be able to rise in this Assembly and this democratic institution that we all serve. This is a bill that, at first blush, looks like a modernization bill. Certainly there's several bills I think that are being combined into one here. And we see *The Legislation Act*. It's called *The Legislation Act*. That will be the new name of it, but if you look at the back of the bill, you'll see there's a number of bills that are being repealed or amended.

And I think of most interest to me, Mr. Speaker, is the complete repeal of *The Interpretation Act, 1995* and then the subsequent . . . It looks like scrambled eggs a little bit, Mr. Speaker, because all of the provisions I think of *The Interpretation Act* have been incorporated into this new bill, but in a very different order. So it's very difficult to understand if all the provisions of *The Interpretation Act* are present or if they've been amended.

I notice there's a couple of changes. There's, for example, in the reference to something like preambles and marginal notes that were in the old Act that may not be in the new Act. And these are classic aspects of an interpretation Act that I think are very familiar to anyone doing interpretation of laws, and that would be pretty much every member of the bar of Saskatchewan or any lawyer in Canada, as far as that goes.

The minister did speak to the impetus for these changes, Mr. Speaker, and he indicated that this is implementing a model interpretation Act of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada and adopts most recent drafting standards. So, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the model Act has been entirely interpreted or replaced or used for this particular bill, and in fact I think the Minister of Justice went so far as to say it isn't, that there are specific, unique aspects in the Saskatchewan bill. So that's where you start wondering, well why? Why do we not use the model Act as we've been asked to do by the Uniform Law Commission?

And the work of the Uniform Law Conference of Canada is an important one. It's the one that I think drives a lot of modernization of legislation and keeping up with the times, so to speak. As you know, laws can become dated very quickly. So in order for Canadian laws to be reflective in areas where there is a cross-border impact, this is the important work that the Uniform Law Conference of Canada does. But I think we'll have to be very careful in committee as to understand why we are entirely getting rid of an Act that's been around for a long, long time, known to everyone as *The Interpretation Act*, an important piece of legislation, and replacing it with something called *The Legislation Act*.

The other interesting piece that the Minister of Justice is bringing forward here, it's also going to repeal *The Regulations Act* and

The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act. And these are all now going to be combined forward into this new Act, he said, without many significant substantive changes, Mr. Speaker. But again this is something I think in committee that we're going to drill down to and find out what are those changes. If they're not substantive, what are they and why are they being done?

And as you know, Mr. Speaker, I'm always a little concerned when regulations are given more strength and more force without coming before this Assembly because there isn't that scrutiny happening at the Legislative Assembly level. And that is something that maybe in a modern democracy it's not as critically important for all regulations to be put forth before the Assembly, but there are some very important regulations that I would submit should be scrutinized at the Assembly level. And these types of changes are going to be done without scrutiny from this body. For example, the minister refers to the revision of these regulations. The authority to revise regulations is going to be expanded . . . and simplifying updating cross-references.

[15:45]

That's good, Mr. Speaker. That's all fine and dandy. But I think without some level of scrutiny at the Assembly level, the more important regulations — and there are many — will not be brought forward to this level.

I think, Mr. Speaker, you won't have any trouble recalling the last time the government tried to change *The Interpretation Act*. That was Bill 40 that was brought forth in this Assembly. I'm trying to remember what year, if it was '17, 2017 or 2016. And this is one of those pieces where the government thought they could do something through this door rather than doing it through the front door and that is changing ownership of the Crowns here in Saskatchewan. If you'll recall, Mr. Speaker, the attempt was made to change the definition of Crowns in *The Interpretation Act*, which I've never received a fulsome explanation from the minister of Justice at the time — now the Minister of Education — about why you would go through the back door of *The Interpretation Act* to make a change to the definition of Crowns.

And ultimately in committee, Mr. Speaker, we were able to ascertain that that particular definition that the government chose to use, which was . . . The minister kept referring to the World Bank. Well what it turned out is that that definition came from just after the Soviet Union broke up in the early 1990s. And that was a very definite . . . As you can imagine, all of the Crown assets of the Soviet Union, the USSR [Union of Soviet Socialist Republics], were now being divvied up and they needed a definition for that. And there's just absolutely no understanding or explanation of why that particular definition was chosen and why on earth it would be done through *The Interpretation Act*.

So as you can remember, Mr. Speaker, this entire government stood up and voted in favour of that bill. And then lo and behold, there was some *mea culpae* happening, and come back in the fall and the premier has had a change of heart. He said he's listened to the people and now changes his mind. Mr. Speaker, how could he not listen when they introduced the bill? Why did they go through the whole charade of introducing the bill and then every single member opposite votes on it and then they see the light four months later?

The uproar related to that bill was huge. And you'll recall that, Mr. Speaker. I know you were in the Assembly at the time. And the way this government handled it made me really fear for the rule of law and the way *The Interpretation Act* was being basically destroyed.

Now we see it being wiped out. I don't see any ulterior motive at this point, Mr. Speaker, as to why they would completely wipe out something called *The Interpretation Act* and move it over to something called *The Legislation Act*, move all the statutes and regulations Acts into the same bill. But it's something I know that we're going to have to ask questions about and that of course in this way of doing debate; there is no debate coming back from the government at this point. So we'll look forward to the opportunity to raise these questions in committee.

And so, Mr. Speaker, it's an extensive Act, and I'm not going to go through every section at this point. I think it's important work to be done in committee. So at this point I would like to move that we adjourn the debate on Bill No. 155, *An Act respecting Statutes and Regulations and making consequential amendments to certain Acts*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 155. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 156

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 156** — *The Legislation Act Consequential Amendments Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Once again, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising to speak to Bill 156, and I just have very few comments to make. This is as you know, as Acts are being amended or replaced, then there are consequential amendments where other Acts are being referred to that need to be changed. So there's a number of bills or Acts that have to be amended because of the change of the name of *The Interpretation Act* which, as I indicated earlier, I don't know why we don't keep the name interpretation Act, and that's a question we have to ask the minister.

But we're changing *The Aboriginal Courtworkers Commission Act*, *The Community Planning Profession Act*. *The Election Act* needs to be amended. *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act* needs to be amended. *The Executive Government Administration Act*, *The Land Surveys Act*, *The Land Titles Act*, *The Lobbyists Act*, the preamble to *The Métis Act* has to be amended. *The Municipal Financing Corporation Act*, *The Pipelines Act*, *The Planning and Development Act*, *The Police Act*, *The Provincial Court Act*, *The Provincial Health Authority Act*, and *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act* is actually being repealed, or a section of that, and finally *The University of Regina Act*.

Now I know our hard workers at the Ministry of Justice have to go through, check every bill to make sure anything that says interpretation Act will now be amended. That's a big piece of work, and I'm not sure if they've caught them all. We'll find out when there may be other changes, and I've seen this in the past where some things get missed and then they're brought forward again. But at this point in time, this Bill 156 is simply doing that change and so I think there's not really lots to say and I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 156, *An Act making consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Legislation Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 156. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 157

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Harrison that **Bill No. 157** — *The Education Amendment Act, 2018/Loi modificative de 2018 sur l'éducation* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate this afternoon as it relates to Bill No. 157, *The Education Amendment Act*. This bill, it appears, has brought about some housekeeping changes and some other changes that certainly it would appear have been pushed by stakeholders, and that's important, Mr. Speaker.

The summary that I've scanned here, Mr. Speaker, suggests that the bill corrects and changes the terminology in both the English and the French versions of the Act, so certainly that's important. That it exempts the city of Lloydminster from paying proceeds of the school tax received to the government as the city of Lloydminster pays boards of education directly. And my expectation would be that that change comes in working in consultation with that community and those school boards.

I believe there's also changes as it relates to the acquisition of personal property by a board of education or a conseil scolaire to clarify how they manage their own personal property, and that sounds reasonable as long as folks . . . the impacted stakeholders are at the table and changes . . . The clause as well, or the clause has been changed around the disposable of real and personal property by a board of education or conseil scolaire.

Again we'll learn more about what this bill actually sets out to do, what its impacts are, in conversation with the education sector. I know our Education critic, the member for Regina Lakeview, has been listening frankly with education stakeholders in every corner of this province on wide-ranging priorities to education. But I know she's also been engaged with respect to this bill, and we'd invite and encourage our education sector to be engaged at this point in time, to make sure that any of the changes that are brought forward to ensure that they're in the best interests of education in Saskatchewan and that they respect the autonomy of school boards for example, Mr. Speaker.

Far too often with this Sask Party government, when it comes to education, we've seen a government operate from a very ideological approach, Mr. Speaker, and a very disrespectful approach when it comes to the education sector, when it comes to who we would view as education partners, Mr. Speaker — the teachers within the province, the boards across the province, Mr. Speaker. And we've seen where that gets us as well. We've seen the Sask Party preside over a period of time where students have really lost out on some of the needed supports that they need and deserve.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, teachers have had stripped away from them much of their professional autonomy in respect for the work that they do, but also the tools and support for them to do what they do every day, Mr. Speaker, and that's that transformative work that they do day in, day out, making a difference in the lives of young people.

Without, you know, elevating rhetoric at all, Mr. Speaker, it's fair to say that classrooms across our province and that education and that teachers and that students have really taken a pounding by the damaging and ideological approach of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker. And the result of that, as I've said, is that we have far too many young people in classes where they're not able to get the one-on-one support that they need and deserve, far too many young people, Mr. Speaker, who have had intensive supports pulled directly away from them, Mr. Speaker, students with complex needs, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that many members, you know, will be aware of many of the cuts and the impacts within their communities, Mr. Speaker. In government, a Sask Party that's been so arrogant about its approach in education that they've failed to go and consult those who know it best, Mr. Speaker — students and parents, teachers across our province, Mr. Speaker, education workers across our province, and school boards across our province.

And it's just so disappointing, Mr. Speaker, to have observed these actions over the last decade, Mr. Speaker, where this province was given an unprecedented opportunity by way of the bounty that was flowing in through revenue strength, Mr. Speaker — in the boom if you will — but for education to not receive a fair shake through that time, for students to not get the attention that they deserve. We should have been coming out of the last decade, Mr. Speaker, with the best classrooms possible for young people, classrooms that extend opportunity and hope to young people and that build, certainly not only that young person, but our society and our province and our economy of tomorrow.

I believe that education is the foundation of our province and it disturbs me to no end — and I know so many across this province, Mr. Speaker — that they've been so abandoned by the Sask Party government. The changes that are before us here today, many seem to be housekeeping changes, many seem to be practical. And it's only our hope that these modest changes have been brought about in full conversation and full consultation with the very important stakeholders across Saskatchewan.

But what bothers me, Mr. Speaker, is the amount of attention that, you know, the government may place on a housekeeping bill like this and the practical changes that are brought, but then really

fail to support the very important learning that needs to be supported all across our province. The fact of the matter is our classrooms and our school boards have been strained for far too long when they were hit with the devastating cuts, Mr. Speaker. They've been just that; they've been devastating. And in this province we have a great history of education, high-quality education with world-class educators who have signed up for the task to make a difference in the lives of the children, the students that they serve, but the future of our province as well, Mr. Speaker.

And I think it's past time that we get back to that sort of agenda and that sort of respect amongst the sector, that kind of support for the world-class professionals who carry that heavy task and that enormous responsibility each and every day in our classrooms across the province. And of course that means respecting the autonomy and the role of our school boards across the province, who want nothing but the ability to deliver the best education possible to our young people, who so often have had their autonomy trampled on by this Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

It's incumbent on all of us to step up to the plate to make sure that our students' best interests are brought forward. It's awfully disappointing day after day in this Assembly to see, you know, Sask Party government MLAs not do their part on this front, Mr. Speaker. But worse than that, making things worse for students within our province and putting enormous pressure on those caring and brilliant teachers and education workers across this province who are there to do their best and will give you that and more, Mr. Speaker. But that should never be taken for granted by their government, and far too often we see that.

[16:00]

And we see the result of that as well. We see education workers and teachers who are feeling burned out, sadly that are departing their service, Mr. Speaker, because of the conditions that they're facing, because of the recognition that the limited support, or the inadequate support, compounded by the cuts, Mr. Speaker, leaves them in a very challenging position to do the work that they signed up to do.

So I believe our education system is at a breaking point, and I believe it's well past time for a government to step up and support the future of students. I know that's what the official opposition Saskatchewan New Democrats have been fighting for, for a decade plus, Mr. Speaker, and I know it's what we're ready to do with the support of Saskatchewan people if offered the opportunity to serve as the next government, Mr. Speaker.

At this point in time, I will . . . I don't have a whole bunch more to say about this bill, Mr. Speaker, but I have a whole lot more to say about education and how important it is to the future of this province. But because this debate is focused on the bill, I'll adjourn debate as it relates to Bill No. 157, *The Education Amendment Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 157. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 158

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 158 — *The Youth Justice Administration Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to participate in this debate on this bill. Mr. Speaker, we know that crime is a problem in our province. It affects families and this is one measure of the government's attempt to address that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think it falls short of the mark, because as we have been reminding the government time and time again, what is needed is a way of addressing root causes and not simply reacting to crime. And, Mr. Speaker, this looks like again overall a way of simply reacting to youth crime and not actually preventing it.

Mr. Speaker, the leader of our party wrote a book, *A Healthy Society*, that talks about the things that make people happy. And one of the leading things that makes people happy and healthy is not being in poverty. And, Mr. Speaker, we also know that poverty is a significant root cause of crime. And, Mr. Speaker, we also know that when it comes to addressing crime and addressing root causes, you have to get at things like addictions. And we know that there's a meth crisis and opioid crisis that's happening in our province and those things need to be addressed if you want to get at youth crime.

Now for any of us who are parents in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we know it's not easy to figure out kids. Sometimes despite our best efforts and our best intentions, our kids make mistakes. That's not a new problem. That's something that's been going on for the history of mankind. But, Mr. Speaker, jail isn't the answer. We've seen that over and over again. We saw that with gangs, that when you simply put kids into a custodial facility, it makes things worse. It doesn't make things better.

What we need to do, what we need to be doing is actually giving kids, giving the families of kids the supports that they need to actually address why they're there in the first place. So we've seen over and over again that what causes addictions is pain. Sometimes it's psychological pain. Sometimes it's the pain of families torn apart. We need to be getting at that pain. We need to be getting at addictions. We need to be getting at poverty. And that's how we will address crime in this province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to actually looking into the details of this bill, one of the things that I note that gives me some concern is the provision on strip searches. And all of us, Mr. Speaker, I think place a fair bit of . . . Being stripped and searched is a very intrusive, humiliating process. And so it gives me a great deal of concern, Mr. Speaker, that the provision talking about strip searches in this bill does not make it mandatory that the government agent has to have reasonable and probable grounds. That to me, as a lawyer, as somebody who's concerned about due process, who's concerned about the autonomy of children, it gives me a great deal of concern that there wouldn't be reasonable and probable grounds before a child could be subject

to a strip search. So I have a great deal of concerns about that.

I expect that because this a new bill, because this hasn't been . . . this isn't replacing a previous bill, that I expect that there's going to be a lot of questions that we have in committee in this process, Mr. Speaker. I want to invite stakeholders that are out there in the public to let us know if they have concerns about this bill. I want to invite stakeholders to be looking at these things, because this isn't the best way to be addressing youth crime. We need to be investing in supports for youth, and that is the way that we will change behaviour. By changing behaviour we'll protect the public, and that is ultimately what we are interested in. This is about protecting the public, investing in the citizens of our province. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll move that we adjourn debate on this bill.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 158. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 159

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 159 — *The Securities Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Obviously when we look at the Bill 159, obviously I take an interest in how the securities operate throughout the country. The bill itself is very, very technical in nature, a lot of language that the average layperson, including this hockey player, has difficulty trying to understand, Mr. Speaker. So it's important to know that the bill obviously impacts the securities operations overall.

And they talk about the use of benchmarks and adds new definitions regarding the use and administration of the benchmark. And looking at the explanation on the benchmark, Mr. Speaker, it really sets out the behaviours and standards expected of administrators and contributors and will ensure that the financial benchmarks are produced in a transparent and reliable manner. The draft standards, some of the benchmarks established, and the provisions establishing those benchmarks in various other securities commissions throughout the world, Mr. Speaker.

They talk about the process of providing benchmarks that are being checked with the new oversight function that administrators have to establish. The potential manipulation of benchmarks is minimized through new rules regarding the methodology of the calculation and the contribution of input data. It talks about the conflict of interest of administrators and contributors that are properly managed. And finally, Mr. Speaker, a level playing field across if different members of organizations, securities might want to look at the authorization and registration of benchmark administrators.

So really, Mr. Speaker, I think what this bill talks about is the benchmarks, and adds new definition regarding the use and administration of those benchmarks. Obviously benchmark administrators and benchmark contributors must provide or must be added and designated to a list of persons or companies required to provide information or records at the direction and order of the director.

Mr. Speaker, the bill also talks about the person appointed by the commission to conduct an examination of the affairs and records of a designated benchmark administrator or benchmark contributor, allows the staff of a recognized entity to appeal the decision of a panel of that entity to the commission for review. And, Mr. Speaker, this bill also talks about a complaint resolution service as a category of entity that can be designated by the commission.

So overall, this bill sets out the procedures for a designated benchmark and benchmark administrator which I tried as best I could to explain, a very brief description of what the benchmark administrators, what that matter involves. It provides an automatic recognition in Saskatchewan of certain enforcement orders and settlement agreements made by other security regulators, authorities in Canada, and allows certain categories of prescribed self-regulatory organization to file their decision with the Court of Queen's Bench. And finally, Mr. Speaker, the bill itself makes housekeeping amendments to maintain consistent language throughout the Act.

So it's important to point out, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the reasons why we each have our opportunity to look at these bills, is to try and understand what is being proposed, what the impact is, and which organizations would find this of value and which organizations may find this of benefit. So it's important that we take the time to try and understand these bills as best we can. As I mentioned, it's detailed, highly technical changes to *The Securities Act*.

We obviously have people within our caucus that have much more of a grander view of how *The Securities Act* is enforced in Saskatchewan. But clearly I think what this does is adds new definitions regarding the use of administration of the benchmark and, Mr. Speaker, I think some of the processes that are outlined in this bill are consistent with other jurisdictions throughout the country. And I believe that some of the more technical and detailed explanations that would be required, where lay people could actually understand what is being proposed here a lot better, will be done through the committee stage. And obviously it's important that people pay attention.

So it is, as I mentioned, we think that this Act brings some of the roles and objectives in line with other jurisdictions. But during the committee process we'll ask the questions and get the explanation so people themselves that are out there might want to understand exactly what's going on, would have the opportunity to learn through that particular medium of communication during our committee work.

So on that note, it is a very important bill to pay attention to. It's something that is highly technical, highly legal, and that we must take the time to study this as best we can to explain to the people of Saskatchewan exactly what Bill 159 does. So on that notion, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on *The Securities*

Amendment Act, 2018.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 159. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 160

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 160 — *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into this debate on Bill 160, *An Act to amend The Trespass to Property Act* and also making consequential amendments to *The Snowmobile Act*.

And this is one that has caused a lot of controversy and created some attention to this. And this is one that we will be very interested how the government proceeds with this, both in terms of the committee and then regulations that come out of it and how quickly they move. There has been quite a few groups that have spoken out and said this may be a heavy-handed way of dealing with this issue of security in rural Saskatchewan. And while no one is saying that security and peace of mind is something that's not reasonable, people are saying, that's a reasonable thing but how do we get to that?

[16:15]

And of course the minister was very clear in his opening comments about the lack of consultation, the proper kind of consultation. Now they may have done some online consultation, but clearly when you want to reach some of the understandings, particularly with the First Nations, that we need to go back, and with respect and engagement, and get to a good place where we can deal with entering rural lands. That's really, really important to do so that everybody's respected on it.

You know, one of the things — and I've become aware of this over the years, of course — was the transfer of the Crown lands in the early 1930s from the federal government to the provincial government without the involvement or any other consultations with the First Nations. And that's always left a bad taste with the First Nations people because it was the beginning of the weakening of the treaties, because the First Nations felt they had made treaties with the Crown. The Queen and the federal government represented that. And then when they saw the Crown lands being transferred ownership to the provincial governments in the '30s, early '30s, that that began the . . . well not began, because it began a lot earlier. I won't say the lack of trust. That was not the start of it, but it furthered it along.

And when this comes along and we see the lack of clarity around what this really means for different groups who have enjoyed the ability to access rural lands, farm lands, and where there was

vacant Crown lands, that type of thing. And this has been not communicated well by this government. And so we see the FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations], in fact, threatening that they may have to consider taking this to courts because it's just too, too, too much of an overreach for what the government really wants to try to do.

So we do have some questions with that. And you know . . . And I would just say that when we get to committee that it will . . . This is one that, just as I read through this, I think that one question comes to mind, and maybe the folks can answer this and shout out the answer if they know it. I don't know. But you know, section 4(1) talks about "prohibited entry and activities." And it goes through the list:

. . . without any notice on the following premises:

- (a) a lawn;
- (b) a garden;
- (c) a yard site;
- (d) land that is under cultivation;
- (e) land that is used for grazing;
- (f) enclosed land; [or]
- (g) any other premises that is prescribed in the regulations.

You know, Mr. Speaker, in our farm that we have up north, we have about 30 acres that are under, you know, that open water. It's a slough and we often find we'll come along and there will be people canoeing in that slough. Now they may have got on that by not actually stepping a foot on the land of the property because the slough is accessible from the road. Is this part of this?

You know, and we've seen, particularly over the past several years, the increase . . . We think of the Quill lakes. Now the Quill Lake, where the increased size of some of our lakes, are they not part of . . . Especially when they were on private property. You know, we might argue that that's actually federal Crown land if it's got water running through it. I'm not sure.

So these are the kind of questions when we have this kind of legislation that's before us. What does this really, really mean? What does it mean for road allowances? You know, it's funny when we talk about the Wildlife Federation, that it's actually made a big deal about protecting road allowances, you know, because the old way was that, you know, in our maps we have road allowances that are created for roads if they are to be built. Many are not actually built but they are there. Whose property are the road allowances? And so that extends right through the rural area.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know there will be lots of questions about this, and particularly now we're back in session, about what's the position on the government to clear up a lot of the confusion. What is their real intent? As I said right at the beginning, people do want to create a safe place in rural Saskatchewan. They acknowledge the challenges, and we have talked about that. And we want to see results in terms of attacking crime or the root causes of what are the causes of crime in rural Saskatchewan, in all of rural Saskatchewan. That is so important.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will be moving adjournment of Bill No. 160, *An Act to amend The Trespass to Property Act and to*

make consequential amendments to The Snowmobile Act. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 160. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt that motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 161

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 161** — *The Trespass to Property Consequential Amendments Act, 2018/Loi de 2018 corrélative de la loi intitulée The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2018* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'll be brief in my comments on Bill No. 161 because it's a consequential amendment created by the enactment of *The Trespass to Property Amendment Act, 2018*.

And really, what this really speaks to is actually the creating on . . . hunting on certain land and in the creation of signs. And that would be one that I think has probably some questions that we'll have to have answered. It does talk about:

. . . does not apply to the following land:

vacant provincial land as defined in *The Provincial Lands Act* . . . [which we'll do some homework and get more understanding of that];

any other land or Crown land that is prescribed in the regulations.

And so we will be looking into that. And of course, we'll have our consultations with people who are affected by that, particularly the Wildlife Federation and Ducks Unlimited, those types of organizations who this really impacts a lot on, and of course SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and their feelings about this as well.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move adjournment on Bill 161, an Act to make consequential amendments to the wildlife amendment Act, and making sure they get out and do those consultations with everyone that's impacted, particularly the FSIN, the Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, SARM, all the folks who have a role out in rural Saskatchewan because it's so, so hugely important we get it done right. These Acts are meant for a long time. And so I do move adjournment. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 161. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 162

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Marit that **Bill No. 162 — *The Irrigation Act, 2018*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for the great introduction, totally on point.

Bill No. 162, *The Irrigation Act, 2018*, again, Mr. Speaker, on the face of it would seem to be a fairly straightforward piece of legislation. But we'll certainly be doing the work of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition in terms of making sure that things are as they seem to be, making certain that it adds up, consulting with affected parties, and generally not just doing the work of consulting, but looking to see how the minister's word and the language set out in the legislation, how that adds up and is verified with stakeholders, Mr. Speaker.

But again on the face of it, *The Irrigation Act, 2018* replaces the 1996 edition, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if that's a pretty fair rotation. Sort of like the rotation on the Speaker's automobile — 22 years and out or however that might go. But you know, it would seem to be about time.

In terms of anticipating the establishment of irrigation districts, fair enough. In terms of describing the structure, governance, powers, and duties for the formation and operation of irrigation districts, again it would seem fair enough. Updating the language, incorporating new terminology, changing some of the definitions, broadening some of the definitions, again fair enough. Changing the time period required for the preparation of the annual report, again fair enough. Explicitly setting out that irrigation services must get approved by the Water Security Agency, again that would seem to be straight ahead. Determination of the purpose of irrigation works' management plans, the increase of fines up to \$100,000, and also, Mr. Speaker, setting out the conditions where an irrigation district is liable for personal injury or damage to a property — be interested to see how this interacts with current events, Mr. Speaker.

I know that we had some interesting times of late where the government of the day, one of the former leading lights in this government, the former member from Kindersley, had some pretty innovative things to say overseas in China, Mr. Speaker, in terms of pitching irrigation projects with that country. How that particular approach would be regulated in this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, be interested to see how that translates. Hopefully it's not lost in translation, but that's perhaps work that will be better undertaken at committee and allow for that more thoroughgoing questioning of the legislation. But certainly if . . . There were some pretty interesting things being put on offer by the former member from Kindersley and some of them in the name of all of us here in the province of Saskatchewan, if you can imagine that, Mr. Speaker. But anyway, we'll see how that shows up in the work of committee to come.

But again, Mr. Speaker, you know, I'm from southern Saskatchewan, so like the idea that water is life hereabouts, I get it. I think we all, you know . . . You go to the North — one of the

things I'm always struck with by the beauty of northern Saskatchewan is just how much water there is. You can stand on the shores of a place like La Ronge and look out over the water right to the horizon, Mr. Speaker, and think about our circumstance here in southern Saskatchewan where, you know, water is always a tricky thing. Sometimes it's a flooding aspect. Sometimes it's a, you know, cooling a parched throat. Sometimes it's making the crops grow. And sometimes there's too much of it.

So one of the big challenges we've always had — and this is as old as one of the particular focuses of this legislation — is the South Saskatchewan River and things that have taken place over the years resulting in the formation of Diefenbaker lake and the damming that went on there. Again that came out of the hard lessons of the dust bowl '30s and making sure that we had access to a sustainable supply of water.

The kind of issues that were anticipated at that time remain with us still, Mr. Speaker. So in terms of this particular piece of legislation, we want to make sure that the issues that a province like Saskatchewan and places like southern Saskatchewan have been wrestling with for decades, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that this legislation is equal to that task.

So I don't know that I'd need to say much more on this piece of legislation at this time, Mr. Speaker. I know different of my colleagues will have things to say, and certainly our critic I am certain will have some wise things to say on this particular piece of legislation. And then of course the closer questioning that will come at the committee stage with this particular piece of legislation. And again as a particular point of interest for me, Mr. Speaker, you know, how things like the irrigation project that was being peddled by the former member from Kindersley, how that interacts with this particular piece of legislation and the oversight and the regulatory powers that are contained therein.

So we'll be watching with great interest, Mr. Speaker. But for the time being I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 162, *The Irrigation Act, 2018*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 162. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 141

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 141 — *The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol (Clare's Law) Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is an important bill to get up and speak to, not so much in terms of the content of the particular bill itself, but in terms of the general issue of violence against women. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, this is something that has impacted pretty much every corner of our

society and continues to. And definitely we've seen some changes in expectations in our society for sure, and supports for women when they are encountering these difficulties.

[16:30]

But when you look at missing and murdered indigenous women and girls . . . And today I heard on the radio this morning about women from Saudi Arabia who virtually have no freedom. All decisions in their lives are being made, even to get a passport, is being made by the male assigned to them. And that sounds strange, coming from where I come from, that that could even be possible. And if anybody tried to suggest that to me, I don't think I'd react very well. But I live in a free country, and these women are under threat of death if they oppose the men that have control over their freedom.

So it's alive in this world, it's alive in Canada, this sort of violence against women and oppression of women and women's rights. And Clare's Law, or the interpersonal violence disclosure protocol, is a tiny piece of, I think, changes that need to be made. I think this is a positive step, although I think there's a fair bit of vagueness in this particular bill, so we're not exactly sure what it will look like.

And there's something called the interpersonal violence disclosure protocol, but we don't know what that's going to look like because it's going to be done in the regulations. There's something called an applicant, which is clearly an individual. If someone like me needed to apply for this information on whether or not someone else has a history of violence against women, that's fair enough. But then there's something called a prescribed individual. So who are these prescribed individuals? We won't know until the regulations are passed. So once again that kind of scrutiny won't happen here in the Assembly, which is interesting, Mr. Speaker.

Basically I think the way the bill is set up is that people can go to the police if they're concerned about their safety, their personal safety — or advocates, and there's a number of advocates in section 3(2), the disclosure portion of the bill — where they can go to the police and get information on whether somebody has a violent past. Now obviously, Mr. Speaker, this will only capture those individuals who have a violent past that have been caught, right, that have a criminal record or information that the police have on them.

So as I say, it's a small piece. It's a small piece, but it's an important one because at least there's that much that can be done. And we know too often, when we hear stories of abusers and predators, that people knew about them and how capable they were of violence, and yet for some reason the individual that engaged with them didn't have that information.

So I don't think there's a whole lot that we can say about the bill right now. Obviously we're going to have to ask some questions about the number of regulations that can be made under this bill, including what the interpersonal violence disclosure protocol will look like, or people that could assist on making applications on behalf of an applicant, and there's a whole bunch of other things that could be done under the regulations.

So, not sure that there's a lot of information here but, as I said,

it's one small step towards giving women the tools they need in this country to protect themselves. So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I don't have anything else to add to the bill. So I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 141, *The Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol (Clare's Law) Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No 133

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again it's an honour to join within the adjourned debates and to give my remarks with regards to Bill No. 133, *The Legislative Assembly (Election Dates) Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this particular bill has been very much of an interest of mine, especially since I previously was the deputy returning officer for Prince Albert Northcote. So that was, I believe, the election years of 2003 and 2007.

And so I was always really quite interested in how elections are run and all of the complexity of it. And I got to meet individuals who were also returning officers for the federal elections or municipal elections, and we discussed some of the challenges of having an election. And in those times we didn't have fixed elections. So you agreed to be the deputy returning officer. You had to find people to staff an election that you had no date for and find locations when you couldn't tell them when you were going to rent them because you didn't know when the election was. It was very difficult and challenging, but kind of exciting.

I remember getting my first call when the writ dropped for the 2003 election. I was in my car and I heard it on the news, and I was like, okay, let's start booking places and getting staff in and telling my employer that I need a leave of absence. And I believe I was one of the younger deputy returning officers at those times for Saskatchewan. Generally it's individuals who are retired and have more flexibility with their schedule. But just because I had an extreme interest in elections, I thought this would be a great opportunity for me to get to know a little bit more about our electoral process. And it was certainly a learning experience and I really enjoyed that time. So whenever there's any changes with regards to *The Election Act*, I find that I'm quite interested in that because I had to learn that piece of legislation quite thoroughly with regards to that role as the deputy returning officer.

And so when this government decided to have fixed elections dates, I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, I was pretty happy to hear about that, especially knowing the challenges I had as a deputy returning officer with not knowing when the election time was

going to be, and how that was such a challenge. But when they said that they were going to have set election date so that they couldn't strategically decide when elections were planned and such, that did sound like a really good idea.

But like we know, Mr. Speaker, since they indicated that they were going to implement this legislation, a set election date has not worked for the government. They've made changes for every one of them that was supposed to happen, for different reasons. The last one was because it was too close to the federal election, so then they extended their period of time in government. So it kind of was in their benefit to extend the date of the election. And it seemed like every time that they had this date planned, they extend it a little bit more so they have a little bit more time in office. And this one is no different, Mr. Speaker.

We know this government . . . We had our last election in the spring, April of 2016, and so a person would think that four years from then it would be the spring of 2020. But not for this government. They like to add a little bit of extra time on their mandate, even though that's not what the voters provided them. But they decided to set the date for the election for October 26th, 2020.

And so, Mr. Speaker, when you look at how the provincial election's going to be October 26th, 2020 and the municipal election is going in November — two weeks later, I believe — that's going to provide a lot of difficulties for voters, for the deputy returning officers, municipally and provincially, to run their campaigns, the elections there.

This is basically a nightmare for them trying to negotiate all of the aspects of running an election, such as training employees; having locations for advance polls, like trying to make sure advance polls don't conflict with election dates; or also renting locations. Because I know in the Prince Albert area anyway, a lot of the polling locations are within the schools, which generally work all right, and it's a good learning opportunity for students to see the electoral process happen right there in their facility. But I don't know how the schools are going to feel with shutting down their gyms to accommodate for provincial elections and municipal elections. That's going to be quite a few dates that they're going to have to close those down.

And also we know that with the municipal election being so close to Remembrance Day, that could provide quite an issue, Mr. Speaker. I believe the election date for the municipal election is November 9th, so it's the day before Remembrance Day. And I don't know what the schools' calendar year is going to look like, but that potentially could be a day that schools decide to close. And so I don't know how municipal governments are going to find polling locations within the community if they don't have access to those locations.

The schools also ensure that they have employers there to accommodate for the length of time that the polling stations need to be open because it's longer than what a typical school day would be. We need to go in and set up the polling stations earlier in the day, and then we need to stay later and stay for the count and such and make sure that the doors are sealed. And so usually they provide some staffing for that. And although we pay to rent those locations, which probably helps with the costs of the staffing, I don't know how much more this is going to be for the

schools to arrange — or other locations — and so that's something to look at too.

It's important to note, Mr. Speaker, that the Chief Electoral Officer suggested a spring election, either that the municipal election was moved to the spring or the provincial. But he really thought that would have been a better alternative for this, and probably because he knows the issues with having two elections so close together. Two weeks is quite close. You know, that's going to provide some issues with regards to finding people to work the elections. I know a lot of the people that I had working our elections, they were retired individuals and they could only earn a certain amount of money before it was clawed back with regards to taxes. So probably having two elections close by, they're probably not going to want to work both of them because it would be . . . could potentially be too much of an earning potential for them, whereas usually if elections are about six months difference it doesn't cause that much of an issue.

And so training employees is also a bit of a challenge, because each election is a little bit different. So even though someone had worked a federal election, it's important to train them on what the provincial standards are, or again with the municipal standards. So that's going to be a bit of a challenge as well. So quite a few challenges with having these elections so close together. And this legislation hasn't passed yet, so there's opportunity to make some of these changes.

It also makes it difficult for individuals who potentially might be looking at, say, municipal leaders who might think about trying their hand in provincial politics, and this isn't going to allow much opportunity to do that, or individuals who may be on the school board looking. And we know we have members right here that also used to sit on municipal governments or school boards and then they decided to try their hand in provincial politics. So that will limit people's options in order to do that.

And then they also talk about voter fatigue, and I think that's really . . . It is real, Mr. Speaker. So this decision was not made on the voters' behalf. And I think municipal elections and school board elections already have a hard time ensuring that they have good turnouts with regards to their elections. So this is also going to damper their turnout, and I think that's really unfortunate. Because as we know, municipal governments and school boards, they have a very important role in communities and so it's really important to ensure that they have good voter turnout in their election so individuals can select the appropriate representatives there.

Also we know like with regards to knocking on doors and seeking voter support, voters are going to be a bit tired of that and maybe mixing up who the candidates are for, because not everybody pays that close of attention if you're running for provincial or municipal elections.

[16:45]

So also the minister, when he announced this piece of legislation, he quoted here, "Fall provincial elections are preferable because they don't disrupt the legislative calendar." Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't understand how this won't disrupt the legislative calendar because since I've been elected we usually start the fall session mid-October. So if the election is October 26th, and we need to

have some time in order for all the results and everything to come back from election day, what date would we start that fall session? And I think that's getting pretty close to December, and I think then it's no longer a fall session; it would definitely be a winter session.

And roads . . . Like we know, most people who are coming to this fine facility are traveling lengthy ways and so we don't know what type of weather will be at that time of year. So it will disrupt the legislative calendar. So we have to keep that in mind as well, because we know if the election is October 26th then the writ will probably drop around September 26th, because it's usually about a month prior. So then there won't be any ability to have the session prior to that.

A June election makes more sense, Mr. Speaker. Like, the weather is nice. We don't have to worry about potentially having a snowstorm on election day. Seeding is generally over at that point so farmers would be able to participate. People aren't away on holidays as of yet. And so I don't understand why the government won't decide on that.

Also one of the things I wanted to bring up as well is by-elections. We know that there's some members in this House that are seeking federal election. And if they tend to be successful with regards to their federal bid — the federal election is October 19th — and if the provincial election's October 26th, will we have some by-elections to fill those spots?

I think it's very important that those constituencies are well represented. It's an important role that the MLA plays within their constituency. So to leave that position open for a full year, I think, is not very good for constituents to not have that proper representation. And so I think that's something that needs to be considered as well. And so I didn't see anything that kind of talks about how that would be handled.

We know that this doesn't settle the conflict facing the municipal and school board voters and within their . . . because they were not happy to have their elections so close to the provincial election. So none of the changes within this legislation is going to help that. And it only provides an advantage for the Sask Party government to have an extra six months, a little bit more than six months extra in their governing, which they haven't earned, Mr. Speaker.

So I think there is going to be quite a considerable amount of discussion with regards to when this bill comes to committee. I know the critic will do their due diligence and talk to stakeholders and have a lot of questions with regards to the reasoning that these dates were changed to the dates that they are suggested. And I know my colleagues have a lot more that they'll want to add with regards to discussion with this piece of legislation, so with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to adjourn debate on Bill No. 133.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Speaker: — It's been moved by the House Leader that the Assembly be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:50.]

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