



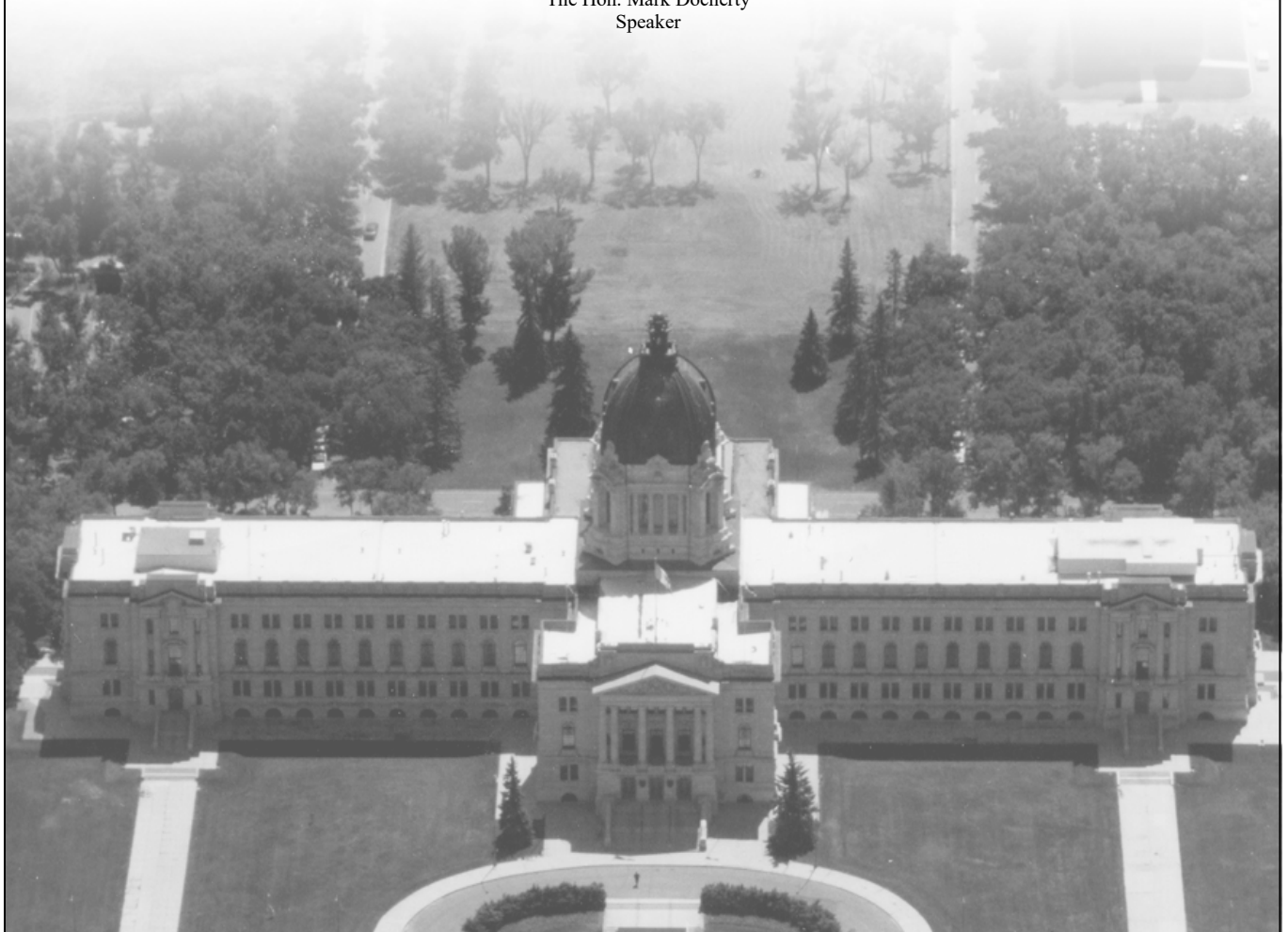
THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thanks a lot, Mr. Speaker. This morning to you and to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a group of people here from the Dream Brokers program. That program gives opportunities for children and youth to develop physical literacy and engage in sustained participation in sport, culture, and recreation activities.

In the House today is Roselin Stonechild, a Dream Broker participant who was involved in the program at Sacred Heart School in Regina for seven years. Roselin had the opportunity to participate in over 10 sport, culture, and recreation activities. These opportunities helped her gain new skills, interests, and culminated in her now attending Athol Murray College at Notre Dame. She credits her hard work and support from the Dream Brokers program for this excellent achievement.

Also joining us today is Alyssa Strasser, the dream broker that worked with Roselin. A dream broker connects and supports children and youth by identifying and overcoming social and economic barriers to participate in activities. Alyssa enjoys working with youth to ensure they have fun and success in opportunities that are pursued.

Cheryl McCallum, manager with Sask Sport, also joins us here today. She oversees several programs throughout the province including Dream Brokers.

Other guests joining them are Huey Blacksioux and Danita Stonechild, Roselin's parents; Michel Mercredi, Sask Sport community development consultant; Dominga Robinson, SaskCulture outreach consultant; Kristen Bialobzyski, Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association inclusion and access consultant. Mr. Speaker, this is a great program that works with our youth right across the province and we thank them and welcome them this morning for all the work they do. And all members please help me welcome them.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery, once again from F.W. Johnson Collegiate, is a group of students accompanied by Mr. Scott McKillop again. And Ted Hastings is also helping out this morning. There are 28 of them, grade 12 students, and I look forward to having a chat with them after routine proceedings today. So again, another group, if we could all welcome them this morning.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the opposition I'd like to join the minister in welcoming the folks here from Dream Brokers — that's a wonderful thing — and the folks from Sask Sport and culture, parks, and recreation.

I think I got that kind of right. But we appreciate your all coming here early on Thursday morning and it's a great thing. And congratulations on heading off to Athol Murray. That's a wonderful school. So we'd like to welcome you to your legislature. Thanks so much for being with us this morning.

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

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And to you and through you to all colleagues of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce 22 grade 4 students from École St. Mary, along with their teacher Annette Duval. Joining them as parent chaperones are Lorraine Young, Shauntel Lemon, Trevor Fisher, and Jennifer Morin. Just give us a wave. Thank you very much for coming out. That's our fourth group from Regina Walsh Acres this week and, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to have a conversation with them after. I think Jennifer's going to have an easier day. She usually has a harder task, I think, trying to keep the member from Regina Rosemont on task and on schedule. So welcome them to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to send a special thanks to the Dream Brokers program. They have supported two programs that I'm involved with in the fiddle community. It's a joint collaboration with St. Michael Community School in Saskatoon, and we have received grants from them to help support the young fiddlers that are taking fiddle at St. Michael Community School. And through joint efforts with my fiddle organization, FiddlyNess, we've been able to host them through two separate programs. So a special thanks and a welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with members in welcoming Huey Blacksioux, Danita Stonechild, and Roselin here to their legislature, and certainly part of the Dream Brokers program, a great thing. But it's a wonderful thing to see this daughter of our home community, North Central, doing so well.

And it makes a lot of sense, Mr. Speaker, because certainly Huey Blacksioux and Danita Stonechild are very proud parents, very active members in our community. And I think Danita probably even knew the way to the gallery, having once upon a time worked in this building for then member for Saskatoon Greystone, Lynda Haverstock, Mr. Speaker. So she knows her way around the community and knows her way around the legislature as well.

But it's good to see these very important members of my home community here today at their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to join the chorus of MLAs [Member of the Legislative

Assembly] in recognizing the great achievement of the participants of the Dream Brokers program, in particular Roselin Stonechild. As we all know that it's the challenge within the Indigenous community is great in a sense of many of our young people have the pressures of trying to resist the challenges of life.

And when you see parents do so well through raising a very accomplished child, it's important that we all stand to recognize that and especially in the Indigenous community. We have such beautiful, strong, and gifted children and when parents recognize that early, we can see the effort of that recognition when we have successful young people emerging from our Indigenous community. And there are many more to come, Mr. Speaker. But I want to share in my own Cree language.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Cree.]

In Cree that means keep on going, keep the fight going and never give up, and congratulations.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite to welcome the students from École St. Mary that are here today. But I want to give a special shout out to my good buddy Jackson Morin that's here today. Jackson, he's a YouTube sensation. He's an all round good kid. He's one of the very fastest skaters out there at the Rosemont Outdoor Hockey League, one of the most prolific goal scorers. I know this winter I feathered a few nice ones onto his tape, Mr. Speaker, and he always finished. A much better hockey player than his dad, Mr. Speaker, a much better hockey player than his dad.

And it's also a pleasure to welcome Jennifer Morin to her Assembly. Jennifer is the constituency assistant within Regina Rosemont. She's incredibly patient both of course being married to Trevor and working with me, Mr. Speaker. And she's really effective, hard working to make sure we get results for those that are seeking support.

I ask all members to welcome my good buddy Jackson and Jennifer to their Assembly here today.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Martensville.

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Didn't mean to shock you with my jumping to my feet, but here we go. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose a carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan.

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 from Saskatoon and Outlook. I do so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to rise once again here today to bring attention to and petition against the Sask Party government's imposition of the PST [provincial sales tax] onto the construction industry, onto construction labour in our province. Of course this is the epitome of a job-killing tax, Mr. Speaker.

You know, what we saw was the Sask Party saw a slowing economy. They chose to hit the brakes, Mr. Speaker. And as a result, we see projects that have been shelved all across the province, permits that are down, thousands of hard-working tradespeople that have lost employment, so many that have been forced outside of Saskatchewan in pursuit of employment, Mr. Speaker.

The prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Cut Knife, Paradise Hill, and Lloydminster. I so submit.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition on inconsistencies about the major deficiencies and minor deficiencies in the Regina bypass project. We have contradictory statements made by previous and current ministers of Highways.

And so I will 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 release a full, unredacted copy of records detailing all minor and major deficiencies identified in the Regina Bypass Project to date.

And the folks signing this petition today are from Moose Jaw and Regina. I so submit.

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

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

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to overhaul Saskatchewan 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 the petition today come from the city of Moose Jaw. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today yet again to present another petition calling for critical workplace supports for survivors of domestic violence. Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: Saskatchewan has the highest rates of domestic violence amongst all the provinces in Canada; employers should take every reasonable precaution in the workplace to protect workers who are survivors of domestic violence; and five days' paid leave and up to 17 weeks of unpaid leave should be made available to workers who are survivors of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, this is what we called for in our private member's bill which seeks to provide five days' paid leave. There are many other provinces in the country which have some form of paid leave available, and that includes Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Newfoundland and Labrador, PEI [Prince Edward Island], and New Brunswick, Mr. Speaker. It's time for the Sask Party to do the right thing and to pass this legislation.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to pass legislation to ensure critical supports in the workplace, including reasonable accommodation and paid and unpaid leave for survivors of domestic violence.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today come from Weyburn and Pangman. I do so present.

[10:15]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Resilience Report and Climate Change

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the House today as our government has released its first climate

resilience report, with 25 measures that demonstrate how our province is increasing resilience to climate change. Resiliency is the ability to cope with, adapt to, and recover from stress and change, Mr. Speaker. It's the very foundation of Saskatchewan's climate change strategy.

And the first report is encouraging, Mr. Speaker. We're making huge strides in our ability to safely and permanently sequester carbon in our soil. We're installing new highway culvert systems to meet new flood standards, and we're increasing wildfire fuel management to reduce the risk to northern communities, to name only a few of our positive findings.

We're also learning from this report, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to reduce emissions and energies in government buildings. We will increase surveillance for mosquito- and tick-borne diseases which are indicators of a changing environmental condition. We're continuing flood plain mapping and community preparedness plans, and will continue to increase our mix of renewable energy sources as outlined in the Prairie Resilience climate change strategy, Mr. Speaker.

This first annual resilience report is an innovative and forward-thinking component of our approach to climate change. This will help keep residents and communities prepared and safe in the face of a changing climate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Former Premier Retires

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the retirement of Lorne Calvert, former premier of Saskatchewan, as principal of St Andrew's College at the University of Saskatchewan. I was pleased to attend the St. Andrew's College retirement roast of Lorne last night along with our leader and the member from Regina Northeast.

While Lorne really needs no introduction, his roasters, including Paul Martin, Dale Botting, the Waltons, Nora Saunders, Pat Atkinson, Glen Hagel, and even a few words from Murray Mandryk, ensured that we understood in a delightful way the more complex side of our former premier. While Lorne started out in the United Church, found his way into this legislature, and then back for nine years at St Andrew's, he never lost his common way about him.

One of the many common themes was Lorne's penchant for old school buses, often used for family vacations with seemingly regularly recurring breakdowns throughout Canada. It was noted that Lorne's wife, Betty, had the patience of a saint at these times, and well recorded by her many photographs of Lorne busy under the hood.

The other theme, and one I've observed, is Lorne's deep love for this province. He is a true friend and fan of Saskatchewan. His practical conviction that social progress cannot exist without economic progress is a notion he lived his working life by, and one we all can embrace. Mr. Speaker I ask all members to join me in wishing Lorne the very best in his future endeavours. May he fully enjoy his well-deserved retirement. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

Learn Ag Career Fair

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On February 5th, Churchbridge Public School held their second annual Learn Ag Career Fair. This career fair is a specific event that targets students who are interested in agriculture and who may want to pursue a career in the field once they've graduated high school. The event was organized and run by the school's Learn Ag committee, made up of two awesome staff members, principal Amanda Kornaga, and vice-principal Derek Serdachny, local farmers, parents, and students.

Mr. Speaker, the fair was kicked off by Kaitlyn Sauser, a grade 12 student and representative of the LearnAg committee. She's also the daughter of one of my key employees, Sheldon Sauser, who was an integral part of our seed business. Kaitlyn explained the importance of agriculture and her own personal ties to the industry. Kaitlyn has been accepted into the College of Agriculture, Saskatoon this fall. Go Agros!

This year students from Macdonald School in Stockholm, Yorkdale School in Yorkton, and the Langenburg Central School attended this career fair. Mr. Speaker, in total 150 students participated in eight panel discussions about agriculture and the evolution of the industry throughout the years. Thank you to the following companies for sponsoring in part, participating in the panel discussions: Sask Apprenticeship and Trades; Wendell Honey Farms; Saskatchewan Crop Insurance; Sharpe's Soil Services; Mosaic; Wellness Pharmacy; and Bridgeview Manufacturing/Hruska Farms.

Thank you to the Churchbridge Public School students and officials in organizing another successful ag career fair.

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

Tartan Day Honours Scots

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's my great pleasure to rise today to recognize Tartan Day which was celebrated in Saskatchewan last Saturday.

On April 6th, 1320 at Arbroath Abbey in the county of Angus, Scotland, the nobles, barons, and freeholders, together with the whole community of the realm of Scotland pronounced the Scottish declaration of independence. This became known as the Declaration of Arbroath, proclaimed under the kingship of Robert the Bruce.

The tartan of the highland clans was banned in 1746 and throughout the infamous Highland Clearances. By the time it was repealed in 1782, thousands of Scots had emigrated to Canada to start a new life, bringing their clans' tartans with them.

Saskatchewan chose to honour its Scottish settlers by enacting *The Tartan Day Act* in 1992, and the official tartan of Saskatchewan was designed in 1961 by Lillian Michaelis Bastido. It has seven colours. The predominant gold represents the golden ripe prairie wheat; brown for the summerfallow; green for the forests; red for our provincial flower, the western prairie lily; yellow for the canola flower and the sunflower; white for the snow; and black for oil and coal.

To my colleagues, I ask them to remember this phrase from the Declaration of Arbroath: "For we fight not for glory, nor riches, nor honours, but for Freedom alone, which no good man gives up except with his life." The freedom we enjoy today came at great cost, including so many of Scottish heritage who gave their lives as Canadian soldiers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cypress Hills.

Music Group Celebrates Their Saskatchewan Roots

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in my place to congratulate Shaunavon's own the Hunter Brothers on their first number one on the country radio. Their new single "Lost" is now one of the top-five selling Canadian singles, and the top-four streamed country single. It has streamed over 2.5 million times to date and has been in the top 10 of the Canadian radio for over five weeks.

Mr. Speaker, Luke, J.J., Ty, Brock, and Dusty Hunter have deep roots in Saskatchewan and come from a very musical family. Four of the five brothers also had very successful hockey careers. When that was finished, they returned to their family farm and made the decision to take on music as their next adventure. Most of their music is inspired by what it was like growing up in Shaunavon and area and how it shaped them as men.

Their previous hit "Born and Raised" serves as an anthem for everyone who grew up in Saskatchewan, as in celebrating the importance of the family, agriculture, and the sense of pride earned while living in a small town.

Mr. Speaker, I now ask the members to join me in congratulating the Hunter Brothers on their growing success.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

People Who Care Give Back to Their Community

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to highlight three very important community groups from Lloydminster. The 100 Men of Lloydminster is a group of men who come together four times a year to hear from local non-profits in a Dragons' Den-style pitch. Each member comes prepared with a blank \$100 cheque, and at the end of each presentation the members vote on which of the two causes are nearest and dearest to their heart. The group with the majority of votes walks away with a major donation. To date they have helped raise \$100,820 towards non-profits in Lloydminster.

Mr. Speaker, similar to this group is the 100+ Women Who Care and the 100+ Youth Who Care groups. The 100+ Youth Who Care group was inspired by Jordy Haughian. He was a very compassionate young man and was compelled to give back to his community. With the help of his mom, they created the two fundraising groups and have made major donations towards local non-profits in Lloydminster as well. Recipients of these donations include groups like Inclusion Lloydminster and the Sexual Assault and Information Centre.

I now ask my colleagues to join me in thanking the 100 Men of Lloydminster, 100+ Women and Youth Who Care for their loving and generous fundraising efforts and events. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Swift Current.

Award-Winning Pro Named Coach of the Year

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Swift Current's very own Jeff Chambers was named the PGA [Professional Golfers' Association] of Canada Coach of the Year for 2018. Mr. Speaker, Jeff is the head professional at the Elmwood Golf Club in Swift Current, and he was told that he was this year's Coach of the Year while in Arizona at the PGA of Canada Head Pro Championship.

The national Coach of the Year award is a very prestigious recognition, Mr. Speaker. Some of the past winners include Alberta's Paul Horton, Team Canada men's national coach Derek Ingram, and Golf Canada's Tristan Mullally.

Mr. Speaker, I feel as though I don't have enough time to properly talk about Jeff and all of the accolades that he's collected throughout his career. But if you take a look at it, Jeff has won six different PGA of Saskatchewan awards a combined 13 times. He's also received past honours like the Player of the Year in 2011, the Professional of the Year in 2012, and the Teacher of the Year in 2017.

By the way, Chambers also runs a junior golf academy for young promising golfers, which has seen its numbers grow from 60 kids per year to a remarkable 340 kids each year. Chambers won an award for that program as well. Mr. Speaker, of the awards, Jeff Chambers said:

Every award I've got, I've said just push hard, go out, do this, and great things can come out of Saskatchewan. There is always a feeling the only things happen in BC or Ontario just because of size, and I've always said Saskatchewan is on the map, and we can do great things.

What a great message from Jeff Chambers.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate Jeff on being recognized as this year's PGA of Canada coach of the year for 2018.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

School Capacity and Class Sizes

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this budget simply failed to deliver when it comes to education. Not only did the Premier fail to fully undo the cuts to our education sector, cuts that he campaigned on fixing. We've since learned of some very concerning capacity pressures in Saskatchewan schools.

There are 70 schools across our province that are at 100 per cent capacity, and 20 of those schools are 120 per cent or over. Teachers are not only doing more with less; across the province they're teaching in crowded classrooms and portables. The government likes to brag about growth, but they dropped the ball when it comes to actually supporting those children in the classrooms.

When will this Premier put his money where his mouth is and

actually provide what is needed to keep pace with the growth in our growing classrooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I just kind of find it remarkable when the opposition stands up and asks questions about capital, Mr. Speaker. After all, when they were in government, Mr. Speaker, they closed 176 rural schools. Since we've been in government, Mr. Speaker, a 441 per cent increase in capital funding, Mr. Speaker, many new schools. And the member only has to drive down Elphinstone Street to look at the new schools that have been built right here in the city of Regina, including a new joint-use school proposed in her constituency, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know that . . . Mr. Speaker, we know that there are some capacity issues in our schools. We have a number of schools that are over capacity, Mr. Speaker, but we deal with those in a very realistic way: funding in the budget for more portables, Mr. Speaker, to help alleviate that, always keeping an eye on making sure that the safety and health of our students is our number one priority, Mr. Speaker.

So in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, 12 new portables to help deal with some of the over capacity in our schools, and that includes in addition to four new portables at some of our joint-use schools, Mr. Speaker. We're concerned about ensuring that students have a safe place, a safe place, a healthy place to learn, Mr. Speaker, and our commitment to capital speaks for itself.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, those lines and that spin are cold comfort for teachers and students who are trying to learn in overcrowded schools and classrooms. We also have teachers' associations sounding the alarm about classes with more than 40 students. It's frankly unacceptable that we expect students to be supported in classes like this, worse yet that we know that this government doesn't even track maximum class sizes.

Provinces across this country regulate, legislate, and publicize maximum class sizes because they know that it's important. If this government insists on taking an austerity approach to education, the very least that they could do would be to track the impact on maximum class sizes. We know that the Premier's political ally in Ontario is looking to take his province backwards. And his minister has even suggested that more kids in classrooms make them more resilient, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier commit to moving in the other direction, agree that class sizes do impact student learning, and commit to tracking class sizes today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, the average class size in this province is at a manageable level, certainly on par with many other jurisdictions across this country, Mr. Speaker. But we have no intention of following the lead of the Ontario government, Mr. Speaker, with the increasing class sizes. We know it's important in terms of student learning that class sizes are a reasonable size, Mr. Speaker. It's one of the reasons that we've committed to

more capital, one of the reasons that we're out having conversations with school divisions and with teachers' associations, Mr. Speaker — to make sure that we provide the right environment for kids to learn, Mr. Speaker.

This is a commitment that we've made. We'll continue to have those conversations. I've mentioned in this House before that we talk about innovation, Mr. Speaker. We talk about ensuring that we're providing the right supports for students in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. Our commitment to funding public education, Mr. Speaker, speaks for itself, not only with respect to operating with the largest operating budget for education in the history of the province, but our ongoing commitment to capital.

[10:30]

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

Funding for Literacy Programs

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this budget not only failed to undo this government's cuts to education and threatened to defund Cornwall Alternative School, we've also learned that it fully eliminated vital family literacy supports designed to, and I quote from the government's own news release, "... focus on the literacy needs of Indigenous and/or Métis people, newcomers, people with intellectual and/or physical challenges, young and/or single parents, youth, low-income families, or rural communities."

Does the minister think that the need to support literacy among these groups no longer exists? Or does he agree that eliminating supports like these to put 500,000 back into the government coffers was a terrible mistake?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, we understand the importance of family literacy in all sectors of our economy, Mr. Speaker. We have family literacy initiative programs which we fund, Mr. Speaker. Some are literacy camps, First Nations literacy camps, Mr. Speaker. And we've seen a reading level increase over the last number of years of 10 per cent. So our commitment to literacy is clear, Mr. Speaker.

We did have a grant, Mr. Speaker, which we eliminated in this year's budget, a grant which was costing over 20 per cent to administer, Mr. Speaker. We're looking at seeing how that can be more effective in terms of retooling that program as we move forward with our sector engagement, our strategic plan around libraries, Mr. Speaker. Those were one-year funding arrangements, Mr. Speaker. If there was a successful program that was coming out of that, Mr. Speaker, there was no way to fund it for a second year. We think we can do better, and as we move forward with our conversations around our library engagements, Mr. Speaker, we will.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, we know that it was a one-year funding arrangement, but you know what else is a one-year

funding arrangement? The budget. And that minister and that front bench made a choice not to move forward with family literacy programs that support some of the most vulnerable kids in this province. It's shameful, Mr. Speaker, and it's short-sighted.

Some examples of the programs that will no longer receive support as a result of these cuts in their budget: the Treaty 4 Education Alliance's program focused on intergenerational learning; a family literacy program for K to 3 [kindergarten to grade 3] students at the Cree school in Saskatoon; the newcomer family literacy network's program in Moose Jaw; the Peepeekisis First Nations traditional mental health and wellness family literacy project. These are just some of the 14 programs that won't have access to government support come June.

Over 40 per cent of students entering kindergarten in this province do not have the skills that make them fully ready to learn. We need more targeted supports, not fewer. Will the minister do the right thing — reinstate this program for the coming year?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, it's important to remember that the cost to administer this program was 20 per cent, Mr. Speaker. It's a significant amount of money, Mr. Speaker. The other problem with the program is there was no outcomes. We couldn't track the outcomes that were coming from these programs, Mr. Speaker, and I think that we can do better.

So, Mr. Speaker, as we move forward with our sector engagement, with respect to our library sector engagement, we will look to ensure that we can continue to enhance family literacy programs, Mr. Speaker. We've demonstrated, I think, with the numbers which I've already quoted in the House, our success in terms of ensuring that children are ready for kindergarten, Mr. Speaker, ready for grade 1, to meet those grade 3 learning requirements in reading. We've seen a steady increase in those numbers, Mr. Speaker.

But it seems to me that if you're going to have a program and you're going to fund it as a government, Mr. Speaker, it not only needs to have outcomes, Mr. Speaker, but you need to be able to perpetuate the successful programs that are being funded by the government, Mr. Speaker. And that's precisely what we're going to do.

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

Supports for Post-Secondary Students

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, University of Saskatchewan students are set to pay an extra 3.4 per cent in tuition fees next year. This comes on the back of a 4.8 per cent hike last year. Saskatchewan students already pay the highest tuition in Western Canada, well above rates in Alberta, Manitoba, and British Columbia, and the third highest in Canada.

This government's cuts and flat operating grants have left universities with few options outside of digging deeper into students' pockets to make ends meet. When will this government

recognize that investing in students is an investment in the economy?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. You know last time I had the opportunity to stand on my feet and respond to a question from the member opposite, she mentioned that our institutions are autonomous and then she went to say and I quote, Mr. Speaker, that:

The Minister for Advanced Education likes to say that post-secondary institutions are autonomous. They make their own decisions about how they use their money. And she's right, at least partially.

Mr. Speaker, there is nothing partial about that. The universities Act governs both of our institutions, and I expect that both of those institutions wouldn't want that to change any time soon.

In addition to the part about tuition, Mr. Speaker, we have very strong partners in the University of Saskatchewan. They made a decision on their tuition rates. They are still the medium of the U15 across the sector, Mr. Speaker, and they have the lowest student fees of the U15. They are very strong partners for us, and this government has invested heavily in student supports, Mr. Speaker, as well as operating for our post-secondary institutions.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the minister expects us to believe that the amount that this government provides to universities doesn't have an impact on the decisions that are made there, but I think that there are many who realize it differently.

The minister repeats all of the lines about their commitment to post-secondary education, but the only line that really matters, Mr. Speaker, is the budget line, and that's been flat or falling over the last number of years. The minister knows that this budget fell short. In February the University of Saskatchewan said that they were looking for \$5 million in a bump to their operating grant in part to mitigate the years of this government's back-to-back austerity budgets. Their hopes, of course, were not realized and this government chose to squeeze the sector yet again.

Does the minister understand that years of denying universities the funding that they need has serious consequences for students, the quality of education, and the sector as a whole?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and again I thank the member opposite for the question. You know this government has funded our institutions very, very well. Over the last number of years we've increased the operating funding to our institutions over the last decade, Mr. Speaker, by 53 per cent. Over that same period of time, the enrolment has grown about 25 per cent and the CPI, the consumer price index,

has grown about by 22 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

And I would also say this, Mr. Speaker, that this government has been very, very focused on making sure that students have a job at the end of their degree, Mr. Speaker, something which I know the member from Meadow Lake will be only too happy to speak about once again. In terms of our graduates, 90 per cent of the graduates that we have — 9 in 10, Mr. Speaker, of our graduates — stay in this province, Mr. Speaker. Two-thirds of them are working in jobs related to their field of study, Mr. Speaker, and in part that's because of the over 70,000 students that have taken advantage of the graduate retention program, Mr. Speaker, something which the Leader of the Opposition wanted to scrap, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this government appears to be completely out of touch with how difficult students are finding it to make ends meet. For a start, it's tax time and students and families are feeling the pinch of this government's elimination of the tuition and education tax credits.

In addition, they can no longer access the Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings. And for those who are trying to work to pay their bills along with their classes, they're dealing with the absolute lowest minimum wage in Canada. How can the Sask Party honestly expect students to get ahead when they're making life more and more unaffordable at every turn?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Mr. Speaker, I again say that our students are staying in this province. They're building their lives here. They're working here. They're building homes here. They are starting their families here. Mr. Speaker, we're very, very proud on this side of the House about that.

There's also been, Mr. Speaker, a 262 per cent increase in student support since this government took office, Mr. Speaker. We provided over \$1.1 billion in student supports, Mr. Speaker. And of course again, the GRP [graduate retention program] is the only one in its kind.

And let's look at, Mr. Speaker, what is happening with our First Nations and Métis students as a result of the 17 million in targeted funding that we provide to our Indigenous institutions every year, Mr. Speaker. More of them are enrolling. More of them are attaining a credential, Mr. Speaker. And more of them are also receiving employment upon graduation, Mr. Speaker. We're very, very proud of that record on this side of the House.

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

Access to Prescription Drug and Members' Views on Abortion

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, last night we learned that the Minister of Rural and Remote Health, whose job it is to ensure that women in rural and remote communities can access

abortions and other medical procedures, spoke at an anti-choice convention last week. The minister encouraged them to continue their “battle.” And he told the anti-choice gathering, “I’ll continue to do what I can in my professional capacity.”

Exactly what is the minister planning to do in his professional capacity in the battle against women’s reproductive rights in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, there’s a balance for all of us in this House, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to matters of conscience, Mr. Speaker. We all have personal beliefs, Mr. Speaker, in this House and, I would put forward, in communities across the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are services that are provided by this province. They’re provided in this country, Mr. Speaker. It is the law of the land, Mr. Speaker. There is a policy that this government has, Mr. Speaker, and it is the understanding that MLAs, ministers on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, support the policy that the government has.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier’s lines are a lot different than what was reported to have been said in the minister’s speech. The vast majority of leadership candidates on that side, including the Premier, courted the votes of anti-choice groups in the Sask Party leadership race. The anti-choice political action group celebrated the Premier’s win last year.

Since then, we’ve seen this government’s slow-walking expansion of access, including access to Mifegymiso. We know it’s not about the money; the savings are clear. With so many members of the Sask Party cabinet connected to and supported by the anti-choice movement, can the Premier update the House: how do these conversations go when they come up around the cabinet table? What role do these anti-choice views play in the decision making of this government?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, members, I would assume, on both sides of the House have a diverse array of opinions, Mr. Speaker. We welcome that. The fact of the matter, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health has been on record for many years as supporting pro-life. But, Mr. Speaker, the whole . . . The fact of the matter, Mr. Speaker, though, is abortion is legal in this country. It’s the law of the land. The position of this government is very clear. We support that, Mr. Speaker.

As far as accessibility, the member opposite talks about Mifegymiso. She’s simply inaccurate, Mr. Speaker. It is accessible. It’s treated as any other drug that’s on the formulary in this province. When the medical students came and I met with them, I assured them that we would . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . So it’s about dollars then, is it? Is that what it is? Mr. Speaker, it’s . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Access, Mr. Speaker . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order please. Direct your comments through the Chair. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, it is accessible in this province. A woman can go to a doctor and get a prescription. This is a public policy discussion right now, Mr. Speaker. The only question that’s up in the air is who pays for it.

Mr. Speaker, the medical students made a very compelling case. I promised them we would review it and, Mr. Speaker, we are.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just because it’s in the pharmacy doesn’t mean women have access to this prescription, Mr. Speaker.

I’ll ask the Minister of Rural and Remote Health again about his quote, “I’ll continue to do what I can in my professional capacity.” What exactly is the minister planning to do in his professional capacity?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, again the member opposite is inaccurate in her assessment on the accessibility. Mr. Speaker, it’s available. A woman can go to any doctor in this province and get a prescription for it. Mr. Speaker, as far as the dollars, I said that we would review it. We certainly are.

And, Mr. Speaker, what the members opposite are either not understanding or choose to not understand, Mr. Speaker: the most vulnerable are protected through a number of health services, Mr. Speaker. And also, Mr. Speaker, if they don’t qualify under that, there is an emergency accessibility program that they can access, Mr. Speaker. The person merely needs to go to their doctor, like with any pharmaceutical on the formulary, and they can gain access to Mifegymiso that way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:45]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, there does remain a significant barrier to access in terms of cost. I think that that case has been made quite clear.

I will ask the Minister of Rural and Remote Health one more time. He was quoted as saying, “I’ll continue to do what I can in my professional capacity to advancing the battle.” Mr. Speaker, what is he referring to in this case? What exactly is the minister planning to do in his professional capacity in the battle against women’s reproductive rights in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health has held this file I think for about four and a half

years now, Mr. Speaker. I've worked with him very closely going on three years. Mr. Speaker, I've never seen him let his personal beliefs get in the way of conducting himself appropriately in his performance as a minister.

Mr. Speaker, again I would ask the members opposite to be respectful of the fact there's a diverse array of opinions on both sides of this House on a number of issues, Mr. Speaker. But the position of this government is very clear. Abortion is legal in Canada, Mr. Speaker. We provide those services in this province.

And back to the Mifegymiso, Mr. Speaker, a drug that's relatively new in the country, Mr. Speaker, it's approved. It's in the formulary and as far as who pays for it, Mr. Speaker, it's under review as I had said.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, since it looks like we've got the Minister of Health today, I have some questions for him as well. There are serious questions that Saskatchewan people are asking. And they're asking because they don't want to see us go backwards when it comes to reproductive rights in this province. In the article released last night, the Health minister said he's somewhere in the middle when it comes to reproductive health. So my question to the minister: how exactly does one find themselves in the middle of supporting reproductive rights or not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the reporter asked me the question. I gave him an honest answer. That's how I do feel. I am supportive of reproductive rights in this province, Mr. Speaker, and the fact of the matter is this is a moot point. This has been settled a long time ago by a Supreme Court of Canada decision, Mr. Speaker. The position of this government is that we will uphold the law of this country, Mr. Speaker. Those services are legal. They are provided in this country.

I will repeat, Mr. Speaker, for about the fifth time I believe, the only issue that's left to be determined right now is there was a request for a review to look at whether Mifegymiso would be provided universal coverage so that tax dollars would pay the entire cost of it, Mr. Speaker. There's a number of things to consider in making that decision. We've asked the ministry officials to do a review, Mr. Speaker. When that review's done we will make an informed decision.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If he's supportive of reproductive rights, why did he say that he's somewhere in the middle, in an article just yesterday? Please clarify for the people of this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure how much more clear I can make it. Mr. Speaker, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled on reproductive rights a long time ago. This government's position is clear. We support that. We respect the law of the land.

We provide those services and, Mr. Speaker, I support that position. Absolutely I do.

Mr. Speaker. Again I would repeat, when it comes to the issue of the pharmaceutical, Mr. Speaker, Mifegymiso, it went on the formulary, I believe it would be about a year and a half or so ago after Health Canada approved it. Mr. Speaker, the medical students made a compelling case. There's pros and cons to any drug that we consider providing universal coverage for, Mr. Speaker, very simply, like in the case of the HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] medication that we approved a little over a year ago for universal coverage; others that we haven't, Mr. Speaker.

It's a question of, do we want valuable tax dollars paying for a particular pharmaceutical? In which case often that lets private drug companies not make that payment anymore, Mr. Speaker. There is access. Members opposite are saying access. There is also access through a number of other programs, including an emergency assistance program.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the government's position is clear, then I'll ask the Minister of Rural and Remote Health to clarify what his position is in terms of what he sees his professional capacity as doing as the minister here. We have a quote: "I'll continue to do what I can in my professional capacity." I'll ask him once again: what exactly is he planning to do in his professional capacity as minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, all of us on this side of the House will be following the policy of this government and the law of the nation of Canada. Mr. Speaker, what we are discussing here is the balance of personal beliefs in our caucus, Mr. Speaker — and in fairness in the members opposite's caucus as well — in balancing that with our professional duty to represent all of the people as MLAs in our constituencies, Mr. Speaker, our professional duty as ministers of the Crown to represent all of the people relative to our file, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the case of both of these ministers and other ministers in this cabinet, I would ask the people to reflect on their service, Mr. Speaker, to reflect on their professional service of representing all of the diverse opinions we have, not only in our caucus or in this House, Mr. Speaker, but in our communities in this province and across the nation, Mr. Speaker.

These ministers have done very well in ensuring in their professional capacity as ministers, Mr. Speaker, that they continue to represent the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to support the policy of this government and the laws of the nation of Canada.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 136, *The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act, 2018* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill, and that the bill be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 136, and that the bill be now read a third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading. I recognize the minister.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 136 — *The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act, 2018*

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 136 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Third reading of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answer to question no. 75.

The Speaker: — Ordered question 75.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very pleased to stand in my place today, and I thank the members of my caucus for allowing the opportunity to stand today and for giving me the opportunity to stand today as an Indigenous member of the Assembly to speak about a very important issue.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, Saskatchewan has had a lot of challenges over the number of years. And I want to especially thank my caucus colleagues for giving me the opportunity, as a member of their caucus, to get up and speak about specific issues as it pertains to Indigenous people throughout Saskatchewan, and of course throughout Canada. There are many issues that we could've brought forward, Mr. Speaker. This particular matter came forward as a priority with our caucus, and I want to again recognize their incredible and gracious support for giving me the forum and the floor today to speak about the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the document itself is really a very well-written document and it's a document that's not all that long, Mr. Speaker. I think there are 11 pages in total. And I have extra copies available. If any of the members of the Sask Party wish a copy of the declaration, I can certainly make it available to them. While I'm making it available to them, Mr. Speaker, I want to also point out to them that they must read it and they must understand it with a good intent, with a good heart, and some really strong intelligence, as it pertains to what the document is trying to do.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in Canada we enjoy a rich history as a nation of nations, of nations of all people in building this great country. We all know that the history and the effect of a treaty agreement signed on behalf of the people of Canada and the First Nations people and the Inuit are some of the agreements that today many of the First Nations cling onto as an agreement that should be honoured, Mr. Speaker.

The Indigenous people gave up quite a bit, Mr. Speaker, if I can use that phrase, to be able to achieve peace and harmony within Canada. The Fathers of Confederation of Canada, as we built Canada, they negotiated these agreements with the First Nations people, Mr. Speaker. Today there are a number of groups that wish to be recognized as Indigenous as well. The Métis continue struggling for that recognition. Many of the non-status Indian peoples throughout the land also struggle for that recognition.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as the Fathers of Confederation, if you wish to call them that, when they began sitting down and negotiating with many of the First Nations and tribes throughout Canada, they sat and they had some very, very long discussions. And on behalf of Canadians, Mr. Speaker, the federal government signed these agreements where the First Nations would relinquish lands and they would relinquish a lot of assets that they enjoyed before in the name of building a great nation.

So many times I hear throughout my travels, why should we be bound by agreements signed 150 years ago or 200 years ago? Because, Mr. Speaker, that was the basis and the genesis of creating Canada. And many of the First Nations leaders at the time done it in good faith. And, Mr. Speaker, the First Nations and Indigenous peoples of this land gave up a lot. They gave up a lot in the name of creating the country called Canada, and that's one of the reasons why you hear many First Nations and you will

see them on a continual basis assert their treaty rights, Mr. Speaker. Because in those rights they were bound, the Canadian government was bound by a contract to these treaties.

Now many people decry First Nations treaty rights, Mr. Speaker. We hear it all the time. And now they are beginning to decry the Métis rights agenda as we're beginning to see some of the strength and some of the organization happening within the Métis Nation. Now, Mr. Speaker, we should not decry those rights, Mr. Speaker, because the nation formed agreements on those rights. They formed a partnership with the Indigenous people based on those rights, Mr. Speaker, based on agreement called a treaty.

Now when we have a treaty with Russia or with any other threatening country in the name of peace, we respect those treaties. Well the same goes for our domestic treaties, Mr. Speaker, as we make treaty with the First Nations — and we hope one of these days with the Métis people, Mr. Speaker — that it's important to respect those treaties. And that's the important point I would make at this day, that in order for us to respect the importance of treaty rights when it comes to the First Nations people, and hopefully one of these days the Métis, we have to understand the context of how we got here to this day.

And, Mr. Speaker, I hear throughout my travels many, many people. Again I will reiterate the point that they would say, you know, why should we be bound to the agreements that were signed 150 or 200 years ago? And, Mr. Speaker, we also know that many people out there complain. They complain about the tax-free status of many First Nations people, and they shouldn't, Mr. Speaker. That was what they negotiated in good faith with the Government of Canada. That is the basis of how Canada came into being.

And let us not forget, Mr. Speaker, that we also had a war that . . . in which Canada was about to be annexed by the Americans, Mr. Speaker. And once again we stood together, shoulder to shoulder, and we resisted that particular battle and Canada remained intact. And Canada remains very definitive in its statement as a country over the many, many hundreds of years that we have collaborated between the First Nations, the Métis, and of course the new Canadians.

[11:00]

And when you hear people talk about trying to get rid of the treaty rights, Mr. Speaker, get rid of these treaty agreements, well I can tell you that many First Nations people would say, if that's the case, if we had to change what we gave up to what we enjoy today, then perhaps we should look at what they would like to have happen. And that's to start all over, start a brand new series of negotiations.

And that's exactly what is really what the UN [United Nations] declaration speaks about, Mr. Speaker. It recognizes the fact that many Indigenous people gave up so much to become part of Canada. And yet these agreements, binding and as solid as they are, Mr. Speaker, they have been watered down and weakened over the years by attitudes such as that. And we need not be guided by the history of what was done, Mr. Speaker, but we should be guided by the formality and the technicality and the legality of these treaty rights and these treaty agreements designed and supported by the Government of Canada on behalf

of Canadians, all new Canadians that received land grants and became the basis of their five or sixth or seventh generation farm, Mr. Speaker. The Government of Canada signed these treaty agreements on your behalf so you can enjoy land ownership today with the blessing of many First Nations leaders of the past, Mr. Speaker. And that's the whole notion of how the Canadian government negotiated these treaties.

So now we fast-forward to 2019. There are many of the opinion, well, the First Nations don't pay taxes; we should get rid of that agreement. But it was negotiated in solid good faith many years ago, so that the resources and opportunity for land ownership is available for many people in Saskatchewan to enjoy.

Our First Nations forefathers saw that opportunity to share the land, Mr. Speaker, and they shared the land. Now you're not going around saying, okay now that we have the land, we then turn around now and take away every other right we negotiated through the treaty agreement. And people may not think that's important, Mr. Speaker, but many people have that opinion today.

And I've heard many people say, as we visited on some of the places . . . and I dare say, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan, it's a great province with some great people, and those people expressing that negative opinion about treaty rights are in the minority. They are a very small group that persistently and consistently say that. And I give credit to the people of Saskatchewan for understanding what the treaty rights are all about and really respecting how Canada was established many, many years ago.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I've only got a short bit of time on the UN declaration. We spoke about the history. We spoke about the need to establish new tables and new opportunities to discuss where the Indigenous people would sit today as it pertains to the social and economic fabric of our country.

It is a question of economic and social justice, Mr. Speaker. We've long maintained that. And we've also tried to explain to the people of Saskatchewan as you look at the UN declaration on Indigenous rights, Mr. Speaker, that from the economic perspective, this is a \$90 billion opportunity to embrace the Indigenous peoples' right to enjoy life, the freedom of choice in terms of education, the access to affordability when it comes to housing and health care. These are basic human needs, Mr. Speaker, that they've negotiated and that we've seen watered down over time.

And I think when people talk about how we move forward, Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that we must be at the table as a federal government. The federal government must move forward to create a table where the Indigenous leaders, Mr. Speaker, and the provinces must be at those tables to negotiate what we think is a time for reflection of how the Indigenous people have fared thus far as a result of signing these agreements. And, Mr. Speaker, you can see that there has been great sacrifice being paid by the Indigenous people through our history, and it continues, unless we reassert ourselves to negotiating tables such as this.

So as the UN has a declaration of Indigenous rights, Mr. Speaker, I would challenge the members opposite to read the document, as I have, to try and understand the document from a humanity

perspective and from a fairness perspective, Mr. Speaker, not so much from a legal perspective nor a political perspective.

It is important that we point out that the provinces have to be at the table, Mr. Speaker, with the Indigenous leaders and the federal government, and once and for all, that we embrace the rights of the Indigenous people and the duty that we have as a province to engage them in a new deal, in a new round of discussion and talks on how we can strengthen our Indigenous communities right across this great, great country.

And, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan can be part of that process. I would dare say that the caucus on this end of the Assembly, the NDP [New Democratic Party] caucus are in support of those tables and are in support of us really working closely with the Indigenous communities to make sure that they enjoy their rightful place, that they have the right, as many people say, in the pursuit of liberty, good health, good future for their children, and of course to be secure, Mr. Speaker.

The document itself has a lot of really solid language, Mr. Speaker. It talks about everything, from the rights to education. It talks about the rights to enjoying a safe community. It talks about the rights of the disabled community, the rights of the elderly. These are some of the things that are basic human rights.

So we needn't get mixed up in the whole notion that the context that . . . Some people have a negative context towards treaty rights, but then they stop when we talk about human rights. Well, Mr. Speaker, these are one and the same. These are the treaty negotiations that resulted in one thing, and that is to treat all humans with a sense of dignity, pride, and allow them to become self-reliant people.

And on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, the greatest gift that our caucus can afford the Indigenous people is a total sense of, in my own words, Mr. Speaker, a total sense of independence. That they need not come to the government for anything anymore in the future because we have given them what they negotiated in the treaty — a right to flourish, a right to be successful.

And again I'll quote my current mayor, Mr. Speaker. In northern Saskatchewan we see some of the challenges in the Indigenous community because we live there. And, Mr. Speaker, our mayor made a really fine statement one day when he said, this is not an issue of us surviving; we have to turn the corner to begin to thrive, not just to survive.

And that is the fundamental point, Mr. Speaker, that when we sit here and talk about the UN declaration on Indigenous rights, we have seen failure after failure. Yet we see court- after court-imposed rulings around duty to consult, duty to accommodate, and, Mr. Speaker, nobody respects that process. And that's why it's important that we begin to talk about the UN declaration because nobody respects the rule of law when it comes to Indigenous people, and that has got to stop.

Everywhere we go, everywhere we go, Mr. Speaker, we see resources hauled out of our land, and yet we see the resulting challenge socio-economically as we struggle with youth suicide, as we struggle with high unemployment, as we struggle with barely accessing our land. And, Mr. Speaker, this has been continuing on for a number of years and continues in 2019. So

enough is enough. Let us get real on some of these processes. And this is why, Mr. Speaker, I think we have to have a serious discussion and begin to set those tables of negotiation.

Read the document. It's a great document. It's a great start to forging a peaceful, respectful, intelligent process. It starts the process to make sure we respect our agreements with Indigenous people. So therefore I move:

That this Assembly supports the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

And, Mr. Speaker, I so present.

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

That this Assembly supports the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour for me to rise in the House today and join in on this very, very important debate. As for today's motion, it's important to note that the UN declaration is not legally binding, and it is written for the international community. Because of that and its general nature, it does not take into account Canada's constitution or Saskatchewan's unique history, including our treaties.

Mr. Speaker, we respect that our relationship with First Nations and Métis people is governed by treaties. We recognize that this bond has created strong relationships between our Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, and that more work can be done in providing opportunities for all. Mr. Speaker, we recognize the need for Indigenous communities to have every opportunity available, and that revenue sharing is very important for municipalities to be sustainable.

Mr. Speaker, back in 2007 the sharing breakdown for La Ronge was only 642,000. In 2018-19 that number was increased by 157 per cent to 1.6 million. In Creighton, there was an increase from 452,500 in 2007 to 1 million in 2018-19 fiscal year, which works out to be a 140 per cent increase. In Air Ronge, their revenue sharing was only 322,500 but has increased by 186 per cent to 932,000.

Mr. Speaker, in the last 11 years in government, the NDP only provided the North with roughly 67 million in revenue sharing. In our last 11 years, we have provided the North with 182 million. This is a 172 per cent increase.

Mr. Speaker, we firmly believe in providing great opportunity for all of our students across Saskatchewan who are interested in career training. In the 2019-20 budget, funding was provided for both adult basic education and skills training allocation to the following institutions: 6.083 million for Northlands College, 3.2 million to Dumont Technical Institute, 4.351 million to SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies], for a total of 13.643 million towards these institutions.

In 2018 Indigenous employment accounted for 31 per cent of

Saskatchewan's forestry sector, which is by far the highest proportion in any province, and we are proud of their contributions. Of this 31 per cent, 1,300 Indigenous people were directly employed in the forestry sector and 1,600 Indigenous people held jobs in forestry-supported industries. Twenty-eight per cent of Saskatchewan's timber harvest is allocated to Indigenous businesses as well, which is the highest proportion in any province in Canada.

Saskatchewan has the largest 100 per cent owned and operated First Nations saw mill in Canada, NorSask Forest Products, and uses dozens of Indigenous contractors for road construction, timber harvesting, trucking, and reforestation activities.

Mr. Speaker, another sector that is important to this side of the House is the oil and gas sector. The oil and gas industry employed 2,000 Indigenous people in Saskatchewan in 2018, which accounted for a 9 per cent share of employment. We can proudly state that our mining sector in northern Saskatchewan is one of the largest employers of Indigenous peoples in Canada. That accounts for 2,866 employees, of which 41 per cent are Indigenous.

Mining and mill operators in the North have also established benefit agreements within their northern communities, providing an opportunity for industry and communities to strengthen their long-standing relationships and shaping them into mutually beneficial partnerships.

Mr. Speaker, the safety and security of our northern communities, and communities all across the province for that matter, is a serious concern for this government. In the 2019 budget, our government announced an investment of 57.3 million to our northern highways. This includes upgrades to Highway 135 south of Pelican Narrows and completing an upgrade to Highway 155 north of Green Lake. Since 2008 we have invested over 568 million in northern infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, we also have made efforts in expanding cell and internet service in the North. In March 2019 SaskTel announced the completion of upgrades to 25 Indigenous and northern communities, upgrading internet service that is now two times faster than the previous service. This speed and connection will help areas like local businesses and schools thrive.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, SaskTel's wireless network extends to 99 per cent of the population. This includes over 800 cellular sites and covers more of the province than any other wireless carrier. These investments improve the connection and safety for so many communities. Thanks to the efforts of SaskTel, SaskPower, and Cameco in 2016, a three-year project was completed to rebuild the backhaul network in northeastern Saskatchewan. The completion of this project significantly increased the bandwidth availability throughout the region, bringing better high-speed internet access to households and small businesses in northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes the work that the United Nations has done for our world. But this declaration is very general and is written for an international community. Our constitution and the needs of the people in our province need to

be considered first.

Our government does take pride in the opportunities that have been created for the First Nations and Métis populations. But what is more important is the steps we are taking to build strong relationships and grow the province as a whole.

We understand that there is more work to be done in terms of employment. In 2018 there were 10,400 more First Nations and Métis employed in Saskatchewan than during the NDP's last year in office. This reflects a 28.6 per cent increase in jobs since 2007. Also under the NDP, there we saw one of the highest Indigenous unemployment rates in our province's history: 19.4 per cent of Aboriginal people and 29 per cent of First Nations peoples were unemployed in March 2006. Again, Mr. Speaker, we understand that there is more work to do and that our numbers can improve, but our government is committed to building on the current opportunities we have created in supporting those communities.

Mr. Speaker, we commend the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and those survivors who courageously came forward to share their stories. Our government's plan for growth, along with several inter-ministry strategies, align with many of the TRC's [Truth and Reconciliation Commission] Calls to Action focusing on securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. Twenty-six of 34 of the recommendations directed at the provinces are already being supported by a number of initiatives across various ministries, and we are also working on five actions that are not directed at the provinces.

We will continue to build on past successes, like teaching First Nations and Métis histories in school, being leaders in treaty education, as well as continuing our work with a joint task force to improve education and employment outcomes for First Nations people.

Mr. Speaker, in response to declarations made by the United Nations, various governments have either adopted their declarations, implemented principles, or have created their own legislation. We will continue to work on our relations with our First Nations and Indigenous neighbours, but we must have their best interests and consider all of their consultation on the matter.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we must understand that the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is non-binding. It is general and meant for a global community. We must work with our First Nations and Métis partners to continue strengthening our relationships and understand that the declaration does not take into account our Canadian Constitution and Saskatchewan's unique history, especially with the treaties. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise into the Assembly and speak to this motion today. It's an important motion. And I think when it comes to United Nations declarations, they're declarations that are guides for all nations to consider how they implement their laws, how they pass laws, and certainly how they recognize the self-determination of Indigenous peoples. In particular, this particular declaration, the United Nations Declaration on the

Rights of Indigenous Peoples, is very clear in terms of recognizing Indigenous peoples' rights in a number of areas, and certainly in health, in education, but in law, Mr. Speaker, in terms of self-determination.

And this is work that in a colonial setting, in a settler-government kind of setting, it's a very, very difficult piece of work, Mr. Speaker. And it's one that will provide challenges as we go forward in strengthening the relationships with the First Nations and Indigenous people here in Canada.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was published a few years ago in 2015. We all know there are Calls to Action in that document, and it struck me, as I was reviewing this, how much the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is woven into the Calls to Action for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Of the 94 Calls to Action, 15 of them specifically mention the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. And as I went through those, Mr. Speaker, I noted that five of them are actually ones that are within the purview of this provincial government.

And the member who spoke, member opposite who spoke just now, said they have made efforts on many of these Calls to Action. I would like him to table a report of those efforts that have been made, so that we can see exactly what this government is doing and what they think they're doing in relation to the Calls to Action. So certainly would like to see that member table that information and share with the Assembly, share with the people of Saskatchewan their views on how they're meeting these Calls to Action. I haven't seen that, Mr. Speaker, and I don't think I've seen a demonstration of those many Calls to Action that he's alleging that the government is looking at. So it would be helpful to have that information.

Before I get into those Calls to Action, Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge that I come from a settler family. I am a settler here in this territory. As you know, Mr. Speaker, before it was called Saskatchewan, it was occupied by First Nations people. And our relationship and my presence in this province is entirely dependent on the treaty relationship that was established.

And my colleague from the North articulated very well what the First Nations were looking at when they decided to cede their territory and what they bargained for in the treaty relationship. And I think looking back in the last 125 years — this was the 1870s — it was a tough bargain for those chiefs, for their people. The buffalo were disappearing. They were starving, and they knew that they needed to get some support for their people so that they could continue to survive.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that struggle continues today when we look at poverty rates for First Nations children, when we look at the rates that they are put in care, the rates that they are in conflict with the criminal justice system. So I don't think our efforts have been much to cheer about, Mr. Speaker, but I am ever thankful for the treaty relationship because of what it afforded my grandfather when he came to start his life here in Saskatchewan.

And of course, you know, I can go back to the 1600s, Mr. Speaker, when my mother's ancestors — I'm 14th generation on that side — and they had treaties of peace and friendship. The

French settlers from France had strong relationships with the First Nations peoples and indeed depended on them for their survival.

When my grandmother's family came from England, they settled in Nova Scotia where there were the Mi'kmaq people. And again, the stories of survival and the dependence on First Nations' help was incredibly important, and again part of the reason why I'm able to be here standing on my feet today. Of course my dad's Irish-Scottish family, the same story when they came to Nova Scotia.

So there's so much that I have to be thankful for the treaty relationship. And I was fortunate in my professional career, before entering politics, to have worked on the 1992 Treaty Land Entitlement Settlement Agreement that was signed here in Saskatchewan. And that was a hard fought battle. We were behind, as a settler government, over 100 years in terms of our obligations for the treaty, for giving the First Nations the land that they were actually promised back at the signing of the treaty.

And the First Nations people are patient, but I do have to give credit to Chief Roland Crowe who stood up to Premier Romanow. And basically it came down to the eleventh hour, Mr. Speaker, here in this building. And former Premier Romanow tells a great story of how Roland Crowe basically laid it down for him and was not going to back down, and the premier recognized that. And that's the signing of the 1992 framework agreement. And I was really fortunate to be able to work in that area and to actually be part of the team that added over another million acres of land to official reserve status in the '90s and the 2000s, Mr. Speaker.

There are four Calls to Action I want to just mention today in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that I believe this government has a direct ability to influence or to actually create, Mr. Speaker. The first one is Call to Action 24:

We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights.

And it goes on. Mr. Speaker, the same for the lawyers in this province, call no. 27, calling on "... the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to ensure that lawyers receive appropriate ... training." And that's not one directly related to the provincial government. But the next one is no. 42:

We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to commit to the recognition and implementation of Aboriginal justice systems in a manner consistent with the Treaty and Aboriginal rights of Aboriginal peoples, the *Constitution Act, 1982*, and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

And, Mr. Speaker, those clauses in that declaration are very, very lofty indeed, and I think we have a long ways to go to get to them.

Obviously no. 43, I think, is the primary clause that touches the provincial government when it comes to this, and that's on

reconciliation. And that's the whole point of this commission, Mr. Speaker. Forty-three reads:

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

So as it relates to reconciliation, when you look at the clauses in the declaration, there are many that push us towards better action, more honest action in terms of reconciling the relationship between settlers and newcomers. Of course we're all newcomers, as far as that goes, settlers, newcomers, and the Indigenous people here in Saskatchewan.

Call no. 44, "We call upon the Government of Canada to develop a national action plan, strategies, and other concrete measures." So this is for the federal government, but again this is where I believe this government could be proactive in ensuring that the federal government is developing that action plan.

Another one that relates specifically to the province of Saskatchewan is again in training and development, and we have the Minister Responsible for Career Training. Call no. 57:

We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law, and Aboriginal-Crown relations.

Now I was in committee last night, Mr. Speaker, with SaskBuilds. And they talk about the training that they're doing on procurement, that they had trained thousands of public servants on procurement. My question is, Mr. Speaker: have these public servants received the training that's called upon in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission under call no. 47? And I think that's an important question that perhaps one of the next speakers will be able to answer.

There's a number of calls for museums and archives, and although it's focused on the federal government, I think there's room for the provincial government to act there.

And the final one that specifically relates to the declaration is no. 86, calling:

. . . upon journalism programs and media schools to require education for all students on the . . . [issue] of Aboriginal peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples . . .

Mr. Speaker, it's a lofty, lofty declaration and much to aspire to. And I think any time we can take steps as a province to make an incremental change that will pull us closer to those goals, I think is something definitely worth considering, and for that, I will support the motion that's on the floor today.

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

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is an honour to stand today and enter into this debate, a debate that is incredibly timely and very important topic. The United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is an important document in the international community.

[11:30]

Our government recognizes the significance it has internationally, but in this House, our foremost concern is to continue working towards the growth of this province and expanded opportunities for First Nations and Métis communities. Our government has made it a priority to work with First Nations communities within our province. It is our duty as members of the Legislative Assembly and as representatives to do just that — represent and work with all people of Saskatchewan.

It's no secret that our province and our country does not have the most respectful past in terms of Indigenous relations. We can all agree the measures that were used in an attempt to remove the Indigenous culture are unacceptable. Our government is working towards reconciliation.

In fact, this past January, our Premier stood in the rotunda and apologized to all victims of the Sixties Scoop. Though it can never make up for the years of suffering, it has allowed the creation of an ongoing dialogue to begin building a new foundation of trust and partnerships with First Nations people.

In 2009 the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was established. It was created to provide former students of residential schools and anyone affected in the legacy of those schools with an opportunity to share their individual experiences in a safe, culturally appropriate manner. Mr. Speaker, it took six years of gatherings, and hearings were held across the country with the residential school survivors to ensure the TRC report was thoroughly conducted. And this government took the recommendations very seriously and incorporated them into the Saskatchewan plan for growth.

The Saskatchewan plan for growth incorporates several strategies that focus on sustaining growth and opportunities for Saskatchewan people through multiple initiatives targeted to improve education, employment outcomes, as well as those engaging First Nations and Métis people in economic development. In the plan for growth, it focuses on securing a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people by specific areas like focus on improved K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] to post-secondary education for First Nation and Métis people.

Well, Mr. Speaker, let's talk about what this government has done to improve education results for First Nations and Métis people. Since 2007, direct investments in First Nations post-secondary education and students and programs across the province have increased by 71 per cent, from 26 million under the NDP to 45 million under the Saskatchewan Party. And because of this, Saskatchewan had nearly 16,300 Indigenous students enrolled in post-secondary institutes in 2018.

Perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the most promising statistic though is the employment rate of Indigenous graduates. Eighty-five per cent of graduates are employed within their field they studied. That percentage is actually higher than the employment rate for

non-Indigenous graduates. Also in this year's budget, \$24.1 million was allocated to adult basic education, with \$5.2 million going towards on-reserve programming. That is over 21 per cent of the overall adult basic education funding.

Mr. Speaker, our government has invested in Indigenous education as a priority. Is there more to do? Absolutely. Let me be clear that we are not claiming to be perfect, but we are working hard to ensure all citizens of this province are given the absolute best opportunities possible, opportunities like employment, Mr. Speaker. In 2018 Indigenous people accounted for over 31 per cent of Saskatchewan's forestry sector employment. And 28 per cent of the Saskatchewan's timber harvest was allocated to Indigenous businesses last year alone. Those are good, sustainable jobs that matter and help the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, mining is one of the province's largest industries. It was our government that launched an incentive that aims to increase the amounts of mineral exploration in Saskatchewan. This program specifically targets exploration in the Creighton-Denare Beach area. This incentive program can not only uncover new potential revenue for the provincial coffers, but it can also provide valuable employment for northern residents. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the mining sector in Saskatchewan is one of the largest employers of Indigenous people in Canada. In fact, the mining and the oil and gas sectors in Saskatchewan employ 2,000 hard-working Indigenous people in 2018.

Mr. Speaker, our government is fully supportive, giving each and every citizen of this province the respect and opportunities they need to succeed. That is why we on this side of the House are working hard. Since we were elected in 2007, we have been working with all residents of Saskatchewan to make sure this province an even better place to call home.

The Leader of the Opposition likes to say Saskatchewan is the best place to be a kid. For once, Mr. Speaker, I agree with him. Saskatchewan is the best place to be a kid, but it wasn't back when the NDP were in government. It was in April 2000, the NDP were still in government when the Children's Advocate identified "a serious gap and a major disconnect" in the way children welfare services were being provided by the NDP. That is completely shameful. The NDP completely ignored and disregarded the needs of our most vulnerable, Mr. Speaker, our children.

On March 15th the Saskatoon Tribal Council and our government officially signed a new Delegation Agreement, a Children and Families Reconciliation Partnership Agreement and First Contact Panel Protocol. These documents will provide better outcomes for First Nations children in care.

The partnership agreement identifies a number of short-term and long-term priorities like reviewing plans for the Saskatoon Tribal Council's First Nations children and youth in care to ensure they support connections to culture, language, identity, and community; establishing a joint child welfare innovation committee to improve child and family services; and working to keep First Nations mothers and their newborns together through better prenatal prevention and support.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to quote Saskatoon Tribal Council Chief

Mark Arcand: "The signing of this reconciliation partnership agreement signifies a new era in the advancement of the reconciliation process where we all work to put children first." That is what we on this side of the House are working hard to do — put children first — by strengthening programs, initiatives for First Nations and Métis families.

Mr. Speaker, there's far, far too many First Nations and Métis children in care. It is something that our government has made a priority to try to rectify. We are working hard to create better supports for networks for children and caregivers to ensure no child is left behind.

That is why the Minister of Social Services has focused on strengthening the support in maintaining connections to the family and culture by working in Saskatchewan Foster Families Association to recruit and maintain First Nations and Métis foster families. Additionally non-Aboriginal foster families will receive cultural training to provide them with better understanding of the children's culture. In this year's budget, \$4.5 million will go to the Saskatchewan Foster Families Association.

In comparison, Mr. Speaker, while the NDP were in power between 1998 and 2007, at any given time there could be 21 kids could be living in one single foster family home. Those are the conditions that are completely unacceptable, and we on this side of this House are working hard to make sure that never happens again.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, we are not ignoring UNDRIP [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples]. We recognize that it has some value but is drafted for the international community and not for the Saskatchewan context. We realize there are important matters, issues for the First Nation and Métis communities that need our attention right here at home. In Saskatchewan, we as legislators have the ability and a duty to making sure this province is the most inclusive and safe place for everybody.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the motion put forward by the members opposite.

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

Mr. McCall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it was a bit of a twist ending on the member's speech there in terms of, you know, what I thought was in the main a fairly good speech. But that it comes around to not supporting the motion, not supporting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples comes as a bit of a surprise, Mr. Speaker, because this House has voted on a related matter previously, and of course, I'm talking about the vote that we had concerning the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, wherein the House voted unanimously on November 24th, 2016 to implement all the TRC recommendations related to the provincial government. And of course, Mr. Speaker, recommendation no. 43 from the Calls to Action states, "We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation."

So I guess, Mr. Speaker, I know that this a 75-minute debate and

there's not a vote coming at the end of this. But I guess, Mr. Speaker, we have our doubts at times where the members opposite stand on issues related to Indigenous people. And for every good action, and certainly the member that I'm following in this debate referenced the agreement on child welfare with the Saskatoon Tribal Council between this government and tribal Chief Arcand. You know, we think that's a great thing, Mr. Speaker. We want to see more of it. But in terms of the sort of, you know, the . . . I don't know, how would you characterize this? You know, doublespeak or, you know . . .

An Hon. Member: — Both sides of the mouth.

Mr. McCall: — Both sides of the mouth, Mr. Speaker. I don't want to get too far down that road of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But in terms of trying to keep track of the positions of members opposite when it comes to the importance and the undertakings that are made to Indigenous people, Mr. Speaker, I'd again offer for folks the fact that we have voted to again endorse the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and in particular, recommendation no. 43 where again, "We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* as the framework for reconciliation."

So I don't know if the member wants to clarify what he was saying at the end of his remarks, or if the member from Kelvington-Wadena wants to clarify where he was heading with, you know, very gingerly setting out the call as international and non-binding. And all of that is true, Mr. Speaker, but this House has already had an opportunity to weigh in on whether or not we support the Calls to Action for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and this House decided unanimously, Mr. Speaker, that that support was here. And I thought was a good day for the province because, again I support the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Mr. Speaker. I think they've pointed us in the direction that we need to go in this province if we're to succeed in realizing the initial vision of the treaties, Mr. Speaker.

And I say that, standing here on Treaty 4 territory. It'll be 145 years this fall, Mr. Speaker, the anniversary of that signing, in September at Fort Qu'Appelle. I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you'll likely be there in attendance at various of the celebrations as you often are.

And again, it's important to know that. Do we mean our vote? Do we stand by our vote as an Assembly? And again we voted unanimously, Mr. Speaker, in favour of the Calls to Action for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But we see some backsliding on that, which I guess is part of the point of why we're here today.

We should be using these things as a road map to make progress, Mr. Speaker, instead of, you know, trying to figure out, does the government really support it or does it not, Mr. Speaker. Like enough with the head scratching. Let's get on with making the progress. Let's put that table together, bring the folks around the table, and make that progress, Mr. Speaker, because it is literally a matter of life and death for too many in this province, Mr. Speaker, whether we get that right or not.

So, Mr. Speaker, in terms of employment, in terms of economy, in terms of education, in terms of health care, in terms of child welfare, you know, surely we can know our mind and stand by the fact that what was decided as unanimously supported in this Chamber is in fact the case. So, Mr. Speaker, again, it's discouraging to hear the demure that goes on or the changing of minds in terms of whether or not this is actually something that we support in this House, and that we spend time with that as opposed to actually making progress on the file, Mr. Speaker.

[11:45]

Because again, here we are in Treaty 4 territory. One hundred and forty-five years ago they smoked pipe, they joined together in the sight of Creator, Mr. Speaker, to try and plot that new way forward, to make those treaties, Mr. Speaker. And those treaties did not envision a time when Indigenous people would live in poverty in their own land in numbers that are unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. They did not envision unemployment, particularly on reserve and in our inner cities, that is unacceptable, Mr. Speaker. They did not envision health status that is far, far below what it should be, Mr. Speaker. They did not envision the measure of inequality that is far too often evident all around us these days, Mr. Speaker.

So in terms of if we're serious about reconciliation, Mr. Speaker, if we're serious about responding to the Calls to Action, if we're serious to, you know, stand by our vote that we cast in November of 2016, Mr. Speaker, surely that's not what we're up for debate here, Mr. Speaker. That shouldn't be the question. The question should be how do we realize these things, Mr. Speaker? How do we make them happen? How do we get that table together to bring all the partners so that we have that road map being realized, Mr. Speaker?

Pointing that way to the peace, the mutually beneficial co-existence, Mr. Speaker, that was envisioned by those treaties, Mr. Speaker, that is what we need to seize the opportunity for. And for far too long, that has eluded us as a province, Mr. Speaker, which is, you know, it's beyond frustrating, Mr. Speaker. Like how many wake-up calls do we need? There's a Cree expression, Mr. Speaker. It's waniskâ. It's wake up. And we've got to wake up in this province, Mr. Speaker.

You know, if we're going to spend our time deciding whether or not, you know, people can take us as being as good as our vote, Mr. Speaker, instead of making progress, Mr. Speaker, instead of realizing . . . You know, young Roselin Stonechild was here today, you know, the âyîsiyîniwask. You know, that's who we're trying to do these things for, Mr. Speaker. That's who we're either failing or succeeding for, Mr. Speaker.

And surely to goodness we can succeed and surely to goodness we can recognize the good work that has been done by people like Chief Justice or Justice Sinclair and the folks with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the blood, sweat, tears, and suffering that they've poured into that work, Mr. Speaker, to make it happen. Surely that shouldn't be in question.

But I am sad to say that, you know, again if you can take people at their word in this Assembly, and I know we certainly can, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's apparently up for further debate. And that's not just disappointing, Mr. Speaker. That's something that

was decided. We should be talking about how we make these things happen, not whether or not, you know, is it this debate that matters or is it the vote that you had in November of 2016, Mr. Speaker. That shouldn't be the thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I say enough of that. I say let's get on with it. Let's waniskâ, Mr. Speaker. Let's make that progress. Because it's not just us in this Assembly that are at stake, Mr. Speaker, or who's going to have to listen to what speech, Mr. Speaker. There are lives in the balance. There are lives in the balance, Mr. Speaker, so let's take up that road map. Let's finally realize that journey together to that better place, Mr. Speaker. êkosi.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Good morning. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to have the opportunity to speak to this motion. And I think it's important to talk about some of the things we've had the opportunity to do in partnership with Indigenous people in Saskatchewan. I believe we've had a strong record, a very strong record of supporting and working with the First Nation and Métis people of our great province of Saskatchewan, and one that I'm quite proud of.

Our government has been investing in First Nation and Métis organizations, as well as northern supports. Specifically the 2019-20 budget commits approximately 211 million for First Nation and Métis organizations. Mr. Speaker, this is such an important investment to support the wonderful work of Saskatchewan's First Nations and Métis organizations.

Our government invests and supports First Nations and northern initiatives throughout many of our ministries. One of the ways that our government has been investing in our Indigenous peoples is through post-secondary education. In the 2019-20 budget the Ministry of Advanced Education will be investing 23 million in Indigenous post-secondary institutions and programs. Since 2007-08 direct investment in Indigenous post-secondary education institutions and programs across Saskatchewan has increased by 71 per cent. In 2019-20 Northlands College received over 6 million. Dumont Technical Institute received 3.2 million, and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, received four point three hundred and fifty-one million.

So, Mr. Speaker, there has been an increase of Indigenous students enrolling at Saskatchewan's post-secondary institutions across the province. In fact in 2018-19 there were nearly 16,300 students enrolled, which is a 34 per cent increase since '07-08.

And I'm also happy to report that in a recent *Maclean's* article that ranked universities across Canada, the University of Regina ranked second among comprehensive institutions for promoting Indigenous visibility, and the University of Saskatchewan was ranked number one. Not only are more Indigenous students enrolling in post-secondary institutions and feeling more welcome in their programs, but more are receiving credentials. When we combine our province's two universities and Sask Polytechnic, there has been a 35 per cent increase of credentials awarded.

When looking province-wide, there has been a 49 per cent increase, and as a result there has been a 48 per cent increase in

the number of Indigenous graduates in the provincial labour market that have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. And that means that there's been an increase of over 10,000 Indigenous students receiving a credential and entering the labour market since 2007, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The employment rate for Indigenous graduates with a degree is actually higher than the employment rate for non-Indigenous students, which is something to be very proud of.

And in health, our government has increased funding by over 45 per cent since 2007 in operating funding to the former Athabasca regional health authority. We have increased operating funding to the former Keewatin Regional Health Authority by over 57 per cent since '07, and increased operating funding for the former Mamawetan Regional Health Authority by 83 per cent since 2007.

Today our budgets are focusing on providing mental health supports to those who need it in the North. Our government invested 11.4 million in targeted mental health services, which include the following investments for the North: 1.2 million for improved mental health and addiction services for children and youth; 400,000 for expanding addiction services in Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan; almost 88,000 for a mental health capacity-building pilot project in Sandy Bay; and \$500,000 for suicide prevention initiative in La Ronge and Meadow Lake.

Community recovery teams were introduced in North Battleford and Prince Albert to provide more intensive supports for people living with complex persistent mental health challenges. And in this budget our government built on the previous years' investments. It included a total funding increase of over 29 million for targeted mental health and addictions.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this investment includes an additional 250,000 for a suicide prevention initiative in Buffalo Narrows and 300,000 for 24-7 nursing support to the detox facility in La Ronge. This funding will significantly improve the La Ronge detox centre's ability to provide treatments to individuals who are detoxing from opioids, crystal meth, and other substances.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's a further 1.13 million to improve access for children and youth mental health, some of which will be dedicated to the North, and an additional 13.7 million to support our new Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford.

Our government has also invested in other areas of health that provide support to First Nations in the North. And in this budget, this has included 2 million towards the construction of a new wellness and recovery centre being built by the Lac La Ronge Indian Band. This wellness centre will blend Western and traditional Indigenous approaches to healing and recovery. It will include 10 addiction treatment beds as well as a recreational facility and mini-lodges that allow clients to stay as part of a remote community program.

500,000 to continue to expand the use of medical robotic technology in northern communities; 13.3 million to northern medical services; 1.9 million for Valley Hill Youth Treatment Centre in Prince Albert; 3.2 million for Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan. Our government is providing funding for a number of initiatives in northern Saskatchewan, including 12

million to begin construction of a new long-term care facility in Meadow Lake, with capacity increased from 55 to 72 beds.

Mr. Speaker, our government has been working hard to ensure that there are services and programs for Indigenous and northern communities that need them. We're also working alongside First Nation communities to ensure the right investments are being made.

It was recently announced on March 15th that the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatoon Tribal Council officially signed agreements to work towards meaningful improvements in the lives of children, youth, and families. And the next step will be to implement a first contact panel protocol which will bring Social Services and Saskatoon Tribal Council representatives together with families involved with child and family services when developing a case plan for children.

Our government has so many programs and initiatives to strengthen services to support First Nation and Métis families. I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. We have intensive home supports where CBOs [community-based organization] provide a response to a family crisis, ensuring the personal safety of children while allowing them to remain with family or extended family. We have a Positive Parenting Program which enhances knowledge.

Our government has strengthened and aimed at maintaining connections for Indigenous children to their family and culture. Our government has invested with Saskatchewan First Nations and . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

Ms. Young: — Mr. Speaker, we've seen a lot of identity politics from the NDP. Last week if you were concerned about the economy and didn't want a carbon tax hurting your family, the NDP labelled you anti-Semitic, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant. I fear members opposite are trying to do the same today and label people.

I think there are many points in the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples we can agree on and points that need to be explored more. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is to the member for Athabasca. Do they agree with every article of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or do they have any concerns with it?

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

[12:00]

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, since the Saskatchewan Party formed government 11 years ago, they've enjoyed well over \$120 billion in revenues. Let me re-emphasize that number — \$120 billion in revenue. And what have the Aboriginal community received from this government so far? They closed down NORTEP [northern teacher education program]. They took away timber harvesting rights from the Métis communities to give it to a company from BC [British Columbia]. Indigenous people are now paying more and more property taxes on leased

lands in the North in their own backyard. Gary Tinker, a disabled champion, had to hitchhike to Regina because they shut down the bus service. He had to hitchhike here to advocate for more money. You also shut down the remote housing program that promoted home ownership.

So, Mr. Speaker, the last thing we're going to do, Mr. Speaker, is take any lessons from that party on how to make sure that there's parity, fairness, to the Indigenous people of this province.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I heard the member from Kelvington-Wadena speak at length about all this government's achievements, or his view of this government's achievements, in relation to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. And I'm wondering if, like the Minister of Environment after one year gave a report on the progress or his perceived progress on Prairie Resilience, will this member encourage the member for Government Relations to table the report on this government's progress on the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission calls?

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do appreciate the question from the member opposite. I'm just reminded, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that much has been done on this side of the House on that particular file. I know that the members . . . or the cabinet ministers are fully engaged in the process of advancing that particular issue, and I'm sure they're doing excellent work. Thank you.

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

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member from Athabasca says a lot of things in this Chamber. Conveniently, he forgets them shortly after he says them. But I'd like to go back to an article from the *Northern Pride* publication where he asserted that the biggest issue for his constituency in the 2007 election was resource revenue sharing.

Mr. Speaker, my question is to the member from Athabasca. When his former leader flip-flopped on that issue, where was he and does he still advocate for separate revenue sharing for First Nations today?

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

Mr. Belanger: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the issue around the UN declaration on Indigenous rights is for people to understand that there has to be a better deal in place for the Indigenous people. We have long maintained that is an issue of economic and social justice, Mr. Speaker. All we've seen from the conservative government, and that includes Harper and this government, has been cut after cut after cut to Indigenous programs.

They have no respect for the Indigenous people of this province, Mr. Speaker, and every time they get up and they talk about the

millions of dollars they commit to the Indigenous people, what it is, it's gaming money, Mr. Speaker. It's a gaming agreement. That's 90 per cent of their funding commitment to the First Nations people of this land, Mr. Speaker. And it's time they started telling the truth and tell people exactly what they intended is to not do anything for the Indigenous people.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On November 24th, 2016, this House voted unanimously for the following motion:

That this Assembly call upon the government to fulfill the Calls to Action in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report that pertain to the jurisdiction of the provincial government.

Mr. Speaker, as has been, you know, abundantly laid out, call no. 43 deals with supporting and using the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a framework for those Calls to Action, Mr. Speaker. And it points directly at the provincial government.

So I appreciate that the member from Saskatoon Eastview was in the Chair that day, Mr. Speaker, so in fact wasn't casting a vote, but certainly the members from Saskatchewan Rivers and Kelvington-Wadena did cast a vote. Have they changed their minds now, Mr. Speaker?

[Interjections]

Mr. McCall: — Kelvington-Wadena.

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I find it extraordinarily rich coming from the member from Elphinstone-Centre, who was the Advanced Education and Employment minister and Corrections and Public Safety minister in their government. The member from Athabasca goes on and on about what our government has been doing, and he was the minister of Northern Affairs and Community Resources, minister of Highways.

And I think all of the members on that side can really and truly appreciate the incredible work that the ministers on this side of the House have been doing in the last number of years on these particular files. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Arm River, Watrous.

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, the NDP have referred to the resource royalty structures as playing games. They've called for higher royalties. They've attacked us for simplifying the royalty structure, then go quiet for a little while when low commodity prices make people lose their jobs.

But the member for Elphinstone-Centre said, the last time they were talking about resource royalties before the 2011 election,

that there was unfinished treaty business with resource royalty sharing and this needs to be addressed. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the member from Athabasca: is your party advocating for renegotiating the treaty system with the First Nations?

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

Mr. Belanger: — Just to correct the record, Mr. Speaker, when the member says that they designed the royalty regime for Saskatchewan's resources, the answer is absolutely not. They didn't. The person that redesigned the royalty regime for Saskatchewan was our former premier, Mr. Speaker. Premier Calvert did it. He brought the oil and gas sector to this province, and the potash. And all we ask, as the official opposition, is don't mess with that formula. It was designed for you. It was working well. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? They got \$120 billion in the last 11 years.

And again I go back to the only commitment that they have made to First Nations people and the Métis organizations of this province is through gaming revenue agreements. And yet they talk about the millions and millions. Ninety per cent of their commitment to the Indigenous people of this province has been through gaming revenue, and that is a crying shame, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'll resist the temptation to ask my colleague from Arm River, you know, what the heck he's talking about in terms of, you know, the whole question of resource royalties when in fact they've said, they were preaching — what was it? — apocalypse, if we had, you know, we got a bit more from our resources in this province. And then, just right across the aisle, his colleague, you know, went and slammed him in the budget, Mr. Speaker.

But I guess my question is this, for the member from Saskatchewan Rivers: does she stand by her vote from November 2016 or has that changed now?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Hon. Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I thank the member for the question. And it's an honour and a privilege to stand here today to discuss and debate the rights of Indigenous people and all the good initiatives brought forth by our government, in partnership and supports with working with the First Nation and the Métis people of the province.

Our investments support the wonderful work of Saskatchewan, the First Nation and the Métis organizations. And our relationship is built on treaties and we respect and honour them. Our government is also supportive of the UN and the work that they do. However, the rights of the Indigenous people was written for the international community and does not take into account Canada's treaties.

Now our government's plan for growth, along with several inter-ministry strategies, align with many of the Truth and Reconciliation's Calls to Action. And currently 26 of the 34

recommendations . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The member's time has expired. I recognize the member from Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — And unfortunately time is expired for the 75-minute debate.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Swift Current.

Motion No. 3 — Prairie Resilience Climate Change Strategy

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's an honour to rise in the Assembly today to talk a little bit about our government's plan to address climate change. And it's been a topic as of late here, our made-in-Saskatchewan plan called *Prairie Resilience*, and we'll speak about that a little bit here this afternoon.

The basis of the plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is referenced right in the title, that it is a made-in-Saskatchewan approach — not a carbon tax force-fed on us by the Trudeau federal Liberal government, but something based on our own experiences here in Saskatchewan, something that's not new to our province. As any of us can attest to, I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the 100-plus years of our province's history, we have managed to adapt to a number of changes in our province, whether it is with respect to changing times, our changing worldwide economy, but we've had a great opportunity to face some of these changes and challenges head on and to be able to address some of these with some solutions made here at home.

And that's what the basis of the prairie resilience plan is, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Our province is a province of natural-born innovators in our province, whether it's on the farm or in business or in professions or any other areas. We are a province of entrepreneurs and problem solvers.

Let's be clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Climate change is a global challenge and our government wholeheartedly supports efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, but we must do so in an effective way and in a way that does not disadvantage one area of the country over another. And that's been an important part of what our focus has been.

If you look back at our climate change white paper from three years ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it outlined three responses that we believe that our country needs: number one, adapting to climate change because climate change is happening; number two, reducing our own emissions because we have to do our part; and number three, sharing Saskatchewan's tech and innovation around the world to help reduce global emissions because we have some of the answers homegrown right here in our province.

And we can't just pick any one of these three areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have to focus on all of them, and that's what's important about this particular strategy. We need to remember

that Saskatchewan's efforts do only affect about one-tenth of 1.6 per cent of global emissions, which doesn't stop at international borders, which is why we say that this has to be a global approach towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Our climate change strategy, Mr. Deputy Speaker, focuses on the principles of innovation and resilience and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions while still enabling our economy to be competitive. Saskatchewan is committed to doubling our renewable power up to 50 per cent of electrical generating capacity and reducing overall GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions by 40 to 45 per cent province wide by 2025 and developing an offset system that will recognize our province as a carbon sink.

We are a leader in global agriculture research in genetics, in agronomy, in zero-till technology that sequesters carbon in the soil. And I think it's important to point out, Mr. Deputy Speaker — you come from a farming community like many of us do — more than 70 per cent of our land is cultivated using a zero-till technology these days. And we are also on top of that, also reducing carbon intensity in agriculture, and this needs to be acknowledged and recognized as part of our plan.

Earlier this week, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would have seen the release of the resilience report, which has given some indication as to kind of where we stand on some of these issues and some of the targets we've set and where we're trying to get to. And in releasing our first climate resilience report — it's part of our prairie resilience strategy — it covers five key areas: natural systems, fiscal infrastructure, economic sustainability, community preparedness, and human well-being as well.

And we looked at the current status of 25 measures of resilience and of those, in this particular report, 14 of the resilience measures are classified as good and are demonstrating anticipated trends. My colleague, the member for Moosomin, had indicated some of these earlier today in members' statements. He talked about some of those indicators. For example, Saskatchewan continues to sequester significant amounts of soil organic matter, an indicator of soil productivity and carbon sequestered into our soil.

We're increasing the number of culverts on the national highway system. The member for Moosomin talked about that, how we're trying to meet a new provincial flood standard and thereby making our transportation network more resilient to extreme weather events. And we've seen those on a number of occasions. In my particular area, in southwest Saskatchewan a little west of Swift Current, you'll recall a few years ago, due to some extreme flooding in and around the Maple Creek area, we had some massive flooding in and around Maple Creek, flooded the campground. Part of the No. 1 Highway was washed out, if you can believe it, Mr. Speaker. And that's almost hard to believe but that's what happened as a result of that.

We're also reducing the intensity of greenhouse gas emissions per unit of the GDP [gross domestic product]. This proves that our industries, Mr. Deputy Speaker, are becoming more environmentally efficient and cost effective as well. We're also increasing the area of Crown land with wildfire fuel management practices, which in turn reduces the risk of wildfires in our northern communities and in the northern part of the province.

So on top of these 14 measures, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that were classified in the good area of this report, we also had an additional seven which were classified as fair, including renewable energy sources. Efforts will continue to increase the amount of these as part of our overall electricity mix, with the goal of reaching 40 to 50 per cent of total capacity coming from renewable resources by 2030.

[12:15]

Something else that was mentioned, increasing the number of communities with active surveillance of mosquito- and tick-borne diseases, both of which are indicators of a changing climate.

And we'll continue to look at options to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from government-owned buildings, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are some exciting pilot projects that are taking place that are showing some excellent results. I had the opportunity a couple of weeks ago, Mr. Deputy Speaker, along with the Minister of Government Relations and the Deputy Premier, to have a meeting with such a company called Greenwave Innovations, which is a Saskatchewan-based company which is providing energy predictive analysis and monitoring solutions for companies.

They're doing some work with SaskTel in addition to looking at some of the government buildings that they're working on a pilot project with. And they can do as much as track the individual electrical usage, energy usage, from a single light switch. And what it does is the information they're able to gather allows them to help determine where energy is being used most effectively and perhaps not very effective at all. And as they say — this is a quote according to Greenwave — they say they're very proud to be a made-in-Saskatchewan company committed to providing the solutions that support Saskatchewan's climate change plan. And that's what we need, Mr. Speaker. We need Saskatchewan-based companies that provide some Saskatchewan-based solutions. This is all part of our climate change strategy.

Farming practices, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we can talk about that at length. How much of what our farmers are doing is helping to address climate change? Well it turns out quite a lot, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We've looked at the total amount of soil organic matter sequestered in Saskatchewan's cultivated land as a result of various farming practices, whether it's the zero-till farming that I mentioned before or a reduction in summer fallow, changes in tillage practices, the conversion of crop land, of forage. The innovative production practices plus the research and development, the R & D that has gone into agriculture has meant that over the past 20 years, sequestration rates have increased and since 2006 Saskatchewan farmers have sequestered at least 5.3 million tonnes of soil organic matter annually.

Crop rotation practices, Mr. Deputy Speaker, 2018 there was no single one crop type that made up more than 50 per cent of total cultivated area of Saskatchewan. Well why is that important, you might ask. It's because the diversification of crops, it enhances soil health. It helps manage pests and disease and manages financial risks for farmers as well.

Furthermore, the addition of pulses to crop rotations — we've

talked about that as well — helps reduce emissions through the reduced use of fertilizer. And anyone who farms now or grew up on a farm, as I did many years ago, has seen how much the agriculture sector has changed and has adapted and has become a leader, I think, when it comes to this particular file.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's so many other areas we could focus on. In addition to that, renewable energy generation capacity — I talked a little bit about that in October of 2018 — this past October SaskPower signed a new agreement with Manitoba Hydro for some additional hydroelectricity. And let's talk about what SaskPower is doing as a Crown corporation. You would have seen this past fall that they signed a 25-year power purchase agreement to see the developments of a 200 megawatt wind power facility which provide power to roughly 90,000 Saskatchewan homes. This is the project that'll be done by Potentia Renewables down in southwest Saskatchewan in and around that Assiniboia area. We expect to see a fivefold increase in wind power generating capacity in Saskatchewan in the years ahead. We also anticipate growth in solar, biomass, and geothermal generation capacity, as well as in conventional thermal generation capacity on top of that.

Mr. Speaker, SaskPower and the First Nations Power Authority signed an agreement on flare gas power generation. Solar power — Saturn Power will be building Saskatchewan's first utility-scale solar project just east of Swift Current.

I want to talk to you on a couple of other areas, Mr. Deputy Speaker, carbon capture, utilization, and storage. Boundary dam 3 is globally recognized as the world's first commercially viable, post-combustion carbon capture and utilization storage project, fully integrated within a coal-fired power plant. It captures 90 per cent of CO₂ emissions, up to 1 million tonnes of CO₂ annually. And our international CCS [carbon capture and storage] knowledge centre here in Regina has been working with countries across the globe, like China for example, where we can help play a role in their clean energy future for countries like China and other areas that face this challenge as well.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I didn't talk about a very important sector of our economy, the oil and gas industry, which tends to be a favourite whipping boy of the environmentalist crowd. And it's important to get on the record, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some of the significant achievements and investments that have taken place in the oil and gas sector.

The upstream oil and gas industry is the largest sector of the provincial economy accounting for 15 per cent of the total GDP, 34,000 full-time equivalent jobs. Companies have invested between 4 to \$6 billion annually and provided over a billion dollars annually to the provincial budget through royalties and various taxes and revenue streams. It's the top provincial export in nine out of the past 10 years. And we need to be so very mindful of what we do in terms of transitioning, how that impacts the upstream oil and gas industry, to help them lower GHG emissions through their sector.

And if we don't balance it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with economic growth and industrial competitiveness, this will be completely devastating to our province — massive job losses, a decline in oil production, lower exports, a tax base erosion, less ability to pay, Mr. Deputy Speaker — for all the programs and services and

infrastructure that we rely on in our province that help build our standard of life and our quality of life here in our province. So much of that is funded by the oil and gas sector in our province.

And for anyone who . . . I would encourage anyone who hasn't had a chance to do so, take a tour. Go talk to some of the oil companies in and around Swift Current, southwest Saskatchewan, the Southeast, Weyburn, Estevan, up around Lloydminster. Talk to some of the oil companies and ask them to take you for a tour sometime to have a look at their operations. And you'll see the things that they have done, how they've invested into their industry to make themselves a leader when it comes to what they do.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if it's not balanced carefully, this is what will happen. Investment will move. It will move to other jurisdictions with less stringent standards and will do essentially nothing to reduce GHG emissions worldwide, which that's the point of it all, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This past January we enacted the oil and gas emission management regulations, which will reduce methane emissions in our province by over 40 per cent between 2020 and 2025. And it's this results-based approach that focuses on achieving proven and verifiable emissions reductions. If I can quote just a couple of things here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the *Methane Action Plan*:

Saskatchewan's Methane Action Plan is an example of an efficient regulatory framework aimed at improving environmental outcomes, while protecting competitiveness.

That's from the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers vice-president of Western Canada operations, Brad Herald. He said:

The results-based design enables innovation, encourages new technology, and provides industry with the flexibility to apply strategies for methane emission reduction that are both efficient and effective.

One other quote, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is, and I quote:

The Saskatchewan government has taken a pragmatic and balanced approach through the development of the outcome-based Methane Action Plan.

That's from the Explorers and Producers Association of Canada president, Tristan Goodman. He goes on to say:

The transparent engagement approach has resulted in a policy that allows industry to innovate and remain competitive, while also ensuring policy objectives are achieved.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's what happens when you consult with industry to come up with a plan that involves talking to the industry to come up with a climate plan, the climate change strategy, which is what our prairie resilience plan is about. That's the focus of it. We can't afford to weaken the economy because a strong economy is what we need to seek solutions to innovate to find sustainable answers to the problems that we face.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would conclude with this by . . . I would like to move the motion which reads:

That this Assembly recognizes the efforts that this government has made to fight climate change with *Prairie Resilience: A Made-in-Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy*.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Swift Current has moved the following motion:

That this Assembly recognizes the efforts that this government has made to fight climate change with *Prairie Resilience: A Made-in-Saskatchewan Climate Change Strategy*.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. After listening to the eloquent speech from the member from Swift Current, I see him and I have to really polish up for next week. However what I'd like to do right now is say, we have a plan. We put forward a plan. The plan is being implemented. The NDP have yet to do anything other than oppose everything we've put together. They haven't put together a plan yet. They haven't costed a plan yet.

And being near the hour of the end of the day, I would like to add more to this next week. However, I'd like to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — This Assembly is adjourned until Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:26.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Makowsky	5773
Forbes	5773
Steinley	5773
Sproule	5773
McCall	5773
Belanger	5773
Wotherspoon	5774

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Heppner	5774
Wotherspoon	5774
Sproule	5774
Forbes	5774
Sarauer	5775

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Resilience Report and Climate Change	
Bonk	5775
Former Premier Retires	
Forbes	5775
Learn Ag Career Fair	
Kaeding	5776
Tartan Day Honours Scots	
Sproule	5776
Music Group Celebrates Their Saskatchewan Roots	
Steele	5776
People Who Care Give Back to Their Community	
Young	5776
Award-Winning Pro Named Coach of the Year	
Hindley	5777

QUESTION PERIOD

School Capacity and Class Sizes	
Beck	5777
Wyant	5777
Funding for Literacy Programs	
Beck	5778
Wyant	5778
Supports for Post-Secondary Students	
Beck	5778
Beaudry-Mellor	5779
Access to Prescription Drug and Members' Views on Abortion	
Mowat	5779
Moe	5780
Reiter	5780

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Standing Committee on the Economy	
Young	5782

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 136 — <i>The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Act, 2018</i>	
Harrison	5782

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Lawrence	5782
----------------	------

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	
Belanger	5782, 5791
Nerlien	5784, 5791
Sproule	5785
Tochor	5787
McCall	5788, 5792
Wilson	5790, 5792
Young	5791
Sproule	5791

Cox	5791
Brkich	5792
PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS	
Motion No. 3 — Prairie Resilience Climate Change Strategy	
Hindley	5793
Lawrence	5795

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Premier

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Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Deputy Premier
Minister of Education
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Priority Saskatchewan