



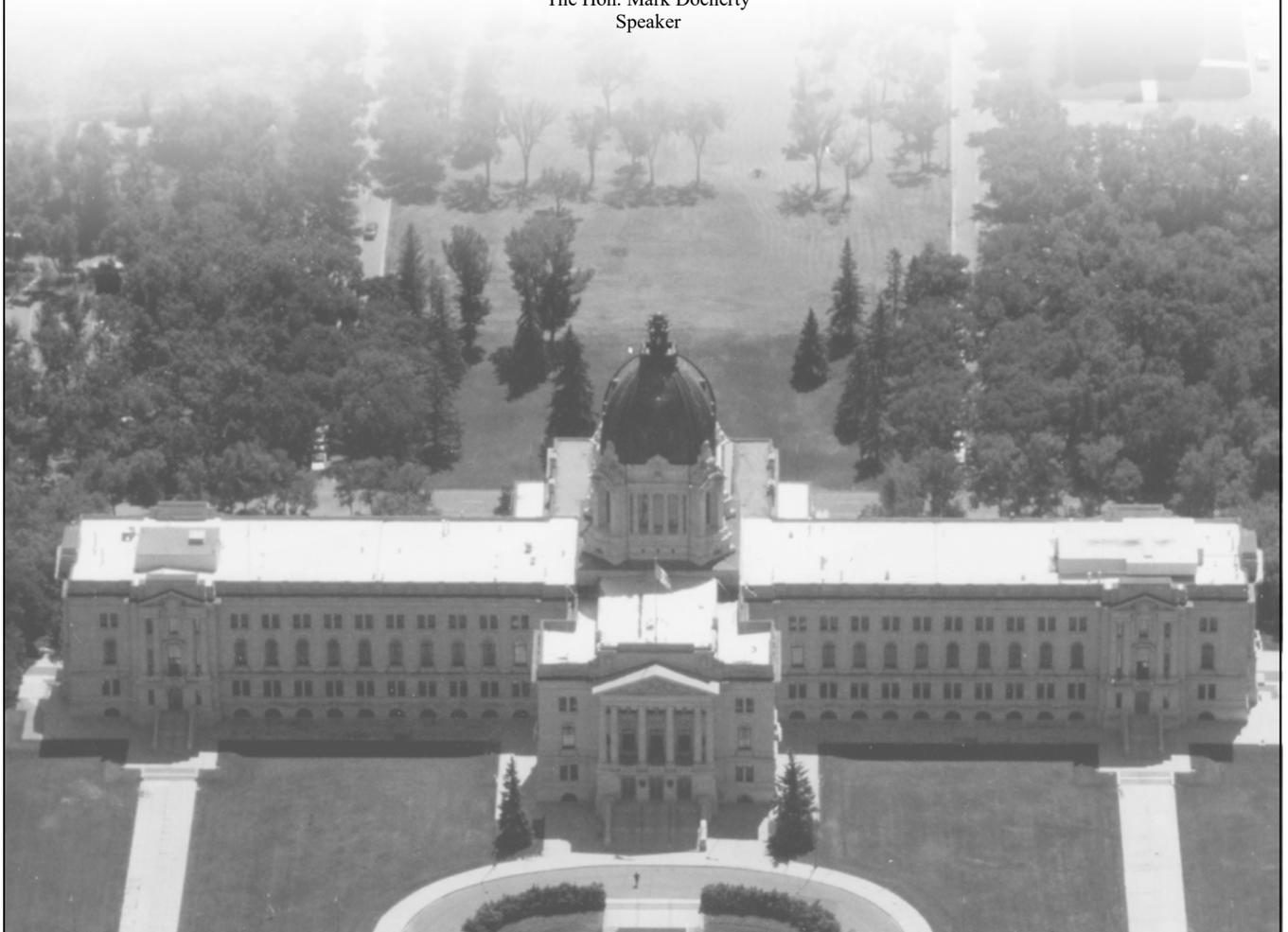
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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
4th Session — 28th Legislature

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Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	Vacant — Saskatoon Eastview

Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 46; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 13; Vacant — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce some very special guests, seated in your gallery today, to the Legislative Assembly. We have with us here today His Excellency Ariunbold Yadmaa, Ambassador of Mongolia to Canada, and Battushig Zanabazar.

This is their first visit to Saskatchewan officially, and we had a great time over lunch together learning about their culture and the relationship that Saskatchewan has with Mongolia. We have a lot of things in common, from what I understand, and one of them is living next to superpowers. Very important to keep good relationships with your neighbours to foster that. Our economies both rely heavily on agriculture and on mining, and we both have vast, wide open spaces and living skies.

His Excellency had said that his friends call him A.B. And one of the other things that I can see that both of our countries have in common is warm hearts and the value of friendship, so today I would like to ask if we would welcome A.B. and Battushig to the Saskatchewan legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Mr. Yadmaa and Mr. Zanabazar to our Legislative Assembly. On our behalf, we'd like to say *sain baina uu* to them as well. I understand it's the ambassador's first official visit to our province and to the city of Regina. I'd like to say that it was the Provincial Secretary who specifically ordered the snowstorm to welcome you today.

What I do understand though is that, as the Provincial Secretary had said, we do share many things in common. One of them is, of course, our weather. And similarly I hope you find that although our weather can be cold, that the people here are very warm. So welcome. I hope you enjoy your visit and we do hope you come back again. I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming them to our Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Through you and to you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce some guests seated in the west gallery, a group that has come from Swift Current, from my constituency. They made the trek in last night to beat the snowstorm. I believe this is their first opportunity to visit the Legislative Assembly. Seated in the west gallery is Wayne Oakman, Sherri Fahselt, Rhett and Troy Oakman, and joining them is Zach Paquette, who is an exchange student from Quebec. I would ask all members to welcome the group from Swift Current to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, up in the far gallery we have a group of 21 grade 4 students from Regina Christian School in my constituency, and a number of parent chaperones with them: Yolanda, Tanya, Brian, Melanie, Mari-Louise, and their teacher, Danae Le Drew. Mr. Speaker, I'm looking really forward to spending some time with you later in the Assembly today. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them here. Thanks.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in the east gallery we have 23 grade 6 students here today from Douglas Park School. Accompanying them is their teacher, Ms. Myrah, as well as parent chaperones, Ms. Randall and Mr. Massey. It's wonderful to have you all here to witness the proceedings today. I hope you learn a lot, and I'm looking forward to joining you later this afternoon to answer all of your questions. I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce two very special women in my life — they are seated in the Speaker's gallery — my wife, Carla, who is officially, officially retired as of today from active duty as the administrator for the town of Churchbridge. And I asked her if this meant she would spend more time watching the legislative channel. She said, not a chance, Mr. Speaker.

Seated beside her is my mom, Phyllis Kaeding. She's an active senior who knows her politics and is a big supporter of this government. She's a volunteer in many different groups and organizations in our community of Churchbridge and area, of Communities in Bloom, our church, recreation board, the library, and many, many more. She is also providing a lot of guidance to the Minister Responsible for Seniors, Mr. Speaker.

They were in the city to witness a baptism of our two granddaughters this weekend, Brynn and Tessa, and watch the Heritage Classic and visit with family. I love you both and I wish you a safe journey home. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome Carla and Phyllis to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to introduce a young man who is sitting in the west gallery, Josh Hack. Josh is new in my office. Can you give us a wave, Josh? There he is. I'm not wearing my contacts so I can't see all the way up there. Josh just joined us last week, Mr. Speaker, in my office. I understand that Josh has a keen interest in politics and comes to us with an education background in business and in marketing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in the hallway last week, Josh had the great honour of meeting the Attorney General, and in spite of that he came to work again this week, so I'm pretty thankful for that, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members of the Assembly to help me welcome Josh to his Assembly.

The Speaker: — I would like to take this opportunity to introduce Sean Darling, who is seated on the Chamber floor with us today. As a special constable, Sean will fill the new position of Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms. Sean comes to us after a distinguished career of 31 years in the Canadian Forces and the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police]. Welcome, sir.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petitions once again today on behalf of concerned residents, businesses from all across Saskatchewan, and communities from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented tax hike and expansion of the PST [provincial sales tax], Mr. Speaker. Of course that accounts for a billion-dollar tax hike by the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, and it's been expanded onto construction labour.

Certainly it's hammered households, Mr. Speaker, who can ill afford its consequences, but it's hammered our construction industry. Certainly we see permits down all across the province, projects that have been shelved, jobs that have been lost, and sadly, so many Saskatchewan tradespeople that have been forced to move from Saskatchewan in pursuit of employment because of this ham-handed move by the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker. We continue to press the Sask Party to pull back that tax hike.

My petition 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 from Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Canora-Pelly.

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from the citizens who are opposed to the federal government's decision to impose an unfair and ineffective carbon tax to our province of Saskatchewan.

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

Canora, Springside, Kamsack, and Preeceville. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for a \$15 minimum wage. Those who have signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: Saskatchewan has the lowest minimum wage in Canada, and a minimum wage should never be a poverty wage. Saskatchewan people working full time at minimum wage jobs are living in poverty, Mr. Speaker, and a \$15-an-hour minimum wage will improve health and well-being and lift Saskatchewan workers out of poverty. And a \$15-an-hour minimum wage will benefit local businesses and support local economies by putting money in workers' pockets to spend in their community.

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 adopt a plan to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for all workers.

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition on behalf of folks who are calling on this Sask Party government to call a by-election in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. We know those two seats are now vacant. But because of a loophole in *The Legislative Assembly Act*, by-elections are not legally required to be called in Regina Walsh Acres or Saskatoon Eastview because the former MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] did not resign before August 6th, 2019. But they did so just a month later. And we know that these folks will go without representation for over 14 months until the next provincial election is held on October 26th, 2020.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Premier does have the ability and the power to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Eastview. He can do that.

So, 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 urge the Premier to call by-elections in the constituencies of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview.

And the people signing these petitions come from Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. Thank you so much.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am rising today to present a petition calling for the government to save the swales. And the people who have signed this petition would like to bring to our attention the following: the Ministry of Highways is planning a four-lane, high-speed highway around part of

Saskatoon that's going to cut right through a very important ecosystem in relation to the land in Saskatoon called the swales.

The northeast and small swales of Saskatoon provide food and habitat to a number of endangered and declining species and many others not listed as endangered. They are part of our shared natural heritage and include rare fescue grassland and high-quality functional wetlands. Lack of adequate protection for these species is leading to a decrease in many types of wildlife habitat. And of course, Mr. Speaker, we know that highways impact ecosystems through fragmentation. But assessments of the environmental impacts are only being done for site-specific boundaries, ignoring the cumulative impacts.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the provincial government to suspend planning for the Saskatoon freeway and development around the swales until a regional cumulative effects assessment has been completed, Mr. Speaker; secondly, to update *The Wildlife Act* and expand the list of wild species protected by provincial regulation; thirdly, recognize the swales as an important ecological habitat and designate them as protected areas; and fourthly, ensure adequate long-term funding for research management enforcement to protect the swales for generations to come.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people who've signed this document are from Saskatoon. I so submit.

[13:45]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Women's History Month

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, October is Women's History Month, and I rise today to celebrate the achievements of women and girls in Saskatchewan and across Canada. It's an opportunity to celebrate the women that have dedicated their lives to equality as well as the women that have had positive impacts on our province. Women's History Month is a reminder of the landmark Persons Case. Five Canadian women, known as the Famous Five worked tirelessly to ensure women and girls were considered persons. Ninety years have passed since women gained legal recognition as persons, but there is still much work to be done.

This month is also cause for celebration. From Lila Fahlman, an educator and social justice advocate born in Limerick to Mary Greyeyes-Reid, the first Indigenous woman to join the Canadian army, Saskatchewan is fortunate to celebrate remarkable women. We also have incredible women entrepreneurs including Christi Beaudin, the owner of Newborn Feathers in Saskatoon.

Despite this leadership, women and girls still face structural inequalities in our province. Women are disproportionately employed in low-paying and precarious work. They face sexism in daily life, discrimination in the workplace. And Indigenous

girls are 29 times more likely to attempt suicide than the general population. We could be doing so much more to ensure women and girls have the means to succeed.

Mr. Speaker, women's issues are everyone's issues. We need to work to improve women's equality so that our government is more representative and responsible to the people we serve. Thank you.

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

Regina Bypass Opens

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this morning the Regina bypass officially opened. With its completion, Mr. Speaker, the Regina bypass project is the largest transportation infrastructure project this province has ever seen. Mr. Speaker, this is a multi-generational project that will improve safety conditions for drivers and benefit the people of Saskatchewan for decades and decades to come.

Throughout its construction, Mr. Speaker, the Regina bypass project helped create thousands and thousands of jobs for Saskatchewan companies and Saskatchewan people right here, Mr. Speaker.

The newly completed project includes 12 overpasses, 40 kilometres of new four-lane highway, 20 kilometres of resurfaced four-lane highway, 55 kilometres of new service roads, and twinning of about 5 kilometres on Highway No. 6 South. It is estimated that the Regina bypass will save 2 to \$3 million a year just on property damage alone. But perhaps the most important thing, Mr. Speaker, is it will drastically reduce the number of injuries and fatalities on our roads, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately, for some unknown reason, the NDP [New Democratic Party] have been against this project from day one, Mr. Speaker. It was a surprise to see one of them show up today, Mr. Speaker.

There are so many people to thank for this project, Mr. Speaker: our province and municipality partners, the city of Regina, the federal government, and surrounding municipalities. From concept to construction to completion, this has been an overwhelming undertaking, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank all of Saskatchewan for being positive on this project.

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

SaskBooks Celebrates 30th Anniversary

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, on June 6th I, along with the member for Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota, was pleased to bring greetings to SaskBooks at their celebration of the book publishing industry in Saskatchewan.

Over the last 30 years, SaskBooks has grown considerably and now provides resources and services to more than 45 book publishers in the province. SaskBooks supports a variety of professional development opportunities for its membership each year, such as that evening's event where we had a chance to network and observe the Museum of Antiquities at the University

of Saskatchewan campus.

Beyond its own membership, SaskBooks promotes learning opportunities province wide, including events such as hosting the Saskatchewan Book Publishing Week in September, organizing tours around the province, working with schools and libraries, engaging in joint marketing projects, and honouring authors through the Sask Book Awards.

The organization has an impressive website that not only shares extensive information about our many Saskatchewan publishers and authors, it also has reviews of a diverse selection of recent Saskatchewan publications and an excellent professional development section for those who want more information about the publishing industry. The work of this organization is indeed impressive.

I was honoured to be present at the SaskBooks celebration and to learn more about this very interesting and important industry. SaskBooks should be very proud to foster this thriving sector that helps connect people with the books that tell our story. I ask all members to join with me in congratulating SaskBooks for 30 years of service to authors in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Moose Jaw Athlete Medals at Parapan Am Games

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is every athlete's dream to represent their country on an international level, and for athlete Krystal Shaw, that dream became a reality this past August. Krystal competed at the Parapan Am Games in Lima, Peru in the Para swimming S7 class. Mr. Speaker, Krystal returned home with four medals. She earned a silver medal in the 100-metre freestyle, 50-metre freestyle, and 100-metre backstroke, along with a bronze in the 4 x 100-metre medley relay.

Mr. Speaker, these accomplishments are impressive for any athlete, but for Krystal they are even more impressive. The 25-year-old Moose Javian was born with arthrogyriposis which resulted in under-developed legs. Krystal began swimming at the age of nine, but in her teens she was forced to take a medical hiatus from the sport for seven years after a blood clot formed in her leg. But forever the competitor, Krystal never quit, and with a lot of hard work found herself on the podium not once but four times in Peru.

Mr. Speaker, after an impressive showing at the Parapan Am Games, Krystal has her sights set on qualifying for the 2020 Summer Paralympics in Tokyo, Japan. We wish her nothing but the best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

2019 Western Canada Summer Games Held in Swift Current

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past summer, Swift Current and area hosted the 2019 Western Canada Summer Games. For 10 days in August, the city and all of southwest

Saskatchewan was booming with spectators and over 1,500 athletes, parents, and coaches competing in various events around southwest Saskatchewan. Throughout the games, athletes competed in front of sold-out crowds full of supporters from across the province and also across Western Canada. There were so many spectators in fact, Mr. Speaker, that in a single day, 675 tickets were sold, setting a new record for single-day ticket sales.

Mr. Speaker, these sorts of competitions don't organize themselves, as it takes months and even years of planning and fundraising to make an event like this possible. Our government was happy to contribute \$1.5 million to help sponsor the Western Canada Summer Games.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot talk about the success without highlighting the incredible volunteers who made the event the success it was. Over 2,000 people including myself signed up to volunteer, and over 25,000 hours were put in throughout the 10-day competition.

Congratulations to all the athletes who competed in the games. Western Canada is represented by so many unbelievably talented and elite young athletes.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the city of Swift Current and all of the surrounding communities who helped make the 2019 Western Canada Summer Games such a tremendous success.

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

2019 ABEX Awards

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 19th, my colleague, the Minister for Energy and Resources, and I attended the 2019 ABEX [Achievement in Business Excellence] Awards in Saskatoon. The ABEX Awards recognize Saskatchewan enterprises for their commitment to their employees and communities, as well as the businesses' long-term growth that has been achieved.

Mr. Speaker, JNE Welding took home top honours, winning the Business of the Year Award. I'd also like to congratulate O & T Farms Limited, Tim Wiens for being inducted into the Business Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, the Roger Phillips Chamber Builder Award was presented to John Hopkins, the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce. Wayne Clifton, founder and CEO at Clifton Associates, received the 2019 Business Leader of the Year Award, and the Community Leader Award was given to Wally and Colleen Mah.

Other winners included Regina's Sperling Silver Distillery, Greenwave Innovations, and Escape Manor; Saskatoon's Cravings, Temple Audio Design Inc., Passions Beauty Studio; and Spotlight Sport & Corporate Wear Ltd. from Humboldt were also the big winners of the night. Constituents of Saskatoon Willowgrove Utsang and Khyati Desai were nominated in the young entrepreneur category with their BarBurrito franchise.

Congratulations to Conexus Credit Union, the title sponsor of the

evening, and a job well done to the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce organizing committee. I now ask all members to join me in congratulating all of the Saskatchewan businesses that were recognized at the 2019 ABEX Awards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Canora-Pelly.

Vision for Education

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government has a vision for education. It was outlined in this province's plan for growth, and following that, goals were set for the first-ever education sector strategic plan.

This year, in collaboration with our partners, the ministry launched a survey. In it almost 9,000 respondents provided over 40,000 comments. The Leader of the Opposition heavily criticized the survey and even said we didn't need it. But do you know what they did shortly after? They launched a survey.

Mr. Speaker, our education partners then gathered even more input with over 300 meetings, 10,500 individuals, and 35,000 more comments. Mr. Speaker, amidst our consultations, NDP accused us of not having a legitimate consultation process and even said that our education policy should be left to "lay people." Well we beg to differ.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite claim that there was nothing in the Throne Speech for education. They must have missed pages 10 and 11 which outlined our vision for education in Saskatchewan. However I can point out where we didn't hear anything in education — in the Throne Speech by the members from Saskatoon Nutana and Douglas Park. It's true that it's the new legislative session, Mr. Speaker, but it's the same old NDP.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Emergency Health Care

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, last week we heard the story of Angela McLean who was left in the hallway at Regina Pasqua Hospital for almost a week. Angela's experience left her extremely concerned about the state of our emergency rooms. That's why she felt compelled to go to the media.

My question is to the Premier. After years of ignoring and underfunding our hospitals, will he finally take real action today to address the crisis in our emergency rooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First and foremost I would say, to the end of the member opposite's question about underfunding hospitals, that's just not the case, Mr. Speaker. We're funding it dramatically higher than we were in 2007 when we were given the privilege of forming government.

To the very serious issue that she raises on emergency rooms, Mr. Speaker, she mentioned last week, we discussed it in this

House. There's an issue both at Pasqua in Regina and also at RUH [Royal University Hospital] in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. I mentioned last week that 24 beds were added to Pasqua Hospital a couple of years ago, Mr. Speaker, in an attempt to get ahead of this issue.

This issue isn't unique to Saskatchewan. I had the opportunity this morning to meet with the Health minister from Manitoba, who tells me they're grappling with the same issue, as are all provinces across the country, Mr. Speaker.

In RUH it was announced a few weeks ago that we'll be adding a 36-medicine bed unit, Mr. Speaker. We believe that'll help alleviate it. And on top of this, as I mentioned last week, we're also doing work in the community with accountable care teams and community health centres, Mr. Speaker. It's an issue that all provinces are grappling with. It's a very serious issue, Mr. Speaker, and we're determined to rectify it.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister knows that funding has not kept pace with growth in this province. Today in Saskatoon there are five people receiving care in pods, which are essentially glorified blanket forts serving as treatment spaces in the emergency rooms. There are 22 people who have been admitted but have no beds available for them. Last week a patient wrote to us about their experience in the ER [emergency room] saying, "My sister was in hallway at emergency for two days before going to a room."

Angela's experience at the Pasqua is clearly not an isolated incident. It's the utterly predictable result of Sask Party cuts to health care. Will the Premier admit that the ERs, particularly in our cities, are understaffed, underfunded, and overstretched?

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, since 2007 the allocation spent by this government on health care has increased by 60 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That would be at a time when the CPI [consumer price index] for the country, I believe, is around 21, 22 per cent, somewhere in that range, Mr. Speaker.

We have ramped up health care spending in this province enormously since it was under the NDP. Mr. Speaker, just the whole premise of the question is wrong, Mr. Speaker. This is an issue, as I said, all provinces are grappling with. We realize how serious it is. What the citizen that went through what the member opposite spoke about is unacceptable. We need to do better. That's why last week when the issue came up at Pasqua, I spoke to the CEO of the Saskatchewan Health Authority. He assures me they're doing a review to find out what's causing this huge influx right now, Mr. Speaker. We're going to do everything we can to rectify it.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's clear that the

minister has a different version of reality than what exists with the Canadian Institute for Health Information that shows a decrease in our health spending per capita.

Mr. Speaker, the question was for the Premier. This Premier refuses to take responsibility for the state of our emergency rooms. When we're driving to the ER with an aging parent or a sick child, we want to be confident they'll get the care they need when they get there.

If the Premier wants to stop pointing fingers and actually do his job, here is a place where he could start. Will the Premier commit today to a full public review of our overcrowded emergency rooms? And if not, why not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, we're taking action to attempt to rectify this. I talked about the new beds both in Pasqua, the new beds that are going to be coming at Royal University. Mr. Speaker, we're doing more things in the community: the accountable care teams, the community health centres, Mr. Speaker. Officials tell me they believe all these will help to mitigate the problem, Mr. Speaker.

Again it's not just in Saskatchewan; it's across the country, Mr. Speaker. I know the NDP loves public reviews, Mr. Speaker, but the situation right now is not acceptable. So, Mr. Speaker, we need some action. I have asked the Saskatchewan Health Authority to review the situation to understand what's causing the influx right now, Mr. Speaker, and to take steps to mitigate it.

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

Water Quality at Saskatchewan Hospital

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we've learned last week that in addition to needing its entire roof replaced, the water at Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford is undrinkable. We're talking about a brand new hospital that's already had all the exterior bricks and cladding removed, the entire roof needs to be replaced, and now we learned that patients and staff have been exposed to unsafe drinking water. When asked about lead in the water, an official told reporters it's "not unusual for challenges like these to happen when constructing a brand new building."

To the minister: it's not unusual to have lead in the water at a brand new building? Is this a joke?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ensure the residents of Saskatchewan that the government's number one priority is ensuring the safety, well-being of patients, staff, and visitors.

Recent water testing at the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford has shown some signs of irregularities and inconsistency, and test results indicate that levels of certain minerals may be higher than desired levels. The local medical health officer has indicated that there is not an immediate health

hazard. Out of an abundance of caution, Mr. Speaker, and with the health of patients, staff, and immediate steps in mind, immediate steps have been taken to ensure potable water is available on site at Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, if this government thinks this is business as usual, they need to give their heads a shake. Suggesting that Saskatchewan people should be all right with this speaks of the lack of capable supervision of this government when it comes to public infrastructure.

The same official said, "This issue demonstrates the value of the P3 model." Will the minister explain to patients and staff, who are still waiting to hear how much lead and copper they consumed, just how valuable this P3 [public-private partnership] process has been?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to assure the member opposite that a full investigation and further water testing is occurring at the site to identify and remediate any issues as identified. A full facility audit is also under way to identify any other deficiencies in the building.

But I want to also assure the member opposite that P3s allow government to invest in large-scale infrastructure projects while saving money and transferring that risk to the private sector. As one of the key components of the P3 model, there are no additional costs to government for delays or repairs. Additional costs do not fall on the backs of the taxpayers. And I want to remind members opposite as well, the total cost of the project was \$407 million. Taxpayers saved over \$15 million on construction alone and will save an additional 90 million over the 30-year life of the P3 contract.

Now, Mr. Speaker, many of us on both sides of the House have toured this wonderful facility. It is state of the art as far as a mental health facility goes. Projects like this do incur some challenges and, Mr. Speaker, this government will make it an ultimate priority to ensure that that takes place. Thank you.

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

Available Space in Schools

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, you know what taxpayers would appreciate more? Not having lead in their water.

Mr. Speaker, parents and teachers across Saskatchewan are looking for this government to do something — anything — to address the crisis in our classrooms. They had a chance to lay out their vision in the Throne Speech, but it offered nothing new for education. They had a chance to debate this crisis in our emergency motion last week, but they refused. This government is completely out of ideas.

A few weeks ago I attended a meeting of concerned parents and

community members at Harbour Landing School. This school is bursting at the seams and a second school is needed in southwest Regina. What's the Sask Party going to do to address the overcrowding in these classrooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the urgency with respect to class size and composition was of any interest to the opposition, they're a little late to the party, Mr. Speaker, because two weeks ago I made a release, Mr. Speaker, with respect to starting a conversation, a collaboration, Mr. Speaker, with respect to class size and composition. And within the next couple of days, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to be releasing the terms of reference for that matter.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of Harbour Landing School, it was after the development of the school, the delivery plan, that the Public School Board here in Regina — and there's a former member on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker, who served on that board — decided that they were going to add French immersion to that classroom, to those classroom components, which was an additional strain on class size in that particular school and on utilization, Mr. Speaker.

So as I understand, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of schools that are in close proximity that are underutilized. The school board has indicated that they are going to utilize that space to help deliver the French immersion program. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we are having a dialogue with the Regina Public School Board about additional facilities in that part of Regina. Mr. Speaker, they've submitted their capital plan with their list of priorities, and we're going to be taking that list of priorities in consultation with the other priorities of government when it comes to public education infrastructure.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, more conversation, more collaboration, yet no action. And once again we see this minister blaming the school board.

Mr. Speaker, that meeting was full of concerned parents. They've waited years for this new school, and now it's already full with portables stacked on top of each other and no room for more. Some students may have to transfer to a different school, as the minister had mentioned, which creates a real disruption in these students' lives. Harbour Landing School doesn't have any room to grow, but the student population is projected to grow each year until 2024. When is the Sask Party going to start making education a priority and give our school boards the resources they need to properly fund public education?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, our record when it comes to delivering capital infrastructure in this part of the economy, Mr. Speaker, in the education sector is clear: 46 new schools in this province under this government's watch. Now we also know that in Harbour Landing there's about 150 kids that go to that school that don't live in the direct neighbourhood, Mr. Speaker, and so that's causing some stress on the school, Mr. Speaker, in addition

to the addition of the French immersion program to that school.

But we appreciate the fact, Mr. Speaker, that there's some challenges with respect to growth in this area. And that's why we're currently having conversations, Mr. Speaker, with the Regina Public School Board about ensuring . . . looking at their plan for additional capital space in that part of the city of Regina, Mr. Speaker. And that plan will be looked at in the context of the greater capital needs of school infrastructure in the province as a whole, Mr. Speaker.

But if they want to talk about capital infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, this government's committed to two new schools, one joint-use school, in the constituency of Lakeview in the city of Regina to address the capital needs of the city of Regina and the Regina Public School Board and the Catholic school board, Mr. Speaker. So to suggest that this government doesn't have an interest in meeting the capital needs in the schools so that kids can get a good education in this province, Mr. Speaker, is ridiculous.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Now, Mr. Speaker, I wasn't the only MLA at that meeting. The member for Regina Pasqua was there as well. Showing up to that meeting is important and good, but people in that room were looking for answers. Despite being given an opportunity, that member didn't speak up at the meeting. He wouldn't commit to fighting for those families. Just like the Throne Speech, he had the opportunity to present something new to address the crisis in the classrooms. And just like the Throne Speech, he took a pass on offering solutions.

How is it that that member and that minister have absolutely nothing new to offer when it comes to supporting public education in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that I've had a very, very lengthy conversation with the member from Regina Pasqua, Mr. Speaker, who relayed to me the concerns of the parents that were in that room that day, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you that we're taking very seriously the request of the Regina Public School Board, Mr. Speaker, for additional capital, for additional classroom spaces in this part of Regina, Mr. Speaker.

But I would point out again, I'll point out again if the opposition member didn't hear me. There's some stresses, Mr. Speaker, with regard to the classrooms in that school as a result of the addition of French immersion, which was not a program which was originally conceived to be going into that school. That came afterwards, and the addition of about 150 kids that don't live in that neighbourhood.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they can stand there and they can complain about the over capacity at Harbour Landing. But, Mr. Speaker, the school division has an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to look at the utilization of all schools, and there is a school that's close by that has utilization of less than 70 per cent. It's incumbent on the school division, Mr. Speaker, to take advantage of that underutilized space in that school, Mr. Speaker, while we're considering new capital space in the city of Regina.

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

Regina Bypass Project

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, today the Premier made a big show of driving a semi for the grand opening of the P3 Regina bypass. Perhaps the Premier should drive that semi . . .

[Interjections]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the Premier should drive that semi on a trip down memory lane instead. Remember this, Mr. Speaker, when the Sask Party handed the contract to a P3 conglomerate from France. And also remember when the auditor found out that they grossly mishandled the land-buying process, which allowed Sask Party donors to make millions on the infamous GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deals, the same GTH that they didn't even mention in this morning's opening. Remember, Mr. Speaker, farmers couldn't get their equipment through the overpasses, which sent dozens of trucks into Balgonie, causing mayhem.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Sask Party justify plowing ahead . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. Please finish your question.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How can the Sask Party justify plowing ahead and forcing Saskatchewan people to pay \$2 billion for barely 60 kilometres of road on the bald, flat prairie from original price of \$400 million?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I was really, really encouraged that the member opposite was able to attend the event today at the bypass opening, Mr. Speaker. And I'm pretty sure she heard the words of not only the White City fire chief, but also Wanda Campbell, who lost a son along that stretch of highway on the initial part opened on the east side of the city, Mr. Speaker.

The bare facts of this, Mr. Speaker, is the priority of Highways, the priority of this project is for safety. And, Mr. Speaker, we know that this project will save lives and that was reinforced by the comments that we heard today, Mr. Speaker.

When they talk about a \$400 million project, Mr. Speaker, we know fully well that was a few kilometres of repaving some twin highways and four overpasses. Mr. Speaker, this is, as we heard earlier, 40 kilometres of new twinned highway; 55 kilometres of access roads, service roads; 80 kilometres of on-ramps and off-ramps; 12 full interchanges; other access points, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

This is not a project that was even envisioned by the NDP. They were planning for decline. We are planning for growth. This is going to provide safe transportation for people of the province and contribute to our strong economy in the future, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, no one has disputed that a bypass is needed but what Saskatchewan people are concerned about is the ballooning cost of handing this contract to a conglomerate from France and the fact that Sask Party insiders made millions because of this government's choices. And those are just the problems we know about. We know that there are more than 1,000 others that we don't.

We know there were more than 1,100 deficiencies identified previously in the construction of the bypass that the Sask Party refused to release. And one of the companies even hit an aquifer during the construction but the previous minister said, oh we shouldn't worry about it; it isn't a big deal. Well, Mr. Speaker, that was two years ago. So now the question is, what other deficiencies were identified and why is this government so keen to keep Saskatchewan people in the dark?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we also heard, in addition to the safety aspects and the economic contributions of this project, Mr. Speaker, it was on time and on budget. Actually, Mr. Speaker, I think it's two days early. So, Mr. Speaker, you know, it's something that this whole province can be very proud of.

And when we look at the actual engagement of people and companies in this project, Mr. Speaker, 70 per cent plus, Saskatchewan companies. Of the 9,200 people employed on this project, the majority of them Saskatchewan employees, Mr. Speaker. And we know very full well that a lot of those people that came from other jurisdictions to work on this project are actually staying, becoming Saskatchewan residents to contribute to our economy and our tax base in this province.

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

Ms. Sproule: — I guess that means we're not going to get the information we're asking for, Mr. Speaker. It's no secret the cost ballooned on this bypass to accommodate Bill Boyd's grand vision for the GTH, a vision that is now proved to be nothing but a mirage. The Sask Party grossly overestimated the truck traffic at the GTH by 90 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and the \$2 billion price tag for the bypass is, as a result, nearly five times more than what they initially promised.

When it comes to the Regina bypass, this government is letting their friends and insiders make off with millions while letting Saskatchewan people down. Will the minister apologize for the overruns on this project? And if not, why not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, about a year from now we have an election. I'd like those members to go back to that election and go back to their constituents and say, we don't want this. We'd rather have an unsafe road. We'd rather have fatalities. We'd rather not have jobs. We'd rather not have business. Because, Mr. Speaker, that's what those members are saying in this House today. Mr. Speaker, we have now . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the Global Transportation Hub during its construction created 1,800 jobs, \$485 million in private investment. There are over 860 full-time jobs. They want to call that a mirage. They can go and talk to those 860 people out there. Those people will vote. Those people will have family members who will vote. And, Mr. Speaker, those people aren't going to vote for the NDP. They're going to vote for jobs. They're going to vote for the future of our province. Mr. Speaker, 4,800 trucks every week move in and out of the GTH, Mr. Speaker, that turn the inventory over through that facility every three days. Mr. Speaker, that's the future of Saskatchewan.

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

Status of Crown Corporations

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this government expects Saskatchewan people to just take them at their word when it comes to their plans for SaskTel and our other Crown corporations. Well so far those words told this Assembly that there were “no formal discussions” about a sell-off, the same, very same day they were signing a non-disclosure agreement with two different potential purchasers of that Crown corporation. Forgive my skepticism, Mr. Speaker. If there is in fact nothing to hide, the Sask Party government will release the documents from their very own cabinet committee to sell off the Crown corporations. Will they do that today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, last week members opposite wanted to have further discussions in committee. They made a big issue out of it. We produced the official from SaskTel. What did they do? They wanted to talk about committees and committee structure. They didn't want to talk about whether SaskTel was for sale. They didn't want to talk about the services that SaskTel provided. They had the very official that prepared those documents — documents that aren't government documents, documents that are SaskTel's documents. We don't control the freedom of information process done. We have no control over that. I haven't seen those documents that are at SaskTel. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have. They did an FOI [freedom of information] request.

Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you about SaskTel, state it quite simply: not for sale. I don't have anything further to say. It is not for sale, will not be for sale. Mr. Speaker, two pieces of legislation, one to allow for privatization of up to 49 per cent, one in its entirety withdrawing that. And, Mr. Speaker, that's the direction we're going. That should be abundantly clear for the members opposite.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Of course, Mr. Speaker, this government, the Sask Party has betrayed Saskatchewan people before on this front when they claimed that this Crown and our Crown corporations weren't for sale after the last election, then of course brought forward legislation and sold off STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company]. So actions speak louder than words.

And if we're to listen to that government's former leader, he often said the best predictor of future behaviour is past behaviour. We know we simply can't take the Sask Party at their word, which is why the facts in this case matter and why the Sask Party owes the owners of our Crown corporations, the Saskatchewan people, all the information in this case.

We're calling on the Premier to table the documents from this secret, cabinet sell-off committee. And we also ask him once again, was he a member of that committee? Will he release that information? Will he answer that question today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, SaskTel's not for sale. SaskTel is owned by all of the citizens in this province. It's something that everybody in this province can and should take some significant pride in.

The rural wireless and internet enhancements will add over 100 towers this year. There's an increased investment in fibre to the premises. There's wireless network enhancements taking place all the time, Mr. Speaker. Those enhancements and those growth are continuing to do . . . We have some of the best wireless service anywhere in Canada, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite should take notice of that and, Mr. Speaker, we're proud of that.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Housing Partnership Announcement

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 25th, I was pleased to announce a new housing partnership agreement with Saskatoon Downtown Youth Centre — or Egadz, as it's called — and the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation that will give youth and families the opportunity to live a positive, independent lifestyle.

This new initiative, called Fusion 22, leverages the resources of Social Services' child and family program division, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, and Egadz to give 22 single mothers and their children a safe, secure home and the support they need to continue positive lifestyle changes and achieve their goals. Fusion 22 is based on Egadz's philosophy that all partners involved need to be fused together to work towards a common goal of supporting their clients to be more independent, employable, and contributing residents to our great province.

Twenty-two refers to the number of units that will be used for this program. Through this partnership, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and the Saskatoon Housing Authority agreed to lease a 24-unit government-owned building in Saskatoon to Egadz to make this project a reality. Residents will live in the 22 units and the remaining two units will be used as offices for support staff. Egadz will work with Saskatchewan Housing Corporation and the Saskatoon Housing Authority to provide safe and affordable housing to young mothers entering the workforce.

Mr. Speaker, another component to the Fusion 22 partnership is

the expansion of the action to employment program. Egadz's youth clients are given an opportunity to develop their skills by undertaking the repairs of these 24 units and other Sask Housing buildings. This work is being led by Egadz staff, and the construction workers on site are youth connected to the Egadz trades and training program.

Other community partners including Conexus Credit Union, and the Saskatoon Truck Centre, Home Depot, and the family of the late Francis Reiss also contributed to this exciting news. Conexus Credit Union is donating \$20,000 to Egadz for the purchase of new beds and kitchen tables and chairs. The Saskatoon Truck Centre is also supporting this initiative by donating a trailer that will be used for Egadz.

Mr. Speaker, I have said on many occasions that partnerships are the key to helping meet our province's housing needs. Fusion 22 is especially meaningful as I would like to take this opportunity in the House to acknowledge a special partnership that helped fund this initiative. Mr. Francis Reiss was a school caretaker in Saskatoon who believed in Egadz and its important work. After Mr. Reiss passed away in 2018, his family generously donated \$50,000 in his memory, which is to be used to purchase furniture for the Fusion 22 suites. We sincerely thank Mr. Reiss and his family for the thoughtful gift, as well as Conexus Credit Union, the Saskatoon Truck Centre, and the Home Depot for their support.

This story tells us that success through innovation and partnership is possible. Mr. Speaker, Fusion 22 represents the essence of what all our work is about — seeing innovative ways to support children and their families so our whole community benefits. We welcome this opportunity to further our partnership with Egadz and, most importantly, help single mothers down the path to independence.

This fiscal year, Social Services will provide Egadz with more than \$5.8 million to continue its essential residential and outreach services for children, youth, and their families. The need for safe, secure, affordable housing is ongoing and our government will continue to develop strong partnerships to help people who need it the most. We are excited to be part of Egadz's good work and look forward to more innovative approaches to changing lives and strengthening our communities in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate the opportunity to reply to the ministerial statement today. And I first want to thank the minister for sharing this statement earlier with us at our caucus office. And of course we read with interest this weekend about the Fusion 22 in the paper, and what that means for kids who are very much at risk. And I want to recognize for sure the good work that Egadz does. And Egadz is particularly known for being able to draw others into partnerships, whether that's Conexus or Saskatoon Truck Centre.

I just want to take a moment to talk about Francis Reiss. I've worked with Francis Reiss at Caswell School. He was the caretaker downstairs, and I was the guy teaching grade 8 causing all the problems. I mean my kids were. Anyways problems were created; anyways I'll leave it with that. But he was a good guy.

He was one of those stand-up type of caretakers who we all know in schools, that loved the kids and every kid was important to him. So hats off to Francis Reiss and the family for making that real important contribution. So I just want to make sure that's out there.

But I do want to say and I hope the minister really thinks about, when we talk about innovation, today, right now at this moment in Saskatoon, according to the media, there's 60 to 70 people meeting to talk about the implications of housing for many people in the months ahead with winter. This is very, very important.

So when we take the spirit of innovation then . . . I know the ministry's there. The report said that they will be there to be listening and talking about the Saskatchewan income support program, which we know causes some challenges for folks who are dealing with addictions, who are vulnerable, who are now being given their rent cheque, their rent payments directly, and many of them are having challenges.

So tomorrow, Mr. Speaker, I look forward to another ministerial statement from the same minister saying that they've adopted some of the recommendations today from the folks in Saskatoon about how they're going to make housing a reality for all those who are at risk. We appreciate they're doing it for 22 young kids. That's an excellent thing. But there's going to be many, many this winter who are going to be facing some real challenges because of their addictions, and because the capacity to deal with money that they've set out now provides some challenges that people are talking about. And they're talking about that right now in Saskatoon, so I hope that they're listening to that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. D'Autremont, seconded by Ms. Ross, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Ms. Sarauer.]

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

Mr. Nerlien: — Mr. Speaker, once again our government has reaffirmed its commitment to the people of Saskatchewan. Over the next few minutes, I'll speak about the great things that our government has done for my constituency. I will then speak briefly to the Throne Speech, and as has become customary, I will likely follow up with a bit of fact and philosophy on two subjects, energy and political correctness, for us to ponder.

First let me thank my wife, Giselle, for her support, and my family for their interest in what we do. It's always an honour to rise in this Assembly and represent the good people of

Kelvington-Wadena constituency.

Throughout the summer I was constantly reminded of the resilience of our ag producers, the generosity of our hometowns, the leadership of our municipal leaders, and the incredible volunteers across my constituency. Mr. Speaker, this summer I had the opportunity to meet with health care professionals, teachers, librarians, seniors, students, and good folks from all walks of life. I've met with newcomers to our province who are committed to a new life where their children have a future and their skills are in demand. I met with the technology leaders and innovators. I travelled on behalf of the province to experience and share on energy and economic issues with our American partners. It simply goes without saying that we live in a time and place where opportunity abounds and it is ours to lead. Mr. Speaker, having just celebrated Thanksgiving, it is notable that we in Saskatchewan have much to be thankful for.

It is often said that you can best predict the future by considering past behaviour. If that is the case, Mr. Speaker, we are truly on a path to continue the growth experienced in the past 12 years. My constituents in Kelvington-Wadena expect us to build the trade relationships that sell our agriculture, manufacturing, oil and gas, and mining products. We do this to sustain employment, to facilitate the economy necessary to afford good health care, good education, supportive social services, safety on our highways, and security of our citizens. Our ag community, including farm families, support crews, suppliers, and rural communities, have been challenged by mother nature this year. We want to assure our ag industry, we have your back.

The Premier just returned from Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea on an important trade mission to put our resources on the table in Asia. The Minister of Ag just returned from Mexico to do the same, and the Ministry of Trade and Export Development will soon embark on a mission to India to further position our products in their markets. These are critical endeavours to support our industries in the global marketplace. Understanding the power of the appropriate business card is exactly why the Premier and senior cabinet ministers must lead these initiatives with industry leaders. These missions also developed significant relationships in advanced education sharing opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, in northeast Saskatchewan we are excited about the investment in mineral exploration. We know that this is an investment in the future of our province. Our North holds incredible opportunity for Indigenous partners, industry, and employment for more of our great mining expertise to build this province.

Mr. Speaker, thousands of people from rural Saskatchewan have worked in mining and oil and gas industries to supplement farm income. We continue to invest to create these opportunities here at home. We will grow our economy in a sustainable way, fully respecting the relationships necessary as well as the environmental stewardship with which we have been entrusted.

Mr. Speaker, I mentioned that I had opportunity to meet with people in the emerging technology sector of our economy. Whether we look at the incredible work being done at Synchrotron or the technology incubator or VIDO-InterVac [Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization-international vaccine centre] or any number of other facilities, we are again

leading the world in technological advancements over and above our ag-tech leadership.

Mr. Speaker, my government has made important investments across my constituency. We have seen significant work done by Highways through safety initiatives in various locations, new flared widening at a number of access locations to communities, paving of many local highways, improved maintenance, and a number of new bridges and culverts. Mr. Speaker, we've also seen continued investment at Greenwater Lake Provincial Park this year with new lift stations and ongoing investment in camping, water treatment, and supportive infrastructure. We've also seen upgrades in key health care facilities, continued investment in operational funding for schools, health care facilities, and social services. We know there is much more to do, but my constituency appreciates the support for our seniors, our youth, our industry, and all of our citizens.

Credit rating agencies continue to acknowledge the great work done by our Minister of Finance and treasury board in getting to balanced budgets by reaffirming strong credit ratings.

Mr. Speaker, none of this is possible without a strong economy. We've seen 53 consecutive quarters of population growth and 14 consecutive months of job gains. Despite challenges in some industry sectors, our unemployment rate is 5.3 per cent, below the national average, and we have the fourth-highest weekly earnings rate in the nation.

Mr. Speaker, I'm particularly pleased with the progress we've made on rural connectivity. Rural Saskatchewan is where the wealth of Saskatchewan is created, whether in ag, mining, oil and gas, forestry, tourism, and where supports for rural education, health care, and security are critical.

Rural cell and enhanced internet services are being improved by our commitment to 103 new small-cell towers, with most of them being operational this fall, and all operational by March 2020. My constituency will benefit by new towers in Theodore, Wishart, Lintlaw, Kuroki, Sylvania, Margo, Fosston, Sheho, Rama, and Elfros. We have much more to come, but these are important steps in supporting rural economic drivers.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge the private sector's role in improving connectivity across the province. Along with the great work that SaskTel and Access Communications are doing, we also have many other important players in the connectivity market including Shaw, RFNow, Krakr, Redbird, Wood River Controls, Stafford, and a number of other industry players both in hardware and software arenas. We thank them for their commitment to our growing economy.

Mr. Speaker, I'm about to move on to energy and climate, so let me be clear: the climate is changing. It has always and will always change. We only need to look at the Cypress Hills to recognize the incredible power of climate over time. I also want to specifically state that those that interchange climate and weather are simply delusional. Further, those that compare the destructive forces of weather events today with those of the past always fail to reconsider the vastly different population and economic factors that affect damages to human lives and costs of natural disasters.

Mr. Speaker, despite the best efforts of the people of Saskatchewan and my government, we are faced with a time in our history of unprecedented challenge. As you know, we've just come through a federal election where four of the six national leaders actually campaigned against our economy, and they were so bold as to specifically name Alberta and Saskatchewan and our premiers in their campaigns against Western Canada.

Mr. Speaker, we had Justin Trudeau, the now leader of a minority government, specifically campaign against three premiers in an unprecedented attack on the economic drivers of Canada. The result unfortunately is a divided Canada, arguably more so than during the first Trudeau iteration in the '80s when the National Energy Program was implemented to nationalize industry in favour of Eastern Canada.

With an active campaign against our primary industries supported by Bill C-48, designed to stop the movement of our energy products off the West Coast, and Bill C-69, designed to stop the development of pipeline capacity to move product across Canada, it is abundantly clear that the Trudeau government's intent is to starve Alberta and Saskatchewan industry into submission.

Mr. Speaker, the question is: why? Without our industry, some 20 per cent of the economy of Canada is at risk. Without it, tens of thousands of Maritimers, Ontarians, Quebecers, and others from every province and territory in support industries are out of work.

The public argument is it's all about the environment. Well if that's so, let's consider some facts. First, CO₂ is plant food. Second, the oil and gas industry is made up of many component parts, beginning with upstream development of the resources, the transportation of the products, the refining and petrochemical processes, and ultimately consumer use. It's my understanding that about 20 per cent of the beleaguered greenhouse gas conversation is actually attributable to the first part — the production, transportation, and refining. So that means that 80 per cent is attributable to consumers.

Another small but important point is that the Canadian oil and gas industry actually represents about 0.6 per cent of global emissions, while the widely reported number of 1.6 per cent is the entirety of Canada's contributions.

Let's take a realistic look at what oil and gas actually contributes to our lives. Let's begin by acknowledging that the population of the world has quadrupled in the past 100 years, largely because of the advent of low-cost energy. Let's move more specifically to the things that the four national leaders — Trudeau, Singh, May, Blanchet — actively campaigned to remove from our economy. For argument's sake we need to understand if they are specifically saying they want to shut down the Canadian industry in favour of the global industry. Take note that none of them campaigned against the global industry, just us.

So let's begin with obvious things they see that we can do without in the future. The internal combustion engine is history, so therefore no cars, trucks, tractors, combines, saw mills, motorcycles, pumps, etc. Of course without oil there wouldn't be any grease, so that means the end of pretty much anything that has wheels, including certain methods of transportation of the

Leader of the Opposition. They might argue that we can go back to pine tar and whale oil but those industries will be shut down entirely by the environmental movement. It really doesn't matter because they are having us give up pavement and concrete. There won't be any international trade because bunker fuel, used by tankers, is the worst kind of fuel in the world. The airline industry ceases to exist because I really don't think we will see solar passenger planes in the near future. That's the end of the cruise industry and on the upside we won't have to put up with the insufferable agitation of the travelling anti-oil crusaders.

I could go on about the big-scale consequences, but let's look at some of the little things they are willing for us to give up. All of these things have elements of petrochemical ingredients. Plastics of any kind, so any packaging including sterilized equipment, disposable syringes, milk jugs, and oh yes by the way, not to be replaced by the famous paper straws and packaging because they will have also shut down the forestry industry. Fertilizers, carpeting, crayons, dyes, wax detergent, insulation, paint, and furniture. Glasses, contact lenses, false teeth, penicillin and aspirin, artificial limbs, makeup, lipstick, pantyhose, resins used in the manufacture of drugs for the treatment of cancer, AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome], and arthritis. Canned foods and nylon clothing, cellphones, TVs, computers. And don't forget those pesky electric cars because we will have done away with the manufacturing capability. And I guess it really doesn't matter because we wouldn't have a road to drive them on anyway. These things do not exist in the NDP, Green, BQ [Bloc Québécois], and current Liberal view of the world according to their platforms.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, the point is that no one seems to be sitting down and having a rational conversation with these national leaders and their special-interest supporters. Can we transition to new fuels and other materials? Absolutely. According to some though the world is done in 5 years or 10 years, or by 2030 or by 2050. These folks are going to be deeply disappointed by the timing. However, they are certainly welcome to lead the way by going back to the caves, leaving behind their cellphones, tents, clothes, and all the garbage they tend to leave after the latest campaign.

Mr. Speaker, two particular comments have come out over the past few weeks and months that are repeated ad nauseam by the end-of-the-world crowd. One is that the science is settled, and two, conservatives had no environmental plan. Mr. Speaker, for anybody with any intelligence to say the science is settled, well let's say that they can go back to the Flat Earth Society and live in the world where they will fall off the earth if they reach beyond what they can see. If the science is settled, let's just send all those scientists home because their work is clearly done.

For those that say conservatives don't have an environmental plan, they simply have not taken any time whatsoever to open their minds to the reality that it is with on-the-ground action that environmental issues can and will be addressed. Our Prairie Resilience plan includes specific action items. Most egregious was a *Globe and Mail* reporter last week stating the conservatives have no plan because they are only relying on science and technology. What ignorance. Clearly he is of the belief that the new government can wave its taxation wand and make everything better.

So on that note, may I take a moment with this segue to politically correct speech. Having just lived through a rather nasty election and having observed rising tensions, perhaps a brief discussion on political correctness is in order. The fundamental essence of democracy is freedom of speech. The respect for individual values, beliefs, opinions, is foundational to civil discourse. In the process of censoring our history, we are essentially disrespecting our forefathers, for it is they who fought valiant fights to overcome the challenges of the day. Is it our place to rewrite history when we do not know the full context of the times, the players, the story behind the story, nor do we appreciate the limitations of the day?

Thomas Sowell, an American economist and social theorist, said, “In this era of political correctness, some people seem unaware that being squeamish about words can mean being blind to realities.” How have we arrived at a time when social justice warriors can shut down free speech at universities, which are supposed to be the bastions of development of critical thinking? What corner did we miss where it became appropriate to call anything and everything a crisis or an apocalypse or genocide or catastrophic failure? Who decided we are done moving forward in learning from our past and working toward doing better in the future?

Mr. Speaker, conflict has always been part of human history. The migration of peoples has been a reality since the dawn of time. Asia, Europe, Africa, the Americas are all a result of the mobility of people. Arguably throughout history it is three fundamental things that have driven conflict. They are religion, race, and greed, not on an individual, personal level as much as by the political will of small minorities while silent majorities are shuttered by various forms of political correctness.

Mr. Speaker, I have travelled a reasonable amount and I have seen racism everywhere I have been. A race was once defined as follows, and I quote: “A race is a grouping of humans based on shared physical or social qualities into categories generally viewed as distinct by society.” The term was first used to refer to speakers of a common language, and then to denote national affiliations.

Mr. Speaker, by this definition I grew up in a world where racism existed at every turn. Immigrants from every nation-state made jokes or defined another nation-state by some derogatory descriptor. Today racism is more defined by the colour of skin or particular physical traits, and racism by this definition exists across the world. On a recent trip to Vietnam, it was absolutely evident that as a nation they are experiencing a similar race history as we would have 50 to 100 years ago. I’ve also seen it in other Asian states, in Europe, and across the Americas.

Is it rational to expect racism will simply disappear when it has existed throughout human history? Perhaps a rational conversation about understanding each other’s personal and collective journey might be more appropriate. I, for example, cannot unsee what I have seen. I cannot unlearn what I have learned. I cannot un-hear what I have heard. I cannot un-experience what I have experienced. My values and beliefs are no less important than yours. They are shaped by my personal history, which is not remotely like yours. Collectively we need to come to some understanding around that perspective.

Why is it that some people can speak their values, beliefs, and dogma while others are open to absolute social censorship? Claiming to be offended is a great way to elevate yourself at the expense of others — look at me, I am a much better person than you, and I judge you, I condemn you. Political correctness kills civil discourse on important matters. We are at a point where everyone believes that they have a right, but very few understand that rights come with accountability and responsibility. We need to have civil conversation about important topics without the arbitrary limitations of political correctness, particularly at this time. If we think this is a national issue only, we are dead wrong. This is a global pushback at every level that is fed up by the tyranny of political correctness. The silent majority is fed up with their voices not being heard.

Frankly, Mr. Speaker, if we want civil discourse to be the measure, we collectively need to be a little more forgiving and we need to use the concept of the talking stick to allow all voices to be heard fully, openly, and without prejudice.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I fully support my government’s Speech from the Throne and wholly reject the amendment put forward opposite. Thank you.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It’s my pleasure to enter into a debate about the response to the Throne Speech here, which is the topic we are supposed to be on. I felt like the last was a little bit bizarre, but I will get us back on track here, Mr. Speaker, and I will talk about the Throne Speech.

Before I do that, I want to spend a little bit of time talking about some of the important people in my life who allow me to do my job in this building and outside this building, Mr. Speaker.

One of those is my constituency assistant, Twyla Harris, who works tirelessly in the office holding down the fort and managing all the casework that comes in — whether it’s for our constituency or not — and especially a lot of the health casework that comes in in the province. So I want to thank her for everything she does to keep the ship going. And we have a number of casual CAs [constituency assistant] that help out in our office as well, so I want to thank them for the time that they put in, and particularly the time they put in over the past month here.

On the home front I have to thank my partner, Grayson, who spends a lot of time at home without me while I’m here in session, deals with my very full evenings and weekends with a smile on his face, and is quite supportive of me and has been since the first day of this process. So I want to thank him for that support. As well, we don’t have any kids at home but we do have a little puppy that we got this spring, who is now a very big puppy, that he spends a lot of time looking after. And of course he’s a single dog dad while I’m away, so he has to find time to run home and play with the puppy while I’m gone too.

In addition to that, we have a number of caucus staff members who help us out on a daily basis. So I want to thank everyone from the caucus team who spends time assisting. And if I start calling out names, I feel like I’ll leave people out. But I want to

give a special nod to Kat Norton who does a lot of the health research. So I work very closely with her and thank her for constantly being willing to answer my questions and indulge me on a very quick timeline.

I'm going to get into some of the content of the Throne Speech now here, starting out with just an overall reaction to what some of the content isn't that's contained here. Overall as I was reading through the Throne Speech, I was feeling a little bit let down. I was feeling like the government that we have here right now isn't acknowledging a very severe state that exists both in education and in health care, a crisis in our classrooms and also in our emergency rooms. We saw nothing going toward those issues in this Throne Speech. It spends a lot of time relying on pointing back into the past rather than looking into the future, while ignoring the recent challenges that have existed in this province and the recent cuts and failures.

We know that when parents are thinking about education, they want their kids to be in well-funded schools that can adequately support them, not overcrowded classrooms. We know that when we drive to a hospital, we expect that we should be able to get the care that we need in emergency departments and that there won't be this backlog in the whole system that will impact us. And we won't be facing long wait times or dealing with hallway medicine, which is completely unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

So the Throne Speech ignores some of these facts. It ignores the fact that per-student funding has fallen each of the last three years — we're talking about hundreds of dollars here — and that we can talk about the same thing happening in terms of a per capita basis in the health care funding decreasing per capita. So these are some real concerns that we expected to see addressed, and sadly do not see in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

To start out, the news release that the government put out really talks about this theme of growth, but I think that they are forgetting that Saskatchewan has not grown at the same pace as other provinces. There was a news article as recently as September 30th of 2019 that talks about and compares us to a national average of growth. And the title of it was "Saskatchewan is growing, but more slowly than most provinces." And I took some time to look through it. It specifically talks about how Saskatchewan is growing more slowly than the Canadian average . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And the members opposite seem very interested in this, so I will encourage them to participate by getting up and entering the debate as well, Mr. Speaker.

And with growth comes responsibility. We need to look after these people and we need to make sure the supports are there for these services.

I will spend a little bit more time talking about my take on the health aspects of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, as any diligent Health critic would do. When we're talking about health care funding — this came up today and we were talking about the per capita decrease in health funding — we were the only province to see a decrease on the CIHI [Canadian Institute for Health Information] report last year. Every other province saw an increase. And we're not comparing ourselves to other provinces here, Mr. Speaker. We're comparing apples to apples, and the benchmark that's been provided is Saskatchewan last year versus Saskatchewan this year in terms of per capita calculation. It's

easy for people to turn a blind eye and to dismiss those facts, but I feel like they are an important starting point for a conversation here, Mr. Speaker.

[15:00]

My colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale and I spent a lot of time driving around in Saskatchewan this summer and talking to concerned folks in communities, health care providers, doing tours of facilities and opening up conversations with the public as well. And now we have also launched a health care survey to hear from folks directly, because one of the concerns that we consistently hear from people is that, whether they are patients or health care providers, they don't feel like they can come forward and be protected. So they're afraid that there's going to be negative consequences if they come forward, particularly providers. They don't want to bite the hand that feeds them.

So we wanted to provide the survey as a way to allow people to come forward in a way where they'll feel protected and they'll feel like they can have their voices heard. And we've already heard a number of concerns coming forward so far, and many of them are related to some of the issues we raised in question period today as we talk about patients facing hallway medicine, patients facing long wait times in hospitals.

There's some back-patting about doctors and nurses in the Throne Speech here, again looking back and not looking forward, Mr. Speaker. And I'm glad that funding for health care came up today in question period. We need to talk about what some of the required expenses are in health care. The cost of needed repairs in our health facilities has grown from \$2.2 billion to 3.3 billion in just three years, and I would expect that number has grown since that was captured.

They cut funding for recruitment and retention, if we want to talk about doctors and nurses as well. There's a claim that there are shorter surgical wait times, but there's 7,300 more people on a wait list for surgery than there was in 2016. So there's no desire on the part of this government to even acknowledge the past few years. They're sort of pretending like those past few years don't exist.

There's a claim that there's more long-term care beds, and they've tripled the seniors' income plan benefit. But at the same time they've hiked long-term care fees for half the seniors in the province. They've hiked the cost of prescriptions for 120,000 seniors. And they've eliminated the hearing aid plan and coverage for podiatry, which we've heard about a number of negative implications for, Mr. Speaker.

We've heard issue after issue with the major capital projects that the government's back-patting themselves for here. With the children's hospital, we've heard concerns about it not being adequately staffed and what the implications are going to be for patient care there. We've also heard concerns that there are less beds at the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital than in RUH, because you can't double up the rooms in the same way that you could at RUH when there was a need to increase capacity, and of course something that made the news this fall as we heard about concerns of patient safety coming from psychiatrists who toured the building as well.

At the Sask Hospital in North Battleford we've heard a string of concerns. It needs a new roof even though it's a new building. This is on top of the insulation problems that already existed. And now we're hearing that we can't drink the water there and that there's lead and copper in the water. We don't know how long that's been there for. We don't know what the risk has been to staff that work at the facility, or patients that have been there, or how long this has been happening for. There's no indication of any of that, Mr. Speaker. And what we do know is that it's not related to the city of North Battleford, so that raises a lot of questions about how this happened.

We know that there is a real cost to these issues coming up at Sask Hospital, so it's unacceptable for the minister to say that there hasn't been a cost to the public. Patients have been displaced due to these problems. They've had to be moved around. The facility's not full because they haven't been able to accept new patients because they're in the process of moving folks around. So there has been a real impact on community. There are costs that are associated with this as well.

In talking about the increases for mental health and addictions funding, I just want to point out that they don't specify how much of this money was federal money. They sort of bring all the federal money into the budget and collapse it into one category and make it look like all that money is coming from the province even when it's directed federal funding. They don't talk about the underfunding of CBOs [community-based organizations]. We're hearing from lots of health CBOs that are struggling to get by and constantly being asked to do more with less.

They bring up the conversation about organ donation, but there's no mention of an expansion of any program beyond what we heard about in the budget last year. So they're just sort of re-announcing their registry. The registry's important, but the day after it was announced people started asking me how they could sign up to be an organ donor. So people are waiting for this. They're trying to figure out why it isn't out there yet. And we're hearing from so many folks that there's so many different ways that organ donation can be improved, like adding more donor physicians into the equation so that someone's there to have that conversation with patients when it is the appropriate time.

I'm on page 10 now, Mr. Speaker, for anyone who's following along with the Throne Speech in hand. There's talk about an investment in STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service]. This government promised a ground ambulance review over 10 years ago. We've been talking about a ground ambulance review for 10 years. We asked about it in the spring and they said, we're still doing consultation. I don't know how much more consultation you need to do to be able to understand that people are being hurt by the fact that we don't have caps to our ambulance fees. People are being really hurt by inter-facility transfers. It's not even their decision to get the ambulance when they're being transferred from one facility to another.

And we are constantly hearing about other issues that involve ambulances in our province as well, like zero alerts, where one time per day when you call for an ambulance in Saskatoon, there is not one available. And it's an average of . . . It's over one per day actually, because there was around 400 incidents that were reported last year, which is really quite scary. And I feel like

people don't have this information, and we need to be able to make sure that we are acting on behalf of the people of this province. It might be hard to do but we need to get to work and make it happen.

They're also re-announcing the community health centres that were opened. The idea here was that they would provide services for seniors. I heard from a constituent that needed to get a referral from a family doctor to go to one of those community health centres, so I'm not sure how that's supposed to streamline the process, Mr. Speaker.

Another discussion about surgical wait times. It's hard to fathom how they got out of control again. And maybe if they don't abandon the initiative this time it will stay under control, but there are a lot of folks waiting for surgery across this province.

I'll make a few comments about education and what's here, or rather not here, in terms of education in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. There's no discussion about the decrease in per-student funding of hundreds of dollars. We know that, even from question period today, that schools were built that weren't big enough from the get-go. We've heard about the overcrowding at Harbour Landing School in Regina. But we also have heard about this all over the place, as we saw new schools opening up that had portables attached to them and the tremendous cost of those portables. And adding those portables right at the time of opening just shows a lack of foresight in terms of being able to understand where things are going in terms of the demographics of the province.

I think that there are quite a few people who would take issue with the fact that there is back-patting going on over intensive needs supports in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. We had an extensive conversation about this in Public Accounts Committee, where we were looking at the good work of the Province Auditor and intensive supports needs that exist in the Saskatoon area. I know that there are issues with our funding model in education that don't address the actual number of intensive support students that exist in a region but sort of forecast it broadly based on general demographic information that they get from Stats Canada.

So I raise the question about, you know, could we not get actual information from school boards? If this is something that's being reported already, how could this not be factored into the funding model? We have schools like John Dolan in Saskatoon that have to hire a nurse in order to deal with the intensive support needs of their students, and that money is all coming out of the education budget. So it raises a lot of questions about how fair all of this shakes out, Mr. Speaker.

There's also talk about post-secondary education in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. And we know that budget cuts at the provincial level, deliberate actions by the government, have amounted to about 4 per cent less spending on post-secondary operating funding. A 4 per cent cut doesn't sound like very much, but we're talking about, in 2017 the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] called it the single biggest cut to funding that they'd ever seen. And that funding hasn't been restored, Mr. Speaker.

The impacts: it's meant job losses, including fewer contracts for

sessional lecturers . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It's interesting that the Advanced Ed minister is chiming in here, Mr. Speaker. I used to be a sessional lecturer, and I know that she did as well. So let's talk about what the funding cuts have meant for sessional lecturers at the University of Saskatchewan.

Between last year and this year, there was a 27 per cent reduction in classes that were taught by sessional lecturers and a 22.6 per cent reduction in the number of sessional lecturers teaching. That's less jobs, Mr. Speaker. Our College of Medicine was in danger of losing its accreditation. The graduate retention program was gutted. And last year, student tuition in the College of Arts and Science at the U of S rose by 4.8 per cent.

This year we know that direct financial supports for students have been cut, making post-secondary less accessible for low-income students, which is something that matters quite a bit to me, Mr. Speaker. We know that failing to invest in education leads to so many more issues down the road. Attending post-secondary is a predictor of income. Income is a social determinant of health. In fact they call it the determinant of determinants. If you can have a stable income in your life, you're going to do so much better in life. And we know that post-secondary and being able to access post-secondary is a key component to that, Mr. Speaker, a hand up to those in need.

So on page 12 the government's talking about the new Saskatchewan income support program, SIS. I have to talk about some of the issues that we've heard come forward in my constituency office about these changes. We've heard concerns about the new program requiring direct deposit. Some folks, our marginalized populations, don't always have a bank account, Mr. Speaker.

Losing the letter of guarantee, the loss of funding for utilities, the money going directly to clients rather than landlords, delays in processing of five to six weeks, I know that the minister has to be aware of these issues. In Public Accounts we had a very frank conversation about it with officials. They told us they are aware of these issues, and with such a large-scale program change of this nature, I just hope that we don't see more people being evicted, more people ending up on the streets. We're going into winter, Mr. Speaker, and there are a number of community groups and people that work with housing organizations that are quite concerned about what these changes mean for our vulnerable populations across the province. So it would probably be good if the minister would listen, instead of chiming in as well, because these are real concerns that we are hearing.

As we talk about crime, we know that we need to address root causes of crime. When we see the populations in our prisons growing, we know more than ever that addressing those root causes is absolutely key. We also know that we need a crystal meth strategy in this province. In the touring around that we did this summer, we hear about it everywhere. We hear about it across the board and it is absolutely required and long overdue.

I think my time is depleting here, Mr. Speaker, but I do want to say that I think it's rich that there is a conversation about strong fiscal management when we know that we're on track for \$23 billion in debt, tripling the debt. It's hard to understand how that's considered strong fiscal management.

[15:15]

It's great to see that there's legislation coming forward on vaping and vaping products. We've been hearing in particular lately about many concerns from respirologists, folks that know a lot more about what's happening at the chemical level in lungs than I do, about the dangers of vaping or use of e-cigarettes. These studies have existed in the US [United States] for a while, but the act of vaping has had a huge uptake with youth in particular across the province. We hear from folks in the education sector that they are dealing with it constantly, so we need to see regulation at the provincial level for sure. And there's been some good folks advocating for this as well.

Overall, Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech is not something that I'm going to be supporting. I will be supporting the amendment that was put forward by my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana. I can't support the Throne Speech because it fails to address the crisis in our classrooms and our emergency rooms. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm honoured to rise in my place on behalf of the constituents of the Weyburn-Big Muddy constituency and speak to the Speech from the Throne that was delivered last week by the Lieutenant Governor, Mr. Speaker. And first and foremost just want express my appreciation to my constituents that have given me the opportunity to do this on a number of occasions, Mr. Speaker, and it is an honour to represent the good people of the Weyburn-Big Muddy constituency.

Before I speak to some of the things that were in the Throne Speech and how they may impact my constituents, Mr. Speaker, I do want to thank the staff that I get a chance to work with each and every day here in my office here in Regina, Mr. Speaker. And I particularly want to thank my constituency assistant Marcie, who is going on into now nearly her 20th year of being a constituency assistant for the people of the Weyburn-Big Muddy constituency. But, Mr. Speaker, I also want to note that for Marcie and her family this is also a difficult day as her mother-in-law passed away early this morning, Mr. Speaker. So I want to extend my condolences to her and Blair and their entire family, Mr. Speaker, and I certainly am thinking about them today.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank my family. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Amanda who I think is . . . I'll give a bit of an update on my family, Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence. As members I think will know, Amanda enjoys music and singing and writing. And so I'm happy to report that she's back at it, Mr. Speaker, and doing some writing and some singing. So you're all invited out. You know, the next Sunday that she's up I'll invite you out and you can hear her sing, Mr. Speaker, and maybe stick around for the good news after, Mr. Speaker. And she's mainly at home right now, Mr. Speaker, and is just the most incredible wife and mother, Mr. Speaker, to our three children. And so I thank her for her support and her encouragement, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to thank our children. Our son Jack, Jack is five years old. He's in kindergarten, Mr. Speaker. And I don't think anybody could've explained that even at five years old, the conversations that he and I would be able to have, Mr. Speaker.

I am learning so much from him. I'm learning about what he's learning about and through a five-year-old set of eyes, Mr. Speaker. And we just have some of the most amazing conversations. And you know, when I get to put him to bed at night, Mr. Speaker, and some of the things that we talk about that he's learned in school or maybe learned in Sunday school, Mr. Speaker, or picking him up after school and ask him what he learned about. And he'll say, you know, he learned about . . . What did you do in school today? And he'll say, well we did recess twice and we did lunch and we did, you know, played after school and before school. And I'll say, well what did you learn? What kind of school work did you do? And you know, he'll say to me, well we did fish math today, Dad, but I don't think you'll get it. You know, Jack Alexander is just, he's just a special boy, Mr. Speaker, and I love him so much.

His younger brother, Ephram Henry, is two and a half years old. And so now with Jack away at school for a couple days a week, we're seeing this new, little personality that's not having to compete with his brother and not having to . . . You know, in the past it was respond to the fights, but now it's maybe instigating the fights a little bit because he's a little bit of a bigger boy, Mr. Speaker. But he's just a sweet boy, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, you know, he's starting to talk more and more now, and a lot of it's just repeating what he hears. So, you know, we're on guard to make sure that we're saying the right things because he's probably going to repeat what mom and dad have to say and his older brother as well, Mr. Speaker.

And then in April along came Penelope. And, Mr. Speaker, April 20th was a wonderful day in our household, Mr. Speaker. That's my mother's birthday and it's also the day that Penelope was born. So she was born, she arrived and, you know, we got to share this wonderful experience with so many people. And in fact, the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood his, I think, grandson was born around, I think on the same day. And so I'm leaving the hospital to go home to see the boys and tell them the good news and we run into the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood. And so, you know, we got to share this experience together, Mr. Speaker. So it was so great to see a familiar, a warm face, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, what I'll also never forget, Mr. Speaker, is being able to go and tell the boys that their sister had been born. And my mother-in-law and my sister-in-law were watching the boys, Mr. Speaker, and being able to tell my mother-in-law that Penelope's middle name, Nalla, is my father-in-law's first name, Allan, in reverse. And Allan passed away about a year ago, a year and a half ago, and so obviously he wasn't there to share in this special day. But just to see my mother-in-law's face, knowing that, you know, we included her husband, my father-in-law, in this special occasion was something that I'll never forget, Mr. Speaker.

So to Jack and Ephram and Penelope, I love you so much. You just make me want to be a better person each and every day, Mr. Speaker. And I'll say this to the person that would harm those three children, Mr. Speaker: I would gladly give up my government ministry for a prison ministry any day of the week.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about the Throne Speech and the way that it affects my constituency, Mr. Speaker. And I would say that I represent — I know we would all argue

this, Mr. Speaker — but I represent, I think, some of the hardest working people in this province. And I would say to the people that are still trying to get a crop off here almost at the end of October that, you know, this has been a very difficult year. We've already had some challenges with some market access issues, and obviously the weather is not being helpful, Mr. Speaker.

And so I would certainly . . . I hope to be able to share this as well. I know the Minister of Agriculture is going to be in Weyburn next week for our annual farmers' appreciation, Mr. Speaker. But for producers in all areas of this province that have had a tough, difficult year, especially a difficult harvest, that there is help available, Mr. Speaker, through the Farm Stress Line. And so I just would encourage all of our producers who are trying to get their crop off just to also, you know, take care of themselves, take care of their hired hands and their families, Mr. Speaker. You know, just let's get the crop off, but let's make sure we're safe this fall, Mr. Speaker.

And I also want to say . . . and it's not that we just have two industries. People are employed in my constituency in a variety of ways, but obviously agriculture is a big part of that, and oil as well. And, Mr. Speaker, you know, it's been a difficult couple of years in the oil industry and, you know, hopefully that whatever came out of this federal election, Mr. Speaker, certainly I think it's a message that we've sent from this part of the world, this part of the country, Mr. Speaker, that these are important industries. They employ a lot of people. They provide a lot of good-paying jobs for people that work hard, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we just don't want to live in the basement anymore, Mr. Speaker.

And you know, we just hope that that message was heard and we hope that we're able to continue to contribute what we can to this country and to this world, and do so in a way that can support families, Mr. Speaker. Because I know in my constituency, you know, there has been times over the last years where you just need to look at the number of kids that are in a preschool class at the beginning of school and how many of those kids are gone six months later, Mr. Speaker, because their families just have not been able to stay in the communities.

So we will do, I think, what we can do, Mr. Speaker, to try to provide that support and that help to those communities. Specifically in terms of government initiatives, I know that we announced in this year, in the budget, Mr. Speaker, we're moving into the final phase of planning for a new hospital in Weyburn. And I know that that certainly is at the top of mind for my constituents.

I know the passing lanes have been very well received for people that drive on Highway 6 and 39, to and from Regina to Weyburn now and through to Estevan, Mr. Speaker. And we're continuing with work on that.

Mr. Speaker, I was very honoured to attend a water reservoir expansion opening in Weyburn that's over a \$6 million project that's very vital to the community, an expansion of the water treatment plant at Ogema, Mr. Speaker.

We broke ground on a new elementary school in Weyburn this spring that will be a community partnership with the city of Weyburn that will have a community recreational centre attached

to the school. And that's been very well received, Mr. Speaker.

And I also do want to mention, I want to thank members that were able to attend — and I know that, I think, almost all of cabinet attended — the Oil and Gas Show that was held in Weyburn. This is something that's held every two years, Mr. Speaker, in Weyburn. And for the first time ever we had premiers from both Alberta and Saskatchewan attend, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you, I have been running around the grounds of the Weyburn curling rink and the Colosseum on the grounds where the oil show has taken place, I think, since I was about 12 years old. Probably 10, 12 years old the first time I ever attended, Mr. Speaker. In fact my brother and I — he's a couple years older — our dad works in the oil industry and so, you know, for us this was a pretty big deal, Mr. Speaker. And I remember when we were kids, we'd run around and get as many stickers from the different companies, and I think I would collect business cards. I think my brother went and collected the stickers, but I was collecting business cards, Mr. Speaker.

But anyways, I can tell you that the luncheon that the Premier spoke at . . . You know, I think in a good year a couple hundred people would attend the luncheon. And in a really good year in terms of price, in terms of the price of oil, when everybody's in a celebratory mood, I think the first five or six tables would actually pay attention and the rest of the room would be, you know, talking amongst themselves. And the award show, it was kind of hard to really follow it the further back that you were in the crowd, Mr. Speaker. But you know, usually 150 people, that was a pretty good crowd. I think there was 800 people that attended this event, Mr. Speaker, and you could have heard a pin drop. And so I want to thank the oil show board. And I want to thank the two premiers and the cabinet that attended, because, you know, it was a really big deal, Mr. Speaker, and it was very much appreciated.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think for the most part that's all I'll really touch on in terms of the Throne Speech and the impact that it has on my constituency, Mr. Speaker. I want to talk a little bit about some of the initiatives that we were able to bring forward as a part of both the Ministry of Environment and SaskPower, Mr. Speaker. I'll talk really briefly just on the work that SaskPower is doing on furthering the work of reducing emissions while also exploring new technologies, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

So we've set a goal as a province to reduce our electrical emissions by 40 per cent from 2005 levels by 2030, Mr. Speaker, and I think we're certainly well on our way on doing that. But, Mr. Speaker, I think that there are opportunities that we could actually exceed that 40 per cent over the coming decades and beyond, Mr. Speaker. And so NRCAN [Natural Resources Canada] approached a number of jurisdictions about two years ago to ask for input on how we would see a path forward for the deployment of small modular reactors in Canada, Mr. Speaker. And SaskPower took part in that process, Mr. Speaker.

There were over 50 recommendations that the group that came together to explore this road map idea. So the road map was actually presented back to the federal government last November with those 50-plus recommendations. And we're going to follow

the progress of particularly OPG [Ontario Power Generation] and New Brunswick Power as they are pursuing different technology sources, Mr. Speaker. And you know, certainly it's one of the options that could be available the next decade and beyond in terms of emissions-free electricity production, Mr. Speaker.

We are also pursuing significant growth in renewable energy, Mr. Speaker, in this province. And we've had an opportunity to talk in this House last week about rooftop solar and the role that it will continue to play going forward, Mr. Speaker. And I'm sure there will be future questions from the members on that, Mr. Speaker.

But I can imagine, you know, I'll just say I can imagine the frustration from the members opposite, you know, from a party that I think try to position themselves as being an environmentally friendly party, Mr. Speaker. And you know, I think despite the fact that they presided over a time of emissions growth, of over 70 per cent emissions growth in this province, but despite that, Mr. Speaker, I still think that members opposite, you know, pride themselves on being environmental stewards or environmental champions. And I can just imagine . . . Because they certainly don't think that about us. You know, they certainly don't think that that's the position that we take, Mr. Speaker.

So I can imagine the NDP, they get together, and it must be a scene right out of *Monty Python*, right? Like you know, what has this Saskatchewan Party government, you know, what have they ever done on renewable energy? Nothing. They've done nothing on it. They've done nothing on it. Well except the Blue Hill wind project and the Western Lily wind project and the Capstone Riverhurst wind project and the Golden South wind project and the 300 megawatts that they've just . . . But other than that they haven't done much. They haven't done anything.

Yes, but what about also the Saturn 10-megawatt solar project and the next 10-megawatt solar project and the 20 megawatts that they've set aside for the First Nations Power Authority? But other than, they've done nothing. They've done nothing. But don't forget the 10 megawatts of hydro power that they're buying from Manitoba and the 215-megawatt power purchase agreement that they now have from Manitoba and the 5 megawatts of geothermal power that they're going to purchase, Mr. Speaker, the first of its kind in Canada. But other than that, nothing. They haven't done anything on renewable energy.

An Hon. Member: — Absolutely nothing.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well I want to thank the member from Saskatoon Centre. At least he's paying attention, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, so you know, I just want to make sure that the members opposite are fully aware of what the plan is in terms of reducing our emissions, Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House, that we obviously, you know, look forward to hopefully going forward with some decisions around baseload power.

Certainly we have the Chinook power plant that we are going to be opening imminently, very soon, soon, very soon, Mr. Speaker. And Moose Jaw, we're going to be making a decision on that whether to go forward with that, Mr. Speaker. But I think that's an important one, and I want to thank the member from Rosemont for prompting me on that one because I didn't have it in my notes but I do now, Mr. Speaker.

And I think this is an important point for me to say in terms of the importance of ensuring that the federal government knows the consequences of the regulations that they put in place, Mr. Speaker. And this is not new. This is not new because we already had this with the Shand power plant, Mr. Speaker, where we had the opportunity under federal regulations to operate a coal-fired power plant to 2030 or beyond, depending on its retirement date, Mr. Speaker. And so now that the regulations changed a couple years ago, now that that's off the table, it's 2030 or retirement date, whatever comes first, Mr. Speaker. And we know that we may be forced to strand an asset 12 years before its retirement date, an asset that we've all paid for, Mr. Speaker. And now the same is true . . .

So every jurisdiction is looking for lower emissions baseload power, Mr. Speaker. We certainly thought that one of the options that we have, whether it's going with CCS [carbon capture and storage] on future projects, Mr. Speaker, or in the case what we did with Chinook and what we're proposing to do with Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker, is bring forward natural gas which has lower emissions than conventional coal, unabated coal-fired generation, and consulted with the federal government on regulations that would allow us to move forward with that plan, Mr. Speaker, and with that plant.

And lo and behold, the day after we meet with the Environment minister at our FPT [federal-provincial-territorial] and there's no mention of those regulations, the next day after the meeting while she's jetting off to Brussels or somewhere, Mr. Speaker, they sent out a news release saying that the regulations have changed and are now final and essentially add a carbon tax on every single emission from that power plant by the end of 2030, Mr. Speaker, which will add significant cost to that. So there are, whether they are intended or unintended — and I think, Mr. Speaker, in the case of the federal government, they are intended consequences — but they certainly do us no good here. And again hopefully they got the message loud and clear from last week, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, so I will just close by saying that I think what our message to the federal government is going to continue to be is that we have a plan in Saskatchewan. It's a plan that will see reductions in our emissions, Mr. Speaker. It's a plan that does account for and take advantage of the natural sequestration and the created sequestration through technology, Mr. Speaker, and it's a plan that does report to the public in terms of our ability to be resilient to the changes of climate change.

Because we know, Mr. Speaker, we are 10 per cent of the world's . . . 1.6 per cent of global emissions, Mr. Speaker, and so we want to balance off doing our part to reduce our emissions while ensuring that people still have an opportunity to live, to work, and to raise their family here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and for us to continue to allow people in this province to produce the resources that not only fuel our economy but that fuel economies around the world, Mr. Speaker, whether that's in the potash, uranium, oil, or agricultural or other sectors going forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, I also want to note that we will have legislation coming forward on aquatic invasive species. I want to thank the member from The Battlefords that has really championed that issue, Mr. Speaker. We want to ensure that we can in a more timely fashion respond to those different species that may pose a risk to the province of Saskatchewan. Right now it's a bit

cumbersome, Mr. Speaker, and so we want to streamline that process and to be able to allow for a more timely response to that, Mr. Speaker.

And also finally, I do want to commend leadership that we are seeing, particularly, Mr. Speaker, with the Whitecap Dakota First Nation, Mr. Speaker. We've actually been able to sign a first-in-the-province agreement with Whitecap Dakota that essentially allows for the adoption of our provincial environment regulations on First Nations, Mr. Speaker. This was something that the leadership of that First Nation asked of the province so that they could essentially say to potential investors and potential developers that had questions about, you know, when they potentially were looking at investment on First Nation or perhaps in Corman Park or perhaps in Saskatoon, and the First Nation had wanted to be able to provide that certainty that our provincial environment regulations are the same on the First Nation as they are in the RM [rural municipality] as they are in the city, Mr. Speaker, and so there was a level playing field.

And that's a first of its kind, Mr. Speaker, in Canadian history, and it's something that I'm looking forward to highlighting next summer as we host the Environment ministers from across the country here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, of all the good work that we are doing in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, on the environment front, Mr. Speaker, and the leadership that I think that we are showing other provinces and other jurisdictions around the world.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I won't be supporting the amendment, but I will be supporting the Throne Speech. Thank you.

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

Mr. Olauson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to get on my feet and talk a little bit about Saskatoon University and how this Throne Speech is going to help guide us for the next year. Of course, you know, when people ask me, how do you like your job, how do you like what you do, Mr. Speaker, I tell them that every day I'm blessed to come into this place and do the work that we do and affect the changes and the policy that we have in this place. And I tell them that I'm very blessed and I'm very thankful for what I'm able to do here.

And of course we don't do that alone. As you've heard before, there's a number of people behind us working with us, and I'd like to say a few thank yous, first of all to my family. I've got a very supportive family. It's a fairly big, big family but everybody kind of pulls together and does what needs to be done, especially when we're down here in this place. It's not so bad when we're up in Saskatoon but, you know, my partner, DonnaLyn, looks after the house and cuts the grass. And hopefully she shovelled the walk today . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well I hope, I have to hope, right? I have to hope she did. I don't think she did. But I have a feeling that that didn't happen today. Or maybe my son, Connor who's 21, has shovelled the walk today because that actually should be his job. Is that better? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, good, good.

My son Connor is 21 and he's becoming a pilot and for that I'm very thankful. Hopefully he'll give us some quick rides to various places throughout Saskatchewan. And then we've got our three

daughters: Danielle, Abby, and Rebecka, and they are busy, busy, busy. They're in grade 9, 10, and grade 7. And they all play soccer and they all play football and they are involved in their school sports and they are involved in everything under the sun it seems like. They've got a very active social life and they keep us on our feet. And there's not a day that goes by that one of them isn't doing something or off doing something fun with their friends. So they are very busy young ladies but they also do a lot around the house. So I'm thankful for them.

And of course my CA, Maddie, does the yeoman's work in my office as I'm sure everybody else's CA does in theirs. She keeps me on time and gets me to where I need to go, when I need to be there. She looks after all the correspondence that comes into the office. And you know, every week, every Friday she keeps me informed on everything that's going on in our office. She sits me down and we have about a half-an-hour meeting and she tells me exactly what I need to do and when I need to do it.

It wouldn't be a reply to the Throne Speech without me mentioning our caucus staff as well. I've been blessed to become the caucus Chair and we work with fabulous staff. The member from Saskatoon Centre always reminds me of how good our staff is up in the caucus office. They look after all of our communications and they look after any member statements and all that fun stuff, and you know, we're very blessed to have them working with us. And I just want to, you know, give them a big shout-out because they deserve it. So up there we've got Taylor. We've got Kim, Chantel, Lee, Hayley, Michael, Karalee, Kendall, and of course John, the leader. And we couldn't do our jobs here on this side of the House without them.

[15:45]

We also have our House leadership team, who I quite frankly don't know when they sleep because they always seem to be working. And that's Michelle Lang and Kali Olynyk. They do a lot of work for us in House leadership.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatoon University. I have a very diverse community that I represent and I'm very thankful for that. We have people from all walks of life, from all professions. And each and every one of them, of the communities that I represent, are unique. We have five distinct community associations. We have five distinct areas within Saskatoon University. And you know, I'm blessed to represent them all. They all bring a little bit of something different to the table when we have discussions, and you know, I think that by listening to each and every one of them my vision and my view becomes even more broad, and the way that I represent those people here in Regina just grows every year.

And so now, well we're talking about growth, Mr. Speaker, and why it's important that our province grows and what are the benefits of that growth. And you know, it's pretty simple to see, from our point of view, what the benefits of growth are. The purpose of growth is to secure a better quality of life for all the people here in Saskatchewan. And we can look back and see what some of the benefits of that growth were. Over the past 12 years, of course, we've seen more hospitals, doctors, nurses, shorter surgical wait times; more schools, teachers, and funding for education; lower personal income tax and Saskatchewan people keeping more of the money that they earn; safer highways, more

police officers; more long-term care beds and tripling the seniors' income plan benefit, more child care spaces; more funding for post-secondary education, doubling of funding to municipalities, and over 70,000 students benefiting from the graduate retention program after graduation just simply by staying in Saskatchewan.

So when we look at some of the investments that our government has made over the last 12 years, you know, I can start in Saskatoon. Revenue sharing in 2007 was dismal and we made a commitment over on this side of the House when we were fortunate enough to form government in 2007, and we have more than doubled that to \$45 million last year, Mr. Speaker. And that allows the city of Saskatoon . . . And of course as a former city councillor, I can see where that money was spent that allowed us to fund various programs. We could spend that money as we saw fit and we did, in our roads and in our recreation services and in our infrastructure.

In Saskatoon we were also fortunate enough to have a couple of new bridges in the Traffic bridge and the Chief Mistawasis bridge that were opened just last year. And you know, that's also a benefit of growth. We needed those bridges. We needed the new route to get across to the north end where most of the employment is. And you know, of course, most of the people live over on the east side of Saskatoon and so we needed that. It was probably overdue, but we got that done because of our government's investments in those areas. You know, Saskatoon has certainly been the beneficiary of that.

And then, you know, we just this year opened the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital. And what does that mean for the people of Saskatchewan and the people in Saskatoon? And I can tell you that it was through the hard work of a lot of different people — Brynn Boback-Lane, for one — who had that vision to carry through just to last year. We've got the new hospital that has 176 new beds. We've got 70 physicians that are going to be operating in that hospital.

It's going to mean for me personally, Mr. Speaker, it's going to mean that my niece will be able to stay in Saskatoon, stay in Saskatchewan, get the care that she needs. I've spoke about it often in this place, but my brother and his family have had to travel all over North America actually to get some of the services. I mean it won't all be there in Saskatoon but, you know, a lot of the specialists that little Anna is going to need in the next few years can be located right in Saskatoon. And that just takes the stress off of the whole family, whether it's my mom that has to go and travel with my brother's family to Edmonton or Philadelphia or Calgary for these procedures for Anna. That causes stress on everyone, and it's not only financial but it's, you know, it's mental stress as well. So I'm very happy that our government has saw fit to invest in over \$250 million in that hospital because it will truly make a difference here in Saskatchewan and in Saskatoon.

One of the highlights of where I represent, Mr. Speaker, is obviously the university. And I get to spend a lot of time at the university. Almost every single week I'm there for at least one day. And despite the parking challenges that they have and the frustration that we have with the parking, it's a pretty neat place and they're doing fantastic work there. And that's why, you know, I'm proud that our government invested in the university. We don't understand exactly how many things go on at the

university and how diverse and how vast the things that they are doing there, whether it's research in technology or whether it's research in medicine, whether it's services that they're providing.

Last week we had an opportunity to tour VIDO-InterVac. And you know, a lot of people probably won't know about VIDO-InterVac if they've never been told about it. But it's fantastic. It's a level 3 infectious disease facility that you can go into, but you have to gown up and you have to wear the big masks and all those things because they're dealing with stuff that none of us really want to deal with. They're dealing with the Zika virus. They're dealing with the swine flu that's happening in China and decimating their swine herds. And you know, it's cutting-edge research, and they will come up with a vaccine or with an antidote to that, to the swine flu, I assume, very quickly.

You know, we invest in our universities, and in the U of S just last year it was \$331 million in operating funding. We invested 87, almost \$88 million in the College of Medicine to ensure that the college is successful, to provide that quality medical education to keep those doctors here, to keep them here in Saskatchewan and get them practising here. You know, there's a bunch of different things in here, Mr. Speaker. But you know, in 2009 for instance, there was \$15 million for U of S new-resident funding for graduate students. And you know, the list just keeps going on and on for our university.

You know, they are involved in so many different things. Whether it's athletics, whether it's research, whether it's innovation, what have you, Mr. Speaker, there's a number of things happening at the university that are very exciting. Like I said, I'm there probably at least once a week for an announcement or for new research that's coming out. And I'm happy to see that our university is thriving.

I am fortunate to work with a lot of good people over there: Dr. Peter Stoicheff is one; all the different deans, Michelle Prytula, Peta Bonham-Smith, Suzanne Kresta, all those deans that are doing really great, innovative work over at the university. Can't say enough about Sara Daniels, the government relations director at the university, who always helps us navigate what is the university bureaucracy.

You know, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of good things in this Throne Speech and I can't speak to all of it, but some of the things that I took out, and we don't say enough, is about education. You know, we hear a lot about how education, is a big deal in our province, and I agree. I agree it is, but we have to also put everything in context and take a look at what exactly is going on.

You know, part of the benefits of growth is that we have more students, more kids in our classrooms. And last year, last month actually, 191,000 pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to grade 12 students started their school year here. And I've got three of them in my family. That's an increase of almost 27,000 students since 2007, Mr. Speaker, something that we didn't see for many, many years prior to that. But in that same period, operating funding to the schools has increased by 34 per cent and investment in school capital is nearly five times higher.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there's a whole discussion going on about education, and I think that that's really a good positive step. I think the more we talk about it and the more people that we bring

into that conversation, the better the outcomes will be and I think the better decisions that we'll make. But we need to deal with facts and we need to deal with reality as well.

So you know, a growing province needs a well-educated workforce and that's when our post-secondary education field or post-secondary education partners come into play. And that's why in Saskatchewan operating funding has increased more than 50 per cent in the last 12 years. There's 80,000 students enrolled in Saskatchewan's universities and technical colleges this year. And 9 out of 10 post-secondary graduates are now choosing to stay and work in Saskatchewan after graduation.

I think that's a fantastic number. That is a number that we haven't heard or we didn't hear about for 16 years because, you know, to be quite frank, when people graduated from high school they left here.

An Hon. Member: — Luggage.

Mr. Olauson: — Luggage was the number one high school graduation gift. And people just up and left and that happened over and over and over.

And now talking to the dean of the Edwards School of Business, 87 per cent of their graduates stay here and work in Saskatchewan. And that's a low number. That's a conservative number, but 87 per cent of his students stay here and work here. Yes, they do.

Mr. Speaker, I think I'll close with a couple of more things that are important. We want to talk about legislation that we're going to bring in, in this session, and there was one that caught my eye. And I'm just trying to find it here.

Last spring we had a reception here at the legislature, an MLA reception. We go to a lot of them. We go to almost two or three every week. But one of them was a group of students, Mr. Speaker. And they came down to talk to us about vaping, and how you vape, and what's in vaping, and what it all entails. And it was really informative. You know, myself, I have very little to do with vaping in the past, and I haven't heard anything about it really. And all of a sudden these young people were educating me. And so I took the opportunity to listen and learn a little bit about vaping, and what it does, and what it was intended to do, and how you vape. And it really caught my eye that these young people were so passionate about it and so informed about it, and they'd really done their homework about what exactly vaping was. And so with the help of their instructor, Jennifer May, they brought forward a pretty persuasive argument on why vaping should be regulated, why vaping is, you know, not healthy, especially for young people.

Now I understand that vaping was brought in to help people like myself quit smoking — hasn't worked yet but maybe it will — and I understand that. But you know, I think the conversation or the direction of vaping has turned a little bit. And so I was really happy to see that, you know, in this session we're going to bring in legislation around vaping and perhaps controlling it a little bit and keeping it out of the hands of people like my three young daughters who are in high school. They don't need to start vaping. They don't need to start smoking. And hopefully we can help with this legislation.

That's all I really have to say for today, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the time. I won't be supporting the amendment, if that was even in question, and I will be supporting the Throne Speech. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

[16:00]

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's a pleasure today to get up and speak to the Speech from the Throne, "A New Decade of Growth." Mr. Speaker, I definitely can't speak near as eloquently as the member from Cannington, who is going to be retiring this year. Of course he's been here way longer than I have — a lot longer — and he . . . Actually, you know, I think when he first came here they still had ashtrays and spittoons in the Legislative Building here. But he also was a founding member for the Saskatchewan Party and we appreciate everything he has done over the many years that he has been involved here. And he gave a great speech the other day. And I want to thank him for everything that he has done.

Mr. Speaker, it has been an honour and a privilege for myself to have been here for just about 12 years and listening to all the things that have been going on. And I want to thank the people of Carrot River Valley. And I don't know if many people knew it — probably people on the other side didn't know it — but I was actually challenged in the nomination this year. And we had a very good nomination and I was lucky enough to be successful at it. And so apparently a lot of the people in Carrot River Valley still don't know me.

But anyway I wanted to talk a little bit about Carrot River Valley and some of the things that have been going on in there. You know, we were very fortunate this year in Carrot River Valley; we didn't get stuck with that snow that hit down south. We got started early on the seeding end of it. Farming is very important in our constituency. And so consequently we got the crops off in good time and had good, good yields and good quality. Now everybody up there has dryers. I'll get into the carbon tax on the dryers later on. But, Mr. Speaker, it was a successful year up there. And I want to thank all the farmers in Carrot River Valley who have done such a wonderful job. And they're very innovative farmers up there. If there's going to be something new to try, they are the ones that'll do it.

We also . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I hear some complaints from some of the people that farm in the South here, but that's okay. And I was going to mention forestry which, you know, the people in the South don't know what trees are either. Our forest companies are doing quite well up there. Right within Carrot River Valley constituency, we have two plants. We have a stud mill in Carrot River — Edgewood Forest Products — actually just taken over by Dunkley forest products out of British Columbia. This is good news. This is people from other provinces who are trusting us. They actually moved . . . They originally started in Carrot River, moved out to British Columbia at that time when the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] was in, and now they have come back to Saskatchewan because they've seen the opportunities here with the Saskatchewan Party government rather than the NDP. We also have Weyerhaeuser over in Hudson Bay who makes strand

board and they have done . . . They are going full bore also.

Mr. Speaker, we have to remember these plants all shut down when the NDP was in power, so it's kind of amazing the way things work. Now I'm not going to say it was all the NDP's fault because the logging industry was down at that time.

And then we have our peat moss industry up there, which is a very good industry. It employs a lot of people, probably employs about 150 people in Carrot River Valley. Now at one time under the NDP government, they thought it would be a great idea to take over the peat moss industry, and they did for a little while. Found out that they didn't know how to run it — go figure. And it went back into the private sector and the private sector is doing very, very well at it.

There's a few other things too that are going on around Carrot River Valley, and of course we have our tourism which is great up there. We have a lot of outfitting, a lot of big game hunters, and of course Tobin Lake is well known for its fishing. Even the member from Regina Rosemont could actually catch a fish up there, Mr. Speaker. But when people come along and they say that they got a fish that was this big, Mr. Speaker, out of . . . You know, they're not lying, Mr. Speaker. They're actually telling the truth. The world record ice fishing walleye was actually caught right in Tobin Lake.

Another thing that we have up in our area is Ag-Vision Seeds. Now this is kind of a little known thing. A lot of people don't know this. Ag-Vision Seeds specializes in grass seed cleaning and it is the largest grass seed cleaning plant in North America. They ship all over the world. So consequently we have a lot of clover, alfalfa seed, and they get a lot of grass seed comes in out of the Peace River country for cleaning there.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss if I didn't mention, and I haven't done it for quite some time, and a lot of people have always wanted to hear about our Carrot River Wildcat football team. Unfortunately this year was a rebuilding year. And we've virtually always been in the playoffs and this year we missed, but like I said, it's a rebuilding year so consequently I expect next year we will take the provincial title back to where it rightfully belongs and that's right in Carrot River.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Shelley and Cindy, my CAs in the office who do yeoman work around there and do a great job of managing any of the complaints we have. Over the last number of years, the complaints have actually . . . I shouldn't say complaints, but things that they think the government should be doing. We're actually getting some accolades into our office now rather than people complaining because the Saskatchewan Party has been doing such a fantastic job within this province.

I also want to thank my family, my son Morgan who says I'm not politically correct at all and I shouldn't be saying a lot of the things that I'm saying. But consequently I told him, well, you know, I'm from Carrot River Valley and most of us are rednecks up there and people like the way I speak. I guess that's how come I keep on getting elected.

And I want to thank my wife, Terry, who is, and I've said it before I think, that she is quite happy. She really wanted me to win the nomination. I think part of the reason is, is that, you

know, she knows when I'm down in session I'm not around there bugging her. So consequently I think she's very happy at the nomination.

Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech is called "A New Decade of Growth." And it's something that the NDP never, ever thought about, and that was actually growing the province. I can still remember the quote from the previous premier, Lorne Calvert, when he said, "We will always be a wee province." We will always be a wee province. Mr. Speaker, this province is growing now and it's good for everybody. It's good for Saskatchewan. It's good for Canada. We used to have to get equalization payments, and now unfortunately we're paying in more than what we should be, but I guess that's better than having to receive them all the time because it shows that the province is doing well.

And a very good example, a very good example is . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And I can hear the member from Athabasca keeps on talking. He was Highways minister at one time and couldn't even dream about some of the things we've done with the highways, like the Regina bypass. The Regina bypass, which we opened up today, they couldn't even think that far into the future to try and see any growth within this province. Here we have the biggest infrastructure in Saskatchewan ever, and this is going to really improve the way we can do trade, the way we can move people around, and also the way we can have safe highways within the province.

You must remember, Mr. Speaker, a matter of just a few years ago we didn't have the highways. The highways were right full of potholes. We have spent billions of dollars on highways.

And I was very happy this spring to be able to announce Highway 55, which runs across the northern part of the province, we're going to be working on Highway 55 and improving Highway 55 so we have direct access over to The Pas in Manitoba, and that we can be shipping our grain and other products through the port of Churchill. This is a big thing for us up there. It helps on tourism. It helps our economy. It helps our farmers. It's something that is very, very important and something I've wanted to see for a long time.

Mr. Speaker, there've been many different things that have been invested. Under the NDP, of course they kind of forgot about rural Saskatchewan. And I just wanted to mention just a few of the things that have happened, like this year we had the revenue sharing for Tisdale. It's gone up 117 per cent since 2007. The revenue sharing for Nipawin has gone up 117 per cent since 2007. The revenue sharing for Hudson Bay has gone up 74 per cent. And when you take a look at some of the different things that have been done around here, some of these are small but they're very important, very important for our rural people. In Tisdale we had a grant of \$10,000 just to put up a speed sign. So people, it reminds them when to slow down when they're coming into Tisdale.

We have the provincial . . . in Codette. Same thing, three point three thousand dollars. But you know something? These small things mean a lot. Our operating funding for education in the North East School Division is \$54.3 million. Our PMR [preventative maintenance and renewal] allocation — if you don't know what that is, that's for doing some fixing if you need to do it throughout the school year — is 1.75 million.

We've done a lot of other things: Arborfield health centre roof replacement, \$135,000 this year; a new 100-tonne chiller for the Nipawin Hospital, \$150,000 this year; roof replacement for Pineview Lodge in Nipawin, \$150,000 this year; renewal and security upgrades for the Nipawin public health, \$80,000. These are things that are being done in rural Saskatchewan that the NDP never thought of because they forgot about rural Saskatchewan.

Another one that's important, and that's Nipawin upgrading to SaskTel fibre to the premises program to upgrade broadband facilities and bring Infinet to Saskatchewan customers. It's a 12-year program, \$250,000. Same thing going into Tisdale and 117,000, actually about 118,000. Water supplies, 471,000 for reservoir rehabilitation in Hudson Bay; Carrot River, 1.2 million water treatment plant upgrade in Carrot River. It goes on and on and, Mr. Speaker, we're starting to see these things come about.

But I wanted to get back into this carbon tax just a little bit. Mr. Speaker, as we well know, we are against a carbon tax. This government is against a carbon tax. Unfortunately the NDP are for a carbon tax. And I'm just going to do a few quotes from the leader of the NDP. And this quote is here: "Our position is very clear. We think a price on pollution is a reasonable thing." And that was done in a scrum on February the 12th of 2019. Another thing that the leader of the NDP said: "I think carbon pricing is a model that works." And that was done in a scrum of March 3rd, 2018, right after he won the leadership. Here's another quote: "We applaud the federal government's recent announcement on a minimum price on carbon." That was on the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news, October the 30th, 2016. Here's another one: "We also need to look at what's being done in other places and consider a modest carbon tax." That's in the *Leader-Post* of February 14, 2017. These all came from the leader of the NDP, which takes me back to the carbon tax.

[16:15]

I talked to the fellow who rents our land on the Carrot River side of the river. And of course we have grain dryers up there. His carbon tax for drying grain — and now this was just for two months; he's still drying grain — is \$1,800. Now here we have, here we have a farmer being penalized, being penalized for drying grain, an export that we need that is crucial to Saskatchewan. And it's just something that doesn't work. It's stymieing our industries.

And I'll tell you right now, the NDP do not want to . . . They want to support a carbon tax. They supported their federal leader who's totally against pipelines, totally against pipelines, doesn't want to see any of this happen here, which is a mainstay of our province.

Mr. Speaker, I can just imagine what would happen if the NDP were ever, ever to form government in this province again. I really don't think that they will, but if they ever did, they would break this province, guaranteed. You know, here's what they wanted to do. In their leadership platform the Leader of the Opposition promised 2.5 billion in new spending, and since winning the leadership he's called for over 200 million in additional new spending, which doesn't include the . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Centre, the member for Athabasca, have we had enough? Apparently not, Saskatoon Centre? I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Now this doesn't include the estimated 50 billion cost to SaskEnergy to replace — this is one of the stupidest things I ever heard of — replace all the existing pipeline infrastructure. And now since he's appointed himself the Economy critic, the Leader of the Opposition has promoted policies that would kill jobs in Saskatchewan, a carbon tax that kills jobs, higher business taxes that kills jobs, higher resource royalties that kill jobs, a \$15 minimum wage that kills jobs, and opposing pipelines that kills jobs.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm rapidly going to run out of time here. I wanted to talk a little bit about education. Now we have heard before how education worked previously under the NDP. In fact I'm going to bring up a quote here now that I'm thinking of it here. This quote came from the member from Regina Northeast and it's in *Hansard*. They were bragging about 176 rural schools that they reopened and the 52 rural hospitals that they reopened. Oh, you're right. What am I talking about? That didn't happen. So maybe those places should've been closed. That's the attitude of the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that in Carrot River Valley and very close to it we have two new schools. We have a new school that was just built in Kelvington-Wadena. We've got another one that was built in Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan. How can they say that we are underfunding education? And as, Mr. Speaker, and as this is happening I am fighting hard, and hopefully our Minister of Education will announce a new school. We'll have to see how this spring's budget goes. I'm hoping we can announce a new school in Carrot River, Mr. Speaker. These are things that this government is doing that the NDP never ever dreamt about.

When my niece graduated from education a number of years ago under the NDP government she moved to Alberta to get a job. When our daughter, Gina, graduated from education under the Saskatchewan Party, I'm happy to say that she has a job working right here in Saskatchewan — a far cry from the NDP record. Mr. Speaker, some things people say in *Hansard* never get forgotten. Mr. Speaker, as I'm talking about education, students up 17 per cent, operating funds up 34 per cent, and all they can do is complain and say we need more.

Mr. Speaker, we have an excellent record of supporting education, trying to move this province forward in a way that should happen and a way that will happen. That's why in our Throne Speech, it's "A New Decade of Growth." We're not just going to stop at what we're doing right now. We are going to continue on to move this province forward to make this the best province, the richest province in all of Canada. I do not support the amendment, and I do support the Throne Speech. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to rise in this Assembly to address the motion and the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. Before I get into the substance of my remarks, I'd like to express my appreciation for my constituency

assistant, Morgan, for my kids and my parents and my sister and my friends, all of whose support enables me to do the work that I do. And I also want to acknowledge the support that I've received from Michelle, who pushes me to be better, who has supported me in times of crisis, who has shared her life, her love, and her energy with me.

Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech, I guess the first question I had to ask was, well what is there in the Throne Speech? And what I saw, Mr. Speaker, was a tremendous amount of back-patting and self-congratulation and taking credit for other governments' work. I also saw some manipulation of history and facts. But, Mr. Speaker, what I didn't see there was I didn't see any vision that was anything other than if we export more wealth outside of the province that a little trickle might stay here.

Mr. Speaker, I saw no compassion for the people of our province that need our help: the disabled, children in our overcrowded schools, Indigenous peoples dealing with historical wrongs and attitudes which continue today, people with addictions, the under-employed or the unemployed, people waiting for healthcare in the hallways. Mr. Speaker, I saw no recognition that there's a global climate crisis and that we have an obligation to the citizens of our province and the citizens of the world and future generations to deal with that.

So, Mr. Speaker, let's dig into the details. What there was in the Throne Speech was there was a lot of reference to what has happened in the past 12 years since 2007, but there wasn't very much mentioned of what has happened in the past three years when this government was in place. In fact I counted, Mr. Speaker, and there's 20 references to what happened since 2007 but there's only three references to what's happened in the past three years. Seems like there's a fair bit of cherry picking of facts, figures, and details. So let's humour them though and let's look at what has actually happened in the past 12 years.

Well first of all, Mr. Speaker, what's the most obvious? The debt has tripled. And if we ranked the ministries by spending, what we'd see is that the third-largest ministry was just paying the interest on the public debt.

What else happened in those past 12 years? Well, Mr. Speaker, hospital wait times — and let's not forget at one time the Sask Party promised to eliminate wait times — but where are we now? Well we just heard today, Mr. Speaker, we've got people waiting in the hallways for a week to get the care that they need.

What else happened in the past 12 years, Mr. Speaker? Well you might recall that there was a government who talked about how we shouldn't be picking winners and losers. And yet in the past 12 years, within weeks of forming government, Bill Boyd was picking winners in what would become the scandal-ridden Global Transportation Hub. And who were those winners? Bill Boyd's friends and Sask Party donors. And who are the losers? Well, the people of Saskatchewan.

So what else happened in that time period? Across the province, small family-owned local businesses on the main streets in our hometowns, they've closed. The main streets in our small towns in Saskatchewan have never had more empty, closed buildings than they do today. Our farms have never had fewer people living on them than they do today.

What else has happened in that time frame? Wages have barely gone up. From \$8.60 minimum wage in 2008, now we're only at \$11.32. But at that same time, Mr. Speaker, power rates have gone up by 45 per cent. Water rates, in Regina at least, are up over 200 per cent. And average rents have gone up almost double as well.

What else has happened in that time frame? Greenhouse gas emissions, they've gone up and up and up. You might even think it's as though the Sask Party is full of climate change deniers. This is an issue that we have known about since I was a child. And yet in the face of this knowledge, Sask Party governments have ignored science. They've ignored evidence. They've ignored their obligation to our own citizens and to the citizens of the world. Methane is 10 times more potent a greenhouse gas, and yet even North Dakota and Alberta have more stringent regulations and rules for oil and gas sector methane emissions.

What else, Mr. Speaker? Well what about poverty? We've got more people than ever requiring social assistance. A quarter of the children in our province live in poverty. That's unacceptable. Mr. Speaker, if this government wants to talk about the record over the past 12 years, that's fine. But that's not a record to be proud of either. On the things that really matter, on our health, on the education of our kids, on climate change, the Sask Party governments get a big fat F grade.

But let's talk about this government. Let's talk about this government. What did happen in the past three years? Well what did happen was cuts to education; the loss of a provincial transportation service; cuts to health; RCMP investigations; backroom deals for Sask Party donors; wage cuts; hidden attempts to privatize the Crown corporations that are so important for our province; tax cuts for the wealthiest people in our province and corporations; and at the same time the largest tax increase, the largest tax increase ever in the history of the province on the backs of the people who can least afford it; job losses, Mr. Speaker; and as my colleague across the floor talked about, pipelines. Oh, wait. No, there were no pipelines built in the past three years or the past 12 years. I can see why this government doesn't want to talk about the past three years and its record about the past three years.

What else do we see in the Throne Speech? Mr. Speaker, what else we see in the Throne Speech is mo of the same. We see this government taking credit for the work of previous governments. We see them taking credit for overpasses east of Regina. We see them taking credit for the children's hospital. We see them taking credit for good fiscal management under NDP that allowed the largest paydown ever on the provincial debt. What we see is mo of the same, pointing fingers outside of the province and elsewhere instead of looking at what they could be doing for our government here. Pointing fingers like the carbon tax and China and trade problems instead of actually looking at what we could be doing here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to get into some of the specifics that I noticed as I was going through the Throne Speech and listening to it. Mr. Speaker, Estevan and Coronach, these are communities that deserve our concern. They've provided great service to the people of this province and I'm sure they will continue to provide great service to the people of this province when it comes to power generation and energy. And, Mr. Speaker, we all know

that they're facing a deadline, 2030, when some of the coal plants will either have to be shut down. Mr. Speaker, we're all concerned about what's going to happen to those communities of Estevan and Coronach. And it's great that there's going to be some funds for those communities, but what would be even better, Mr. Speaker, was if there was an actual plan. What would be better is if there was assurance to the workers and their families who are going to be directly impacted that the government will have a plan for them.

[16:30]

What else in the Throne Speech specifically? There's a goal of population growth. Now I'm not going to say this, Mr. Speaker, but one of the political commentators in the province suggested that that number was a pipe dream. Now what I would say, Mr. Speaker, is that that target is going to require a massive amount of immigration to our province and it's also going to require a substantially increased amount of investment and support for our First Nations communities because that is where the population is growing. It's growing in our First Nations communities and the people coming from outside of Saskatchewan from other countries to our province.

So having a population growth goal is all fine and good, Mr. Speaker, but then we look at what this government has done. Well this Premier refused to denounce the anti-immigrant yellow vesters. This government has a terrible record with the Indigenous peoples of this province. And a plan for population growth surely, surely requires a commitment to funding education. Mr. Speaker, our province has grown. In fact we have 7,000 more kids in our schools than we did a few years back, but no more money. So how are we going to grow the population of the province if the funding for education isn't going to keep up?

What else do we see specifically? We see some blue-skying about nuclear power. But, Mr. Speaker, even the government acknowledges that this is at least a decade away, if not more. Now again this stands in contrast to their actions because they're talking about nuclear power as a solution to transitioning our electrical production. But what are their actions? Their actions are shutting down a successful solar installation industry, costing our province hundreds of jobs, a program that only cost the province \$2 million a year, a program that was working right now, not decades down the road, a program that was working right now to reduce emissions and transition our electrical production.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I just want to pause at this moment and say our Minister of the Environment has done some good work on this file, and it's about time. It's unfortunate that it took the Sask Party 12 years to get to this point, but our Minister of the Environment has done some good work on this file and I want to commend him for that.

Mr. Speaker, what else do we see specifically in the Throne Speech? Well we see some questionable terminology. I see that the government is now calling natural gas carbon neutral. I see the government suggesting that agriculture is a net sequesterer of carbon. And I see the government suggesting that the carbon tax applies to our oil and gas sector and other heavy emitters, which this government knows and the Ministry of the Environment knows that none of that is true.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to specifics, at page 6, Mr. Speaker, of the Throne Speech, when it comes to our emissions the government wants to talk about the money saved and the greenhouse gas emissions reduction from one building, from one government building, but they want to ignore their past failure to act over the past 12 years.

At page 7, the Throne Speech talks about a tax credit for angel investors. Now, Mr. Speaker, what I wonder is, how is it okay to spend almost \$7 million on speculative, high-risk businesses, but spending \$2 million on an existing successful industry, although one that's in its infancy, that wasn't okay? Mr. Speaker, I wonder why it's okay to have a tech-sector tax credit when this government's track record when it comes to tax credits for other industries, notably the film industry, couldn't stand. When it came to the film industry, the previous Sask Party government said tax credits and supporting an industry were no go.

Page 8, Mr. Speaker, they talk about municipalities. But, Mr. Speaker, what we know is that that largest-ever tax hike that this government implemented also cost municipalities money. When this government imposed the PST on construction services, that wiped out the funding that they talked about for municipalities.

Page 8, they talk about long-term care beds. But what is missing, Mr. Speaker, is the track record on affordable long-term care beds, the long-term care beds for people who can't afford 3 and 4 and \$5,000 a month. What's the record on that, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, page 9, we've got the North Battleford Hospital, the new North Battleford Hospital. And I don't think anybody here would disagree that having a new provincial hospital was a good idea. Everybody in the room would agree that that was a very good building. But, Mr. Speaker, how is it that we found out today, lead in the drinking water? Like what's going on here? We've known you can't buy lead in solder in the hardware store for decades. We've known about this as an issue. How is it that we end up with \$407 million spent on a new hospital and they used the wrong pipes, and we've got lead in the drinking water? Like what is going on? And, Mr. Speaker, what we've heard, what we've heard is it's not coming from the city water. So if it's not coming from the city water, it's got to be coming from somewhere, and that's within the building itself.

Mr. Speaker, page 10, we get into education in the Throne Speech. And it's worth repeating, Mr. Speaker. We've got 7,000 more students in school in this province over the past three years and not a single dollar more, not a single dollar more to recognize the need for those 7,000 additional kids. Right now we've got teachers suffering mental health and stress. We've got students who aren't getting served. And those students and their families, they know that the funding on education just isn't getting a passing grade.

And also in education, our post-secondary, what do we see in post-secondary? Well we see fewer courses. We see job losses and higher tuition expanding at an exponential rate. That's not okay.

Page 11 talks about the funding for SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies]. And the Throne Speech notes that the funding to that institution doubled, but in that time frame, so have the costs. So this Throne Speech is the government patting itself

on the back simply for matching inflation. And it's hard to talk about SIIT without also wondering at the same time, well what about NORTEP [northern teacher education program]? What about NORTEP? Oh, it got closed.

Page 12, Mr. Speaker, this government in the Throne Speech talks about, I believe the quote was successfully finished transitioning over 100 people from the Valley View Centre. And that's fine, Mr. Speaker. It's a different vision of care for the people who live there. But what we see, Mr. Speaker, is that the workers who provide care to people with disabilities across the province are getting paid less than people who provide care in child care and long-term care. And what we see, Mr. Speaker, is that workers providing care to the disabled, they have higher burn-out. Well higher burn-out and lower wages, that's not successful and that's not a way to deliver quality care to the disabled people of our province.

Mr. Speaker, page 13 there's reference to the gang violence reduction strategy. And, Mr. Speaker, it's great to have a strategy for reducing gang violence, but what's interesting, Mr. Speaker, is the money that's talked about there, it's all federal money. It's all from a different government. It's not any money that this government committed.

Mr. Speaker, I can see that I've used up a fair bit of the clock here, so I'm going to try to fast forward a little bit here. Mr. Speaker, I see on page 18 a note about the lobbyist law that's coming. Well, Mr. Speaker, what about getting big money out of politics? What about getting rid of union and corporate donations? What about getting rid of out-of-province donations? What about other things that require transparency? What about an inquiry on the GTH? What about Pinehouse? What about disclosing the secret SaskTel sell-off file? So much for the most open and transparent government ever.

Also on page 18, Mr. Speaker, I see that there's going to be a new fisheries Act presented here in the legislature this session. Now I don't know what the details are of that Act, Mr. Speaker, but I wonder if it's going to include things like shoreline alterations and drainage of wetlands because those also affect our fisheries. I wonder if there's going to be the Bill Boyd clause in there. And I wonder if there's going to be a plan to enforce existing laws that we have.

So, Mr. Speaker, in conclusion I guess for me the question is, what is there in this Throne Speech for kids and their families who are in overcrowded classrooms? What is there for residents of Saskatchewan who are suffering from mental health? What is there for people with addictions? What is there for farmers who are struggling with tight margins? What is there for the ironworkers and plumbers and electricians and pipefitters who are watching out-of-province workers build the projects here in our province? What is there for contractors who could be working on projects for us if only there weren't P3 requirements? What is there for municipalities whose projects are costing more because of PST increases? Mr. Speaker, there's nothing for them.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we are left with is the conclusion of an out-of-touch government that's not listening to the people and the needs of our province. They just keep letting people down. And, Mr. Speaker, I couldn't help but notice on page 17, and I think I'll leave it at this. It seems that this government's view is

“... sound management of taxpayers’ dollars means cutting services.” And they say there’s some who say that. And I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the some who say that are in the cabinet and in this government. That’s their view, is that sound management means cutting services. That’s what their view is, and for that reason, Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the amendment.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Mr. Speaker, before I start, just a couple of notes that I made while the member from Regina Northeast was talking. What was he talking about? He obviously didn’t read the speech that was presented. Like when he talked about health care and questioning health care, if he looks on page 8, you can see that there are 3,800 more nurses and 900 more doctors. That’s one thing. And then there’s, since 2007 over 1.6 billion has been invested in health care infrastructure.

Like what is he talking about? I don’t understand this. There’s an average of 2,700 more students, but in that same time we’ve built 46 more schools. And I could go on and on and on and talk about what he said on each different page. But it’s a little bit ridiculous, Mr. Speaker, on the way he has come across, that this government has done nothing for 12 years, when in fact we all know what this government has done. This province has grown substantially over the last 12 years, and with these expectations in the Speech from the Throne we will see another decade of growth. Mr. Speaker, this is what this government is about. This is what the Speech from the Throne is all about. And he should sit down and read it word for word and try to understand it.

Mr. Speaker, it is in fact a pleasure to be able to stand and it is an honour to participate in the Speech from the Throne. As many of my colleagues know, I have informed the Premier that I will not be seeking re-election, so in fact this is my last reply to the Speech from the Throne. And I want to thank the constituents of Moose Jaw North that have been so supportive of me in the last 12 years while I represented them in this House. And I couldn’t be pleased more.

[16:45]

I’ve got a lot of comments since I announced that I will not be seeking re-election, even some of the people that haven’t supported the Saskatchewan Party philosophy. And I can appreciate that there are different ideals. But what really pleases me, when they’ll come up and tell me that they really appreciate what I have done for the constituency, what I’ve done for the city of Moose Jaw, it’s overwhelming, the support and the comments that I have got. And I thank them all for that. Out of the 12,000 members of the constituency, I will never have the opportunity to thank them personally, but I certainly want to make it known publicly that I certainly support that they’ve put their faith in me in the last 12 years.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne came down, I thought it was important to invite some of the people that were closest to me. And of course my wife, Debbie, was accompanying me at the Speech from the Throne, as she has for the last 12. My daughter, Kimberly, also came, and my brother, Garth, who works in the city here. And along with them, Judy

Ballman, my wife’s sister, my sister-in-law, was able to attend. And I certainly appreciate their support and, I think, giving them the opportunity among my guests to attend the Speech from the Throne and doing this on the most honourable of days, with the pageantry and the protocol of the parliamentary procedure.

I appreciate the Honourable Russ Mirasty, the first Speech from the Throne that he has given. You know, the more you get to know this man, the more you appreciate the talent and the expertise that he brings and the pride that he brings to the position as a Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. And it certainly was an honour to get to know him a little bit and know about his dedication to the cause.

I’d like to thank my family, as you know that we don’t work in these positions alone. We always have the support of our families. And my wife, Debbie, I expressed deep appreciation for what she’s done. And a lot of times, you know, as we work in the work that we do, there’s a lot of times that there are things that we might forget. And we say, oh by the way, I forgot to tell you about the event tonight, or that we need to attend such-and-such. And as much as it’s a bit of a surprise for them in some cases, not intentionally of course but it does happen, it’s still nice to have their support.

Yes, I’ve got my four children: Paul and Krista and Kimberly and Brent. And I’ve got eight grandchildren. And it’s interesting to know that in 2007 when I was first elected, I had two grandchildren. Now we’ve got eight. So when we talk about the growth in population, I believe my family should be given part of the credit for the increase in the population of this province.

To me the province of Saskatchewan is home. It’s a good place to live and to work and to raise a family. And especially over the past 12 years, Saskatchewan has been just a great place with significant growth in almost every area. There’s 1.17 million residents now living in this province, 83,000 new jobs, and millions of dollars invested creating economic growth and strengthening our economy.

Our strong economy holds significant potential and provides limitless opportunities. And as it said in the Speech from the Throne, a strong and growing economy means a strong and growing province, which in turns enables our government to invest in important government services that provide a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people, whether it’s in health or it’s in education or in social programs. If you don’t have strong economic programs, it’s pretty hard to have strong social programs. And this province has come a long way in the last 12 years.

And we think of the potential of this great province, and I’ve mentioned it before when I have an opportunity. But when you think of Saskatchewan, two-thirds of this province is covered by forestry. We’ve got almost half of the arable agricultural land in Canada, besides the oil and gas and potash and uranium and coal and other minerals, including salt. Who would think Saskatchewan is a big producer of salt? But we are.

An Hon. Member: — We’re the salt of the earth.

Mr. Michelson: — Might say that we’re the salt of the earth. Thank you.

You know, and manufacturing has taken a great part of this province too. When you think of the manufacturing and transportation and industrial equipment in food and crops and beverage processing, wood, steel, and plastic products. When we think of manufacturing, the first ones that come to mind are the bigger industries, of course, like Morris and Bourgault and Honey Bee and Schulte, Riteway and Doepker. But there's a lot of smaller ones too, and I noticed the member from . . . during a member statement, talking about JNE Welding in Saskatoon. I toured that facility and they were . . . Congratulations to them on being selected as Saskatchewan Business of the Year.

Another place that I was really intrigued with was Flexxifinger down in Assiniboia. And here is a farmer that's working the land and trying to pick up lentils. And it's a year probably something like this where things got smashed into the ground a little bit early, and trying to pick up lentils with the pickups wasn't working. And he developed something and refined it and made the Flexxifingers so it could go down and actually pick up the lentils. And it was renowned and it's marketed right across the world now.

So those are the kind of initiatives that we see in this province. People have difficulties, have problems, and they find the solutions and they bring them together and refine them and market them.

With all that, agriculture is still the backbone of the Saskatchewan economy, besides the freshwater that we have and the wind. We've got lots of wind and the sunshine for solar energy. So there's a lot that can be done and a lot that can be . . . The potential in this province is totally unlimited.

And yet for 12 years the NDP government couldn't see this. Twelve years ago they couldn't see this. They hadn't seen it for decades before that and, obviously from the member that just spoke prior to me, they still don't see it. Things have really changed. Not the potential — it's always been there — but the attitudes and the investment structure and the overwhelming opportunities that are in this province are starting to come to light.

You know, Mr. Speaker, getting things to market is our biggest challenge. Two-thirds of our production is exported, and we need to have ways to get them to the marketplace around the world. This morning the Regina bypass was opened. It was on time and on budget as we heard before. It's the biggest infrastructure project in this province's history, and it's something that was really needed. This government came together a few years ago, thought that this was the right idea — which it is — and utilized the initiative with the partnership to bring it on time, on budget which will help to market our products through the Global Transportation Hub and all around the world.

And we'd heard earlier today in question period, the Global Transportation Hub and how 4,800 trucks go through there per week. What an opportunity, what an idea to have a transportation hub in a province that's landlocked. It was not only important, but it's vital to the future success and the future growth of this province. And I will stand up for the Global Transportation Hub for the rest of my life because I think it was the right idea. It is a good idea. It'll last for a long time along with the Regina bypass.

It was mentioned with the Regina bypass that safety was really one of the biggest issues. It's not just the transportation and the economic achievement from that. But when you think of Balgonie and Pilot Butte, east Regina all going with the overpasses and the infrastructure upgrades for the Global Transportation Hub, it really, really is the right thing to do.

There's \$9 billion has been invested in highway infrastructure over the past 12 years repairing and replacing 14 000 kilometres of Saskatchewan highways and 280 bridges. The last decade has seen tremendous growth in this province and, Mr. Speaker, it's bound to continue.

And now we're facing a new decade, a new decade of growth. And that's what the Speech from the Throne is all about, keeping Saskatchewan growing — the opportunities, the opportunities, and more opportunities.

And our kids, our kids are staying here. They're finding jobs here. They're close to home. Our grandchildren are here. It's a real big improvement. And I wouldn't doubt if Samsonite had a legal challenge against this province simply because the sale on luggage has decreased significantly over the past 12 years because our kids are staying here. And not only that, we're attracting others from all over the world to come and help build our province. The opportunities are here and this Speech from the Throne reflects the new decade of growth. Our new growth plan will set specific targets like continuing to build our population to 1.4 million people by 2030.

So, Mr. Speaker, picture if you will a Saskatchewan where much of the primary agricultural production is processed here in our province. Imagine those possibilities. That potential is here. The investment it attracts and the employment it creates and these opportunities, Mr. Speaker, are endless. All here in Saskatchewan: growth, great growth, with a plan of how to achieve continued growth for the benefit of all residents for generations to come.

Challenges, we know there will be challenges. We are living in a challenging time right now. As I mentioned, Saskatchewan manufacturers and . . . [inaudible] . . . the integrity of the Saskatchewan people will meet those challenges every time.

One of those challenges quite frankly is climate change. And I wanted to spend a little bit of time. I don't have an awful lot, but I wanted to spend a little bit of time. You can go on the internet; you can find all kinds of reasons why climate change is something we really have to understand and deal with. And I believe there's climate change. There's been climate change for millions of years. It's how we're reacting to it is what's important. But if you want to listen to the alarmists, the world is coming to an end. And that's not necessarily the truth. I think we have a big responsibility to clean up this province, do the things we need to do, like the plastics. But you can also go on the internet and you can put in "climate change hoax" and you can find thousands of pieces of information from scientists that also say that we don't have to be alarmists.

We know that most of our energy comes from the sun. We know when the sun has sun spots appearing on it or some kind of in-climate sun issues, it affects our weather and it can affect our weather for decades. We've seen it through history where there's

warm times and then there's cold times. So you know, let's not be an alarmist. Let's not be like the Swedish teenagers or Al Gore that just go on a script and come up here and try and raise all kinds of issues about climate change, because I don't think it's something we have to worry that much about. Do we have responsibility? Absolutely. No doubt about it. But let's not go and jump off bridges because of the climate change.

You know that Prairie Resilience climate change strategy the Minister of Environment brought out, the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, well there's a great plan. It's a brilliant document to address climate change and to protect our economy. As it says in the Throne Speech, the Saskatchewan Prairie Resilience plan is designed to "... accomplish the goal of adapting and thriving in a changing climate, resulting in real emission reductions and ensuring our industries remain competitive without the harm to our economy caused by the costly and ineffective federal carbon tax."

Mr. Speaker, the federal carbon tax is ... If you want to talk about a hoax, that would be one. The whole idea of the carbon tax does nothing to reduce carbon. All it is, is a total tax. So that's something that this government will continue to fight against — the carbon tax. And we will do that in the legal challenge that's coming up and continue for the good of this province.

I'm quickly running out of time, but the Throne Speech notes a lot of good things, and I haven't got time to go into a lot of things. One of the things that I wanted to mention is the geothermal. And I think people can learn from Moose Jaw. The Temple Gardens mineral spa used the geothermal years ago to create the heat for the Temple Gardens and to make it an economic developer as well.

Mr. Speaker, I'm out of time, but I want to say thank you for the opportunity. I will not be supporting the amendment, but I will support the motion for the Speech from the Throne. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

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Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

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Minister of Advanced Education
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr
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Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

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