



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

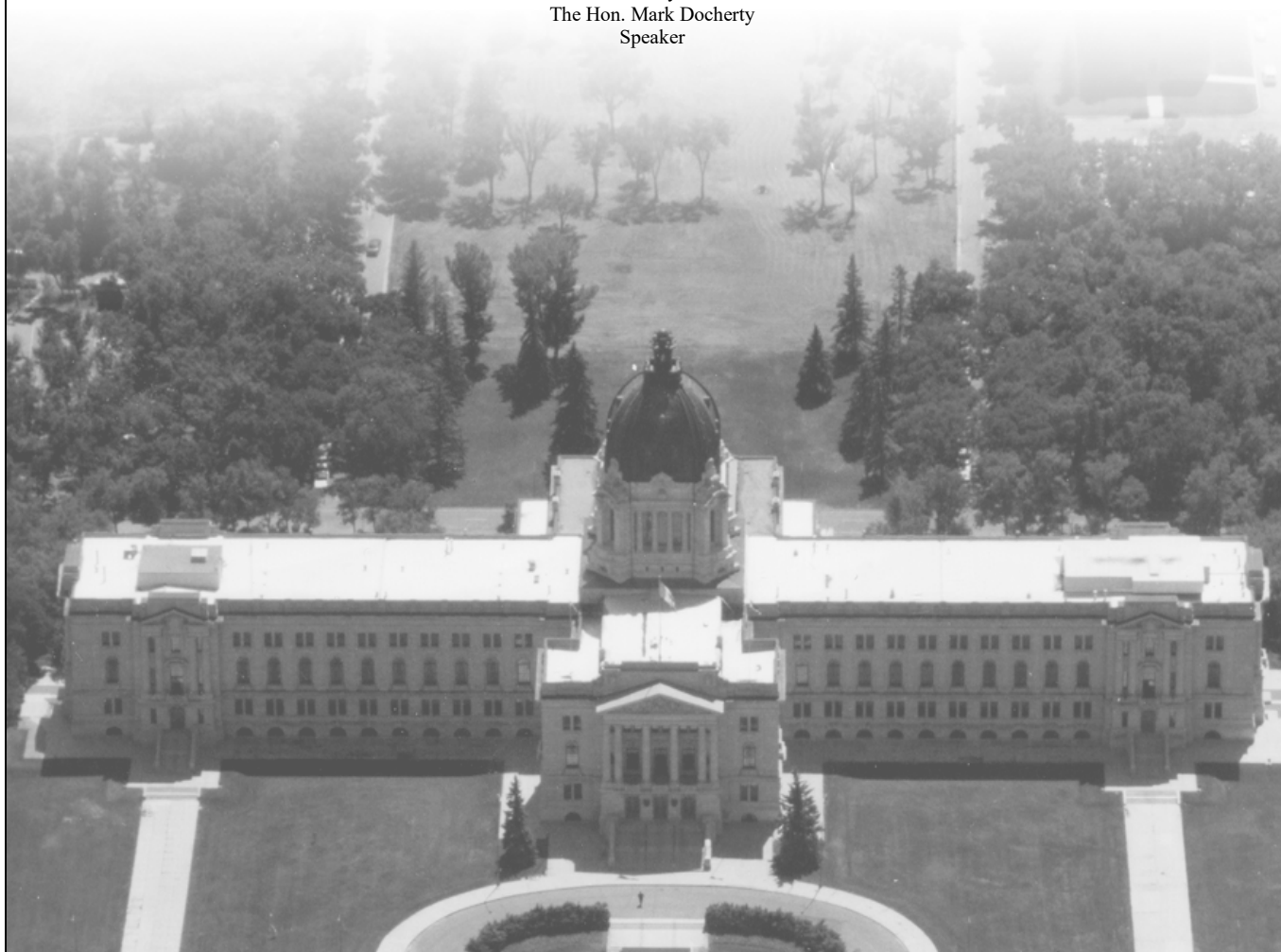
**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(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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**Premier** — Hon. Scott Moe  
**Leader of the Opposition** — Ryan Meili

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**Beck**, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)  
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**Lambert**, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)  
**Lawrence**, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)

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**Tell**, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)  
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**Weekes**, Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)  
**Wilson**, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (SP)  
**Wotherspoon**, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)  
**Wyant**, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)  
**Young**, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)  
  
**Vacant** — Regina Walsh Acres  
**Vacant** — Saskatoon Eastview

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

**Clerks-at-the-Table**

**Clerk** — Gregory A. Putz

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

**Principal Clerk** — Iris Lang

**Clerk Assistant** — Kathy Burianyk

**Sergeant-at-Arms** — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — Introduction of guests, and I've got a couple to go through. A couple, with leave for an extended introduction . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The member for Rosemont, if you could give me leave, that would be awesome.

Okay folks, today I'd like to welcome Krystal Shaw; her mother, Terina Shaw; and Kelly McKnight to the legislature. Krystal Shaw started swimming at age nine as she wanted to get involved in sport to help her muscle development. At age 14 she competed at the Canada Games with the Saskatchewan provincial team where she won a bronze medal. In 2009 she was a member of Canada's national Para-swimming team and competed at the IPC World Championships in Brazil where she finished by ranking eighth in the world.

This past September she competed in Peru for the 2019 Parapan Am Games, where Krystal's medal standing finished strong with three silver and one bronze. Krystal's athletic determination is remarkable. She has pushed through blood clot surgeries and kidney stones to continue to compete and represent Canada and Saskatchewan on the national stage. We're very happy to have you and your family here with us today as we celebrate your athletic accomplishments. I'd like to invite all members of the legislature to welcome all these folks to their legislature. We're very proud of you, Krystal.

I've also got, in the Speaker's gallery, special guests seated in the gallery who participated in the Saskatchewan Book Awards author readings in the Legislative Library over the lunch hour. Author Harold Johnson was there, he had to leave; author Valerie Korinek, please give us a wave; author Arthur Slade; Saskatchewan Book Awards representatives Donna Woloshyn, the board Chair is with us, and Kam Teo, excellent; and the Legislative Librarian, Melissa Bennett. Are you with us, Melissa? Excellent.

The authors read from their books which won awards at the Saskatchewan Book Awards gala earlier this year in April. Again thank you so much for being here, and congratulations on your awards.

I recognize the member for Saskatoon University.

**Mr. Olason:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with you in welcoming these guests to our legislature today. I understand that Harold had to leave, but Valerie and Art, it's great to see you here again today. We listened to some readings from their books at lunch time today and had an excellent time.

It was nice to see Art again. I celebrated with him when he won the Cheryl and Henry Kloppenburg Award this past fall in Saskatoon. And yes, really good guy, and it was nice to see him again. Of course this next year we'll see you again at the Saskatchewan Book Awards down here in Regina. It's proudly

supported by Creative Sask. And so I'd like all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to echo your introductions, first recognizing Krystal and her outstanding accomplishments and making us all proud here in Saskatchewan. Thank you so much for all your work and your effort in coming through on all those things. Thank you so much.

I'd also like to recognize the authors. It was a great reading again; I look forward to that, and we all look forward to it every year. It's a wide range of experiences that you bring to the legislature, so thank you so much: Arthur Slade, Valerie Korinek, and Harold Johnson is not here right now. He must have left just minutes ago.

But Melissa Bennett, thank you so much for organizing this, and Kam Teo and Donna Woloshyn for organizing this. So thank you. We look forward to actually reading more of your books. And on behalf of the opposition we welcome them to their legislature. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Ms. Baudry-Mellor:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, up in the west gallery we have a group of grade 10 and 12 students from Campbell Collegiate in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, with Erin Harlos. I'm really excited to have the opportunity to sit down and have a chat with you guys following the Assembly today. I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce two guests. We have Dr. Siva Karunakaran and Dr. Barb Konstantynowicz. How did I do, folks?

Mr. Speaker, Siva is a past president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association. Barb is the vice-president of the Saskatchewan Medical Association. They're here today because of the surgical initiative that was mentioned in the Throne Speech. It's a \$10 million injection that's going to do about 1,700 surgeries before the end of the fiscal year, Mr. Speaker. A very good news announcement, and I'd like to thank both our guests for being here to share in that with us today. And I'd ask all members to please give them a warm welcome to their Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with members that have already welcomed guests from the Book Awards. In particular I want to welcome Kam Teo who, for I believe 11 years, was the librarian at the Weyburn Public Library. I got an opportunity to get to know Kam during this time, and it's great to see him here and in his new role as the executive director of the Book Awards.

As well, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, she's on occasion in the gallery but not always introduced. And I want to introduce Carmen Sterling, who's the reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Weyburn, seated in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. She's also, members would know, vice-president of SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and does a great job of advocating on behalf of producers and rural residents right across this province in that role and, in particular, people that live in her rural municipality of Weyburn. So I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Carmen and Kam to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to join with the minister to welcome a leader within municipal politics within our province, a leader within SARM, the reeve of Weyburn, Carmen Sterling, who's here with us today. Of course she represents rural municipalities and her rural municipality in a strong way. I believe this was the last crop that her family just took off this year as well, I think. Probably it's been a tough harvest, I know, but I know they've been at it for many years. And I'm sure it's a big and special time, taking that last crop off. So sending care to her and her family, their farm, and thanking her for her leadership in the province.

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, I'd like to introduce a group of 23 outstanding public service employees seated in the Speaker's gallery. They're here today to take part in a parliamentary program for the public service. That program includes a tour of the Legislative Building, briefings presented by various Legislative Assembly Service and Executive Council officials, an opportunity to sit in the Speaker's gallery to observe question period and House business, and brief meetings with members from both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The participants are from 12 different ministries across government. I look forward to joining them after question period. Again I ask all members to help me welcome these outstanding public servants to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thanks kindly, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the Minister for the Public Service Commission in welcoming these public servants to their Legislative Assembly. Certainly it's always a sign of dedication that public servants would come and avail themselves of the parliamentary program to gain that extra insight into the public service work as a whole, Mr. Speaker. They're to be commended for this, as they are for their work each and every day on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan.

So on behalf of the official opposition, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these public servants to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Pedersen:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise, to you and through you, to introduce a guest in the east gallery — Jeff Olson. Jeff is a farmer and rancher from the east central part of Saskatchewan in the Beaver Hills area, so he came a fair ways to be with us today.

He's a retired public servant who worked 36 years in the environmental field as a conservation officer, as a wetland specialist with Saskatchewan Environment, and as a watershed planner with the Water Security Agency. He's the co-founder of the Saskatchewan environmental alliance, a group of concerned citizens working on innovative solutions to contemporary environmental problems, and he's also the managing director of that group. And they are hosting a conference on agricultural drainage this coming week here in Regina.

Jeff holds an environmental professional designation in natural resource management, and he's also the principal of Mind's Eye Consulting, which is involved in watershed management, environmental law enforcement, and present environmental water issues here in Saskatchewan. So I'd ask the members to join with me in welcoming Jeff to his Legislative Assembly.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Lawrence:** — 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, ineffective, NDP [New Democratic Party]-supported carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan.

And I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good citizens of Moose Jaw and Weyburn. Thank you. I do so present.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents, businesses, communities all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party's expansion and hike of the PST [provincial sales tax] in a massive way, of course to the tune of a billion dollars. This had hit households hard. And my petition relates directly to the expansion onto construction labour, Mr. Speaker, the epitome of a job-killing tax. And of course the results sadly speak for themselves.

We see projects that have been shelved all across Saskatchewan. We see that permits are down. We know that so many Saskatchewan tradespeople have lost their jobs, Mr. Speaker, many forced out of the industry, many forced out of Saskatchewan in pursuit of employment. And we continue to call on the Sask Party to see the error in their ways, the damage to

this tax, and to do the right thing and to scrap the tax that they've imposed on the construction sector.

The prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Earl Grey. I so submit.

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

[13:45]

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for by-elections in the constituencies of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. And you know, Mr. Speaker, we are painfully aware that the constituencies of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview, their seats are currently vacant. And that's because of a loophole in *The Legislative Assembly Act* that by-elections are not legally required to be called in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview because the former MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] did not resign before August 6th. They resigned one month later.

Now we know that unless a by-election is called, the constituents in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview will go without representation for nearly 14 months, until the next provincial election is held on October 26th, 2020. But the Premier does have the power and authority to call by-elections in these ridings of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview even though *The Legislative Assembly Act* does not require it. He could do that.

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

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, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition I present today come from Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition calling on the government to fix the crisis in our classrooms. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to several points: that the Sask Party government's cuts mean falling per-student funding and fewer supports for students who need extra help; that the government's cuts leaves educators without the resources that they need to support student learning; and that the Sask Party government is ignoring overcrowding in our classrooms by refusing to track and report on class sizes.

Also that the Sask Party government's lack of funding for school infrastructure has led to crumbling and overcrowded schools, as well as the fact that the Sask Party government's failure to invest in our classrooms is having serious consequences today and will continue into the future.

Mr. Speaker, in the prayer that reads as follows, those who have signed this petition:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to immediately fix the crisis in our classrooms by properly funding the most important investment that we can make, and that is in our children.

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

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition to reinstate and expand SaskPower's net metering program. The people who have signed this petition would like to bring to our attention the following: an unprecedented number of residents want to take part in renewable energy opportunities. The SaskPower net metering program was very, very successful, which caused SaskPower to shut it down early rather than expanding it.

And as a result of the abrupt shutdown of the program, up to 800 jobs will be lost and federal rebate dollars will be left on the table. The government's failure to plan for transition from carbon-intensive economy to a low-carbon economy is short-sighted, detrimental to our economy and our future.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the Sask Party government to act to address climate change by restoring the SaskPower net metering program and introducing the Renew Saskatchewan energy transition program.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today are from the city of Regina. I so submit.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for pharmacare for Saskatchewan. I spent a lot of time out on doorsteps in my riding this summer, Mr. Speaker, talking to my constituents and hearing their concerns. And a number of the concerns that were brought forward by my constituents were related to pharmacare and the cost of prescription medications, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the cost of prescription drugs is rising, that there's a crunch on a lot of folks who are trying to figure out how they're going to pay for the medications that they need to stay healthy. And many of them are in situations where they're concerned about the fact that they might not be able to keep their houses as

a result of the cost of drugs. So it's something we're hearing about loud and clear. We know it's the unfinished business of medicare and we have a lot of work to do on this front, Mr. Speaker.

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by individuals from Moose Jaw. I do so present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

#### Canadian Rangers and Volunteers Find Missing Youth

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. When an Ile-a-la-Crosse teen didn't return from a canoe trip on the night of October 19th, 2019, a distraught grandmother, Ruby Jones, called for help. Her grandson was alone in a canoe propelled by a two-horsepower motor, and while he had informed his family of his destination, he did not return at the expected time. He had no data on his cell and couldn't be contacted.

The RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] were extremely busy that night and the Canadian Rangers volunteers were contacted to help. After a search which lasted all night, one of the rangers spotted the canoe on the shore of a river and located the youth, who was safe.

The volunteers spent the entire night on the lake, searching the bays and the cabins he could have stopped at. It was a windy night. It was snowing and cold to be out on that lake all night. The Canadian Rangers and the volunteers deserve commendation for this search and all searches that they have spearheaded in the past. Their readiness to step up and help is a true service to our community and region.

We want to thank the Canadian Armed Forces for implementing and maintaining this valuable initiative. In particular, I'd like to recognize the people who were out searching all night for the 17-year-old boy. From the Canadian Rangers: Gordon Aramenko, Leon Desjarlais Jr., Barlow Roy, and Jeremy Daigneault. And we also want to thank our ranger champion at CFB [Canadian Forces Base] Edmonton, Warrant Officer James

Vogl.

Volunteers like Frankie Daigneault and Lance Laliberte worked all night, Mr. Speaker. The people who searched the shore areas near the village also assisted from their homes, were people like Antoinette Gardiner, Violet Daigneault, and my wife, Beckie, and I. Thankfully the youth was found safely, but the rangers deserve great gratitude for their great service. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

#### Kindersley Resident a Top Fundraiser for Parkinson's Canada

**Mr. Francis:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in my place to highlight a very special constituent of mine. Nancy Kelly, a resident of Kindersley, has been living with Parkinson's disease for over 14 years. Each year she and her family participate in the Parkinson's Canada SuperWalk, a fundraiser in support of Parkinson's research. The money raised from this annual fundraiser goes to further education, advocacy, research, and hopefully one day, Mr. Speaker, a cure. This year Nancy was the top fundraiser in Saskatchewan. She raised a personal total of \$12,000 and most notably she was the ninth highest individual fundraiser in the country. Across the province of Saskatchewan, over \$125,000 was raised.

On average there are 25 people diagnosed with Parkinson's every day. We need to find a cure, Mr. Speaker. Despite her diagnosis, Nancy refuses to let it slow her down, and she is very determined to help others. Nancy facilitates a local support group that meets the second Wednesday of every month at the Kindersley Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, I ask members to please join me in congratulating Nancy on her impressive efforts in the battle against Parkinson's disease. And all the best to her going forward on the path to finding a cure. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Remembering Dr. Mohammad Hussain

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On October 12th Prince Albert lost a valued citizen and well-respected psychiatrist, Dr. Mohammad Hussain. Dr. Hussain had practised in our city for over 40 years. As a mental health counsellor in the former Prince Albert Parkland Health Region, I worked with Dr. Hussain. I saw first-hand his compassion and incredible knowledge of psychiatry, especially with children and youth. Dr. Hussain accepted difficult child psychiatry cases from across Saskatchewan and Alberta. He had an incredibly heavy caseload but never complained or turned anyone away. Dr. Hussain also volunteered a great deal and donated time and money to many events and organizations in our community.

He was also a recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award in 2009 at the Prince Albert Parkland Regional Health Authority Excellence Award. Dr. Hussain founded Prince Albert's first mosque and paid for operating costs every month himself, refusing donations. One of the contributions that Dr. Hussain was

most proud of was that he opened a school for underprivileged girls in his home region in Pakistan.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Hussain will be sadly missed in our community and in the mental health field. I ask that all members join with me in acknowledging Dr. Hussain's many contributions to psychiatry in Prince Albert and in passing on our condolences to his wife, Dr. Chaudhry, his family, friends, and colleagues. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy.

#### **Saskatchewan Livestock Association Honour Scrolls**

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this summer three Saskatchewan families were presented the Saskatchewan Livestock Association's 2019 Honour Scroll award for their contributions to the industry.

The first recipients, Helge and Candace Bye, own and operate By Livestock in Regina. Helge has served as a Charolais International president and Candace is currently the acting secretary. They have travelled frequently, promoting the Canadian livestock industry around the globe.

Keith and Linda Kaufmann are constituents of mine from Ceylon. Since 1990 they have owned and operated South View Ranch which specializes in purebred Angus cattle. Mr. Speaker, the Kaufmanns have been representatives on many cattle associations and in 2000 started Border Line Feeders, a feedlot south of Ceylon.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, the third family, you could say, is a household name. Linda Stewart and her husband, the member from Lumsden-Morse, have been farming in the RM of Pense since the mid-1970s. Their community efforts extend far past farming as they both are active within their community, serving on many local boards and committees. As you know, Mr. Speaker, the member is a passionate advocate for Saskatchewan's agricultural industry. I could mention his impressive professional accomplishments but I think we're all familiar with those, Mr. Speaker, and it's my understanding that he's the first former Saskatchewan minister of Agriculture to receive the scroll.

So, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members in joining me in congratulating all three of these families on their Honour Scroll awards and for their continuing contributions to Saskatchewan's cattle industry. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

#### **Mammogram Program Aids in Early Cancer Detection**

**Ms. Lambert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed form of cancer in Saskatchewan women. In any given year, more than 700 new cases are diagnosed in our province. Mr. Speaker, a close family member of mine was one of those new cases in 2017.

In 1990 the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency launched the screening program for breast cancer. Through the program, women 50 years of age and older receive a letter in the mail inviting them to participate in a screening. Mammograms are offered in Regina and Saskatoon, as well as at satellite sites in Lloydminster, Moose Jaw, North Battleford, Prince Albert, Swift Current, and Yorkton. The Cancer Agency also operates a mobile mammography bus that travels to rural and remote areas of the province on a two-year cycle.

A mammogram takes less than 10 minutes to complete and can detect cancer before symptoms appear. I went for my annual mammogram screening this summer because, Mr. Speaker, we know that regular screening and early detection helps save lives. We have seen a positive trend in the fight against breast cancer in our province which can be attributed in part to screening and early detection.

Mr. Speaker, our government is proud to continue funding the Cancer Agency to ensure services like this are available in our province. Thank you to all of those in Saskatchewan who have supported this worthy cause. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melfort.

#### **Star City Athlete Wins Gold at World Junior Ball Hockey Tournament**

**Hon. Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A young athlete from our Star City area is now a world champion. Jeremy Hancock, a 16-year-old ball hockey player, won gold with Team Canada West at the Junior Under-16 Tournament in Česká Třebová, Czech Republic, this past June. Mr. Speaker, Team Canada West had a perfect 5 and 0 record during the tournament, and in the championship game, Team Canada West defeated its main rivals of the tournament, Team Canada East — which we were glad to see — with a final score of 8 to 6.

Mr. Speaker, Jeremy's road to the national championship was one of determination and hard work. Back in the spring of 2018 he was picked up to play on a ball hockey team from Edmonton as a spare. Well he ended up helping that team qualify to play in the national tournament that summer.

[14:00]

There, Jeremy was scouted by the national team and in the fall of 2018 he was officially asked to join Team Canada West. Mr. Speaker, going from a spare body to a world champion is proof that as long as you have hard work and determination, you are able to be rewarded with gold.

Please join me in congratulating Jeremy Hancock and the Team Canada West teammates on their gold-medal-winning performance at the 2019 World Junior U-16 Ball Hockey Tournament. Thank you.

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

#### **40th Anniversary of Autism Services of Saskatoon**

**Mr. Olason:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. 2019 marks the 40th

anniversary of Autism Services of Saskatoon. I was honoured to bring greetings on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan at their AGM [annual general meeting] this summer. Mr. Speaker, Autism Services of Saskatoon has helped countless people with autism live with dignity and reach their full potential. And, Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to improving access to supports and services for individuals with autism and their families.

Mr. Speaker, each year the Government of Saskatchewan allocates approximately \$12 million to support autism services, including consultants, support workers, and therapists. In this past budget, we were proud to distribute \$200,000 between the Autism Resource Centre in Regina and Autism Services of Saskatoon. This will enable each organization to hire a mental health professional to provide enhanced treatment for autism-specific mental health disorders.

Mr. Speaker, while we are proud of these investments, we know there is still more work to do. We will continue to work with organizations like Autism Services of Saskatoon to find better ways to support people with autism spectrum disorder and their families. Mr. Speaker, I now invite all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Autism Services of Saskatoon on 40 years of important, impactful work that has made a difference in the lives of so many Saskatchewan people. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Provision of Emergency Health Care

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health has said that hallway medicine is unacceptable, which is strange because under his watch it's become the standard of care. Now, Mr. Speaker, we have hospital staff telling us that we have spaces in our hallways that are being designated as rooms. At Regina General Hospital we're told that emergency rooms number 29, 30, and 31 are not rooms. They're spaces in the hall to which they've attached numbers on the wall.

Mr. Speaker, if the minister believes, as we do, that hallway medicine is unacceptable, will the Premier tell us how under his government it's become the norm?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we've discussed on this floor of the Assembly, this is a very serious issue that we're dealing with right now in the province. All provinces are dealing with this issue, Mr. Speaker. We've taken steps to attempt to rectify it. We've opened 24 more beds in Regina, Mr. Speaker, which we believe should help flow emergency room into hospitals. Mr. Speaker, this is a complex issue that involves discharging patients appropriately. Again all provinces are grappling with this.

We've also announced a capital project in Saskatoon: 36 new medicine beds will be opened there, Mr. Speaker, which we think will help. We're also committed to our Connected Care strategy, Mr. Speaker. We have community health centres that have been opened, including one that my colleague, the Minister of Rural

and Remote Health was at an opening in Regina Four Directions in north central Regina earlier this week, Mr. Speaker. Our accountable care units have been showing some success in Saskatoon and Regina, Mr. Speaker. We know there's much more work to do, and this is a serious issue.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those added rooms at Pasqua were added three years ago to little effect. And we know that the numbers in Saskatchewan are among the worst in the country — Manitoba's the only one that's worse in western Canada — and they're continuing to get worse under this minister's watch, Mr. Speaker.

Emergency rooms are the canary in the coal mine of the problems in our health system as a whole. And we've seen no meaningful action on primary care reform or prevention. We've seen no effective action to make sure that patients aren't stuck in hospital, that they're appropriately placed in long-term care or able to get home with home care. And we've seen no action at all in addressing the crystal meth crisis that is driving up volume in our emergency rooms.

Mr. Speaker, if the Premier agrees that hallway medicine is unacceptable, why is he taking no action to address the root causes of emergency overcrowding and long wait times?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Health Authority is working extremely hard along with the ministry to address the pressures that the member opposite is referencing, Mr. Speaker. We recognize how serious this issue is. When he talks about getting to the root causes of it, he mentions the crystal meth crisis. Mr. Speaker, we understand the whole issue around mental health and addictions. We addressed many of them in the budget this past spring, Mr. Speaker.

To his point, we've announced an RFP [request for proposal] for 75 new residential support beds for individuals with intensive mental health needs. On the addictions side, just recently an RFP went out for 50 new pre- and post-addiction treatment beds. We've already announced and opened more addictions treatment beds in Indian Head, in Calder Centre, Mr. Speaker. We know this is just a tremendous problem right across the country, both crystal meth and opioids. Mr. Speaker, we are making every effort to address that.

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

**Mr. Meili:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The stress in our emergency rooms is affecting patient care. It's also leading to staff burnout. We've received a copy of a document that the Saskatchewan Health Authority distributed to staff, and the key message was that there are increased treatment and medication errors happening because staff is, and I quote, "overwhelmed." That same document described how staff turnover has risen sharply in Regina emergency rooms since the formation of the Health Authority. Mr. Speaker, one nurse told us that because of burnout at the Regina General Hospital emergency room, that that room goes through, and I quote, "recycles staff faster than bottles at Sarcan."

The minister has committed to the review of one patient's experience, but will the Premier admit that this doesn't come down to one-off? It's not just about one patient's experience. It's not a sudden influx. This is a chronic problem.

This question is to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. Will he admit that there's a problem and will he commit to reviewing all of the problems in our emergency rooms and mobilizing the resources to address them?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, I think there may be a misunderstanding with the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, the review that I've asked Saskatchewan Health Authority to do will address obviously the single patient he's referring to, but I've asked them to look at the entire picture, the emergency room wait times which I think is what he was asking for, both in Saskatoon and Regina, the problems that we've been having, along with some recommendations on how we can address those, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, again we realize there is a staffing issue, as he mentioned in the preamble in his question. We've significantly ramped up the number of medical staff that we have across the province. Since we've been given the privilege of forming government, there's about 900 more doctors. There's many more nurses, Mr. Speaker. I've been given a list of different medical professionals. The increase is right across the piece, Mr. Speaker: 74 per cent more mental health FTEs [full-time equivalent]. There's 34 per cent more addictions counsellors, Mr. Speaker. The list goes on.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Mr. Speaker, we're not measuring emergency room waits in terms of reductions anymore. Every single wait time measure grew last year under that minister's watch.

In Regina, patients were in the ER for nearly 21 hours before getting an in-patient bed. In Saskatoon, admitted patients are waiting 30 hours. This has rippling consequences, Mr. Speaker. It's good that government is reviewing what happened at the Pasqua Hospital, but we need to see a plan that's going to get these wait times under control. We're voting on the Throne Speech tomorrow but it includes nothing to address emergency room wait times. When will we see a plan to get these wait times under control?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, it's part of an integrated health system, Mr. Speaker. There's many moving parts that are all impacting the emergency rooms. I talked about some of the things that we announced in the budget last spring, Mr. Speaker. Some of those are still coming online. The Leader of the Opposition, in a question earlier, had talked about mental health and addictions. Those cause strain to the emergency room, Mr. Speaker.

We've announced a number of RAAM clinics, rapid access to addictions medicine, that are going to be opening, that have had

great success in both Manitoba and Ontario. We believe they'll have success here and will help to ease the burden on emergency rooms. I mentioned earlier about the accountable care teams, the community health centres. Mr. Speaker, we recognize the seriousness of this issue. We're making every effort to rectify it, Mr. Speaker. As I said, I've asked Saskatchewan Health Authority to review this matter and come forward with more recommendations.

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

**Ms. Mowat:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Health said yesterday that the Manitoba government is facing similar challenges in their emergency rooms. Well if the government wants to take Manitoba as a model, here's that government's record on health: cutbacks, firing hundreds of nurses, closing three ERs and seven clinics in Winnipeg. The latest data shows Manitoba as the only province in the West with worse wait times than Saskatchewan.

If this government was serious about addressing ER waits, they would have continued to fund emergency room wait time initiatives, not water down targets while things are getting worse. When will we see action to get these wait times under control and moving in the right direction, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to meet with the Minister of Health in Manitoba earlier this week, but I'm not sure if the member opposite expects me to defend the Manitoba record. I'm worried about Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I'm the Minister of Health in this province, and I take that position very seriously.

So, Mr. Speaker, she's talking about an action plan. As I said earlier, I went through and listed a number of the things that we're doing to attempt to mitigate the situation — the community health centres, the accountable care teams, the long list of mental health and addictions initiatives that we introduced in the budget, Mr. Speaker. Again we recognize how serious this issue, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the review of the Saskatchewan Health Authority. We're going to work very hard to make this situation better.

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

### Supports in Classrooms

**Ms. Beck:** — Yesterday we heard an interesting line from the Minister of Education: "Class size isn't as important an issue to most teachers in Saskatchewan as the composition issue." When it comes to class size and composition, Mr. Speaker, it's not either-or, it's both-and.

As you know, this summer we ran an education survey and there was overwhelming support for introducing a cap on class sizes. Eighty-two per cent of the more than 1,400 respondents support a cap on class sizes. So my question to the minister, Mr. Speaker, is he really planning on ignoring class sizes in his task force?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I've been in many classrooms around the province, Mr. Speaker, and spoken to many teachers. I don't have to repeat that in the House today, Mr. Speaker. But overwhelmingly, Mr. Speaker, the issue that comes to me when I talk to teachers and trustees is the issue of composition in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker. Composition is by far and away, Mr. Speaker, the more important issue that I hear when I talk to teachers and when I talk to trustees, Mr. Speaker.

So as we move forward with the consultation — and as I said yesterday, I'll be releasing the terms of reference for that consultation in the next couple of days, Mr. Speaker — we're going to concentrate on the issues that are important to teachers. We're going to concentrate on the issues to try to relieve some of the challenges and the pressures in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

But I can tell you, when I talk to people, Mr. Speaker, when I talk to teachers, it's certainly composition. We have children in our classrooms with many complex needs, Mr. Speaker, things that we didn't experience even five years ago, Mr. Speaker. So certainly, while we're not going to ignore the issue of class size, Mr. Speaker, there's certainly going to be an emphasis on composition.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Again, Mr. Speaker, it's not either-or. If the minister really thinks that class size doesn't matter, he needs to start listening to teachers. One teacher told us, "I finished the year with 34 students which was commonplace in my school." Another teacher: "Most of my classes have around 30 students. I'm worried about my upcoming math class with 38 students and no learning assistants."

Mr. Speaker, we've heard from teacher after teacher concerned about class sizes, well over the 19, Mr. Speaker, cited by the Premier. When is the Sask Party going to act on what teachers are saying and actually, actually address the overcrowding in our classrooms?

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I've told the member opposite exactly what we're doing. We're moving forward with a consultation around class size and composition, and I'll be releasing the terms of reference in the next little while, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I hear from the member opposite day after day talking about these issues, but the one thing she never offers — never offers any solutions, Mr. Speaker. And I'm willing to listen to anything that the opposition has to say, any of our other partners in education as we move forward with this consultation because we realize that there are some challenges in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker. Far from being a crisis, we understand that there are some challenges, and we plan to address them, ensuring that our children in our classrooms have the best educational opportunity that they can, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to see that that happens.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, we are happy to talk about solutions after that minister acknowledges the extent of the problem in our classrooms. Every teacher will tell you that class composition and size matter. You don't need an education degree to understand that students can't reach their full potential when teachers are overburdened.

Seventy per cent of the teachers that responded to our survey admitted that five or more of their students in their classrooms need additional supports that they currently are not receiving. Seventy-seven per cent say there are five or more students — of EAs, Mr. Speaker — five or more students in their classes who require additional supports, but they are not receiving them.

When will the minister admit that class size is an important issue, and composition as well, and come forward with a plan to adequately resource our classrooms? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I'm glad you think it's funny.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, the member stands on her feet, the member stands on her feet and cites two examples where composition was her challenge, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what we're saying. We're not dismissing the fact, we're not suggesting that class size isn't an issue with teachers around this province, Mr. Speaker, but we're certainly acknowledging the fact that class composition is one of those factors. And as we move forward with our consultation, Mr. Speaker — and as I said, we're going to be doing that very, very quickly — we're going to have those conversations with people. We're going to understand what the answers are to these problems.

I spent the last almost two years, Mr. Speaker, understanding what the challenges are in the classrooms of this province, and they're unique. From class to class, from school to school, from division to division, Mr. Speaker, this is a very complex issue. It involves a conversation with many people in our sector, and not just teachers but trustees and parents. And we're engaging with a parental engagement as we speak, Mr. Speaker.

And so as we bring all these people together, we're actually going to try to find some solutions and some paths forward on these very difficult issues, Mr. Speaker. But for the member just to stand up and say it's just that simple, it's not.

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

### Busing of Students

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, now that the minister has stated the obvious, that it's taken him almost two years to get to, I'd like to talk about another issue of overcrowding, this time outside of the classroom. It isn't just being felt in our facilities, it's also including our school buses.

Mr. Speaker, Tina Caderma is a Regina school bus driver on stress leave who told CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] that she worries about having so many children packed onto one bus, with a bus that seats more than 70. Mr. Speaker, we're

hearing all around the province about three students even in a seat. And we know that the Sask Party cuts to education have forced school divisions to make changes to busing, including route changes forcing students to ride on those buses even longer.

What does the Minister of Education have to say to education workers like bus drivers who are feeling more and more stressed because the government is putting more and more on their plates and on their buses?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — The member opposite is a former school board trustee, Mr. Speaker, and she knows that the responsibility of providing transportation for children to schools, Mr. Speaker, is the school division.

We have the largest education budget, Mr. Speaker, the largest transfer of funds to school divisions in the province's history. And we expect that school divisions will make the decisions that they need to make to ensure that students get to school safely and efficiently, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the school buses have certain capacities. I am not aware of any circumstance where those capacities on those school buses have been exceeded, Mr. Speaker. If that was the case, it's certainly a violation of *The Highway Traffic Act*, Mr. Speaker. But we expect school divisions to transport our children to school safely and efficiently, Mr. Speaker, and I think they do a very, very good job of that.

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

#### Funding of Education

**Ms. Beck:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister knows that school boards make do with what money that minister gives them. And too often they are making decisions based on what they can do to fit their budget, instead of what is in the best interest of the children. And that minister ought to know that as well.

Mr. Speaker, in our education survey, 41 per cent of teachers said that they have seriously considered leaving the profession. Mr. Speaker, 41 per cent of teachers. Seventy-four per cent of educational assistants, and 42 per cent of teachers see violent incidents once a week or more. One staff member told us and I quote, Mr. Speaker, "Teachers are burning out like never before. All school staff, from teachers, support staff like myself, EAs, etc. are starting to look for alternative careers or leaving the province altogether."

Those aren't just stressful and difficult working conditions, Mr. Speaker. Those are stressful and difficult learning conditions for our students. Does the Minister of Education realize that his failure to properly fund public education is burning out our staff and leaving students behind?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I've got to tell you, I reject the premise of that question, Mr. Speaker. The largest education budget in the history of the province. But here's the facts, Mr. Speaker. We've had over a 34 per cent increase in funding school

divisions, Mr. Speaker, since we've had the privilege of forming government, compared to a 14 per cent increase in students, Mr. Speaker. We've got more teachers in our classrooms. We've got more educational assistants in our classroom, Mr. Speaker. We've seen a significant increase in capital funding, 46 new schools, Mr. Speaker. So to suggest that this government isn't paying attention to the needs in public education, Mr. Speaker, is just plain wrong, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to continue to look to make sure that we fund public education in the best interests of our children, in the best interests of those that deliver public education to those kids, Mr. Speaker. And you can expect more from this government as we move forward with our consultation, Mr. Speaker. We're going to get to the end and we'll have a path forward with respect to some of the significant issues that we're facing, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Status of Crown Corporations

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, in August the independent Information and Privacy Commissioner exposed that the Sask Party had struck a secret cabinet committee to try to sell off our Crown corporations. But the Sask Party has failed to provide any answers or release any documents about the work of that cabinet committee.

A simple question: which Sask Party cabinet members were on that committee, and was the current Premier a member of that committee?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to make it perfectly clear. I've said it before and I'll say it again. And I suspect, given the preoccupation that the members opposite have with this . . . SaskTel is not for sale. Plain and simple, Mr. Speaker. SaskTel is something that is owned by . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Plain and simple, SaskTel is not for sale. It is an asset that is owned by all of the citizens of this province. It is something that the citizens of this province value and respect. It is something that gives them a great deal of service by way of SaskTel Max, SecurTek, Directwest, and a variety of other services that come directly for them.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to say this about SaskTel. In 2017 . . . Well if the members opposite don't want to learn about SaskTel, I'll be glad to sit down and take my place, Mr. Speaker. In 2017 they committed \$4.2 million to expand high-speed Fusion internet to an additional 34 rural sites. They're adding towers, Mr. Speaker. If they've got more questions, I have more answers.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll make it real simple. Who was on this committee? And was the Premier a member?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we are now approaching phase 2 of that project. We are doing small community towers to expand internet and cell phone coverage. We are adding 103 such towers. We have completed 70 of those. We are also adding large tower sites. The large tower sites will cover a large geographic area of 15 to 20 miles in diameter. And, Mr. Speaker, work has begun on 15 of those sites.

Our goal is to have some of the best cellular coverage anywhere in Canada. SaskTel is a great corporate citizen. They're working with a variety of different initiatives, but especially trying to provide better SaskTel coverage to all the cell customers all the way across the province, not just on our major roads and secondary roadways, in small towns and throughout this province, Mr. Speaker. And I've got more if the member's got more questions.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, this is pathetic. This isn't hard. It's a simple question. We know the Environment minister was the Vice-Chair of that committee. My question, not to that minister, to the Premier: was he a member of that committee?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — The members opposite want to play private investigator. They think that there's some great mystery hidden, Mr. Speaker. I'll tell you what is open and what's public and what's transparent. Three things: one, SaskTel is not for sale. Mr. Speaker, a piece of legislation was introduced in the legislature, nothing hidden about that, that would allow for the sale of up to 49 per cent of a Crown corporation. Mr. Speaker, we heard loud and clear from the citizens of our province they didn't like the idea. They wanted us to protect and sanctify the rights of those particular assets.

And, Mr. Speaker, we introduced another piece of legislation. No secret. Nothing hidden away. No secret meetings. No secret committees. Right here on the floor of this legislature, from this very desk, a piece of legislation was introduced that withdrew that — not just close, not just nearby, but exactly fully and completely, took that off the books once and for all. So I'll say this again. SaskTel is not for sale.

## 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 Kindersley.

**Mr. Francis:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very appreciative

for the opportunity to finish my speech from last night. And unlike some others, I will attempt to be mindful of time out of respect for members that haven't spoken yet, especially those of you that won't be here next fall due to either retirement or moving on to future endeavours. So thank you for your service to your constituents and to the province.

I'm going to cut out some statistical information that I originally had in my remarks, but I'm going to touch on a few that I think we take far too much criticism for. And we heard it again today. Education, we're constantly criticized on ignoring education. Last month 191,000 pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] students started their school year in 770 schools across the province. That's 27,000 more students than when the NDP were in power. Forty-six new schools, 23 major renovation projects, versus the NDP record of closing schools at the rate of one per month the last time they were in power.

While student numbers have risen 17 per cent over the past decade, operating funding has increased by 34 per cent and capital funding by nearly five times. Our government will always give education and students high priority. Students with intensive needs are no exception. Since 2007 the number of students has increased 38 per cent. During that same time this government's financial support has more than quadrupled.

[14:30]

Our government has stayed in touch with the education system at all times, with teachers, with parents, and with students, establishing priorities and ensuring that our upcoming workforce will be well educated. That includes continued support for our post-secondary institutions. Nearly 80,000 students are enrolled in these institutions, Mr. Speaker. Currently 9 out of 10 grads stay in the province to start their careers, a far cry from when the NDP were in power and there was a mass exodus of our youth to other provinces.

Mr. Speaker, we're also accused of not caring for the province's most vulnerable. I think "heartless" is a term most often used by them. A strong and growing province, we know, leaves no one behind. That means continued investment and commitment to lend a hand to those in need. This past summer, the Minister of Social Services launched the new Saskatchewan income support program for new clients. It's designed to achieve independence through a simplified process as well as allowing for an increased income exemption designed to get the clients in and out of the program as soon as possible — a hand up, Mr. Speaker, not a handout.

Whether it's supporting programs for those with disabilities or drafting and signing groundbreaking agreements with First Nations to secure safety and well-being of their youth, our government will make every effort to ensure no person is left behind.

We also take a lot of criticism for our highway network. It's one of the biggest concerns in my constituency for sure. And yes, as Saskatchewan residents, we drive a lot and everyone has their own favourite stretch of road that's their own personal priority as they travel it more than anyone else does. Always more to do for sure, but safe roads and intersections have been and always will be a priority for this government. New bypasses, passing lanes,

improvement to high-volume intersections are all fantastic projects that improve the lives and the day-to-day safety of our residents.

My constituents have been patiently waiting for Highway 7 passing lanes. We all travel to Saskatoon a lot in our area, including my family, so we're very well aware of the traffic volume and the dangers on Highway 7. I'm glad to say completion of that project is getting closer every year. The twinning to Delisle is completed, as well as passing lanes from Delisle to Rosetown to Fiske. And we anticipate that from Fiske to Kindersley will be done next year and to the Alberta border in subsequent years. That is such a game changer for my constituency, Mr. Speaker.

Many residents of my area, including myself and my family, are very thankful for the infrastructure investments we receive like this. We are very thankful for the 9 billion in investments made repairing and replacing 14 000 kilometres of our highway network and bridge system across the province. Still more to do, Mr. Minister, but thank you and the previous ministers for the good work you continue to do. Once again, only a strong economy affords us the ability to make these investments.

Another significant investment we have, and we heard about it again today in question period, will be the importance of rural constituencies like mine getting expanded cellular and internet network. Communication and access to information is more important than ever, and programs like the Wireless Saskatchewan initiative will help service 103 rural communities by the end of 2020. If our federal government would work with us a little better and in more good faith, that infrastructure network could be improved even faster.

But to be fair, we've had several infrastructure projects approved by the feds and supported by our provincial government that help our residents. Communities like Kindersley, Eston, Kerrobert, have all received federal funding for water and wastewater projects that in all likelihood would not be feasible otherwise.

To conclude, we need to continue to have vision. We need to prepare and strive for great things as outlined in the Throne Speech. Status quo was the NDP mandate for decades, and that's the fundamental difference between us and the members opposite. The members on this side aren't interested in the equal sharing of misery preferred by the left. We want to ensure there is opportunity for all who seek and make this province their home. As our Minister of Advanced Education mentioned, we need to have aspirations. We need hope for better things for every generation.

Twelve years ago there were aspirations and dreams. A dream for a new Sask Hospital in the Battlefords. No longer a dream; a reality, Mr. Speaker. A dream for a new children's hospital in Saskatoon. No longer a dream, Mr. Speaker; a reality. A dream of a population of 1.1 million or more; a reality. More doctors, more nurses, more schools, students and teachers, lower taxes, more police officers, more care homes, better and safer highways, more funding for municipalities, better post-secondary education. It all stops and starts with a strong economy, Mr. Speaker. Strong economies and sound governance make dreams and aspirations become realities.

This government will continue to aspire and work to keep the economy and province moving forward. I proudly support the Speech from the Throne. And I reject the opposition's proposed amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Energy and Resources.

**Hon. Ms. Eyre:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I am very pleased to rise today to weigh in on the debate on the Throne Speech. And it's a speech in which the Ministry of Energy and Resources, I'm proud to say, features quite prominently.

But before I get to that, of course it's *de rigueur* at such times to acknowledge first, of course, our families. And certainly I want to acknowledge my dear, dear family, Mr. Speaker, my shining stars as I call them, who are everything to me. And little Max, who of course is not so little anymore, whom I'm so proud of and who is such a positive life force.

I would also like to acknowledge those I work with: my chief, Jeremy Brick, who is so eminently good natured, Mr. Speaker, so professional, a real rock under pressure. He is young but wise, and of course I feel older when I say that, but he's a talented young man. He really should go to law school or get his master's in something. But every session that he doesn't, I have to admit to some relief and selfishness in that regard. But whatever he does, he will go far.

I want to acknowledge Sam Sasse, Taylor Stenson, in my office here in Regina. Last spring we lost our senior admin, Sandy LaClaire, to the Minister of Social Services, but we gained Jennifer Clarke, and the entire office is harmonious and professionally run. And Jennifer is so very can-do and unflappable, as is Carrie Zdunich, my constituency assistant back in Saskatoon. And she isn't a big one for public statements so on such occasions I just call her C.Z.

And C.Z. and I and the constituency of Stonebridge-Dakota hosted a very successful fall fowl supper recently. The Premier spoke, Minister of Finance. Senator David Tkachuk was our MC [master of ceremonies]. Senator Pamela Wallin was also there. And every guest who walked through that door was part of a VIP [very important person] reception in my books because of course they are all VIPs, Mr. Speaker. And I am so proud to represent them, as I am to represent my beautiful constituency of Stonebridge-Dakota, which of course is both urban and rural, a wonderful, diverse mix.

And I got out and about a lot this past summer and knocked on doors. And I'll get started again, of course, after this latest federal election fever has calmed down a bit, although it's quite a bit colder now than when I stopped. The comments at the door were very interesting, Mr. Speaker. I heard a lot about the budget and how important it was to people to keep it balanced because they're feeling overstretched by other levels of government. And I was told to always keep up our advocacy for pipelines, for energy projects, to always be passionate about that because as our energy and resource sector goes, as our economy goes, so goes the quality life for all of us.

I heard about the carbon tax. I heard from a single mother who told me that she had a farm property she'd inherited from her

father and a house in the city, and how there was an effect on her bottom line, a clear effect, paying for that tax for fuel and heating in two places. And I think that's what we always have to remember, Mr. Speaker, the effect of this tax on people because they do struggle. And we've all seen the stats about the levels of debt in this country, about how many people would be in the red and how quickly, if they were to lose their jobs right now.

We heard about the impact on grain dryers and grain dryer bills last week, how much the carbon tax adds to the bills of people who are just trying to get a crop off, and of course, as they say, feed the world.

And there's the effect on small businesses. And, Mr. Speaker, of course those businesses don't get the famous rebates. They may get some boondoggle incentive return at some point, but they don't get a rebate. And people who don't file tax returns don't get the rebate. Tax decisions have a clear and present effect on people's livelihoods, and a tax does not amount to an environmental policy. A carbon tax and its attack on our resource sector does not amount to an environmental policy, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the Throne Speech, a couple of highlights from Energy and Resources' perspective. The Saskatchewan mineral development strategy is great news, and the targeted mineral exploration incentive, or TMEI as it's known, which is part of that, is all about helping to realize the significant potential for ground-based exploration of base metals, precious metals, and diamonds, primarily in the Creighton-Denare Beach area. So that's copper, gold, nickel, zinc.

And that's diversification, which we're asked about, and this is part of that. And TMEI has already resulted in a net increase of over half a million hectares of new mineral dispositions being acquired. There have been more than 600 downloads of raw data and maps. And that may not sound super sexy, but for the mining sector, that's pretty sexy.

Proposed expenditures of \$6 million, 110 new drill holes, seven successful applications for the 2018-19 program — that's really good meat-and-potatoes stuff, because the real exploration, the exploration phase, is the R & D [research and development] of mining. And Saskatchewan juniors are pivotal to that process and attracting them here to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of potash, we all know the optimistic news that came out of BHP a few weeks ago. Things are looking good in that regard, and there are a number of projects that are working their way through the process, projects that will use innovative new technology that could actually change the way potash is mined. And it's all happening right here in Saskatchewan, and we couldn't be prouder of the sector and all the companies that we have here in the province.

In terms of nuclear, Mr. Speaker, clearly there have been some difficult years. But you know, the international spot price recently was pegged higher than before Fukushima. And that's very, very good news. And with the changing international geopolitical landscape also come potential opportunities. Already 1 in 20 homes in the US [United States] are powered by Saskatchewan uranium; 1 in 10 in Canada. We have new players that want to come to this province, are interested by the possibilities here. And that's one of the things that I noticed when

I was at the Prospectors & Developers Association in Toronto in March and walked the massive convention floor. And Saskatchewan had a great presence there. What I got was the renewed buzz and the renewed energy about our province after some challenging years, companies that want to come here to explore for copper and lithium, rare earths and uranium.

And I remember a delegate from Rio Tinto telling me that he told Peru, as a resource country, that Peru should be more like Saskatchewan, that it could learn from Saskatchewan and our regulatory and royalty stability and structure. And let's not forget the Fraser report, Mr. Speaker, on our mining sector. Saskatchewan was ranked last year first in the world for the integrity of its mining policies, number one in Canada for investment attractiveness. And we are very, very proud of that.

So in terms of uranium, who knows what the future holds? Those export numbers could grow and maybe the future of renewable energy could belong to nuclear energy, which would be amazing news for Saskatchewan, less so of course considering the staunch anti-uranium positions of the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Regina Northeast, which needless to say is problematic considering, for starters, how the mining sector employs thousands of people, First Nations people in the North.

Really, Mr. Speaker, you cannot leave every resource in the ground, which brings me to oil and gas, speaking of difficult years. I read a poignant line recently by Mr. Darryl Shirley from Estevan. He said, "When the oil patch dies, it's like turning off a light switch. But when it starts to come back, it's like filling up a swimming pool with an eyedropper."

And you know, we talk about mental health, Mr. Speaker, within sectors, the ag sector of course, the stress line. But there are also mental health challenges within the energy sector. How could there not be? To be so under attack, so mocked in so many quarters, held in contempt, dismissed. And dismissed with glib facile alternatives — energy workers will all get miraculously . . . they'll seamlessly find jobs in the renewable energy sector. Please.

I sometimes think of Gilles Duceppe in this regard. Remember him, the former Bloc leader? And he once did a very noble thing. He went to a cheese factory out east somewhere and he put on a hairnet, because that's what the workers who worked at that factory wore. And he was mocked for that. He was lampooned. He looked stupid. And he said, if you say I look stupid, you're saying that about every worker in this factory because this is what they wear.

[14:45]

And I thought of that when I saw the tweet by Gerry Butts trying to shame Andrew Scheer for shaking hands with an energy worker who was wearing a yellow vizzly vest, which is just what that worker happened to be wearing to work on that day when he met Andrew Scheer.

And of course the Leader of the Opposition over there, he wouldn't condescend to shake the hands of workers who came through here on that bitterly cold day last January and who rolled on to Ottawa, or who rallied, which was a very similar attitude demonstrated by our federal leader. Speaking of whom, we

continue to face now, after last week's federal election outcome, those same proverbial headwinds from the federal government. Grant Fagerheim from Whitecap Resources, I think, told it like it is: "... federal government policies, [are] saying, 'No more coal, no more oil, no more natural gas.' [But] you can't create energy out of Pixie Sticks." In other words, transition all you like, but keep it in the ground isn't going to cut it when it's minus 45.

And after the election last week, some pundits said on TV, well what do you want from the federal government? They bought the darn pipeline. But of course they only bought a darn pipeline because death by a thousand processes had driven Kinder Morgan out. Otherwise they wouldn't have had to.

And that same academic who spoke about the darn pipeline, he didn't mention how the federal government killed Energy East and Northern Gateway and imposed Bill C-69 and C-48 which, if we're talking about national unity, Mr. Speaker, is so absolutely divisive — Bill C-48 — that from northern BC [British Columbia] ports Western Canadian companies can't export their product to international markets, even though loading and off-loading LNG is fine and even though anti-human rights countries such as Venezuela, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, they're still perfectly okay to sail up the St. Lawrence and off-load their oil in the ports of Quebec and Montreal. What country does that to itself? And it's the lip service. It's the lip service that is such a fundamental part of the problem, the attitude of, on the one hand, nominally supporting the energy sector, that lip service, but nevertheless allowing for the oil baron rhetoric to creep in.

The member for Regina Rosemont was all gung-ho yesterday evening about the importance of the energy sector, but back a few years ago he was against Northern Gateway, which means by extension he was for Bill C-48 because Bill C-48 kills any and all future manifestations of Northern Gateway. And comments and positions such as that, taken together, one by one over time, have collective consequences. And are we to interpret the member for Regina Rosemont's pro-energy comments as going fundamentally and formally against his leader's positions on oil, on uranium, on coal? Because that's got to be awkward, and that's what you call a rift. Because some of the members over there, as opposed to the woke member for Regina Northeast and the Leader of the Opposition himself, they are actually pro-resource and pro-resource sector. So that's a very delicate dance, Mr. Speaker, and a very damaging one for our sectors here in Saskatchewan.

And in terms of energy policy, I simply must address the strange fixation or fiction perpetrated by a number of the members over there on inches of pipe. The member for Athabasca in particular is obsessed by inches, Mr. Speaker. He continues to ask, and I quote, "How much pipe have you laid?" And I'll tell you. Aside from pipelines that cross provincial boundaries, which is a federal, federal responsibility, we have actually laid a lot of pipe. Since 2007 we've laid 503 pipelines with a total length of 3569 kilometres. There you go. That's a lot of inches.

Just finally, Mr. Speaker, I'll say for all the talk about energy and transition, it's important to remember and acknowledge what the energy sector is actually doing. The oil and gas sector is investing in renewables: \$1.6 billion so far, the Western Canadian oil sector, so surely some credit where credit is due. And this is

arresting — and I always mention this whenever I can — that if every oil- and gas-producing country around the world extracted oil and gas the way we do here in Canada, in Western Canada, global GHG [greenhouse gas] emissions would fall by a quarter.

And to young people asking, all the Greta-ites out there, what are you doing for the environment? Well we're doing methane capture, Mr. Speaker, and we're doing CCS. We're doing carbon capture and storage. And experts from Norway to Australia call carbon capture technology the answer to young people's protests on climate change.

The European Union, the G7 [Group of Seven], G20 [Group of 20], they're all integrating CCS into major policy statements, and those members over there mock it. Yesterday evening the member for Regina Rosemont stood in solidarity with the workers in Coronach, in Estevan. So doesn't he agree then with the brotherhood of boilermakers that CCS can make coal communities viable and sustainable?

I also wish that I could remind the young people who protest, and remind Greta Thunberg, how fossil fuels have lifted so many millions of people out of poverty. And here in Canada our Indigenous partners can be a major part of that, and the Indigenous communities who want energy and want pipelines. Where does "leave it in the ground" leave them?

Energy, Canadian energy, is nothing short of an issue of national unity, Mr. Speaker. And I think that the federal election has reminded us, if we needed reminding of that, which is why the Premier's vision is so important for a new Canadian deal on what our national unity means. Because as the economy goes across this country, so go all of us.

To stand up for Saskatchewan and its workers, that isn't negative. That is what is expected of us — of all provinces, of all premiers, of this Premier — for positive energy, which is why I will be supporting the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, and not supporting the amendment.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As ever, good to look at my neighbour's desk and wonder: lights are on, nobody's home. But here we go. Very good. This is probably a good place, Mr. Speaker, to say in this House we are literally nothing without the people that make this work in terms of *Hansard* and *Journals*. And you know, this is as fine a point as any and as fine as an example as any to say thank you very much for all the great work that is done in helping us come back to the people's business.

Mr. Speaker, again it's good to take my place for one of these remaining times available to me. I'm not running again in the next election, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to move on to other chapters. I'm getting a lot of encouragement to speed it up from my colleagues. But, Mr. Speaker, it gets said a lot, but what an honour it is to take your place in this Assembly and to speak to something of the hopes and dreams and the issues that are most important for your constituents. And, Mr. Speaker, I've always tried to keep that firmly in mind as we set about doing this work, and that's certainly all the more clear for me at this stage of the game, Mr. Speaker. So what an honour and what a privilege it

really is to do this work and to sign the roll and to take our place as honourable members in this Assembly.

And again, Mr. Speaker, it's a cast of thousands — well, it seems like thousands — that makes this work happen. But between the Table and the Clerk's office, the Speaker's office, the Pages, Journals, Hansard, security, sarge. Let's be honest, you know, sarge, pretty much revolves around the sarge. And you know, I think of Linda, who's kind of like my mom down in the cafeteria. You know, it's the library. Again there's so many people here that do such great work and are behind the scenes and do what they can to give us this place to do the people's business. And I couldn't be more grateful for being party to that, to these many years.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Speech from the Throne 2019, you know, one of the sort of standard criticisms of a Speech from the Throne is that it's kind of light on detail and kind of long on the aspirational and that, you know, the things that get a light hung on them, you find out what really is important come the budget. Mr. Speaker, and so we'll see again. There's some interesting things in this particular Throne Speech and we'll see how that comes out in the wash with the budget, Mr. Speaker.

So if I'm not giving the full critique today, I'm sure perhaps the member from Indian Head-Milestone will cut me a little slack for once, just this once, if I'm not fully weighing in on this. But you know, the speculative begs the speculative, Mr. Speaker.

But in terms of the Throne Speech itself, I thought it was nicely rendered by His Honour. And certainly Their Honours, it was lovely to see them here. And I've got to say, the beaded moccasins they had were just stunning. I always think of moccasins in this business, Mr. Speaker, in terms of it's good to think about walking a mile or a kilometre in the other person's shoes or moccasins, Mr. Speaker.

And again that the Honourable Russ Mirasty has taken this job is, I think, a tremendous thing for the province. I had the great opportunity to be at the Protective Services Medal presentation yesterday along with the Provincial Secretary. He didn't bring out the great seal for the occasion, which I was a little disappointed in. I don't know if he's lost it or if it's in a safe place. I'm sure it's in a safe place. But anyway, Mr. Speaker, it was great to be there with the Lieutenant Governor, and a fine job was done, as was done in the case of the Speech from the Throne.

And, Mr. Speaker, again this is also a point where we'd like to say to the family of Thomas Molloy, to extend our condolences at the loss of a great son of Saskatchewan, a great Canadian, Mr. Speaker. And if I might just from a personal observation, a great proponent of reconciliation, and his work will outlive his years, Mr. Speaker. But of course, the grief that comes with such a loss, both for those that worked immediately with him and to the Molloy family, again we extend our condolences and our thoughts and prayers with his passing.

But again, Mr. Speaker, Russ Mirasty did a fine job yesterday. His Honour . . . Again I don't know if I'm even . . . When it comes to the honorifics, Mr. Speaker, you'll forgive me. I mean well, but I don't always get them right. But certainly the Lieutenant Governor did a fine job. And I also want to say, we'll

get to the speech quickly, Mr. Speaker, but I want to pay a compliment to yourself for yet another round of excellent spiritual leadership that was provided by Rabbi Jeremy Parnes and by Elder Harry Francis.

And certainly those are two individuals that I've had the great privilege of knowing and observing on a personal basis, Mr. Speaker, and know a little bit about the great work that they do in so many walks of the Saskatchewan life. And again, it was great to see them on the bill and they did not disappoint, I don't think. I thought they lifted up our eyes to beyond the horizon to that better Saskatchewan that such an occasion should have us all thinking about, Mr. Speaker, and what we can do to make that happen.

So again it's always good to hear the . . . If you think Harry Francis's *nêhiyaw* for the praying is amazing, you should hear him sing, Mr. Speaker. He comes from Piapot of course, and as the late Bush Kaiswatum used to say, they got lots of songs out on Piapot.

[15:00]

And indeed Piapot is where they keep the Treaty 4 song, that song that was sung at the signing of Treaty 4 and then has been kept by the Kaiswatum family these many years. And Harry is very much a part of that very proud and vital tradition, and it was so wonderful to see him here that day at his Legislative Assembly.

So, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the Throne Speech itself, I thought the Lieutenant Governor did an admirable job with the hand he was dealt to play. But I don't know if it's the yawn scale — is that a thing? — but there seemed to be a lot of yawning going on, on the government side, Mr. Speaker, when it came to the Throne Speech.

And you know, I'm not saying that you've always got to be a self-starter in this business or that you've got to be throwing your own parade all the time. And sometimes when the Kool-Aid chugging gets going over there, it's a little much to take, Mr. Speaker. But you know, it's your Throne Speech. Like, get behind it, Mr. Speaker. So that was kind of interesting, and I don't know if it's like, you know, people had been up past their bedtimes or, you know, they were just shining their shoes or what was going on. But, Mr. Speaker, you'd think that there would be a little more enthusiasm on offer for the Throne Speech. But not so.

The Throne Speech itself, Mr. Speaker, again there's some . . . Mr. Speaker, I hear my friend from Martensville chiming in. And I say that without a hint of irony. I consider her a friend. And, Mr. Speaker, when you think about . . . The member from Moosomin as well. I'm always open to heckles about a swinging bridge in Wolseley. And Gene . . . pardon me, the member from Dewdney, Gardiner. Too many friends to count at this juncture, Mr. Speaker.

**An Hon. Member:** — You're a popular guy.

**Mr. McCall:** — I'm a lucky guy is what I am. Too many friends to name, Mr. Speaker, and I'm just glad that they're all sort of like lining up for it here. So it's an unanticipated consequence,

Mr. Speaker.

I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that in terms of the Throne Speech, and again where I started off in the work that we do here, we're all sent here by constituencies. And in my case it's the good people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. And you know, here we are, Treaty 4 territory, the homeland of the Métis. And again we had Harry Francis praying for all of us in *nêhiyaw*. It was such a wonderful thing. As was the case with Rabbi Parnes. And so to Rabbi Parnes, I would say, *toda raba b'emmet*. And to Harry, I'd say, *kinanâskomitin*.

So with the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, how that responds to what's important to an individual in Regina Elphinstone-Centre and how that interplays with the work that's been done . . . You know, again I don't want to crash anyone's parade or anything like that, Mr. Speaker, but we're not here to pump the government's tires. We're not here to throw the flower petals in their path as they proceed about their daily business, Mr. Speaker. We're not here for the amen chorus, Mr. Speaker. We're Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition. And again, to do these things credibly where we see things being done well, we like to say, you know, good work; keep that up; more of that please. And where we see things that are falling down, we like to say, you know, pull up your socks; do better. Because that is what the people expect of us.

And again, Mr. Speaker, there's sort of an eternal return quality to the Throne Speech debate in that some of these things, it goes around and around. And you know, the opposition criticizes, the government defends, and you start to wonder about various life choices you've made over years, Mr. Speaker. But again that's the base of the equation that we're here to perform, Mr. Speaker, and again you try to set about doing that work.

You know, some good advice a long time ago I got was like, you know, attack the policy and not the person. And again, Mr. Speaker, I've tried to do that as best I can. But it's also probably no surprise, you know, it's not exactly breaking news — it's more fun to make the decisions than it is to respond to the decisions. And I think there's something profoundly creative and productive and positive that goes with the great privilege of being in government. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, there's important work to be done on the people's behalf through the official opposition as well, but you know, it's sort of no contest in terms of what's more fun, what warms the soul a little more.

But, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what we wanted to see, I think in terms of relating some of the concerns of the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, Mr. Speaker, for this particular Throne Speech, and it was touched on here today in question period. There is a crystal meth epidemic that is washing over the province once again, and the response has not been equal to the challenge, Mr. Speaker. So we'd hope to see some recognition of that in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, but we did not.

The CBC's [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] *the fifth estate* came to town a couple of weeks back, Mr. Speaker, and they were over at *mâdawêyatîtan*, the let's all be together centre. And again, a wonderful facility for the people of Elphinstone and indeed the city of Regina and region. And, Mr. Speaker, they had a town hall, and there were officials certainly from the government in attendance. And I know them to be hard-working

people and concerned about the issues, Mr. Speaker, but there wasn't the representation that you'd hoped there would be from the government, Mr. Speaker.

And one of the things that was I think most shocking and eloquently stated, forcefully stated, by the chief of police, Evan Bray, the Regina Police Service chief, Mr. Speaker, in reflecting on the wicked interplay of the big three of increased gun violence, increased gang activity, and increased drug incidents with crime, Mr. Speaker, and the way that these things were interplaying to drive what's happening on the streets of Regina. He talked about in the past four years we've seen . . . He had, you know, from their stats and their information, intelligence-driven folks, in the past four years they've seen criminal incidents involving cocaine go up by 75 per cent. In the case of crystal meth, they've seen the increase of crystal meth-related incidents increase by 2,400 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And that coincides with things like . . .

I know this is not just unique to Regina. I know this is not unique to places like Saskatoon. And I know that it's playing out in a terrible toll of human life and death, Mr. Speaker. And you know, that we have record murder years on the part of Saskatoon, that we have, you know, Battlefords struggling with the different things there they're working with, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of things that go to make this circumstance what they are, but certainly in the case of Regina, the immediate factors are that.

But there are also a broader set of issues, Mr. Speaker, where this is a horrible barometer of how we are doing or not, how we are succeeding or failing when it comes to reconciliation, when it comes to fighting poverty, when it comes to, you know, who benefits from this tremendous land of opportunity that we live in, Mr. Speaker, who has a share in that, who's on the outside looking in.

And, Mr. Speaker, again that it was at *mâdawêyatîtan*, the centre of that is the renewed Scott Collegiate, named for the premier, the first premier of this province who again is recognized as having such a tremendous vision for Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, it's a wonderful facility and it's going to do increasingly wonderful things. But last year, Mr. Speaker, I got to stand in this place and one of the people I reflected on in my remarks was a young woman who, at the age of 16, had been killed by a 15-year-old. And that still awaits trial, Mr. Speaker. But that young woman was recognized at the graduation ceremony for Scott Collegiate this past year, Mr. Speaker, in June, and she graduated in memoriam.

And for the gains that we make at Scott Collegiate, Mr. Speaker, I'm so thankful for them, and we're counting on that critical institution to make the difference for our neighbourhood, Mr. Speaker. But if what we gain at Scott Collegiate is lost at 900 block Cameron, Mr. Speaker, we're not going to be further ahead as a people. We're not going to succeed as a people.

And I guess in a bunch of different ways, Mr. Speaker, I think, I subscribe to a philosophy that says that we're better together, and when we all succeed, we all succeed, Mr. Speaker. And a victory for just a few that doesn't benefit the great many is not much of a victory, Mr. Speaker.

And so there are things that you witness in this life, Mr. Speaker,

and it makes you wonder, you know, like what difference do you make, taking your place in the Assembly and trying to bring attention to these issues, Mr. Speaker? And it's a hard thing. It's a diffuse thing. I've thought this about politics from the start, Mr. Speaker. It's not like you gain the satisfaction of being a carpenter, and you build a house. And you stand back and you look at the house and you say, that's a job well done; I can be proud of that. And it's not like that working for human beings, Mr. Speaker. I know that in spades.

But, Mr. Speaker, on different factors, be it housing, be it the increasing, sort of, difficulty that people have accessing the Social Services ministry, what happens there, Mr. Speaker . . . And you know, again I want to say a big thank you to the Minister of Social Services and his staff, Mr. Speaker, whom my office is in contact with on a several times a day, daily basis. But as thankful as we are for those efforts, Mr. Speaker, I think it's signal to a broader system that is failing the people and that we've got to do better there. And that again in terms of what happens with . . . You know, we go through the cold snap here, and in Saskatchewan these things are a matter of life and death, a matter of life and death, and we've got to do better.

So on housing, on social services, on employment, on you know, not just, you know, fighting the gangs on the suppression side of things, but making, laying out those exits to get people out of the gangs, you know, these things have to be more than just like waiting for the feds to show up to throw some inadequate dollars on the table to make it go round, Mr. Speaker. We're here on Treaty 4. We're here in a time where the calls to action for reconciliation ring out, and we need to take them up.

[15:15]

The one other thing I'd be remiss in not mentioning about this town hall, Mr. Speaker, again is in terms of what's happening in corrections in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I think, you know, we should seriously consider a name change, because correction is not what's going on in the prison system in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. When you've got all of the programming space — the things that give people a shot at rehabilitation, at a better life, Mr. Speaker, at employability — when you've got all of that taken up by double- and triple-bunking, Mr. Speaker, and when this gang flips on that gang and then it's, you know, the riot is on again in the system, Mr. Speaker, there is zero correction going on in that circumstance. It gets worse. And folks get out, and then we wonder why we have record years in terms of murder in our bigger centres and mayhem throughout the province.

And I am not . . . I wish I was making this up, Mr. Speaker. I wish this was just some sort of like, you know, Warren's an opposition MLA and there he goes again just being negative. I wish I didn't have these things to talk about, Mr. Speaker. And I wish that there was more of a response that made the difference. Because again, Mr. Speaker, a year ago there was a 15-year-old girl, should have had her whole life in front of her, paid the price for this. Paid the price for how we're not getting it right. So, Mr. Speaker, on those and many other fronts . . .

Like, again, I like a good parade. You know, I grew up . . . As a kid we'd trot down to Dewdney Avenue for the Buffalo Days parade and, you know, the politicians of the day would pelt us with candy and we'd see the Shriners go by in their little cars.

And you know, I love a good parade, Mr. Speaker. And the Throne Speech is often that. It's sort of the greatest hits package. It's sort of the high level and the, you know, wait for the detail.

But, Mr. Speaker, we need to do better on reconciliation. I would submit that there are a great number of challenges that face us as a province. And Saskatchewan is a proud part of Canada, Mr. Speaker, but reconciliation is something that we need to do better on. And, Mr. Speaker, there are ways that we can do this. And I'd listened to a fine speech offered last night by the Minister of Justice and what he had to say about the Ministry of Justice's response to the missing and murdered Indigenous women commission and the fine words of thanks he had to say for Commissioner Buller. And that was all very well placed. But what he also outlined, Mr. Speaker, was a plan, a plan to take up the Calls to Action and to address the problem that we experience in Saskatchewan in a lot of horrible ways. And that's as it should be, Mr. Speaker, because, you know, it's the old D.O.A. formula, Mr. Speaker — the great political philosophers, you know, punk rock's D.O.A., Mr. Speaker — talk minus action equals zero. And sometimes less than zero, Mr. Speaker, because people just stop listening to you.

So, Mr. Speaker, there's action. And that was well enumerated by the Minister for Justice last night around the missing and murdered Indigenous women Calls to Action, and we'll be watching that with great interest because this is important to all of us. But so too the Calls to Action out of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Mr. Speaker, and it is so very important to the people of Saskatchewan, you know, Indigenous, non-Indigenous, all of us.

Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of other fine things to talk about in the Speech from the Throne. There's some things to critique. But at this point I'd like to say a big thank you to the people of Elphinstone for returning me to this Legislative Assembly for these years and to apologize to them for where we haven't been able to do all that we wanted or to make the cases as forcefully as it needed, Mr. Speaker.

But I've never been the kind of politician that can come out of this and say, you know . . . One of our predecessors talked about never losing a night's sleep over political matters. I'm just not wired like that, Mr. Speaker. I don't understand how that works. You know, I'd get a mean heckle in on . . . from Martensville and then I'm like losing sleep for a week. But, Mr. Speaker, these are . . . Where we couldn't get it all, Mr. Speaker, the determination continues.

And you know, for my own self, that cause moves on to different ways to pursue those dreams and that better world and the better neighbourhood for me and my neighbours, Mr. Speaker. And that certainly carries on with the party that I am proud to be a lifetime member of, Mr. Speaker, and have been through a lot of good times and a lot of bad times and a lot of points in between with, Mr. Speaker, and for that I'm very thankful.

Mr. Speaker, on Monday it was the occasion of my 47th birthday, and before we break into the cake, Mr. Speaker, I have to confess to something. This time of year for me is kind of hard because, Mr. Speaker, my brother Neil, who we lost to cancer in 2003 . . . He turned 30 October 26th and had been diagnosed with cancer October 23rd, 2003, and then was dead the beginning of

December, Mr. Speaker. And my brother Neil, me and him, we were Irish twins. We were 363 days apart, Mr. Speaker. And I miss him every day. I miss him every day. And . . . This is, this is terrible. You're like, boy, those NDPers are just waa, waa, waa.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is the birthday of my mother, and so you can imagine in the McCall house this time of year it was often quite the scramble to see who got cake, you know, who got the piece with the dime in it; who got the piece with the quarter in it. But, Mr. Speaker, you do find out real clear in this work that family is everything. And so for me, Mr. Speaker, as you make these decisions, it's a hard time of year for me and, like, I miss my mom. I miss my brother.

And, Mr. Speaker, for the family, what I've got left, we've been through a hard pass this past year as well. And my darling Theresa is on the mend and she's on a back-to-work program and she has, you know, been raising Cain, back full bore soon enough, Mr. Speaker, and for that I couldn't be more thankful.

And then there's the big McCallski — Clifford Robert Douglas McCall. You know, my dad's coming up . . . I think his 86th birthday will be coming in March, on International Women's Day because he was, you know, profeminist as he is.

But you know, he was a 35-year guy for SaskEnergy. He was a big, strong farm boy come in off the farm. You know, we've still got the home quarter out there at Moffat and, you know . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And I should say for the benefit of my friend from Moosomin that the McCalls, when they got to Canada, they started out Scottish Tories. But in the '30s they all wised up real quick. They all got CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] and NDP after that. And in his more honest moments, Mr. Speaker, I know that the member from Moosomin will still fess up to the fact that he ain't got all the McCall votes yet out of Wolseley . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . We'll take it, Mr. Speaker.

But anyway, my dad. Man, I'm so lucky. So lucky. Again, he was the big, strong farm boy. And the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood was talking about the wet times, you know, in the '50s. And I've talked about this before in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. My grandfather had rheumatic fever when he was a kid and then, you know, he was stricken on the farm in the wet years — '55, '56, '57. And it was wet so that, you know, the hooves were rotting off the cattle, Mr. Speaker. You get my dad near to tears when he smells cordite these days, Mr. Speaker, because they were blasting ditches to try and beat the band, and it didn't work. They got flooded out, Mr. Speaker.

And in the middle of this, my grandfather Gordon . . . I'm named for my grandfathers, Warren Gordon, not to refer to a member's name in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. But he was stricken, and they drove him by team to the Hinton and then put him in the car, got him to Wolseley where he passed on. This is 1956. And grandma and dad tried to make a go of the farm. And then, you know, come the time they figured they're going to head into the city and see what a life they could make for themselves there.

And so, you know, I never got to know my grandfather Gordon, and I didn't really know my grandfather Warren. But I've always been very conscious of that legacy that was bestowed onto me, and very proud of the fact that there's a beautiful stone house

across from the opera house in Wolseley that was built by McCalls, because they were stone masons when they come over from Scotland, Mr. Speaker.

And they could have had some of that beautiful land. They could have proved it up north of the No. 1, out by Wolseley, Mr. Speaker, that the member from Indian Head-Milestone was talking about yesterday. And they said, no we don't want to go there. We want to go down closer to Montmartre where there's lots of rocks in the land, lots of stone. Better to build our houses, Mr. Speaker. But they picked a lot of rocks, Mr. Speaker. So I know what it means when you've got somebody coming at you with the hand shaking . . . [inaudible] . . . Watch out for those rock pickers. I'm like, yes, you know, take it easy.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud of that legacy. And I'm also proud to point out that when they proved up that first home quarter in 1883, the McCalls, as is written up by Kay Parley in her fine discussion of Moffat, that the McCalls were pitching right from the start in terms of being trustees on the local school board and being good neighbours, Mr. Speaker. And certainly we've tried to carry that forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we got to the city — you know, the McCalls have been in North Central Regina since '57 — my dad and my grandma moved into the house on 9 block Athol and we've been hanging around there ever since. And so when my dad . . . You know, again, we had such a great time growing up and a great life. And, Mr. Speaker, it really gave us all a lot to think about this year when my dad had a fall, had a subdural hematoma, a brain bleed. And in typical big-McCallski fashion, he was coming out of the Albert library, big bag of books in one hand, you know, tradesman's hips and knees, and cane in the other, and took a tumble and then wondered why he had this splitting headache for the next three weeks, Mr. Speaker, and wound up in the hospital. And they gave him a bit of an oil change, checked his sparks and all that, and he's made a remarkable, miraculous recovery. And for that, we couldn't be more thankful in the McCall family, Mr. Speaker.

But again in terms of reminders of we've not got a lot of time on this earth and you've got to do what you can with it while you can, Mr. Speaker, it was certainly a pretty good reminder for all of us in terms of that. Maybe not as much time as I'm taking in this speech, Mr. Speaker, but I thank colleagues for their indulgence in this.

[15:30]

Mr. Speaker, in this work I've also been blessed by the fact that at the signing of Treaty 4, so I understand, one of the chiefs, Cote, talked about, you know, the importance of education and that the Saulteaux and the Cree and the Assiniboine that were gathered for the signing of Treaty 4, that they should learn the cunning of the white man but that the white man should also give their kids to the Indigenous people so that they might learn something of their ways as well. And that to me always stood out as a really good example of, you know, the treaties and the spirit of reconciliation and action on reconciliation because if you're family, you know, ain't nothing going to tear you apart. If you're family, their problem is your problem. Your problem is their problem.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's something that I've been so blessed in my life that I've been taken as a son by the late Sterling Brass and by Edna Brass, and very proud of my connections with the Favels and the Brasses. And I've been taken in ceremony as a son as well by Murray Ironchild from Piapot. And so to have Murray as my father and as someone who helps me along in these things, Mr. Speaker, and Terry as my mom, how lucky am I. And I think it's made for a better human or increased the odds of me being a better human, Mr. Speaker. But I think in terms of the work that we need to do in this province again to bring folks together, I wish everyone could be as lucky as I have been to receive the love and the generosity and that help from Jumbo and from the late Sterling and all my brothers and sisters and cousins. And it is something that will carry me till the end, Mr. Speaker, and beyond. So I'm thankful.

I'm still voting against the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. I'm voting for the amendment, Mr. Speaker, because you know, health and education and certainly the Crown sector . . . You know, I think the historical record when it comes to why this government can't be trusted when it comes to the Crowns is pretty clear, pretty clear, Mr. Speaker. You know, fool me once, shame on me; fool me twice . . . Like you know, now I'm measuring twice and cutting once . . . [inaudible] . . . Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the record is clear. And may it be better going forward, but when we have the Minister of Justice protesting, as he did during question period, it reminds me of the Lady Macbeth, you know, methinks he doth protest too much.

But, Mr. Speaker, the other thing I just want to say at this point, we've come through this sort of wild time of political division in the country and in Saskatchewan. And I would remind everyone to look up the great words of John G. Diefenbaker. And again, Mr. Speaker, I'm not . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, I'm getting some help from Moosomin. I'm appreciating that. Mr. Speaker, in terms of his great quote . . . And his other quote that I like is that he once addressed a freshman class of parliamentarians and he said, for the first six months on the job you're going to wonder how you got here. After that you're going to wonder how everybody else got here.

Mr. Speaker, Diefenbaker said this:

I am a Canadian, free to speak without fear, free to worship in my own way, free to stand for what I think right, free to oppose what I believe wrong, or free to choose those who shall govern my country. This heritage of freedom I pledge to uphold for myself and for all . . . [humanity].

Mr. Speaker, in this time where we have those that would, you know, try to use anger and division in aid of separatism, Mr. Speaker, like we don't need that. We need fairness for the West, absolutely. We need a fair shake for all people of this country, absolutely. But, Mr. Speaker, those that would try to turn this into something else, you know, Canada is better than that. It is bigger than that. And, Mr. Speaker, let us all remember that we're Canadians. We should be proud of that.

So I don't know. I'd quote the member from Arm River here, where there's a speech he once gave where he said, you know, he wasn't wild about the father and he didn't like junior much either when it came to the Trudeaus. And you know, I share some of that sentiment, Mr. Speaker.

But I am also, you know, struck by the record of service by someone like Ralph Goodale, in conjunction with the old adage that justice is not politics, you know, Mr. Speaker. And I don't think that that was an end that was particularly well deserved for Mr. Goodale. But I do want to go on record and thank him for the service to the people of Saskatchewan these many years and wish him and Pam all the best.

Mr. Speaker, again it's a privilege to take your place, say your piece in this House. I've buried the lede. I already told how I'm going to vote on the Throne Speech motion and on the amendment. My apologies for that. But it really and truly is a privilege to serve in this Assembly and to serve not just with my caucus colleagues, but in my more honest moments, Mr. Speaker, I've got a lot of friends on the other side of the aisle as well, and for all of that I am very lucky and thankful. So, Mr. Speaker, I'll now take my place.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melfort.

**Hon. Mr. Goudy:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, this will be my second opportunity to respond to the Speech from the Throne. And it would have been a little bit less than two years ago that the member from Kindersley, the member from Swift Current, and myself were sworn in by our past LG [Lieutenant Governor] who we wanted to give, with the rest of the members of this House, condolences to his family and friends.

The member from Kindersley and myself think it's a little bit unfair having the member from Swift Current. He's got, as we say, the voice for radio and the face for TV and has spent 20 years so far, so it makes us feel a little bit at a disadvantage. But it has been great over this last year to get more comfortable with the people of this House. You know, it's far more easy to stand up and speak when you feel like you're with family. And so, though between the sides sometimes it's a little bit of a dysfunctional family, it still is family for all of us here and in a strange sort of way.

But, Mr. Speaker, this was a little different as well this year being at the Throne Speech, following the new Lieutenant Governor into the House, looking down and see him wearing his moccasins. And knowing a little bit about our new Lieutenant Governor, Russ Mirasty, it really took a lot of the fearfulness out of the event and put us all at ease. So you know, Russ Mirasty, I have been able to go to a number of events with he and his wife over the last few months and, you know, for a fellow who grew up in a small two-bedroom house with no electricity and no running water, a person who had a bout with . . . What did he have a bout with, Mr. Speaker?

**An. Hon. Member:** — Tuberculosis.

**Hon. Mr. Goudy:** — Tuberculosis, that was what it is. So a bout with tuberculosis, spent four years in residential school, and to see him get to the place where he's at today, Mr. Speaker, it was really a privilege. But more than that, watching him as he leads different events, as he speaks at different events, and as he interacts with people from all areas of society, I have nothing but a great respect for that man.

Before I got to meet him, I was in Melfort at the police station there. I was talking to a number of the RCMP officers and his

name came up. And he had been in one of the top positions for the RCMP in the province and in our nation, and a very successful career. And it was interesting to hear them all, one after the other, tell stories. I thought, it can't be that you all know Russ Mirasty. But it turned out most of them there not only knew him but had a great story of some kind of act of courage or leadership in his life. So when I finally got to meet him, I was expecting a great man and, Mr. Speaker, that's what I found.

So as all of us, he grew up in a home that taught him to make, as a young man, good decisions, and I think that he's been doing that since he was a young man. And now that he's older, he's been making good decisions. And, as many of us on this side and that side of the House, his best decision was the wife or the husband that we choose. And seeing Donna Mirasty, the way she carries herself as well, I think the greatest decision that our Prime Minister has made in his time in office was choosing the Saskatchewan LG.

So, Mr. Speaker, he started off his time, Speech from the Throne, with condolences to the man who was before him. And interestingly enough, all government people, we step in to follow before people who've . . . and build on the foundation that people have laid before us. And you know, I've listened to a number of MLAs who are retiring from this side of the House and give their last response to the Throne Speech, and I just want to say that we will certainly miss them all and, you know, the family will be changed, but the new normal might be better. In some cases it might be worse. We're not sure. But we . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I wasn't pointing at anyone specifically, but if you feel that way, then hey.

But you know, it has been a great time. We've all been able to learn a lot from those who went before us. And one of the things that really struck me, Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to this Throne Speech . . . First of all as I was sitting beside the Premier trying not to mess up, it is harder than I thought to just sit there and look like you know what you're doing.

**An Hon. Member:** — Regal.

**Hon. Mr. Goudy:** — Well maybe not regal, but just, you know, don't mess up. And so I didn't want to look this way or that way.

But as I was listening, I heard him make a statement a number of times. And I know he's a non-partisan individual. He's a representative of the Queen. But as he was speaking, he said the words "my government." My government. My government. And as he went through and was saying my government, I don't know if he voted NDP, Sask Party. You know what? It doesn't really matter with that man. He shows respect and honour and kindness to everybody on both sides of this House. But I was impressed that he was saying it's my government.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that we all see that Speech from the Throne is not just we, the government, but it's our government. And you know, we're all one. I really appreciate the strength of the opposition, but I also really appreciate the strength of this government and the plan that they have to move forward. I was looking through the Speech from the Throne, and as His Honour outlined things here, he talked about the new growth plan. And the MLA from Lumsden-Morse mentioned, he said something along the lines that you can put

your expectations for the future performance of a government based off of its past performance. And so as Mr. Mirasty was sharing the plan for growth and mentioning some of the highlights here in the Speech from the Throne, I was able to think back on the foundation that I'm able to live on and build on.

So as we were going through the export growth, I thought of our Premier and the MLA from Swift Current who have been overseas many times trying to keep those markets open, and opening new markets. Our Trade and Export minister working hard for that. You looked at resources. And not only is he doing a good job but it's fun to listen to him speak in the House. But the Minister of . . . Her, sorry, Minister of Energy and Resources.

[15:45]

You know, it's encouraging to see the people that are sitting in those positions of leadership in this province. Before when I was living in Melfort, and though I never watched question period or anything, I must admit I was not a real political savvy person. But I always wondered, who are these people that make all these decisions? And now to be on this . . . Now I know who these people are. And so, Mr. Speaker, as our Lieutenant Governor kept saying over and over again, my government, my government, my government, I was just thinking, you know, I know these people now.

What a privilege to know the person who is working hard to keep the export markets open for our province, the person who is leading the Ministry of Energy and Resources, the person who is leading the Ministry of the Environment. These people are the people that we go to on a day-to-day basis, Mr. Speaker, when we have issues from our constituents and from our constituencies. And I've got to say that I'm awfully thankful to see the kind of quality people that are in the positions that they're in.

A good friend of mine had said at one point, he said you need to make the plan. You need to stick to the plan, and you need to execute the plan. And so, Mr. Speaker, our quarterback, the Premier of this province, has a great team working together with him. And they have put together and are continuing to put together a plan for growth for this province. And based off the past experience, their past performance, Mr. Speaker, I am looking forward to what we've got to face in these next 10 years.

Mr. Speaker, just to take a snapshot of the Melfort constituency. You know, we read through here and we see it from a high level, but looking at it in a small . . . just some snapshots of what I see the past performance of this government has resulted in, and what I can expect in the future, is things like, Mr. Speaker, going out to the town of St. Brieux. And St. Brieux is a very unique community. It has a very large manufacturing company there, founded by local people. Local family members and friends worked hard.

Interestingly enough, St. Brieux is probably some of the worst farm land in the province. And I was out with Gerry Bourgault one day on their test plots where they make sure all the equipment is tough enough to handle whatever anyone can throw at it. And I said to him, I said, do you guys bring in all those big rocks just to make it tough? He looked at me funny: no, that's just, those rocks are here.

So it's quite a place, Mr. Speaker. St. Brieux is a very rough terrain, and yet they have developed a company there that's employed over 1,000 people. And so there's been a lot of growing pains in that community. And the government, working together with the private sector, have really been able to look after all those growing pains, Mr. Speaker. And just this last little bit, another million dollars put into their water treatment plant, and they added on to the school for all the people that were coming and moving in to St. Brieux area.

Melfort had growing pains. Humboldt had growing pains. An interesting thing is that the highway between St. Brieux going towards Humboldt was one of the worst highways, I'm sure, in the whole province. But one of the things I can say for the government on this side of the House is, when they got into power, that highway was pretty nice.

And so, Mr. Speaker, to see the government working with the private sector in different ways has really been a delight of mine to watch. Another area where I saw this was in the community of LeRoy. I have a friend who's a developer out of Alberta, and he said to me, Todd, I have a vision for putting seniors' homes or long-term care facilities connected to day cares and being close to schools where some of the seniors, when we get older, we'll appreciate that, you know. We'll be able to look out our window and see those kids playing in the playground or somehow having them close.

So I was out in LeRoy, Mr. Speaker, in small-town Saskatchewan, and was able to be a part of the opening of the LeRoy day care. And so, Mr. Speaker, there's an assisted-living building and what did they put on the side of there but a day care, funded by the province of Saskatchewan and part by the Canadian government as well, and yet also by the local people and the local businesses of that community. So we support 15 of those places in that day care, Mr. Speaker, and the community supports another five. They put windows at the end of the hallway between the assisted living and the day care, Mr. Speaker. And it was so interesting to watch the seniors coming up to those windows, looking through the windows, and the little kids looking up. Mr. Speaker, it was a beautiful thing to watch. But again, community working together.

There's a large mine being put at Jansen Lake there, Mr. Speaker, by a large company called BHP. And our opportunity is to speak at different times with different leaders of business that come to the city and speak with us. And I've asked a large number of VPs [vice-president] and different leaders, what is it that you'd want to see from the provincial government that would allow you to feel confident in investing in our province? And the thing that they mentioned was stability, Mr. Speaker.

And so I think that what BHP is seeing is stability in the Saskatchewan government and the people of Saskatchewan. Because if you go out to that site, Mr. Speaker, you can see two shafts that have been drilled 2 kilometres deep. You can see housing for 2,600 employees, a basketball court, the largest cafeteria in the province, Mr. Speaker, a first-class facility, a movie theatre and all the rest, all for their employees. So does the government have to do everything? Not on your life, Mr. Speaker. But we need to be there to make a plan, to stick to the plan, to execute that plan so that when companies come to our province looking to do business that they can expect that there is

stability in this province.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I was listening to the LG speak about his government, I was proud that day to be able to say as well, Mr. Speaker, that this is my government. Mr. Speaker, they ended off. I think my time is up. It was shorter from . . . But, Mr. Speaker, that day we also had an elder, Francis. He prayed. And then we had Rabbi Parnes, who also quoted from the scriptures. And what he quoted was from Zechariah, and it says, "Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, says the Lord."

So though we make our plans, we stick to our plan and we execute our plan, at the end of the day I believe that the most important thing is that the spirit of God gives us the kind of attitudes that we really need. And one thing that I would like to see in this House before my days are finished, Mr. Speaker, is a real unity across the floor and a real unity in the communities. It may be a miracle, but I'm looking forward to it, Mr. Speaker.

So you know, where we say, go the extra mile, turn the other cheek, bless those who curse you, I think what a great opportunity here, Mr. Speaker, in this government to be able to show some real camaraderie and some real work together. If our LG can say, it's my government and they're going ahead and making this plan, well I would extend my hand across the aisle and say, let's work together for the future of this great province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**An Hon. Member:** — And now for something completely different.

**Ms. Heppner:** — Yes, now for something completely different. I think this was somehow very bad planning to put me of all people after one of the nicest people to sit in this Chamber. So I think our tone might be a little bit different, but yes, whatever.

I know that at the end of spring session we get a chance to do, those of us who aren't running again, get a chance to have a farewell speech in this House. So I'm not going to spend a lot of time thanking people and going through all of that because I think I have another chance. This is one of the last times I'll be speaking in this House. I know that there are some that are going to miss me terribly. Yes.

And I do want to commend the member for Elphinstone-Centre. I've said this before, we do have a lot of fun in this House. And I know that people outside of this Chamber think that it's always adversarial, I say that right before I give this speech, but there are moments where we do actually get along. And that's one of the things that I'm going to take with me once I'm out of this place, is the relationships that we've been able to build.

I do want to thank my husband. He is a driver with Saskatoon Transit, and every time that winter hits I worry about him a little bit because his job is to be out on the road. And so every morning I send him a note telling him to drive safe, which I know he will, but I think it's kind of everybody else on the road I worry about. When you're driving a bus out there it's not always easy. But I'm

very proud of the work that he does. He's a very hard worker, and I think yesterday he put in eleven and a half hours. The day before it was thirteen and a half on winter roads.

And so my love to my husband, John, who is . . . I've told him this to his face so you guys don't have to say it for me. I don't know where he came from that, you know . . . A cousin of mine told me a long time ago that I was going to have to find somebody pretty special to marry me, and apparently I have. And my mom is also very thankful that he did that because she was a little bit worried about me too.

And to my girls, they are now 22 and 25, I've said this before: it gives you a great understanding how much time we've spent in this House. Sharmaine sat on my lap during the nomination meeting 13 years ago. She was nine years old. She was a tiny, little thing, and she's turned into this 22-year-old beautiful young woman. Her sister as well. And while they're not biologically mine, they are in my heart. And so I want to thank my girls for letting me mother them. I try not to do it too much. But sometimes you just can't resist, so thanks to my girls.

I do want to recognize Terry Jenson. He's the new candidate for the Saskatchewan Party for Martensville-Warman in the next election. I knew that he was keen for this job. I knew he was never going to run against me, you know, which I appreciate, but I had announced to my constituency association on a Monday that I wasn't running again. The press release went out on Tuesday, and I think Terry had all his papers signed and in to the party by Thursday. And he's worked very hard. It was a contested nomination. There were five of them and he was ultimately successful. And I know he's going to do a great job. He understands the riding so well. He's the owner of the *Clark's Crossing Gazette* newspaper, so he's in those communities all the time at different functions, meeting people. And I know he's going to be a great representative because I'm confident that that riding will remain Saskatchewan Party after the election next year. And so good luck to Terry.

And on to my speech, Mr. Speaker. I have said this before — once a researcher, always a researcher. I actually love doing this and the NDP in this Chamber give me so many opportunities to sit at home at night with my laptop and glass of wine and do some correct the record.

And so that's what I'm planning on doing today. It was interesting listening to the members opposites' speeches this last week. And I know those of us who've been here for awhile, we've heard some whoppers but they usually come from the member for Athabasca. But there's others who are apparently taking up the mantle for him. And I want to start with a quote from the member for Regina Northeast who's apparently trying to outdo the member for Athabasca. And this is a quote from, I believe it was Monday:

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 paydaydown ever on the provincial debt.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that they are trying to take

credit for things that we did when they refuse everyday to take any kind of credit or responsibility for things that they actually did when they were in government because none of these things actually happened under them. But now they're trying to take credit for it, and mad that we actually got some recognition for those things. So that's interesting.

And, Mr. Speaker, I know that I've made fun before of the NDP's crack research team. I'm actually going to leave them alone because I'm going to lay this solely at the feet of the member for Regina Northeast because I think probably their research team is probably a bit more accurate than this.

So when it comes to overpasses, and I've talked to previous Highways' ministers about this because it was an odd comment, I thought maybe I missed something, not being from Regina, but having been here for a while. And were there any overpasses east of Regina prior to 2007? And the answer is decidedly no. So I'm not exactly sure why we shouldn't be taking credit for those things. It was our government that built them. Apparently, yes, if you go far enough east you get to Winnipeg, but I don't think the NDP here did those either. So, Mr. Speaker, why he's upset that we're getting credit for the overpasses east of Regina, I'm not sure. And why he's trying to take credit for it, I'm not sure about that either, but whatever.

And then he was also upset that we were taking credit for the children's hospital. So being a researcher, and I had my glass of wine and my laptop the other night, I searched through the NDP's last budget documents before the 2007 election. And the only reference to the children's hospital was a one-line mention about reviewing the potential need for a children's hospital.

And then I found a story from the *Leader-Post* of March 17th, 2007. Apparently they'd gone out that day, several ministers had gone out and were just throwing money around, but it had nothing to do with the election that was coming up, just regular business. And they were asked about the children's hospital. The line in the newspaper said, "No timeline has been set for the children's hospital to become a reality." Not, no timeline has been set for it to be built, completed, started, but for it to become a reality. And now they're upset that we're taking credit for it. Well they didn't do it, Mr. Speaker, so I'm not sure why they should be getting any credit for it because they didn't get the job done. Mr. Speaker, that's the NDP. It's all talk and no action.

And if they truly wanted to do all these things, the member for Athabasca keeps telling us how much money they left on the table after 2007. Interesting, over the last 12 years I should've dated his comments, but that amount has gone up each and every time he stands up on his feet because he gives the same speech every time he's up in this House. And that amount of money that they left over gets bigger every time he stands up. So if they had all that money, why didn't they build it? And apparently not important.

[16:00]

And on the debt payment, I do want to thank the member opposite for crediting us for, in his words, "the largest paydaydown" of the debt in Saskatchewan's history. So that's nice to get credit for that. I also want to thank him for recognizing that we were left with a bunch of debt when we formed government in 2007.

And I know that they really hated those billboards. Do you remember those, those billboards that got put up? And they ranted against those all the time. They were so upset about that, about talking about this debt repayment. And now apparently it's because of them that the debt was paid down. I'm pretty sure that happened after the 2007 election.

But again, Mr. Speaker, he recognized there was a bunch of debt left behind. The member for Athabasca loves to tell us how much money they left behind. So why didn't they pay any of it down? They had the opportunity apparently. There was all this cash, but didn't bother doing it.

Mr. Speaker, that same member — not the member for Athabasca, the one for Regina Northeast — went on to say in his speech from Monday:

We've got 7,000 more students in school in this province over the . . . [last] three years and not a single dollar more, not a single dollar more to recognize the need for those 7,000 additional kids.

No more money? Mr. Deputy Speaker, this last budget, when it comes to education, is the largest Education budget in our entire history. There is money for education. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that they like to talk about crisis in a classroom. And I represent one of the fastest growing sets of communities not just in Saskatchewan but in the country. It's a lot of young families, a lot of kids. And I'm not getting phone calls about a crisis in our classroom. And I would imagine communities as young as mine, that's probably where you would see the manifestation of that if it was accurate.

You know when I did get phone calls? When I got elected in 2007. Because there was a crisis in my classrooms in my constituency when I was first elected. There was classrooms on the stage. There was special education classes in janitor's closets because our schools were so full, Mr. Speaker. But you know what we did? We invested in capital, built five new schools and a major high school expansion. So while there are, yes, challenges in the education system, Mr. Speaker, a crisis it is not.

That member went on to say . . . There's a lot of fact checking to be done on this one, I have to say, and I didn't even get to all of it. He went on to say, when it comes to environment, "Greenhouse gas emissions, they've gone up and up and up." Well it's an interesting thing for the NDP to lob on to, is emissions increases in this province. I was also Environment minister at one time so I have a pretty good understanding of this. In the NDP's last stint in government — so it was 16 years — they oversaw basically a stagnant economy, and yet emissions went up 70 per cent over those 16 years. That's their record. It's all in black and white. It's been documented.

And in our term in government — so it's just about 12 years — the economy has grown and greenhouse gas emissions have remained relatively stable. They've increased about 9 per cent over the last 12 years. Nine per cent over 12 years versus 70 per cent over the 16 years. And he stands there and says, oh, emissions have gone up and up and up. On the intensity side of emissions, they've actually decreased over the course of our term in government, Mr. Speaker. So we're not going to take any lessons from the NDP on that issue.

He went on to talk about revenue sharing, which I thought was pretty interesting considering the NDP's abysmal record on revenue sharing and supporting our municipalities across this province. He said this: "When this government imposed the PST on construction services . . . [they] wiped out the funding . . . for municipalities." Wow, that's a pretty bold statement.

In Warman, one of my two cities, revenue sharing increased from \$485,000 in 2007 under the NDP to over \$2 million this year, an increase of 313 per cent. In Martensville, it increased from \$506,000 under the NDP in 2007 to almost \$1.8 million in 2019, an increase of 247 per cent, Mr. Speaker. To say PST wiped out those increases is absolutely ridiculous. And it doesn't take a laptop, a glass of wine, and a bunch of research to figure that one out.

Mr. Speaker, from the NDP's last budget in 2007, they boasted, and I quote, \$127.3 million for revenue sharing for urban, rural, and northern municipalities. Mr. Speaker, revenue sharing in our last budget was \$251 million. It's almost 100 per cent increase from the NDP's last budget. I think our municipalities are faring quite well under this government, Mr. Speaker.

Not to be outdone by her colleague, the member for Saskatoon Fairview said yesterday that we are gutting the graduate retention program. She should maybe go talk to the 71,000 people who are on that program, Mr. Speaker. Another ridiculous statement. And I've offered this advice up in the Chamber before — I might say it once or twice before I'm done at the end of next spring — hyperbole does not increase credibility.

So first of all, the program's not gutted. And if she's so concerned about this program that never existed under the NDP . . . It was our government who initiated this. So if she's so concerned, she should maybe go talk to her leader, who in his leadership platform said, and I quote, "Phase out the \$40 million per year graduate retention fund." That's the position of her leader, so if she's so concerned, maybe she can go talk to him.

And, Mr. Speaker, in light of the fact that there is no policy, no platform, no ideas coming from the NDP . . . There certainly isn't any on their website. I have checked. And this is the only thing that stands: they chose him for leader. This is his policy positions, and he is going to not gut the graduate retention program; he wants to kill it, Mr. Speaker. So she should probably go register her outrage with her own leader.

Mr. Speaker, she also, again not to be outdone by the member for Regina Northeast, the member for Saskatoon Fairview lamented that Saskatchewan wasn't growing as fast as other provinces. What a thing to come out of the NDP benches, Mr. Speaker. We know exactly what population did in this province under the NDP. It was stagnant at best and decreasing at worst. We've heard the stories about suitcases for graduation so I won't go over that again.

But, Mr. Speaker, to tell us that we're not doing enough to grow the population — we set targets. A long time ago Saskatchewan Party set targets about what we wanted to see the population to be in this province. And the NDP, what did they do? They mocked us. They said it was statistically impossible. It would never happen and we were just like off our nut for even thinking about it, Mr. Speaker. And now she stands up and laments, oh,

we're not growing as fast as everybody else in this country. We have overseen the largest population increase in this province that we've seen in decades. And we've set new targets in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. And then she says, well there's nothing in this Throne Speech except new targets for population growth and then she complains that we're not growing the population enough. So I don't know. Make up your mind. I don't know where that was coming from.

Mr. Speaker, I know that my colleagues have covered the things that are in the Throne Speech and I found it interesting that the NDP's complaint is there's nothing in there. Except that there is. But you know what really is lacking is any solutions or ideas coming out of the NDP. Their answer to everything is more, more money. More is not a policy. More is not an answer. And when you ask them how much more, they can't say. Their Education critic stands up every day. For years she has stood up every day asking for more. And I bet you if you would go and ask her, she wouldn't be able to tell you what the dollar figure is for that. If she's so adamant about this and she knows best and we're all wrong on this side and she knows how to fix this, then offer up some solutions. How much more money does she want? It's been years of her complaining about it but she hasn't given us any information on what that would look like, Mr. Speaker. And it's not just education, but anything else that they bring up on the other side. It's always just more, but they have no information, no details to back up more. As I said, more is not a policy.

And I had mentioned this earlier. I had gone onto the Saskatchewan NDP website, both their provincial site and their caucus site. And I was actually looking to see if maybe I missed it. Maybe they had presented something. I was looking for a little button to click on that says ideas or solutions or stuff that we would do or things that we would like to see. None of that exists, Mr. Speaker. It's just not there. They have no idea. So again, the only thing that they have in light of a complete absence of information or ideas that they're presenting here or to the people of this province through their website is their leader's platform. And we know what that would cost this province, Mr. Speaker. It's \$10 billion over four years.

Mr. Speaker, people expect more from their political parties. We laid out our vision for the next few years in the Throne Speech that was read in this Chamber just a few days ago. And I know, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP have had 12 years in opposition to figure out what they stand for, but I would say, judging from the lack of support that they're getting from voters in this province, they're going to have years more to sit in opposition and figure out what that is, Mr. Speaker.

So to wrap up, I will say very adamantly that I will not be supporting the opposition's amendment and I will be supporting my government's Throne Speech. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

**Ms. Rancourt:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's been three and a half years since I've been elected in the last election, and so this summer I spent a great amount of time reflecting on these past few years. This should be the last Throne Speech response before the 2020 election, as it's the fourth session of the twenty-eighth legislature.

And as is customary, I would like to thank all my support people. First my constituency assistant, Rose, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She works incredibly hard to make sure that the constituency office is well managed. She works on very tough casework, with many calls coming from social services issues. Mr. Deputy Speaker, people are really struggling in our province and it's challenging to see so many families falling through the cracks, cracks being made deeper and larger, to the mismanagement of the Sask Party government.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm very fortunate to have a large, supportive family. My siblings stay engaged on the political activities I'm involved in, even though they live provinces away. Their support is very much appreciated. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to talk a little bit about my sister Susanne. Me and my sister, Susanne, are really close. She lives in St. Louis, so not too far away from Prince Albert where I was raised. And Susanne and I have been through a lot through the years with managing things in our family because we're oftentimes the two people who manage situations. So with our parents being ill and then passing away, she's been my rock and she's my best friend. And it's wonderful to have your best friend be your sister because she can't go anywhere. And I keep bugging her about that.

I also, Mr. Deputy Speaker, want to thank my partner, Darren, who is incredibly supportive and ensures that our home and our family is cared for when I'm away. And he's always prepared to attend many of the events that we need to attend, and he never complains and is always willing to be there by my side. And so I really appreciate everything that he does for us.

Also my children and grandchildren help me realize the little things in life that really matter. And on Saturday, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when we woke up to a blanket of snow on the ground and were grumbling a bit, my grandson Rhyker woke up — and he's about four and a half years old right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and right away he said, Grandma, Grandma, look. There's snow outside. Isn't it cozy? So they really make you realize the small things in life are really important and those moments are very precious.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the past three and a half years, our family has experienced a lot of loss and some bad news. My mother, my mother-in-law, my father-in-law passed away. Also my brother and my nephew are struggling with some challenging cancer diagnoses. So it's been a rough go for our family. Also four of my mental health colleagues have passed away since I've been at mental health. So you know, reflecting on that really makes you realize it's the little things in life that really matter, which I think a lot of people here have said. It's family, your community, and your health. And so we can't take that for granted, for sure, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I'm incredibly honoured to represent Prince Albert Northcote, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and it's important to talk about the challenges in my community. Two of the mental health colleagues that passed away suddenly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, were psychiatrists. It was a big loss when Dr. Baqir-Husain passed away in 2017, but at that time the other psychiatrists were able to step in and fill the cracks and make sure those clients didn't go without services.

And then earlier this year, one of our long-term psychiatrists in

Prince Albert moved closer to family which left another huge gap in psychiatric services in Prince Albert. And while the mental health team was trying to adjust to losing a senior psychiatrist, we also experienced another loss recently with the recent death of Dr. Mohammad Hussain. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Dr. Hussain had thousands of cases, thousands of cases. His work ethic was astonishing and he often took the hardest-to-manage mental health cases and used methods that required a special knowledge of mental health. So Prince Albert, we did have a wait-list to have psychiatrist services, but we know the loss of these psychiatrists will only increase the wait times, and many people are really worried about that becoming a crisis.

[16:15]

And while we talk about mental health services in Prince Albert, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to talk about a non-profit organization called S.H.A.R.E. [self help and recreational education program] that has been operating for over 35 years and provides an important service in our community for clients with more complex mental health issues. They provide vocational, recreational, and residential services to adults living with mental illness. Mr. Deputy Speaker, they have received less than 1.5 per cent in new funding since 2015, and they were looking forward to receiving some of the increased funding, federal funding from this provincial government that they received for mental health and addictions.

They provide many services with a limited budget and have many other clients that could benefit from their programming if they had more funding. A quote that they have is, for every dollar spent in mental health and addictions treatment, \$7 is saved in further health costs and \$30 is lost in productivity. So supporting these effective programs such as this one saves money in the long run, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one thing that was disappointing to see in this Throne Speech was the fact that Prince Albert was only mentioned once in the entire speech. This is the third-largest city in the province, that serves the northern portion of the province. It was only mentioned once, and this was for the redevelopment project for the Victoria Hospital. Redevelopment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm concerned about that wording. Redevelopment is not a strong enough language that confirms the construction of a new, bigger hospital that residents of Prince Albert are expecting that the Premier will honour his words when he told them that they would get this new, bigger hospital. So I'll be holding this government's feet to the fire until they fulfill this promise.

It was also disappointing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there was no mention of working on the challenges in education. We had meetings in Prince Albert on Monday with both public and Catholic school boards, the teachers' association, and then we hosted an education town hall that highlighted the results in the education survey we conducted.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, all sectors of education are talking about the consequences of the cuts from this government. We need to be mindful, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that the decisions that are made by this government fall directly on the shoulders of front-line workers. Teachers, administrators, support staff, they are all seeing the direct impacts from the cuts to education. And when you see individuals working in the education system breaking

down emotionally because they see children and youth falling through the cracks because the programs, successful programs, Mr. Deputy Speaker, were cut, it is hard to not feel their pain and struggle.

There was a lot of discussion that what is happening in the community is reflected in the classrooms. Families are struggling in our community, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Children are moving multiple times due to housing issues. They are coming to school hungry. They are coming to school below grade level, which is not due to the fact that they're not capable. These are all issues that educators are trying to manage when they support these families in need. This is a real sign that our community is struggling and families are struggling.

One other topic not mentioned in this Throne Speech was issues seniors are struggling with. The government was so proud to say they now have a Minister for Seniors but there was no mention to the issues that seniors are struggling with, Mr. Deputy Speaker — affordable housing, high medical costs, access to medical treatment, expanding home care, and many, many other issues. But no mention of them in this Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, I am the critic for Social Services and my office has been flooded with casework and calls with regards to issues with the new income support program the ministry implemented this summer. The Throne Speech referred to the SIS [Saskatchewan income support] program indicating that it "... will keep more money in their pockets." Mr. Speaker, that statement is misleading and the minister needs to get his facts straight.

The minister has been trying to provide an illusion that clients will be better off with this program while professionals in the field are voicing concerns and saying that the most vulnerable residents in this province are going to fall further through the cracks. But the minister doesn't want to accept that this program needs to go back to the drawing board and is not willing to work with front-line workers and make the appropriate adjustments that will help support clients in need. Professionals in the field have said that if no changes are made, there will be an increase in homelessness, and tragedy will be inevitable. If anything happens, it will definitely be on the shoulders of that minister.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it was nice to see the federal Liberal government appoint our first Indigenous Lieutenant Governor in Saskatchewan. I think for many this was an acknowledgement of the importance that the federal government is placing on reconciliation. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Throne Speech had very little reference to reconciliation, which is very unfortunate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd like to quote a well-known social worker, Cindy Blackstock. And she says, "Reconciliation means not having to say sorry a second time." She also says:

What we know from the research is that First Nations children are being removed at an astonishing rate because of neglect. When I talk about neglect I mean poverty, poor housing, and substance misuse related to the residential school trauma. All of those are things we could do something about ... What I don't want to see is another generation of First Nations adults having to recover from their childhoods as so many survivors of the residential schools have had to do and as so many families of the

murdered and missing women are now doing.

And she continues to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, “Let’s be the first to raise a generation of children who do not have to recover from their childhood.” Mr. Deputy Speaker, that should be our goal with this government. That should be our vision and our plan. And in able to do that we need to make some bold moves to make the appropriate changes necessary to work towards true reconciliation and ensure that no child needs to recover from their childhood.

I do want to thank the staff at the Legislative Assembly and the staff at the Speaker’s office for arranging to have Elder Harry Francis and Rabbi Jeremy Parnes to provide some remarks after the Throne Speech. Their comments were very powerful and encouraging. I appreciated the quote from Rabbi Parnes when he said, “. . . we are blessed to be living in a province of beauty, diversity, and community. We can set the example of what could be, of what will be.” And he also states in his prayer:

Help us to learn not just to recognize our similarities but to respect and embrace our differences. Remind us daily that this province is not just for us, not just for now, but for future generations and all your creations; and to be good stewards of this precious land.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also hope that we can all work together and be mindful of these messages. There doesn’t seem to be a lot of hope in this Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and that is the reason why I cannot support this Throne Speech but instead I will be supporting the amendment put forward by my colleague, the member from Regina Douglas Park. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Beck:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is an honour to stand in this Assembly late this afternoon and enter into the Throne Speech debate. This will be the last Throne Speech prior to next fall’s provincial election. And it is the last Throne Speech of this decade, as in several impossibly short weeks we’ll be turning the calendar year and entering into the 2020s. Mr. Speaker, it seems impossible to say that, but I guess that is true.

And I know that I’m not alone in my desire before I begin to formally enter into this debate to thank those who make it possible for me to stand here this evening. First of all I want to thank the people of Regina Lakeview for placing their trust in me and allowing me to serve them as a member of this Assembly. I think it’s important that we never forget that it’s a privilege to serve in this way, and not one that should ever be taken lightly.

Ours in Regina Lakeview, like so many communities around this province, is a vibrant and engaged community. And if you think people aren’t paying attention to what happens in here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I invite you to go on the doorsteps in Regina Lakeview. Because they are paying very close attention to what happens here. And they care very much about it, as we all should. Because the debates that happen here — although maybe not every word — but the decisions that we make here have a very real and immediate impact on people right across this province. And they will continue to have an impact into the future.

So I do appreciate the comments on both sides of this Assembly when we hear and we ground our words and our work in that knowledge that although sometimes this seems like theatre, and seems like a very odd choice of a way to spend your time, the decisions that we do make here, those things that we discuss, are impactful, and they will be felt not only today but into the future. And I think that we ought never lose sight of that.

One of the things that I’ve come to say, and I’ve said it to many people is, you know, in these roles it’s pretty important that we don’t think any of us are a big deal. But this role is a big deal. The work that we do here is, and it is a privilege to get to do it.

I’m already off my notes. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I look at you, and I listen to the words from my friend from Regina Elphinstone-Centre and I’m reminded that this is the last Throne Speech for many in this Assembly. And I think it’s important that we thank you, we thank those like the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre for their long service and be reminded of not only our shared role here. This is a privilege that very few people get to do. Very few people in the history of this whole province have got to stand in these spaces and enter into debate on Throne Speech, and it is to be respected.

I know none of us serve here without some significant sacrifice. I know often I think our families sacrifice even more than we do to be here. And to recognize our shared humanity and our shared camaraderie, we are part of a very small group. And I thank you for your service and all of those members who won’t be joining us here next year after the Throne Speech.

As I got up to speak, I got a message on my phone from one of my constituency assistants. And if I wasn’t going to put them into this speech, I’m reminded to do that now. We know that not only the work that we do but the work that they do in our offices, talking calls from members of the public, setting up our schedules, often hearing, you know, stories and people when they are desperately reaching out and being that lifeline often for our constituents. Sometimes being a sounding board, sometimes, you know, taking unpleasant calls; that happens. But that is a part of our democracy.

And our offices do not function without those very capable people in our offices. I think sometimes people imagine that we’re the ones who are taking all of the calls and certainly we do, but we all know how much work our constituency assistants do. So I want to say a sincere thank you to both Cory and Chris for all of the work that they do there.

And like everyone else here in this Assembly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to take a little bit of time to acknowledge my family, perhaps brag about them a little bit and just tell them how important they are to me. My husband, Guy, and I just recently celebrated our 22nd wedding anniversary. I know I don’t look that old, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And you know, it’s hard to imagine that that is already the case.

[16:30]

We recently had the opportunity to attend a pre-retirement seminar through his workplace, if you can imagine, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So you can tell that I am much, much younger than Guy. But I also just got a text from him telling me that the lights are

taken care of and supper is on the table. And I can't tell you how important it is to know that those details, when we're very busy in the Assembly, are taken care of at home.

Sometimes my sharpest critic, but I know he does it in service of wanting me to do a better job and wanting so much for the province of Saskatchewan, like so many people here. So I thank him. I wish sometimes he would give me an easier ride, but I know that it's all in service of wanting better for all of us.

This year our oldest daughter turns 20, and she's in her second year of university at the University of Alberta. She was accepted into the environmental engineering program, the co-op program, earlier this year, which I thought was great. And then I realized how difficult it is to get into that program and I was ever more proud of her. We hope that perhaps she will come home this summer and undertake her first co-op term in this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I think maybe I shouldn't let it get to me, but sometimes we hear charges that, you know, we don't care about the future and, you know, it's all gloom and doom. I think we must never imagine that any of us want anything more than the very best for not only our children but for all children in this province. And that the work that we do here, I understand why it might be difficult to hear that, but we do that in service of hoping for better for the people of Saskatchewan. And again I think it's important to ground ourselves in that shared humanity.

Speaking of humanity, we've got three teenagers at our house. And our son is in grade 12 at Sheldon-Williams Collegiate. So shout out to all of the teachers and the volunteer coaches. They're just finishing up their football this time of year. And it really does take a village, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we couldn't be prouder of him. He's looking to do well, and we're going to see where he's going to go with his future. And again I hope that he finds a place and finds his passion in this province that we all feel so strongly and so passionate about.

And our youngest, this is our last year of elementary school. Maya is in grade 8, which again doesn't seem quite possible. And next year we will have one child in the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system and none in elementary school, and that feels like leaving a little bit of our family behind.

When I was thinking of this today, I was thinking of Ms. Starblanket, who has been an EA [educational assistant] for all three of our children through their career. And every time I post something on social media, she's right there to cheer for them. She feels proud of them. She feels like she has been a part of their lives, and she has.

And, Mr. Speaker, when I think about some of the comments later about education, I think sometimes we're accused of only looking for the dirt and, you know, that we're looking at people who like to complain and they just want to bolster their position in bargaining. And I think of people like Ms. Starblanket who puts heart and soul into those kids, and that has been by far my experience with those who work in our education system around the province.

I know, I hear the member for Rosemont, I know they're just entering the school system with their young guy, and it is so

exciting to watch those little ones light up and trot off to their first day of school. And that's, I think, why we want better. We want more for them, and that's why we fight so hard, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I had the opportunity this summer and again this last week to be on the doorstep with my constituents. I was eager to go and test what people were thinking after the federal election and, as I've said before and say again sincerely, Mr. Speaker, those folks are paying attention in the constituency of Regina Lakeview, as I'm sure most of you, you know, as we enter into fowl supper season, you'll be hearing from your constituents.

And as has been mentioned before, there's a lot of concern out there, and never let it be said that any members in this place are cold to the realities that Saskatchewan families are facing. There is a very real anxiety out there. We know consumer debt is rising, foreclosures and mortgage arrears, those things are rising and there's a lot of uncertainty. We're in a state of flux economically and of course, we've just come off a very, very difficult harvest season in the province, and that anxiety is real. People are looking to the future, they're looking at their bank balances at the end of the month and feeling anxiety. And they're also looking for leadership, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So as has been said before, I don't think I could say it any more eloquently than my friend from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, but I want to also register my concern about the opportunity or the tendency to conflate and inflate differences to the point that we are talking about, you know, wanting to leave federation, that we are inviting people to look at their neighbours as their enemies, and that we are taking those very real political differences, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and using them to wedge for short-term political gain. There are many challenges that this country faces and certainly many challenges that this province faces. But I would hope that we understand how very lucky, in the scheme of things, we really are in this province.

I've had the opportunity, and I believe I've mentioned them before, to make acquaintance — more than acquaintance, friendship and well, almost like a family relationship — with a family who lives in Regina Lakeview, my friend Rawda and her husband Abdelkarim. And they came to Canada from Syria in 2016 along with their children. And, Mr. Speaker, there are many things that get us down day to day that we are concerned about and not to be concerned about, but I think sometimes I just need to be reminded to look at things through their eyes and their hopes. And they come to the park here in Wascana Park and their children run around, and they cannot believe their good fortune to be able to be in a place that is so beautiful, that is so safe. And although they miss their family dearly, they have found so many welcoming and kind people here in this community. And those are the people that I know right across this province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So when we would seek to divide ourselves up over the smallest of differences — and again there are very real political differences and there are very real concerns — we ought again to ground ourselves in our shared humanity.

One of the things that may not come as a surprise that I want to spend some time talking about — I believe I might be one of the last speakers here today — getting into formal comments about

the Throne Speech, is about, you know, what we saw here. What were some things that are promising and what are things that are disappointing about what we saw in the Throne Speech?

One of the things, again perhaps I shouldn't listen so intently to comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but sometimes they do get in your head. And last night I heard a lot of talk about, you know, just complaining on this side. And you know, everything's negative, and the sun started shining in 2007. Before then, you know, it was just a sinkhole in the province and there was doom and gloom everywhere, and it's just a growth mentality that we needed and it was all good.

Mr. Speaker, you know, probably the truth lies somewhere in the middle of most discussions. But you know, I look at this Throne Speech, and I understand the need to attract investment and to bolster confidence of investment. But I do think we run a risk if we talk about . . . When people are very concerned, when they have very real challenges in their life, one of the things that we talked about in counselling is if someone is really, really elevated, their anxiety, their fear is very elevated. And you come in down here saying, oh it's all fine and everything is good, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that doesn't calm folks down. It actually just makes them feel not heard and actually escalates them further.

So I think we really do have to acknowledge where people are at and then offer hope. People have to, you know, bring their fears, their hopes to you. And we offer them hope but it has to be based in reality.

So when I look at the section under education in the Throne Speech, you know, I see some numbers that we've heard repeated time and time again. I hear an increase of over 27,000 students, which is significant for sure. But I don't see much that addresses the reality in our classrooms today. And that is what we heard time and time again. I just received another email from a concerned teacher — and this is commonplace; this happens several times a day — feeling not heard, that the answers are being given, or non-answers, don't reflect the reality in the classroom.

And that's why we decided to do our own survey in May of this year. In fact the breaking point was when the minister stood up and talked about a class size average of 19. And it has become, honestly, the punchline in most town halls that we've conducted. People laugh out loud. I know that certainly was the case at the Saskatoon Teachers' Association, where we had thousands of teachers in the room. And the class size of 19 was mentioned and people burst into spontaneous laughter. It wasn't meant to be a joke, but that's how funny people found . . . how much that strays from the reality of what's going on in the classrooms.

And we don't say this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because well, it is our role as the official opposition to bring forth concerns of course, and those concerns are there. But also what came through very, very clearly with the emails that we were receiving, with conversations we were having with folks who were in and around schools, is that they felt like their concerns were being trivialized, were not being taken into account. So that's why we decided to conduct this survey.

And people were very responsive to the survey. We had over 1,400 responses. And we were very careful with the questions

that we asked because they were reflecting the things that we were hearing, concerns about learning conditions worsening. Eighty-four per cent of teachers said that conditions at their school had worsened over the last three years. Staff morale is suffering.

I'm going to repeat what I said earlier today, and that is that two out of five teachers in this province have seriously considered leaving the profession in the last several years. That is something that we've been hearing for a while.

One of the things that I've mentioned before — I don't think I'm outing him — my brother is a teacher. And one of the things that he said that concerns him the most is when he hears other of his colleagues say that they would never encourage one of their children to go into the teaching profession given what has happened, really intensified over the last five years in the province, because he loves being a teacher. That's been my experience as well. And I think all of us here who have children will have those stories about those educators who bring their passion and compassion to the classroom, and who are there at 6 in the morning and there at 6 at night, and they're doing their lesson plans at the beach in the summertime.

Mr. Speaker, those are not other than the teachers that filled out this survey. These are the same teachers. These are the teachers who are saying, I don't have a whole lot extra to give. I've been giving and giving for so long and more and more is being placed on my plate. And I love these kids so much and I want so much for them, but I don't feel like I can do it any longer. That's why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are saying there's a crisis in our classrooms.

[16:45]

It is not a crisis that happened in 2017 when this government took \$54 million out of the classroom. It is not one point in time that created a crisis. It's not like an earthquake. It has been a slow-moving crisis that is reasonably foreseeable given what we have seen with regard to underfunding and lack of compensation for growth within the education funding model year after year after year. It's a slow-moving crisis but a crisis nonetheless. And I have been called to task several times for using that word. I understand why. And we've been very thoughtful about using that word, but the reason we use it is because that is what we're hearing time and time again.

Recently we were in Prince Albert, as the member for P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote just mentioned. Not different from what we're hearing in other communities in some ways, in that we heard of very, very successful programs that were moving the dial for children with needs, programs that these educators, these administrators were very, very, very proud of, but programs that were being scaled back not because the need had decreased but because the funding had decreased.

So we are past the point where we are trimming fat, as some would suggest there's more money than ever in the system. We are at the point where we are cutting programs that we know to be beneficial to children in service of the budgets. I am so tired of hearing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that that is the best we can do, or that's a decision we made given what we've got right now, or this is what we can get away with and still balance the budget.

These are our children that we are talking about, Mr. Speaker. They are not asking for a pony in every classroom. They are asking for a chance to have the best education system that we can provide, and I think that's a reasonable demand.

So we're not going to stop. We are going to continue having these town halls around the province. Lest folks think that we are, you know, all doom and gloom, I cannot wait till we get to the point where we get to talk about what we could do in our schools, where we get to the point where we get everyone together and say, okay this is where we're at; this is where we want to be. How do we get there? What do we need to do that?

But you know what? And I didn't come to this right away, but in looking back I notice that in meetings — it didn't matter if it was trustees or parents or teachers or EAs or bus drivers — you would sit down with them and you would talk for the first 10, 15 minutes, hour. And by the time you know, you had the tissues out and people had been able to let go of all those things that were bugging them, that were keeping them up at night, then we'd start talking about what we wanted, what we could do, talking about teaching.

But this is a quote that I'm going to, you know, write down and you'll hear me say it again, I'm sure. But it really stood out and it really captured what we've been hearing in so many conversations. This was from a group of teachers who told us that:

Those moments when you actually get to sit down and teach your lesson plan, when you get to actually teach and you see the kids excited about learning, that those have become all too rare, that they become precious because they're few and far between because so many educators and those in our school are spending their days putting out fires.

And as the member for P.A. Northcote so eloquently said, you know, what is happening in our schools is not just a result of education funding. I mean, I think that would be one thing if that were the case. But it's a reflection of larger societal issues that are going on in our communities. And I don't mean to just pick on these two members, but they've been the most recent, you know, concerns with crystal meth in our communities, gun violence, homelessness, precarious housing. Those kids show up in our classrooms in the morning — on a good day they show up in those classrooms — not having slept, perhaps not having eaten. And our teachers are the ones who are left dealing with that more and more often without any supports.

They're paying out of their own pockets to buy granola bars for the classroom. They are paying out of their own pockets to buy hats and mitts for students. And, Mr. Speaker, what they're saying is that they are starting to feel burnt out. It's not that they don't care. They're just worried about how much more they have to give.

We heard tell recently again about students coming to class without language skills. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm not talking about kids for whom English is a second language or an additional language; kids who have lacked those early childhood development moments, where they are in chaotic housing, perhaps with families who have a host of issues. And they don't know how to hold books. And I think of the work that we could

be doing and we should be doing with early childhood education, with supporting families right from those ages of zero to five.

And I can get really excited about that. And I know many folks in here, we know these things work. We know that these are good investments. But what we've lacked up to this point is the political will. We talk about the number of child care spaces we have opened, which is great. But we have to make sure that those people who are conducting that work with two, three years of education, making \$15 an hour, Mr. Speaker, that they are supported in the work that they do, that they have the professional development that they need.

We need to look at thresholds for subsidy. It's not reasonable that a single parent making barely above minimum wage doesn't qualify for a subsidy in this province for child care. That is keeping people from being able to take employment they need to be able to pull their . . . And the member, my colleague from Saskatoon, notes that those thresholds haven't changed since the '80s, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So this is not some objective, you know, wanting to be Debbie Downer, you know, rain on the parade. This is the reality here. Unless we acknowledge what is going on, we can't fix it. Of course we want to get to the part where we fix everything and we get to have the, you know, great ideas. But if you don't acknowledge issues, you can't fix them. So that's, you know, that's more of what we want to see.

I see that I'm probably getting fairly close to the end here, so I want to make sure that I touch on a few other things. One of them is the libraries. I want to put a plug in there for the role that our provincial library system does play and could play in this larger vision of ensuring that all kids, all families, get a start in this province. In 2017 we came very, very close to losing a good portion of that functionality and that central role of libraries in our communities. Thankfully for the people of Saskatchewan, they fought back. And we were promised a library review that would, you know, look at the role of libraries in the future in this province. We did get a 16-page report without recommendations. I think that's something that we could revisit as well in this province.

One of the pieces that is in here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is around protecting our environment. None of it matters if you don't have clean water and you don't have clean air to breathe. And this shouldn't be an exercise in PR [public relations]. This shouldn't be a political club to beat your opponents with, or wedge. This is an issue that is . . . really I don't think it's overstating it to say, is an existential crisis for the folks on this planet. That is not to degrade anyone. That is not to say that anyone's work is not important. That is that we need to think about how we are going to play a role in ensuring the future viability and vibrancy and health of, you know, people on this planet, and how we are going to position ourselves to take a role in that. I always say that I'm not going to say that very often but I find myself saying we have a moral responsibility to do that.

And again this is not an either/or. This isn't, we take our responsibility seriously or, you know, we completely dismiss and degrade all of those folks who work in oil and gas, as we would have you believe if sometimes you listen to the folks on the other side . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thumbs up or thumbs down?

Should I go right till 5? I can stop as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So let's not make that false dichotomy. Let's think about how we can take reasonable, meaningful measures that take into account the very real condition, the reality of our economy here in this province, and find a way to do our share without unduly burdening any one sector, any one community. I think it is a positive to see some transition money in here, a community fund for the communities of Estevan and Coronach. I think that's positive.

While I'm on the positive train, I'm really happy to see some proposals around vaping. As you know, as a parent of kids who are frequently talking about the prevalence of vaping, I think it's important we get ahead of that before we're dealing with a public health issue like we saw with cigarette smoking in the province.

And I want to give credit for some of the strong measures around distracted driving, drinking and driving in the province. I think that that is in the column of what is positive and in the column of what can happen when we put our heads together and think of public policy that is thoughtful and takes into account the challenges that we see, and what the best policies of legislation from other jurisdictions that fit the unique situation that we have here in this province.

And I wasn't sure if I was going to talk about this, but it . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Uh-oh. And she's going to hate it if I mention it but, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you're in the Chair and you're giving me encouraging nods here. I want to talk about our responsibilities to the future and to our children in this province, but also children everywhere.

Recently I was listening to a radio program about climate change. I believe it might have even been the forest fires in California. And my youngest daughter, the 13-year-old, was in the back seat and she was talking about climate change. And she said, well do you think, you know, do you think anything will change? And I said, you know what? I'm really hopeful. I think that there are a lot of people who take their responsibility seriously, that we have a lot of folks working on this, and that I think if we find a way to work together we can do that. This is something we can move the dial on.

And she said, well I really hope so because we only have about a year if that isn't the case. And that hit me like a gut punch, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because I always think that we don't try to engage in hyperbole. We try to shelter the kids from things that I think reasonably ought to be on the desks of grown-ups. But this is what our kids think. They think that their future is being compromised by our inaction on issues like this.

I think we certainly have a role not to ramp it up and to frighten them. But we also have a role to actually take meaningful steps towards ensuring that they do have a future, where they can dream about having families of their own, and they can dream about, you know, having wildlife to enjoy.

So, Mr. Speaker, all that to say I will not be supporting the motion for the Throne Speech. I will be supporting the amendment. And again one more plug to remembering our shared humanity. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — It now being 5 o'clock, the time of adjournment, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]



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