



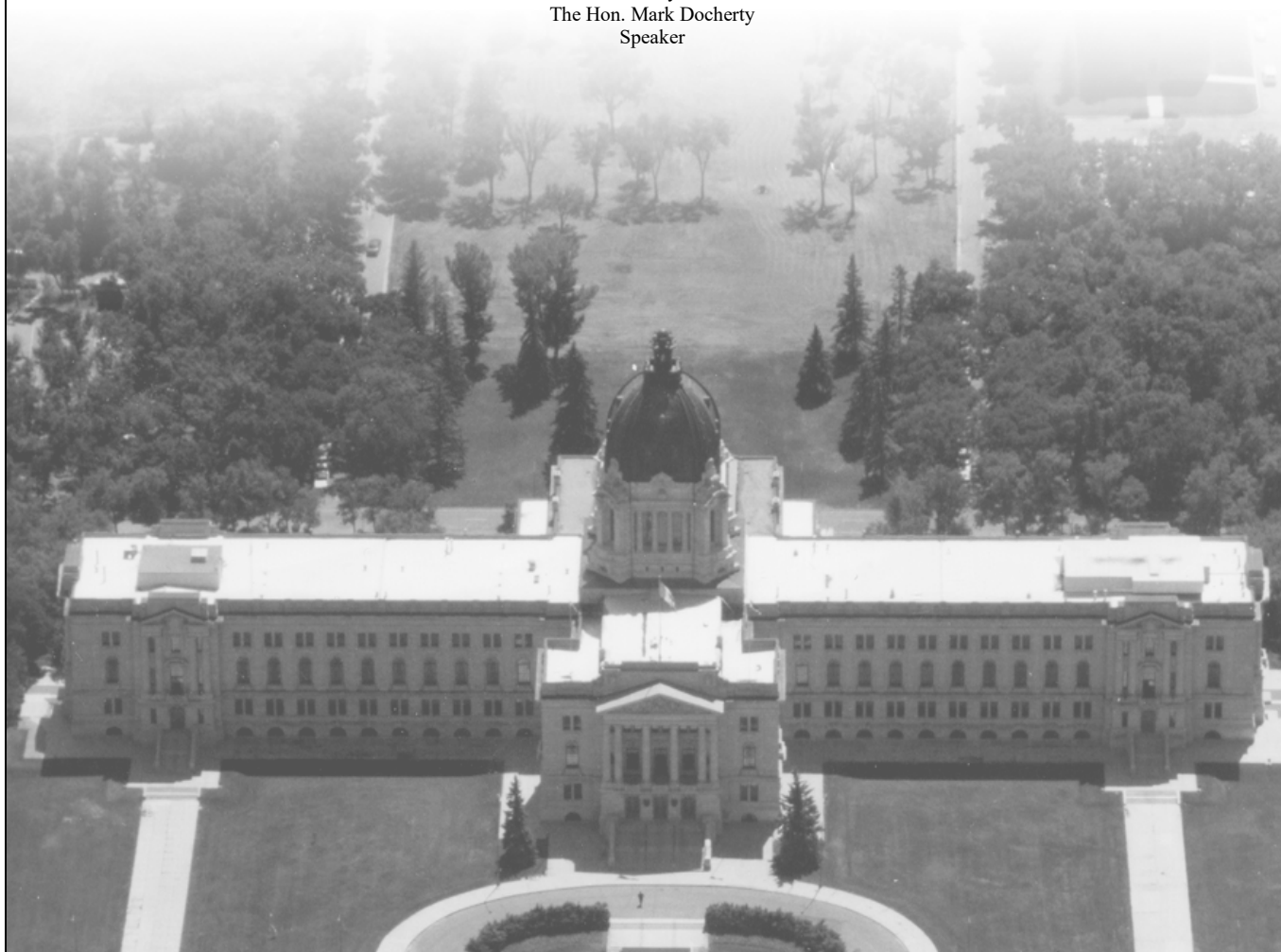
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
4th Session — 28th Legislature

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Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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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

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

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Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Burianyk

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I would just take a moment this morning to introduce a couple of gentlemen that are sitting in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. First of all, from Hill+Knowlton here in Regina is Lance Donison, who does good work not only on behalf of Hill+Knowlton, but good work on behalf of the industry partners that we have across Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the industry partners that are creating jobs in our communities right across this province. And as we know, Mr. Speaker, many of those industry partners, many of those businesses also operate across the nation of Canada.

So with Lance today we have from also Hill+Knowlton, Mr. Speaker, from their Vancouver offices, Mr. Stephen Smart, Mr. Speaker. And I would ask that all members of this Legislative Assembly welcome first of all Lance to his Legislative Assembly, but also welcome Stephen Smart to Saskatchewan and to the Legislative Assembly of our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to join with the Premier to welcome Lance Donison to his Assembly. Certainly he does very good work on behalf of his clients through Hill+Knowlton, and I've got a lot of respect for how Lance goes about his work. And on behalf of the official opposition, we want to offer him a warm welcome. And we want to welcome to Saskatchewan, Stephen Smart from the Vancouver office. Thank you for your presence in the province and for your time here as well. So I ask all members to welcome these two folks to the Saskatchewan Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to this Assembly, I've a number of guests I'd like to introduce in the west gallery, Mr. Speaker. This morning I had the privilege of proclaiming November as lung health month. Mr. Speaker, I presented a certificate to the Saskatchewan Lung Association, and we have a number of partners with us today that were at the event. And I'm glad they were able to stay as our

government looks forward to introducing important legislation this afternoon in the House.

Mr. Speaker, these organizations represent a number of agencies and organizations that were consulted when looking at the proposed legislation. First, I'd like to welcome a number of people from the Lung Association of Saskatchewan including Jennifer May, respirologist Dr. Mark Fenton. In fact as I mentioned, I presented a certificate this morning to Jennifer. From the Canadian Cancer Society, Donna Pasiechnik and Jeff Christiansen are here this afternoon. From the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Saskatchewan, welcome to Stephanie Rusu.

And there are also of course, Mr. Speaker, a number of young people in the gallery this afternoon, but this isn't their first visit to the legislature. They were here last spring, Mr. Speaker. Youth 4 Change made a presentation to all MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] on the dangers of youth smoking and vaping.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all these organizations for their part in the consultations and for being here this afternoon, and I'd ask all members to please give them a warm welcome to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the minister in welcoming this delegation to their Assembly today from the Canadian Cancer Society in Saskatchewan. We have Donna Pasiechnik, the health policy analyst; and board Chair Jeff Christiansen. From the Lung Association we have Jennifer May, the VP [vice-president] of community engagement; and Dr. Fenton. And Stephanie Rusu from the Heart and Stroke Foundation, and of course the young folks that are here from Youth 4 Change that are no stranger to this Assembly as well, Mr. Speaker.

As the minister mentioned, these folks are here to see the introduction of *The Tobacco Control Amendment Act*. I want to thank all of them for their advocacy today and ask all members to join me in welcoming them to this Assembly.

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — I ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize and introduce four special individuals who are in your gallery today, who were able to attend today's Scholarship of Honour ceremony here at the legislature. Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery — and

I'd ask them to just give a little wave when I call out your names — are Corporal Austin Guenther, who was part of Operation Lentus, assisting with the British Columbia wildfires back in 2017; Bombardier Kaden Chater, who was part of Operation Nanook which focused on crisis response in Nunavut. We also have Myra Schneider, the wife of Jeffrey Schneider. Her husband served in Afghanistan. And finally we have Rachel Maerz, the daughter of Captain Sheldon Maerz who also served in Afghanistan.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the privilege of presenting the Scholarship of Honour to these individuals today. There were 16 actually in total. These are those who are not currently deployed somewhere and able to make it.

These folks represent not only members who served, Mr. Speaker, but also their children and their spouses. And as everyone knows, Remembrance Day is coming up and people throughout this country will stand together and remember, honour, and pay gratitude to those who have served. And so I would like to ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in thanking these individuals and give them a warm welcome to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, just on behalf of the official opposition, I just want to join with the minister and certainly all members in welcoming the recipients that are here today for the Scholarship of Honour, and to say very simply, thank you for the service to your country at such a terrible cost. This time of year we certainly remember, but this is something that goes all the year through and all the days ahead. And for the things that you as individuals and you as families have taken on for all of us, again we simply say, thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The member for Cumberland has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes there's special people who touch our lives. The people that I'm going to introduce today, two mothers, there's a group of them, and I'll read out their names. But they lost two of their young children to suicide in 2016, and I just want to welcome them here. And when I do that, they're here because they want to ask the government to work with this side of the opposition on a bill that I'll introduce this afternoon, a suicide prevention strategy for the province of Saskatchewan. And they're here with hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of signatures on a petition asking this government to work with the opposition to address a crisis that's going on.

But I want to introduce Sally Ratt from Stanley Mission and her son, Sheldon. She also has with her Sheena Charles, who is here

supporting her. I just want to welcome you to your Legislative Assembly, and supporting a mother for such a tragic loss. I also want to introduce Lynda and Michael Roberts, who lost their young daughter in 2016. And Charity's here, their niece, supporting them.

And I want to just, my heart sometimes . . . You know, in life you're touched so many times and impacted. And these mothers want everyone to know there is hope, and they want all of us to know that they're here asking the government, the Premier, for a commitment. And they're here today to watch their petition being served, the good work they've done to bring awareness, but also to have first reading of a bill that I will introduce this afternoon. They're here and they want to make sure that people understand that they go through tough times but they have supports. They've done walks, and I commend them on their suicide walks that they've done from Prince Albert to La Ronge, also to Stanley Mission.

And they today are joined by one of the band's health people who do a lot of transporting people who are needing medical. And Kim's here as their transportation person, so I just want to acknowledge her and thank her for making it possible for them to come here to share their story and their hope that no child — not one more child, not one more person in this province — will be impacted, that we say we've done what we could. And that's what they want.

They just want to make sure that we understand that and that's why they're here. They want to make sure people understand. It's not to criticize. It's to say, let's work together. Let's get a suicide prevention strategy for this province once and for all. And I hope at the end of the day we can have that co-operation. We have co-operated on other bills, so I'm hoping today. And that's what they want, so they're here.

I want to welcome you to your Legislative Assembly. I know how hard it's been for you. You have struggled on your healing journey, and I just hope the Creator gives you what you need to move on at the loss of your beautiful angels. With that, again I want to welcome all of you to your Legislative Assembly and hope what you've asked for, what you've come here for, we as a province will deliver to you so no one has to suffer the loss of a loved one again, knowing that we've done all we can as a province to support them. With that, I want to welcome you to your Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The member for Kindersley has asked leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming some special guests. They're with the Lung Association and Youth 4 Change delegations. In the west gallery, with the Lung Association, is

vice-president of health promotion and community engagement Jennifer May as well as her mom, Susan. These two are actually relatives of mine, Mr. Speaker. They are former residents of Alsask who now reside in the city of Saskatoon.

And as good luck or good planning would have it, we have current Alsask resident Joseph Chiliak accompanying them in the same row. He's a spokesperson with the Youth 4 Change delegation himself. Joseph is actually a very political active young fellow. He ran with me and four others in the Kindersley nomination not so long ago.

These fine west central Saskatchewan products are doing great work with their respective associations. I was very glad to see them here in the House today. And I would ask all members to please join me in welcoming these fine folks to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to join my colleague from Cumberland in welcoming our guests from northern Saskatchewan. And I want to say in my own language:

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

In my language, I explained to them in Cree that I'm so proud that they're here to hear the presentation by the member from Cumberland and that they have nothing to fear here — this is their building; this is their land — and that I encourage them to continue to fight because their fight is so vitally important. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And welcome to our guests.

[13:45]

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll keep it brief. Mr. Speaker, I'd just like to introduce a guest sitting in the west gallery here, Jeff Christiansen. Jeff is an important reason for the success of one of our local businesses, Speers Funeral Home. But in addition to that, Mr. Speaker, Jeff has been an important contributor to his community. He's been involved with Regina Palliative Care, with the Rotary Club, with Luther College among others. And I just ask all members to join with me in welcoming him to his Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Corrections and Policing.

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a group of school students joining us here today seated in your west gallery, 43 students, grade 4 students from St. Elizabeth in the Greens on Gardiner. Give us a wave. They are accompanied by their teacher, Ms. Sylvestre, and their parent chaperones, Phuong, Julie, and Carla. And I guess I'm going to be meeting with them afterwards. And I ask all members to join them in welcoming them to their Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lumsden-Morse.

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good citizens of Herbert, Moose Jaw, Regina, and Saskatoon. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of northern Saskatchewan residents that *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act* introduced in 2018 has not been passed because it has not received support from the Sask Party government; that suicide continues to affect families throughout Saskatchewan; that the rate of suicide among First Nations girls is 29 times higher than other girls.

And the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call upon the Sask Party government to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to address suicide in Saskatchewan.

It is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I 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 people and businesses and communities from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party's hike and expansion of the PST [provincial sales tax], of course a billion-dollar hike in the PST, and something that's hit families hard. In fact the average family, we've learned, is paying now \$800 more per year than what they were paying just four years ago in PST alone, Mr. Speaker.

And we know that as it relates to the hard hit on construction with the imposition of the tax onto construction labour, sadly the result speaks for itself. This is the epitome of a job-killing tax. Permits are down right across Saskatchewan. So many important projects have been shelved. And sadly thousands of hard-working tradespeople have lost their jobs here in Saskatchewan, many having to find employment in other industries, and sadly many of those workers having to pursue employment in other provinces, Mr. Speaker, a loss for them and their family but a real loss for us as a province.

The petition reads as follows:

We, in the petition 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 are signed by concerned residents of Earl Grey and Maple Creek. I so submit.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I rise to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, of those constituents, want to bring to our attention the following: that the seats in the Legislative Assembly for Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview are currently vacant, and that's because of a loophole in *The Legislative Assembly Act*. By-elections are not legally required to be called in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview because the former MLAs did not resign before August 6th, 2019. They resigned just a few short weeks later, in September.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that unless a by-election is called, constituents in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview will go without representation for nearly 14 months until the provincial election is held October 26th. But we know, Mr. Speaker, the Premier has the power and authority to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview, even though the Legislative Assembly doesn't require it.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the Premier to call by-elections in the constituencies of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview.

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

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition calling on this government to save the swales. The people who have signed this would like to bring to our attention the following.

The Ministry of Highways is planning a four-lane high-speed highway around a part of Saskatoon and through the swales. The northeast and small swales of Saskatoon provide food and habitat to a number of endangered and declining species, and many others not listed as endangered. They're part of our shared natural heritage and include rare fescue grassland and high-quality functional wetlands.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to call on the provincial government to suspend planning for the Saskatoon freeway and development around the swales until

a regional cumulative effects impact assessment has been completed, Mr. Speaker; update *The Wildlife Act* and expand the list of wild species [I guess the member from Willowgrove's not in favour of this, Mr. Speaker] protected by the provincial regulation; thirdly, recognize the swales as important ecological habitat, designate them as protected areas; and fourthly, ensure adequate long-term funding for research, management, and enforcement to protect the swales for generations to come.

And, Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition here today are from the communities of Pelican Narrows and Saskatoon. 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 to end unacceptable emergency department wait times. We continued to hear over this past weekend that there's an over-capacity crisis happening in Saskatoon. This petition is more important today than it ever has been, and we've been raising these issues for weeks in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. So we would urge the government to take action today.

These citizens wish to bring to our attention that despite the Sask Party government's promise to eliminate emergency room wait times in 2012, wait times seen in Saskatchewan emergency rooms continue to grow; that instead of making smart investments to meet emergency room targets, the Sask Party government watered down targets to the point where they no longer exist; and that the Sask Party has cut funding to address emergency room wait times and has no meaningful strategy to get emergency room wait times under control.

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 fully fund and execute a plan, as they promised to do in 2012, to lower and eventually end ER wait times across Saskatchewan.

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

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Scholarship of Honour Recipients

Mr. Weekes: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has a strong history of men and women serving in Canada's Armed Forces. These courageous people have laid their lives on the line to protect our country and our freedom. Mr. Speaker, today we thank them through the Scholarship of Honour.

This scholarship was first announced in 2009 and was created to honour the sacrifices made by members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families. It gives returning Canadian Forces members, as well as the spouses and children of injured or fallen

members, a chance to pursue post-secondary studies. The scholarship is \$5,000 and is available to all eligible candidates who apply. It is a token of our gratitude and respect for the men and women who protect our country, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan is the only province to offer this type of scholarship.

Mr. Speaker, there have been 226 Scholarship of Honour recipients to date. This year we celebrate 16 of those recipients; four of them are in the House with us today. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize Bombardier Kaden Chater; Corporal Austin Guenther; Myra Schneider, wife of Private Jeffrey Schneider; and my constituent Rachel Maerz, daughter of Captain Sheldon Maerz.

I would ask all members to join me in showing this province's appreciation for their contribution and sacrifice.

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

Saskatchewan Craft Council Dimensions Awards

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On May 31st I attended the Dimensions Award Gala hosted by the Saskatchewan Craft Council in Saskatoon. Dimensions is a biennial juried touring exhibition of contemporary art. The award event celebrates and acknowledges the creations by Saskatchewan's finest artists and crafters. This year's jurors, Felicia Gay and Kye-Yeon Son, had the difficult task of selecting 35 pieces from 219 submissions this year, resulting in \$13,000 awarded in grants to artists.

The award for Innovation in Craft, valued at \$1,500, was issued to Mary Lynn Podiluk of Saskatoon for *Parlance*. The award for Excellence in Craft by an emerging artist, valued at \$1,500, was issued to Keith Morton of Grasswood for *Sculpted Rocking Chair*. And the award for Outstanding Entry, valued at \$3,000, was bestowed upon John Peet of Regina for *Forgotten*.

The SCC [Saskatchewan Craft Council] has existed for 42 years and their vision is to foster an environment where excellence in contemporary craft is nurtured, recognized, and valued, and where Saskatchewan craftspeople flourish creatively and economically. The council offers a number of exhibits, such as the touring Dimensions program as well as a variety of training and mentoring opportunities for its member artists. Further, the SCC operates a boutique in Saskatoon to market lovely creations designed by provincial artists.

Mr. Speaker, I would encourage all members to express their support for the Saskatchewan Craft Council. Thank you.

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

Radiothon Raises Funds for Mammography Unit

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Friday my wife, Anita, and I participated in the 11th annual Pharmasave Radiothon for Healthcare in partnership with the Close to the Heart campaign in Swift Current. Hosted by Golden West radio and the Dr. Noble Irwin Healthcare Foundation, they're raising funds for a new digital mammography unit for the Cypress Regional Hospital. After 15 hours of fundraising on live radio, a total of \$155,832 was raised.

Mr. Speaker, mammograms are the go-to method for early detection of breast cancer. It's estimated that one in eight women and 1 in 25 men will be diagnosed with breast cancer at some point in their lives. Mr. Speaker, this disease is close to many families, including my own. In 2017 my wife, Anita, received her letter for a mammogram but she didn't think she needed one. She didn't have a history of it in her family. So the letter sat there unopened on the kitchen table for a year. Fast forward to the spring of 2018, and this time she opened that letter and went for a mammogram and they found a 5-centimetre tumour. They caught it just in time, Mr. Speaker, and she underwent successful surgery in September of 2018.

As my wife said on the radio, "Take control of the things you can and let go of what you can't control. When I was able to let that sink in, that's when I was able to let go of the fear. So get that mammogram. It's okay to be scared. It's the first step in taking control."

Mr. Speaker, thank you to everyone who participated and donated to the local radiothon. You're making a huge difference in helping to save people's lives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Prince Albert Arts Hall of Fame Inductees

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On September 28th I had the pleasure of attending the sixth annual Arts Hall of Fame, which was hosted by the Prince Albert Arts Board. This year's inductees into the Arts Hall of Fame are the Watsonairs in the music category, Prince Albert Community Players in the arts organization category, and Bruce Rusheleau in the volunteer category.

The Watsonairs are a choral group started in 1956 and have been very active in Prince Albert ever since. The Watsonairs are the longest continuously operating choral group in Saskatchewan. As well as providing entertainment at many local venues, the Watsonairs provide financial support to youth attending music camps, the Prince Albert Lions Band, Prince Albert Arts Centre, and an annual scholarship awarded at the Prince Albert Music Festival.

[14:00]

The Prince Albert Community Players have been in operation since 1959 and is Prince Albert's longest running theatre company. PACP [Prince Albert Community Players] supports high school drama programs and offers scholarships. The theatre company has provided training in many areas including acting, lighting, sound, direction, stage management, and set design. Bruce Rusheleau has put in over 1,000 volunteer hours in theatre construction and is trained to operate the fly tower system over the E.A. Rawlinson stage. He has built many theatre sets over the years and is always willing to share his expertise.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating this year's inductees in the Prince Albert Arts Hall of Fame. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cannington.

Saskatchewan Becomes a Full Member of the Midwestern Legislative Conference

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday was the signing ceremony for Saskatchewan to become a full member of the Midwest legislative council of the Council of State Governments. Saskatchewan was the very first Canadian jurisdiction to become an affiliate of MLC [Midwestern Legislative Conference] and CSG [Council of State Governments], and was the first Canadian member to host an MLC convention in Regina in 2005. On top of that, I am proud to say that we are the first Canadian jurisdiction to become a full member of MLC.

Mr. Speaker, for the signing ceremony we were joined by Senator Elgie Sims of Illinois, Representative Robert Cupp of Ohio, Mike McCabe, executive director of MLC, and Ilene Grossman, deputy director. The membership of MLC includes 11 US [United States] states, Saskatchewan, and affiliates Manitoba, Ontario, and Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, in 2018 Saskatchewan's exports to the 11 MLC member states was more than \$7.9 billion Canadian, which speaks to the economic benefits of this membership. The MLC membership also gives us the avenue to talk with American border legislators to work with and interact on common concerns and solutions. I have been honoured to be an integral part of the membership process for our province.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is again leading the way, and I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing our full MLC membership.

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

Maple Creek Receives 2019 Prince of Wales Prize

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Prince of Wales Prize recognizes a community and other local governments for the successful heritage protection of a town, city, or region. The Prince of Wales Prize is a national trust, Canada's most esteemed prize, and the highest honour for heritage management that can be awarded to a Canadian municipality.

For the first time in history, the 2019 Prince of Wales Prize has gone to a Saskatchewan community — the town of Maple Creek in my constituency. The 2019 Prince of Wales Prize has recognized the town of Maple Creek for its excellence in restoration practices in bringing heritage to life.

Maple Creek has many historical landmarks which have added to the heritage atmosphere. The post office constructed in 1908 remains the most frequently visited in the heritage district. St. Mary's Anglican Church built in 1909 has been described as one of Maple Creek's most striking and valued community landmarks. And the Jasper Hotel Tavern has been running 364 days a year for 116 years. I highly encourage everyone to come and experience what Maple Creek has to offer.

Mr. Speaker, I now invite all the members to join me in congratulating Maple Creek on receiving this honourable, incredible honour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Esterhazy Martial Arts Athlete Exemplifies Dedication

Hon. Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Eighteen-year-old Zach Gehl from Esterhazy has been making his mark on the mixed martial arts world stage. He has competed internationally in cities like Reno, Las Vegas, Minneapolis, New Orleans, and Chicago. Zach has earned three world medals for his skills and has 97 titles and podium placings since 2014 at various provincial, national, and international competitions. Mr. Speaker, Zach is also the first ever Martial Arts Sports Hall of Fame inductee from Saskatchewan. He competes mostly in Brazilian jiu-jitsu, kick-boxing, wrestling, and has done a couple of mixed martial arts tournaments.

At the age of 13, Zach experienced bullying at school, so his parents encouraged him to get into martial arts for self-defence and self-confidence. What could have been another major obstacle is that he also is dyslexic and reverses not only words but actions.

Mr. Speaker, Zach began competing only in local tournaments and not winning a single match. But over time he put in more and more work every day, eventually becoming the athlete that he is today. Zach believes that if you dedicate yourself to something, you can accomplish basically anything. He has also learned that hard work will always beat natural talent and skill.

Zach graduated from Esterhazy High School this spring. He now trains close to 30 hours per week, has travelled over 300 000 kilometres in three years, and has goals of one day competing in the UFC [Ultimate Fighting Championship] as a professional.

Mr. Speaker, I now invite all members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing the outstanding athleticism and dedication that Zach displays every day and the role model that he has become, showing that any obstacle can be overcome if you're willing to put in the work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Suicide Prevention Strategy

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, we're joined today by families from La Ronge and Stanley Mission whose lives have been forever changed by suicide. This is a problem across all of Saskatchewan, but it's felt particularly hard in the North. Too many have lost loved ones, and the members from Athabasca and Cumberland have attended far too many funerals.

What is the Premier going to do to address the unacceptable rates of suicide in our province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, suicide is a tragedy. It's a tragedy for a life lost too soon. It's a tragedy for the family and friends that are left behind. I think there's probably virtually no family in this province that hasn't been touched in some way. I

know my family has.

Mr. Speaker, I listened with interest earlier today when the member from Cumberland spoke about the bill. Mr. Speaker, what I've done a number of weeks ago is I've asked the Ministry of Health to do a jurisdictional scan to look at other provinces that have suicide prevention strategies in place. In Saskatchewan we have the mental health and addictions actions plan. I've asked them to see if there's any gaps between services provided in other provinces and what their suicide prevention strategy addresses and what our action plan addresses.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the approach the member from Cumberland took earlier today. I would offer to him that I'd be pleased right away, Mr. Speaker, to meet with him to offer an update, to have officials present where we're at with the work right now and then also follow-up work once their work is completed. I'd like to make this non-partisan, Mr. Speaker, as the member from Cumberland had suggested and asked. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the remarks. We don't want one-on-one conversations. We want a full and open transparency action plan, and that's what we're calling for today.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death for young people in Canada. The suicide rates for First Nations people in Saskatchewan are four times that of non-First Nations people, and the rate amongst First Nations girls 29 times higher than non-First Nations girls. Over 2,200 people have died from suicide in Saskatchewan since 2005. Much more needs to be done to ensure no more lives are lost, and that starts, Mr. Speaker, with a strategy.

These people have travelled a long way to hear the Premier comment on this issue, and these questions are to the Premier. When will the Premier get to work and implement a suicide strategy for Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government takes this issue very seriously. We're extremely concerned about the high rates of suicide. As I mentioned previous, the ministry's working on the cross-jurisdictional scan. We want to see if there is any gaps between our action plan and strategies in other provinces. Mr. Speaker, in the last two budgets we've added a large amount of resources to mental health and addictions, Mr. Speaker.

You know, we talk about youth. Not this last budget, the year before, Mr. Speaker, we did a pilot project, a mental health capacity building. There's, I believe, four schools right now that that program's under way. We're going to be evaluating that to decide whether we should be expanding it, Mr. Speaker.

You saw just recently the Saskatchewan Health Authority has done a number of RFPs [request for proposal] for both mental health beds in the province, Mr. Speaker, and also addictions

beds pre- and post-treatment, Mr. Speaker. We recognize the severity of this issue and how it impacts families and friends. Mr. Speaker, my heart goes out to our guests here today and, Mr. Speaker, we just need to continue to improve and do better.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, other provinces have a suicide strategy. The federal government has worked together to unanimously call for a suicide strategy. The FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations] has proposed a suicide prevention strategy to address this crisis. There's no reason why we can't have that in Saskatchewan as well.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Cumberland will be introducing legislation today after question period. To the Premier: will the Premier work with us to pass this bill, implement a strategy, and save lives all across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we would like to see what the ministry comes back with in regards to if there's any gaps between strategies in other provinces and the action plan in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the bill introduced by the member opposite, while I know comes from a place of good intentions, Mr. Speaker, it merely directs the Saskatchewan Health Authority to come up with a suicide prevention strategy, Mr. Speaker. I think it's important to determine, if there is one, what it should entail, what should be in it. Mr. Speaker, we need to understand if there are gaps that we need to fill and what those gaps are. And we'll make the decisions at that appropriate time.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I think we could all agree that if this measure would save one life, it would be worth it. We're looking for leadership from the government, and we're working to work together as we have seen in other jurisdictions, including the federal government, Mr. Speaker.

One more time: will the Premier work with us to implement a suicide strategy for Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Minister of Rural and Remote Health and myself would be pleased to update the member from Cumberland and the Deputy Leader of the Opposition, if she so chooses, on where that work is at in the ministry right now. We'll certainly periodically update them, and when that work is completed I'd be pleased to have a conversation, a non-partisan conversation on where we go from there.

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

Provision of Emergency Health Care

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, we've been talking a lot about overcrowding in Regina emergency rooms, but we know this issue is not isolated to the Queen City. On Friday the SHA's [Saskatchewan Health Authority] deputy chief medical officer issued a memo to physicians highlighting the "extreme over-capacity crisis in Saskatoon." The memo says there were 79 admitted patients with no beds available for them.

What is this government's plan to get the over-capacity crisis in our emergency rooms under control?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's been a number of memos dispersed internally within the Saskatchewan Health Authority to draw all staff's attention to the severity of the situation, Mr. Speaker. We need all hands on deck, if you will, Mr. Speaker, as we grapple with this issue. So the Saskatchewan Health Authority has initiated a command centre, Mr. Speaker, that's taking a number of actions — I've referenced a number of them in past days including last week in the House — actions that they're taking to try to mitigate this situation. Among those, Mr. Speaker, is I'm told that there's a number of people in hospital in the major tertiary centres right now that wouldn't have to be in a tertiary centre. They could be in another hospital or another setting, Mr. Speaker.

So they're working through that to try to . . . For example, if there's a patient from my community of Rosetown that doesn't have to be in the tertiary centre, they're seeing if they can repatriate them back to Rosetown hospital or another facility, Mr. Speaker. We're taking some long-term action as well. In Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker — I see my time's almost up — we've announced a capital project of 36 medicine beds that should be done early next year.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We certainly appreciate the hard work that's happening on the ground to respond to this crisis by folks who are in understaffed and overcrowded situations that are just trying to get the work done. But what we're hearing is that the government supports aren't there to have their backs. The minister keeps pointing to previous announcements and beds that are already open, but this is something that's happening this weekend and happening today, and clearly these measures that the minister is pointing to are not enough.

On Saturday, a second memo was issued by the SHA highlighting that 150 patients in Saskatoon weren't where they were supposed to be. So this includes patients in overflow, in glorified blanket forts, and in hallways. It described extreme system pressures on staff and physicians and the risk to patient care. Beyond what has already been committed, moving forward what specific measures will this government take to stop hallway medicine?

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said before in this Assembly, there's sort of two tranches that the SHA is working on right now. There's a short-term to try to mitigate the effects, and then there's the long-term approach to help to cure this problem in the long run, Mr. Speaker.

Short term, in Saskatoon there's been expanded hours added to the emergency room in City Hospital, as I mentioned, the command centre set up. They're working with doctors to ensure an appropriate discharge program for patients, and as I said, possibly moving them to centres that aren't tertiary if they don't need to be in the major centres.

Long-term plan, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in the first question, we're adding a 36-bed medicine unit to Royal University Hospital. We're going to continue with our accountable care strategy, Mr. Speaker, that's shown some results, particularly in Regina. That's the accountable care teams. Again the numbers that have been shown have been very promising. Community health centres, one that the Minister of Rural and Remote Health just did a ribbon cutting on, I think it was last week, Mr. Speaker. This is a serious situation, but Saskatchewan Health Authority is working extremely hard on it.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are concerned about being able to access care, and physicians and staff are burning out under this extreme pressure. We haven't even reached the height of flu season yet. We know in the long term this province needs to better support seniors in their homes and long-term care. And the province desperately needs a critical meth strategy and better mental health and addictions supports. We've seen this movie before. What assurances do we have that we'll have a better result this time? And does he agree with officials that this is a crisis?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, absolutely we know how serious this situation is. That's why the command centre announcement. That's why all hands on deck from the Saskatchewan Health Authority. Mr. Speaker, there's any number of issues that are adding to the strain.

The member correctly mentioned the crystal meth situation in the province. That's why, again on the long term, Mr. Speaker, in the last budget we announced the rapid access to addictions medicine — they're referred to as RAAM [rapid access to addiction medicine] clinics, Mr. Speaker — that'll be opening soon. We think that's going to help to alleviate some of those calls in emergency. Mr. Speaker, again we recognize how serious the situation is, and we know we need to do better.

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

Government's Fiscal Management

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear that those members are as out of touch with the crisis in our emergency

rooms as they are with the reality facing so many Saskatchewan families that are struggling to pay their bills.

Yesterday *The Globe and Mail* reported that more and more Saskatchewan people are falling behind on their debts. Home foreclosures have nearly doubled over the past year, and the percentage of residential mortgages that are delinquent has nearly tripled to an almost 27-year high, the worst rate in Canada by far.

To the minister: can he explain why more and more Saskatchewan people are struggling to make ends meet in this stagnant economy that's been made worse by the Sask Party's choices?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, that member would know, because I know he read the entire article from end to end, that the article references the issues with the slowdown in the oil patch as being one of the major problems in this.

Mr. Speaker, what has our government done to help all families, quite frankly, within the province to make their life more affordable is we have reduced taxes for those families, Mr. Speaker, something that the NDP [New Democratic Party] at their convention made mockery of and said now's not the time to reduce taxes. We've removed 112,000 people within our province with the personal exemption increases that we made, which is a tax reduction, Mr. Speaker. People in the province are paying less income tax than they were under the NDP.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I certainly did read the report and it did reference the challenge by way of commodity prices. But the reality is that government hiked taxes with a massive and record billion-dollar tax hike by way of PST. It's hamstringed our economy and it's hit families hard.

What we see from the Sask Party is finger pointing time and time again instead of tackling the challenges and instead of fixing the problems that they've created within our economy. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has more delinquent mortgages than BC [British Columbia], but has only one-fifth of the total mortgages. Our rate is twice that of Alberta next door, also facing energy pressures, and it's more than triple the national average. This is a government that's letting people down on front after front, from job loss and a stagnant economy to jacking up the costs of living.

My question is simple. What's the plan to turn things around so that people can pay their bills and get ahead?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Again I want to remind the member opposite to check the tweet that was put out during their convention that says now's not the time to look at tax cuts, when he's asking us to cut taxes.

But, Mr. Speaker, here's the reality of what it is for families to pay, to what it was when the NDP were in power. For a single resident, Mr. Speaker, making an income of \$40,000 they are paying, including the increase to the PST, with our reduction on

the income tax, they are paying \$938 less than they did a number of years ago under the NDP.

For a family of four that have a total income of \$50,000, how much less are they paying now in taxes, including the increase to the PST, than they did under the . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. Order, please. Minister, finish.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I will just repeat that last comment. A family of four which is making an income of \$50,000, today are paying \$2,302 less — that includes the PST increase — than they did under the NDP.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we're talking about Saskatchewan people who are facing a very hard reality. And we have a minister who wants to dismiss that reality, who's tone-deaf to those circumstances and instead wants to political back-pat himself with nonsensical responses.

Mr. Speaker, people are facing significant cost increases that are direct choice of that government: jacked up power rates, PST on children's clothes as part of the billion-dollar PST tax hike of that government. Let's look a little further at that Sask Party record. Under the Sask Party, foreclosures have gone from 392 in 2008 to a whopping 1,411 in 2018. That's not a record of a government that's putting people first, Mr. Speaker. That's a record of a tired, arrogant, and entitled government that doesn't understand the reality facing Saskatchewan people.

To the minister: what does he have to say to Saskatchewan people who are struggling to pay their bills, to find a job, who are looking to this government to make life more affordable and to finally fire up this stagnant economy?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the members opposite want to join us in lobbying the federal government for a pipeline because that would really help the situation we have right now, if they want to join us in lobbying against the carbon tax because that would certainly help feed people in our province today.

But, Mr. Speaker, we don't have the same gloom and doom . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order, please. A little less crosstalk. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — I'm very glad to say that the members on this side of the House do not have the same gloom and doom doomsday attitude that they do on that side of the House. Mr. Speaker, is that what a stagnant province with a growing population, Mr. Speaker . . . He calls it a stagnant province when we have more people working today than we did month over month over month in this province, Mr. Speaker. That is not stagnant.

Mr. Speaker, there are challenges. We will acknowledge that and we will work with the people of Saskatchewan on those challenges. But we are not a stagnant, failing province the way they want to portray it.

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

Funding for Education

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. One of the overarching themes of the Re-Imagine Education survey released yesterday is the need for adequate funding. And one of the recommendations was that “Any funding model must be designed to provide the resources to support the varied needs of students, including behavioural issues, learning needs, cultural diversity, and mental health.” Yet this government has cut per-student funding by \$400, shortchanging school divisions by 80 million.

How many more times does the Sask Party government need to hear that more supports are needed before they will adequately fund our schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, in last year’s budget we had a record investment in public education, almost two and a half billion dollars, Mr. Speaker, the largest in the history of the province. Now, Mr. Speaker, we’re having the conversations with respect to our education-sector partners. Mr. Speaker, I read the report yesterday from the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation], their Re-Imagined campaign, Mr. Speaker, and one of the comments in the report was that the system isn’t broken.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge that there are some challenges within the system, and even the STF’s own report acknowledges it. Mr. Speaker, the system isn’t in crisis. And we’re continuing to look, as we move forward with our budget development for the next fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we are supporting children in our classrooms and that we are supporting the very teachers that are providing that critical education to the children, Mr. Speaker, in those classrooms.

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

Ms. Chartier: — It’s pretty hard to solve a problem, Mr. Speaker, unless you’re willing to acknowledge that there is one. A \$400 cut per student, Mr. Speaker, this is the sad reality that students and teachers have to deal with every single day in our classrooms. Professionals providing mental health services to our students have been cut under the Sask Party government. Over the last three years there are 5 per cent fewer counselling positions and 9 per cent fewer psychologists.

When will the Sask Party government stop cutting public education and make sure that children have the mental health supports that they need?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — I have been sitting in the House, Mr.

Speaker, for nine years, and I’ve never heard a more outrageous comment from a member of the opposition than that one I just heard from that member, Mr. Speaker. To suggest that this government, Mr. Speaker, hasn’t acknowledged some of the challenges that are going on in public education is just plain wrong, Mr. Speaker.

In each and every year, Mr. Speaker, we continue to add more resources. And those resources are provided to the school divisions, Mr. Speaker, who are in the best position to make the determination as to what is in the best interest of the children in our classroom, Mr. Speaker. Even the Leader of the Opposition acknowledged that, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the president of the STF acknowledged it and so did the trustees of the School Boards Association, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that this government is ignorant or ignoring the challenges in our classroom, Mr. Speaker, is just plain wrong.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Like I said, Mr. Speaker, you can’t fix a problem unless you’re willing to acknowledge you’ve got one. If that minister put as much effort into supporting our children as he does delivering his lines, maybe we wouldn’t have this growing crisis in our classrooms.

Children’s mental health was not even mentioned in the Throne Speech. Neither was the crisis in our classrooms. When will this minister take some responsibility for his government’s failure to deliver the needed mental health supports to our children?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, earlier on in question period, my good friend the Minister of Health stood and talked about our plan for mental health capacity building in schools, a pilot project that we borrowed from the province of Alberta, Mr. Speaker, that’s been highly successful. I expect we’re going to see that same success in that pilot program in those four schools currently in Saskatchewan, and we can continue to expand that program to more schools, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as we go forward, as we go forward with respect to consultation around class size and composition, certainly composition and the challenges of mental health, Mr. Speaker, are certainly key issues that we’re going to need to be thinking about in terms of how we provide the supports to our children in the classrooms that they need. But to suggest that this government is ignoring those issues, she knows that’s not true, Mr. Speaker. And to stand up on the floor of the Assembly and suggest that this government’s ignoring those very important issues, Mr. Speaker, is ridiculous.

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

Suicide Prevention Strategy

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, it’s been a while since we started question period. I’d like to see if the Premier has found his feet

when . . . [inaudible] . . . on this particular serious issue. There's people in the gallery who travelled a very long way to hear the Premier give his remarks and his comments about the importance of the suicide strategy for Saskatchewan. This is a strategy that other provinces have implemented, the federal government has implemented. If they don't think that it's appropriate for this province, I'd like to hear the Premier get up and explain to them why.

[14:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would just begin with expressing my thoughts, my prayers, our condolences to the family of Sally, Sheldon, as well as to Michael and Lynda, Mr. Speaker, on the loss of their family members.

And I would also express that our goals in this province are goals that, regardless of which side of this House that you're on, are congruent. Mr. Speaker, we need to do better. The statistics with respect to suicide — not just in Saskatchewan but across this nation, Mr. Speaker — we need to do better. And we need to work together to ensure that we can change those statistics when we are having this conversation in one, in two, in three, and in five years, Mr. Speaker, and we are most certainly committed to that.

The Minister of Health has outlined the cross-jurisdictional scan that he is doing with respect not only to suicide strategies and if they're present in other jurisdictions across the nation, but also our mental health and addictions plan to ensure that we are identifying if we have gaps in this province when it comes to mental health — the treatment that we are providing, the supports that we are providing, or resulting in many cases, some of the addictions challenges that arise from that, Mr. Speaker — that we are filling those gaps wherever we can. He has offered to the member from Cumberland, Mr. Speaker, to work with him if we are able to identify any gaps that may be present so that we can do better, so that we can do better by the families across this province, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to that, we have been working at the premiers' table, at the Council of the Federation table, Mr. Speaker, to come together in this nation for a mental health symposium so that we are able to share best practices. Not just best practices of government, Mr. Speaker, but best practices of our community-based organizations, not just in Saskatchewan but across the nation, Mr. Speaker, so that we can share what is working, just as importantly share what is not working, Mr. Speaker, so that we can move better and change those statistics, not just in our communities here in the province but across the nation.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 182 — *The Tobacco Control Amendment Act, 2019*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 182, *The Tobacco Control Amendment Act, 2019* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 182, *The Tobacco Control Amendment Act, 2019* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 618 — *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act, 2019*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 618, *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act, 2019* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Cumberland that Bill No. 618, *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act, 2019* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

Mr. Vermette: — At the next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 1 through 6.

The Speaker: — Tabled questions 1 through 6.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 181 — *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy and

Resources.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*. The Act levies the mineral rights tax on roughly 40,000 freehold mineral titles in Saskatchewan. It generated \$9.4 million in revenue last year. The current Act has been in effect in its present form for almost 40 years.

The proposed amendments to *The Mineral Taxation Act, 1983* will move the mineral rights tax rate, which will remain unchanged, as well as exemptions and processes from the current Act to *The Mineral Rights Tax Regulations, 1998*. Moving these components to the regulations, Mr. Speaker, follows contemporary legislative drafting standards. It will make the Act easier to interpret and to administer. The amendments will also modernize the Act in several other important ways: they will update the legal language, enable non-taxed individuals to voluntarily transfer their mineral titles to the Crown; they will also authorize the use of new electronic mineral rights tax administration.

Current administration of the mineral rights tax is dependent on software that's no longer supported and requires intensive manual entering. Authorizing electronic administration will streamline assessment, provide data backups, and enhance service delivery to mineral rights taxpayers.

Over the past summer, the Ministry of Energy and Resources consulted with internal and external stakeholders regarding the proposed legislation. This included contacting numerous industry associations, freehold mineral rights organizations, and a portion of the roughly 1,600 mineral rights taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. Implementing the proposed amendments will have no financial impact on these stakeholders. It will also not require additional resources or produce additional costs to the Government of Saskatchewan.

The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019 will be proclaimed into force once these regulation amendments have been completed. Overall this legislative decision item will promote a more balanced mineral rights tax regime with a more effective, more reliable, and less costly administration system.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Speaker: — It has been moved that Bill No. 181 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm pleased to be the first on my feet on behalf of the official opposition to respond to this bill. I think it's important for the people of Saskatchewan, as I explained yesterday, to realize that the schedule as we introduce bills and as we debate bills in the Assembly, is during the fall sitting the government announces their agenda. They propose a number of bills and then over the next several weeks we'll have our initial comments on the bill. And then we'll break for the winter, return in the spring, and this is where the bills will be proclaimed and further debated.

And this is the purpose, for people out in Saskatchewan to know, is this is the reason why we do some outreach. We talk to a number of people that are impacted as to how they could give us advice on any of the bills that the government is proposing. So clearly it is a process that is meant to engage people. And what we would encourage people out there that are involved with the mineral development of our province, the various companies, the people that are employed in that particular sector, if they have any concepts or ideas or issues that pertain to this particular Bill 181, *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*, that our doors are always open.

The crux of the matter that we view from this perspective, Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the challenge of my member from Regina, in the sense of the incredible challenge that the economy of Saskatchewan is facing . . . As you look at the modernization Act that we're talking about here today, Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to hear the minister say that there wasn't going to be a review of the royalty regime that has been in place, Mr. Speaker. This is a regime that has been brought forward by a number of past NDP leaders, Mr. Speaker, in particular Premier Lorne Calvert, when they'd done a bunch of assessments on what royalties plan we put in place to attract investment in Saskatchewan. And they reviewed all the royalties and they put together a comprehensive plan.

And I can remember the discussions around the cabinet table, Mr. Speaker, in which Mr. Calvert, or Premier Calvert at the time, led. And there was some very strong champions, whether it was Minister Lautermilch, Minister Cline, or Minister Sonntag out of Meadow Lake. These were people that architected what I think is a phenomenal effort to attract the mineral companies to the province of Saskatchewan and to really modernize a royalty schedule that was in place and, Mr. Speaker, it paid dividends. As you know, Mr. Speaker, one of the greatest plays in oil and gas, the Bakken field, Mr. Speaker, and it's one of the areas that has had tremendous opportunity for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I think it's important for the people of the province to understand this: it's that as you look at some of the bills being proposed, and this bill in particular, 181, it's a modernization bill, Mr. Speaker, in which they're certainly looking at the language. They're trying to make sure that there is proper administrative processes, Mr. Speaker, which is fine to do.

But that's the issue that I wish to elaborate on, that there's nothing significant that the Saskatchewan Party is doing to stimulate our economy, whether it's oil or gas or mineral development, Mr. Speaker. And the province is indeed hurting, Mr. Speaker. It is hurting a tremendous amount. We've heard of how we're leading the nation on mortgage delinquency, Mr. Speaker, of how people are paying more for children's clothing, and how we're getting less and less off of this government, Mr. Speaker.

And you contrast this deal, Mr. Speaker, you contrast this deal to the fact that they've had record revenue; they've had record spending. They inherited a booming economy. They've inherited, Mr. Speaker, a growing population. And yet they had, they brought the biggest tax hike in the history of Saskatchewan under their watch. And, Mr. Speaker, how do you do that? How do you do that? How do you change the largesse that was

inherited by the Sask Party and a mere 10 years later you're not only seeing record debt, Mr. Speaker, you're seeing record problems in the resource industry, Mr. Speaker.

And of course every time we challenge the current government, they blame the oil and gas sector, Mr. Speaker. They have not built one inch of pipeline to tidewater, Mr. Speaker, not one inch. And the oil and gas sector of this province need that support from governments, Mr. Speaker, and this government has failed miserably on that front. And yet they bring administrative bills of this sort to the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, which really to me denotes their effort and certainly the understanding of what is required to stimulate our provincial economy.

There are things they can do of significance, Mr. Speaker, as I speak about the history of the NDP and how they ushered in a new regime of royalties that would really stimulate investment, Mr. Speaker, and get the economy going. And once the economy was going, Mr. Speaker, that Sask Party simply assumed that booming economy, assumed record revenues, Mr. Speaker, without doing one day's work. And a short 10 years later we're facing record revenue, record tax increases, Mr. Speaker, and today, today now we also have record revenue.

So tell me, how does that translate into taking care of Saskatchewan's people, Mr. Speaker? It does not translate in any way, shape, or form. Now I tell New Democrats this throughout the province and all people of Saskatchewan, when we talk about the economy and what is necessary and needed for the economy, Mr. Speaker, first thing you've got to do is get rid of a tired, old government that's running on fumes, and that's the Saskatchewan Party. You've got to get rid of them because they've had their time. They've spent their money, and now they are running on fumes, Mr. Speaker.

And secondly I think, Mr. Speaker, is you have to look at ways and means in which we can become the voice of reason in Western Canada. And the New Democrats can do that, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to the oil and gas sector, no matter how much the Sask Party whine about the position of the NDP, we're the ones that ushered in a new era when it comes to oil and gas development in Saskatchewan. It was not them, Mr. Speaker. It was not them, Mr. Speaker.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Let's take it down to a dull roar maybe. I recognize the member.

Mr. Belanger: — So as we look at bills of this sort, Mr. Speaker, what I tell the people of Saskatchewan is, study your history a little bit and you'll quickly find out that really it is a facade of the Saskatchewan Party to claim credit for the booming economy that they inherited, Mr. Speaker. It took some strong leadership, Mr. Speaker. It took some tough decisions. Many people before them made some very tough and principled stands on many fronts, and that's how Saskatchewan moved forward, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

And you'll hear them every day whine about the NDP position on oil and gas. Let me be crystal clear, as the Resources critic for

the official opposition: we support the development of gas and we support the development of oil in the province of Saskatchewan. Always have, always will. It'll be a big part of our economy for years to come, Mr. Speaker. And for them to suggest that, Mr. Speaker, they're simply trying to mislead our position on oil and gas because somehow, along the way, it pays them political dividends. And I say to them, shame on that particular activity because it does not bode well for the future of our province if they continue that type of discussion, Mr. Speaker. So I would point out again that the New Democrats and the people of Saskatchewan, we can simply do this. We can be the voice of reason for Western Canada, Mr. Speaker. We have a proud history of how we have stimulated the oil and gas sector.

And in northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the people are feeling the hurt attached to the uranium industry slowdown when they shut down these mines, Mr. Speaker. These are some of the things that we ought to take care of and none of these matters have been brought forward by the government. And, Mr. Speaker, as we look at southeastern Saskatchewan as people struggle with the coal industry, as we see that coal is being gradually devolved over time . . . And we applaud the \$10 million set aside for that particular region and for that particular sector, Mr. Speaker, because losing a job . . . And as we heard today the mortgage default rate is high for the province of Saskatchewan, we understand that families struggle.

So from our perspective, as you look at the \$10 million earmarked for the transition of the coal industry in southeastern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we understand that these kind of investments are necessary and that they're very strategic, and we would support any effort in that regard. So I would say we applaud that initiative. But where was the initiative around uranium for northern Saskatchewan? It did not exist, Mr. Speaker. All they provided in terms of response was a rapid response team, and we still don't know what that is.

So, Mr. Speaker, as you look at the history of what regime we put in place, the royalty regime, our advice at the time was, don't mess with that royalty regime because it's working. Keep it as it is. The NDP developed it. Don't try and think on your own, Saskatchewan Party. Just follow the lead and we'll be okay. And, Mr. Speaker, thank goodness they'd sought . . . they took that advice. But how does it work? How does it work, a party that simply inherited record revenue, inherited a booming economy, inherited a growing population, a short two, three terms later we have record debt and we have record tax increases, Mr. Speaker?

And then you turn around and you say, oh, the P3s [public-private partnership]. That's going to saddle future generations as well. So they've almost completely squandered the opportunity that they were afforded, and they completely mortgaged our children's and grandchildren's future by their ineptness as a government, Mr. Speaker. And that's why you have to get rid of them. That's why they have got to go, Mr. Speaker. And that's why these people on the NDP side, Mr. Speaker, I would match our history of resource development and opportunity in building the economy of Saskatchewan every day of the week compared to the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker.

But they continue their facade. They continue whining about the NDP. And I would say to them, get it figured out. If you can't figure it out, get out of the way. We'll come and help you figure

out how the economy of Saskatchewan should be built in concert and co-operation with our oil and gas sector, with the people that are going to benefit from the mineral developments of our province, Mr. Speaker, in concert with the many, many different players in resource development, Mr. Speaker. We can do a good job. We can do a better job. And I think it's time people of Saskatchewan get that message.

And that's why it's important that we pay attention to these bills. It's important that we see what is being proposed. And all we see here is housekeeping. And every other development coming out of that government, Mr. Speaker, is housekeeping items. You've got to get bold. You've got to get aggressive. You've got to get visionary, Mr. Speaker, and you've got to do the things that are going to stimulate the economy. And unfortunately the Sask Party gets an big fat F in that regard, Mr. Speaker. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 181.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 174

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 174 — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter the debate today on Bill No. 174, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019*. At this point in the legislative session, Mr. Speaker, bills are getting introduced. And this is basically our first opportunity to take a look at bills and see what's in them and reach out to stakeholders, to people who are impacted by particular legislation, and in this case those who have maintenance enforcement orders against them and those who have them and need to have them enforced — getting a lay of the land maybe from lawyers who work in this particular area as well in family law, Mr. Speaker. There's many people with whom our critic will need to speak to about this bill in the next little while. So this is early comments, Mr. Speaker.

It's always good to look at the minister's second reading speech to get a sense of the government's goals with respect to the bill, Mr. Speaker. So for this particular bill, I think it's important actually to talk a little bit about the maintenance enforcement office, which was created in 1986, Mr. Speaker, as the minister points out. And what it does, it provides people in Saskatchewan with assistance in both the recording of and the enforcement of maintenance enforcement orders registered with that office.

So for those who don't know what maintenance enforcement orders are, if you haven't had the misfortune of going through a divorce and you've actually had to go through the court process, Mr. Speaker, a maintenance enforcement order is something the court deems when it comes to one partner paying the other to ensure that families have what they need, Mr. Speaker.

The minister has pointed this out, and I've heard this in committee in the past too, that the province has one of the highest collection rates in Canada. And he points out that "\$47 million was collected in the last fiscal year for children and families," and he says, "the office is on track to collect \$50 million in the current fiscal year."

I know one of the challenges . . . I know the office is very proud of its record, but I know that there are some trickier situations. And I would have liked to have seen in this bill those who are self employed. For those who've been ordered to pay child support, there are ways that people use to get around paying the amount, Mr. Speaker. And sometimes I've dealt with constituents who have struggled. I've dealt with constituents who've had more difficulty in having their order enforced, Mr. Speaker.

And I know some of the challenges are also around staffing in that particular office. They do have a lot of people on their caseload. The minister pointed out 9,000 active orders and agreements registered with the office. So that's a lot of work for a small office who is working with both sides of the equation, both those who are ordered to pay support and those who receive it and need to receive it in a timely manner and budget for it and plan for it. I know that one of the concerns that I've heard from folks is some staffing issues: good people with whom to work but, like across government at the moment, there just aren't enough of them.

But with respect to Bill No. 174, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2019*, what does this bill do, Mr. Speaker? So one of the proposed amendments adds banking information to the list of information that may be requested from the parties, Mr. Speaker. The minister points out that:

In practice, the maintenance enforcement office regularly sends demands for information to employers, seeking financial information about delinquent payers. Since the Act [he points out] was passed in 1997, more employers are directly depositing paycheques into employees' bank accounts.

So employers, because of all this, are more likely to know information related to an employee's financial institution. And so the ability to demand this type of information, the minister argues, "will assist the maintenance enforcement office with the collection of outstanding funds."

Another proposed amendment "will also revise the service provisions to permit service by email in accordance with the Queen's Bench rules."

He points out that:

The . . . office is already able to serve demands for

information and notices of seizure by email. The proposed amendments will also revise the definition of “maintenance order” to include maintenance awarded through arbitration and orders recalculated by the recalculation office.

This is because in 2019 there was an Act that came into force. *The Arbitration Act, 1992* came into force just this past July respecting the arbitration of family disputes. So when parties enter into arbitration and maintenance is ordered, this award should be treated the same as a court order and be enforceable by the maintenance enforcement office. And also he points out that:

... since spring of 2018, Saskatchewan’s [our province’s] recalculations office has been recalculating orders pursuant to *The Family Maintenance Regulations, 1998*. Where the amount payable for support is recalculated to either a higher or lower amount, this new amount should be enforced by the maintenance enforcement office.

And he also points out that:

Related amendments to *The Family Maintenance Act, 1997* will allow the recalculation office to recalculate the amount of support set out in an agreement filed with the court ... [with the goal of ensuring] agreements that include maintenance payments through court orders are treated consistently and the maintenance enforcement office is able to enforce recalculated agreements.

So just for clarity’s sake again, there’s updates in the language throughout the Act. It allows the court to collect banking information for an accurate calculation of the payment due. And it revises the definition of “maintenance order” to include maintenance awarded through arbitration and orders recalculated by the office in charge.

I would just go back to the point about the ability to enforce payments. They’re very proud of their enforcement rate and their ability to collect payments but there can be a more difficult group from whom it can be more challenging to collect money owed to families. It’s interesting. I don’t have the stats here, but I believe that ... I am quite confident that the number, the higher percentage of people who are receiving enforcement are women, Mr. Speaker. So putting a gendered lens on this, it’s important to always think about how policy impacts men and women differently or how it impacts all of us, but recognizing that by the roles that we hold in society, sometimes policy has different effects. So like I said previously, I think it’s important to ensure that there are conversations that happen with those impacted by this legislation to see if there’s any unintended consequences or perhaps some room for amendments to improve to a greater extent the collection rates and ensure that we’re doing the most justice to families possible.

But I would just again point to that enforcement side and the functioning of the office itself to make sure that the staff are in place to do this in a timely fashion because I do know that waits for returned phone calls can be quite lengthy. I know people mean to do ... The people in the office do the best they can but when there’s not enough of them, sometimes families who are waiting on money, who don’t have means and who have budgeted their amount that they have been ordered to receive, sometimes waiting for that can be challenging, Mr. Speaker, and

not getting it at all can be even more challenging to families.

But I know that over the course of this sitting and into the spring that we will continue learning about these changes and how they impact people, and I will leave it up to our critic to pursue some of that. But with that I would like to move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 175

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 175 — *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur le mariage*** be now read a second time.]

[15:00]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It’s a good thing to enter into the debates, the consultations, the discussions around the new bills that are coming forward in this fourth session of the twenty-eighth legislature. This bill, No. 175, *An Act to amend The Marriage Act, 1995 and to make consequential amendments to The Wills Act, 1996*, now it’s a very important piece of legislation we have before us and it’s one that shouldn’t be taken lightly. But it’s interesting to watch how the concept of marriage has evolved over the years, and in particular, you know, just talking about the previous bill in terms of supports and that kind of thing and, you know, the divorce, separation, cohabitation, all of that kind of stuff.

And this is a different kind of thing that has now arisen and so it’s one that I think is important, one that when we look at people who may not be in the best position to say that they are capable of making a contract of marriage and that they’ve been taken advantage of, either because of their state of mind or by their age. And so this is very interesting. Of course it brings a bit of a change, you know, when we have in our mind the idea of the common scene in the movie where if anybody has a concern about this marriage, will they raise their issues now or forever hold your peace. This actually changes that by a lot, where you now can really get involved with the people. And the minister talks about that, and I quote:

The proposed amendments to *The Marriage Act* will add a new provision to permit an application ... before the Court of Queen’s Bench to nullify a marriage where an interested person believes one of the parties to the marriage did not provide valid consent to enter into the contract of marriage.

So there you go. I’m not sure if this is new or an amendment or a change, but this is one that I think is important in protecting people’s rights and making sure that they are safe and not taken advantage of. And the term “predatory marriage” is one that really brings to mind, you know, abusive relationships, particularly where there might be gain in terms of either financial

gain or other gains.

So I think this is one that we really need to take a look at. It'd be interesting to know much more about this in terms of who brought this forward, what kind of consultations has been out there, what kind of data do we have in terms of predatory marriages. You know, I know a few years ago we were talking about mail-order brides and that whole issue. And I'm not sure how that was resolved or if this is almost the same sort of thing. But I think this is one that we need to take a lot of attention to.

So the idea that an interested party could bring a statement of claim to the courts is interesting. Now it doesn't really define what the minister meant when he used the word "interested," but if you look in the Act, and if I'm reading it right, it really talks about the fact that . . . And I look at the new section 32.1:

"Jurisdiction of court re validity of consent

In an action by a person mentioned in subsection (2), the court may declare that a valid marriage was not effected or entered into if the court determines that one of the parties did not provide valid consent to enter into the contract of the marriage.

Subject to the regulations [and it will be interesting to see what the regulations are], an action mentioned in subsection (1) may be brought by any of the following:

a party to the marriage [either one of the people being married];

And interesting that we're not talking about gender roles here, whether it's male or female. And I think this is a progressive step of describing that there's two parties to the marriage:

[Or] a family member of one of the parties to the marriage.

Now what's interesting is that we don't have a description of whether it's an immediate family or whether it can be extended family. What is the definition of family member here that would be able to bring that concern and whether or not that person who brings that concern to the court has to have permission of one of the parties to do that? Because in effect, you know, which makes it very . . . It would make it a very challenging, awkward moment in the course of the family, maybe one that's necessary if there is a question of state of mind and/or age and if the age has been misrepresented, that would be interesting.

So we have questions. We have lots of questions about this. And one that we think, you know, we think about the sanctity, the commitment that people when they enter into a marriage make. This is not just a simple business relationship, but obviously that has . . . The nuts and bolts of that relationship have to be considered. And so this is one that's very, very interesting, and I look forward to hearing more about that in committee.

And also that there is significant consequences to the amendment to *The Wills Act*, and what does that mean for people.

So interesting whether there will be any public consultations. Were there consultations? What was the stimulus to bring this

forward in terms of the necessity of having legislation? Is this something that's emerging as a trend across Canada, across North America? The minister's comments were absent of any reference to consultations or any kind of lobbying or responding to a need. So what were the stimulus to bring this forward? I mean obviously when you enter into changing laws such as the will legislation or the marriage legislation, we are really doing something that, boy, we better make sure that we get it right.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm looking forward to hearing more about this. And I know that all members will want to enter into this debate and say a few words because it's a very important piece of legislation, one that we can't dismiss out of hand. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would move adjournment of Bill No. 175, *An Act to amend The Marriage Act, 1995 and to make consequential amendments to The Wills Act, 1996*. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 176

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 176 — *The Fiduciaries Access to Digital Information Act/Loi sur l'accès des fiduciaires à l'information numérique*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter into the debate on Bill No. 176, *An Act respecting the Rights and Duties of Certain Fiduciaries in relation to Digital Assets*. And again this legislation brings to mind a lot of interesting things that perhaps we haven't thought of over the course of time and how it's been evolving, because as people who have the ability to their fiduciary rights to access different . . . How they manage or they're expected to manage their responsibilities have evolved over the course of time. And at one time it was much more clear and straightforward when the assets were real and physical, and that was straightforward.

And so as the minister rightly noted that:

The rules with respect . . . over real and personal property are clear: [and especially] when an individual is unable to manage his or her own tangible property due to incapacity or death, someone else may step in to do so on the person's behalf.

That's the fiduciary responsibility. But what do we do about digital assets? Now again the minister was not as clear in terms of, you know, what comes to mind when we talk about digital assets. It is defined in the bill and it means "a record that is created, recorded, transmitted or stored in digital or other intangible form by electronic, magnetic or optical means or by . . . other similar means."

And what does “fiduciary” mean, for the folks at home:

... in relation to the account holder:

an executor or administrator for a deceased account holder;

a property guardian;

a property attorney; or

a trustee appointed to hold in trust a digital asset or other property of the account holder.

So many of us will think about social media in this case.

And it was interesting the other night. I just happened to be looking through Facebook’s privacy things because somebody had mentioned that maybe I had been hacked and so I wanted to know how to report that. And it was very interesting how their world view of when you sign up to Facebook, what belongs to them and what belongs to you, and what happens in terms of your death. And what they do is, they talk about memorializing your account. I thought you could just end your account, but it’s not quite as simple as that. And they have different options and that type of thing, but they also have ... I mean it’s very thorough. They talk about if you think somebody’s not able to hold an account. They’re very clear that if you’re under a certain age that you shouldn’t be having a Facebook account as well.

But that’s the kind of thing that we often think about when we have digital assets. So now the minister talks about how this has come forward from the Uniform Law Conference of Canada in 2016 which formed the basis of this bill. So that’s a very important thing, that we have consistency across Canada when dealing with this.

I mean we’ve just seen what happened in Europe around the right to be forgotten legislation that France was championing against Google. And Google in the end actually ended up winning the court case. They have a lot of money, these companies that are just huge. And what they can do, it’s staggering, the impact it can have to fight the will of a country in terms of managing privacy and what is appropriate, and then what a company like Google can say, no, it’s ours and we’re above national laws, and even international when you get into the European Union.

So this is one that, it really is very interesting. And what does it mean in terms of managing digital assets, let alone finding where everybody’s passwords are? You know, I mean like that’s a tricky thing when people pass away. Where are their passwords? How can they get into accounts, close accounts, that type of thing? And not a simple thing.

And so maybe, you know, we’ll get into committee and find out whether ... Are we talking about at that level? Are we talking about passwords and getting into accounts, that type of thing? I mean when you talk about fiduciary responsibilities usually you think about getting into people’s safety deposit boxes, finding out what’s in that because you’ve got to deal with it. So now what do we do with all that other thing? And are people really prepared to have that thing happen?

And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I think this is an appropriate bill for us to be having a discussion about, one that’s timely. And I’m glad we’re having it right across Canada, because who knows what the future brings? We’re all here right now. But you know, we’ve all got our passwords and we’ve all got our things.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that many people have lots of questions about this. And we’ll be interested to hear, when the minister brings his officials forward, what their background and what they’ve been reading and that type of thing on this issue. With that though, I know many of my colleagues will want to speak to this and have a few thoughts. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I move adjournment of Bill No. 176, *An Act respecting the Rights and Duties of Certain Fiduciaries in relation to Digital Assets*. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[15:15]

Bill No. 177

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 177 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I can’t tell if it’s, you know, too late for lunch dessert or too early for supper dessert, but here it is, Bill No. 177, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*. Buckle up, because it’s going to be quite the ride for this little number.

Using my colleague from Saskatoon Centre’s remarks as a point of departure, Mr. Speaker, and given my gift for the obvious, I’ll point out to folks that this is indeed the 21st century. Things like electronic registers, not only possible, but they’re asking for them by the dozens, Mr. Speaker, or two dozen in this particular case.

But, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan miscellaneous statutes, always an interesting read when they come forward with this government, and this was no exception.

In terms of the legislation we have before us in Bill No. 177, this does indeed deal with a number of self-regulating professions in the province of Saskatchewan. There are 40 different Acts involved in this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, and miscellaneous statutes, being what it is, whereby they’ll permit occupational and professional organizations to make their register available to the public in any manner, including electronic format, Mr. Speaker.

So again, as one often does in this circumstance, referring to the minister’s second reading speech, of the 45 occupational and professional organizations that are regulated by legislation

setting out the basic criteria for self-regulation, there are a number of those organizations, Mr. Speaker, where the existing wording in the legislation was broad enough to anticipate the arrival of something like the electronic register. There are a number of organizations that that was not the case with their legislation. Their language was more circumscribed, Mr. Speaker.

So I'll spare folks going through the entire list here, but suffice it to say that from accounting on through to midwifery, Mr. Speaker — or pardon me, *The Naturopathic Medicine Act* — that there are a number of organizations that are now going to have, after this legislation takes effect, the ability to provide the registry of their members in an electronic format.

And I can tell there's a great deal of interest here. I know certainly various of my colleagues, following the affairs of the day as they do and they want to know who the movers and shakers are, are going to be very happy to take advantage of, you know, what the electronic register might tell you about the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents, you know, LEADS, Mr. Speaker. That's going to be an interesting read, to be sure. Or perhaps considering one group that we met with, why just this very morning, Mr. Speaker, the chiropractors of Saskatchewan and who's registered under *The Chiropractic Act*, or the architects or the assessment appraisers or the midwives, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of groups that will be covered by this particular legislation.

So that is what this legislation sets out to accomplish. We of course want to do our own verification of that stated intent on the part of the minister, Mr. Speaker, not to doubt that minister's word, Mr. Speaker, but we always want to make sure we're not taking any wooden nickels over on this side of the House, as offered up by the government. But certainly we'll be out there doing the work of verification that is required by Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd now move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 177, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Electronic Register) Amendment Act, 2019*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 178

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 178 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure and a privilege to rise and participate on behalf of my constituents in the debate on this bill. Mr. Speaker, I note that the minister in introducing . . . or I shouldn't say introducing, but the second reading speech noted that many of these bills were obsolete and

so that this was merely housekeeping. And not that I always doubt the minister but, you know, on this side of the House we don't generally take ministers' statements at face value, and so I had to do some digging into that, Mr. Speaker.

Now what I noticed, Mr. Speaker, is that *The Water Appeal Board Act*, which is one of the statutes being appealed here, that basically its function was basically made inoperative. The Water Appeal Board used to hear appeals of the Water Security Agency, and back in 2016-2017 the government changed that so that the right of appeal of Water Security Agency decisions now goes to the Court of Queen's Bench, it appears. And it looks like the government of the day limited the right of appeal now to questions of law. And so the government, back a couple of years ago there, what they did is they limited citizens' rights of appeal and directed that to the Court of Queen's Bench instead of the Water Appeal Board. So now the Water Appeal Board has nothing to do, and so I suppose that's why they think *The Water Appeal Board Act* should be repealed.

The minister, in his second reading speech, also talked about the impact of this bill on stakeholders, and he assured us that there would be no impact on stakeholders. In fact what I note, Mr. Speaker, is that the minister specifically stated that the Justice officials have confirmed that this repeal of legislation "will not have any impact on stakeholders."

Now, Mr. Speaker, when I looked at what this bill is doing, it's repealing *The Family and Community Services Act*. And that law, Mr. Speaker, is really not regulating anybody. What it does is it empowers the minister, and specifically it empowers the minister to take any action needed to promote the growth and development of family and community services. And I'm curious as to why that is no longer considered important, because it seems like that would still be an important function for the Minister of Health.

The Act talks about the minister's role in developing services and resources that would:

strengthen families;

foster the healthy development of children; or

provide local services and supports to families.

So this Act is really just empowering the minister, and I guess I'm quite curious as to why it is felt that an Act empowering the minister to do these good things is now considered obsolete. Does the minister no longer do those types of things? It seems curious, Mr. Speaker.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, now this is an area where it kind of delves into my critic portfolio of Agriculture. The other law that's being repealed is *The Veterinary Services Act*. Now you may not have guessed this from the title of the Act, but this Act specifically applies to the provision of veterinary services in rural Saskatchewan. And when I took a look at *The Veterinary Services Act*, it appears to be its reason for being was to enable the delivery of veterinary services in rural areas, primarily of course to farmers.

It has long been the case that large animal practices or dealing

with agricultural animals veterinary practices aren't as profitable as small animal practices. So it's been the case for a long time, and I'm not sure if this is still the case. But it has been the case in the past that you can make far more profit, you know, tending to cats and dogs and pets in a city than you can tending to cows and horses and sheep and pigs in rural areas. And so I think at one point what governments of the day were trying to do was make it easier for rural municipalities to band together to get veterinarians in their areas.

Now one of the things I'm curious about, Mr. Speaker, is again the minister's comment that this will not impact any stakeholders. And the reason I'm curious about that, Mr. Speaker, is that there is at least one veterinary clinic in Saskatchewan which is still governed under this legislation. Stoughton Veterinary Services are governed under that legislation.

From their website, Mr. Speaker: "Stoughton Veterinary Services is one of the few veterinary clinics in Saskatchewan that is still a part of a Veterinary Service District . . . [They] belong to the Stoughton and District Veterinary Service Board," which is made up of the four local surrounding rural municipalities of Tecumseh, Griffin, Golden West, and Fillmore. So I'm curious about how the repeal of this legislation will impact this particular veterinary clinic and those four rural municipalities.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also repeals four private statutes. And while I haven't dug into those statutes, of course my expectation and assumption would be that normally those wouldn't be repealed unless those organizations or their successors had actually applied or mentioned something to the minister. So I haven't dug into that. I'm assuming that in the case of those four organizations that they have either been wound up or disbanded or simply faded off into the sunset. And so I suspect that debate on those particular repeals is not necessary.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move that we adjourn debate on this particular bill and wrap up my comments.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 179

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Marit that **Bill No. 179 — *The Apiaries Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always an honour to have our opportunity to put our remarks on the record with regards to adjourned debates. Today I'm going to talk a little bit about Bill 179, *The Apiaries Amendment Act*.

And you know, Mr. Speaker, one of the things I really enjoy about being in this position and being able to review all of this

legislation that's being put forward is I get to learn a lot about things that I never really thought too much about before because I was working a lot within my background with mental health and addictions prior to this. And so reading about apiaries, to be honest, I didn't even know what apiaries was prior to reading this piece of legislation. And doing some research with regards to it, it was actually quite fascinating, Mr. Speaker.

And so I'm excited to talk a little bit about some of the information that I reviewed while looking for some background and history with regards to *The Apiaries Act*, which I've discovered was first enacted in 1924, because it governs the beekeeping industry in the province. And the history with regards to the beekeeping industry is quite a lengthy one, Mr. Speaker. It goes back to the early 1900s.

And the increase of demand for honey increased in World War I, immediately during and after World War I, because there was an increase of prices for sugar. So that created a demand and the prices of honey increased as well because, you know, when there's demand, that increases the price. And so a lot of people were interested in getting into the beekeeping industry. And then there was also another increase within the beekeeping industry during World War II due to the fact that there was sugar rationing. So that was very interesting to read a little bit about.

[15:30]

Within our province in the early 1900s many beekeepers were located in the southern and eastern parts of the province, Mr. Speaker. But with myself coming from more of the central area of the province, I know of the beekeeping industry there. It's quite busy. You oftentimes see a lot of beekeeping huts when you're driving around. I don't even know if that's what they call them, Mr. Speaker, hives. But especially when we would go around the Tisdale area, and my dad is originally from Zenon Park, so we'd often go in that area of the province and you would see a lot of the beekeeping industry there.

And also I went to school, business administration school — that was one of my first degrees — with a guy from Kinistino. His name is Corey Bacon and his family has the B's Bee Ranch in Kinistino. And when we were going to business administration and learning more about how to have good businesses, that was when we were in our 20s. He was there because he wanted to help with his family business of beekeeping and utilize the skills and everything we learned there and incorporate into their business. And I bumped into him a few years ago, and obviously those skills that he learned there were deemed to be profitable because he is still managing the family business and doing quite well. And so we have to realize that the beekeeping industry within this province is very active and we need to make sure that it is well supported by this government.

Mr. Speaker, my brother, after retiring after over 30 years in the army, he decided he needed a hobby. And he for some reason decided to go into beekeeping as well, which really surprised all of us in our family because it wasn't anything that we were very familiar with. And he educated himself on the industry. He had a friend that joined him to start doing this. And this is one of his hobbies that he has, is keeping bees and having honey, and we enjoy the honey that he produces with that. And I know it's been a learning curve for him because it's not that easy.

And I'm lucky to have my seatmate, my colleague here from Regina Northeast. That is a family tradition in his family as well with regards to beekeeping. And so I know he's actually the critic for this portfolio, this area, and so when he has some questions with regards to this piece of legislation, he's going to be much more knowledgeable than I am with it. And he probably already knows a lot of this history that I've talked about.

But like I said, there's lots of hobbyists within the province that dabble with beekeeping as a hobby, just like my brother. But there's also a lot of beekeeping companies within this province, with over 100 members represented with the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Development Commission. So when we look at a piece of legislation like this, we need to make sure that we consult with the stakeholders, with people in the industry, to ensure that whatever is being recommended within this piece of legislation really is truly what they need within the industry. So we also have to make sure our honey production is competitive and that this government supports the important industry.

So some of the issues, one of the things I was wondering about with regards to changes within this Act is, how is this going to curb the growing use of pesticides that can cause a decline in the bee population? So that is definitely a question that needs to be asked, especially if we're looking at making amendments. Maybe this is an area that the minister needs to put more effort into, how we can ensure that the bee population is healthy and producing.

So I know there's also some housekeeping amendments that are going to be implemented in this Act. And so that's important whenever we're opening up a piece of legislation, to ensure that, you know, while we're looking at it, making sure that it's going to be consistent throughout the whole bill and to ensure that the language is modernized because I'm sure, since the 1900s, I'm sure this industry has changed substantially, like most industries. And I'm sure there's a lot of things that might need to be adjusted.

I know that this piece of legislation was first enacted in 1924, but I believe that the last time that there was any changes or any amendments to it was in 2005. And so still that is 14 years ago, which is shocking when I think about that, but in 14 years a lot could have changed. A lot probably has changed within that industry, so that's important that we look into it.

We know that this is an important piece of legislation. We have to check to see if there's any change to the industry or any changes that's going to be brought forward in the previous legislation, and it requires our close attention, Mr. Speaker. So we know that this replaces the apiaries certificate with the premises registration, and this also cancels the certificate that was previously required by beekeepers. And so I don't know why that was necessary, but I'm sure the due diligence of learning about that will come about.

It also introduces some procedures regarding beekeeping equipment to allow for effective time-saving technique of open feeding bees. And so it defines the American foulbrood as a notable disease, and it also increases fines. I believe those would be empty hives that are left out in some areas. They oftentimes will create a problem, and so they're increasing the fines from 10,000 to 25,000. That's quite substantial, Mr. Speaker. So

hopefully that really deters people from doing that and is substantial enough to do that.

And when I talk about ensuring that our honey production is adequate and competitive, I think about back in 2018 when officials called this the worst year in history for beekeeping in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So that was a really bad time for honey production, and so some hives . . . I'm looking at a news article with regards to it, because the Saskatchewan Beekeepers Development Commission, they said that the cold winter with below-normal cold snap at the end of the season was to blame for the mortality rates and that they were high across the province, those mortality rates.

So like we see with farmers struggling this fall with regards to getting their crop off the fields and the weather not being supportive of that and how that's impacting the agriculture industry, a government needs to stand up and support our farmers that way. And we know that even with the beekeeping industry, we need to have a government that will look out for them as well. We need to support them and help them when we know their industry has taken a big hit, especially when it comes to something that they can't control with regards to the weather.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that's about all the comments I have with regards to changes with this piece of legislation. I know for sure that my colleagues have a lot of information that they would like to put on the record with regards to these changes. And I know the critic is very well informed and will do his research and appropriate consultation with the industries. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to adjourn debate on Bill No. 179. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 180

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carr that **Bill No. 180 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my privilege to rise and enter the debate on this bill here. You know, Mr. Speaker, I was thinking I've had many occasions in the course of my short time here in the Assembly to draw on my expertise, my legal expertise, in reviewing bills, you know, what comes up in subject matter. And I started thinking as I was preparing for my debate on this. I thought, I wonder if we have any plumbers in the Assembly or former plumbers. And I wonder if we have any electricians or any gas fitters. I wonder if we have any people who happen to work looking after amusement rides or looking after boilers or elevators. These are all things that the Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan, or TSASK as it's called, looks after.

And I understand from the minister's comments and second reading that the main thing that this bill does is transfer basically the oversight of gas, electrical, and plumbing functions to TSASK. Specifically, what the minister said in her second reading speech was that this will implement the government's decision to transfer responsibility for gas, electrical, and plumbing licensing and inspection functions to TSASK.

Mr. Speaker, it seems like where the government is going with this bill is to transition the inspection and licensing to a single point of contact, that being TSASK, a single point of contact for citizens and tradespeople and industry. All of that, they'll be now going through TSASK.

It does cause me to wonder, Mr. Speaker, whether this transfer of legislative oversight and regulatory oversight is also being matched with some increased dollars, Mr. Speaker, so that TSASK actually has the budget to have inspectors and regulators who can go out and conduct the audits and oversight and respond to public inquiries and questions when it comes to these things. So I hope that the money will also follow the transfer of legal control that this bill proposes to do.

But we'll have to get into that when it comes up time to the budget and our estimates process in committee. Mr. Speaker, I know in the opposition side, we'll take advantage of the opportunity while this bill . . . before it's passed, to consult with the industry and make sure that stakeholders and people affected, to make sure that they are okay with these changes and to find out what sorts of concerns they might have. And so with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm now going to move that we adjourn debate on this bill and take my spot.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Speaker: — It has been moved that this Assembly do now adjourn. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:45.]

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Premier

President of the Executive Council

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor

Minister of Advanced Education

Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr

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