



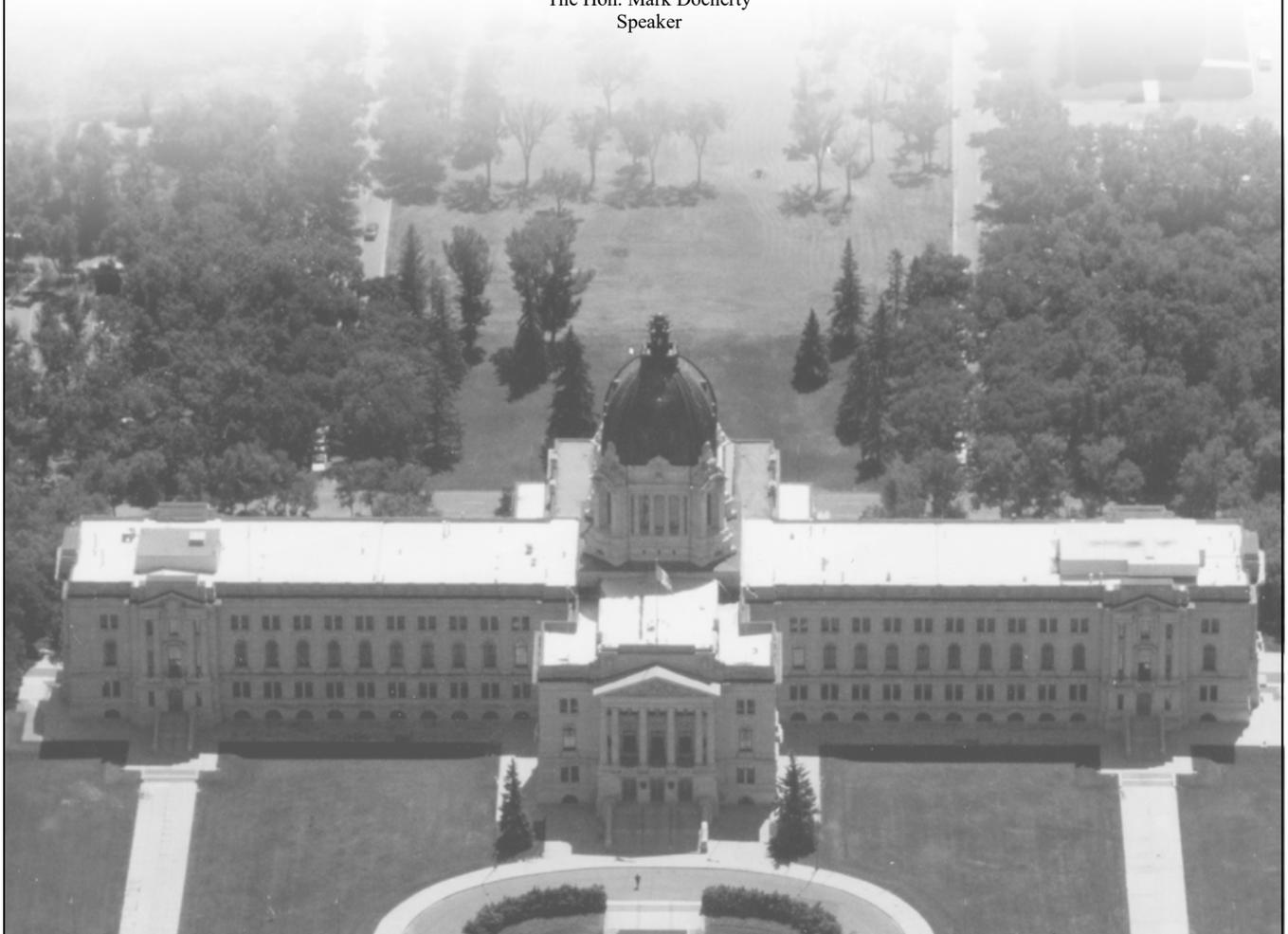
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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

Speaker — Hon. Mark Docherty
Premier — Hon. Scott Moe
Leader of the Opposition — Ryan Meili

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Kirsch , Delbert — Batoche (SP)	
Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Vacant — Regina Walsh Acres
Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	Vacant — Saskatoon Eastview

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Gregory A. Putz

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

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Buriannyk

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in your gallery this morning I have five very special individuals who are with us here today from my constituency. And when I say your name, if you would just give a wave. I have Jordis and Fred and Cydney, and I have Hans and I have Lauren. They're joining us today from the Marion Chateau retirement residence located in my constituency, Mr. Speaker, and I'm looking very forward to spending some time with them after question period today. And I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery is Denis Ferré and his son Jean-Michel — give us a wave; there they are — who are attending the legislature, Mr. Speaker, for the first time. They are proud family members of Sophie Ferré, Mr. Speaker, as many may know, my former chief of staff when I was the Attorney General.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Ferré is a retired director of education and leader in the francophone community who has worked tirelessly for change in his time as director of education with the conseil. He was dedicated to preserving the francophone culture in not only our diverse and expansive province but, Mr. Speaker, across the nation. Evidently his commitment to francophone education opportunities for our province's youth was instilled in his children, Mr. Speaker, who have grown to be francophone powerhouses in their own right.

Mr. Speaker, with that said, I'd like everyone to join me in welcoming Denis and Jean-Michel to their legislature today, true leaders in the province's francophone community. Bienvenue.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join in with the minister in welcoming these guests and particularly Jean-Michel, who I've had the occasion to spend a number of evenings with. He used to live with my partner when my partner lived in Regina. So I welcome him to this Assembly. I can't believe it's the first time, but I hope you enjoy the proceedings today. So I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, I would like to

introduce one of my constituents, a very special guest in the Assembly today, Kayleb Slater, with his family: two daughters, Reyna Slater, kindergarten; and Nevaeh Slater in grade 2 in St. Kateri, Harbour Landing. Kayleb is accompanied by his mom, Deb Kozun, and a few of his friends: Scott Gibney, Bert Redstone, and Cameron Church from Saskatoon.

I will tell something about Kayleb today in my member's statement as well, Mr. Speaker. Kayleb also asked me to mention he is a fan of the Saskatoon Rush. I ask all the members to join me and welcome Kayleb and his family in his legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave to make an extended introduction.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. McCall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure today to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly, two very talented opera singers, one who hails from Regina Elphinstone-Centre, I should point out, Mr. Speaker. I'm talking about, in your gallery, Joanna Simmons and Heather Molloy — there they are waving; looking good — cast members of the chamber opera, *Missing*, a story that we all need to know, told by women who deserve to be remembered.

Joanna holds the titular role and is of Saugeen Ojibwe descent, holds degrees from the Glenn Gould School of Music. Heather performs as Jess, a UBC [University of British Columbia] law student. Heather has studied voice here at Campion College at the University of Regina and went on to grad studies at the University of British Columbia.

They are now part of the cast of *Missing*, an opera that speaks to the story of missing and murdered Indigenous women, hosted in Regina by and performed with the Regina Symphony Orchestra. This opera will be presented to many of our schools in Regina on Friday afternoon, and public performances will be held on Friday and Saturday evenings for the rest of us to experience this powerful and heart-wrenching story.

Mr. Speaker, it's indeed a great pleasure to introduce Heather and Joanna here today at the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. And I'd also like to point out that Heather's mom is Stephanie Molloy, a long-time, great worker in Hansard, and she couldn't be prouder, as should we all. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Ms. Carr: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I would like to introduce a school group from the Estevan Comprehensive High School seated in the west

gallery, grade 11 and 12 students that are here today. They are accompanied by their school teacher, Josh LeBlanc.

Josh is not only a school teacher in the community of Estevan, but he is also a real estate agent and a volunteer extraordinaire, and most recently he had the opportunity to win Business Leader of the Year in the city of Estevan. So our students in the city of Estevan are served very well by him and our community is also. I look forward to meeting the class later on after the Assembly today and taking questions from them. So thank you very much for joining us and please welcome them with me.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to welcome a group of students and their chaperones in the east gallery. Their teacher, Ms. Kristi Loucks; intern, Kayla Schemenauer; and parent chaperones, Terri Schous and Sarita Bhandari. And we have 25 students from Henry Braun School that I'll be meeting with afterwards. So I'd ask that you and all members join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to all members of the House, I have four students and their teachers seated in your gallery. Just give us a little wave and hopefully I don't butcher your names too badly. We've got Kaia Isenor, Olivia Mowchenko, Inga Tittmore, and their teachers, Cameron Church and Bert Redstone. And we also have — I didn't write it down, but luckily I've got a text here — Sarah Hartmann. So welcome them to their legislature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of northern Saskatchewan residents: that *The Saskatchewan Strategy for Suicide Prevention Act* was introduced in 2018 but 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.

I'll read the prayer:

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 suicides in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed and supported by many northern residents and leaders. I so present.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today

to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to the federal Liberal government's decision to impose an unfair and ineffective carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the Evraz steel plant in Regina is located just north of my constituency of Regina Rochdale. Many of the employees at Evraz are constituents of mine. I'm here to speak on their behalf and the residents of Regina.

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 of Saskatchewan.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On top of that tax, of course, Saskatchewan people are dealing with the billion dollar PST [provincial sales tax] hike and expansion of the PST by the Sask Party. This has hit households hard. The average household is now paying more than \$800 per year more than what they were paying just four years ago in PST. It's certainly impacted our economy, and it's hit our construction sector particularly hard.

Quite simply, this is the epitome of a job-killing tax. The results speak for themselves. Permits are down all across Saskatchewan. Projects have been shelved. Sadly, hard-working Saskatchewan tradespeople have lost their jobs, have had to pursue employment in other industries. Many workers have had to pursue employment in other provinces and have had to move from the province that they know and love.

We continue to push on this government on behalf of concerned citizens and businesses and communities all across Saskatchewan to scrap the PST on construction labour.

And the prayer reads as follows:

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

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present, yet again, another petition calling on the Sask Party government to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. And those folks, residents of this province of Saskatchewan, want to bring to our attention the following: that the seats in the Legislative Assembly for Regina Walsh Acres —

many of whom actually work at Evraz — and Saskatoon Eastview are currently vacant. That's because of a loophole in the Legislative Assembly. 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 did a few weeks later in September.

Now we know that unless a by-election's called, constituents in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview will go without representation for nearly 14 months until the next provincial election is called late next year in October, and that the Premier has the moral power and authority to call by-elections in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon, even though the legislative Act doesn't require it.

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

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

And, Mr. Speaker, today I present these petitions on behalf of people who are living in Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to fix the crisis in our classrooms. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to a few points: that the Sask Party government's cuts mean falling per-student funding and few supports for students who need extra help, and it's also left educators without the resources that they need to support student learning; that the Sask Party government's lack of funding for school infrastructure has led to crumbling schools across Saskatchewan; and that the Sask Party government's failure to invest in our classrooms is having very serious consequences today and will continue to do so into the future.

[10:15]

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

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

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

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition to end unacceptable emergency room wait times. 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 in Saskatchewan's 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 that they no longer exist; and 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 and Regina. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

National HIV Testing Day

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, I participated in the third annual National HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] Testing Day here in Regina on June 27th of this year. Organizers of the event know that by promoting testing, we can reduce the stigma of HIV. Testing was provided at AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome] Program South Saskatchewan, Carmichael Outreach, and at a public testing demonstration at the F.W. Hill Mall. I hope my participation in the event at the time highlighted the importance of prenatal HIV testing.

Mr. Speaker, one in five Canadians living with HIV don't know they have HIV. In Saskatchewan we have the highest prevalence of HIV, with new diagnoses almost two and a half times the national average. In an effort to combat the stigma of HIV, it's important to remember that HIV can spread to others regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, race, or ethnic origin. Equally important is that with early diagnosis and treatment, people living with HIV can have long and productive lives and reduce the risk of transmission to others.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this time to recognize our province's countless HIV activists, medical professionals, and every person living with HIV. I'd ask all members to join me in recognizing these champions in our communities and the success of this important event. Thank you.

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

Colonsay Resident Receives Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last month one of my constituents was recognized for his life-long dedication to community service. On October 4th Mr. Herbert Shier was presented with the Governor General's Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers.

Mr. Speaker, Herbert has been a pillar of volunteerism in the Colonsay community for over 70 years. He's done everything

from planning fundraisers to donating and maintaining trees to calling bingo, and he even donated the proceeds from a quarter section of his farm land to the Colonsay Recreation Board.

During his tenure as secretary-treasurer of the Colonsay Community Hall board for over 20 years and a member of the Recreation Board for over 30 years, Herbert made a point of ensuring that residents had access to recreational facilities. Mr. Speaker, the children of the Colonsay area have an artificial ice rink to skate on in the winter and an outdoor pool to cool off in during the summer, thanks in large part to Herb. He also served on the Colonsay Co-op board as a delegate for over 23 years.

Herbert and his wife Gudrun were married for 60 years and raised five children. It's people like Herb who make the great province of Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and raise a family. I would now invite all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Herbert Shier on being awarded the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers.

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

Meewasin Valley Authority's 40th Anniversary Gala

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the pleasure of attending the Meewasin Valley Authority's 40th Anniversary Gala on October 22nd in Saskatoon. Several of my colleagues were in attendance and former Premier Roy Romanow gave a wonderful speech as always, showcasing his wit and insight. Mr. Speaker, the gala served as an opportunity to look back at 40 wonderful years of conservation and community stewardship. Over the past years, hundreds of staff and thousands of volunteers have worked diligently to ensure the South Saskatchewan River Valley maintains its position as the vibrant and accessible heart of Saskatoon.

The MVA [Meewasin Valley Authority] has created and maintained one of the most enviable river valleys in all of Canada, Mr. Speaker. It's a point of pride for Saskatoon and indeed Saskatchewan, an area that actively protects endangered species as well as creating wonderful riverbank trails, gorgeous green spaces, recreational and educational opportunities, art facilities, offices, and hotels with fantastic views of the river.

In our increasingly digital world it becomes more and more difficult to enjoy what nature has to offer. Fortunately the Meewasin Valley makes seeking out peace and quiet within Saskatchewan's largest city effortless. I'd like to congratulate the Meewasin Valley Authority on its successful 40 years and wish them well on the next 40 and beyond.

I ask that all members join me in congratulating the Meewasin Valley Authority on an incredible journey of leadership in our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Lakeland Citizens of the Year

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In early September I had a wonderful time, as I do every year, attending the Lakeland Citizen of the Year ceremony at the Christopher Lake Legion hall

in my constituency. This year the Lakeland Citizens of the Year are Margaret and Harvey Boettcher, two very well-known community stewards and friends to so many of us north of Prince Albert.

They were honoured for their years of dedication and service to the Lakeland community and surrounding area. I've known these two wonderful people since I was a girl, Mr. Speaker. Throughout their entire lives they've served on many committees, boards, and groups in the Christopher Lake and Prince Albert area. Throughout their long volunteer history, they both served while working full time, raising their family, and managing their local business.

For organizing this splendid event, Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank the Lakeland Recreation board and the reeve of the district of Lakeland, Cheryl Bauer Hyde. Every year their volunteerism brings us all together in Christopher Lake for this vibrant, friendly banquet and of course the delicious potluck supper which is second to none.

I now invite all members to join me in congratulating Lakeland Citizens of the Year, Margaret and Harvey Boettcher. Thank you.

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

Revera Marian Chateau Celebrates 20th Anniversary

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about the wonderful staff and residents at the Revera Marian Chateau retirement residence, which is here for a visit today but which also celebrates their 20th anniversary, Mr. Speaker.

Established in 1999, Marian Chateau has successfully operated with a team of highly skilled, friendly, and I think deeply caring professionals. I know many families across the city and maybe even members of this House can speak to the high standard of care and compassion that we have seen from the staff members over the past 20 years, and we are so fortunate to have this place here in our city.

The Chateau has a number of services for its residents, including a library, theatre, and a hair salon, Mr. Speaker. And I've been there for barbecues and dances, carnivals and dunk tanks — they haven't put me in it yet, Mr. Speaker, thankfully — and even fashion shows featuring resident models.

I want to thank the kind and dedicated staff for all of the work they do to make life for our seniors in our community happier and full of laughs and friendships. And I would ask all members now to join me in congratulating the Revera Marian Chateau on another 20 successful years of operating in our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Regina Resident Performs Heroic Rescue

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight a heroic constituent of mine, Kayleb Slater. Mr. Speaker, Kayleb is a husband and a father of two. This past February his daughter had life-saving open-heart surgery. And if

that is not enough, Mr. Speaker, he himself was diagnosed with a rare medical condition. But as heroes do, they never give up.

While on a recent trip to Texas, Kayleb and his wife witnessed a serious car crash. Mr. Speaker, he and his wife stopped to check on the driver but they found him unconscious and with very severe injuries. Mr. Speaker, at this point the car had started on fire. Without hesitation, Kayleb climbed into the car, kicked open the door, and dragged the driver to safety.

It's a struggle to put into words just how brave Kayleb and his wife were that day. Mr. Speaker, putting your safety aside to help aid another is the ultimate definition of a hero.

On behalf of everyone in this House, Kayleb, we wish you and your family all the best. I ask all the members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing Kayleb Slater for his heroism that day in Texas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Statements on Carbon Pricing

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the NDP [New Democratic Party] Opposition Leader stated repeatedly his support for the carbon tax, it was absolute. He never put a caveat on it. He didn't say a carbon tax except for the ag sector. He did say, "There is a model that works. There is an argument to be made for putting a price on carbon." He didn't say a carbon tax except for parents driving their kids to hockey. He said, and I quote, "I think carbon pricing is a model that works." He didn't say a carbon tax except for SaskEnergy customers. He said, and I quote, "Putting a price on carbon is really just a practical way of decreasing emissions." He didn't say a carbon tax except for grain drying operations. He said, and I quote, "We applaud the federal government's recent announcement of a minimum price on carbon."

Mr. Speaker, he happily campaigned for his federal leader in this last election, and we shouldn't be surprised, supporting that leader. From this leader's very own leadership platform he said, and I quote, "We can and should support a national approach to carbon pricing." No caveats.

Mr. Speaker, he has no credibility today to claim that he is the grand defender of our ag sector in this province. Farmers in Saskatchewan know exactly who is defending them against the NDP-supported carbon tax, Mr. Speaker, and it is the people on this side of the House.

The Speaker: — Well that should generate a few questions there in our school groups.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Review of Emergency Health Care

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday I asked the Health minister if he agreed with his officials that there is a crisis in our

emergency rooms. He didn't answer the question. Last night we learned that a patient died in an emergency room in Saskatoon because of over-capacity pressures. So will the Premier admit that there is a crisis in our emergency rooms?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I was extremely concerned to hear of the death in the hospital, Mr. Speaker, and my heart goes out to the family of the person who passed away.

Mr. Speaker, when incidents like this occur, the Saskatchewan Health Authority has a process in place where they do a critical incident review. Mr. Speaker, I've been told that that review has been completed by the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority]. That review is done by a team of doctors — medical professionals at arm's length from the incident — who review, look at a number of different instances around there, Mr. Speaker, and I'm told that that review said that the care received at the hospital was not the cause of death.

But having said that, Mr. Speaker, we understand the urgency of the situation. The member opposite said that I didn't call it a crisis. We can call it a crisis, an emergency, whatever we like; we realize how urgent the situation is, Mr. Speaker. That's why the SHA is taking all kinds of steps to attempt to rectify it. I went through those yesterday. Over the last number of days, both short-term and long-term actions were taken, Mr. Speaker. I'm told that the numbers are improving in Regina. We're still extremely concerned about the numbers in Saskatoon.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, a person has died without getting the care they need. And things keep getting worse. New numbers from our written questions show emergency room wait times continue to grow. Wait times increased again this year by 22 per cent in Regina and nearly 20 per cent in Saskatoon.

Again to the Premier: what is your plan to get our wait times moving in the right direction?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

[10:30]

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, to the preamble to the question, Mr. Speaker, that is not what the critical incident report said. Mr. Speaker, again as we've talked about previously, the Saskatchewan Health Authority, I am in constant communication with the CEO [chief executive officer]. In fact I met with him earlier this morning, along with my deputy minister. Mr. Speaker, they realize the urgency of the situation. They have an all-hands-on-deck approach. They're in constant communication with all officials and with the doctors involved.

Mr. Speaker, again as I've said previously, they're taking short-term action, which we think will help to mitigate the situation and has shown improvement in Regina. But again, still extremely critical situation in Saskatoon. We're very concerned about that. We're taking both a short-term and a long-term approach. I've mentioned in this House before, there's

alternative-level-of-care patients that don't need to be in a major tertiary centre. They're looking at ways to repatriate them back to their community hospitals, Mr. Speaker, and also long-term action as well.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Mr. Speaker, I'll take the word of nurses working on the front lines ahead of that Health minister any day. Wait times are increasing by our ERs [emergency room] by 20 per cent. This government's failure to address wait times is causing staff to burn out in Regina. It's causing what his own officials are calling a crisis in Saskatoon, and it's putting patients at risk. People are dying in our ERs because they can't get the care they need.

This government is letting Saskatchewan people down. We know there's a crisis, and in a crisis we look to our leaders to respond. So to the Premier: what is your response to the crisis in our ERs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not asking the member opposite to take my word for it, Mr. Speaker. It's incumbent on someone in my position to accept the word of senior officials and the doctors and the medical professionals who do those critical incident reviews. Mr. Speaker, that's whose word I'm accepting on this, whose word I respect. But again, Mr. Speaker, that is not to diminish the seriousness of this situation. We understand that our emergency rooms are over capacity. We are taking every possible action to alleviate that situation. I've mentioned before, this is not unique to Saskatchewan. Emergency rooms across the country are struggling with these issues.

Mr. Speaker, the actions that the senior officials have taken, the actions I've went through many times in this House before to repatriate alternative-level-of-care patients, the accountable care strategy that we're using, Mr. Speaker, has shown some improvement in numbers. As I said, the numbers in Regina appear to be improving. We're still extremely concerned and we're not taking that for granted either, Mr. Speaker. Obviously we need to keep an eye. We're extremely concerned about the situation in Saskatoon.

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

Regina Bypass Project

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, this government claims that they're out for the little guy when it comes to the Regina bypass, but their actions speak louder than their words. They weren't looking out for the little guy when they expropriated more than 1,000 acres from farmers and then fought them in court for years, or when they looked the other way as a local landowner's house was shaken apart by the construction, or when they flippantly dismissed Balgonie residents' concerns about the roundabout mess and RBDB [Regina Bypass Design Builders] didn't even pick up the phone.

And now again, in a dispute between the Regina Bypass Partners and a local steel company just trying to get paid, the Ministry of

Highways sided with the conglomerate over the company. To the minister: why?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, any time a huge project like this goes forward there's all sorts of issues to deal with. Some people are happy; some aren't, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have the system in place for acquiring land. A willing buyer, willing seller, Mr. Speaker, have mediation processes that can take place. Also if needed there's expropriation that can take place as well, Mr. Speaker. But even within that system there is an appeal process if the landowner feels they're treated unfairly. And if all that falls short, Mr. Speaker, there's always the legal process that landowners can go through.

Mr. Speaker, the information I've recently attained from the officials at Highways is, through the many different claims that have come through, most have been settled. There's a handful of court claims still out there and they are going through the appropriate process.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about Supreme Steel, and they were subcontracted by the bypass builders to construct steel girders for bridges on the bypass. In the fall of 2018 the steel company issued a lien to the bypass builders, hoping to get paid for their work. But instead of saying oui, oui, oui [Translation: yes, yes, yes], the French conglomerate said non, non, non [Translation: no, no, no], and took the subcontractor to court claiming *The Builders' Lien Act* didn't apply to the bypass bridges. And for reasons beyond me, this government, through the Ministry of Highways, joined the conglomerate and took that steel company to court.

Well, Mr. Speaker, RBDB and the Ministry of Highways' application was summarily dismissed. When is this government going to start putting local companies first like we're proposing with our Sask-first procurement plan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, obviously we can't speak about details that are before the courts, Mr. Speaker. But what we can speak about is the proper process when it comes to payment of contractors, Mr. Speaker. Contracts undertaken by the partners of the bypass are reliant on those contractors, Mr. Speaker. Subcontractors are hired by the contractors and illegal proceedings between those will be between those.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's pretty apparent the minister hasn't been briefed on this court case yet. It's over, it's finished, and the government lost. Mr. Speaker, the government was on the wrong side of this issue and they should know that. In the decision, here's what the judge said:

To accept the interpretation suggested by RBDB that *The Builders' Lien Act* has no application to a multimillion dollar highway project would be extremely unreasonable and inequitable and incompatible with the object of the

legislative enactment.

Well, Mr. Speaker, this government wants it both ways. On the one hand, the true bypass cost and profit structures are hidden from the public because it might hurt the conglomerate's bottom line. But on the other hand, RBDB wants to be treated like a public entity so it can skirt paying the bills. Mr. Speaker, you can't have your gâteau and eat it aussi [Translation: cake and eat it too]. How many other small businesses aren't getting paid? And how many other liens have been put on the bypass?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Mr. Speaker, I don't have some of the information that the member across . . . at my fingertips. But I can say that, of course, the processes that are in place, that have been in place for many years when it comes to the payment of contractors and the like, is pretty standard, Mr. Speaker. But what brings . . . The question to me is, why do these members continue to oppose a bypass that is so safety oriented?

Mr. Speaker, we've seen time after time and testimony after testimony of people using the bypass, talking about how it's minimizing their travel time, it's safer to travel and, Mr. Speaker, moving more and more traffic through, Mr. Speaker. So you know, we're very proud of the bypass. As the process gets finalized these situations will be dealt with, Mr. Speaker, but of course some of the other issues before the courts I can't comment on.

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

Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, the recently released Re-Imagine Education report includes 12 recommendations for fixing our education system, a system that everyone who has been near a classroom knows is in crisis. Recommendation 1 from this committee, comprised of over 20 CBOs [community-based organization] and Indigenous Sovereign Nations is, and I quote, "Learning spaces must be resourced so that teachers can create a safe and effective learning environment for the diversity of student learning."

This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that has cut per-student funding to the tune of over \$400 per student, leaving school divisions with an \$80 million shortfall. What is this minister going to do to turn things around and start to work on the top recommendation of the Re-Imagine Education report?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to go to the announcement when the Re-Imagine report was made public. I know that the member opposite wasn't there, but I attended, Mr. Speaker, to hear the recommendations. Mr. Speaker, I attended to hear the recommendations that came out of the Re-Imagine campaign, Mr. Speaker, and I must tell you that I was anxiously waiting for those because . . . see how they were going to dovetail, Mr. Speaker, into the work that's being done in the creation of our provincial education plan that's been under way within the Ministry of Education for the last year and a half, Mr. Speaker.

And I was pleased to see the recommendations. There's certainly nothing surprising in those recommendations, Mr. Speaker. But I do want to go back to the very last page, Mr. Speaker, and look at what . . . There's a comment in the report that says "What We Have Learned." It's saying "That the system is not broken . . ." Mr. Speaker, and they go on to say, Mr. Speaker, that they've ". . . learned that people want to continue to talk about the future of education . . ." and the initiative that's being brought forward in this conversation, Mr. Speaker.

It's exactly what we've been doing, Mr. Speaker, over the last year and a half as Minister of Education, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to do that. And with the work that I announced yesterday, Mr. Speaker, with our committee, we're going to get to the end of that.

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

Ms. Beck: — I guess the answer to that question is, have more conversations. But the second recommendation in the Re-Imagine Education report calls for more supports in classrooms today:

Human resources must be provided to support inclusion and create classrooms where every child can learn. This means providing educational assistants, Elders, speech-language pathologists, educational psychologists, counsellors, [teacher] librarians, English as an additional language teachers and others to support classroom learning.

Nearly all of those positions, Mr. Speaker, have been cut under this government. Will the minister commit any new supports today to address recommendation no. 2? Or will he keep letting our students down?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, we don't disagree with any of the recommendations in the report, Mr. Speaker. As I've said, they dovetail very nicely with the work that's being done on the education plan, Mr. Speaker. We do have record investments in public education in Saskatchewan — \$2.48 billion, Mr. Speaker. But we've acknowledged, and I've stood on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, to acknowledge that there is more work to be done. And that's precisely, Mr. Speaker, why we put a committee together to advise the Ministry of Education on what steps we should take to address those challenges in the classroom, Mr. Speaker.

You know, Mr. Speaker, it's not just simply a matter of throwing money at a problem. We're not fixing a furnace here, Mr. Speaker. This is a very, very complex issue which requires the input of many partners in education. And that's why we're going to bring these people together to make the recommendations that need to be made, Mr. Speaker, so we can address these very serious issues which we don't deny.

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

Ms. Beck: — So I guess the answer to the request for more resources is no, or there's already enough money.

I'll try this, the final recommendation from this report. And it's

perhaps the most important, Mr. Speaker: “The Actions for Education outlined in this report must be acted upon. We are all accountable.” The committee members are also asking for decision makers to be held accountable.

This government has shown that it’s really not interested in making public education the priority that it needs to be. We continue to see class sizes grow and needs grow in the classroom, but instead of investing in students, this minister has cut needed supports.

Given the minister’s record of letting students and teachers down, how are Saskatchewan people supposed to believe that he is going to make this or any of the recommendations in this report a priority?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, one of the first things I did when I became the Minister of Education was to engage my ministry and encourage them to start working on a new provincial education plan, Mr. Speaker, to take us past 2020 for the next 10 years. And that’s precisely what the Ministry of Education has been doing, Mr. Speaker.

And in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, I’ve been encouraging the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation] to complete their work on their Re-Imagine campaign, Mr. Speaker, so we can take their recommendations — recommendations that come to us quite honestly, Mr. Speaker. And I appreciate the work that the STF has done in putting this report together. But those recommendations, Mr. Speaker, will now form part of the work that’s being done by the Ministry of Education in the development of a provincial education plan that’s going to take us out for the next 10 years.

And in the meantime, Mr. Speaker, we’re going to be working very, very hard at addressing the issues that are challenging our classrooms. I know what they are, Mr. Speaker. I spent many, many hours having discussions with teachers and with parents and with trustees about those very challenges, Mr. Speaker. But to say that this government isn’t concerned about the issues in public education, Mr. Speaker, is just plain wrong. We’ll continue to invest in public education. And the proof, Mr. Speaker, will be in the pudding.

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

Methamphetamine Strategy

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, we know complex issues related to the crystal meth crisis are straining our ERs beyond their limit. Doctors tell us the complex issues related to meth-induced psychosis and the spike in drug-related gun violence are having devastating impacts on our emergency departments, and pull care providers away from others in need.

But, Mr. Speaker, the massive increase in crystal meth usage in this province shouldn’t have taken this government by surprise. This government’s own data indicates that in 2018 there were 10 times more people seeking addictions care for crystal meth than there were in 2013. That’s a tenfold increase in just five years.

What is the plan to finally get ahead of this?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

[10:45]

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the member’s right. It is a serious situation. It’s a crisis. Not just in Saskatchewan; other provinces are grappling with it as well. Mr. Speaker, we did realize this was going to be becoming a larger problem. That’s why, Mr. Speaker, in the last budget last spring, you saw the largest budget ever for mental health and addictions treatment in history. We saw a substantial increase in addictions treatment.

Mr. Speaker, recently you saw the Saskatchewan Health Authority release a request for proposals for a number of addictions treatment beds, both pre- and post-. You’re seeing more addictions counsellors, Mr. Speaker. There’s work being done to determine length of stays for addictions treatment. And it’s obvious to all the experts in the field that the current standard 28 days is not enough to treat crystal meth, Mr. Speaker. There’s a great deal of work being done.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, a Regina ER doctor told CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] that since 2014, firearm injuries have tripled, saying the biggest change “. . . has been the escalation of drug use in the community, crystal meth and the crime that drives it.”

This government and this minister have failed to get ahead of the crystal meth crisis in our province and all the related gang and gun violence that comes with it. This government sat on its hands for years while this crisis got so much worse. The status quo is a disaster, Mr. Speaker, and we don’t need any more one-off announcements like the minister had just been describing. When will we see a concrete strategy to address the crystal meth crisis that is tearing up our communities?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I must say that the safety and security of all Saskatchewan people is the highest priority of our government. There’s no easy solution to addressing the problem of crystal meth and fentanyl. It requires various prevention, intervention, and suppression efforts from all levels of government.

We do know, Mr. Speaker, that crystal meth and fentanyl originate outside of our borders and come into Canada and Saskatchewan as a result of smuggling and trafficking. We are providing supports through Corrections and Policing to help address the drug issue and the gangs who bring them into our communities. And I’m going to bring the member’s attention to our gang violence strategy, which includes adding addiction supports into our correctional facilities, launching an intensive outreach program to help at-risk youth, additional resources to prosecuting the individuals involved in organized crime, and providing additional intelligence-gathering supports to our law enforcement.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have taken a multi-ministry approach to the issue of fentanyl in our province and will continue to do so.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, it's good to see that minister on her feet on this issue, because crystal meth is taking a serious toll on our police forces. Regina Police Chief Evan Bray told reporters the first half of 2019 saw the highest reported crime rates in a decade. He was clear on three main factors — drugs, guns, and gangs — that were related to this issue. Bray says they simply cannot address this issue by themselves and need help from provincial and federal counterparts to address the root causes of crime.

Mr. Speaker, where is this government's crystal meth strategy? And how did they let this get so bad?

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

Hon. Ms. Tell: — Mr. Speaker, it's absolutely preposterous that the members opposite are suggesting that this government hasn't taken appropriate action. If we look at the protection and response teams, we've provided municipal policing grants to all our municipal police services across the province, and we've added dollars, which equate to numbers, Mr. Speaker, to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] over time.

So my job as minister is to ensure that the municipalities and the rural areas have the policing resources that they need to address the crimes in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what we've done here.

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

Call for By-Elections

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You know, Mr. Speaker, even when Warren Steinley and Corey Tochor were filling the seats of Regina Walsh Acres and Saskatoon Eastview, I'm not sure the constituents were really getting their money's worth. You know, the members spent over a year after winning their federal nominations campaigning for a different job while still collecting a paycheque from the Saskatchewan people . . .

[Interjections]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, if the Premier was okay with paying two backbenchers to campaign for their jobs in Ottawa, why is the basic right for representation in this Assembly somehow a luxury for people in those ridings that they don't deserve? Mr. Speaker, thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, when the new Leader of the Opposition came into this House, he talked about having a new standard, a higher standard, a standard of quality, a standard of decency, and proper decorum. I see that's completely gone, Mr.

Speaker, something that doesn't exist on that side of the House anymore.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite wants to talk about the value to taxpayers and the money that's spent and money that's given to elections, given to MLAs. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to refer the members back to 1999, June 28th. There was three by-elections held on that date. On that date, Wayne Elhard, Kevin Yates, and Chris Axworthy were all elected. They became MLAs. Did they ever sit in the House? Not until after the general election which took place four months later, September 16th, 1999. Mr. Speaker, it's the same kind of process that we're doing here.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll say this to the members opposite and I'll say this to the citizens of Saskatoon and Saskatchewan. There will be an election on October 26th, 2020 and that's when the matter will be resolved. We'll save money in the meantime.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Well you know, Mr. Speaker, I think that that minister should look at the members on his own side for what they're saying. This is what the member from Cannington said: "I think it's just not acceptable for a seat to be vacant for one whole session." They could be in here now. And what did the member from Lumsden-Morse say: ". . . it is simply wrong to let people remain unrepresented in this Legislative Assembly which exerts so much control over their lives for any more than six months."

Mr. Speaker, well you know earlier this week the minister said we should be careful what we wish for when it comes to by-elections. Somehow he thinks the Sask Party's going to win those seats. Well if they're so confident, they should call those by-elections. Call the by-elections and give those voters a chance, a voice in this Assembly. But we all know the real reason why they won't call these by-elections. They're afraid they're going to lose. Does the Minister of Justice really think it's fair to deny a voice to those Saskatchewan citizens because he's afraid of them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the member opposite's comments, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad that he's listening to the members on this side of the House. I suspect that we'll have a chance to cross paths during the election when we're both out door knocking, helping out in those constituencies, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to see what the results are like, not just in those two constituencies but in a whole bunch of constituencies all the way across the province. And we're going to see some different results for those members.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, it's a long-standing practice of this Chamber, and I believe rule 51 has a number of

provisions that would be relative to this, casting aspersions on the integrity, on the honour of members and former members which the member opposite just did in a very substantive way. Mr. Speaker, I would call on that member, who is a veteran member, is a well-thought-of member, to withdraw that comment and to apologize to the Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think we're going to ask you to reveal the exact contents of the rule because I don't think there's any reference to former members. And this is something I think that there are some fair questions being asked here, so we'd ask you to rule on it.

The Speaker: — I think there's enough information for me to have a ruling, and I would agree with the point of order. The member for Saskatoon Centre, I ask that you withdraw and apologize for your remark.

Mr. Forbes: — I withdraw and apologize.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 187 — *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur l'administration des successions*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I move that Bill No. 187, *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2019*, a bilingual bill, be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 187 be now introduced and read a first time. 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. Morgan: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 188 — *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2019*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 188, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2019* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 188 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. Morgan: — Next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure this afternoon to rise and put forward a motion into the 75-minute debate:

That this Assembly recognizes the Sask Party government's underfunding of public education has created a crisis in our classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, of course this motion was originally presented the first week of session and was voted down by the members opposite. They didn't want to talk about it. Prior to that and since then, we have had encouragement from the people of Saskatchewan, from those who know what is going on in our classrooms, that they do want to see action with regard to the crisis in our classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, we have been around the province over the last several years talking with educators, talking with parents, talking with students, talking with EAs [educational assistant], support staff in our schools, and the message that we have been hearing has been consistent, it has been urgent. And that urgency has only continued to rise year over year.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think that there was perhaps some hope that this new Minister of Education, this new Premier, there might be a page turned and we might see some action. It was of course the current Minister of Education who stated when he was running to be the leader of the Saskatchewan Party, he acknowledged that there is no wheel in our economy that turns without education, something that we certainly agree with, Mr. Speaker. And the now Premier, when he was in that same leadership race, pledged to ensure that there would be an additional 400 educational assistants hired in our schools to deal immediately with the crisis that is happening in our classrooms.

And I think that what we've seen since then, Mr. Speaker, is a high level of disappointment that those nice and lofty words that we heard during the leadership campaign have turned into months and months of inaction, talk about conversation, and now

we're hearing, time and time again, denials about that very crisis in our classrooms.

[11:00]

We've heard the minister state recently, selectively quoting the STF Re-Imagine Education report "That the system is not broken." Mr. Speaker, it's funny that he pulls that quote out of a report presented by over 20 community CBOs and sovereign Indigenous nations, a very thoughtful report. He pulls out the one quote that belies all of what is going on in the classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, why were people hopeful that things might turn around? Well some of us might need a reminder that in 2017 it was this government that cut \$54 million out of classrooms in this province — \$54 million that was much needed in growing classrooms right around the province, \$54 million that was needed to not only pay power bills and pay salaries, but was needed to address what we also saw which was, in addition to growing class numbers, growing needs of those students in those classes.

And this is something that we have heard right across the province. We have an epidemic in the North of student suicides, Mr. Speaker, something that my colleague from Cumberland has been trying desperately to get some action and attention from this government. That is something that is showing up in our classrooms, and we hear about it in every community around the province.

Mr. Speaker, we also have a crystal meth crisis that we saw some acknowledgement of today in the province, Mr. Speaker. That is contributing to increased needs in our classrooms. And it is time that we looked at what is going on in our classrooms, stop denying, stop stalling, and go about the work of actually addressing those needs in classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

But we're not hearing that. If you listen to the minister speak, you might think that we have class sizes of 19 in this province, Mr. Speaker, something that draws laughter in every room that we mention that quote to, and we heard it again last night in Regina. The suggestion is preposterous that everything is better than ever in our classrooms.

But if you listened only to that minister, you might think that that's the case. You might think that there is no crisis in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we are so determined to bring the voices from those classrooms to this Assembly, to this debate, and ensure that they are heard. And the message that we're hearing, as I've said, Mr. Speaker, right across the province is consistent; it's urgent and it needs to be addressed with that same level of urgency.

I'm going to read a few quotes. We conducted a survey this year, between May and October of this year, in the province and had over 1,400 respondents to that survey. We heard concern again about mental health issues, not only of students but from those who work in our schools, telling us that they feel that they are near the end of their rope, that they are burning out, that they simply cannot keep up with the needs in their classroom. And I cannot tell you how many teachers, how many educational assistants . . .

And again, this is something we heard in Prince Albert, we heard in Moose Jaw, we heard in North Battleford, and we heard again last night. Teachers are losing sleep. They are going home feeling guilty because they know that what they want to do, what they need to do to provide the best learning conditions for students in their classrooms, they simply are not able to get all of that done.

So not only are teachers being asked to do more. They're being asked to do more with less — fewer educational psychologists, fewer occupational therapists, fewer speech and language pathologists. We heard a tale from a grade 1 classroom this last week, a grade 1 classroom where half of the students in that class who needed speech and language support were simply not able to get it because of the lack of speech and language pathologists within the system. They were cut due to funding, not due to lack of need.

We heard another school with a list of 45 students in that school, an elementary school, that needed speech and language pathologist support. Out of 45 names on that list, they were only able to provide services to eight of the children on that list, Mr. Speaker, which means the other students simply have to go without. And those needs follow year after year; it's cumulative.

And as we've said before, it's not only what is or isn't going on in our schools that is impacting the crisis in our classroom. It is what is going on in our communities. We are seeing fewer and fewer supports for students and families in the community, fewer and fewer mental health supports, fewer and fewer housing supports, all of which impact in the classroom.

And very importantly, Mr. Speaker, we continue in this province to deal with the effects of colonialism, the effects of the residential school crisis, the effects of the Sixties Scoop. And if we want to meaningfully work towards reconciliation, we need to do that work in our schools. We've been told that by community leader after community leader.

But in order to do that work, we need to make sure that we are taking action today, that we are getting resources where they need to be today because we need to stop . . . Members opposite often seem to suggest that it's a cost. We have the Finance minister yelling at us all the time asking, where's the money going to come from? I would ask them this, Mr. Speaker. What is the cost if we continue to allow this crisis in our classrooms to continue? What is the cost, not only to those kids today in those classrooms and those kids in the future, but what is going to be the cost to this province if we are wilfully ensuring that children in our classrooms are not getting the resources that they need? I would suggest that it is in need of urgent, not only resources, Mr. Speaker, but a little bit of humility on the part of those members opposite to get this work done.

And sometimes when we stand up — well often, I suppose, Mr. Speaker — when we stand up and bring up these concerns, we hear things like, well the NDP did this in 1991, or the NDP did this in 1943, or the like. You get the point, Mr. Speaker. Here's something that they would do well to remember. Those students who are in grade 12 in our schools today entered kindergarten with a Sask Party government. Those students who were born in 2007 are now in grade 7 in our schools, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps it's not a coincidence, in one of the school divisions we were recently at we heard a concern about violence amongst the grade 7 and 8

students in that school — a rise in gang affiliation, a rise in mental health concerns, and a rise in . . . well, concern about the condition of our classrooms. And that's something that this government doesn't want to talk about.

We hear a lot of talk about conversations. We hear striking committees, similar to the four committees that were struck after the 2017 disastrous budget, after this government introduced Bill 63 where they threatened to take away locally determined trustee voice within education. They spent money. They went around. But yet here we are, Mr. Speaker, almost three years later and the crisis in our classrooms has only deepened.

Mr. Speaker, in order to get this right, we are going to have to put resources towards it and we're going to have to start listening to those voices from the classroom. Here's one quote from a recent town hall that we were at:

Children need help, but without a diagnosis there is no help available. Two-year waiting lists for an appointment to see a psychiatrist, then another two years to wait for an assessment and diagnosis. In the meantime, the children's needs are not being met and they are waiting.

Here's another quote from that same town hall: "This government has intentionally pit parents against teachers." And that's something we've seen right across the province. Instead of actually taking action, we have seen this government engage in political spin, in pitting one group against another group rather than actually take responsibility and take ownership of the issue. There are a lot of things, Mr. Speaker, we could and should be doing in our schools.

I cannot wait until the day we get to actually think about what our students need and what we can provide for them to increase support for more resources in the classrooms, to think creatively and passionately about the type of classrooms that we want our children to have, the type of education that we need them to have going into the next decade. But, Mr. Speaker, until we acknowledge there is a crisis in our classrooms, until we acknowledge that there is a need, it's very difficult to garner the type of support and the type of resources that we need to bring into our classrooms.

We know right now that decisions are being made about the next provincial budget. We know that those discussions are happening. And I hope that all those members know — because we've been out into communities that all of those members represent — know that this is happening in your constituency. This is not just an issue in Regina and Saskatoon, or this is not just an issue in the North or in the South. This is right across the province, and I know that those members opposite are hearing this from their constituents as well.

It's time you let the minister know. It's time you let treasury board know that these decisions have to happen. We need these resources today because it will be on all of you if this continues and we allow this crisis to deepen even further.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I am going to move the following motion:

That this Assembly recognizes that the Sask Party

government's underfunding of public education has created a crisis in our classrooms; and

That this Assembly calls upon the Sask Party government to take immediate steps to address the critical pressures facing teachers and students when it comes to infrastructure, class size, and composition.

I do so move.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Lakeview has moved the following motion:

That this Assembly recognize that the Sask Party government's underfunding of public education has created a crisis in our classrooms; and

That this Assembly calls upon the Sask Party government to take immediate steps to address the critical pressures facing teachers and students when it comes to infrastructure, class size, and composition.

Ready for the question? No. I recognize the member for The Battlefords.

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's indeed my pleasure to join in this debate today. And at the outset of my comments I would just like to say that I totally disagree with the premise of the motion, and I quote, "the Sask Party government's underfunding of public education." And I'll certainly address this statement a little bit later.

Mr. Speaker, my wife, Linda, taught school in The Battlefords for many years, both in the elementary system and in the high school system. So, Mr. Speaker, I am very familiar with the great work that our teachers do in this province and at all grade levels, not only while they're in the classroom, Mr. Speaker, but also after school preparing lessons, marking papers, and making sure that that classroom is an inviting place to learn.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'm also very happy to say that all three of my children graduated high school in the Battlefords school system and received a great education. And I think even more important, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that I've got six grandchildren that will very shortly be entering our K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] system, and I know that they're going to receive a great education as well.

Mr. Speaker, if we add to all of the work that the teachers do and then add the extracurricular work they take on — in whether it's sports, whether it's music, drama, or whatever — they do a great job for our students. And, Mr. Speaker, I've had the privilege to speak at several Saskatchewan High School Athletics Association events, one as recently as last month with the 3A girls soccer championships. Later this month it will be a 4A boys volleyball championship to be held in The Battlefords and last year it was a high school golf championship.

[11:15]

So, Mr. Speaker, each of these events and many others involved a lot of our teachers' time and effort and most of it, of course, is on either evenings or weekends. Our government certainly

appreciates our teachers and the work that they do to provide our students with a well-balanced education, and certainly we can never thank them enough.

But, Mr. Speaker, I think the best evidence of that appreciation is borne out by the great increases in funding that we have seen from this government. In this budget we have allocated \$1.9 billion for operating funding. And that's a whopping increase of some \$531 million since '06-07. Each year, Mr. Speaker, I meet with the school boards in my area, both the Catholic School Board and the Public School Board, and each year we hear their concerns. And they're very appreciative of the work that's being done by our government.

So I would just say in my own constituency, this year the Light of Christ Catholic school system received \$19.86 million in operating, and that's compared to what they received in '06-07 of 15.3 million. Same story, Mr. Speaker, with Living Sky School Division. They received operating funding of some \$60.51 million, while in '07 that amount was only 55.5 million.

Mr. Speaker, this fall we had 191 students in pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] starting their school year in some 770 schools throughout this province. Mr. Speaker, to put that in context, that's an increase of some 27,000 students or nearly 17 per cent increase from 12 years ago. At the same time, operating to those same schools has increased by 34 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and an investment in school capital is nearly five times what it was 12 years ago. And that's allowed us to build 46 new schools and complete 23 major renovations, not close 176 schools.

Mr. Speaker, here's what our Education budget has allowed us, along with our partners in 27 school boards in this province, to do to ensure that our students get the best possible education. Firstly, we've increased per-student funding to \$10,942, compared to what it was in '06-07 at \$8,866. Secondly, today we have 1,142 more total full-time employees than we had in '07-08. Our number now sits at 12,276 full-time employees. Our total school-based educators has risen from 9,471 in '07-08 to 10,723 today. And of that number, we see 851 more regular teachers — now sits at 9,453. '07-08, 8,601. Student support teachers, up by 177 to 1,047.

Without getting bogged down in too many more numbers here, I'll just say that we have increased counsellors by 87, psychologists by 7, English as additional language teachers by 37, speech-language pathologists is up by 40 per cent to 133, and education assistants by 14 to 3,560.

Mr. Speaker, our province has seen tremendous growth over the past 12 years, in fact, I believe 53 consecutive quarters of positive growth. A total of 160,000 more people living here in Saskatchewan. We're now a province that attracts residents. We attract residents from some 170 countries from all around this world. That's why we have made increases in so many of our school-based educators like, as I mentioned earlier, student support services, counsellors, psychologists, English as additional language, and educational assistants. And, Mr. Speaker, in fact that tremendous growth has allowed us to make the investments in education that we know is so important.

Mr. Speaker, lately in the Assembly we have heard so much from this opposition about the crisis in our overcrowded classrooms.

Well I'd like to just share some relevant facts here. It's always easy to cherry-pick to make the figures fit the narrative, but here's what we know. Due in part to the fact that we have built 46 new schools in this province, and even though we were approximately 27,000 more students enrolled in our classrooms, our classroom size is virtually unchanged from what it was in '07-'08. The average then was 19.2 students. Today it's 19.1 students, an actual decrease of a half of a percent.

And while we're on the topic of compare/contrast, the increase of 27,000 students in 12 years is a far better fact than the loss of 32,627 students under the NDP. We will continue to make investments to make sure our classroom size is conducive to our students receiving the best learning environment possible.

But again, here are the facts, Mr. Speaker: only 10 schools are at a utilization rate that require relocatables. We are now providing funding to nine schools and four joint-use schools for relocatables. Of the 27 school divisions in Saskatchewan, only two of those divisions average full utilization. Ten of our school divisions have an average utilization rate below 70 per cent. In my own constituency, the Light of Christ Catholic School Division reports 76.35 per cent utilization; Living Sky School Division reports utilization at 61.49 per cent.

But of course, Mr. Speaker, there are school boards reporting higher utilization, and that has initiated demand for relocatable classrooms to alleviate the pressure. And we have answered that. For example, in four school divisions that have utilization between 80 per cent and 89 per cent, we are providing 12 new relocatables and moving two others. And let's not forget the new P3 [public-private partnership] schools that have an increased student capacity here in Regina Public by almost 1,700 students, and in Regina Catholic by 1,350 students.

Mr. Speaker, we hear almost incessantly from the opposition about how paramount classroom size is to receiving an education but, quite frankly, I'd sooner listen to the wisdom of some of the experts in education. And I'd just like to share a couple quotes here right now if I may, Mr. Speaker. And this quote came from Pat Maze, the president of the STF as recently as November the 1st of this year, and I quote, "We aren't looking for hard caps on classroom size. That does nothing to address the composition and the complexities of our schools."

Mr. Speaker, Michelle Prytula, dean of the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], College of Education says, and I quote, "Class composition is at the heart of the issue, not necessarily its size. It just really depends on what that school administration and the teachers know about the student and the students' learning . . ."

Mr. Speaker, these are the experts to whom we will speak about education in this province. We will not be taking lessons from the opposition, and for that reason I certainly cannot support this motion. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate this afternoon with respect to education, something that's so foundational to everything within our province, Mr. Speaker. Education builds our future, Mr. Speaker. It builds our future; it's foundational to . . . It builds our future

. . . Maybe the member from Elphinstone-Centre wants to do the 75-minute debate. If not, he can hold his heckles until the other side is speaking. But he's new around here, Mr. Speaker.

But the fact of the matter is education is transformative in people's lives. It extends hope and opportunity. Certainly my work before coming into this Assembly was as a teacher and working in the community as an educator, Mr. Speaker. And I draw on those experiences every day, and that was in large part the motivation to go at this work, Mr. Speaker, recognizing how important education is in the lives of young people in closing gaps and addressing historical injustices, but also in recognizing those other external factors to a classroom and the profound impact that they have on people's lives.

And so certainly without a doubt our classrooms are at a breaking point, Mr. Speaker. Certainly without a doubt our teachers and our support workers and our students have been left by the Sask Party without the supports that they so need and that they deserve, Mr. Speaker. Certainly this has a cost and a consequence for our future economically, socially, culturally, Mr. Speaker, and it holds back young people from living up to their full potential. In preventing young people from living up to their full potential, it holds all of us back. It holds our province from living up to its full potential, Mr. Speaker.

Classrooms are strained because of years of inadequate support by that Sask Party government during years of boom where they had a historic opportunity to invest in classrooms, Mr. Speaker. They choose not to, and they left classrooms under-resourced as they grew with need, and certainly they grew in size and pressures, Mr. Speaker.

Classroom size and classroom complexity are real challenges for students in communities all across our province, and they're real challenges for the profession. They're real challenges for our teachers and for our education workers who are there to make a difference, Mr. Speaker. And we're leaving our teachers and our education workers, who sign up to make that difference, in a position that leaves them hamstrung and not able to respond to student needs and build the futures in the way that they want. And that beats the heck out of morale, Mr. Speaker.

This is on top of a government that has attacked the entire education sector throughout their tenure, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that of course didn't support teachers, but actually ran attack ads, with public dollars, against the hard-working schoolteachers of this province, Mr. Speaker, something I'd never, ever seen or even thought was possible, Mr. Speaker.

But it's not just the teachers and the education workers that they've attacked, Mr. Speaker, that they've disrespected, and they certainly have. It's our local school boards. It's the autonomy of those school boards. This is a government that of course took over full control of funding and then under-resourced school boards, leaving them with the dirty work, leaving them with the difficult choices, Mr. Speaker, leaving them in 2017 at a time where classrooms were strained and needed supports, leaving them then with a devastating gap in being able to step up to meet students' needs when they cut education to the tune of \$54 million. And at the same time, Mr. Speaker, they went and took control and took autonomy away from school boards with Bill 63, where they brought forward budgetary control measures

of school boards, of those locally elected trustees who know their communities and their regions and their schools best, Mr. Speaker.

And we've seen a government here that's wasted time and wasted money on pursuit of right wing, outdated exercises like standardized tests, Mr. Speaker, when all the evidence has proven that this is a damaging approach to education. This government instead thumbed their nose at the experts, wouldn't listen to the school boards, wouldn't listen to the teachers, and wasted millions of dollars and time and morale in the pursuit of standardized testing, Mr. Speaker, because they've failed to listen and work with the education sector and their partners in good faith, Mr. Speaker.

As I've said, our classrooms are at a breaking point and that matters. That's why we're going to work to change the government in the next election and deliver for students across our province.

Beyond that, Mr. Speaker, we know that factors external to the classroom have a direct impact on student learning and outcomes. And I've always said, and I saw this in my own teaching, Mr. Speaker, but if kids are coming in without a safe roof over their head, without food in their belly, without security and peace of mind at home, Mr. Speaker, learning's a non-starter.

And what we've seen under this government is we've seen inequality grow. We've seen poverty grow. We've watched mental health needs and addictions needs grow and not receive the kind of adequate response that they need and deserve. We have a broken mental health and addictions system. We have a crystal meth crisis, Mr. Speaker. And this places inordinate stress on young people each and every day who are not able to get to have the peace of mind and the sleep that they deserve, Mr. Speaker, who are going into school to do their best but with the world tilted against them, Mr. Speaker.

So when I say that we want to change the government to put students first and to invest in education, we will also be stepping up to respond to those factors that are external to the classroom that have a direct impact and, at times, a devastating impact on student learning, Mr. Speaker.

[11:30]

That's what a fulsome approach to education is all about. That means stepping up and supporting young families and young children in the earliest years of their lives, Mr. Speaker, knowing that it's those interventions, those supports, those wraparound supports around families and those early learning supports for young people, including high-quality, accessible child care, Mr. Speaker, it's those things that make a difference, and make sure that young people are going into our classrooms in a position to learn, in a position to grow and to develop and to live up to their full potential, Mr. Speaker, so we as a province can live up to ours.

To not characterize what's happening in education as anything less than a crisis, Mr. Speaker, doesn't do it justice. You know, my partner, Stephanie, my wife, she's a schoolteacher, Mr. Speaker, as am I. I come from a family of schoolteachers. Stephanie sees day in, day out through her students but also

through her peers in schools throughout our community, Mr. Speaker, the direct impacts of the choices of this government. She sees students, as other teachers do as well, that present needs by way of crisis and trauma in their life. And she sees the terrible delays in supports from counsellors to psychologists through to making sure that young people have the mental health supports that they need.

There's a devastating cost to all of this, Mr. Speaker. We've spoken about the suicide epidemic that we face in this province, Mr. Speaker. It all connects. It connects when young people don't have the mental health supports in classrooms that they need and deserve. It connects when young people don't have the relationship and one-on-one time that they need and deserve with teachers and education workers because the cuts have eroded the ability to have that relationship at the level that students need.

It all connects when you see the factors external to the classroom getting so much worse, Mr. Speaker — more kids facing circumstances of inadequate, safe housing, Mr. Speaker; the consequences of families and people that are dealing with intergenerational trauma and real challenges in their own life that manifest themselves in things like addictions, Mr. Speaker; that connect directly to things like neglect and hurt in households, Mr. Speaker. This has a cost and this adds up into that tragic decision that we see all too often around things like suicide, Mr. Speaker, as well.

I fully support the motion brought forward by the member from Regina Lakeview, our very strong Education critic. And together as New Democrats we're going to fight for students and work to make sure they have the supports that they deserve.

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to reply to the motion made by the member from Regina Lakeview about the state of education in Saskatchewan, which I think this government has done a remarkable job in addressing. More work needs to be done, which I think would be fair to say at any time in the history of education.

The members on this side of the House are willing to listen to ideas on how to move forward with changes that will benefit the education system. We have done this through working alongside our education sector partners, as well as consulting both students and teachers, unlike the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Lakeview's motion suggests that education is underfunded and is at a state of crisis, but I think we should dig down a little bit deeper to look at the accuracy of those comments.

First, Mr. Speaker, the member from Regina Lakeview suggests that education is underfunded. Well here are some facts, Mr. Speaker: 2006 and 2007, enrolment was 163,311 students. Projected enrolment in 2019-20 is 186,065 students. That is an enrolment increase of 14 per cent. Keep that in mind. We will come back to that number real quick here.

Operating grants on the other side for school divisions in 2007-08 were \$1.41 billion. Operating grants for school divisions in

2019-2020, 1.9 billion. That is a funding increase of over 34 per cent. So just to clarify, enrolment is up 14 per cent and funding is up 34 per cent. I hope the members opposite heard that clearly because the facts do not support the member's claim of funding around schools. Operating funding for pre-K to 12 is 1.9 billion and it's the highest ever. This is an increase of 531.8 million. Per-student funding has increased since 2007-2008 from 8,866 per student to 10,942 per student in '19-20. Early years funding increased from 50.92 million in 2008-2009 to 111 million in '19-20.

Mr. Speaker, again the facts do not line up with what the member from Regina Lakeview has been shouting at us. Mr. Speaker, if we look at the facts, there is no crisis. We acknowledge that there is more to do. We acknowledge that our population is continuing to grow at a steady pace. That is because people are finally choosing to call Saskatchewan home after the NDP chased them out.

Mr. Speaker, on the capital side, capital spending has more than doubled for the 10 years prior. 12.4 billion has been invested in capital since '08-09. This government has built 46 new or replacement schools and has added over 1,000 teachers. In 2019-2020 the budget provides for 95.6 million in capital funding, and that is an increase of 20 million over last year. There are four new schools to replace Argyle, École Pius elementary in Regina; Sacred Heart, St. Mary, Empire, and Westmount in Moose Jaw.

The member for Regina Lakeview goes on in her motion to say that there is a crisis in our schools. I would remind the member for Regina Lakeview that this is simply not true. We have consulted our students in this province and are taking measures to ensure that they receive the best education possible. Instead the member for Regina Lakeview has fallen for the NDP Kool-Aid and has decided to go along the side of fearmongering instead of listening to her constituents and being supportive of the new school projects.

I'd like to remind the House that this member has voted against every single new school project or build since her time in this Assembly. Mr. Speaker, guess what? The sky isn't falling. Challenges, yes; crisis, no. Mr. Speaker, that NDP opposition always likes to play to the narrative that they would do so much better if given the chance. Well they were given a chance and we will gladly compare our record to theirs any day of the week.

Mr. Speaker, in my constituency of Saskatoon Westview the schools are close to capacity, which shows a sign of major growth. It is exciting that people are staying in Saskatchewan and raising their families right here. In Hampton Village, the new P3 school which is one of 18 new joint-use schools built in the province, is full of positive, young, eager students, many that have come here from countries all over the world. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that those schools were built on time and on budget. Does this education system have challenges? Yes, at times they do, and this government will deal with those challenges as they arise.

This government is proud of the teachers in this province and that is why the Minister of Education is travelling the province to learn more about the needs of our education system. This new school in Hampton Village I mentioned earlier was completed in

2017 and I think defined the outcome of the 2016 election in Saskatoon Westview. Mr. Speaker, in the lead-up to that election, this government announced a new school for Hampton Village, a P3 school to deal with the explosive growth in the area. Members opposite and their leader, however, sat on their hands when it came time to support that budget that funded those new schools.

I will remind the Assembly of the wise words of the member from Athabasca when he said, “. . . we have always maintained that P3s are a valuable tool that should be used from time to time. We’ve maintained that position.” Well, Mr. Speaker, what I think they have maintained is weak leadership and a confusing position on how they would run this province. Mr. Speaker, the fact is that this Saskatchewan Party government has done more for education than any previous government — more funding for education, more capital funding, more program funding, more teachers, and more consultations, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP have recently said that if they were to form government, they would cap class sizes at 24. Surprising, Mr. Speaker, that they think we should just give more money to education. They think that there has been enough consultation on our side. Well I’m not so sure that they have done enough consultation on their side, Mr. Speaker.

It would seem that the Saskatchewan Teachers’ Federation may have something to say about that. Patrick Maze might disagree with some of the comments, Mr. Speaker. Here is a quote from Patrick Maze from the STF on November 1st, 2019, just a few short days ago: “We aren’t looking for hard caps on classroom sizes. That does nothing to address the composition and the complexities of our schools.”

Michelle Prytula, dean of the U of S College of Education, says class composition is at the heart of the issue, not necessarily size. Setting specific teacher-to-student ratios may not be the answer. The decision is complex and the issue can’t be solved by an arbitrary number.

Mr. Speaker, we understand why they don’t know how to solve busy classrooms because between 1992 and 2007, the number of students fell by 32,625 while they were in government. The topic of the day though for the NDP is class size and the crisis in our classrooms. But if we look closely at the numbers, it does raise some concerns about the sky-is-falling mantra that they have. Again when the NDP don’t hear what they like, they ignore it.

Mr. Speaker, our province has been blessed with growth since 2007 and that means more students and more needs. This government is committed to those challenges. Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the motion that the member from Regina Lakeview has put forward, and unlike her I will continue to listen to the needs of our students, teachers, and education partners in this province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It’s my honour to rise this afternoon and enter into this very important debate, and I am appreciative of the support I’m getting from members on the other side as well.

I do want to take a bit of my time today to commend the work that the member from Regina Lakeview has been doing on this file, in particular lately. She’s been the Education critic for a few years now since she was first elected, and I think you can see the passion she has for this file, especially in question period, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And she’s passionate about this file because she cares about this province, as do we all, but I think she, especially lately, has been hearing the stories told to her by educators, students, parents, and members of the community, trustees. And they weigh heavy on her because she cares about the future of the children in our province.

And it truly is a crisis in our classrooms, Mr. Deputy Speaker, despite what members opposite think and say. They only need to attend one of the meetings that the member from Regina Lakeview has been hosting or one of the town halls that she’s been hosting to hear the real experiences from those who are close, very close to those who are in our classrooms right now, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[11:45]

And the member from Regina Lakeview has been listening, not just from the results of the survey that attracted quite a large response, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for those across our province. I think that speaks to how important this issue is to so many people. And if the members opposite were correct in saying that everything was great and that nobody is complaining to them, then we wouldn’t have seen as many respondents as we did, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The member from Regina Lakeview alone in the last week, on top of doing all of her other duties as a caucus Chair, as a critic for many different files, and representing her constituents, was in The Battlefords, was in P.A. [Prince Albert], Cumberland House, and Regina — that’s just the last week alone, Mr. Deputy Speaker — hosting meetings and listening to those at the front lines of this crisis, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So to say she’s a little passionate about this issue and that she cares about it, and you see that in question period, I think is a testament to the hard work that she’s been doing on this file.

It’s a real lost opportunity from this government, I think, that we’re in this situation today. This is a government that is overseeing record revenues over the past 10 years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And they had a choice what to do with those record revenues, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Could they invest in the future of our province, or could they do otherwise? And they chose, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to do otherwise.

And we saw that in particular in the 2017 budget. That was a budget that cut \$54 million from the education system, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That was a system that was already not receiving what they needed in terms of funding, that was already struggling to keep up with the demand of student growth and complexity of student needs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then they saw a further cut in the \$54 million, and the system has been reeling, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since that cut happened.

At the same time that the \$54 million was cut, the government introduced Bill 63, which was an attempt by this government to further reduce the autonomy of school boards, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So to say that teachers, educators, parents, and trustees don’t trust this government, I think those are two clear, stark

indications as to why, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I want to speak in particular about one constituent of mine who recently attended at my office. It was a mother of a young girl who has needs as a result of an autism diagnosis, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She, as a result, requires a speech-language pathologist. She's been having delays in reaching her speaking milestones, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is a child who was virtually silent for the first few years of her life, until they were able to enter into the health system and receive speech-language pathology care.

And they were getting that care once a week, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And as a result of that intensive support, that girl was really starting to flourish, and it was really not only improving the life of this child but improving life of the family as a whole. They were able to interact in a better way. That child was much happier. That child was growing.

And then that child entered the school system, Mr. Speaker. That child went into kindergarten and then grade 1. As a result, as you well know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, once a child enters the education system, the health care system takes a step back and the education system is told to provide those services. So the education system then has to provide a speech-language pathologist. They can receive private care, but this is a family that can't afford that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The speech-language pathologist in that child's school could meet with that girl once a semester. So once every five months that child was able to meet with a speech-language pathologist and receive the care that she desperately needs. As you can obviously guess, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this child, this flourishing girl, ended up taking a real backslide in terms of her developmental milestones in her ability to speak, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it's really created a problem in this girl's life.

Is this the fault of the school board? As the members opposite would often say that it's not an issue of funding numbers but an issue of allocation of dollars by the school board. Absolutely not, Mr. Deputy Speaker. These are trustees who are tasked with the honour and the burden, Mr. Deputy Speaker, of allocating resources to the best of their abilities. They cannot get more resources. They're given what the province has given and then they have to work with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So because they're so limited in the resources that are provided — the \$54 million cut in 2017 is one example, Mr. Deputy Speaker — these trustees have to focus their funding on front-line care, on teachers, staff, trying to reduce that teacher-student ratio that is getting higher and higher in this province, especially in the first few years of school because we know that that's where the highest impact can be for our students, naturally. As a result unfortunately — and for the students that have more complex needs and those numbers are growing, Mr. Deputy Speaker — that results in cuts to speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, and counsellors, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we know that those positions are crucial to a student's level of success, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But the Sask Party government doesn't like to hear us when we say this is a crisis. They don't believe us. They think we're in the opposition and this is what we say. And I encourage them to read some of the responses, some of the quotes that are in our

education survey, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I was hoping I would have more time actually, so I could read to them what are some of the quotes that are in here. So I'll read a few, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This isn't coming from us, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is coming from teachers. This is coming from parents. This is coming from students.

Here's a quote from a teacher:

With so many cuts, it becomes harder and harder to do the job. This leads to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, and feeling inadequate as a teacher. You put your heart into a job and can't help students the way you'd like to.

Here's another quote: "We are failing the students in our province and as a teacher I am worried about the future of Saskatchewan." Another quote:

Everyone is doing more and more and more, and we are burning out. I teach in a rural school. Because our hats are many and the workload intense, we are losing new teachers to the city where they are getting an hour of prep time [one hour of prep time, Mr. Speaker] daily as opposed to our [one] hour . . . a week. There is no downtime during the day to speak of, and the memes about teachers not being able to use the washroom are often sadly true.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, one final quote:

Next year, I'm projected to have 28 students, no EA, 2-3 undiagnosed students with autism, ADHD, possible learning disability. I teach grade 1. That is too large of a class with no support even if there were no special needs. How is it okay for one person to be in charge of 28 (or more) students on their own when they are so diverse?

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a real issue. This is a serious issue. These students deserve more from this government than speaking about how much money they've put in over the last decade while ignoring the fact that they've been cutting funding while the student complexities have been higher. These students deserve more from this government, and it's real shame. And as a result I will be supporting the motion from my colleague, the member from Regina Lakeview.

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

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess it's with mixed emotions you have to stand and debate an issue like this on funding of education. And again, as I said in my Speech from the Throne, always interesting to hear from their side, what they're hearing, and hear from our side, what we're hearing across the province. But when I was thinking about what I wanted to say today, I really thought . . . You know, if you bear with me, Mr. Speaker, to begin with I want to be a little nostalgic and talk a little bit about what happened in the past, and then we'll certainly get on to what happened in the future.

And I know the one thing that I want to talk a little bit about is what happened in the past, what happened, for example, 12 years ago today, what happened 12 years ago today when people were out across this province voting, Mr. Speaker. It had been an NDP

government that was in control of education. What happened on this day, with the people of the province voting, they soundly rejected the NDP philosophy when it came to education, Mr. Speaker. And 12 years ago is not that long ago. The members will remember that very well. And I remember the member from Regina Rosemont. That was only 12 years ago. He's got 12 more years in opposition, Mr. Speaker, to learn the lessons that they may have forgotten already, Mr. Speaker. And what happened eight years ago today was the same thing. In fact it was a larger majority, Mr. Speaker, for the Saskatchewan Party. On November the 7th the people were voting. So those are just kind of a couple of milestones.

But when it comes to this motion, what I really twigged my memory was I was elected in 1999, quite a long time ago. And you know, like all of us when we first stand in here for our first speeches, we're kind of nervous and, you know, you hope you get your point across. And we all remember those first speeches, I'm sure.

Well I had had, I think, probably a reply to the Speech from the Throne. The second time I stood up and spoke was in the 75-minute debate, and I remember it distinctly. I remember that 75-minute debate distinctly. And I was sitting on that side, of course, a couple of rows back, kind of in the middle, and the motion was put forward by us, as opposition. In fact the motion was put forward by a good friend, the member from Saltcoats — it was Saltcoats then because Melville was a separate constituency — Bob Bjonnerud. And Bob spoke for 15 minutes and then the government would have spoke, and then I had to speak. And I remember it distinctly. I remember standing up, and Roy Romanow was sitting in the centre chair here and there were certainly a lot of names that had governed this province for a long time.

But the motion was, and I remember it distinctly, it was about funding education because the NDP had done such a terrible job about funding education. And it's kind of ironic to see them standing up today and criticizing funding, because let me tell you how the funding of education took place in the 16 years that the NDP were government.

Mr. Speaker, in those years, the government only funded about 40 per cent of the total cost of education. Let's say they spent \$1 billion on education, only 400 million came from the provincial government. The rest came from school boards that would have the municipality collect that education portion of property tax, Mr. Speaker.

So what the motion was about was not only about the funding of education, but it was about the tax revolt meetings that were held around this province. And, Mr. Speaker, I can remember many, many days in the first year or two that I was elected, of tax revolt meeting after tax revolt meeting because the property tax payers were fed up with the NDP.

Now the member from Regina Lakeview is chirping from her seat. And I know why she is chirping from her seat because when those tax revolt meetings . . . One of them was in Lang. I remember it distinctly. And the whole community from Lang was around because they were sick and tired of the NDP and funding education on the backs of the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker.

It wasn't only in Lang. It was in Kronau. It was all over. I went to a dozen . . . If you wanted to get in touch with your constituencies back then, you didn't have to have a dog-and-pony show like the Leader of the Opposition and the critic are doing right now, going around trying to garner support, Mr. Speaker, on a political drive, because those tax revolt meetings were put on by the citizens of the province, the RMs [rural municipality] of the province because they were sick and tired of the NDP and how they were funding education, Mr. Speaker.

Things have changed a lot since then. And I know they don't want to talk about the past, but it's so important to talk about the past. The NDP want to increase the funding. Absolutely. And that's what we've done — 34 per cent in the 12 years that we've been government. They think it should be increased more, way more.

In fact they've got a list of promises here. A list of promises of what they want to do: certain caps on class sizes, more teachers, more everything. And you look at the 12 ideas, every one takes more money. So how much more money? I will tell the taxpayers, the property tax payers of this province if that party ever gets back into power, expect your property bills, the education portion of property bills back to funding 60 per cent of education instead of 40 per cent under this government, Mr. Speaker.

That is certainly why we can never let . . . And I don't think it's going to happen for a long time yet, Mr. Speaker. Who knows? I mean the numbers may change. But what is very important is the philosophy of the NDP has never changed. You can change the people on that side, you can change the names on that side, but the philosophy is the same. And it will go right directly onto the taxpayers, the property tax payers, through education portion of property tax.

We dropped it to 40 per cent. In 2009 we took over the lion's share of funding education: 60 per cent, where only 40 per cent came off of property tax. And in nine years that stayed constant. It stayed constant, Mr. Speaker. I remember as a farmer, you were always never really quite sure when that property tax bill came from the RM, what your education portion of property tax was, because the NDP would demand more out of the education system, put no more money in, and force the school boards through the RM to charge more on education portion of property tax. That's how they paid for their . . .

Believe this or not. They would negotiate. The NDP, the government, would negotiate with the teachers, come to an agreement, and then say to the school boards, go get it off the property tax. That's how it was run back then, Mr. Speaker. And so you know, they don't want me to talk about what it was in the past, but if they ever got into government it's the way it would be today, Mr. Speaker. That's why we've got to continue to remind the opposition that the people of Saskatchewan had had enough 12 years ago, they've had enough today, and they'll have enough of that government well into the future.

[12:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, really quickly — because I can't believe that I've had 10 minutes — Mr. Speaker, they talk about a crisis, a crisis in education. You know, on that side of the House there is

a crisis in everything. I've only got one minute and 40 left to go through all the crises. Here's how many times something has been in crisis in this province. And when I leave the doors today, and we all leave the doors, out the front door, we're going to go out to our constituencies. We're going to talk to people across our constituencies. We're going to come back on Monday — Tuesday because Monday's Remembrance Day — and talk about what we heard. And I'll guarantee we didn't hear that — this is in the last two years — how many times they've used.

There's a debt crisis. There's a climate crisis. There's a classroom crisis. There's a crystal meth crisis. Yes, we probably agree with that one. There is an emergency room crisis. There's a government crisis. There's a manufacturing crisis. There's a health care crisis. There is a health care workers crisis. These are all the different crises that this province has faced in the last two years. I don't know. When I go to my constituency, I don't hear that. I had the luxury of going to a fowl supper in Gray last Sunday and a fowl supper in Milestone the Sunday before, and I didn't hear crisis after crisis after crisis.

Now I'm not done yet, Mr. Speaker. That's only three pages of crises from the opposition. There's more. There's a suicide and mental health crisis. There's the opioid crisis. There was a crisis in mining. I didn't know that, Mr. Speaker, but there's a crisis in mining. The members opposite are kind of frowning, but oops, the member from Athabasca said that on October 28th, 2019. There's a railroad crisis, Mr. Speaker, and there's a youth crisis. And that's only in the last two days on a quick search.

Mr. Speaker, education needs more work. The minister's on it, Mr. Speaker. The people of Saskatchewan can count on this Sask Party to fix it.

The Deputy Speaker: — Time for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since we've formed government we've moved forward with 46 brand new or replacement schools and 23 major school renovations using the P3 model. In addition, the member for Regina Lakeview, joined by the NDP, voted against funding these schools. It's a shame that the member from Regina Lakeview was so opposed to the projects, similar to the École Connaught Community School project which benefits the children in her own constituency.

To the member from Regina Lakeview: does that member believe that Saskatchewan education would be better off without these schools?

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to answer this question. First of all the member has his facts wrong. It was nine joint-use schools that were built under the P3 model, but that's okay.

Mr. Speaker, obviously we need schools in the province and the fact, you know, that schools are being built is great. The fact is also that we need more. We have schools projected to be over 200 per cent capacity, including that École Connaught Community School. So, Mr. Speaker, I suggest that there's more work to do on that side. They don't want to do it. We're prepared

to do it.

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I do hope that the public is watching and engaged in this 75-minute debate because it certainly impacts so many people across our province, and it's something that we hear about as we travel around so often. And I know that the folks that I'm talking to don't want to hear about things that happened when I was in grade 8. That's not what's going to influence their voting in 2020, Mr. Speaker.

I wonder what the members opposite have to say about some of the comments we've been receiving in our education town halls, as the Leader of the Opposition and the critic have been travelling around. And here's a comment that we received, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

I'm in rural Saskatchewan pre-K through 12. We lost a teaching position and have only four EAs currently in the building. There are so many needs in our building that our support staff can only be scheduled in pre-K through 4 because these are the highest risks or hot spots in the school."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, my question is to the member from Saskatoon Westview. What does he have to say to this individual?

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. You know, I think it's pretty clear the record on education on this side of the House and that side of the House. This side of the House has had record investments, but we listen to the people too. Our minister is out talking with stakeholders right across the province all the time. Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Education supports innovation and the value of sharing and developing ideas together to improve upon our education sector.

We have been meeting and collaborating with both world-renowned leaders and local community members to share strategies to further enhance Saskatchewan's education system. And we are working with every corner of the education sector to ensure the best future for our students, teachers, and facilities. Our future of education survey was completed by nearly 9,000 students, parents, and community members to give us good guidance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The joint-use schools that were opened in our province are proudly serving the constituents of Regina, Saskatoon, Warman, and Martensville. By using the P3 model, taxpayers saved over \$30 million on construction and \$100 million over the life of the contract. That's enough for five new schools, Mr. Speaker. To the member from Regina Lakeview, since the member is opposed to every new joint-use school, how would the member have saved this kind of

money on a new joint-use school build without using a P3 model?

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the question. It's funny, I think that they need to go back to the drawing board. We've seen the Manitoba government, a conservative government, find that they could actually build five new schools for the cost of four P3 schools. So I would suggest these guys go back to the drawing board with their math again.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Since the member from Regina . . . or Indian Head-Milestone. I said it so much better the first time. Since the member for Indian Head-Milestone doesn't like to believe us when we say there's a crisis in our classrooms, let me read a quote again from one of the teachers who responded to our survey. "We are failing the students in our province and as a teacher I am worried about the future of Saskatchewan."

To the member from Saskatoon Westview: what does he say to that teacher?

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member opposite, thanks for the question. I think it's always important that we remind the members opposite of all the investments that we've had — whether that be teachers, whether it be schools — all kinds of investments in our province. We are consulting with people every day. Our minister is out there. We are listening to our constituents. And we're happy to talk to people about any ideas they have to move our province forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Dennis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On April 9th in regards to the Saskatchewan education, the leader from the opposition said ". . . what we need is not another survey." Then the opposition went and held their very own survey, a survey I'll add that did not consult with experts in the education sector and was driven by a multiple choice in attempt to manufacture results the NDP were looking for.

To the member from Regina Lakeview: does the member believe and agree with the Leader of the Opposition?

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

Ms. Beck: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to answer that question. If that member thinks that those who are working in our classrooms are not experts, I think he needs to go back to the drawing board as well. We are hearing, time and time again, the same messages from parents, from educators, from EAs, that there is a crisis in the classroom. Mr. Speaker, those members

would do well to listen.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, let me read yet another quote from our survey that the member opposite seems to think is manufactured:

The needs are higher [and higher], and we are run ragged. I go home every day knowing I haven't met the needs of my children and haven't helped them reach their full potential.

And another quote from a parent:

As a parent of children who have gone through the education system, I know the value of smaller classes and caring teachers. I would ask this government to stop failing the future of this province.

Mr. Speaker, to the member from Saskatoon Westview: what does he say to these two individuals who are apparently manufactured?

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

Mr. Buckingham: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for all the questions. I'm glad to get on my feet. Our government truly values the educators of this province, which is why nearly all of the funding allocated to school divisions is unconditional.

To allow fair, equitable bargaining, the government trustee bargaining committee is comprised of nine members, five of which are appointed by the Government of Saskatchewan and four that are appointed by the Saskatchewan School Boards Association. We appreciate and welcome the knowledge and experience brought forth by all committee members as they proceed with their bargaining commitments.

Since in government, we have added 1,200 more students. They had 400 less when they were done.

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

Mr. Bradshaw: — Mr. Speaker, the 18 joint-use school build was the largest school build in the history of our province, and we are continuing to work so that we can do more to meet the needs of our ever-growing population. The new school spaces created jobs and were designed with input from teachers and students. They were P3 builds. The member from Athabasca even stated that ". . . we have always maintained that P3s are a valuable tool that should be used from time to time. We've maintained that position."

Well since the entire NDP party voted against these schools, my question is for the member from Regina Lakeview. Do you agree with the member from Athabasca, or can the member speak to the division in their caucus?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Lakeview.

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has continuously been . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You know, continuously patted themselves on the back is right, Mr. Speaker. And I suppose they're . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

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

Motion No. 1 — Support for Pipelines

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and at the end of my remarks I'll be moving a motion on pipelines. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise in the House today to talk about a very important and imperative issue that speaks to the heart of the sentiment that is being felt by many people here in Saskatchewan and across our country: pipelines, pipelines, pipelines. We need pipelines.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's been five years now since our oil sector experienced a downturn spiral in the industry's oil prices and access to markets. And we've had an NDP opposition and a federal government who has stymied every turn the industry has made to get these pipelines built. Mr. Speaker, the members opposite stand behind a federal leader whose platform includes, and I quote:

Ending oil and gas company subsidies means we can invest in renewable energy, and get Canada powered by net carbon-free electricity by 2030. We will fulfill Canada's G20 commitment to eliminate [to eliminate] these fossil fuel subsidies and redirect these funds to low-carbon initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, those subsidies don't amount to a hill of beans compared to the billions and billions of dollars in revenues and taxes we would have received as a province and as a country if our own oil was able to get to tidewater and be sold to global markets at a fair price. Access to tidewater to reach global markets, a fair price for our product, and a safe means of transporting that product means building pipelines, something that the oil industry has not had any support on from the opposition or our federal government.

When Jagmeet Singh was made leader of the NDP, the member from Regina Douglas Park was jumping up and down heralding Singh's victory, stating and I quote:

It's an exciting moment for the federal NDP caucus and New Democrats across Canada. He's going to bring many years of his experience fighting inequality to the issues that matter to Canadians.

[12:15]

Well, Mr. Speaker, where's his fight for equality when it comes to supporting the many thousands of jobs lost in the oil industry due to the inequality surrounding the lack of support for the companies and investors who have contributed billions of dollars

to the country's GDP [gross domestic product], strong economic growth, and equalization payments to have-not provinces?

Mr. Speaker, opposition MLAs in this House supported federal NDP candidates during the past federal election who also stand behind NDP leader Jagmeet Singh on his no-pipeline-on-my-watch stance. The member from Regina Lakeview endorsed Talon Regent in Moose Jaw-Lake Centre-Lanigan. The opposition leader volunteered for Sheri Benson in Saskatoon West along with the member from Saskatoon Fairview who also volunteered for federal candidate Sheri Benson. Standing behind candidates who support a leader's platform of no pipelines at all or ever again is not standing up for the people of Saskatchewan and inequalities.

The NDP have not yet found an actual pipeline project they could support. And Jagmeet Singh has even suggested lately he may allow provinces a veto on a pipeline. He acknowledges the federal government has clear constitutional authority to approve interprovincial pipeline projects but, "I believe that the federal government has significant constitutional powers but I don't think it's effective to impose pipelines on communities. It's not the way to go ahead, he said."

Excuse me? I guess that means if Singh had formed government, one province would have been allowed a veto — Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, I must give credit where credit is due. In his reply to the Throne Speech on October 29th, the member from Regina Rosemont stated:

Mr. Speaker . . . Saskatchewan New Democrats will stand up to the federal government, [we] will stand up to whatever federal leader we need to in Ottawa, Mr. Speaker, for the interests of this province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I truly hope that includes their own federal leader, Jagmeet Singh.

Mr. Speaker, it's critical that we get pipelines built. We are an exporting province and are currently lacking one of our major and most significant exports . . .

[Interjections]

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

Ms. Young: — It is a resource that provides not only important revenue, but supports thousands of jobs and incomes for families in our province and country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, industry investment in new exploration and development was an all-time high in this province just a few years ago, but now we have seen a huge downturn in this province, and it is hurting our economy. It is hurting lives of people all across this country. We have no pipelines to get our products safely to market, and many companies cannot survive on prices that significantly discount their product and do not generate revenues that would support keeping employees on staff, hurting families.

There was a bit of optimism for a while a few years ago when

there was the announcement of Energy East, a pipeline that would have not only been a significant benefit to the people of Saskatchewan and our economy, but for all Canadians. Two-thirds of the energy's pipeline was already in the ground, and it had gone through two comprehensive reviews. The company had spent over a billion dollars on filing applications and meeting all conditions of the National Energy Board. Why didn't it go through, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We had a federal government who decided he wanted to change the composition of the National Energy Board, and he didn't like the standards they were using to approve that pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, the same scenario played out for the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline. It was a proposed pipeline that would have shipped Alberta oil sands via Kitimat, British Columbia. But in June of 2014 the federal government announced it had decided to approve the project despite some opposition from British Columbians and some First Nations. But still after 10 years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is still on the table and Enbridge has no firm shipping agreements with oil producers and believes this deal is dead in the water. Along came our Prime Minister with Bill C-48 and a tanker ban, which was introduced in 2017 and was officially passed through the House of Commons, as we know, in May of 2018.

Enbridge also spent over a billion dollars filing applications, meeting conditions of the National Energy Board. Once again our on-again, off-again Prime Minister and his colleagues liked to play games, it seems. Oil companies, however, do not and pride themselves on integrity, hard work, and following the rules. They know how important it is to safely and economically transport oil and get product to important markets for a fair price. We just don't have a Prime Minister and federal government that comprehends any of this. Or maybe this federal government just doesn't want any of Canada's oil and pipelines in our country at all.

Fast forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to Kinder Morgan and the Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline. And these stories just keep getting better, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as this one is even more twisted, as the citizens of Canada ended up buying a fictional, non-existent pipeline for \$4.5 billion.

Mr. Speaker, if built, Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain Expansion would increase the capacity of heavy oil and other petroleum product shipments from Edmonton, Alberta to Burnaby, BC [British Columbia]. Alberta holds the world's third-largest reserves of crude oil after Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, countries with abysmal human rights records and that our current Prime Minister is buying cheap oil from and allowing them to flood the St. Lawrence Seaway in our coastal shores with tankers carrying dirty oil.

The federal government knows that the oil sands represent about 2 per cent of the overall Canadian economy. Federal and provincial governments would have seen 46.7 billion in additional taxes and royalties from construction and 20 years of operation of this pipeline.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I use the words "would have" because, as we all know, once again we have a pipeline that has been approved twice but never built. Kinder Morgan originally estimated that project, which was formerly approved by the

Prime Minister and his cabinet, to be \$4.1 billion, but with multiple stops and delays, on again, off again from our Prime Minister, by March of 2018 this project's costs had grown to 7.4 billion. And then they had spent 1.1 billion filing applications and meeting the conditions of the National Energy Board as well, Mr. Speaker.

And as we all know, we'd heard in the news that back in March of 2018, Kinder Morgan had had enough of spending money on a pipeline project without guarantees they could complete or even operate it under tough provincial regulations. And that's when our Prime Minister instructed his then Finance minister, Bill Morneau, to negotiate a purchasing deal with Kinder Morgan for the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion.

With an ultimatum from Kinder Morgan, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and his cabinet used yours and my money totalling \$4.5 billion to buy a fictional and non-existent pipeline. And why do I call it that, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Because unless we have all been living in a cave or been out of the country a few years, the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion would have been built — once again, those words "would have been" — parallel to the original 1953 Trans Mountain pipeline. And this has not happened.

Mr. Speaker, we also know where the federal opposition leader stands on the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion and all other pipelines. Back in September of 2017, he made statements to the *National Observer*, and I quote: "I oppose the developments of Kinder Morgan, Energy East, and Keystone XL pipelines." "I've made a really clear no to Kinder Morgan and Energy East," a statement he made in an interview with Cory Collins with Ricochet media in August of '17. "I've been very clear. I'm opposed to the expansion of Trans Mountain. I've been opposed to it before and I will continue to be opposed to it tomorrow." He made that statement to the Global News just in October of this year. I think Jagmeet Singh has made it very clear, Mr. Speaker: no pipelines.

Mr. Speaker, that's the leader the opposition in this House stands behind and defends. They do not stand behind the people of Saskatchewan and an industry that provides for many families.

During the recent federal election campaign the NDP leader, Jagmeet Singh, also stated:

Justin Trudeau gave Canadians pretty words about the environment, but then he bought a \$4.5 billion pipeline over the objections of the province of British Columbia, experts, and even his own MPs and candidates. We can't afford four more years of Justin Trudeau's empty promises. It's time to make different choices that would work for everyday people instead of just big oil [companies] and big corporations.

Mr. Speaker, to add to the misery, we saw in the spring the federal government's passing of Bill C-69 which imposes more regulatory and uncertain regime on to oil companies and investors, making it impossible for pipelines to ever be built in this country again.

Mr. Speaker, the news lately has been reporting one major oil and gas company after another being sold to US [United States] companies for peanuts, or leaving our province and country

because they cannot survive here under the politically beleaguered industry, a federal regulatory nightmare, and no hope of building a pipeline to get their product to tidewater: Pengrowth, Citadel, Encana, and Husky who sold off its refinery in BC. If things don't change, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there will be other companies leaving too.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has gotten a green light to intervene on the side of the federal government and defend the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion from another attempt to block it in court. The Government of Saskatchewan supports the Trans Mountain Expansion pipeline, and we also recognize the importance of the duty to consult with First Nations. We will make submissions to the federal Court of Appeal on the need to balance the duty to consult with other matters of public interest such as transportation infrastructure.

As a landlocked province, Saskatchewan depends on interprovincial transportation facilities to get our production to international markets. And the lack of pipeline capacity in the Western Canadian system is currently forcing Saskatchewan oil producers to ship more of their product by rail, which is a more expensive transportation system and not as safe as pipelines.

Mr. Speaker, following the October 21st federal election Prime Minister Trudeau stated to Saskatchewan and Alberta, "I've heard your frustration, and I want to be there to support you."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, since the Prime Minister spoke those words, our Premier's written two letters to the Prime Minister requesting a sit-down to discuss matters of national importance. He said in his letter to the Prime Minister, and I quote, "Those are nice words but we need action, not words." If he is serious, if he really means it, here's what he could do right away. Commit to develop a plan to ensure Saskatchewan and Alberta can get our exports to international markets. This means pipelines. "Prime Minister, you've left Saskatchewan waiting."

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we are still waiting. No response from the Prime Minister.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to steal words from the opposition, we are in a crisis in the oil and gas sector in this province, in Western Canada, and in this country. This is one real crisis that those members opposite should clearly acknowledge and support, and not the rhetoric and stance of their federal leader, Jagmeet Singh.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move the following motion:

That this Assembly condemns federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh and other federal leaders for their anti-pipeline positions.

Thank you.

[12:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Lloydminster has moved:

That this Assembly condemn the federal NDP leader, Jagmeet Singh, and other federal leaders for their anti-pipeline positions.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:31.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

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Hon. Scott Moe
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
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis
and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Joe Hargrave
Minister of Crown Investments
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Minister of Trade and Export Development
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Hon. Warren Kaeding
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Minister Responsible for Seniors

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor
and Gaming Authority
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Hon. David Marit
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

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Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
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Minister Responsible for The Global
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Minister of Education
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds and
Priority Saskatchewan