



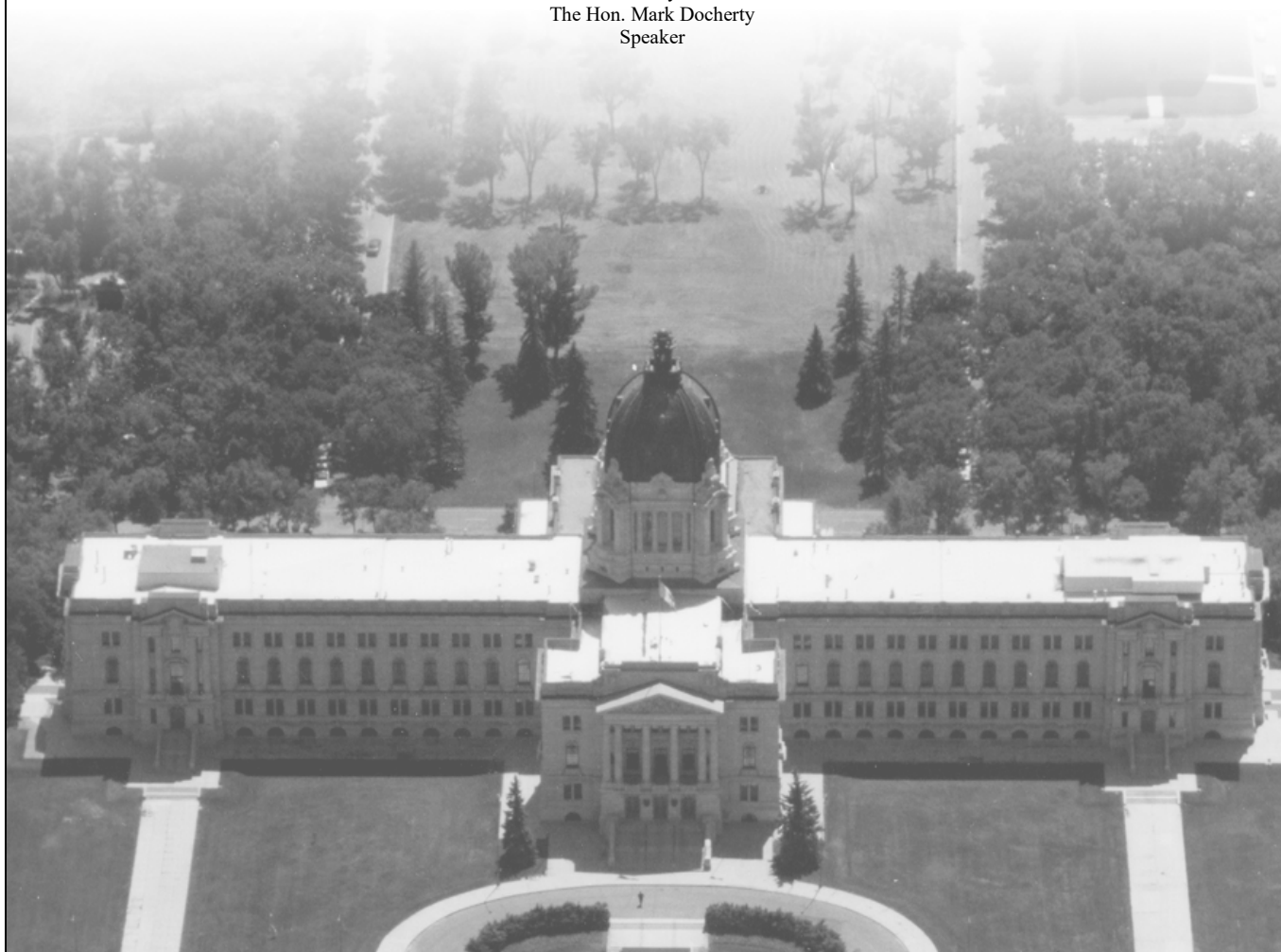
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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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 Burianyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I've got one to start with. So joining us today in my gallery is Ms. Lisa Broda, Advocate for Children and Youth for the province of Saskatchewan. Ms. Broda was appointed by the Legislative Assembly to the role of Advocate for Children and Youth on November 4th, 2019.

Accompanying Ms. Broda are members of her family, friends, and staff from her office. I don't know if they got here yet, but there'll be a couple other independent officers joining probably a little bit later. Yes, I don't think I see them.

But I invite all members to join me at a come-and-go welcome reception for Ms. Broda this afternoon in the Saskatchewan Gallery from 2:30 to 4. I now ask all members to join me in welcoming Ms. Broda and her guests to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the Assembly, I would like to introduce from the Oxbow Prairie Horizon School a group of 38 grade 8 students accompanied by their teacher, Carey Crossman, plus a large group of parents: David Townsend, Trisha Schulhauser, Tami Creusot, Trina Mayer, Shannon Scott, Marissa Logue, Becky Panter, and Lian Heiser. I would like all members to welcome them to their Assembly.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to join you in welcoming Lisa Broda to the Assembly and congratulate her on her appointment.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join yourself and the member across in welcoming Lisa Broda and her family and the staff here to the legislature today. As a registered social worker, I've read some of Lisa's publications that she's authored and co-authored. And with her background in sociology as well as her experience working with the Children's Advocate office as the deputy children's advocate, I know that she truly understands the issues impacting children and youth in our province, Mr. Speaker.

I know, Ms. Broda, you have an incredible staff complement. I've met them quite often and they do incredible work advocating for the children and youth in our province. And youth that I've talked to that have accessed services from your agency say that they feel that their issues are validated, that they can trust the Children's Advocate office, and that the staff do a wonderful job advocating on their behalf. So I do have to say that we know the work that you guys do is very important and will continue because it's in good hands with you as well as your staff.

So on behalf of the official opposition, we would like to welcome Lisa Broda, her family, and the staff to their legislature. So thank you.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much. Leave to make an extended introduction, please.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In your gallery today are several Saskatchewan citizens who are members of the unions who work in the CBO [community-based organization] sector. They're here today to present a petition that calls for better sustainable funding, safe work conditions, and of course fair wages.

And I have a list of people. I think it's only appropriate that we introduce them. So I ask you to give a wave when I call out your name: Carmela Verwimp, a direct care worker at Variety Place and SEIU-West [Service Employees International Union-West] executive board member; Trevor McNabb, who works as a client attendant at Sask Impaired Driver Treatment Centre; Peggy Parenteau, who works as a cook at Sask Impaired Driver Treatment Centre; and also Dannel Pickering, no stranger to this House, SEIU-West staff.

And from CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] we have of course the president, Sask President Tom Graham here with several members: Annette Welsch, Chair of the CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan and a support worker at Nipawin and District Services to the Handicapped; Angela Pawlie, Vice-Chair of CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan, a direct support worker at the MacKenzie Society Ventures in Preeceville; Tacey Goodsmann, treasurer of the CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan, a direct support worker at MacKenzie Society Ventures in Preeceville; Chantelle Norman, recording secretary of CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan, a direct support worker at YAIL Harbor Inc. [Yorkton Adult Independent Living Inc.] in Yorkton; Randy Lange, executive director of CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan and a support worker at YAIL Harbor, also in Yorkton; Melissa Marshall, executive board member of CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan and a support worker at Deer Park Villa in Ituna; Brenda McLennan, executive board member of CUPE CBO Workers of Saskatchewan, and she works at Glencairn Child Care Cooperative; Nathan Markwart, Tria Donaldson, and Aimee Nadon, staff at CUPE.

And we also have from SGEU [Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union], Trish Patey, secretary of SGEU Community Service Sector and employee at Prince Albert mobile crisis; Ken Laing from Saskatoon Housing Coalition; Danielle Hamelin, early childhood intervention program here in Regina; Kathy Cook, labour relations who works with many CBO sector workplaces.

And we also have Whitney Kujansuu, Thunder Creek Rehab and Moose Jaw Wakamow Social Detox; and Carolyn Rebeyka, SGEU staff and no stranger to this House at all.

So I'd ask all members to welcome these workers, these people who are making a real difference with the people we care about here in Saskatchewan. I ask them to welcome them to their legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these members to their Assembly today. It's always their democratic right, and we welcome them to be here to exercise that right to raise issues that are important to them and important to their workplace.

But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to thank them for the great work that they do every day when they go to work to make our province the wonderful place that it is. The care that they give to their patients and the people that they look after is something that none of us recognize and give them thanks often enough, so I'm glad to have this opportunity to give them thanks for the work that they do. And on behalf of the government side, I want to welcome them and wish them all the best. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with my colleague and the minister in welcoming these folks from the CBO sector to their legislature, and add one special welcome which is to Tom Graham.

Tom is the president of CUPE Saskatchewan, as we all know. He's been in that role for 22 years, which is more than most members have been in this House. Through that time he's seen a lot happen in this province, and he's spoken up on many issues in support of the workers in education, in health care, in the CBO sector and all the sectors that CUPE represents. He's a tireless worker on behalf of the workers that CUPE represents, and as well of the people that they serve every day, that all of his members serve every day.

This is likely the last time we'll get to introduce Mr. Graham in the legislature as president, as he is stepping down in March of 2020. So he's nearing the end of his long and valid and admirable service in that role. And we'll see what he goes on to next, but I'd like to ask all the members to join me in welcoming and thanking Tom Graham of CUPE for all of his great work.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the member from Saskatoon Centre in introducing one of the guests in your gallery today, Mr. Ken Laing. He works in mental health at the Saskatoon Housing Coalition, but he's also the son of one of our pioneers who recently passed away, Vilda Laing. And she was very involved in her community, the United Church, library, school, North Battleford Regional Care Centre. She was involved in the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, credit union, co-op, and founding of the Saskatchewan Farmers Union.

And I know that Ken gets his, you know, the care for our community and his belief in working to make our community better from the beliefs that his parents instilled in him. And so I'd just like to ask all members to join with me in welcoming him to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to join you in welcoming Lisa Broda to her Legislative Assembly. I look very much forward to working with you over the next few years on always active cases. Social Services has a lot of contacts with the Children's Advocate, and we're very much looking forward to working with you in the future.

And while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to the Assembly my wife who is up in the top row there . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, I'll be very well behaved. My wife is a business owner. She's a teacher, Mr. Speaker, and now she's transitioned into mentoring women into businesses and taking a mentorship role in that with The Well Collaborative up in Saskatoon. So I just wanted to say thank you very much for supporting everything while I am gone down here in Regina. And I love you and appreciate everything you do, honey. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I can't top that, Mr. Speaker. I do want to introduce though a good friend of mine who is visiting from northwest Saskatchewan, Travis Neufeld, who is in the west gallery. He is a farmer. He is a friend. He farms in the Dorintosh area, and I want to welcome him to his Assembly and ask members to join me in doing so. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition on behalf of northern Saskatchewan residents: that seniors in the North have worked hard to build their province. There is a definite need for a new long-term care facility in Creighton and surrounding areas. Saskatchewan families are being forced to separate, and this causes many hardships including complex income tax filings with Manitoba and Saskatchewan. It is supported by many leaders of the communities.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan treat northern Saskatchewan senior citizens with respect and dignity and immediately invest in a new long-term care facility for Creighton and surrounding area.

It is signed by many good people of the North. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cannington.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to present a petition from citizens who are opposed to

the federal government's decision to impose an unfair and ineffective carbon tax on the province of Saskatchewan. This tax has very negative impacts on agriculture and the energy sector in the Cannington constituency, especially the tax on natural gas and propane for drying a very tough crop this year.

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.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good citizens of Moose Jaw and heartfelt from the Cannington constituency.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens, businesses, communities from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party government's imposition of the PST [provincial sales tax] onto construction labour.

And of course this is all part of the doubling of the take of the PST by the Sask Party government, the biggest tax increase in Saskatchewan's history. It certainly hit households hard. The average household is now paying \$800 more per year in PST than they were just four years ago, Mr. Speaker. And we see the impacts of that hurt within households but also within our economy.

And as it relates to the PST on construction labour, quite simply this is the epitome of a job-killing tax. Sadly the results speak for themselves. We've seen important projects that have been shelved all across the province. We see permits that are down all across Saskatchewan in this important industry. We see thousands of hard-working tradespeople who have lost their job in this important industry. So many of those hard-working tradespeople that have been forced to find employment outside of Saskatchewan, a real loss for them and their family, a tremendous loss for us as a province, Mr. Speaker.

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 today are signed by concerned residents of Regina and Pilot Butte. I so submit.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this afternoon to present a petition calling on the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to stop the Sask Party government's attack on our

children's classrooms, Mr. Speaker. Those who have signed the petition are concerned about the millions of dollars cut from our children's classrooms and the underfunding that has become chronic, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that there are increasing needs and complexity in classrooms right around this province, but fewer and fewer resources to actually address that need in our classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, I will 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 fully restore the cuts to our children's classrooms and stop making families, teachers, and everyone who works to support our education system pay the price for this government's bad decisions.

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

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to end unacceptable emergency room wait times. Yet again it's something we've been touching on throughout the legislative session. And also we've been raising concerns about interrelated issues of hallway medicine and understaffing and all the concerns that this leads to within the health care sector.

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 where they no longer exist; and that the Sask Party has cut funding to address emergency room wait times and has no meaningful strategy to get emergency room wait times under control.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Saskatchewan Party government to fully fund and execute a plan, as they promised to do in 2012, to lower and eventually end emergency room wait times in Saskatchewan.

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

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions calling on the government to fix the crisis in the community-based organization sector. CBOs support people with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, people in crisis, and many others in our communities across the province. But the absence of adequate funding arrangements is hampering their important work. Because of government funding arrangements which change year to year and budget to budget, CBOs are unable to make programming decisions for the long term, and

front-line workers who look after the most vulnerable in our society lack job security, face inadequate staffing levels, and have persistently low wages, which makes it harder to keep staff.

It doesn't need to be this way, and concerned residents across the province and front-line CBO workers have signed a petition calling on the government to urgently do more to invest in people. Mr. Speaker, over 1,300 residents across Saskatchewan have signed petitions to bring to your attention the following prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan commit to directly providing adequate multi-year funding to Saskatchewan's community-based organizations to ensure stable programming and staffing levels are available to meet the varied needs of Saskatchewan's most vulnerable people.

This petition is signed by over 1,300 good people of our great province residing in the communities of Abbey, Aberdeen, Arborfield, Assiniboia, Balgonie, Battleford, Big River, Birch Hills, Broadview, Buffalo Narrows, Candle Lake, Canora, Carrot River, Central Butte, Chitek Lake, Choiceland, Christopher Lake, Churchbridge, Colonsay, Craven, Creighton, Cudworth, Cupar, Cut Knife, Dalmeny, Davidson, Davin, Duck Lake, Estevan, Eston, Fort Qu'Appelle, Grayson, Gull Lake, Hague, Hepburn, Herbert, Holdfast, Hudson Bay, Humboldt, Imperial, Ituna, Kelvington, Kerrobert, Kyle, Laird, Lancer, Leader, Leask, Leoville, LeRoy, Maple Creek, Martensville, Meadow Lake, Melfort, Melville, Milestone, Moose Jaw, Neilburg, Nipawin, Norquay, North Battleford, Outlook, Pense, Pleasantdale, Porcupine Plain, Preeceville, Prince Albert, Radville, Regina, Regina Beach, Rose Valley, Rosetown, Rosthern, Rouleau, Saltcoats, Saskatoon, Shellbrook, Spruce Home, St. Brieux, St. Louis, Star City, Swift Current, Tisdale, Unity, Vanscoy, Viscount, Wadena, Wakaw, Waldheim, Warman, Watrous, Watson, Weyburn, White City, White Fox, Whitewood, Wilkie, Willow Bunch, Wynyard, and Yorkton.

Mr. Speaker, I do so present their petition calling on action to help fund CBOs.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Prince Albert Couple Celebrates 70 Years of Marriage

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A very special Prince Albert couple reached an amazing milestone this summer. On July 19th, Bill and Evelyn Marshall celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary.

Every year they celebrate their anniversary at Waskesiu in the Prince Albert National Park because that is where they were married. They lived their entire lives around Prince Albert and now reside in Prince Albert. They travelled the world when Bill was elected vice-president of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool.

They are both still very active and volunteer in our community with Meals on Wheels. As well, Evelyn plays the banjo as part of her band, the Heritage Jammers, and they entertain seniors in

care homes each week.

This couple has spent a lifetime of doing things together, including dancing, golfing, volunteering, and travelling. They spend a great deal of quality time with their children, Barb, Larry, and Bonnie, and their spouses and with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. On many of their anniversaries, Evelyn has worn her wedding dress, which still fits her to this day. Bill is always quick to note that the tie he wore on his wedding day still fits him as well.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating Bill and Evelyn Marshall on their 70th wedding anniversary and in wishing them many more years of happiness, love, and health. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Kindersley.

World AIDS Day

Mr. Francis: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize an important day that is noted every year, World AIDS Day. This year's theme is Communities Make the Difference, and that is certainly true here in Saskatchewan. It is imperative that we show support to those who live with and are affected by HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] and AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome].

Together with many community partners we have made progress in our efforts to improve our testing rates in Saskatchewan and, perhaps just as importantly, helped to reduce the stigma around HIV. With early diagnosis and medication, the virus is virtually undetectable and people can live rewarding and healthy lives with HIV.

But the first and most important step is knowing your status. Our partners in many Saskatchewan communities have been the key to progress in battling HIV, and work in First Nations communities around the province has been a priority for our First Nations and Inuit health and northern inter-tribal health authorities.

Mr. Speaker, our government remains firmly committed to addressing HIV rates in the province. We are providing 4.7 million to support HIV services throughout the Saskatchewan Health Authority and community-based organizations. We've committed an additional 1.1 million towards harm reduction programs which reduce the transmission of HIV and other blood-borne infections. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan will continue to collaborate with federal and community partners, making HIV testing and patient-centred care more accessible, especially in rural and remote areas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Treaty 6 Medal Installed at Saskatoon School

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to recognize Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools for their work in bringing to life the Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. As a celebration of learning and

honouring the relationship with Indigenous peoples of this province, I attended the installation of the Treaty 6 medal at the Saskatoon French School this past spring. The medal is now a permanent fixture in the school.

This important ceremony reaffirmed the importance of treaty education in Saskatchewan schools. Students were guided through activities such as the raising of the Treaty 6 flag in the school, the blanket exercise, elder visits, and the use of resources developed by the Office of the Treaty Commissioner.

The medal installation ceremony itself was a forum for discussion around treaty education. Having the medal visible at the school is a constant reminder that we are all treaty people, that all who enter the doors have a responsibility to work towards reconciliation. It acknowledges the importance of treaty education, and it's a significant point of discussion for school communities, families, staff, and students.

Greater Saskatoon Catholic Schools has a multi-year plan to have Treaty 6 medals installed in all schools within the division. I ask all members to join me in congratulating Saskatoon French School and the Greater Saskatoon Catholic school division in actualizing and promoting reconciliation. Thank you.

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

Remembering Doug Alexander

Mr. Fiaz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is with deep sadness that I rise today to talk about a dear friend of this House, and one of my constituents, Doug Alexander. Doug passed away last month on November 10th, just before his 84th birthday.

His six-decade-long career began at CKOM while he was still attending high school. Doug moved to Regina in 1959 where he was a radio personality for 38 years with 620 CKCK radio Regina, one of Canada's pioneer radio stations. Upon retirement from CKCK in 1997, Doug joined Cable Regina, now called Access Communications, where he was their manager of community relations until his passing.

Mr. Speaker, Doug helped organize the Remembrance Day celebrations at the Brandt Centre for many years. Perhaps his most famous and long-lasting contribution to Saskatchewan was creating the original Saskatchewan Roughriders' game mascot named Gainer. He received the Government of Canada Volunteer medal and the Saskatchewan Medal for outstanding achievement in volunteer service.

Of his many accomplishments, Mr. Speaker, his most treasured was his family: his wife of 60 years, Joanna; his two daughters, Wendy and Karen; and his beloved grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, Doug is a cherished member of the Saskatchewan broadcasting community. He will be remembered for his *Reading the Funnies* and his ability to entertain with a never-ending supply of great stories. He will be missed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Government Investment in Gordie Howe Sports Centre

Mr. Olauson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On September 4th, I had the privilege of emceeing the investment announcement for the Gordie Howe Sports Centre. This event was the official announcement of our government's investment into the Gordie Howe Sports Centre and many other exciting municipal projects through the Investing in Canada infrastructure program, or ICIP. It was my privilege to share a bit of the good work happening in Saskatoon in partnership with both the city of Saskatoon and the Government of Canada.

The Gordie Howe Sports Centre project will develop and construct new integrated sports fields, ball diamonds, and indoor and outdoor facilities, with the provincial government committing \$6.9 million towards these upgrades. The completed facility will improve the all-season, multi-sport facility complex in the heart of Saskatoon's historic west side Holiday Park neighbourhood.

Mr. Speaker, this is a project that will enhance the city of Saskatoon immensely. The new improvements will allow Saskatoon to host more sporting events, serve more of Saskatchewan's youth, and be a great attraction for visitors to Saskatoon. At the announcement, I had the opportunity to meet with people from the Holiday Park neighbourhood who are very excited about the project, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, I now ask all members of this Assembly to thank some very important volunteers and donors: Mr. Greg Yuel, Mr. Bryan Kosteroski, Mr. Johnny Marciniuk, and the whole DCG Philanthropic team, without whom this project would never have come to fruition. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

Workplace Safety Strategy

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand today to discuss the release of our government's fatalities and serious injuries strategy. Mr. Speaker, workplace health and safety is a top priority for this government, and today's announcement is a significant step forward in helping to reduce the number of serious workplace injuries and fatalities that take place in Saskatchewan.

We are always working towards Mission: Zero — zero injuries, zero suffering, and zero fatalities. Today's announcement of the fatalities and serious injuries strategy is an important part of achieving that. This strategy is led by WorkSafe Saskatchewan, a partnership between the Workers' Compensation Board and the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety.

Mr. Speaker, this strategy is set for three years and will be targeting four priority injury areas including asbestos exposure, work-related motor vehicle crashes, firefighter cancer exposure, and falls from heights.

Mr. Speaker, workplace safety is everyone's responsibility and our government is pleased that so many stakeholders have been involved in putting this strategy together. Workplace injuries and

fatalities leave devastating impacts on families, friends, and colleagues. Our goal is to make sure not one more worker is injured because of a workplace accident. The fatalities and serious injuries strategy is about ensuring every worker returns home to their families safe at the end of every shift. Thank you.

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

Movember Changes the Face of Men's Health

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. About a month ago, many of my legislative colleagues and I came up with a plan. You might call it a growth plan. We decided to spend the month of Movember growing our facial hair. Now this had nothing to do with vanity, Mr. Speaker, at least at first. We did this as part of a global movement to start a conversation about men's health. In the process we also managed to raise a few dollars for Movember Canada.

Mr. Speaker, Movember is the leading charity dedicated to changing the face of men's health. In fact it aims to reduce the number of men dying prematurely by 25 per cent by 2030. Mr. Speaker, Movember brings awareness to issues such as prostate and testicular cancer, men's mental health, and suicide prevention. And while the facial hair isn't always pretty, the conversations and funds raised as part of Movember are pretty important.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank representatives from Movember Regina as well as all the emergency responders who helped us raise the Movember flag in front of the legislature early last month. And I would also like to thank all of those who decided to change their face for men's health, and of course to the countless individuals who showed their support by donating to such a worthy cause. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Provision of Emergency Health Care

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Call bells in the hallway, numbers on the walls in the halls — we've been hearing a great deal about hallway medicine as we travel around the province. We also heard about a hush memo that urged doctors not to advocate, and that that was linked to advocacy around hallway medicine, Mr. Speaker, which is important because in Saskatoon we've heard about a chronic extreme over-capacity issue.

In Saskatoon the time that you wait to see a physician in the emergency room is 2.8 hours, which is too long. In Regina it's 5.3 hours, nearly twice as long. That prompted a briefing note from emergency physician leaders here in Regina who said, and I quote, "Regina has historically been underfunded with regard to emergency physician staffing." Now that letter, which came out not long before the hush memo, was written by senior staff advocating for resources, doing so on SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] letterhead, sharing exactly the kind of information that this government would like to deny the public.

Does the minister believe that he can solve the crisis in our ERs [emergency room] without sufficient number of emergency

doctors in Regina? And does he honestly believe that the public is better off not knowing the truth behind his government's record on hallway medicine?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, the minister isn't going to solve the problem, Mr. Speaker. The minister is going to ensure that officials at the SHA and in the ministry have all the resources that they need, available, Mr. Speaker, that they can deal with the problem. They're the experts in the field, Mr. Speaker. That's who should be dealing with it.

Mr. Speaker, the member stands up every other day in the House and he has a new smoking gun with the memo that was leaked to him. Mr. Speaker, those memos aren't confidential. They're distributed amongst staff. We'll cc him on them from now on if he wants, for crying out loud.

Mr. Speaker, this is a problem right across the country. Mr. Speaker, all health officials right across the country are grappling with this. I've had a briefing this morning again with the CEO of the SHA, Mr. Speaker. They're making good strides as far as alternate-level-of-care patients being discharged appropriately, Mr. Speaker, and to other centres. Mr. Speaker, this is again a problem right across the country. They're working diligently to correct it.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If there's one thing we agree on, it's that this minister won't solve the problem. Because he won't admit that there is a problem. He won't acknowledge that there is a crisis in our emergency room. Saskatoon emergency rooms are chronically overcrowded, chronically over capacity.

Hallway medicine has become the norm under this minister, and it's only become worse in Regina, Mr. Speaker. There's 16 per cent more people in Saskatoon — it's a bigger city — but there are 40 per cent more emergency doctors in that city than in Regina. That's what this briefing note points out. No wonder waiting times are twice as long in Regina.

The note also goes on to say that if decreasing emergency room waits is a priority, the "... most significant variable left to address in Regina is to create equitable staffing scenarios at the tertiary centres."

The minister says he wants to hear from doctors. He says that resources won't be an obstacle. Mr. Speaker, will he respond to the doctors who have raised the issues of the crisis in Regina's emergency, the shortage in staff, by making the 37 full-time equivalent positions that they've advocated for available? Or does he just want them to stay silent and stop advocating for their patients?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, that's ridiculous. The member knows that the minister or the minister's office does not do staffing. We rely on the appropriate officials to do that.

I absolutely will be willing to meet with the doctors, Mr. Speaker. I don't turn down requests for meetings with doctors. But again this is a very serious issue, Mr. Speaker. It's being grappled with right across the country. Mr. Speaker, I've went through many, many times on the floor of this legislature what officials are attempting to do, both short term to alleviate the immediate pressures in the system, but what we're doing long term, Mr. Speaker: capital, including on top of the other capital builds we've already done, Mr. Speaker.

Absolutely it's a serious issue. I'd be happy to meet with those doctors any time, Mr. Speaker. It's important that we let officials in the SHA do their good work.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's not just a shortage of emergency physicians in Regina, although there are 40 per cent more emergency physicians in Saskatoon than in Regina. There are also twice as many anesthesiologists, 74 per cent more cardiologists, 78 per cent more internal medicine specialists, and more than 100 per cent more — more than twice as many — psychiatrists.

Now I trained in Saskatoon. I understand it's the training centre; the needs are different. But along with that training centre you also have residents, something that there are nowhere near as many medical residents working in Regina. All of that adds up to, with fewer residents and fewer specialists, a harder time for patients to get in to see their specialist, which means they're more likely to show up in the emergency room. When they do show up in the emergency room, there are fewer specialists to see them. They're there longer; they're taking up more space. Those wait times are getting longer, Mr. Speaker. All of this doctor shortage, failure to recruit, failure to staff appropriately, is resulting in longer emergency wait times.

Mr. Speaker, my question for the minister is this: will he acknowledge the crisis in our emergency rooms? Will he acknowledge what's going on with hallway medicine? And will he come up with a plan — not pass the buck down the line, but come up with a plan himself — to make sure that we have adequate staffing to meet the needs in our ERs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, absolutely I recognize how serious the issue is. Mr. Speaker, the SHA has instituted a command centre to deal with this issue of the long times in . . .

An Hon. Member: — In Saskatoon.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — For the province. Mr. Speaker, the member who's going to do things differently heckles from his seat. The command centre is located in Saskatoon, but it's for the province, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, they recognize how serious this issue is. They are working diligently on it. It's not unique to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And again, you know, Mr. Speaker, the member continues to heckle from his seat. But, Mr. Speaker, this is very important. This deserves discussion and debate, not rhetoric.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have well-qualified officials in the SHA who are working diligently on this. And for the member to somehow say no, no, not the people who are learned in the field, they shouldn't do it; you should do it, Minister. Part of the role of a minister, which I hope the members on the other side never ever have to worry about, Mr. Speaker, is to listen to the appropriate officials and trust their judgment.

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

Effect of Mental Health and Addictions Supports on Wait Times

Ms. Chartier: — Listen to the officials, trust their judgment, and provide the resources the people need to provide the health care the people deserve.

The opening of the Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford was supposed to alleviate pressures on our acute-care hospitals and in our emergency rooms, but we know the reality has been anything but. With a leaky roof, undrinkable water, and rooms closed due to broken pipes, people are being told they'll need to wait 18 months before they can receive a bed.

Kathy Genest has been advocating for her son, but is worried he may not survive waiting that long, and support should be available when people urgently need it.

To the minister: does he recognize that people are suffering while this government tries to figure out the mess that is the Sask Hospital North Battleford right now? And what interim supports will be introduced for people falling through those cracks?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, and as has been communicated to the members on the floor of this Assembly for some time, there's some issues with the construction of the new hospital, Mr. Speaker. Those issues are being worked at. In the meantime, officials continue to attempt to provide the best possible service that they can, Mr. Speaker.

I know Kathy Genest. I've met with her in the past, Mr. Speaker. Obviously, in issues like this, we will make sure that alternative sources of assistance are provided, Mr. Speaker.

Again, officials are working as quickly as they can to rectify the situation at the hospital in North Battleford.

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

Ms. Chartier: — And in the meantime people continue to suffer. The minister knows that when people aren't able to access timely in-patient or community care, there's nowhere to turn but our ERs. And this is exactly what happened to Kathy Genest's son. He's been waiting for three days in the new adult emergency room in the children's hospital, and their experience has been horrible. He's been sitting there since Friday afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and he was still there just a short while ago.

Her son is not only facing this incredibly long wait for a bed in

the Dubé Centre, he's been forced to sleep on a mat on the floor — one they needed to ask for, Mr. Speaker. Does this minister think patients who are in mental health crisis should be forced to sleep on the floor? And how on earth is this acceptable in a brand new hospital?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, we recognize the strains on the system for addictions and mental health. That's why you saw announcements in this past budget adding a great deal of resources to addictions and mental health, Mr. Speaker. Yes, you saw an announcement for the rapid access to addictions medicine clinics that are opening. In fact there was just an announcement for one in Prince Albert. You'll see them in Saskatoon and Regina.

Mr. Speaker, we've added beds. We're adding more addictions treatment beds. Mr. Speaker, we recognize the seriousness of the situation. But, Mr. Speaker, I take exception to the member who's heckling from her seat, Mr. Speaker, who is complaining because the hospital in North Battleford is not open.

Mr. Speaker, are we disappointed it's not fully functional yet? Yes we are; this is being worked on. But, Mr. Speaker, let's remember, the members opposite when they were government never got it done. Mr. Speaker, this government built that hospital.

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

[14:15]

Management of Government Program Funds

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, last week I asked the Minister for CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] a pretty straightforward question about the private company that has been paid \$10 million to manage the First Nations and Métis Fund and the Saskatchewan Immigrant Investor Fund. Mr. Speaker, my question shouldn't be too controversial. When someone gets paid to manage public funds, they should be made available to answer about the millions of dollars that they are in deficit.

So I'll ask the CIC minister the same question: will the Minister for CIC ensure representatives from Whitecap are present at the next meeting of the Crown and Central Agencies Committee to answer questions about the Saskatchewan Immigrant Investor Fund and the First Nations and Métis Fund?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, here's the reality. The First Nations and Métis Fund was established on the New Democrats, Mr. Speaker, back in 2005. And they sole-sourced that contract to Westcap Mgt., Mr. Speaker, and in that contract, the fees were well set out, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, and with respect to the Saskatchewan immigrant investment fund, Mr. Speaker, that contract was led by RFP [request for proposal] through CIC, Mr. Speaker, with the fees set out. The fees that were quoted, Mr. Speaker, were over 13 years, Mr. Speaker. There's quotes that we have from the auditor

talking about the detailed documentation of decisions, and we found that Westcap followed its established procedures, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, and with respect to the other fund, Mr. Speaker, those parameters were set out by the New Democrats. We congratulate them for putting that fund in place, Mr. Speaker, because it was recognizing that there was a deficiency in terms of supporting First Nations and Métis . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask one more, Mr. Speaker, with respect to who's next, Mr. Speaker. They stand on their feet, day after day, disparaging competent people who . . .

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the issue isn't about sole sourcing. It's about transparency and accountability when those individuals are managing public dollars.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. I recognize the member.

Ms. Sproule: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. Obviously they don't like this line of questions at all. This is not about politics, Mr. Speaker. It's not about those choices that were made about who's managing the funds. This is about transparency and accountability when spending public dollars.

For any other government fund, ministers appear with public servants who make management decisions and explain them at committee. It's that simple. With these two funds that's not the case because a private company is making all the decisions. Mr. Speaker, that's not how accountability is supposed to work.

So why won't the Minister for CIC let Grant Kook out of the Laurie Pushor witness protection program and come to the next meeting to answer our questions? What's he afraid of?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, there's many, many circumstances, Mr. Speaker, in which these answers can be given to committee. The minister has attended committee with his officials, and he has given the answers, Mr. Speaker.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's many funds that are managed for the Government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, pension funds that have losses and gains. We don't expect the managers of those funds to come to committee to explain the various losses or the gains within those, Mr. Speaker. It's not the practice of the fund manager to attend, Mr. Speaker.

And again I just comment, Mr. Speaker, that those members, day after day, stand up and casting aspersions by their questions with respected business people in the community, Mr. Speaker, whether it's a farmer in Estevan, whether it's a businessman in Regina, whether it's a member of the committee that I set up to deal with class size and composition, Mr. Speaker. It's the same old NDP [New Democratic Party], Mr. Speaker — nothing but

fear and smear, Mr. Speaker. We'll have none of it.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It looks like the Minister for CIC has lawyered up and isn't able to answer questions today, but I'll try again. The Minister for CIC is a supposed businessman, and he's supposed to know a thing or two about managing investments. You'd think that he'd be concerned that this private manager managed to put these two funds \$16 million into the red while charging the public \$10 million for the trouble.

Now there's no end to what that money could have been used for, Mr. Speaker. They could hire more doctors in Regina, fix our schools, better supports for vulnerable — the list goes on. But is this minister not curious at all about how this money has been managed? Or maybe if I put it another way, if a private manager lost \$16 million of his money, wouldn't he want to figure out how and why?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I will remind the member opposite that the First Nations and Métis Fund was created under their watch, Mr. Speaker. They signed the contract, Mr. Speaker. It was that contract that had their fees in it, Mr. Speaker. This should come as no surprise. They would have had confidence in the fund manager, Mr. Speaker, to manage those funds on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan. And this side of the House continues to have confidence in that fund manager, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, he's a respected businessman in the city of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker.

That's why we have professional management, Mr. Speaker, especially, especially, Mr. Speaker, where we have a fund . . . It's been established by the New Democrats. Fair enough. They should be congratulated for recognizing the fact that with respect to First Nations and Métis, Mr. Speaker, they were having challenges, so establishing a fund, establishing a fund to help those businesses succeed, Mr. Speaker, that was a valuable tool — one that we accepted, Mr. Speaker.

But the terms of the contract with respect to that fund were established by them. And with respect to the immigrant investment fund, Mr. Speaker, that was established by CIC and their board of directors.

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

Funding for Community-Based Organizations

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, earlier today I presented petitions calling on this government to provide adequate and predictable funding for community-based organizations in Saskatchewan. More than 1,300 people have signed on, calling for multi-year supports. These organizations do vital work in our community helping the most vulnerable with housing, health care, mental health, and disabilities.

But the lack of stable, predictable funding makes it hard to keep staff and harder to provide the services people need. Will the

Minister of Social Services listen to those who have signed the petition and ensure CBOs have the stable, predictable funding they need?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and first off I want to thank all the organizations, community-based organizations that are out across our province performing this valuable deed that they're doing for the most vulnerable in our province.

Mr. Speaker, we have been working with organizations like SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres] and I've personally attended several of these organizations to be able to meet with their executive directors along with their staff. They have voiced their concerns, Mr. Speaker, and this will be part of the upcoming budget process.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to point out for the record that we have increased the disability budget by 145 million, which is 210 per cent, since forming government, and that's in 10 years, as opposed to the member opposite that only increased it by 34 per cent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — That minister knows a thing or two about putting the squeeze on community-based organizations. Mr. Speaker, the lack of funding is bad for CBOs funded by Social Services, but we know it's even worse for those funded by Health. Without multi-year funding, CBOs cannot plan into the future.

This is a model that was introduced in Manitoba and made a real difference. CBOs were able to plan into the long term and look two or three years down the road, rather than just looking at the next 12 months until funding runs out. Why won't the Sask Party commit to adequate multi-year funding for the CBOs that are working on the front lines and addressing poverty in Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to point . . . In our budget last year, there was an increase of \$10.4 million. It was spread across multi areas of the community-based organizations which included training, transportation, and wages, because that's what we were hearing from that, Mr. Speaker.

But it's very curious, Mr. Speaker, how they seem to have found their voice on people with disabilities, Mr. Speaker, because when they had their . . . The last time they went to the polls of the people of Saskatchewan, not a thing was mentioned in their platform at all about people with disabilities. Now they seem to be able to stand on their feet and find their voice about this. It didn't seem to be a concern to them in 2016, Mr. Speaker.

We're very proud of our record that we've done with our community-based organizations, and we'll continue to do that in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Changes to Income Assistance Program

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, front-line workers, housing providers, and advocates have been warning of the consequences of the changes in the income support program. We've raised this issue in this House several times now but the minister isn't listening. Not only do clients get less support for utilities, which are now rolled into the shelter allowance, but direct payments are a challenge for many. Some who want to have their rent and utilities paid directly have had their choice taken away. With the new income support cuts, some of the most vulnerable clients are having their power or gas cut off — or worse, eviction notices. Will the Minister of Social Services do the right thing and fix the many problems that he's created with this new program?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I again want to correct the record. We're very proud of this program that we've created within Social Services, and these are the changes that people have been asking for, Mr. Speaker. When they go . . . And I've referenced this before in the House, Mr. Speaker. They seem to think that Social Services clients all have addictions problems, Mr. Speaker, and that's not the case. We have very good off-ramps for anybody that is identified upfront.

As far as rent, Mr. Speaker, I've identified that already. We're getting rid of . . . dispelling the misnomer that somebody has to go in with a rent slip, Mr. Speaker, that they have to go in and pay their utilities. People aren't getting cut off, Mr. Speaker. When they come in and they have an arrears within Social Services with one of the Crown corporations there before, we're sitting down and we're identifying that with them, Mr. Speaker, to be able to find out what their payment plan is and start them on that payment plan so they can have a good credit rating, Mr. Speaker, and start to move forward again in life. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Mr. Speaker, this program is simply not adequate to meet the needs of the most vulnerable in our province. These are vulnerable people who struggle with addictions, mental health, and cognitive issues, and they're speaking out, saying the new approach doesn't work for them.

Mr. Speaker, there are legitimate concerns that the inadequate benefits that leave people short will increase domestic violence, emergency room visits, and homelessness, costing much more in the long term as more people fall through the cracks. Why won't the minister admit this is a bad idea, listen to the front-line workers and landlord associations, and reinstate the direct payment of the rent option and the letter of guarantee?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — I put a question back to the opposition: why don't they have any faith in our clients, Mr. Speaker, to be able to overcome these needs with some assistance, Mr. Speaker?

We've also done, Mr. Speaker, the earning exemptions, where they can earn up to \$500. This is the first time ever in the history of Saskatchewan that we've had earning exemptions on this, Mr. Speaker. We're very proud of these. I have talked to the organizations multiple times, multiple times. I have met with them multiple times . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. I'm having difficulty hearing the answer. I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to work with our organizations. This is a new program, Mr. Speaker, that has earning exemptions, as well as it does have the rent inside the full amount, Mr. Speaker. And we're continuing to work on things with our federal government. If there are any gaps within that, we will be addressing them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Education has struck yet another committee on education. Now if the Minister of Education were actually listening the way that he says he is, he might not need so many committees to tell him what everyone in education already knows. And that is, more supports are needed now to address the crisis in our classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, at every turn, resources are outstripped by needs. The Saskatoon Catholic school division recently put in a request for 18 portables, Mr. Speaker, including 10 for the brand new cookie cutter P3 [public-private partnership] schools that this government forced onto divisions. Will the minister ensure that there is adequate support for public education in the next budget? Or better yet, will he offer school divisions the relief that they need today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure what the opposition member has, what she has against establishing a committee to determine a path forward to deal with the very complex issue of composition in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

Members opposite, including the Leader of the Opposition and the member, the critic, Mr. Speaker, have stood on their feet and said, they have said that money is not the only answer, Mr. Speaker. We can't continually throw money at public education and expect to solve the problems that we have in our classrooms. But that's exactly what they're expecting us to do, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

So as we plan, as we plan our work, Mr. Speaker . . . And the committee met for the first time last week. I'm very proud of the fact that they met, Mr. Speaker. They're going to be meeting on a very regular basis, a very esteemed group of people that are going to provide advice to me and this government, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the supports that we need in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker.

But our intent, Mr. Speaker, is always to ensure that we are providing the proper resources to the teachers, to the classrooms, to the school divisions, Mr. Speaker, in this province so that we can ensure that proper education service is delivered to our kids in the classroom. And that's our job one in the Ministry of Education, Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Agreement Signed to Develop Small Modular Reactors

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Saskatchewan have good stories to tell when it comes to climate change. Ontario has made significant emissions reductions of 62 megatonnes. New Brunswick's climate change plan reduces emissions beyond 40 per cent of 2005 levels.

And here in Saskatchewan our current plan continues a commitment to reduce emissions in the electricity sector by 40 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030. We believe that we can do this without unnecessary taxes that burden families and businesses, taxes that will do little to actually reduce emissions.

Saskatchewan's plan of Prairie Resilience achieves our emissions reductions through targeted investments and innovative technology in our emitting industries without impacting jobs and our economy because responsibility to address climate change also comes with a responsibility to protect our economies, keeping jobs in our provinces and keeping our sustainable industries competitive.

Yesterday, premiers and provinces looked towards the coming decade and beyond to advance the development of zero-emission, small modular reactor technology. Implementing small modular reactors will provide meaningful action in reducing carbon emissions in electricity production while providing affordable baseload power to our communities and industries.

In addition to providing reliable and sustainable and affordable baseload power supply, this technology has the potential of creating high-quality jobs and local economic development in communities where existing transmission infrastructure exists, or in rural and remote communities that currently rely on high-emissions methods of producing power.

Twenty per cent of the world's production of uranium is mined and milled in northern Saskatchewan. This industry is the largest private employer of Indigenous people in our province. Today 87 per cent of uranium is exported for use in foreign nuclear power reactors. Thirteen per cent is used to fuel Canadian nuclear power reactors. For domestic use, Saskatchewan's yellowcake is refined at Blind Lake, Ontario to produce uranium trioxide. At Port Hope, Ontario, uranium trioxide is converted to uranium dioxide and uranium hexafluoride. Uranium dioxide is used to fuel CANDU nuclear reactors while uranium hexafluoride is exported for enrichment and used in foreign light-water reactors.

Fuel pellets the size of 25-cent coins are assembled into tubes for fuel. One pellet provides the same energy as nearly a half tonne

of coal. Our research institutions have made Saskatchewan and Canada a leader in nuclear research and technology, and it doesn't stop at electricity. Nuclear science is being applied to materials, testing, pharmacology, nuclear medicine, food and agriculture, waste water treatment, and environmental protection. We know that Saskatchewan is home to the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation that houses a unique high-energy cyclotron, a radiopharmaceutical production facility, and radiochemistry laboratories.

On the emissions side, our current plan would see a 40 per cent reduction in emissions in our electricity generation by adding carbon capture and storage to our coal-fired generators or replacing them with combined-cycle natural gas and increasing renewable generation capacity from our current 25 to 50 per cent.

While there's still licensing, prototyping, and investment decisions to make, some have concerns about the radioactive waste. By incorporating SMRs [small and medium-sized reactor] in place of natural gas or coal generation with CCS [carbon capture and storage], that 40 per cent emissions reduction target could actually move to elimination of Saskatchewan's electrical generation emissions by 2050.

The fuel in SMRs have no environmental by-product like coal, and used fuel is stored for the long term until such a time in the future that it is economical for reuse. This is a positive for Saskatchewan, a positive for Canada, and is taking real action in addressing global climate change.

To this end, our Premier joined Premiers Ford and Higgs to sign a memorandum of understanding to support early-stage evaluation, planning, and commercialization to further develop small modular reactor technology options. Together our provinces can achieve bigger and bolder objectives and seize the opportunity to play a major role in the development and deployment of small modular reactor technology in Canada. In doing so, Canadians working together from coast to coast to coast can play an even larger role in addressing climate change across Canada and throughout the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'd like to thank the minister for providing his advance comments. It's always very helpful when we get a sense of what the minister will be addressing in the House.

Mr. Speaker, as everyone knows, small modular reactors are several years away from being viable. We absolutely need to be investing in research on this, but it's too early to know if this technology will bear fruit. In fact the CEO of SaskPower said at the Crown and Central Agencies Committee on September 17th of this year, and this is a quote:

Small modular reactor technology is just in the development stage. As the minister indicated, we are working with other utilities but a technology has not even yet been selected to be developed, let alone in the process of being developed. So we're at least a decade, if not more, away from having a viable SMR industry in Canada that we can point to.

So, Mr. Speaker, there remains a lot of unknowns with this

technology. And certainly the CEO of SaskPower is someone that we should listen to, Mr. Speaker, on this. And, Mr. Speaker, another point. Northern folks who work in the uranium sector have of course been hit hard by market forces and layoffs, and we hope that the government would address the needs of those workers and communities as they've done in the southeast corner of the province with coal workers.

But in the meantime we need a government with a real plan to address the challenges of our electricity system and our other emissions, Mr. Speaker, but in particular the electricity system challenges we're facing as we round the corner to former prime minister Stephen Harper's phase-out of coal in 2030. And we need a government with a plan to implement a meaningful renewable strategy instead of one that destroys entire industries with the stroke of a pen.

Mr. Speaker, my big question about this announcement is the terms of the agreement. And when these three premiers say they are supporting this development, what exactly does support mean? Are there dollars attached to that? We have no information with regards to the investment that Saskatchewan people are being asked to put in. So until we know the details, Mr. Speaker, I think that's something the government needs to be much more forthcoming on. And we hope to hear more information in the days to come.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 203 — *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 203, *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 203 be now introduced and read a first time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — 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. 204 — *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019* *Loi modificative de 2019 sur le jury*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 204,

The Jury Amendment Act, 2019, a bilingual bill, be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 204 be now introduced and read a first time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — 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.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Question of Privilege

Ruling — Premature Disclosure of Contents of a Bill

The Speaker: — On November 26th, 2019 the Opposition House Leader raised a question of privilege concerning the release of details related to Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, before its introduction to the Legislative Assembly. I've deferred my ruling twice to ensure a fulsome and careful review of the practice and precedents from Saskatchewan and other jurisdictions.

In her case, the Opposition House Leader claims that the Minister of Health made comments to the media prior to providing information to the opposition. She alleges that the early release of information constitutes a contempt of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan by preventing all members from exercising their duties and responsibilities as members of the Legislative Assembly.

I'd first like to address the precedents presented in the member's question of privilege and then address the much broader issue of an early release of a bill or its contents.

To support her case, the Opposition House Leader cited a case from the House of Commons in Ottawa regarding the premature disclosure of details of Bill C-14. Speaker Regan decided the release of specific details of that bill before its introduction constituted a prima facie question of privilege. The Opposition House Leader also noted that Speaker Tochor used the Regan ruling on June 2nd, 2016 to support his decision that the release of embargoed information about the provincial budget constituted a prima facie case of privilege.

I think it's necessary to address these two decisions because they are somewhat pivotal to the Opposition House Leader's case. I will begin with Speaker Tochor's ruling.

In her case, the Opposition House Leader quoted Speaker

Tochor's decision not to accept apologies for the budget leak. I remind members that I addressed the subject of apologies on March 14th, 2018 when I said:

It is my belief that members come to this place with honourable intentions. When a mistake is made, the right thing to do is to apologize. There is no doubt that the consequence of a member's action is an important consideration in determining questions of privilege. There might well be instances when an ample and genuine apology is not sufficient, but it is this Speaker's general belief that the willingness of a member to make amends should be an important consideration in deciding cases.

I'll now address the broader issues of Speaker Regan and Speaker Tochor's decisions as they relate to the case before us. Speaker Tochor cited the Bill C-14 case because he believed Saskatchewan's sole precedent on a budget leak did not match the circumstance of the case before him. In Saskatchewan, House of Commons' practice is to be considered under the authority of rule 1 only in unprovided situations. In the House of Commons rulings, he found an evolving situation with precedents that seemed to contradict the historical standards for Speaker's rulings on privileged questions concerning budget leaks.

Speaker Tochor found House of Commons practice to be out of step with more recent rulings on the premature release of information on bills. In reference to the Bill C-14 case, he said, "It is also my point of view that the leak of budget information is as significant, or possibly even more significant, than the leak of a bill before it is tabled in the Assembly."

It is important to recall that Speaker Tochor's decision was in the context of a budget leak and the lack of a directly relevant Saskatchewan precedent. In consideration of the case at hand, it is worth reviewing the application of rule 1 since that is how Speaker Tochor came to cite the Bill C-14 ruling.

Under rule 1, only when Saskatchewan does not have its own rules or practices do we turn to other jurisdictions. Speaker Brockelbank stated on April 5th, 1976, "... rule one applies only if Saskatchewan does not have an applicable rule, precedent or practice."

So before turning to other jurisdictions, the Speaker should review whether this Legislative Assembly has any relevant precedent. I have done this and have found several rulings relevant to this case. On December 4th, 1975; June 2nd, 1988; April 22nd, 1991; and on May 31st, 1993, questions of privilege were raised when either a bill or its contents were released prior to introduction in the Assembly. Speaker Rolfes summarized Saskatchewan's practice in his ruling on May 13th, 1993 when he stated:

While neither the rules nor the precedents require that Bills must be kept confidential until introduced in the Assembly, it is not customary for a bill to be distributed to the public before it is introduced in this Assembly. Notwithstanding that custom, at no time has the advanced release of a bill been found to breach any privilege.

In each of these cases, the Speaker ruled it is an important parliamentary convention that a minister first release a bill in the Assembly before releasing it to the public or media.

As Speaker Tochor pointed out, it appears that practice has been evolving at the House of Commons in Ottawa. For that reason, I want to turn back to the Bill C-14 case for the moment. Members are well aware that Speakers do not determine questions of privilege. It is up to the Assembly to decide if breaches of privilege and occurrences of contempt have occurred. It is noteworthy that the House of Commons never did determine that contempt had been committed by the premature release of the details of Bill C-14. The issue was ordered to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs on April 16th, 2016, but a decision was not reported back to the House of Commons.

It is also instructive to review precedents set in other jurisdictions. A jurisdictional survey of questions of privilege across the country does not indicate any case where an Assembly found contempt for the early disclosure of information from a bill, even when a *prima facie* case had been established. Additionally, Speakers across the country have consistently found that no *prima facie* case can be established without specific details of a bill being provided to the media. This has been confirmed by the rulings of Speakers in Alberta on November 8th, 2016, December 2nd, 2013, and March 7th, 2000; British Columbia on March 23rd, 2004 and February 23rd, 1973; Manitoba on May 22nd, 2018; and Quebec on June 13th, 2014, November 14th, 2007, and October 25th, 2005.

Speakers have demonstrated a common concern for respect to the parliamentary convention of first access to legislative information. This was the basis of Speaker Kowalsky's decision of April 11th, 2005 when members of the opposition were denied access to a technical briefing provided to the media on a legislative matter. House of Commons Speaker Regan stated on May 7th, 2018 "... it remains incumbent upon those who are responsible for legislative information to respect the primacy of Parliament by respecting the right of the House to first access."

In all the Saskatchewan precedents I cited, while finding no breach of privilege, the Speakers did admonish the government for not respecting the convention that members should be advised of new policies first. I have pointed out that our own precedents show that at no time has the advanced release of a bill been found to breach any privilege.

It appears that the needle has moved a little in some jurisdictions, but there are no examples of a case proceeding without *prima facie* evidence confirming the release of a very specific and detailed content of a bill.

In the case before us, the minister provided notice of introduction of Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act* on Thursday, November 21st, 2019. On Monday, November 25th, 2019 he provided general information to the media about the intent of the bill. The Opposition House Leader said the opposition received an embargoed copy of Bill No. 199 at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, November 26th, 2019, before it was introduced in the Assembly later that day.

I've not been provided with evidence that the media was given access to the bill, any content of the bill, or specific details of the

bill prior to its provision to the members of the opposition. Consequently this question of privilege does not equate to the situation Speaker Kowalsky ruled on in connection to access to technical briefings and embargoes.

House of Commons Speaker Regan stated on June 8th, 2017 and re-emphasized on May 7th, 2018:

The right of the House to first access to legislation is one of our oldest conventions. It does and must, however, coexist with the need of governments to consult widely, with the public and stakeholders alike, on issues and policies in the preparation of legislation.

The minister's comments to the media in response to questions about Bill No. 199 speak in very general terms about the objectives of the bill. The minister also expressed an inability to speak further to the legislation prior to its introduction, which demonstrated his intent to adhere to the parliamentary convention of first access.

An allegation as serious as contempt requires a thorough analysis. This has been achieved by scrutinizing our own precedents as well as those nationwide and by examining the facts of the case. Based on this evidence I find that members were not impeded in the discharge of their parliamentary duties and that a prima facie case has not been established.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — I now table the Legislative Library annual report for the period April 1st, 2018 to March 31st, 2019.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 79.

The Speaker: — Tabled, 79. I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answer to question no. 80.

The Speaker: — Ordered, question 80.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 200 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019*

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to move second reading of Bill 200, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019*. The key changes we are introducing include increasing and expanding leaves, strengthening the roles of radiation health officers to reinforce workplace safety, and

clarifying adjudication processes and roles.

This bill increases parental leave by eight weeks. This will ensure that employees that are entitled to the additional employment insurance shared-parental benefit can also receive job-protected leave while accessing the benefit. Bringing a child into a family is a joy that we want families to be able to experience together, and in total a maximum of 71 weeks of parental leave is now available.

Still with amendments to leave provisions, we are expanding candidate public office leave to include employees who are running for election to a band council. Mr. Speaker, I think that as elected officials we can say that making the decision to run for office is one that is never made without considerable thought, and providing job protection for an employee who wants to seek election to band council hopefully encourages participation. This change now provides the same level of job protection provided to those running or elected to civic councils and school boards, which is the right thing to do.

We've also made amendments to the Act unrelated to employment leaves. In the area of workplace health and safety, we are providing radiation health officers with the ability to issue compliance undertakings and notices of contravention very much like their counterparts in occupational health and safety can. We are also establishing higher penalties for second or subsequent offences and establishing an appeal process that is consistent with that outlined for occupational health and safety within the Act. As part of our recently released Saskatchewan growth plan, we acknowledge that reducing the number of serious workplace injuries and fatalities is important, and one step that is ensuring workplaces are in compliance with health and safety requirements. This change to the Act will help enforce and promote exactly that.

We are also making consequential amendments to the appeal provisions of the Act which will enable adjudicators to hear appeals related to this specific section of the Act. In addition, amendments are being made to the appeal provisions to enable parties to apply to the Labour Relations Board to require an adjudicator to provide a decision and, where a decision is not forthcoming, to appoint another adjudicator to hear and decide the matter. Currently an application may only be made to the courts. Mr. Speaker, we believe that by engaging and listening to our stakeholders we are able to ensure the legislation we have is fair and relevant.

The next change we have made to the Act is to enable strikes and lockouts to occur when an application is pending before the Labour Relations Board. Previously this was considered an unfair labour practice, and we wanted to bring clarity to this issue and ensure that we are not interfering with the rights of employees or employers to take job action.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, we have made a few housekeeping changes within the Act that include, firstly, removing the requirement to reduce the assessed wages owed by the amount earned by the worker during the notice period when an employee is terminated without cause; secondly, re-establishing the court's ability to reinstate an employee to former position when they have been discriminated against by their employer; and thirdly, clarifying that the directors of occupational health and safety and

employment standards have 30 days to appeal an adjudicator's decision.

The amendments to the Act will help establish a fair and competitive business environment that will set us on the right path for growth. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister has moved that Bill No. 200, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'm going to beg the support of the Chamber today, Mr. Speaker. I'm struggling with a cold so I may be, from time to time, trying to make sense of not only why my head's so stuffed but why my message is confusing.

But, Mr. Speaker, my initial response around Bill 200, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019*, Mr. Speaker, it's very important to note to the people of Saskatchewan, as we look at this particular bill, any amendments proposed when it comes to the Saskatchewan people and the employees of the Saskatchewan businesses and companies, and especially the employees of this particular government, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that we spend as much time evaluating what the bill is proposing and certainly to dissect what is being suggested in some of the rules and regulations. Because for years and years and years we have known that this particular party has gone to war with the working men and women of the province, Mr. Speaker.

We've seen evidence of that today, so the moment we hear any changes under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, Mr. Speaker, the NDP caucus obviously pay very, very close attention to what is being proposed, Mr. Speaker. And this is why, I think, overall when we look at these particular bills, we encourage people themselves to participate in the process and to really go through some of the rules and regulations and the changes to the legislation with a fine-tooth comb because again, like most of the working men and women in our province, Mr. Speaker, they watch very carefully what this right wing Saskatchewan Party conservative government is proposing under the employment amendment Acts of any sort, Mr. Speaker.

At the outset I can tell you that, as the minister briefly spent a few minutes talking about, it authorizes radiation health officers to issue compliance undertakings and notice of contravention in this particular Act. It amends penalty provisions under the above section to provide a second and subsequent offences, as I mentioned earlier. And it also provides the director of occupational health and safety and the director of employment standards have the right to appeal an adjudicator's decision within 30 business days of receipt of that decision. So, Mr. Speaker, the preface to that is you look at the Labour Relations Board. They have to produce a written decision following a delayed adjudication process to replace the adjudicator if a decision is not provided.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said, we've looked at some of the changes around this particular part of the Act and it's a bit confusing as to what is being proposed. Why is it being proposed? These are

the tough questions that we have.

It will also provide, Mr. Speaker, the amendment Act today provides 86 weeks of parental leave if two employees are taking leave with respect to the same child.

It also expands "candidate and public office leave" to include employees that are running for elections to a band council. So, Mr. Speaker, that's something that we obviously have been advocating for, in a sense if people want to leave their employment to seek public office that they are able to do so in a very seamless and non-confrontational way, where there's not huge costs to this individual if he or she decides to pursue public office. And now it engages the band council election as they do with municipal elections, Mr. Speaker.

So it's something that's really important for us to recognize that there are many occasions where First Nations employees of our government, and employees of our province overall, that if they decide to pursue an office of some sort, at some level, that they would have the ability to provide leave to them.

As well, Mr. Speaker, this bill talks about parental leave from 63 to 71 weeks. This is obviously something that's really important in this day and age. As we all know, spending more time with our children is highly, highly valuable. And as time marches on, Mr. Speaker, that time becomes more valuable. But the stress that many parents face when they have to balance their work life with their home life and their responsibilities as parents, it does become very, very stressful and very trying and tiring.

[15:00]

So I think it's important to know that it's all about building solid and very stable families. That's an initiative I think overall from our perspective as the official opposition that we would take. It does not come with a compromise of productivity, Mr. Speaker. Many times you hear some of the right-wing conservatives talk about that, Mr. Speaker. We know that in many practices in the business community, when one's able to balance life and balance work, and that the company that they work for recognize their aspirations to achieve that balance, then, Mr. Speaker, you see that productivity does increase.

So it's important to know that there is a sense that is required to balance off the stresses of working and the stresses of raising a family, because there are stresses. But at the end of the day, if they're able to balance both demands and continue being productive, then you find, Mr. Speaker, that the output of any employee, the value of any employee, really is improved very much and that helps the company on many fronts.

So I think overall that the bill itself, as I said, the official opposition is going to be very careful and very conscious. Any time there's any reference to the employment Act by this particular government, we become automatically very, very defensive and we become automatically very, very . . . Well we scrutinize the bill first of all and we spend many, many hours on this particular bill to make sure there's nothing that the Saskatchewan Party will try and sneak that will hurt the working men and women of this province.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have a long ways to go and we'll continue

watching the bill as it moves forward to each level of its proclamation stage. And my caucus colleagues will have a lot to say about this particular bill, and particularly the member from Saskatoon Centre who has dedicated his life to protecting working men and women of this province, and that it's something that we should really thank him for. And I look forward to his comments in particular because, Mr. Speaker, we do have a lot of people that are employed in our province, through the government, and over the years we have seen some of their ranks decimated, so we are very, very careful to make sure that none of that initiative or effort is being undertaken under Bill 200, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019*. And I move that we adjourn debate on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 200. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 201 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today to move second reading of *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act, 2019*. This item relates to proposed changes to *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act, 1997*. The changes proposed will do the following: respond to changes the federal government has made related to importation of liquor between provinces; simplify authorities to enter into agreements with liquor warehouses, further align cannabis and liquor fines.

The concept of third-party liquor warehousing is not new to Saskatchewan. Third-party beer warehouses have been operating in our province for decades. Warehouses operated by Brewers Distributor Ltd. and Sleeman's already distribute the majority of mainstream beer in the province, shipping directly to retailers around the province.

SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] currently relies on out-of-province warehouses to fill many of the wine and spirit specialty orders it receives from retailers.

This change means warehouses distributing speciality wine, beer, and spirits can establish operations in Saskatchewan and in turn employ Saskatchewan people. It also means existing third-party beer distributors have the opportunity to broaden their business to include speciality wine and spirit products, if they so chose.

The speciality warehouse model is intended to complement SLGA's distribution centre, not replace it. SLGA's distribution centre will focus on its strength of efficiently and effectively distributing popular high-volume products that comprise the majority of the market.

Mr. Speaker, SLGA already collects markups on all products distributed in Saskatchewan including products from existing

Saskatchewan third-party warehouse. This will not change. Liquor markups will continue to be collected on all products distributed in the province.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019*. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The minister has moved that Bill No. 201, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you once again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I take my spot and my place to speak on this particular bill, Bill No. 201, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker. And as the minister alluded to, he spoke about a number of agreements that authorize the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority to enter into agreements with any person for warehousing or delivery of speciality liquor products. He clarifies that only retail store permittees will be able to purchase alcohol directly from a person with whom SLGA has entered into an agreement. And, Mr. Speaker, it creates a penalty for a person who refuses to produce identification to a liquor permittee, and it creates an offence to having and keeping beverage alcohol not purchased from or through SLGA.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the role of SLGA is something that we obviously . . . It impacts and it involves this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, because certainly from the perspective of liquor distribution throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, we have seen over the last number of years, the growing trend towards privatization of the liquor markets in the province of Saskatchewan.

And often the question is asked, like what was happening prior to this, Mr. Speaker? As we privatized many of the stores that we've had a history of doing or that government has a history of doing, Mr. Speaker, it really talks about the loss of revenues that the province of Saskatchewan enjoyed when many of these stores were being run as a Crown.

So, Mr. Speaker, in 2014 the data shows that the sales of alcohol within Saskatchewan is \$391 million in revenues, but the cost to the province, Mr. Speaker, is now pegged at close to \$600 million. And the cost to the health care system, social services, corrections and policing, Mr. Speaker, these costs are expected to increase. And the question that we have is, how are you going to begin to offset these costs, especially now that the profits on some of the sales within SLGA, primarily liquor sales, are going to companies down east?

And, Mr. Speaker, that's the kind of sense that the current Saskatchewan Party government is trying to impress upon the people of Saskatchewan. First we'll sell the liquor stores that are making incredible profit for the people of Saskatchewan, and then we'll bring in more privatization, and then the profits from our privatization agenda will go to these eastern-based companies. But in the meantime the cost to our health care system is up and up and up, and the people of Saskatchewan will pay that cost.

That's exactly what we want to point out, Mr. Speaker, in this

particular Bill 201, that as we look at what the government is trying to achieve in Bill 201, to allow them to privatize even more services within SLGA, it really impacts the question of, number one, where is the profits of these particular sales going, Mr. Speaker? It's going to the companies in Eastern Canada. Who is paying for the cost, Mr. Speaker, overall on some of the issues that arise from some of the increase in sales, as I mentioned earlier? The increase could be anywhere from the cost to the health care system, social services, correction and policing, which is pegged at almost \$600 million per year, Mr. Speaker.

Well in the brightness of the Saskatchewan Party strategy, they're giving away the profits of SLGA and they've taken the cost of some of the challenges as it pertains to the products that the SLGA sells, Mr. Speaker. And this bill certainly talks about that. So they reduce . . . The recommendation from many of the policy think tanks talk about how we can make SLGA a more socially conscious entity with the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And this is exactly what we talk about in the opposition. We talk about the role of CIC. We heard today that we're asking for accountability around the investment fund. We're asking for accountability on the First Nations and Métis Fund, Mr. Speaker. None whatsoever, Mr. Speaker.

And on this particular bill, as it impacts this particular Crown, Mr. Speaker, we're asking them to assess the damage and cost to our health care system, to the policing cost, and to the health care system, Mr. Speaker. How do we incorporate that almost \$600 million cost? How do we recover from the activities within SLGA that they've privatized to their private corporate buddies when that profit is being moved and sucked away to Eastern Canada and none of the resources stay here in Saskatchewan? So once again their private well-connected business community gets the profits. The people of Saskatchewan, the taxpayers get the headaches, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly why the Saskatchewan Party should not be trusted with the Crowns, Mr. Speaker. And that's another reason why when anything comes up with labour law or anything comes up involving the Crowns, as a bill here today, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan ought to be concerned. Because the official opposition is totally concerned that this government has come along and they've done a number of initiatives, initiatives that based on their philosophy is hurtful to the people of Saskatchewan. And they never took any of that into account.

So whether it is selling, Mr. Speaker, a land titles grant, which is known as Information Services Corporation . . . The Information Services Corporation generated \$14 million a year profit for the people of Saskatchewan. It was a Crown corporation. SLGA generated well over half a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker, for the people of Saskatchewan to offset the cost to health care, to policing, social services, etc. But now in their not-infinite wisdom, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party decided to give the profit to someone else and the headache to the Saskatchewan taxpayer, as witnessed by this particular effort to continue down the road of privatization.

So that's exactly our point, Mr. Speaker. As the opposition, we're asking for accountability, transparency, and oversight on some of these poor decisions around things like, Mr. Speaker,

privatization. We want to know what's going on. We want to know what's going on in this initiative. How have they determined the cost to our system versus the profit that they're giving away? And that's one of the things that they don't want to talk about, Mr. Speaker, because they know very well some of the policies that they've enacted are hurtful to the people of Saskatchewan, and they'll be hurtful for years to come.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've got to have that robust discussion that we . . . Again, we talked about the immigration investment fund this morning and the First Nations and Métis relations fund. We talked about the impact of bills such as this, Mr. Speaker. And we're asking for one simple thing — oversight. We need to ask questions.

And I notice every time we ask questions about any Crown corporation, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatchewan Party becomes very defensive. They become very defensive and almost like they begin to circle each other, Mr. Speaker. And evidence of that was today when we talked about the First Nations and Métis Fund, Mr. Speaker, that all of a sudden they started throwing out these accusations that we're hunting or headhunting these guys and giving them a hard time. No, no.

The questions we have, Mr. Speaker, are legitimate questions. Have they done a full impact on things and bills of this sort? They have not thought it through, Mr. Speaker. When you're paying somebody \$10 million, as we did in today's question period, and they've lost 16 million, you begin to ask the questions. Where's the accountability? And once again they're hiding.

So getting back to this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, it's the same premise that we have in dealing with any of the Crown corporations, from the opposition perspective. The people of Saskatchewan have a right to know, what have you got planned with this particular initiative? Who are the benefactors as a result of some of the changes to this particular bill because evidence have shown, Mr. Speaker, that historically that the Saskatchewan Party have never defended the Crowns.

Every bit that they're able to sell, they've sold off, whether it's a land titles branch that was generating 14 million, whether it was the Saskatchewan Transportation Company that was providing service and really a reduced cost for supplying the entire province, Mr. Speaker, of providing goods and services, and providing that link to the business communities in rural and northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and now with SLGA.

This minister has not done an assessment of his exactly the privatization agenda. How has it hurt our province? They have not done an assessment properly because all they care about is the privatization thought process, Mr. Speaker. They have not thought about the cost to the people of Saskatchewan. And that's exactly what our argument is all about, Mr. Speaker.

[15:15]

So I would urge this minister: do your due diligence and find out exactly what's going to happen. Who's paying for the cost to our health care system, if you're giving the profit line to companies in Eastern Canada? Well, Mr. Speaker, I can point out right now that he doesn't care what happens in the future of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. He never did, because if he did care, he'd do his

due diligence to see the real impacts of some of the decisions being made by him and his government, Mr. Speaker, on this particular bill.

When you start selling off the Crowns, you're impacting your profit line. And when you're impacting your profit line, you're compromising the financial integrity of this province and you're placing the burden of those costs onto the taxpayers. They don't think of that, Mr. Speaker.

So the people of Saskatchewan are asking for three or four things: accountability in how this is going to impact the bottom line of the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, how many, how much job losses are being created as a result of their privatization agenda as being indicated here, Mr. Speaker?

Now I don't expect the minister to have any answers today, Mr. Speaker, but I'm telling him, do your due diligence. Find out exactly what the impacts are. Because our research shows that, yes, you're going to be giving away the profits attached with liquor sales in the province of Saskatchewan to eastern-based companies. And yet you're jacking up the health care costs to the people of Saskatchewan by almost \$600 million. Has he done that assessment? I can guarantee you, Mr. Speaker, he has not, Mr. Speaker.

So we would encourage them to take a hard look at their privatization agenda, because it's not serving the people the Saskatchewan. It is merely serving their political position, Mr. Speaker, and that is a crying shame. The people of Saskatchewan need to wake up and tell the people that they need to send these guys a wake-up call. Because they're going to start waking up. They're going to start realizing that the sale of our Crowns is something the people of Saskatchewan do not want, Mr. Speaker. And I'm talking about the Saskatchewan Party needs to snap out of their slumber, Mr. Speaker, because their privatization agenda is costing the people of Saskatchewan a great amount of money, and that is a crying shame.

So as the minister stands up and provides these answers to these questions, my question back to him: have you done an assessment on what the cost of privatization is on SLGA matters that impacts our bottom line? And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, he has not done so.

And that's why it's important that you have oversight from the official opposition, Mr. Speaker. Because at the end of the day, whether it's the First Nations and Métis Relations fund, whether it is the SLGA revenues, the SLGA loss of revenues, the loss of revenues around land titles branch, the loss of opportunity around STC, the Saskatchewan Transportation Company, Mr. Speaker, those losses of services and revenues will be felt for generations to come. And by that time, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister here will be enjoying retirement somewhere, but the people of Saskatchewan will be left paying the bill for some of the decisions that he's made and the rest of the Saskatchewan Party have made very, very foolishly.

So again there's a lot of issues here that we're going to continue talking about on this particular bill. My colleagues are going to have the opportunity to tackle the incredible, poorly planned, and overlooked privatization agenda of the Saskatchewan Party. Because, Mr. Speaker, it is a crying shame to see this action

continue. And this bill supports that particular initiative.

So again I'll point out that there's many more people within the opposition that are going to speak about it, and I would encourage people from across the land, across the Saskatchewan province here, to take the opportunity to learn what the Saskatchewan Party has done.

I rally the people of Saskatchewan to set up a wake-up call to the Saskatchewan Party on the privatization agenda that they have for our Crowns. They continue doing so at great detriment to the future of our province. And, Mr. Speaker, now the profits are going to Eastern Canada and the bills are coming home to us as Saskatchewan player. That, Mr. Speaker, is not very good financial thinking.

When it comes to our Crowns, we should own them. The profits should stay here because at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we are the ones that serve the people of Saskatchewan, not people that are benefiting financially from Eastern Canada. We get the bill and they get the profit. And how is that going to help the future of our province? That is the Saskatchewan Party privatization agenda, and I say to them, shame on them. Shame on every single one of them, Mr. Speaker.

So until we get to that point, I'm going to move that we adjourn debate on Bill 201, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019*. I so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 201. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Is the member from Athabasca done or would he like to resume the debate? I believe I heard him move adjournment. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 179

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

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure as a member of Her Majesty the Queen's Loyal Opposition to participate in the debate on this bill today. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have to admit that talking about apiaries and bees is one of my favourite topics.

Actually this morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I was pleased to bring a number of visitors here from Agribition, that have been to Agribition this week. True socialists, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they always put the good of their community above themselves. There's about 5,000 of them and they're honeybees. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those honeybees are right now in the opposition caucus office.

I was actually pleased to actually bring them down to the Speaker's office this morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the bees got to visit the Speaker's office. The Speaker showed me this morning, because it was one of my first times in that office, he showed me the original Speaker's capping that's there on display. Mr. Speaker, when earlier this morning before we started sitting, I had the pleasure to take those bees to Hawrylak School and actually show them off to a class of grade 5 and 6 students who had been in the Assembly here a couple of weeks ago. And the kids swarmed around me. They wanted to see the bees and the queen and the drone.

And I mentioned that these bees had been at Agribition. They were at Agribition all week long with the Regina & District Bee Club. Actually the member from Moosomin and his honey came and stopped by the booth and learned about bees. And when I was first elected, the member from Moosomin had mentioned that he was interested in getting into beekeeping but apparently I talked him out of it. I guess maybe he isn't a hard enough worker. But, Mr. Speaker, I hope that in this debate I'll wax eloquent and won't drone on.

Mr. Speaker, the reason why this is a topic near and dear to my heart is, of course, I have quite a family history here. I grew up in a beekeeping family. I'm a fifth generation beekeeper. It's what my family has done for a living, how they've made their living for many years. So I've got a good foundation in this topic. From an early age I've got pictures showing me out in front of beehives wearing nothing but a diaper, you know, when I was just a toddler. So I've been at this a long time. I figure I've been stung probably 1,500 or 2,000 times by bees. I've been stung by the government side probably not quite that many times, thankfully. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I can talk a long time about bees. But today I'm not going to have that much time so I expect I'll barely scratch the surface.

Now before I get into the details of the bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thought I might provide some context for *The Apiaries Act*, which is there to protect the health of honeybees in our province. There's been a lot of talk about bees in the media, in the news lately, on the internet. And I think a lot of people have this idea that there is just, you know, kind of one kind of bee. But actually, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's something like 20 or 30,000 different species of bees in the world, and honeybees are just one of those.

Even in Saskatchewan here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have roughly 300 species of native bees in our province, a little more than that. At least those are the ones we've discovered. Sweat bees, various types of bumble bees, leafcutter bees, miner bees, mason bees, and a whole bunch of varieties or species of bees that we don't even have common names for.

But this bill and this Act only deals with one, and it only deals with honeybees. All of these species of native bees we have in

our province, they're not dealt with by this particular legislation.

I should note that one of the things unique to our city here is that we have one of Canada's foremost experts on bees right here in Regina. He works at the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. His name is Cory Sheffield. And he's been doing a super job of educating the public about bees and their role in the environment.

As I was mentioning, there are lots of misconceptions out there about bees. I've heard many times, over the last several years, that people are concerned that bees are dying, that bees are going to die off. And while there is some truth to that, it's like many other things, there's also some misconception there. And the reality is that the bees that we're talking about today here, honeybees, are largely an agriculturally managed species. And just like pigs and chickens and cows, honeybees are in no danger of going extinct. In fact, in Saskatchewan, we probably have more honeybee colonies right now than we've had in these last few years, more than we've had for a while.

But that being said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many species of native bees that are threatened and that aren't doing so well. Some of them may even have gone extinct, and that is something to be concerned about. We're not entirely sure of, you know, whether there's one particular reason why that is happening. There are several causes that are suspected to be playing a role there. One, of course, is some of the role of pesticides and how pervasive their use is in the environment. But that's not unexpected because, of course, the reason we make pesticides is to kill insects. And so it's not unexpected that they would also kill bees, you know, so that part isn't surprising.

A bigger concern is actually habitat loss for our native bees. And you know, wild spaces, wetlands, hedgerows, native prairie, old yard sites, bluffs of trees — these are all important habitat for some of our native bees here in the province. But there's also lots of . . . And I'll differentiate between native bee species and basically escaped colonies or feral colonies of honeybees, which we sometimes called wild bees.

Now our provincial apiculturalist here is an employee of the Ministry of Agriculture. He has said that Saskatchewan is one of the best places in the world to produce honey but it's also one of the places in the world that's the hardest to keep honeybees alive. And that's largely a factor of our climate. And it's not so much that our winters are cold; it's that our winters are long. And so it means a really long time period when there's no flowers blooming and where it's not warm enough for honeybees to be flying, so they have to have enough food stored up to basically last them through that long fall, winter, and early spring until there's flowers and it's warm enough.

But on top of that climate, we do have several serious concerns happening with the honeybee industry. Those are touched on in the bill, such as American foulbrood. This is a bacterial. It affects honeybees. It's been around for a long time. But American foulbrood, one of the reasons it's such a concern is it's highly contagious and it's not effective to treat American foulbrood. If you discover American foulbrood in a colony of bees, you basically have to destroy the colony so that it doesn't spread to either your other beehives or other beekeepers' beehives.

[15:30]

I was finding out just this past weekend at the convention of the Saskatchewan Beekeeping Development Commission that it only takes 32 spores of American foulbrood to infect another bee with this disease, but the number of spores in just one infected cell that has killed a honeybee larva will actually be, I think, it was in the billions he said. So you can see with that math why American foulbrood is so contagious.

Also an emerging issue for us is European foulbrood. Now it's not quite as contagious as American foulbrood and thankfully it is treatable with antibiotics, but it is an emerging issue in Saskatchewan beekeeping. We don't know exactly the reasons why for that but apparently our provincial apiculturalist was hypothesizing that it might be because of less access to antibiotics on the market. There have been some moves in the past year to restrict access to antibiotics, not just in beekeeping but across agriculture, and that of course is a move globally to prevent or limit antimicrobial-resistant bacteria.

We also have some other problems that are going on that are challenging the beekeepers: the economics of beekeeping in the province. Probably the number one factor there is the varroa mite. The varroa mite is basically a parasite that affects bees. It originated on a different species of bee called *Apis cerana* in Asia but it migrated to the western honeybee, which is what we have here.

And the varroa mite is actually the world's largest parasite that we know of in proportion to its host. And to put it in perspective, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if we had a parasite the size that a varroa mite is to a honeybee, it would be like us walking around with an adult cat, a wood tick the size of an adult cat on our back. And so it's a really huge parasite. And it weakens the bees but it's also a disease vector and so it's a particular problem for beekeepers here.

Right now we don't have small hive beetles but that is an emerging pest that has emerged in other parts of the country. And so right now we are restricting movement of bees to some extent across Canada and even within the province. In Alberta they have quarantined the one area of Alberta because small hive beetle was found there, so we're hoping we don't get that here in Saskatchewan. And I think the ministry is doing a good job on being vigilant on that issue.

Right now beekeeping is an important industry for our province. There's somewhere in the neighbourhood of 1,000 beekeepers in the province. A little over 100 of those are commercial-sized beekeepers. We've got somewhere over 100,000 beehives in the province, so this is an important economic part of agriculture for our province.

Now this past year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was a really hard year for beekeepers across the province just as it was for many farmers. The same weather that played havoc with our grain farmers in getting their harvest off also caused havoc with beekeepers. Many areas of our province just had a cool, wet year and honeybees don't do well in cool and wet weather. In fact no bees do really well in cool, wet weather. In fact that's why deserts are actually one of the places in the world where there's the highest bee diversity in the world, which was something I only learned a couple of years ago.

I do want to say a little bit about the good work that the Regina & District Bee Club does here in our city and in southern Saskatchewan. Now they've been around for decades, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but in the last several years they've grown to be an organization of about 150 members. And actually they've been called the best bee club in the country and it's because of all the work that they do, not only in educating the public but in educating beginning beekeepers, to make sure that the beekeepers that we have in southern Saskatchewan are not actually creating problems with getting bees.

I can't tell you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the number of times someone who came up and said that they wanted to get into beekeeping. And you know, I was describing to them how much honey they could expect to get and they say well, I don't want the honey. I just want to keep the bees, and you know, they can just do with it and do what they will.

Well that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a real problem because that means they're creating a situation where they're not treating diseases, where they're letting their bees basically become feral. And we know that in agriculture we don't want to be letting agricultural animals run feral throughout the province. And it doesn't matter whether we're talking bees or chickens or pigs or cows. We don't want feral agricultural animals out there becoming a problem with our native species and ecosystems.

Now I've kind of wandered off the topic of the bill here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, so I want to get back to that. Before I do that I do want to just mention a couple of people who work with the ministry, Geoff Wilson and Graham Parsons. Now Geoff Wilson is the . . . I think his title is provincial specialist in apiculture. And I'm not sure what Graham's title is, but they're basically the two beekeepers within the Ministry of Agriculture. And, Mr. Speaker, they do a sweet job, and there's no spin to that at all.

Although, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know it's a little bit of sticky business any time a member of the opposition is identifying, you know, members of the public service, because that might not be good for career . . . might be a career-limiting move. So I hope that they don't get stung . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Deputy Speaker, sounds like there's a member over there that's getting hangry and she should probably go have some royal jelly on her toast there.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the workers in the ministry, they have been busy. They have been busy consulting with the beekeeping industry this past weekend at the Sask beekeepers convention. One of the main changes in this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a concept called open feeding. And my understanding is that both Geoff and Graham have been inspecting the rules in other provinces and the academic research. And from that the idea has emerged that our previous restriction on open feeding should be relaxed. The principle that they extracted was that from the period starting on September 7th and going to June 15th — so in other words fall, winter, and spring — that that period of time should be okay for open feeding.

And now it's been suggested that perhaps I should come to the conclusion of my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I do hope that I haven't made my colleagues here fume or bored. I do want to extend an invitation to my colleagues here to come to the opposition office, to greet our Agribition visitors, and perhaps

scout out their new digs for next year. With that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll sit down.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Agriculture that Bill No. 179, *The Apiaries Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 179, *The Apiaries Amendment Act, 2019* be referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 180

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter in briefly here today with respect to Bill No. 180, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019*.

Certainly this bill is an important one because it pertains to technical safety and the safety of the public, safety of contractors and workers on a whole host of fronts. It takes responsibility that's been fulfilled by those at SaskPower and transfers that responsibility to TSASK [Technical Safety Authority of Saskatchewan], an independent, not-for-profit organization that was set up just a few years ago, Mr. Speaker.

Certainly the duties and the goals of ensuring technical safety and protection of the public certainly can't be undermined. And so it's important for us to get a full sense of how these responsibilities may be transferred, what sort of oversight would be in place, Mr. Speaker. Sometimes when responsibilities are moved to an independent organization, sometimes governments may use that as an opportunity to abdicate itself from that important responsibility. When we're talking about safety, certainly that shouldn't be the case. Or sometimes it can be a lot more difficult to get access to very important information that pertains to these files. And certainly in this case, we don't want that to be the case in Saskatchewan.

We will also have questions about who's fulfilling those responsibilities right now, their valued and important

employment. Certainly we need to make sure that we have an understanding of what's contemplated for them. Certainly we want to protect those jobs, protect those workers, protect their employment standards, and protect their collective agreements, Mr. Speaker, make sure that they have job security, Mr. Speaker, and that they are in a situation to be able to fulfill their duties. We also want to make sure we get a sense of who else was doing these duties. I think certain municipalities have been doing them as well. I understand there's a provision for Regina and Saskatoon to continue to do so, and that seems to be important.

But I want to get a better understanding of who's impacted by this legislation. I invite all stakeholders impacted by this legislation to connect with us as the official opposition at this time. It'll be valuable as we deal with committee, you know, into the future, Mr. Speaker, and we make sure that we fully canvass what the government's intentions are with these changes, but that we also canvass any unintended consequences that government may have not considered at this point. So I'd invite that participation.

Ultimately it's really important that we ensure the protection of the public, the integrity of the systems when we're talking about gas and electrical and plumbing. This is certainly very important to the people of this province and to public safety and to workers and contractors, Mr. Speaker. So this is not a bill to be taken lightly. It does represent significant change. You know, the minister is saying that it's just largely a change in the function but not substantive change, I think is what she's described in her remarks, but I think we want to have a better understanding of what changes. Whether or not she considers them to be substantive or not is kind of secondary. I think we have to have a full understanding of all the changes contained in this change.

At this point in time, we'll invite the participation of the public and the stakeholders, and we'll look forward to dealing with this bill at committee.

[15:45]

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 180, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Government Relations — Transfer of Gas, Electrical and Plumbing Functions) Amendment Act, 2019* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 180 be referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Bill No. 181

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Eyre that **Bill No. 181 — *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter into debate this afternoon on Bill No. 181, *The Mineral Taxation (Modernization) Amendment Act, 2019*. I will be rather brief in my remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker. One of the benefits, I suppose, of having spent some time out on the road earlier on in this session meeting with school groups and school boards and town halls is that I've had the opportunity to read the very thoughtful remarks of many of the members of my caucus on various bills. And I suppose that has been a benefit but also leaves me, I'm afraid, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with not a whole lot extra to say on some of these bills. But there are some points that I do want to make on this bill, of course.

I always like to look back at the second reading comments of the minister to provide some context and hopefully some information about why we're seeing this bill before us at this time, who was consulted, what the aims of the bill are. And often the ministers will oblige us with some of that information. So in the second reading speech, the minister did note that this Act is to levy the mineral rights tax on roughly 40,000 freehold mineral titles in Saskatchewan, so fairly significant reach there. The current Act, it's also noted, has been in its current form since 1983, which again, Mr. Speaker, seems an unreasonably long time ago at 40, almost 40 years ago. And there have been some modifications and some amendments since then but this is an Act that is almost 40 years old.

It also moves the mineral tax rate, which is currently unchanged, and exemptions and processes from the Act into the regulation. And I think I'll spend some time here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because this is . . . Often under the guise of modernization we see this happening where we see bills in front of us that move certain aspects, certain functions out of the bill and therefore out of the legislative oversight of this Assembly and into the regulations where of course changes can be made through an order in council outside of the sitting of this Assembly. And certainly there are times I think when that might make sense, but it is our role to make sure that proper oversight has taken place.

In her second reading comments the minister noted that over the past summer, so the summer of 2019, the Ministry of Energy and Resources consulted with internal and external stakeholders. Some of those that are noted here are industry associations, freehold mineral rights organizations, and a portion — it doesn't say which portion — of the 1,600 mineral rights taxpayers, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

As has already been noted, I think it's the role of the opposition to ensure that we have a good sense of who was consulted, what feedback was provided to the ministry, and that we have a reasonable sense of not only the reasonably foreseeable consequences which sometimes seem to be missed when we hear the comments by the ministers, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but also

some of the unintended consequences. And I think that is the role, that is the purpose, and that is the benefit of robust oversight into any piece of legislation that is in front of us. Certainly this is one that will have impacts and again not the least of those impacts being moving the rate, the mineral tax rate out of legislation and into regulations.

So I know that there are various questions, as the member for Regina Rosemont noted. It is always important that if there are members of the public who are reading or watching this that have questions, concerns, comments that they would like to ensure are fully looked at that they please, you know, enter into these discussions ahead of this bill being passed.

But with that I think that I have put some of my comments and concerns and thoughts on the record, and I am prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 181.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 181. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 183

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 183 — *The Fisheries (Saskatchewan) Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on Bill No. 183, *The Fisheries (Saskatchewan) Act, 2019*. I know the government's proposing some changes with the fisheries. And I think any time the minister or officials, ministry want to make changes with the fisheries and especially today when we deal with a lot of our First Nations and Métis rights . . . And I'm not sure who the government consulted with when it comes to First Nations and Métis rights when it comes to hunting and fishing. And I don't know if this will impact it. Obviously the minister, I would assume, and officials would have reached out to our First Nations leaders, our traditional fishers, and those men and women who make that their living or a part of the culture. So I'm hoping that the ministry and the minister have reached out.

Now I know I'm going to take some time and I know my colleague who's the critic for this file, he will be with me when we're going to reach out to find out exactly how will this play out as this legislation comes forward, and the changes. And there might be changes in here, you know, aquatic species and stuff like that, where they're trying to deal with something that's, you know, going to cause some grief to our lakes and our rivers. And that makes sense, you know, that you're looking after that.

And we've heard the minister say they're going to take, for certain species that they don't want to take over — and I understand that — and take over certain lakes. And we've heard different people talk about it. I'm no expert when it comes to that; I want to be clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But there are experts out

there, and I realize hopefully they have been consulted. There are those other provinces that are doing certain, probably, areas of work and have dealt with this.

But I want to go back to more . . . I know we'll have a lot of questions, and we'll have more questions about this in committee. But before we go to that, I think about some of the challenges that our fishers have had. And I think for instance, and I was going to talk about this: I do remember we have a provincial organization that represents our commercial fishermen, northern fishers. And they look after . . . There's a group and a body and they have an elected . . . I think they just had their convention.

And if I'm right or not, on the radio I heard about they used to get provincial funding from the province to deal with the industry that they were doing when it comes to commercial fishing. And they used to get, I don't know if it was 50,000 . . . Maybe it was 400,000 from the provincial government, and now I don't believe they're getting any or, if they are, very little. It's just been cut over time and time again by the Sask Party government not supporting.

So I don't know if that industry feels like it's being supported. And why I say that is, I do remember the government taking advantage of a situation where they're saying, instead of consulting with fishermen and saying, you know, there used to be a freight subsidy for fish, for fishermen to get their freight to market. And it was. You know, it was a dollar commitment by the province and it helped fishermen, commercial fishermen, get their product to market. And that's a good plan but sometimes, you know what? I get that plans change and there might be opportunities where you'd think government would say, okay, it's not being utilized. And I understand that. They've maybe not been utilized the way the program was set up. But instead of consulting with the commercial fishermen and those that were impacted . . . You'd think as a government you would go and talk to those individuals.

What they did is they just said, well we're going to cancel it because you're not using it anymore, instead of going out and saying, here's the dollars; is there a better way we could utilize these dollars to support the industry in northern Saskatchewan when it comes to, you know, getting your fish to market? Well no. Obviously the Sask Party government, they don't like consulting so they didn't do that. They just, you know, obviously did what they wanted to do.

And you know, so they just cut the subsidy for freight, helping those commercial fishermen. Again so when I say that . . . And there's different areas that we look at it. The North has been heavily impacted. And any time I hear a government talk about fisheries and they want to amend legislation, change legislation, give certain powers to a minister, or take away, I think people need to sit up and especially in northern Saskatchewan because of this government's record when it comes to dealing with northern Saskatchewan.

And I'm just going to use examples of how the North doesn't feel like the government is working with them or listening. We have a uranium industry that we've seen so many layoffs, an industry that needed support in the North, maybe opportunities for training and stuff. We see how this government didn't consult with the people that were impacted, the families. And I know

many of the families that have been impacted. Oh they talked about this rapid response team. But that just goes to show you, Mr. Speaker, how this government will change legislation and don't consult the people that will be impacted by the legislation. And that's what the concern is.

So when I look at Bill 183, when I look at that . . . And any time you have a government that's saying, I'm going to change or take over, a minister's going to have powers, people back home, I hope, will sit up and take note. Those that are out there doing the commercial fishing, make sure what's going on. Because I want to say this too.

And I think about an industry we had people working in, the Hatchet Lake Dene Nation, Wollaston Lake. What I see in that community, they got into the fish market. And they had . . . The company was named Northern Wild Fishery in P.A. [Prince Albert]. They hired people. They brought their product from Wollaston Lake, from the North, and they brought it to P.A. They had a process plant; they processed. They sold the fish out of P.A. and the store it was open up on River Street. They did a great business.

But you know what happened to them? They had to shut down. Well why did they have to shut down? Because again a government wants to deal with fisheries but unfortunately they don't have access. They had to fly, they had to fly their fish out. In the summertime you don't have a way to get it out. In wintertime, while you're waiting . . . the barge. So it was to do with cost. Transportation, the fish to a plant.

So, you know, here was an opportunity for a government again, if you want to work with Wollaston Lake. And this is why Wollaston Lake has made it very clear. They shut down their fish store in Prince Albert, which is sad. You know, people lost their jobs, were let go. In Wollaston Lake, it's impacted them. But it is about getting transportation of the goods. People want the good fish from the North.

We have many fishermen who do great work. And they provide a service, and they want to provide that service. And, you know, they shared that. They shared that with the province. And yes, they make a little money and some of their people work and that's great. That's how it's supposed to work. We take care of northern people, and that's how a government should do it. But unfortunately, the Sask Party government doesn't do that.

And here's why I say that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They had an opportunity to build, and a commitment in 2008 to build an all-season road to Wollaston Lake. A commitment. They made that commitment that we're doing it; it's done. We're still waiting. You have leaders waiting. Well that industry could have utilized that road, an all-season, all-weather road, all-season road from Wollaston Lake to get their product to market. Where its cost, the freight was costing them too much to get their fish out. So it wasn't just at certain times of the year.

So I wish that the government would again go back to the industries that they helped kill. You know, they're not helping the industry. When you have people closing down because you have a government who wants to change. And they say that they're taking care of people. Any time you have legislation like this, and any time you have a government changing legislation,

giving powers to the minister, you wonder why. And the good people back home are wondering hey, how come you're not helping the people in the North when it comes to some of these issues? And how come you're not consulting with the leadership? How come you're not talking to the industry, our fishermen, our fishers that are out there? They are doing good work. So I'm just hoping.

[16:00]

I just wanted to talk a little bit about some of the challenges. And when I see a government trying to say oh, they're going to make changes. Well here's some legislation. And I've said this: they're tired, you know, old, wore out, and out of ideas. Well here's some good ideas. An all-weather road to Wollaston Lake that they committed to. Changing legislation? Maybe they can introduce legislation that would give subsidies with this bill. Maybe they could've changed this so that there would be a freight subsidy for fishermen, commercial fishermen.

Like there's different things that government wants to do, and the minister wants to have powers. Well maybe the minister could have new powers in saying I, as the Minister of Environment, responsible for fisheries, Bill 183, I enact an all-season road to Wollaston Lake to get their fish to market. I'm going to do that. I'm going to help them. Maybe that's a power he could do. I would love to see that and we would support that. I'm sure people back home would support that, not only for fisheries but for safety, you know, when it comes to ice roads, travelling on ice roads and stuff like that. So there is different reasons that that minister could have certain powers. I would support that if, you know, he wanted to have that power and build them an all-weather road. I would support that.

I don't want to take a lot more time. I just wanted to, for the record, say that this government and the minister, officials, should be consulting. We will be reaching out to the leaders. Because I know when I talked about the freight subsidy, I've talked about the all-weather road. I talked about an industry that's closed down because they didn't have the opportunity to an all-season, all-weather road out of Wollaston Lake. So with that, I don't have a lot more to say. I know in committee my colleague will have more to say. And we are going to do some work and ask the industry.

And like I said, there was an organization that represents fishermen in northern Saskatchewan and commercial fishermen. And I heard on the radio they were saying how this government has cut the funding to them that used to help them have their convention. And they used to talk about, what are the best practices in the fish industry? What are the challenges? What are the hurdles? And this government unfortunately cut that and doesn't want to support them anymore.

But we've seen that with our trappers. They just keep cutting and cutting and expecting . . . But again, the last thing I'll say about this: our Indigenous and First Nations have rights, and that has to be protected and will be protected under the Constitution and under certain Acts, federal and provincial. We'll call on this government to make sure they consult with First Nations and Métis people — who will be impacted, who truly are the fishers — when it comes to that industry and any time you have challenges.

So with that I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 183, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 183, *The Fisheries (Saskatchewan) Act, 2019*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 184

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 184 — *The Fisheries (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act, 2019/Loi de 2019 corrélative de la loi intitulée *The Fisheries (Saskatchewan) Act, 2019**** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to be able to join in on Bill 184, *The Fisheries (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act, 2019*.

You know, before I get into it, I'm going to go over the same story that I went over before. And I'm going to explain this because it's not often you get an opportunity. Because they were not paying attention, some of them. I want to make sure they understand what I was talking about — freight subsidies, about all-season roads to the community — when it comes to legislation like this, like Bill 184.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can use examples of things that are not happening in northern communities, and people asking the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and asking government to take care of. So I'm going to go over that story again because I think it really warrants the awareness when it comes to First Nations and Métis issues and, as I said, rights that they have, inherent rights that they have. When you talk about subsidies and you talk about companies that are trying to provide a business . . . but I could go on and on and on in talking about this Sask Party government.

Oh, that member wants to heckle so I am going to go a little longer then. Now for his . . . You know, that's heckling. He knows who he is because, you know, that individual . . . But you know, having said that, I'm going to say this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He wants to know exactly how it works. You're supposed to introduce legislation that gives certain powers to a minister, okay? Now you can change and you can actually give powers, and government has a right to do that. They can change legislation to give powers to a minister.

What I would like to do if I could help, you know, give powers to the minister, here's the power I'd like to give to the minister on the other side. I'd like to give him powers to say, I build an all-season road to Wollaston Lake so that they can get their goods — fishing — out to market. I want to make sure. Now I've talked about that. So we could give him those powers and that would be great.

Now on the other side of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I could go on longer if they would like to hear more, like, it's fine, to talk about the challenges that many northern people are feeling by this Sask Party government, and how they're failing the good people of the North and they wonder why. Here's what a government that's been asked to take care of everyone, Mr. Deputy Speaker . . . But I'm not going to do that today. I know that this bill here, 184, is mainly housekeeping, consequential amendments to other legislation that will change. So I'm prepared to adjourn debate on that bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 184. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 187

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 187 — *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur l'administration des successions*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to wade into the debate today on Bill No. 187, *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act*, Mr. Speaker.

One thing that's always helpful to know is why a bill is before us or where it came from, who is asking for it, who would like to see this bill in place, Mr. Speaker. And the minister in his second reading speech raised the fact that these amendments have been recommended by the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee with the effort to ensure the role of the executor and administrators in the administration of an estate are clear. The minister in his second reading comments points out that these changes are designed to try to ensure that the role of the Public Guardian and Trustee as administrator is clear.

This bill, Mr. Speaker, *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act*, is connected to changes to a bill that will be debated here in just a few minutes, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act*. There's changes taking place in both bills, Mr. Speaker. So this particular bill moves the official administrative provisions to *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* because the Official Administrator for the province is in fact the Public Guardian.

So it makes sense to ensure that all those different clauses and tools are in one bill and easy to find, Mr. Speaker, and that the Public Guardian and Trustee is in fact the Official Administrator for estates if there's nobody else who can step into that role. So this bill takes that role, the Official Administrator for the province, and moves it into *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* from this particular Act. An amendment to *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* will happen in this separate English-only bill.

Similarly, Mr. Speaker, the minister points out that there's a

provision in *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* that applies to all executors and administrators, and that will be moved to *The Administration of Estates Act*. This particular bill, Mr. Speaker, it requires that notice of an application for letters of administration be given to the Public Guardian and Trustee where a minor or person who lacks capacity has a claim against an estate, Mr. Speaker.

So at this moment right now, the executors and administrators may not know that they should look at *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act* provisions respecting administration of an estate, so hence the reason it . . . and as such might not comply with that particular requirement, so that's why that's being moved as well.

The minister in his second reading speech points out that the proposed amendments add a provision providing for the removal of executors or administrators. Right now, apparently the current Act allows for the revocation of letters probate or letters of administration, but it does not establish a process for the removal of an executor or an administrator, says the minister.

And a new provision sets out guidelines for when an executor or administrator may be removed, including where the executor or administrator fails to comply with a court order or refuses to administer or settle the estate. And thirdly, the minister points out, fails to administer the estate in a reasonable and prudent manner. And fourthly, where there's no capacity or they lack capacity; and fifthly and finally, where they have been convicted of an offence or as an uncharged bankrupt, Mr. Speaker.

These particular bills update the provision respecting notices to claimants. This particular Act, the current Act, *The Administration of Estates Act*, provides that notice to claimants be provided through publication in a newspaper once a week for two consecutive weeks. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we all know that the state of newspapers has changed, the landscape of newspapers has changed over recent years. We continue to see changes on a regular basis. There was just an ad . . . or actually I think it was the newspaper in Davidson, the community newspaper, where they're looking for a new owner. And I thought it was quite a creative way, putting it out there that they'd like someone to take over that publication.

We saw the loss of the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald*. I believe it was 100 years old. I could be mistaken about that, but that was actually a place where I first worked as a reporter, Mr. Speaker, many, many years ago. I was sad to see the loss of that newspaper, and I know I have lots of fond memories of my time in Moose Jaw. And I know Peter Gzowski, the very renowned CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] reporter, spent some time at the news desk that was still in the *Moose Jaw Times-Herald* when I was there, Mr. Speaker.

So we do know that the landscape of newspapers has changed over time so, as the minister points out, when it comes to the current Act expecting notice to claimants to be provided through publication in a newspaper once a week for two consecutive weeks, that it's more difficult with some newspapers printing less frequently and others non-existent anymore. So these amendments will prescribe the manners of notice in the regulations to allow for other methods of notification, for example through a website to be added as needed.

These amendments also amend the will registry provisions to make the acceptance of wills by a local registrar permissive instead of mandatory. And in conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the minister points out that:

... the amendments include changes to the fee provisions as the final part of the court review project. The proposed amendments do not increase probate fees but will require an application fee for every application for letters made pursuant to the Act to cover the cost of processing these applications.

So I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's always important to look at the minister's second reading comments, which I just reviewed here for folks, because that gives you a sense of where the government's coming from. It's important to review in detail the legislation. And this is the time, in the fall when bills are introduced and we have an opportunity to reach out to folks or folks can reach out to us and tell us if they have any concerns with the legislation, if there's any unintended consequences that the government has missed in drafting legislation.

And there will be many people on our side of the House who will speak to this bill. And the critic responsible, who is incredibly diligent, will ask really good questions, I know, when the bill finally gets to committee. But with that, Mr. Speaker, for the moment I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 187, *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 187. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 188

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 188 — *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into the Bill No. 188, *An Act to amend The Public Guardian and Trustee Act and to make consequential amendments to another Act*.

I won't be long really with this because in many ways this is very straightforward. It follows very closely with the legislation that we were just talking about, my colleague, *The Administration of Estates Amendment Act* relying much more on *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act*. And of course those people do very good work in terms of people who find themselves without a will or sort of lost. And when we find ourselves in that sad situation of someone passing and then not really having things in an appropriate manner, it can leave families and friends and others at odds and at loose ends. And so with this, we appreciate that the government's stepping up.

[16:15]

As well as with my colleague, we talked a little bit about . . . You know, it's interesting some of the things you find about heir locators and the kind of things that are happening now because people are not prepared and, you know, lost bank accounts or forgotten bank accounts and that type of thing. And then somebody's doing their due diligence and coming up with that and finding a way to make a profit. And whether it's a good service, that's the thing that's before us.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the speaker talked about making the recommendations, you know, following out of the legislation I was talking about, and move the Official Administrator from *The Administration of Estates Act* to *The Public Guardian and Trustee Act*. And we'll talk about unclaimed assets which I've just mentioned, which is, you know, one that we often think about or we forget about.

And I'd just relate one short story about how, for example, teachers who taught less than 20 days could not claim their pension contributions; only their estate could. And yet, you know, a teacher who taught less than 20 days is really somebody who taught less than one month. And who would remember after 40 or 50 years that somebody had taught for less than a month way back when?

And it was really a struggle to get this rectified, but I have to say it is now rectified that people, when they superannuate or retire, can claim that money, which is maybe only 1,000 or \$1,500. I think the person that I worked on behalf, her claim was I think 700, \$800. But there are 1,500 people in that category. But who would know who those 1,500 people are, you know? But 1,500 times 1,000 is \$1.5 million. And so the fund was really hoping nobody would claim that. That's 1.5 million, but to an individual it's less than \$1,000.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is important work that we have before us. I know we're going to take some more quality time in committee and have a lot of good questions for the Justice officials. And I know the minister will be all ready to answer those questions when he comes back. So with that I would move adjournment on Bill No. 188, *An Act to amend The Public Guardian and Trustee Act*. I do so move.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 188. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 189

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 189 — *The Coroners Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As always

it's a pleasure to wade into debate on bills before us here today. Today Bill No. 189, *The Coroners Amendment Act* is coming from a review that the former Saskatoon police chief, Clive Weighill, conducted in . . . Well he was appointed in 2017 to undertake a review of the Chief Coroners, now the Saskatchewan Coroners Service. And so from that review resulted a final report last year and 44 recommendations to improve that, Mr. Speaker. And this particular bill provides some space for some of those points to be enacted, Mr. Speaker.

So just to cover some of them, it updates the Act's definitions. It authorizes the minister to appoint a deputy chief coroner who will act as a Chief Coroner in the chief's absence. It grants the Chief Coroner the authority to appoint regional supervising coroners, officers, employees. Grants the Chief Coroner discretionary authority to disqualify a coroner from conducting an inquest or investigation. It authorizes coroners to investigate a death if a body has been removed from the province or if death occurred outside of the province. It expands the investigation powers of the coroner, including the power to reopen an investigation if new evidence is available. It authorizes a third party to request a review by the Chief Coroner of a coroner's decision to not hold an inquest into the death of the deceased. It authorizes the Chief Coroner to appoint counsel for an inquest, and it also allows the inquest coroner to make recommendations at the conclusion of an inquest in addition to recommendations from the jury, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I think one thing that stands out for me . . . These all are reasonable changes I believe, and I know in committee there'll be debate and discussion about them and clarification perhaps. But the one thing that jumps out at me is the individual who has put these recommendations forward, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Clive Weighill who, as I mentioned, was the former chief of police in Saskatoon. I'm glad to hear the government is listening to Mr. Weighill at this point in time.

But I know several years ago sitting down as a caucus, Saskatoon caucus, we met with Chief Weighill and some of his officers and heard quite alarming details about the crystal meth crisis that had been growing for several years at that point already, but was getting worse and worse and was predicted to continue to escalate as we see today in 2019. So Chief Weighill at that time had highlighted the number of incidents that had gone down over a decade, crime stats that had trended down for at least a decade and had now started to go up. Property crime, violent crime, theft from vehicles, theft of vehicles, gun violence — all those things that had gone down over a decade started to go up a few years ago. And Chief Weighill and his management team highlighted that it was directly related to the growing crystal meth crisis and what people were doing out of desperation, the substances they were using and how that was impacting not only them but people in their community, Mr. Speaker. And I know the chief at that point in time was hoping for more action on that front.

And the thing that I've always appreciated about the former chief, and actually now the current chief as well, but Chief Weighill really recognized the social determinants of health, that you're not going to arrest your way out of many of these things that happen in people's lives, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that it's very much about making sure people have a roof over their head, food in their bellies, and connections, and that people get support for some of their basic needs, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm very glad to see the government listening to Clive Weighill, who is now the Chief Coroner, in this regard and implementing some of his recommendations. And I would have liked to have seen this government listen to Chief Weighill several years ago, as we wouldn't find ourselves in the mess we are with emergency departments bursting at the seams.

The emergency departments really are the canary in the coal mine for what goes on in the rest of our health care system. And a big part of what's going on in our health care system is lack of proper mental health supports and substance use or addiction supports, because you rarely have a substance use disorder, Mr. Speaker, without some underlying trauma or mental health. And this is a government who . . . There was some money in this budget, which is better than a kick in the butt, but I can tell you that they're a little late to the game here when it comes to properly supporting people.

And had we invested in addressing what was going on a few years ago, we wouldn't find ourselves with stories like we heard today where a young man has spent since Friday afternoon in the emergency department. A man who has mental health and substance use issues has been in the ED [emergency department] in a room with no bed since Friday, Mr. Speaker, and it's now Monday afternoon — three days. And there's a backlog of people behind him.

So had this government listened to Chief Weighill in the first place, we would not have found ourselves in the mess we are today. So I'm glad to see they were listening to him on this particular bill anyway.

But with that, I know my colleague who is the critic in this area will do her due diligence and ask all the important questions, both in her debate but when she gets to committee. So with that I would like to move Bill No. 189, *The Coroners Amendment Act* for adjournment. I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 189. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 194

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Carr that **Bill No. 194 — *The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to be recognized here in the Assembly today. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this bill is dealing with the important municipal sector here in our province. Of course there's hundreds of municipalities and they represent an important part of the administration of our province. They look after the day-to-day issues of a lot of people's business.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, though, this government has a pretty bad record of consulting with municipalities, a pretty bad record of dealing with them, whether it's ripping up contracts for grants-in-lieu or taking money out of municipal pockets by expanding the PST to construction services. And one thing that's missing from this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that there's once again no formula for sharing cannabis tax revenues with municipalities.

One issue that's been coming up a lot in the last several years is governance issues with municipalities, and I'm pleased to see that there's at least a token nod at dealing with that. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's far more work to be done to ensure that people are getting good governance, accountability, and public disclosure of what is happening in their municipal governments. And we need to look no further than the village of Pinehouse for an example of why that's necessary.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that my colleagues will have more to say about this, and there will be important consultation work done with stakeholders as this bill, once it goes to committee. But for now I'm going to move that we adjourn debate on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Northeast has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 194. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 195

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 195 — *The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was busy looking ahead and not at the task in front of me here. I'm happy to enter the discussion on Bill No. 195, *The Lobbyists Amendment Act*.

This particular bill reduces the threshold for registration as an in-house lobbyist from 100 to 30 hours. It exempts non-profit charitable organizations with less than five employees, who lobby for a total of less than 30 hours annually, from registering as an in-house lobbyist. It prohibits consultant lobbyists and in-house lobbyists from providing gifts or benefits to a public office holder. And it adds a definition of "gift or personal benefit" and creates an exception for gifts provided as part of protocol and valued at less than \$200.

I think the very simple thing here, Mr. Speaker, is we had a bill before this legislature in the spring that my colleague on this side of the House introduced, Bill No. 615 last spring, eliminating the threshold for lobbyists altogether. Not reducing it to 30 hours, getting rid of it totally.

There is absolutely nothing wrong with lobbying, Mr. Speaker. In fact we hear from people every day, people and organizations

every day in this work, who want to share with us policy concerns and issues that they think are important. And they want to connect with legislators and make sure we understand the issue from their perspective. And there is absolutely nothing wrong with that, Mr. Speaker.

But the challenge is it should be transparent. It should be clearly transparent. And we should know who is talking to whom in government about issues, so it can be completely transparent when it comes to decisions that governments make, Mr. Speaker.

So there are very few things I have to say about this except simply that the government, I think, is making an error here in lowering the threshold to only 30 hours. It should be completely eliminated, that threshold, and anyone who lobbies should register as a lobbyist just for the sake of transparency.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, for Bill No. 196 . . . *The Lobbyists Amendment Act*, I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 195, *The Lobbyists Amendment Act, 2019*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

[16:30]

Bill No. 196

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 196 — *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And my apologies to the Table. I got a little ahead of myself there. Such is my anxiousness to get into the debate on this little number. I'm not conflicted about this one, Mr. Speaker. There's absence of conflict. I'm just ready to get at 'er, sink my teeth right in. But . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Speaker, I'm so excited I can't even make out what the heckles are. That's how excited I am.

But the genesis of this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, comes from reports tabled for the Assembly in 2018 by the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. And I think this is as good a point as any to go on the record and to say thank you to the commissioner for the work that has been done on all of our behalf. As well, again I cast my mind back to the commissioner before that, Mr. Speaker, also a fantastic servant of this Assembly and of the people of Saskatchewan and the good work that was done there. And I know that that commissioner's term is coming up, Mr. Speaker, and that this is indeed a good point to say thank you to Commissioner Barclay for the work well done.

And I'd note parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, that I have the pleasure of serving as the local Member of the Legislative

Assembly for the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. And I hope that doesn't cast any sort of shadow on my previous protestations of no conflicts coming to this particular debate, Mr. Speaker.

But again, Bill No. 196, *An Act to amend The Members' Conflict of Interest Act*, 2019 does a number of things. Chiefly it provides a definition to what had previously been stated undefined, the "gift or personal benefit" clause, wherein it will now clearly denote money that will not be paid back, a service, hospitality, or use of property where there is no charge or a charge below market value and, Mr. Speaker, as is important in these kind of things, any other thing prescribed.

Mr. Speaker, it also goes to make a number of clarifications around providing more description or a better description, a more fulsome description around the assets of private companies, commonly known as numbered companies, Mr. Speaker, controlled by members or members' families. It's been included in the disclosure statement.

It also lines up former members for filing a disclosure statement within 60 days of ceasing to be a member. Mental note to self, Mr. Speaker, we'll get that one on the calendar and make sure that we're coming through with that.

And a new subsection no. (8), providing that after filing the disclosure statement, former members shall consult with the commissioner pursuant to section (5), and the commissioner may authorize the former member to submit a declaration in place of a statement in accordance with subsection (6). Section 12 which requires the commissioner to file a public disclosure statement, will also apply to the disclosure statement of former members, thereby, Mr. Deputy Speaker, clarifying the relationship of former members to the commissioner, to *The Public Disclosure Act*. And as is often the case in life, Mr. Speaker, the more clarity the better.

And again this ushering forth from the reports provided by the commissioner in 2018, we will be looking on with great interest to see how that works out. As well, Mr. Speaker, permitting former members to request an opinion or recommendation from the commissioner during the 12 months following the date the former member ceases to hold office, again, Mr. Speaker, further clarification of the relationship of former members to *The Public Disclosure Act* and the responsibilities that arise therein. What's not to like about that?

So, Mr. Speaker, I think I'd wager money — not much, not much — that other of my colleagues will have wiser things to say on these matters than I. But a penny ante if the Minister of Health is going to put some pennies on the table, I'm sure we can find some. I'm sure he's got some squirrelled away, Mr. Speaker, for a brighter day to be sure. Or perhaps a nickel bet. I don't know.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure other of my colleagues will have wiser things to say on these matters than I. And with that, I look forward to it and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 196, *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 196. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 197

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 197 — *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate today on Bill No. 197, *An Act to amend The Automobile Accident Insurance Act*.

There are a number of changes that are being proposed in this legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I find it very useful to go through the explanatory notes every time I'm looking at amendments to see — and folks can do this at home as well if they pull up the website — to see what changes are being suggested here. Many of the clauses are being amended based on providing gender-neutral language, which is of course something that we invite, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

There is one clause that piqued my interest. So clause 70, the existing provision is being changed. Essentially it requires leave of the Court of Appeal to appeal a decision of the Appeal Commission or the Court of Queen's Bench. So at present a normal appeal is already restricted in the fact that it can be only based on a question of law, not a question of fact. And this provision further restricts that ability for an appeal to take place by requiring that you'll need permission to seek the appeal, and you can still only appeal based on a question of law.

So it looks like they're trying to shut down the amount of appeals that are going before the commission. It will be interesting to see what the implications of that are, and we'll certainly be digging into this and the substance of the legislation to ensure that there are no unintended consequences. But with that I would move to adjourn debate on this bill for today.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 197. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 198

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hargrave that **Bill No. 198 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2019*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter in

today to Bill No. 198, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2019*, albeit rather briefly. And this matter merits our full and substantive engagement, certainly something that the official opposition is committed to and certainly has demonstrated that commitment as well through things like the Traffic Safety Committee and so many other efforts to make sure that our roads are safe.

Certainly a motor vehicle collision can be so tragic. Our province knows that all too well, and any effective measures that we can support to improve traffic safety and safety on our roads is something we're committed to. And we've brought forward many proposals on that front, sometimes pushing government or calling for action from government, sometimes working together in a united way across the floor, Mr. Speaker.

But to the people of the province who value the safety on our roads, to those that know all too well the consequences of unsafe roads, I simply say to them that we as the official opposition are there and remain committed to ensure safety on our roads, improve safety on our roads.

Certainly when it comes to things like commercial trucks, heavy trucks, semi-trucks, and licensing requirements, we want to make sure we have the education and the licensing in place to ensure safety there. Certainly when it comes to matters of impaired driving and distracted driving, we will be supportive and always calling for action to improve safety on that front.

When it comes to things like impaired driving, this is a problem within Saskatchewan and it's something that each of us have a responsibility on. And you know, certainly we need to make sure though as well that our laws that are in place are sufficient and as effective as they can be, and as well things like enforcement because I think that we need to . . . We know that our police resources across the province are incredibly strained. But it's important for us if we're going to increase penalties or change some of the education programs if one is caught, and some of these other types of changes, it's important for us to beef up enforcement, Mr. Speaker, to help change a dangerous culture within our province.

I understand there's also some changes with respect to unregistered vehicles and how that relates to the ticketing of a driver, where I understand right now police don't have the discretion to apply a ticket, for example if someone's driving a work vehicle, that they may not have the ability, the reasonable ability, to know whether or not it's licensed or not, that the ticket wouldn't necessarily be in the name of that worker, that it could be applied directly to the management or the owner of that operation. Certainly that sounds more than reasonable.

This is a brief entry into a very serious matter, one that the official opposition has really worked tirelessly on, one that Saskatchewan people care deeply about and know that the official opposition will remain committed to improving the safety of our roads. And certainly we thank all the different organizations and people who have put their energy and their effort into this front as well.

At this point in time I'll adjourn debate with respect to Bill No. 198, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2019*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 198. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 199

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 199 — *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Pleased to enter into the debate today on this bill. It was just released last week as you will recall, and I think that the main thrust of the bill is to allow this government to join with the British Columbia government in a class action lawsuit against manufacturers and wholesalers of opioids here in Saskatchewan, or distributed here in Saskatchewan.

The minister summarized the claim as this in his second reading remarks, that drug companies receive prescribers and patients . . . or that they "deceive." Sorry, can't read at the end of the day. The drug companies are deceiving "prescribers and patients about the risks and benefits of opioids, and they have seriously harmed individuals, families, and the public health care system." And so the government is introducing this bill.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, we have a number of serious drug issues in our society today and uses of opioids and overuses and addictions to opioids has caused incalculable social harm.

And I do want to give a shout out to Marie Best from Saskatoon who has been a tireless advocate for reducing the harm. Her son, Kayle, was unfortunately overdosed on opioids and lost his life. You know, it comes close to home, Mr. Speaker, because my son played soccer with Kayle's brother. And so you start thinking about the impacts of this on families and it's just absolutely devastating.

[16:45]

And of course we've seen many stories in the news about people who are legitimately prescribed opioids who became addicted to them. And I know a family member who's been in that situation, who's successfully not using opioids now, but sometimes it leads to complete destruction of that person's life. And so if drug companies are actively deceiving both physicians and patients about the risks, then this is definitely something that needs to be before the courts, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I would also remind everyone about the fact that crystal meth has also taken over in terms of illicit drug sales in our province. And it's part of that larger issue I think that we're seeing when we talk about suicides in the North and gangs' presence in northern communities, and opioids is part of that issue as well. So glad to see the government taking steps on this

side to ensure that manufacturers of these drugs are held accountable.

I would have liked to see more action for the people who manufacture crystal meth, Mr. Speaker, and I know that's a very difficult issue in society today. And of course a suicide prevention strategy ties into this as well. And we are really wanting to see this government come forward with legislation, or at least accept the legislation that's been tabled, to establish a suicide prevention strategy as well, because it's really important.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I don't have anything to add anymore at this moment, and I know other colleagues will. So I'll move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*, 2019.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 199. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 175

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

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure again to wade into discussion on Bill No. 175, *The Marriage Amendment Act*. This particular bill . . .

An Hon. Member: — Get in there. Don't just wade in.

Ms. Chartier: — My colleagues don't just want me to wade into the debate; they want me to jump in full on, Mr. Speaker.

This particular bill, Mr. Speaker, it permits an interested person to challenge the legal validity of a marriage in the Court of Queen's Bench. There's a presumption that one of the parties to a marriage did not provide valid consent to enter into the contract of marriage. And this particular provision is obviously about protecting vulnerable individuals, but I think it'll be a very fine line to walk between supporting autonomy and protecting vulnerability. So I think that that's something to really keep in mind, that piece around we need to protect vulnerable people in our society. And presumably someone who may have dementia and enter into a relationship a little bit later in life, that might be where this applies, Mr. Speaker, but again, protecting the most vulnerable but ensuring some autonomy as well.

This legislation updates the language used throughout the legislation. It removes the reference to the family service Act. It prohibits the marriage of a person under 16. I actually didn't realize that that was the age that we were at with respect to marriage, Mr. Speaker, until this bill came before us. I've got a daughter who turns 12 tomorrow, actually. And coming from a

place as a mom, my first response to that is, yes, definitely we should be prohibiting marriage of a person under 16 even with parental consent. I don't know if that was how that piece of legislation worked, but that is my first thought with that, Mr. Speaker.

This bill amends sections 25(2) and (4) to update the references to in-patient facility, which is no longer a defined term in *The Mental Health Services Act*. I believe that the words now, instead of "in-patient facility," are actually "mental health centre." I believe that's the language that we use.

This bill will allow a marriage commissioner to charge a fee agreed upon by both parties and the commissioner for the marriage ceremony. It establishes that in the case the validity of a contract of marriage is challenged that the court may require either or both of the parties to the marriage to be examined before the court or submitted to a medical examination. Again I think that that's the fine line protecting the most vulnerable, but ensuring that folks have autonomy as well. I think those pieces are important to keep in mind, and I know that there'll be lots of questions asked in committee around this particular, well around the whole bill. But I think that that's what really jumps out at me as the important part of this bill.

It also amends *The Wills Act* to nullify an existing will if a spouse wants to change their will after marriage.

All bills that come before us are important, Mr. Speaker, but this makes some pretty dramatic changes. I think it's always important, and these will be questions that come before the committee, I'm sure. When a bill is before us it's important to ask: who asked for the bill? Where did the bill come from? Is this an issue that has been raised repeatedly in the public domain? Are legal organizations hearing this to be a problem? So I think it's important to examine why a bill is before us and ask those very important questions, Mr. Speaker.

But again it's the very same diligent critic who will be looking at this bill as a few previous ones to which I have had the opportunity to speak today, so I will leave that in her capable hands. And for now I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 175, *The Marriage Amendment Act*.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 175, *The Marriage Amendment Act, 2019*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy 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 tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:52.]

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