



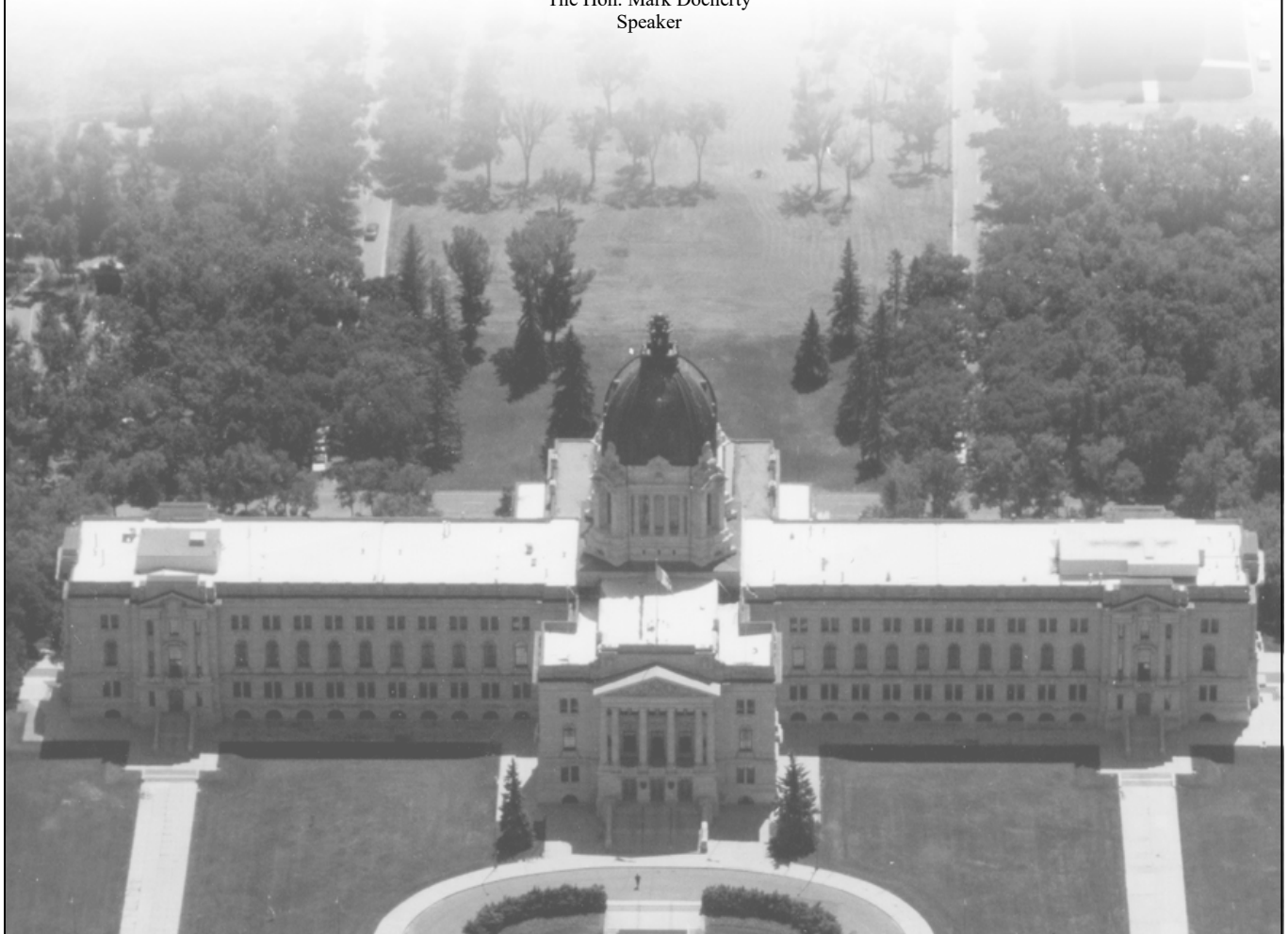
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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



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

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

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

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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

Principal Clerk — Iris Lang

Clerk Assistant — Kathy Buriannyk

Sergeant-at-Arms — Terry Quinn

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[The Assembly met at 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and all the members of the Assembly this morning, I would like to introduce a group in the west gallery, some grade 5 students from St. Marguerite School right here in Regina on Shooter Drive. Mr. Speaker, many of them, this is their first opportunity to be in this beautiful building. I look forward to having a chance to talk to them after routine proceedings. They are accompanied by their teacher Ms. Dauphinais. So I ask all members to please help me welcome them here.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Marit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to introduce to you and through you, seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, a good friend of mine, Tim Oleksyn, and David Gullacher.

Tim is chairman of the board of PAMI [Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute] and David is the CEO [chief executive officer] of PAMI. I've had the pleasure of having a meeting with them this morning. Tim and I have met in my former career. We met years ago and become good friends, and David and I have also met previously. So I just want everybody to please welcome these two gentlemen to their Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to join with the minister in welcoming these two gentlemen from the machinery institute to their Legislative Assembly. They do a lot of good work and Saskatchewan has a long history of innovation in that field. I think leaders, not just in Canada but in the world, and so we are very fortunate to have PAMI in Saskatchewan and for their continued endeavours. And so I would like to ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Hindley: — 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.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the

following action: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to take the necessary steps to stop the federal government from imposing a carbon tax on the province.

Mr. Speaker, this petition today is signed by the good citizens of Langham. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of residents of La Ronge and area that are calling for enhanced internet services in the tri-community area. The tri-community is the 14th most populated community in Saskatchewan but has slower internet service than many communities with smaller populations. Saskatchewan has a growing rural and urban digital divide when it comes to internet access and affordability. That high-speed internet is a very important service that people use more than ever when it comes to education, small businesses, work, communication, and to stay informed.

Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan take steps to ensure that the high-speed internet is available and affordable to residents of La Ronge, Air Ronge, and the Lac La Ronge Indian Band.

It is signed by many good people in the tri-community. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents, people, communities from all across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party government's billion-dollar hike of the PST [provincial sales tax], Mr. Speaker, a doubling of that tax take, something that has hit households hard, Mr. Speaker. The average household is now paying more than \$800 more than they were just four years ago each and every year because of the hike and expansion of the PST by that Sask Party government. Of course it's hurting households, but it's hurting our economy, Mr. Speaker.

And as it relates to the Sask Party's imposition of that PST onto construction labour, quite simply it's the epitome of a job-killing tax, Mr. Speaker. Very sadly, the results speak for themselves. Permits are down all across Saskatchewan in a very serious way. Important projects have been shelved and thousands of hard-working tradespeople, construction workers, have been forced out of their jobs and many forced out of Saskatchewan in the pursuit of employment, hurting them and their families, hurting our economy well into the future.

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 from Regina and Saskatoon. I so submit.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition to restore public control over Wascana Park. Mr. Speaker, Wascana is a treasured urban park that has been managed effectively and efficiently and responsibly through an equal partnership between the University of Regina, the city of Regina, and the province of Saskatchewan for over 50 years. The Sask Party sought to destroy that equal partnership in 2017 by taking over control of the board and giving themselves the majority votes on that board. As a result we've now seen what happened. There's been a growing commercialization of Wascana Park and a giveaway of a portion of the park to one of its largest corporate donors.

Mr. Speaker, the city of Regina, the University of Regina have both expressed an openness to return to a governance model based on equality. And more and more people across the province are growing concerned over the growing commercialization of Wascana Park.

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 government to restore the governance structure of the Wascana Centre Authority and end the commercialization of Wascana Park.

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

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for a \$15 minimum wage here in Saskatchewan. And the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan want to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan now has the lowest minimum wage in Canada, but minimum wage should never be a poverty wage; that Saskatchewan people who are working full time at minimum wage are living in poverty; and that a \$15 wage would improve health and well-being and lift Saskatchewan out of poverty; and that a \$15-an-hour wage will benefit local businesses and support local economies by putting money in workers' pockets to spend in their community.

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

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to adopt a plan to raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for all workers.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the good city of Moose Jaw. I do so present. Thank you.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise this morning to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to fix the crisis in our classrooms. Those who have signed this petition wish to draw our attention to a number of points: that the Sask Party government's cuts mean falling per-student funding which is resulting in fewer and fewer supports for those children who need a little extra help; that the Sask Party government's cuts leave educators without the resources that they need to support learning in the classroom; that the Sask Party government is ignoring overcrowding in our classrooms by refusing to track and report on class sizes; and that the Sask Party government's failures to invest in our classrooms are having serious consequences today. And we all know, Mr. Speaker, that they will continue to into the future until we address this very important issue.

I'll read the prayer:

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

Mr. Speaker, those who have signed the petition today reside in Cut Knife, Unity, and North Battleford. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota.

International Women's Day

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our first thought on International Women's Day is with those women who lack basic fundamental rights and entitlements: to go to school, to go to work, to vote, to marry freely and with consent. Most of all, Mr. Speaker, our thoughts are with those who face persecution.

It's also important to remember in this country where we are, what we've achieved, and fought so hard for, what it really means to come a long way and to never take that for granted, to avoid tokenism, mere symbolic gestures, and to truly with genuine actions and attitudes — not necessarily with ribbons or hashtags — to move beyond still-remnant attitudes and casual sexism and truly foster equality.

On behalf of the Minister of the Status of Women, some Saskatchewan women to highlight today, who have made significant contributions in their respective fields: Shana Pasapa, Carly St. Onge, Tammie Kulyk, Jen Rondeau, Crystal Lybeck, Michelle Zatllyn, Laura Budd, Ashley Nemeth, Zarqa Nawaz, Kim Keller, and Tatiana Maslany.

Mr. Speaker, I work with inspiring women every day. My seat partner here, for example, the Minister of Corrections and Policing, is a former police officer of 28 years. She was the first-ever female president of a major police association in Canada. She knows all about challenging gender stereotypes.

Mr. Speaker, many of us have daughters. We all have mothers. And I think we all agree that how we treat women is about how we treat each other and is the mark of character and true advancement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, Sunday is International Women's Day and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the significance of this day. This year's theme is, I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights. This theme highlights the importance of advancing gender equality worldwide in light of the agonizingly slow progress in establishing equal rights for the majority of women across the globe.

The focus on women's rights is particularly important this year as we see our neighbours to the south trying to roll back the clock on women's reproductive freedom. Mr. Speaker, there would be no better way to celebrate International Women's Day this year than to see the Supreme Court rule in favour of abortion rights being defended by Louisiana advocates in the Supreme Court this week.

We know there's so much more work to be done, especially in Saskatchewan, to ensure women's safety. I would like to thank those who fight for women's safety in Saskatchewan's 14 crisis shelters and six second-stage shelters throughout the province. They work tirelessly on behalf of the women and children who are impacted by violence, unfortunately too many in Saskatchewan.

I would ask all members to join me in acknowledging International Women's Day and thanking staff and volunteers working in shelters and transition homes for their dedication to the women and children in Saskatchewan.

[10:15]

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

The Canadian Challenge Dogsled Race

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canadian Challenge held last month is Canada's premier dogsled race in the Yukon Quest and Iditarod qualifier. This race follows the historic sled dog route between Prince Albert and La Ronge, used decades ago by our province's pioneers, trappers, and First Nation people.

Mr. Speaker, this annual race is organized by a group of dedicated volunteers, the Gateway North Sled Dog Race Association, who've been promoting traditional sled dog racing in Saskatchewan since 1994. Headquartered at beautiful Elk Ridge Resort near Prince Albert National Park, this race sees competitors take to the trails for 12-, 8-, and 6-dog races. They make a loop and cross the finish line at the resort while those in the 8- and 12-dog competitions race 600 kilometres all the way to La Ronge.

Mr. Speaker, teams come to Elk Ridge from all over the world to take part in this tradition, some from as far away as Australia and

Germany. Thanks to the Gateway North Sled Dog Race Association, the Canadian Challenge and its craft of traditional sled dog racing will continue for years to come.

Please join with me in acknowledging and thanking this group of volunteers whose dedication continues to make the Canadian Challenge an incredible success. Mush!

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

Saskatchewan Party Donors

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When we have the opportunity to deliver these statements, we often draw attention to remarkable people or accomplishments. And today, Mr. Speaker, I do want to draw some attention to some remarkable people — specifically, Saskatchewan Party donors.

Mr. Speaker, there are many benefits from donating to the Saskatchewan Party. Here are the top five: a new house. As a donor with friends in the Saskatchewan Party caucus, a municipal official can use Sask social housing dollars to build themselves a new house.

Number four, hot tips. With the right donation and connections, you can get a heads-up on land needed by the Ministry of Highways and the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] so that you can buy it off nuns for a bargain, flip it making millions, and sell it back to the government making millions more.

Number three, government loans. If you've given enough, you could be part of a select group of developers that qualifies for loans from the Saskatchewan Immigrant Investor Fund so you can flood a saturated housing market with unsellable condos.

Number two, government loans you don't even have to pay back. With your donation, you could get a loan from the FNMF [First Nations and Métis Fund] and never worry about paying it back.

And the number one reason to be a donor to the Sask Party, Wascana Park. Forget about getting your name on a park bench. You could get your very own piece of land for a buck, build a large for-profit commercial building, and make millions.

Trust me, Mr. Speaker, it pays to be a Sask Party donor.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

Innovation Challenge Seeks Solutions to Support Producers' Mental Health

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today Innovation Saskatchewan launched their latest Innovation Challenge in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture. This year the challenge aims to address an important issue in the agriculture industry — mental health.

While mental health has always played a key role in farm life, I'm glad to see that we're having more open conversations about it today. After a dry spring and early snowfall during harvest, 2019 was a challenging year for the industry. We saw an increase in the Farm Stress Line, which means more people are reaching out for support.

Mr. Speaker, through Innovation Challenge we are hoping to find more ways to support Saskatchewan producers facing difficult times. This challenge is intended to find answers to the question, what technological solutions can help Saskatchewan producers in actively monitoring their mental health?

Mr. Speaker, over the next six weeks Innovation Saskatchewan is accepting proposals to answer this important question, and I look forward to seeing the solutions that are developed. Producers have always pushed for innovation across all areas of the agriculture industry and I'm pleased to see that they're now harnessing this innovation to support their mental health.

I ask all members in joining me in congratulating Innovation Saskatchewan on their latest challenge and wishing all applicants good luck on their proposals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

39th Annual Scotties Tournament of Hearts Held in Moose Jaw

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For 10 days last month, 16 curling teams and thousands of fans from across Canada travelled to Moose Jaw for the 39th annual Scotties Tournament of Hearts. The teams battled for the opportunity to wear the maple leaf at the world women's curling championship.

I was pleased to have the opportunity to attend the opening ceremonies along with the Premier; Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport; and the member from Moose Jaw North. Mr. Speaker, Team Saskatchewan did an incredible job and represented us well on the national stage. Team Saskatchewan was made up of skip Robyn Silvernagle, third Stefanie Lawton, second Jessie Hunkin, lead Kara Thevenot, alternate Stephanie Schmidt, and coach Lesley McEwan.

Mr. Speaker, it took over 400 dedicated volunteers to make the event the success that it was. Between hotels, restaurants, transportation, and more, the 60,000 people taking in the tournament had an economic impact of almost \$10 million. Mr. Speaker, it was absolutely wonderful having the Scotties in Moose Jaw, and I can't wait to have them in our city again.

I now invite all members of this Assembly to join me in thanking the hundreds of volunteers and organizers for their hard work, and congratulating all the teams on a great performance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Opposition Stance on Health Care

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, later today I'm going to be joining a number of members in this Chamber in a debate on health care, which I'm quite looking forward to hearing the Leader of the Opposition and the two health critics talk on this very issue, Mr. Speaker, later on today.

What spurs this debate, Mr. Speaker, put forward by the NDP [New Democratic Party], I think is the Leader of the Opposition's

flat-out rejection of any private investment into the public system, Mr. Speaker. It doesn't matter, Mr. Speaker, whether it be a parkade at the Regina General that has to be, according to the opposition, funded publicly, to MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] delivery through a private system, through a private deliverer within the public system where a person on the waiting list can pay for an MRI and that private clinic then covers the cost of another MRI. Two people off the waiting list at no cost to the government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a form of this is done in Quebec. A form of this is also done in British Columbia. In fact, Mr. Speaker, a form of this was approved by the former NDP for the Saskatchewan Roughriders and the Workers' Compensation. It should be good enough for all Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, the leader of the NDP would take almost 5,000 MRI patients that have received MRIs and put them back on the waiting list, Mr. Speaker, because for him it's far more about ideology than it is about the patients of our province.

There are two people trying to end this program for Saskatchewan: they're Justin Trudeau and the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Speaker. Once again the leader has shown he'd rather side with the Prime Minister and not on the side of Saskatchewan people.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Unparliamentary Language

The Speaker: — Yesterday, March 4th, 2020, the Government House Leader raised a point of order asserting that during question period, the member for Athabasca used profane language directed at the Premier. In response to the point of order, the Opposition House Leader stated that she did not hear the remark. I also did not hear the remark. I reviewed the audio/video of the proceedings and found there was nothing discernible on the record. Accordingly it is impossible for me to rule on this matter.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

School Board Meeting

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, for the proper functioning of our democracy, it's critical that political leaders exercise their authority appropriately. It appears from FOIs [freedom of information] that we've received, that the Premier seriously overstepped that authority with the Saskatchewan Rivers public school board. Following stories of the potential transfer of teachers in Shellbrook to nearby schools, the Premier and three Sask Party MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] requested a meeting with the board on June the 3rd, 2019. Before the meeting, the school division director wrote to the superintendent, and I quote:

A much more urgent topic is the Premier's position on the [redacted]. Among the other things, at the meeting with the board and me, he indicated he would be [another lengthy redaction]. I am firm in my resolve to see this to the proper end.

My question is simple. Did the Premier pressure the division to overturn its own decision?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the meetings that I have as a representative of all of the communities in Rosthern-Shellbrook, we meet with four different school boards, Mr. Speaker — two in North Battleford, one based out of Warman, as well as the Sask Rivers School Board based out of Prince Albert. Mr. Speaker, we have met with area MLAs with each of those school boards over the last eight, nine years now that I have been in office, attempted to meet with them each and every year.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the meeting that we had this past year, Mr. Speaker, I did ask questions with respect to teacher transfers in the community of Shellbrook. I asked those meetings because it is the largest item that had come into our office over a period of time, Mr. Speaker, from the constituents of Shellbrook.

There was other delegations that had been in and asked the same questions with respect to why this policy is in place and how it had been followed, Mr. Speaker, including members from the town council of Shellbrook, including members from the business association in Shellbrook, as well as the school community councils, Mr. Speaker. So I ask questions on behalf of the people that I represent in our community because they had asked me repeatedly many, many times in my office, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, it's very concerning that the Premier does not seem to understand this very concerning overstep of his authority with that board. After the meeting with the Premier, the school board Chair wrote to the Vice-Chair, and I quote, Mr. Speaker:

We had a very interesting meeting with the Premier and the three MLAs for our area. We moved smoothly through the agenda, but we could tell that the Premier was anxious to get through the agenda and move on to the . . . [redacted and then another lengthy redaction]. Nadine suggested the meeting end as it was after 5 o'clock.

Don't stress over this. Think of the civil rights mantra, "We shall overcome." Tomorrow is another day.

Mr. Speaker, does the Premier believe it's his role to insert himself into the HR [human resources] decisions of a local school board to such an extent that the board officials are left reciting civil rights era slogans simply to maintain their resolve?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier believes that he is also the MLA for Rosthern-Shellbrook. The Premier believes that all MLAs in this Assembly, when they have multiple requests in their office, to inquire with respect to whatever the issue may be — with respect to health care, Mr. Speaker, with respect to education, with respect to the health and the opportunities for us to continue to grow strong communities. I

would expect that every MLA in this Assembly would take the questions of their constituents forward to every table and every opportunity that they have.

So, Mr. Speaker, very proudly as the MLA for Rosthern-Shellbrook have I represented the constituents of Rosthern-Shellbrook and I will continue to do so in the future.

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, like other school divisions across the province, Sask Rivers has struggled under the weight of the Sask Party cuts to education. They have a list of needs of school repairs totalling over \$66 million. They've also had to make staffing cuts forced by this Premier and the Sask Party government. When he won't commit to proper funding of the schools, to the school boards, to maintain their staffing levels, why does this Premier think that it's appropriate and his place to directly pressure school boards about internal HR matters when the decision is simply theirs to make?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — This is a remarkable line of questioning, Mr. Speaker, coming from that member. To suggest that the MLA representing those schools in that school division doesn't have an obligation to sit down with the school boards, Mr. Speaker, and have a . . .

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — To suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the MLA representing those schools doesn't have an obligation to sit down with school divisions, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the issues that come into his constituency office, Mr. Speaker, if that member is suggesting that just simply because the member sitting next to me is the Premier of Saskatchewan he doesn't have that obligation, that's ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. We all sit down with our school boards. We discuss the issues that are challenging our particular constituencies, Mr. Speaker, on any one of a number of issues, Mr. Speaker. The actions of the Premier on this are absolutely responsible, Mr. Speaker, in responding to his constituents. And I would suggest if that member, Mr. Speaker, suggests that that's not appropriate, then she shouldn't be sitting in that chair.

[10:30]

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

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, on this side of the House we respect school board autonomy. It is one thing for the MLA to attend a meeting to bring up concerns. It is a very other thing for the Premier of this province to request a meeting of this school board for the express reason to overturn a decision that that board had made that was in their jurisdiction to make.

Does the Minister of Education actually think that it is appropriate for the Premier to pressure boards to overturn decisions that are theirs to make?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, it is the responsibility of every member in this House to represent their constituents and to take the concerns of their constituents, Mr. Speaker, whether it's a school board, whether it's a city council, a town council. It's his responsibility. It's all our responsibilities to do that. And when a concern comes to an MLA, it's incumbent on that MLA to take those concerns forward and address them, Mr. Speaker. That's what the Premier did. That's what the expectation should be of every person in this province, that their MLA will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

I'll continue to do that, Mr. Speaker. I'll continue to meet with my school boards, Mr. Speaker, and bring forward issues of concern to my constituents in the hopes that they'll listen to those concerns, Mr. Speaker. And as a result of those concerns, Mr. Speaker, we would hope that they would take notice of the concerns of their constituents, that they listen through the constituency offices, Mr. Speaker, of the MLAs that sit in this House.

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

Support for Women's Shelters and Second-Stage Housing

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier and this government will go to bat for their friends and insiders any day, but they're letting Saskatchewan people down.

Mr. Speaker, reports this morning show that each month 600 Saskatchewan women fleeing interpersonal violence are turned away from shelters because there isn't enough space. We know women are at the greatest risk of domestic homicide in the days and hours after leaving their abusers, and to have these women turned away at the door is frankly unacceptable. The status quo isn't enough. What's the plan to create more emergency spaces for these women in need?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. It is always a concern when women are fleeing domestic violence situations and interpersonal violence and abuse, and especially on this day. We are aware that there are some issues with respect to the number of women that are turned away at existing shelters. We know, for example, that there are some opportunities for us to make some changes. First of all, we need to prevent violence from happening in the first place. And that's all of our responsibilities, not just our emergency shelters but each one of us sitting in this great Assembly.

The second thing that I would offer, Mr. Speaker, is that Saskatchewan Housing Corporation has a number of social housing units which are primarily vacant. They have a policy to ensure that women fleeing domestic violence have access to that housing. It's prioritized, Mr. Speaker. I think there are some opportunities for us to work in that area. And certainly I've spoken with the respective ministers about opportunities to look

at that and see how we might better have a second-stage housing for some of those families that are coming in and out of our shelters, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, the minister should know that Sask Housing units are not necessarily acceptable for women fleeing domestic violence for second-stage housing because of the extra safety supports that are needed for these individuals.

Mr. Speaker, the capacity pressure in emergency shelters is made worse by this shortage of second-stage housing for survivors of domestic violence. And even though there are federal dollars at the table to build more of these spaces that have these extra needs and supports, operators can't build them because Saskatchewan is one of only two provinces that doesn't provide operating funding for second-stage housing for survivors of domestic violence. These supports can be the difference between life and death.

Will the minister commit today to providing operating funding for these second-stage housing?

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

Hon. Ms. Beaudry-Mellor: — I think we can commit today that we will continue to look at this issue and we'll continue to see what opportunities there are for us to coordinate resources to make sure that women fleeing interpersonal and domestic violence are looked after.

I would say though, however, Mr. Speaker, at the same time this government has done a lot on this and we have enacted a number of pieces of legislation to help and try to mitigate the amount of interpersonal violence and abuse that is experienced by women in our communities including the Listen project.

The member is familiar with *The Privacy Amendment Act* changes that we made. The fact that we opened the latest transition house that had been, since 1989 had not been built, was opened by our dear and late friend Kevin Phillips in Melfort. We introduced Clare's Law. We were the first province to do that. I see BC [British Columbia] has just done five days of unpaid labour.

Mr. Speaker, we have done a lot on the legislative front in this side of the House. We need to work a little bit harder on the awareness and prevention side, Mr. Speaker, and you're going to be seeing some announcements about that coming very shortly.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to housing, the people of Saskatchewan need more than just a commitment to look into the issue. There is a project available in Regina that's ready to go. It's the Centre for Women and Families that the YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] of Regina have been working on for quite a while. It's ready. It's just looking for funding partners. It would increase bed space in Regina but also

help address the preventative issues and allow them to do more of the good work that they do. They're simply waiting for a commitment from all levels of government for that funding.

Will the minister commit today to being a funding partner in that project?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We've had the opportunity to meet with the YW several times. The last time, their proposal had just been changed to add in a healing centre, Mr. Speaker. I believe that they are working with the federal government currently as well as doing a fundraising campaign, and we're very interested to see the results of that.

We'll continue to meet with the YW to address this problem in Regina and the surrounding area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Management of Government and Program Funds

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night in committee I had the chance to sit down and ask the CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] minister about some of the losses, large losses of public money with the Grant Kook Sask Party insider slush funds, the SIF [Saskatchewan Immigrant Investor Fund Inc.], and the FNMF.

I asked the minister how many jobs were created as a result of the \$3 million that went to support Muskowekwan Resources Ltd. The answer? Very few. I asked the minister how many jobs have been created as a result of the \$1.8 million that went to support Brigden Welding. The answer? Four.

Now the minister wasn't kidding when he said that these were high-risk investments, but this is no joke. How is it that this government, that made a flagship promise never to pick winners and losers, managed to lose so much public money on these funds?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the fund was about investing, investing in First Nations and giving them a leg-up in participating fully in Saskatchewan's economy, Mr. Speaker. While the NDP only focus on the negatives, there were successes in this program, Mr. Speaker. For example, the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council development is owned by 11 members of the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council. And they purchased ownership interest in a drilling rig, a joint venture partnership that's still in business and profitable today, Mr. Speaker.

Sturgeon Lake. The First Nation development acquired equity interest in Glenmor Equipment that sells farm equipment and construction equipment. And it's still operating and very successful and employs a number of people, Mr. Speaker.

Birch Narrows Dene Development acquired 100 per cent of Saskatoon Fastprint. They're also still in business and operating very well, Mr. Speaker.

It's about investing in people. And we won't apologize for trying to strengthen Aboriginal participation in Saskatchewan's economy.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's also about the \$8 million of public taxpayers' money that has gone south as a result of some of the decisions that were made by this fund. Mr. Speaker, the minister tried to shift the blame elsewhere last night, refusing to take any responsibility for those investments that went south. But, Mr. Speaker, the minister isn't Pontius Pilate. Public dollars were put into Brigden Welding, the public is on the hook for the losses, and the minister can't wash his hands of responsibility for these risky loans of last resort signed under the Sask Party's watch.

The minister is totally unconcerned by the fact that the investment into Brigden Welding has been written down from 1.8 million to \$250,000, and that's some light standards that are stored in a garage somewhere right now, Mr. Speaker. All the while Brigden continues to operate several active businesses. Now the minister is the one responsible, and he should be looking to collect on the money that was lost. So why won't he look at Brigden's other businesses and try and recoup some of our public investment?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I've mentioned before in the House and I mentioned last night in committee, Mr. Speaker, the First Nations and Métis Fund did not lend money to Brigden Welding, Mr. Speaker, and so I don't know why the member keeps bringing that up. The First Nations and Métis Fund invested in Infinite, Mr. Speaker. Infinite then as well invested in Brigden Welding in acquiring a percentage of the shares, Mr. Speaker, as per the mandate of what they wanted to do, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, this fund, this fund was developed by the NDP and put into place by the NDP in 2005, Mr. Speaker. That is the truth. Mr. Speaker, it was developed . . . The fees that were paid to the management firm were developed and initiated and sole sourced, I might add, Mr. Speaker, by the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, helping First Nations acquire interest in other companies and developing in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker — we can't apologize for that.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, last night we also looked at the problems with the Saskatchewan Immigrant Investor Fund, which is currently on track to lose \$8.7 million. Now that's the fund that was managed by the Sask Party insider Grant Kook to give loans to developers and build housing. Now here's the rub: Kook made over \$50,000 on each loan that was signed, and many of the builders who received these low-interest loans have been significant donors to the Sask Party. And we all paid Kook's company millions just for the privilege of managing the fund.

So, Mr. Speaker, who benefited? Who benefited? Sask Party insiders. And who paid the price? Who paid the price is all the

taxpayers of Saskatchewan. What does the minister have to say to taxpayers who've been left holding the bag while the Sask Party and their friends have been cashing in?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

Hon. Mr. Hargrave: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll talk about the SIIF program, Mr. Speaker. And that program come about in 2011, and during a time when the housing market, Mr. Speaker, was experiencing an extreme shortage. Now the contract to manage that program, Mr. Speaker, was awarded in 2011 to an open RFP [request for proposal] process, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, that was 74 projects in 19 different communities across the province, Mr. Speaker. That was \$481 million worth of housing projects, Mr. Speaker. That's 2,224 homes completed for Saskatchewan families; 2,104 construction jobs, Mr. Speaker. That, Mr. Speaker, is a pretty good record. One failed investment out of 74, Mr. Speaker, that's a pretty good investment. And that's good work by the management company as well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Condition of Saskatchewan Hospital Building

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, we asked about the Saskatchewan Hospital yesterday and the minister didn't seem to have any answers, so maybe we'll give him another chance. The Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford has been an embarrassment for the Sask Party. We know the same type of modular panels were used on the roof as the walls, and officials knew in 2017 they were defective and used them anyways. This is a serious lack of oversight on a \$400 million project that we will be paying for for decades.

So the same question as yesterday. To the minister: why on earth would this government allow the proponent to plow ahead and install products that had proven to be faulty in 2017?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much for the questions again. And I'm happy to provide the answers, many of the same answers that I provided yesterday. This is a project that was long overdue. This was a project that the NDP had 16 years to look at, to consider. They had a Health minister from that very area. They talked about it. But, Mr. Speaker, at the end of the day, they didn't get it done. It's a reoccurring theme here. Whether you look at schools, whether you look at hospitals, whether you look at highways, all of that infrastructure was ignored by the members opposite.

Now we have a hospital there. Yes, it has some short-term problems. We are looking at them. We are ensuring that they get rectified. And, Mr. Speaker, and the members opposite know this — it is not at the expense of the taxpayers, not at all. The companies are responsible. This government will hold their feet to the fire. And at the end of the day we will have a state-of-the-art hospital in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, something the NDP never did.

[10:45]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Before the minister gets too self-assured here, Mr. Speaker, he might want to check with Moody's. He doesn't even have to flip past the first page of Moody's credit opinion on Access Prairies Partnership to see the issues extend far beyond a leaking roof. And, Mr. Speaker, spoiler alert: the summary says simply, outlook negative. Talk about an understatement, Mr. Speaker.

If the minister had even glanced at the Moody's report, he'd at least know this much: it says the brand new facility already has 25 million in damages and won't be ready until the summer of 2021. Not only is the physical building falling apart, Mr. Speaker, but it seems the private financing of the project is crumbling too. So who will be held accountable for the mess if this project has turned into a mess? And who will be left holding the bag if Access Prairies Partnership falls apart?

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Now, Mr. Speaker, we're hearing a reoccurring theme. It's something that has taken place in this Legislative Assembly. It's happening today. It's happened despite the new leader who came in and said he would do politics differently. We had a series of questions slugging an individual in this province, using his good name in a negative manner, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — A well-respected individual.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Yes, I know. Members who have been in this House a long time, they have the opportunity whether to ask those questions or not. They've chosen to ask them. Now they're trying to look at public companies and be the captains of enterprise that they think that they are. We will let those companies do their work.

What we will ensure is that Saskatchewan taxpayers will get the best value, and that's what they have in this facility. They've saved \$15 million on the construction, \$90 million over the 30-year operation of it. It's something that I think that we can be proud of. And at the end of the day they will have a state-of-the-art hospital in North Battleford, something that members opposite were not able to do. I know that frustrates them but that's something that they're just going to have to live with.

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

Proposals for Construction of Power Plant

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it just makes sense that Saskatchewan companies that hire Saskatchewan people would build Saskatchewan projects. Yet the Sask Party has shortlisted two companies for the Moose Jaw power plant: one from Nebraska and one from Kansas City. And a little reminder to my good pal the minister, who was quoting the president yesterday — Kansas City is in Missouri, Mr. Speaker.

Workers saw what happened on the jobsite at the Chinook power station near Swift Current, which was awarded to one of the same out-of-country companies that's now on the short list for this

Moose Jaw project and that shut out local Saskatchewan workers from the project.

Instead of repeating this mistake that hurt our economy, will the Sask Party commit today that Saskatchewan workers will be at the front of the line when that power plant gets built in Moose Jaw?

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'm going to thank my friend for his question, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously as through the procurement, we'll want to ensure that Saskatchewan businesses can fully take part in the procurement of a new power plant for the city of Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker. And certainly SaskPower and SaskBuilds will ensure that that will be the case. \$140 million in benefits to local businesses were achieved at Chinook, Mr. Speaker, and we certainly expect even more to be the case in Moose Jaw, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, I would say that in terms of an engineer-procured construction project, Mr. Speaker, there are only a handful of companies that would bid on this type of work, Mr. Speaker. Obviously the two that have been shortlisted have Canadian headquarters, but obviously they are subsidiaries of American companies.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, the only Canadian company of the size that would take on a project like this is likely SNC-Lavalin. So, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to see that once again the Leader of the Opposition would side with Justin Trudeau when it comes to procurement projects, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, it was a direct question about workers being at the front of the line, Saskatchewan workers, with no answer from the minister. But what we do know is that building permits are down 57 per cent in construction, thanks to this Sask Party government.

Instead of kick-starting the Saskatchewan economy, the Sask Party has forced almost 7,000 hard-working construction workers out of employment and so many right out of the province with their job-killing tax on construction labour, Mr. Speaker, in addition to their relentless outsourcing. And sadly, of course, we've lost so many of those workers from our province when they've been forced to move.

We've proposed a Sask-first procurement process to help undo some of that damage, create jobs, and put Saskatchewan workers first. Why won't the Sask Party bring a Sask-first plan and ensure that Saskatchewan workers aren't left out when we build that power plant in Moose Jaw?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I am happy to talk about the record of job creation in this province under this government. The reality is 76,000 jobs have been created over the course of this government's term in office, Mr. Speaker. And that is in stark variance with the members

opposite, who actually saw jobs decrease over their time in government, Mr. Speaker, with the worst job creation record in the entire country.

But it shouldn't surprise us, Mr. Speaker. It shouldn't surprise us. The only economic policies these members have put forward are as follows, Mr. Speaker. They oppose pipelines, Mr. Speaker. In fact they all stood up, every one of them who voted at the last opportunity, stood up to oppose pipeline construction, Mr. Speaker. They support Justin Trudeau's carbon tax, Mr. Speaker. They won't support the energy sector, Mr. Speaker. People in Saskatchewan know they are not on their side.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

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

POINT OF ORDER

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, pursuant to rule 20(3), it's clear that responses from that side should be relevant to the question. The only option the minister has is either to decline or take notice or answer. And the most recent answer to the question, that was clearly not an answer to the question at all but it was a political rant suiting the needs of that particular member. So I would rule that that is out of order, and I would ask that you rule that out of order.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A response to the point of order, it was absolutely relevant. The question referenced jobs. The minister of jobs and Trade responded to that, Mr. Speaker. It was absolutely relevant. He was asking the information about jobs. If you want to talk about political rants, they're all coming from that side of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Okay, I'll remind everyone that it's important to be cognizant of what the question is and to answer that. That's a warning and a reminder to all. And we'll go on.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 620 — *The Public Disclosure of Travel and Expenses of Government Officials Act, 2020*

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 620, *The Public Disclosure of Travel and Expenses of Government Officials Act, 2020* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Centre that Bill No. 620 be now introduced and read a first time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

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

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

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

STATEMENT OF CONDOLENCE

Dick Rendek

The Speaker: — Members, I wish to advise the Assembly of the passing of a former officer of this Assembly.

Dick Rendek passed away on March 1st, 2020. He served as the province's Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioner from 2002 to 2003. During his tenure, Mr. Rendek recommended that the position of Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioner become full time to meet the demand for investigations into privacy complaints and to ensure Crown corporations and agencies were adequately protecting private information.

He was the first full-time Freedom of Information and Privacy Commissioner. In his short term he was able to establish Saskatchewan's first stand-alone Information and Privacy office that included two employees. Also during his tenure he served on the selection committee to assist in hiring his successor.

In addition to being an officer of this Assembly, Mr. Rendek served his province in many capacities. Professionally he had a distinguished legal career that spanned several decades and was the president and CEO of the Regina Airport Authority. Mr. Rendek contributed greatly to sport in this province and served as a Chair of the inaugural Western Canada Summer Games.

Mr. Rendek had a passion for the Saskatchewan Roughriders. He served as a member of the Saskatchewan Roughriders' board of directors, including as president from 1982 to 1984. In 1997 he was inducted into the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame, in part for his contribution in securing the Saskatchewan bid for the 1995 Grey Cup.

I ask all members to join me in conveying the Assembly's condolences to the bereaved family.

I recognize the Minister of Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — And thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for bringing to the attention of the Assembly the passing of Mr. Rendek, who was my great-uncle. Dick had an extraordinarily distinguished career, and you recounted his accomplishments very well. He was renowned within our extended family for the tremendous work he did on behalf of this province, and I thank you for that, Mr. Speaker.

Last time I saw Dick was at my grandfather's funeral, who was Dick's brother. And I can tell you that Dick maintained a very high degree of interest and paid a great deal of attention to Saskatchewan politics. And we had a great discussion about the goings-on here in this Chamber and across the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I also would ask all members to conduct their condolences to the immediate family. I do so as well, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Pedersen: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask for leave to join comments as well.

The Speaker: — I think leave is granted.

Mr. Pedersen: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity to cross swords with Dick Rendek. It's one of the very first files that I worked on as a young lawyer. And as you mentioned, he was a well-known fixture in the legal profession in the province, the forerunners to one of the large local firms that's in our city today.

He was also well known for his passion for the Saskatchewan Roughriders. And in addition to the many things that you mentioned, Mr. Speaker, he also sat on the board of governors for the CFL [Canadian Football League]. He was also long-standing involved in the Regina Exhibition Association and the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association]. And as you mentioned, he was instrumental in having the first Grey Cup ever to take place in Regina come to Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, when Dick was in his position as Information and Privacy Commissioner, at that time Saskatchewan was very much a pioneer and a leader in that field of freedom of information and privacy rights, and I think that was due at least in part to his efforts and integrity.

So on behalf of the official opposition, we'd like to extend our condolences to the family and ask all members to join in now.

[11:00]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Hindley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order the answers to questions 99 to 102.

The Speaker: — Order the answers for 99 to 102.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Support for Public Health Care

Ms. Sproule: — Well good morning again, Mr. Speaker. It's with a bit of nostalgia that I get up today to speak in what may be my last 75-minute debate in this Assembly, depending on whether a snap election is called of course, Mr. Speaker. But I want to take this opportunity to get some remarks on the record in relation to the failed MRI experiment that the Sask Party has undertaken and subjected the people of Saskatchewan to.

So my goal today is just to raise some of the points that research, actual research, supports regarding the riskiness of entering into a user-pay model for diagnostic tests like MRIs. And I'm just going to share some of that research and get it on the record, Mr. Speaker.

One of the points that is often refuted by the Sask Party is that we know that private, for-profit delivery is more expensive and it does stabilize a public system. And there's all kinds of research, Mr. Speaker, that supports that. For example I'm going to cite an article by T. Besley et al. called "Public and private health insurance in the UK." And this is from 20 years ago, Mr. Speaker. And this is what the findings of that particular study found.

Studying patterns of private insurance in the UK [United Kingdom], they found that increased use of private payment is correlated with increased waiting lists and that the two are causally related. So that's exactly what's happening here right now, Mr. Speaker, is what we see. Increased use of private payments actually correlates with increased waiting lists because, Mr. Speaker, and here's the reason, as more patients and physicians use the private-pay system, not only do the resources leave the publicly funded system — which was something we talked about when they first introduced this rather strange idea — but the pressure to restore public resources also declines at the very same time because fewer people, and in particular fewer affluent people, are applying political pressure to ensure that the public wait-lists are addressed. So, Mr. Speaker, this is a lose-lose situation for the people of Saskatchewan no matter how you look at it.

A further study done in, this was in around 2005 by Tuohy et al is a study of all the OECD [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development] nations with parallel private insurance for health care. They found that privately funded care produces longer wait times and draws resources out of the public system. And that's exactly what's happening here, Mr. Speaker. So again there was ample research prior to this decision, this ill-fated decision by this government that this is not a good idea and it actually makes the problems worse.

The research also noted that shortening wait times in the public system is usually most successfully achieved by increasing the amount of public investment, not by increasing the amount of private investment. So I would hope that the Minister of Health would take note of some of this notable research and actually do some research to find out whether this idea was really a bad idea. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the numbers are proving that out.

Another study done in 2011 by Koehoorn et al. studied the cost of care and return-to-work time for 1,380 patients in BC who received privately funded and public services for knee surgery. And they found that expedited privately funded care was more expensive and did not improve the return-to-work times. Patients receiving care in the public system did marginally better for a fraction of the cost, Mr. Speaker. So there's more research that is available to the Minister of Health if he's interested in looking into it.

There are a number of other points here in this research that we've done. Here's the point: private MRI facilities do not

improve wait times and have unused capacity. So this is a 2008 study done by Bercovici and Bell, and this is from 2008. They found that private MRIs provided fewer hours of operation but shorter wait times compared to public centres. This finding suggests that private centres have unused capacity and relatively small procedural volumes.

There was also the auditor of Saskatchewan herself found the following, Mr. Speaker, and this was in 2016. These are some of the numbers that we've been told. When we introduced the one-for-one model in March of 2016 — which resulted in 1,192 public MRI scans between March and December 2016 — at December 31st, 2016 RQHR [Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region] had, I'm not sure about this number here, Mr. Speaker, over 2,000 patients waiting for an MRI, which was an increase from the previous period when we didn't have the private MRI clinics here in Saskatchewan.

As of March 2017, the Regina Qu'Appelle Regional Health Authority scheduling staff noted that managing the one-for-one model is time consuming, Mr. Speaker, another example of the waste that this decision has caused. At this time it's largely a manual process. RQHR and private operators send back and forth various lists of privately paid completed scans, lists of referred patients for second scans, lists of second-scan patients who private operators were unsuccessful in scheduling an MRI, and lists of completed second scans. RQHR manually enters the information about the MRI scans private operators complete under the one-for-one model, and the entry of this information is often delayed. So you can see the kind of confusion that this idea has created for the health care system as well, Mr. Speaker.

And another point is that non-emergent MRIs are often overused and often an inappropriate diagnostic tool. So if we want to reduce the wait-list, perhaps the Minister of Health might want to look at some of the studies that have been done in this area. And in this study — it's called "Overuse of magnetic resonance imaging" research letter from 2013 — the authors of this study on the appropriate use of MRI of the lumbar spine and of the head for headache at the University of Alberta Hospital and the Ottawa Hospital found evidence of substantial overuse of lumbar spine MRI scans. Over half the requests were either inappropriate or of uncertain value.

So, Mr. Speaker, you can see that if there was better work done with the medical college and those that are ordering the scans . . . There is obviously a need for better education on the appropriate use of MRI scans if we find that 55 per cent of the scan requests are inappropriate or of uncertain value. That's a very high number, Mr. Speaker, and imagine if we could reduce the wait times by actually reducing the numbers of inappropriate scans. This proposal in front of us has done none of that.

Mr. Speaker, there's also an orthopedic surgeon in Alberta who has done some research. His name is Nick Mohtadi, and he conducted research at the Acute Knee Injury Clinic in Calgary. His research suggested that almost two-thirds of the knee-injured patients who had an MRI could have been accurately diagnosed using other more readily available and significantly less expensive techniques and tools. So again, Mr. Speaker, if the emphasis is being put more on the overuse of non-emergent MRIs, maybe we could see a reduction of the extraordinary waiting lists that we currently have.

The other thing that for me is . . . I have some more points I want to make but time is quickly running out. We know that in August 2018, when everyone knew right from the outset that this idea of the Sask Party government was actually violating the *Canada Health Act*, and they went ahead and did it anyways, Mr. Speaker. So it shows a lot of regard for federal laws, Mr. Speaker. But it has a pecuniary impact on the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker, and the Sask Party government has indicated that this would save money and that we would, you know, reduce wait times.

Well it's done neither and in fact it's going to have a negative effect on our transfers under the *Canada Health Act* because the federal minister in August of 2018, she wrote to our provincial counterpart and outlining that there was a new diagnostics services policy which formalized the long-standing federal position that medically necessary diagnostics services received in private clinics are considered insured services and should not be subject to user fees. So it's a clear violation of the *Canada Health Act*. Provinces and territories were informed that if patients continue to be charged for these services they will be subject to deductions from federal transfers under the *Canada Health Act* with the policy taking effect on April 1st, 2020.

So in less than 30 days, Mr. Speaker, we are going to see a reduction in our health care transfers, which are significant in this province, from our federal tax dollars. And we don't see any action on the part of this government to stop this. We don't see any concern or any estimates about how much this is going to cost us, what the reductions of the transfers are going to be as a result of the Sask Party's decision to deliberately violate the *Canada Health Act*.

Mr. Speaker, that has implications for taxpayers. That has implications for people using the systems. And again I just cannot understand why the government would go forward with a costly decision, with the notion, and telling taxpayers that this would actually save us money. Because all the evidence proves it's clearly not the case, and again I think we have ideology trumping practicality. We have ideology trumping looking at the economy and seeing what's best for the economy of this province and using ideology to overlook and refute the actual evidence and the research that's in place in relation to this.

Mr. Speaker, our health care system is one of the best in the world and certainly in Canada I think we're regarded throughout the world for the publicly funded health care. I am proud that my taxpayer dollars goes to that. My sister was recently in the Bahamas or Bermuda, I can't remember. She was in a Caribbean country and she got knocked down by a wave and had a broken wrist and so had to see a doctor there. And for one visit with a doctor, she was given a bill of \$1,200, Mr. Speaker.

Now we all know that we do pay for our health care system through our taxes but I don't know how people could sustain that kind of bill for a broken wrist bone and imagine what the cost would be if you were injured in a car accident or have some sort of medically threatening event occur to you or your loved ones and you couldn't pay for it.

Mr. Speaker, we are paying for it through the collective action of our tax dollars. When the Sask Party introduces programs like this, it actually undermines our public health care system. I often wonder what their agenda is, Mr. Speaker, because I think the

evidence shows that this was not a good idea. So I'm looking forward to hear why the members opposite think this was a good idea. And certainly I look forward to their evidence. I look forward to their research. I look forward to any knowledge that they can share that is rational for why this decision was made.

Other points that our research has shown is that improved knowledge about appropriate ordering and incentives tied to quality benchmarks may lead to fewer inappropriate tests and cost savings. So again here's an opportunity for the government to actually do some work to ensure that we don't have inappropriate testing. And the root of the problem according to the research that . . . this is still the Calgary orthopedic surgeon. He's finding the root of the problem is a system gap and the relative knowledge gap that exists in Alberta and most probably across Canada. The system gap is the form of slow access to specialty opinion.

So we know how long our specialist waits are here, Mr. Speaker, and then absence of guidelines that would help primary care providers know when an MRI should be requisitioned. So this costs the system; it costs us, Mr. Speaker. The knowledge gap relates to the lack of training and how to accurately diagnose knee injuries, low back pain, and other common bone and joint conditions without expensive tests. Bridging these gaps with provincial MRI guidelines and training in diagnostic test techniques can be done cost-effectively. So there are opportunities to lower the costs, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the use of MRIs. But it certainly isn't in the private clinic scenario, Mr. Speaker.

Also this same orthopedic surgeon in Calgary found that introducing incentives tied to provincial benchmarks for efficient use of public resources could add motivation for training. So why not encourage people with benchmarks and incentives that would lead to some adjustment of the use of MRIs and inappropriate testing and overutilization? The savings could be huge. For example, Mr. Speaker, in 2012 Canadians had 1.7 million MRIs, double the number in 2004, Mr. Speaker. So obviously the use of diagnostic testing such as an MRI has increased and it certainly, I think, has aided physicians incredibly in their diagnostics, Mr. Speaker. But when you overuse something, it costs. And those kind of things, I think through efficiencies, could be managed by this government.

[11:15]

So, Mr. Speaker, there's a lot of reasons why I think we need to revisit this. But my biggest concern is the fact that on April 1st, 2020, we are going to see clawbacks from our federal health transfers, which will effectively wipe out the benefits, any possible benefits of this program.

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

That this Assembly supports public healthcare and condemns government statements supporting American-style private healthcare where patients pay to access care.

I so move.

The Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Nutana has moved:

That this Assembly supports public healthcare and condemns government statements supporting American-style private healthcare where patients pay to access care.

Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is really quite a privilege to join into this debate regarding health care. I know when the Whip had mentioned . . . Often when 75-minute debates come around and they say, would you like to speak, you'd rather defer it to somebody else. I've been on my feet for, like, 20 years in this place and so I would rather defer it to somebody else. But when he mentioned this one, my eyes kind of lit up because I really do want to enter into this debate. This is one that is near and dear to my heart, of course, when you talk about health care.

But when I looked at the motion, the very motion, it's only 20 words. It's not a long motion. And I just thought when I read this motion, this is quintessential NDP. It's got all the push points that the NDP like to talk about. It says "American-style." In 20 words they hit three of their favourite topics. It talks about American-style, it talks about patient pay, and it talks about private health care.

The scare tactics this NDP . . . This motion, quite frankly, could be read in 2020. It could have been read by the NDP in 2010. It could have been read by the NDP in 2000, in 1990, in 1960, because they've been singing from the same song sheet. Oh, that American health care; oh, patient pay; oh, private delivery, Mr. Speaker. They've been scaring the general public with those key points for many, many years. And I just want to, in the time that I have, want to talk a little bit about those three buttons that the NDP have been pushing for decades and decades in this province and how out of place they are.

You know, the first one they talk about, patient pay, and they're saying it like patients may have to pay for health care. Less than 70 per cent of the health care that we receive in this province is covered by medicare. You know, does anybody go to an optometrist? I think that's health care. Patients pay. Does anybody go to a chiropractor? That's patient paid. But they like to use that as a push button to scare people that it's going to cost them so much, Mr. Speaker, when we're already paying for over 30 per cent of our health care through the private system.

Mr. Speaker, even long-term care, many people in long-term care. There's the public system for sure. There are a lot of people that go through private care homes. That's health care delivered through the private system where patients pay. So let's not scare people on the fact that patients may have to pay on many services which they do already, Mr. Speaker.

The other issue that they talk about is American-style health care. I always love that one: "American-style." And you know, they look at American-style like it's the worst thing that ever happened and our system is the very best. And I've been out and talked to people in Saskatchewan and they may not say our system is the best; it may be better. Let's compare the two system

because quite frankly, they are on opposite ends of the spectrum.

In Saskatchewan and in Canada we have a medicare system where we pay for our health care via the government. Our taxpayer dollars go into the government; the government pays for the services. Mr. Speaker, I've been lucky. I haven't had to use the system hardly at all in my lifetime. My boys are a different story. My boys are a little different story, Mr. Speaker, but I have been very, very fortunate and I've paid into medicare for many years. Other people that are close to me haven't been so fortunate, so that's how the system works. We pay our money into the government.

In the States, it goes into insurance for the most part and some people don't have insurance. But they're opposite ends of the spectrum. There are so many variations between those opposite ends of the spectrum, even here in Canada.

I would invite the opposition critic, who I hope joins into this debate, you know, or the two critics that I hope join into this debate because it's on health care . . . I wish they would even just go to Quebec, talk to the minister in Quebec. I mean any of the Health ministers that go to FPTs [federal-provincial-territorial] talk to the ministers in other provinces, and the systems are so very, very different. There is so much private delivery in the Quebec system and they have said — in French and I wish I knew the words — I don't care what the federal government says; this is better for the people here in Quebec.

I would ask the members opposite to go visit some of those systems here in Canada. And I know they're very concerned about expenses and how government people, MLAs, and especially ministers are spending the taxpayers . . . but I would ask them to get out of the province and look what's done in other parts of Canada. But even more importantly, get out of Canada and look what is done in other parts of the world. Not just United States, but go to Britain, Great Britain, and see what the NHS [National Health Service] has to say. Go to Switzerland or Sweden and look at those. Those are public systems but they don't look like ours because they involve much more private delivery.

There are other ways to do what we do here in Saskatchewan and not jeopardize the public system and not jeopardize the patient. In fact what it really does is adds for better care, Mr. Speaker.

So the whole issue around patient pay and American style, there are so many variations. And we need to look at those variations from other provinces, which we've done in this model of MRIs, and look at other countries and take the best of all of those and not be afraid to get out of our ideology and implement those into the system that we have here in Saskatchewan.

You know, it's ironic. I remember sitting on that side of the House for eight years, and the last couple of years I was the Health critic on that side. And I remember carrying forward an issue around the drug, Avastin. And the opposition would not . . . The government at that time would not pay for Avastin. And there was two strong lobbyists. I remember Mr. Loepky from Swift Current and Terry Rak from Saskatoon that carried that. And at that time, they're so scared about patients paying, but they eventually did. Avastin was for colorectal cancer. It was a standard of care by the Canadian cancer agency and our

government would not cover it, but they'd allow people to pay for it.

When we became government we said, this is crazy. It's a standard of care that should be covered. But in that case, they weren't . . . The opposition, which is then the government, the NDP had no problem people paying out of pocket in that case, Mr. Speaker. And in that case, it was wrong. We were able to cover that, Mr. Speaker, one of the first things that we did.

My time is running out here, so there's a couple other things that I want to talk about. I don't think there has been a change that we have made in the 12 or 13 years that we've been government that the opposition has been in favour of. You know, they have rejected anything that we've tried to do because they say, you know, it's privatizing the health care system.

Imagine this one, Mr. Speaker. We privatized the laundry services in this province and the opposition at that time said, it's terrible, you're privatizing the health care system. You know, laundry of course is in the hospital, but do they think a patient really matters who did the laundry, Mr. Speaker, as long as there's clean laundry there? We were able to save millions of dollars, like \$40 million on capital and about \$4 million a year, which doesn't get taken out of the system. It goes into the system to allow patients to access more care, Mr. Speaker. So there's laundry.

They completely opposed the private surgery clinic that we put in this province to lower the wait-list. Now I think the member from Rosemont may talk about the wait-list — he's been signalling that all day — and talk about how the wait-list has gone down. But how did that happen, Mr. Speaker? That happened because we contracted a private clinic, surgery clinics, to help us with the wait-lists. The same that we're doing with private MRIs operating within the public system. It's taking people off the wait-list, Mr. Speaker. And they've completely rejected that.

The last one, and I have to really quickly say this one, is that I remember every day in this House for one session . . . If you can imagine this, every day in the House for one whole session except for the very last day, the former member from Nutana, not the member that's here today, but the — oh, I can say her name — Pat Atkinson. Pat Atkinson stood in the House every day and asked me the same question about Samaritan Place which is a long-term care facility run by the Catholic Health services in Saskatchewan. They were dead set against it. Pardon?

An Hon. Member: — How was that open bid system?

Mr. McMorris: — How is that? It's working very, very well. You talk to the hundreds of patients that are in there, Mr. Speaker, and see how it's working. It's working. Well they're still against it. They're still against it. It's been operating. They said the system was going to crash if we did that, Mr. Speaker, and they're still against it, Mr. Speaker. The Catholic Health system was horrible for the public health care system, Mr. Speaker.

When you look at so much private delivery, Mr. Speaker, all the members opposite can do is try and scare. They've been doing it for years and years and years. And I can tell you it was very, very

successful. I ran for the first time in 1999 and I remember the government at that time talking about, oh, don't let those Sask Party people get in power because they're going to privatize the system. They're going to move to American-style health care, and they're going to make patients pay.

That was in 1999, and 20 years later I'm still glad to talk about this, Mr. Speaker. Because you know what the difference is? Before they could scare people. Now people realize this government has done wonders for health care, Mr. Speaker, because they've allowed some private delivery within a public system, Mr. Speaker. I guess I don't get to vote on this because I sure would not support that motion.

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

Mr. Forbes: — That former minister of Health has given us a lot to debate about. I hope I get to talk about the main motion of which I really support. But I have to say, I have to say that it takes a lot of courage for him to stand up. It must be breaking his heart to see what's happening to the wait-lists here in this province. The work that he did is falling apart. What he's seeing by the current and the previous ministers, I wonder what he thinks every night when he goes, what's happening to those promises we made about the wait-lists? What are we doing?

And I appreciate that he stands up and, you know, he did talk a bit about chiropractic services and that they were private and all of that and we should get used to it. But I tell you, the meanest thing this government — and there have been many, many mean things this government has done — but one to the people on social services when they took that service, that ability to have chiropractor services for people on social services. And we know what that relates to the health of the body. And they yanked that off for those guys. That's a horrible, horrible thing that they did. And he has the nerve to stand up in this House and talk about it.

And then he talks about the privatization of the laundry systems. The nerve of that. And we see what has happened here in Saskatchewan. He says, and I'm glad that he put the caveat on it that at least we hope it's clean laundry that we get. Yes, we all hope that the laundry that we get back in those places that used to be right in the hospitals, right in our cities here in Saskatchewan, particularly in the city of Prince Albert . . . And we see that decimated.

And the other thing that we were so proud of on this side — and I know we have workers up in gallery — but one of the things we did that we're very, very proud of here in Saskatchewan is when the NDP introduced the vulnerable workers' health benefits program. Those guys cancelled it. It was one of the first things they decided to do. Because we know there are workers in this province who have no chance of having the same benefits that we do.

We have a great health benefits program through the Legislative Assembly Services. Teachers do. Many of us do if our workplaces are organized, and that's one of the things we have and people fight for that right. But we know there are people who don't have that — don't have the same benefits that pay the full cost for their prescriptions, pay full costs for chiropractic services, pay the full costs for their eye care.

And we put forward a plan. And that minister cut that in their very first budget, very first budget because they said the cupboard was bare. We didn't leave them any money at all. Well I don't think that was quite accurate. I don't think that was quite accurate. So as I say, it must break that member's heart to see what's happening now with health care here in Saskatchewan.

The four things I want to talk about . . . One is about what's happening in hallway medicine. Where have we come that now in the hallways of our hospitals we have numbers above the places where they park the gurneys? What is that all about? What is that all about? Why are we . . . It's about resources, isn't it, Mr. Deputy Speaker? It's about resources.

And then we also have the issue around wait-lists. And as I've said, there was progress made. But all of a sudden it started falling apart on this government. Their promises, and they don't want to talk about those promises anymore. It's all ancient history. It's pre- what, 2013? Is that the deadline now? That if it's older than 2013, it's ancient history. Except for the '90s. We'll talk about the '90s; we'll talk about the '80s. We'll talk about '90s, but . . .

[11:30]

An Hon. Member: — No, they don't talk about the '80s. All that debt.

Mr. Forbes: — They don't want to talk about the '80s when this government was driven almost to bankruptcy by their cousins. And we have hallway medicine and of course the MRIs. And I do want to say that I appreciate the good work that . . . You know, and it's so ironic. That member before, who is a former minister, encouraged us to look at other places in the world for their data, their research on what's happening in medicine. If I was listening to my member from Nutana, I think she was quoting some of the studies from the UK talking about the impact of MRIs and what's that had on wait-lists.

Mr. Speaker, we just have to look at some of the headlines that we're seeing in the papers and on the radio and on the TV. Here are some that I'll put: "Sask MRI model putting federal dollars at risk." Now, "Canada Health Act policy could affect federal transfer dollars." And that was just from yesterday on CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation].

So they're very aware. And this is what my colleague was talking about. On April 1st if they don't have their act together, we could be at the risk of losing several millions of dollars. Now has this come about all of a sudden? No. They've had two years to figure this out. And they've had two years to figure out what are they going to do to make their American-style, two-tiered system when it comes to MRIs more appropriate and fall into line of what is acceptable under Canada's public medicare system. And this is very, very important.

Well then we have another headline: "No plans to end private MRIs, says Sask health minister in response to federal concerns." And you know, he talks about, the minister talks about private scans take people off of wait-lists. Well we know there's a lot of questions about that statement. Is that really actually happening or is that ideological? And it's based on a hope and a prayer that that will actually happen.

And of course we had again another headline from the Global TV yesterday: "Federally-imposed deadline approaching for Saskatchewan to stop private MRIs." So, Mr. Speaker, this is really something. And even the auditor weighed in a couple years ago. And we hear that maybe the auditor will weigh in again.

Mr. Speaker, health care is top of mind of people here in the province, around the world even, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know. Even when you're watching the news, and whether you're watching Canadian or whether you're watching American or you're watching international news, top of mind of course is what's happening around the coronavirus or COVID-19, whichever you prefer to call it.

And it just underlines how important our health care system is for all of us here, around the world, that we take this seriously and we don't let ideological bents or thinking get in the way. We want to make sure we have the best system here. I mean even the minister, the former minister talks about, you know, the fact that we do have a pretty good system. But it's all at risk if we go down this ideological road and we don't listen and co-operate and think about what's best for the people of Saskatchewan.

You know, Mr. Speaker, when I talked about the coronavirus and people are thinking a lot about that and it really underlines, it underlines a shortage of resources that this government has actually put towards health care here in Saskatchewan. We know they like to tout out their numbers and, you know, make it seem, in one way, that we have spent . . . And we have. The budget is significant, but somehow it's not working.

How is it that we are in a place we are today with hallway medicine? How is it that we have situations where we have the beds in the hall and not a room number but a hall number so people know where they are? That's incredible. Now they've put some money forward to that, but we know it's not nearly, nearly enough. And, Mr. Speaker, we have issues. We have issues.

And we see what's happening with the MRIs and we've asked questions in the House, both the leader and the critic, about what's happening with the money that is going to . . . What's going to happen on April 1st? Will we be eligible for those health care dollars from our federal partners in Canada, or are we going to be stuck in the past and ideological roots where they're giving money to out-of-province companies like . . .

And we understand the bid that they got from Mayfair. Mayfair is not a Saskatchewan company. It's actually based out of Calgary. There were bids. There were bids here from Saskatchewan doctors. They seem to have an allergy, an allergy to anybody who was here from Saskatchewan. If you're from Saskatchewan and you haven't given them any money, you are out of luck. You are out of luck. You've got to get on the program and these folks with the biggest . . . You know, we have a problem here in Saskatchewan with big money, with big money, and they have no intention of changing that at all. And we see the impact it has in Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a sound, good motion before us and I'm going to support it. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to also rise in the Assembly today and debate the opposition's motion:

That this Assembly supports public healthcare and condemns government statements supporting American-style private healthcare where patients pay to access care.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, if you know my family, most of them are health professionals. So around the table, the dining room table, we have many discussions regarding health care. And because they work in health care, they have a different optic than perhaps some of the people that don't. So we've had some very interesting and debating conversations around the table.

But I believe this decade will bring us more inspirations and more challenges facing families. However our government is and has accepted facing these challenges and will accomplish more in the next few years, I believe. We want to empower families in achieving better health and quality of life, and our desire is to be the best we can be in Saskatchewan. More hospitals, more doctors, more nurses, more seats in the College of Medicine, and we are expanding options for patients who need care.

So therefore saying all that, I do not support this motion. And why? Because of significant investments in health capital for people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Deputy Speaker, since 2007, our government has invested over 1.6 billion in building new facilities, renovations, and equipment upgrades. That's a big number. Almost 350 of that investment was for maintenance, and 260 million in equipment maintenance.

But some of the new investments we've made were over 250 million to build a children's hospital, and that was on our watch, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Most of us are parents or grandparents now, and we know that the children we have are very valuable, and if something happens to them it breaks our heart. We don't have to send them away anymore. We can have them right here in the province, and we're able to go visit them and get accessible health care that they need.

But another investment is 340 million for 14 completed long-term care facilities right across Saskatchewan. We've invested money into the Saskatchewan Hospital at North Battleford. We've invested money in Moose Jaw at the regional hospital there. We've built a provincial lab. We've built another district health complex in Humboldt.

And best of all from where I'm from, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the city of Prince Albert. We have good news: going to be 100 per cent funded by the province, new planning stages for the Victoria Hospital. The current hospital provides quality service for all of the region around Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan. We have a very large population catchment area and we're getting it done on our watch. So I'm very proud that we've decided to work and advance the important part of infrastructure that is needed in this part of the province.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've added 40 seats to the College of Medicine. Our doctors ranked Saskatchewan as one of the top provinces in Canada to practise medicine. There's a lot of good things.

Well-being is not only determined by the quality of relationships, friends, and family that we all have, but the quality of our community's opportunities. And Saskatchewan citizens and the quality of health care is maintained by good physical and mental health — benefits all aspects of life.

The implications for good health and general well-being is very far-reaching, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Education increases. Living standards such as income rises. Communities become vitalized. Crime severity drops in areas. And even the environment benefits by Saskatchewan people practising conservation. So that saying, Mr. Speaker, I read somewhere that there's even a higher voter turnout anticipated when good health and well-being is provided by good health care.

And our government has invested over 1.6 billion in the health capital. The Saskatchewan Medical Association is using a new project in Melfort, which is close to my area, to recruit rural doctors. Forty-five medical students have attended the roadmap program to learn what practising medicine in rural communities is like. And that is good news for rural Saskatchewan.

When my four children were born in Prince Albert at the beautiful Holy Family Hospital, it was clean and immaculate. It was run by the nurses. And we asked, why was it closed? I believe it was closed in 1997. And we have a lot of good memories, but it was a facility that was so well run. I believe 30,000 children — 30,000 babies — were born at the Holy Family Hospital. So we ask, what happened to that? Why was it closed? But again, in Saskatchewan, we've got the Victoria Hospital expansion.

Now one thing we haven't talked about is the health facilities that were constructed since 2007. We've got the Dubé Centre for the mental health in Saskatoon. We've got the Rawlco centre for mother baby care at the Regina General Hospital. We've got the Humboldt district health complex, the Wigmore Regional Hospital in Moose Jaw, the Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford, and the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital in Saskatoon.

We also have Leader and district health care facility, Kelvington and district health facility, Biggar long-term care, Kerrobert and district, Southwest health care centre in Maple Creek. Hoo, there's more. We have Kipling, Radville health centre, Redvers health centre, Shellbrook facility. Now we have long-term care. We've got The Meadows in Swift Current; Pineview Terrace, Prince Albert; Rosetown, 54 beds; Tisdale, 36 beds; Saskatoon has 100 long-term care beds; and Watrous.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are a few things that we have invested in in health care. Record investment, over 5 billion in health care in 2019. Health funding up 2.1 billion. That's 60 per cent since 2007. Nearly 900 more doctors, 3,800 more nurses, approximately 12 million annually for autism — I could go on and on, Mr. Speaker. But I am very proud of our Saskatchewan record of health care.

[11:45]

And here's an example of how successful Saskatchewan citizens are with work and care, look after one another. There's an all-women air ambulance team. Pilot Carly, co-pilot Tamara,

medical team members Crystal and Jen responded to a call of a man experiencing respiratory distress. On April 2019, the star ambulance crew took to the air as the first all-female team to take to the skies. They travelled to Buffalo Narrows to assist a man in need, and they became famous. These four women were trailblazers in their field, and they were able to show the province and the world that women are more than capable to lead in the paramedic profession.

And this is my Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, another success and inspiring story to tell about the world of Saskatchewan's talents and health care. And I am so proud to be part of this government team.

We will have more from other colleagues, so I see my time is winding down. But I will not be supporting the motion from the opposition. I will not support this motion because we have done very well in the health capital for Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm so honoured to rise today to enter into the debate around today's 75-minute debate, and I thank my colleague for putting forward the motion that she has. I think it's a very important discussion. Health care and the importance of public health care in our province is one that comes up quite often when speaking with constituents, Mr. Speaker. Frankly, constituents are disappointed in what the Sask Party have done over the last decade or so in terms of health care.

Mr. Speaker, there are serious problems in our health care system, and those lie at the feet of this current Sask Party government. On this side of the House, we agree with Saskatchewan families who believe that getting access to care in Canada should not be based on the size of someone's bank account. Unfortunately it appears that the Minister of Health does not agree with this statement. He recently stated, and I quote, "I think it's easy to get hung up on the ideology that nobody should be paying for anything in the health care system."

It appears that he thinks the big user fees are the way to go in public health care. That's not the tradition of this province. It's not what this province has been successful on and supportive of. Public health care as it exists was created in Saskatchewan and it's something that the Saskatchewan people are incredibly, incredibly proud of, and incredibly — frankly, Mr. Speaker — protective of. Of course Saskatchewan families want to have access to high-quality health care, and that can be done in the public system, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's quite astounding and concerning that this Minister of Health wants to double down on American-style two-tier health care system. We've seen how well that works for our friends south of the border, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Between August 2018 and June of 2019, the number of people waiting for an MRI in Saskatchewan actually increased by 65 per cent. Mr. Speaker, that's after the government put forward their private MRI scheme, their American-style MRI scheme. By this government's own metrics, it's clear that this experiment with American-style health care has failed. And it's failed in particular

Saskatchewan people. The Sask Party's putting private profit over public health care.

This province has had two years to come into compliance with the *Canada Health Act's* protections for our universal health care system, and they have failed. We know that when BC went down this road, it actually cost the province \$32 million in federal health transfers in 2018 and 2019. Mr. Speaker, it's this Sask Party government that is so desperate to push its ideology on the rest of us that, as the *Canada Health Act* states in its section on patient charges for medically necessary diagnostic services, "Saskatchewan is the only province that expressly encourages this practice through legislation."

Under the Sask Party's watch the amount of needed infrastructure repairs has grown by 50 per cent, from \$2.2 billion to \$3.3 billion. And floors are taped together right now with duct tape. Under the Sask Party the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority] is sending memos to staff saying, "If you do not want to see it in the newspaper, then do not include it in the meeting minutes," and criticizing, "Physician leaders [have] communicated directly with external agencies." This is the record that the Sask Party have in this area. This is the climate that we're in, in terms of health care in this province right now.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, even more alarmingly hallway medicine has become the norm, with one woman waiting five days to get a bed in hospital, ER [emergency room] wait times increasing by 22 per cent in Regina and a 20 per cent increase in Saskatoon, as well as a patient who recently passed away because she did not get access to care.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that's putting federal transfers at risk. We see this time and time again with this government, who would rather point fingers and blame the feds and leave federal dollars on the table rather than getting to work, doing the work necessary, and working with the feds to ensure that the best care and the best access to care is available in Saskatchewan. And they do that because it's politically expedient for them. They do that because it's good for them in their politics. It's not good for Saskatchewan people. That's not what they care about.

Mr. Speaker, we need real funding needed to address real issues in our health care system, not ideology and political banter. Mr. Speaker, we have members on that side who are comfortable with us moving toward more of an American-style health care system, who see no concern, as the Minister of Health said, that for people should have to pay to access our health care system.

I want to talk about one in particular that crossed my office recently, and I ask members opposite what they think about this particular situation. And it was a constituent in my riding. She works as a bus driver in Regina. She works hard. She works full time. But she makes essentially minimum wage, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when she started feeling pains in her mouth, pains in her jaw, she went to the ER. She was told that she was having problems with her teeth, that they needed to be extracted, and that she should get oral surgery. But it wasn't at the point where she went. They weren't able to do what she needed to get done. They were able to treat the fever. They weren't able to treat the actual teeth needing to be extracted.

She went to an oral surgeon and she talked to them. She doesn't

have benefits through her work. She works full time so she doesn't qualify for extended health benefits through our Social Services ministry, but she can't afford benefits on her own and her employer doesn't provide benefits. She was quoted \$5,000 to have her teeth extracted. She had to take out several loans to be able to pay to get her teeth extracted so she could live without pain. That's an American-style health care system. That's the problems that we're seeing in Saskatchewan. That's where the Sask Party want to move closer to rather than away from.

Now this constituent of mine, after that, contacted our office because she also had no teeth anymore. She wanted to get dentures. She again didn't have any benefits so coverage for dentures was not one that she had. She doesn't qualify, because she works, for medicare under the province, but she wanted to have teeth, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and she didn't have the money available. She's a full-time worker making minimum wage, could not afford to pay for her dentures.

We had to advocate through our office and I will say, with credit to those who work within the Ministry of Health, we were able to do some advocacy to extend some coverage to her so she could get the dentures that she needed. But I talk about this situation because it shouldn't have to be that an individual has to contact their MLA who needs to advocate with the Ministry of Health on their behalf to get these sorts of coverages in place for something like a woman's teeth, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This is the road that we go down when we start talking about pay-for-access in our health care system. This is what we're concerned about, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There is so much work that needs to be done within our health care system. Further privatization and further responsibility of paying for medical procedures by the public is not the right route to go. That's why we're concerned about this. And that's why we're bringing this forward, because we hear about the problems that are currently faced in our health care system. And we're worried about what the Sask Party's direction is going to do to so many more people in our province who simply can't afford the types of measures that the Sask Party are looking at.

That's why I'm so proud of our critic for Health, our critic for mental health and addictions for doing this work and advocating. And I'm so proud of this motion that we're discussing this morning. Thank you.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The member opposite that has put forward this motion, and I'll read the motion again:

That this Assembly supports public healthcare and condemns government statements supporting American-style private healthcare where patients pay to access care.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will start by stating that I would never support a motion put forward in that manner. I reject the whole premise of that motion.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government has always

had health care at the forefront of our budgeting and our thoughts. For the members opposite to again start with these scare tactics, as one of my colleagues has earlier stated, again they could have said the same thing. They probably did in the early '90s. And then even in our 2007 election, again it was this whole thing of how we were going to bring in American-style health care. And nothing is further from the truth, Mr. Speaker.

And I just find it very disturbing that the record shows that in fact we have invested, since 2007, invested over \$2.1 billion in health care. That's how much it's gone up. Now, Mr. Speaker, I should probably repeat that again. That's \$2.1 billion. That's with a "b". Now for them to turn around and say that we are not investing in public health care is just not correct. And in fact what they're doing is torquing the whole issue of health care. Because that's their kind of go-to. We'll start with the scare tactics that we're going to bring in American-style health care. And nothing is further from the truth.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think they did make a passing comment about MRIs. Now we have to realize that in fact when our previous Health minister looked at how MRIs are being delivered within the province of Saskatchewan, he realized that in fact the Regina Roughriders, which are loved by everyone — and if not then you're probably maybe not bleeding green enough. So the Roughriders, if they were injured or Workers' Compensation if they were injured, they were not in the same queue as everyone else, that in fact they had the opportunity to jump that queue. So what makes that different than myself as a regular taxpayer? I mean I don't play football. I'm not tall enough, not big enough. We do have a colleague here that did play football . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well they keep saying that I'm short, but I think I'm tenacious enough but maybe not tough enough.

[12:00]

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they pay taxes like everybody else. I pay taxes like everybody else. We want to ensure that people are treated fairly in this province. And so for the members opposite to automatically start torquing and twisting our messaging and what we've done in health care is very disturbing because that kind of, you know — can I use the word misinformation? I think I can use the word misinformation — isn't fair to the residents of Saskatchewan. You know, that scare tactic, that's old school. And in fact nobody wants to hear that anymore. They want to hear, what exactly are you going to be doing for the residents of Saskatchewan.

Now I found it interesting that the member from Douglas Park did have the opportunity to stand up and speak in the House on this issue. And she never brought up the parkade that is being explored at the Regina General Hospital. And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is really an important issue that needs to be talked about because this parkade, proposed parkade that's being explored, the city councillor, Lori Bresciani . . . I wish the members opposite would listen to this because this is really important stuff.

The city councillor from Regina, Lori Bresciani, hosted and held a public, open forum to talk about parking at the General Hospital. And the people who attended were nurses from the nurses' union. We had physicians. We had residents from within Douglas Park that attended. And we had people from outside that

were, you know, visitors to patients in the General Hospital. And they talked about parking and how we needed to change the dial on how that service was being provided to either the health care providers, the visitors, and the residents within that area.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the interesting thing about this was that the Union of Nurses said, you know what, we do not want to see health care dollars going in to pay building a parking space. We want our health care dollars kept whole. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the interesting thing is we have the ideology of the left, over there in the NDP, who are going, we cannot have a private parkade. That's not health care; that's parking.

You know, if we want to talk about asphalt, we could talk about roads and we could talk about highways and all of that sort of stuff. That's totally different. We've got a Minister of Highways that looks after that. We have a member here, Minister of Health, he's looking after health care. And parkades, that's not health care; that's parking.

But you know the interesting thing is, we want to ensure that our health care professionals are provided a safe way of getting to and from their parking spaces. Walking down a dark street where they're a little concerned late at night, is that safe? Is that being respectful? Is that being respectful of the people who work hard to ensure that our patients are looked after? Absolutely not.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let's look at this. Let's look at this in a comprehensive manner and say, you know, how do we provide health care in a real way to the residents of Saskatchewan? Because, you know, the interesting thing is it's not just the people from Regina that visit and are patients at the General Hospital. We have people throughout Saskatchewan that come.

Now interesting enough, we used to have three hospitals here, but the NDP . . . And you know, there was lots of . . . and it was safe parking out there at the Plains. But what did the NDP do? They shut the doors on that place. And so what did we have to do? We had to increase the size of a hospital, the General Hospital, in the most densely populated area in the city of Regina.

You know, I don't know if you understand how our city was designed but that's one of the oldest areas of the city — 25-foot lots — so you can imagine how dense that area is. And you can imagine, where are those residents supposed to park? Because we've got health care people parking on those streets. We have visitors parking on those streets. You can't imagine how frustrated those people are.

And then we have the opposition saying, let's take health care dollars and go build a parkade. Like, it just doesn't make any sense. And that's when they stand up and today they talked about, we're stuck in our ideology. You know who's stuck in the ideology? Those people across there. Those are the ones who are stuck in ideology that everything has to be under one big umbrella. They don't understand that today we look, how do we deliver services better? Well sometimes we have to look at a unique way, and this is a unique way.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is no way anyone on this side of the House could support a motion that has even any of the words in it called American-style health care. That is not on, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The 75-minute debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Moosomin.

Mr. Bonk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member from Regina Douglas Park just stood up and said that things like dentures should be covered 100 per cent. I'm just going to ask her today. If the NDP were to win the next election, would they commit to cover 100 per cent of dental extractions and dentures?

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

Ms. Sarauer: — I'd like the member opposite to ask that question to my constituent. The story that I was talking about was a very, very serious one. What I will say is that on this side of the House, we agree with Saskatchewan families who believe that getting access to care in Canada should not be based on the size of someone's bank account.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I was so disappointed to hear the member from Regina Lakeview say she rejected totally everything in the . . .

An Hon. Member: — Rochdale.

Mr. Forbes: — Rochdale. Sorry. My apologies, my apologies. That she rejected everything in the motion, including the words "public health care." I am so disappointed to hear that she's now on the record of rejecting public health care.

You know when we talk about hallway medicine, when we talk about hallway medicine and now it's become the norm. One woman sat five days to get a bed in a hospital. ER times have grown by 27 percent in Regina and 20 percent in Saskatoon. I would want to know, Mr. Speaker, what does the member from Regina Rochdale think about Saskatchewan risking, when she goes on talking about taxpayers' dollars, risking millions of health care dollars and health transfers because their government simply can't follow the rules?

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for asking a question of me. In fact we have always supported public health care on this side. We reject the notion of them doing the blame and the scare of American-style private health care.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the thing that concerns me the most is that those members opposite will side with Justin Trudeau every time and not stand up for the people of Saskatchewan. That's what I find very disturbing, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We didn't get an answer from Regina Rochdale, but I'm very curious to know what the member from Sask Rivers would actually think

about our province risking millions in health care transfer dollars because your government refuses to follow the rules of the *Canada Health Act*. On April 1st we will start getting clawbacks to our health transfers. How do you feel about that, and how do you think your constituents will feel?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'd like to thank the member opposite for the question. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our record speaks for itself. What did they do when there was maintenance to be done? They closed the doors. But that's not our plan. We have a plan to grow, in fact we have a plan to have more hospitals or renovated. And we'll continue to invest in a growing population and the province's health care needs. And I'll take no direction from the opposition who continue to side with Justin Trudeau. Thank you.

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

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After a fair and transparent RFP process was conducted by the Saskatchewan Health Authority, the NDP still question our public servants and their integrity to conduct their work. We have created targets to improve access to service and reduce surgical wait times in our plan for growth, yet we are met with noise and fearmongering. We never hear of an alternative or a plan for how they would meet the challenge and reduce wait times.

My question is for the member from Saskatoon Centre. Has the member failed to present a plan on wait times because there simply is no plan?

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And if the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood thinks the opposition is creating noise and fearmongering by asking fair questions that deserve to be asked, that's our role. They did it and they did it, and I have to say perhaps the member from Indian Head was the very best at asking questions, and we hope to have him back here pretty soon over here. But it's a fair question, and if any of them over there can say to their constituents they don't mind putting at risk millions of dollars in clawbacks in April, no wonder we hear about a snap election because they don't want to deal with that. I'm surprised she didn't bring up the carbon tax, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, will be the member from Indian Head-Milestone please go on the record today and admit finally that he and his party do not support universal, publicly funded health care?

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

Mr. McMorris: — Yes, we support publicly funded health care,

Mr. Speaker, but what we don't support is an opposition party that tries to fearmonger and scare people in this province. They've been doing it for 60 years, Mr. Speaker. That's what we don't support. What we don't support, Mr. Speaker, is when they had a chance to govern this province, they had the longest wait-lists in Canada, Mr. Speaker. What we don't support, Mr. Speaker, is when they were in government, we had a nurses shortage. We had a doctor shortage. We had community after community getting into bidding wars because there wasn't enough doctors, Mr. Speaker. That's what we don't support. And you know what the people of Saskatchewan don't support? The NDP anymore and their health care policies.

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

Mr. Francis: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. When faced with the choice of supporting nearly 2,500 Saskatchewan patients who have received MRIs under our made-in-Saskatchewan two-for-one system or supporting Justin Trudeau, the members opposite chose to support Trudeau.

My question is to the member from Saskatoon Nutana. Why won't the NDP put patients before ideology first? Better yet, when will they start putting Saskatchewan people ahead of their socialist friends in Ottawa?

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

Ms. Sproule: — That was rather a confused and garbled and misguided question, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure the member really understood what he was asking.

But what I can tell you is this. We are concerned about the economic impacts of the ill-advised decision to create a payer or user fee for MRIs, Mr. Speaker, and I introduced all kinds of evidence. Obviously the member wasn't listening when I spoke earlier because I introduced all kinds of empirical evidence that shows this system doesn't work and it actually costs the taxpayers more.

And if he doesn't think that Saskatchewan taxpayers are going to be concerned about the clawback to our Canada Health Transfers because of the actions of this government, then you might want to check with your own constituents — all of you — and see how they feel about these clawbacks that are coming April 1st, 2020. This is an economic issue and this government has put ideology over economy, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad the members opposite are very anxious to hear what question I have, because all we're hearing from that side is noise and fearmongering and all sorts of swashbuckling. Just listen to them. Listen to them. We have a real crisis in health care. Hallway medicine, hallway medicine, they don't care. And now we have a situation with their American-style MRIs that are costing us perhaps millions come April 1st.

So I have a question for the member from Sask Rivers. If the Sask

Party's American-style two-for-one MRI system works, how come we have a situation where you have twice as many people now waiting for MRIs? How does that work?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

[12:15]

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again thank you for your eloquent question. Private-pay MRI service and the unique two-for-one provision gives patients more options in addressing MRI services. This made-in-Saskatchewan approach has added capacity, added capacity to the publicly funded system at no extra cost to the health system or the patient receiving the second scan. So with more people in the province, this will really aid the health care system. It's a growing province, Mr. Speaker, so the more funds that can be provided to the front-line service, the better. Thank you very much.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Doke: — [Inaudible] . . . instead of closing hospitals, we've opened them. Instead of chasing Saskatchewan workers out of the province, we've developed a growth plan to allow families to live and work here.

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No. 1 — Support for Pipelines

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Ms. Young.]

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

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today. And I know we're supposed to stay on topic, but I will ask the room's indulgence to let me go off topic just a little bit.

Today is quite likely the last time I'll be speaking in this Chamber, and I know there are some here probably really happy about that. So today is a bit of a bittersweet day. It is also the 13th anniversary of the very first time I was elected, in the 2007 by-election, to represent Martensville. So it's definitely a bit of an odd day, kind of a hello, goodbye all in the same day. And I have taken some time to reflect on the last 13 years here and what we've accomplished together as a team in concert with people of this province who have honoured us with being able to hold a place in government in this province.

I've got to say I'm proud of the work that I've been able to do. In 2007 I met with all my mayors and reeves and asked them for a list of things that they wanted for their communities. And with

the completion of the bypasses in Warman and Martensville, I'm happy to say absolutely everything on the list that they gave me has been completed in the last thirteen years.

And, Mr. Speaker, as I reflected on this as well, I was talking to the member for Regina Elphinstone. We came into the building Monday morning, got here at the same time. And as we are both on our way out, we had a nice chat outside and actually started my day with a hug from an NDP'er. So that was not how I thought I was going to start my day.

But we were reflecting on our time here, and while I was elected on March 5th, 2007, I was sworn in on March 7th of 2007 in the morning, and that afternoon I was up in question period asking questions of Pat Atkinson, who at the time terrified me a little bit. She doesn't anymore, but she did then.

And so it's been quite a journey from days in opposition where I just got thrown in. My background's in question period, but it's one thing to be hollering at MPs [Member of Parliament] in Ottawa when you're sitting in the lobby watching the television and saying all the things they're doing wrong, and something completely different to be standing in this Chamber and doing it yourself. So thank you for all of those who had confidence in me those first few days.

I want to say a few thank yous. I do have to get to my actual speech because that's the business of today, and I shouldn't do this, but I want to thank my dad. I am literally here because of him. One, because he instilled in me a love of politics and the process and raised me to be a good conservative — and I'm pretty happy about that — but on the literal side, for being one of the founders of the Saskatchewan Party. And without those original eight, none of us on this side would be here. There would be a few probably left over on the other side, but we certainly would not be here. So I want to thank my dad and recognize him publicly. I don't do that very often because I have a really hard time getting through that part.

But I also want to thank my husband, Yanni. You know, there are people who think that I'm not running again because I got married, and it's actually the opposite of that. He actually wanted me to run again. So I don't know what that says about our relationship. Because the entire time I've known him, I've spent the majority of my time down in Regina and we don't spend a lot of time together. So maybe he's happy with that arrangement. I don't know. But sorry, honey, I'm coming home, and I guess we'll have to deal with that.

And to my girls for their patience. I was talking to other members who were leaving and reflecting on how much we miss when it comes to our family. So I want to thank my girls for their patience.

And of course to Whitney Friesen, my constituency assistant. He will be moving on to his fourth MLA after the next election, and he's been doing this job for 25 years. He's exceptional and I want to thank him. There's not enough words to thank him, but I do want to thank him for his dedication, not just to the MLAs that he's been able to work with but to the constituents that he works with and for. He's done an outstanding job and I know that he'll continue to do that.

And now enough of that, and now for the fun stuff. So the motion before us today is:

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

And I know that there are members opposite who stand up and say, all you people ever want to do is condemn things. Well I don't view it quite as that as defending our province, defending our interests. And it's the one thing that the NDP have, for the last 13 years . . . that I haven't seen that they've ever done that, including their own leader.

I was joking this morning in caucus that my speech is nothing but a few pages of quotes and some sarcasm. And I was told later by one of my former staffers that should be the name of my autobiography, because that's what I bring to this House most of the time is a bunch of quotes and some sarcasm. So here we go.

Their federal leader, the one that they support said, "I'm firmly opposed to the pipeline. I've been opposed to it. I will continue to fight against it and it's absolutely one of my priorities," when he was talking about the TMX [Trans Mountain Expansion] pipeline. And just a few days after the federal election and a federal election where the NDP in Western Canada did not fare well, in the home of Tommy Douglas there's not one NDP seat in this province. So the NDP are obviously not resonating in Western Canada.

And just oblivious to what goes on in Western Canada, their leader, right after the election said, "I believe that we have to fight Trans Mountain so I'll continue to fight it." It's just so completely out of touch with Western Canada, the views held here; not just the views but the things that actually keep our economy moving, keep people employed, and out of touch with all of that.

And the NDP in our own province, our provincial NDP, say that they don't need to publicly oppose their federal leader, which means they don't have to publicly stand up for our industries and for our province. And I find that absolutely shameful, Mr. Speaker. There's a reason they've been over there for 12 years. And I'm pretty sure after the next election they'll still be over there. Numbers might change, who knows about that. But they're not resonating because they're not representing the people the way that they're supposed to.

And I've said this before in the House, not only are they not supporting our industries, they oppose them. I know that the member for Regina Rosemont has taken great pains to say that I was wrong when I said this in the House, but the NDP actually voted against Keystone XL and Northern Gateway. So it's not like they've got this quiet diplomacy that somehow behind the scenes they're standing up for Saskatchewan. They're standing all right, Mr. Speaker, but they're standing in this Chamber on their feet to oppose pipelines that would have a direct benefit to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker. And I don't think anybody in this province is looking for that kind of lack of leadership when it comes to defending our province.

And you know what? This isn't even about parties except they would have a direct line to their NDP leader. I'm sure they have

his phone number. If you've got a membership in the provincial party, I think you have an automatic membership in the other one, so they are tied. But this goes beyond just pure politics, Mr. Speaker, because to her credit, the NDP leader in Alberta, Rachel Notley, stood up for her province and against her own federal leader. Of Singh's anti-pipeline position she said it "is absolutely, fundamentally, incontrovertibly [wasn't sure if I could actually read that word, "incontrovertibly"] incorrect . . ." She was not . . . There was no quiet diplomacy when it came to Rachel Notley and her defence of pipelines in the face of Singh's attacks on those same pipelines, because she knew. She went on to say:

I am a New Democrat that comes from the part of the party that understands that you don't bring about equality and fairness without focusing on jobs for regular working people. To forget that and to throw them under the bus as collateral damage in pursuit of some other high-level policy objective is a recipe for failure and it's also very elitist.

That's from an NDP premier, Mr. Speaker. She wasn't afraid to stand up against her leader and defend her province. The people on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, do not take the same position. And what do these pipelines mean? On TransCanada alone, when it talks about having to forgo this project, it's thousands of jobs and billions of dollars for Canada, and it would significantly impact our country's ability to access markets for oil and gas.

It makes a difference what we say and what we do, and what we say and do publicly. And the NDP are happy to sit quietly, unless it comes time to vote against a pipeline in this House, and then they're happy to get energized and get back on their feet. And, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to their leader, it's again not quiet diplomacy. It's not like they're just not saying nothing; they're actually praising him.

So on September 29th 2017 their leader had said, he talked again about opposing Kinder Morgan, Energy East, and Keystone XL pipelines. Just a week later the member for Regina Douglas Park does an interview in Moose Jaw and praises him — a week later — knowing what his position is, knowing that if he has any kind of influence or power he was going to shut down every single pipeline that he possibly could, and stop new ones from starting. And the response from the provincial NDP is to publicly praise him. In their support of him they're supporting not just him as their leader but every position that he stands for. And to try to stand in this House and do otherwise is . . . I don't think anybody's buying that.

I find it absolutely hilarious that this week, when we present petitions opposing the federal government's carbon tax, suddenly the member for Regina Rosemont is applauding us, considering that we know exactly what their position is, is they're happy to sign on to Trudeau's carbon tax. We have the quotes.

And I don't know, I realize the Leader of the Opposition himself might be a little bit new to the process of how things work, but when you're saying something, it's recorded. And people write these things down. You just have to go to the Google and tap in a few words and you can come up with these things. So it's not like he's speaking into a vacuum. And people record these things.

So we have all the quotes and they seem to get very angry when

we bring them up again. I don't know why, because if . . . Why say it if you don't believe it? And so I'm just going to put on the record again because, as I said, Mr. Speaker, it's kind of my last time to do this. The provincial NDP leader, in his support of Justin Trudeau said, and I quote, "We applaud the federal government's recent announcement on a minimum price on carbon." So he can tell us why he had that position and now suddenly doesn't.

But he's also said in his very own leadership platform, so this is his personal thoughts, he said, and I quote, "We can and should support a national approach to carbon pricing." So they can try to change their position on that, but I don't think anybody is buying it. He was out just the other day, I think it was French. It might have been CBC, I'm not sure, but it was an interview in French, and he said again that he supports a province-wide carbon tax for our province. So I don't know.

So, Mr. Speaker, like I said, we've seen it before where they complain that we're condemning things in motions in this House. I would hope that they would use some of that energy to actually get on their feet and condemn the very policies that their federal NDP leader is putting forward that would hurt our province. We know that they are able to voice opinions on things. Their Leader of the Opposition is on the Twitter all the time condemning us for various things. So I understand that he understands the process of speaking up publicly. You know, fair enough. I do find it interesting that for everything he complains about, he doesn't actually raise any kind of solutions or answers to those things he raises.

But we know that he knows how to use the platform. He's familiar with social media. He can make his voice heard if he chose to. And I went back through Twitter accounts and I was looking for something, some kind of position or opinion on oil and gas sector in this province; some kind of outrage when projects were not being approved or they were being delayed. And I couldn't find any of those things. So he has a platform. He knows how to use it. He has an opportunity to stand up for Saskatchewan workers, for Saskatchewan industry, jobs in the resource sector, Mr. Speaker, and he refuses to do it.

And I think we all know why. I think because fundamentally he doesn't support those industries. And we've all seen the pictures of him standing behind anti-oil signs and those sorts of things. I think that's a true reflection of what his position is and what he stands for. I think there's a reason why they're absolutely silent on this file. It's because they don't want to stand up and support it because they fundamentally do not support it, Mr. Speaker. And so while they can sit there and condemn us for condemning policies that are going to hurt us, we're not going to stop, Mr. Speaker, because that's our job. And this should come as no surprise to anybody.

I was going to use a Margaret Thatcher quote because I know that they really like that over there but instead I found one from the Rt. Hon. Stephen Harper and I'm going to probably conclude with that instead.

[12:30]

He said and I quote, "I don't think any voice at the table is heard unless there is a very loud voice coming from outside the room.

Be loud, be difficult, put pressure on." Mr. Speaker, as the Government of Saskatchewan representing the people of this province, that is our job and we will not be silent. The NDP can choose a quiet route, but we will not do that.

And so while the NDP Opposition Leader cowers quietly at the back of the room, we will be loud. And we will continue to put pressure on. We will keep fighting for our province and we will condemn those who seek to damage us. Sadly all we hear from NDP benches in defence of our industries is crickets. And that's not just weak leadership, Mr. Speaker, that's no leadership at all. I adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — I didn't hear but did the member move to adjourn debate? Okay. The member moved to adjourn debate. 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: — It has been 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 Monday at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 12:32.]

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President of the Executive Council

Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Tina Beaudry-Mellor

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Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for Innovation

Hon. Lori Carr

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Minister Responsible for First Nations, Métis
and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

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Minister Responsible for Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre

Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Joe Hargrave

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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company

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Minister Responsible for Seniors

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and Gaming Authority
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

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