



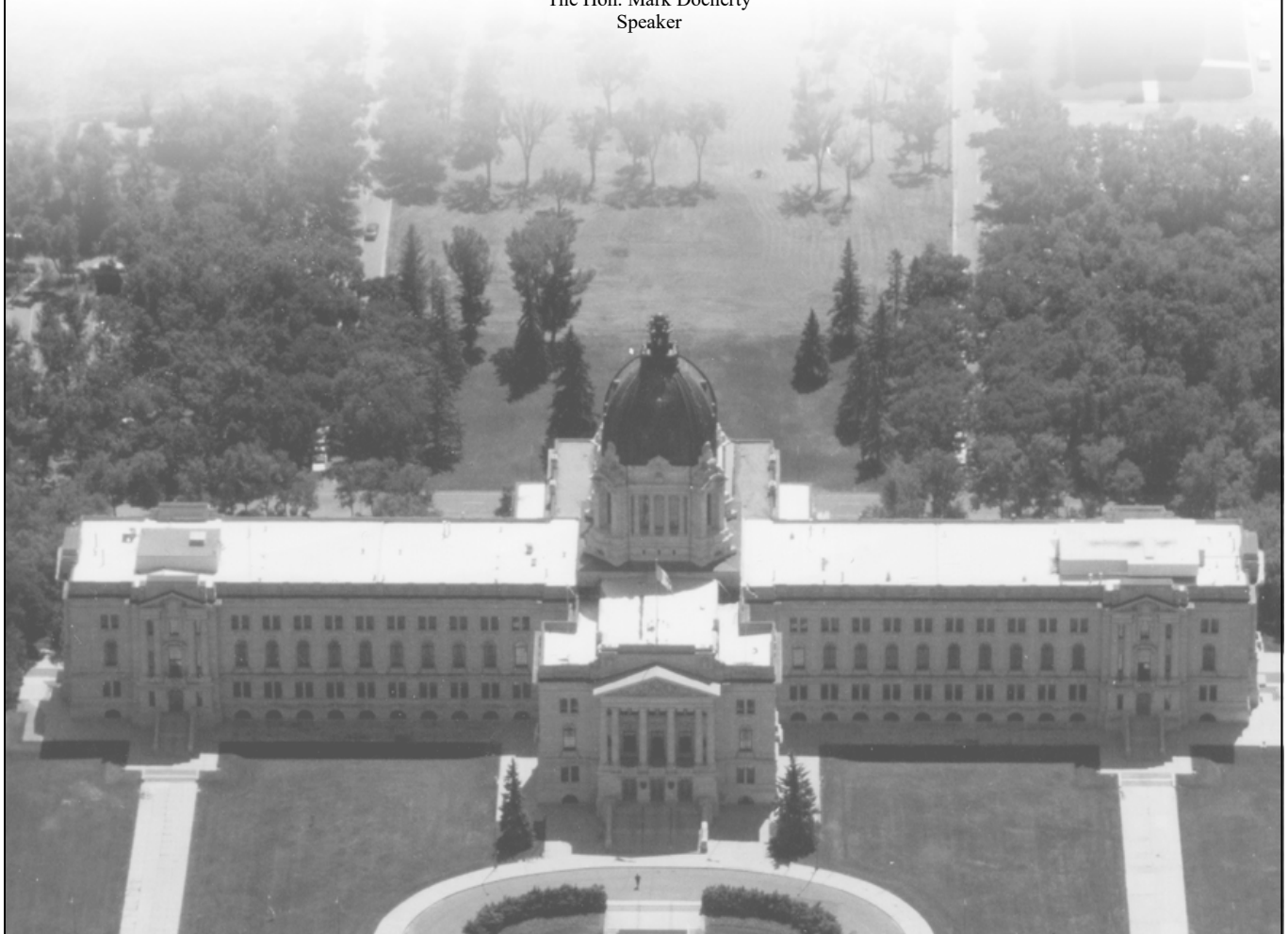
FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

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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Hindley , Everett — Swift Current (SP)	Wyant , Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)
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Lambert , Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)	Vacant — Regina Walsh Acres
Lawrence , Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (SP)	Vacant — Saskatoon Eastview

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

Clerks-at-the-Table

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — Well I'd like to welcome all of our guests today to the legislature. And just a reminder, do not participate in debate and no cheering and clapping and all the rest, but let the legislators deal with their business. But welcome, everyone.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this Assembly, I would like to take a moment for a couple of quick introductions, if you will. First of all I would like to again welcome those members of Unifor that are with us here today, as well as acknowledge all of the students that are here from across the province, Mr. Speaker. And the Deputy Premier, the Minister of Education will have some more formal comments of welcome in a moment.

But I would also like to take the opportunity to welcome, to all members of this Legislative Assembly, no stranger to this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and that is the former member from Kelvington . . . no, no, no, no, Canora-Pelly, the neighbouring constituency, Mr. Ken Krawetz. Mr. Speaker, Kenny K. from Invermay, as many of us often fondly refer to him, continues to cheer for the Toronto Maple Leafs, Mr. Speaker. Despite that, we love him, Mr. Speaker. And I can also say that I have taken a few steps towards the Toronto Maple Leafs. As an avid Edmonton Oilers fan, I believe that if the Toronto Maple Leafs would be successful in winning a cup, my Oilers would be there 20 years later, Mr. Speaker. That's how we think in the world of athletics, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in all seriousness I do want to take the opportunity to thank Mr. Krawetz and thank his wife and his family for his dedication, decades of dedication, not only to this party but more importantly to the Government of Saskatchewan and through the government to the people of the province of Saskatchewan. Please help me welcome Ken to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the Premier in welcoming the members of Unifor who are here with us today, workers out at the Co-op Refinery. I hope to see them back at work very soon. I'm happy to see Mr. Krawetz here as well. Welcome to your legislature, Ken. Good to see you.

And I want to really take a bit of time to recognize Hunter from Indian Head and all of the young people who are here today, athletes. I don't know, Mr. Speaker. I know the rules are they can't participate in debate but shouldn't we get them giving us some cheers and some chants through this? Get some youthful energy in this place for once.

And that's exactly what we saw out on the steps today was great youthful energy. Students who are here on behalf of themselves, on behalf of their fellow classmates, on behalf of teachers, on

behalf of education as a whole, and Saskatchewan. I commend them for their decision to use their voice and speak up for a better future for this province.

Thank you so much to them and ask all the members to join me in a very warm welcome to these inspiring young people.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming these young people to the House today. They're going to witness an exercise in democracy today, Mr. Speaker. We're going to have some vigorous debate across the House, across the floor, with regard to some issues that are important to them, important to the people of Saskatchewan, the government, and the opposition, Mr. Speaker. So we're thankful for the vigorous debate that we are about to have on those very important issues.

I want to thank the young people that are here today for their respectful protest in front of the Legislative Assembly. I thought that was very respectful, Mr. Speaker. And we'll look forward to having, as I say, a vigorous debate with respect to these very important issues today, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour to join with members on both sides of this Assembly in welcoming these young people to their Legislative Assembly. A special thank you to Hunter and the folks from Indian Head for organizing this rally today. And I can't tell you how much good . . . It warms my heart but I know the hearts of many teachers around this province to hear them lead a chant saying "We support our teachers."

Mr. Speaker, I want to send out a bit of a shout to these young people. I know we have people here from Estevan, St. Brieux, Warman, North Battleford, Fort Qu'Appelle, Indian Head, Fillmore, Unity, Foam Lake, Middle Lake, Stoughton, Regina, Lake Lenore, Davidson. And I also spoke to some young folks from Coronach and Humboldt, but I think they already had to turn around and head home.

I want to say with deepest gratitude, thank you for taking an interest and engaging in this activism to support what you know is right. We're very proud of all of you and we thank you for raising your voices. I ask all members to join me in welcoming these young people to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce today a group of 22 public service employees seated in the Speaker's gallery. They are here to take part in the parliamentary program for the public service. The program includes a tour of the Legislative Building, briefings presented by various branches of the Legislative Assembly Service and Executive Council, an opportunity to sit in the Speaker's gallery to observe question period and other House business, and brief meetings with

members from both sides of the House and with yourself, Mr. Speaker.

The participants are employees from the following ministries: Environment, Agriculture, Executive Council, Government Relations, the Public Service Commission, Social Services, Legislative Assembly Service, Trade and Export, Energy and Resources, Justice, and SaskBuilds. Mr. Speaker, and all members, please join me in welcoming these visitors to their Legislative Assembly this afternoon.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the minister opposite to welcome all these members of our public service to the gallery today and to the Assembly. I was a public servant for seventeen and a half years and I was very proud to be able to be a public servant, and I know that you are too. And I want you to know that being in service of Her Majesty, as my boss used to call it, is an important call to duty for citizens of Canada and Saskatchewan. And you have answered the call and you are the people that keep the machine going. So I just want to say a huge thank you, gratitude to all of you for what you have chosen to do with your careers. All the best in your careers in the public service, and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have some special guests seated in your gallery, and I'd like to introduce them to you and to all members of the Assembly. Seated in the front row is my sister Shirly Taylor, if she wouldn't mind just giving us a bit of a wave. Next to her is her husband, Ken Taylor. And next to Ken is a friend of theirs, Glen Clements.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is a special day for Glen. He has a bucket list, and one of the items on his bucket list was a visit to the Assembly. He said it certainly wasn't at the top of his bucket list. He said a ride on the *Bluenose* was, and he did have that a year or two ago. But he tells me the last time he was in this building and in the Assembly, he was part of a school group back in the middle '60s from Champion College where they had a mock parliament. And his role that he played in that mock parliament, he was the Sergeant-at-Arms and he got to carry the mace for that particular mock parliament.

So he's here today along with my sister and brother-in-law to watch the proceedings. And I'm sure they'll have many questions after they leave the gallery. So I'd ask all members to welcome them here today.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite to welcome Ken and Shirly Taylor to their Assembly. I'm lucky to count the two of them as constituents. They're very good people, Mr. Speaker. Of course you can choose your friends, but you can't choose your family, Mr. Speaker. That being said, the member opposite is also, of course, a good friend as well.

But to Ken and Shirly, thank you so much for being here today. It was nice to visit with you in the lunch line. Dave Taylor, Ken's brother, is also a pretty special person in the community and one of the finest educators this city has ever seen, Mr. Speaker. So I ask all members to join with me in welcoming Ken and Shirly Taylor to their Assembly.

While on my feet, I notice a good friend and an incredible leader, both in business and in the community, seated in the west gallery. That'd be Graham Barker, seated here today. It's a pleasure to have Graham in his Assembly. Graham has been an incredible business leader in our province and in our community. He was the founder and owner and president of Phoenix Group Advertising for many years, Mr. Speaker. He's a brilliant communicator, Mr. Speaker, a very fine golfer, an incredible dad, and a very fine human being who's given back to the community every step of the way.

And I think of the North Central Family Centre, Mr. Speaker, which continues to benefit from his care and his efforts to look out for the most vulnerable among us. I'm lucky to count Graham Barker as a friend, and it's a real pleasure to have him in this Assembly. I ask all members to give him a very warm welcome.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you I'd like to introduce the individual seated in your gallery. That's Jonah Toth. He's here today — give a wave. Jonah is a young man from Regina of many accomplishments, too many to name today, frankly, Mr. Speaker. One of them, though, is he is the recipient of the 2017 Regina Young Humanitarian Award that the Red Cross presented. My first opportunity to meet him was at that gala, Mr. Speaker, and it's been an honour to learn more about him and to now, I would say, consider him a friend.

He's also the founder of an organization called passion2action which is a youth-empowerment organization whose mandate is to show youth their potential as agents of change, and to provide them with the equipment, with the skills and resources necessary to be those agents. I think we see a lot of agents of change here today in the legislative gallery, Mr. Speaker. Jonah does the good work of ensuring that the youth of today become the agents of change of tomorrow, Mr. Speaker.

He's also putting on, with his group, a wonderful conference tomorrow called Inspire. He tells me there's 3,000 students who will be attending that conference tomorrow. I'd encourage, if any members have the ability, the time, to attend that conference, it's going to be a great lineup of speakers and a real inspiring opportunity. Jonah is truly an inspiration to many of us, and he is definitely shining a light on how bright our future is looking in this province. I'd like to ask all members to join me in welcoming Jonah to his Legislative Assembly and thanking him and recognizing the many accomplishments he's had so far in his life.

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

Mr. Steele: — Thank you. To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce a council from the RM [rural municipality] of Happyland. They've just come in. They're in the city for the SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]

convention. They just pulled in here in the last little bit, so I'd like to introduce the group here. We've got Tim, Kim, Basil, Doug, Owen, Russell, Darcy, Tony, and Darlene. I'd like to welcome you to your legislature.

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

[13:45]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the Municipal Affairs critic I'd like to join with the member opposite to welcome the leadership from the RM of Happyland that's joined us here today. It was a pleasure to be with them here today and yesterday at the SARM convention. I ask all members to join in a very warm welcome to the leadership from the RM of Happyland.

Mr. Speaker, while on my feet, and actually very importantly, I now have two constituents that have joined us here today seated in your west gallery. This is Chris and Twyla McDougall that have joined us. They held a press conference here today as part of a national campaign with CF Canada, Cystic Fibrosis Canada, Mr. Speaker, calling for urgent action to ensure access to life-saving medication. Mr. Speaker, I thank them so much for their voice.

And this is a courageous family, Mr. Speaker. I've learned lots from these two parents, Mr. Speaker. They have three children, three daughters. Their daughter Ella was diagnosed with cystic fibrosis as a newborn, Mr. Speaker. Hearing of their journey and her journey is, you know, it's heartbreaking and heartwarming and it's a courageous story of a very courageous young person, Mr. Speaker, and a strong, courageous family. It warms my heart to have them here in this Assembly pushing for important changes for many across our country, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members to offer a very warm and thankful welcome to Chris and Twyla McDougall.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I ask for extended introduction leave.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to take this opportunity to introduce two very impressive Saskatchewan people that have joined us and are sitting on the floor of the Assembly. First I'd like to introduce Jack McNeil. Jack has been a member of Gyro since 1921, and Jack was an electrical engineer and he worked for a number of companies, most notably SaskTel, Manitoba Hydro, and SaskPower from 1956 to 1986. And Jack is a very impressive individual because he worked with SaskTel on establishing a number of services, and he also worked with Manitoba Hydro on the switching station service. And he also worked at the computerized system and his own computerized system. And I think he's one of the first persons to do it without the mainframe being engaged.

So Jack is really an impressive individual and in fact he always bragged very clearly about SaskPower having the lowest residential rate except for Manitoba, because they had hydro, he said.

But he traversed the northern area of Athabasca when they flew out there in 1973, and he helped design the electrical system that brought service in 1973 again from Meadow Lake to La Loche. So Jack is a member of Saskatchewan's storied past of working for SaskPower. We thank you for your years of service and your intelligence and contribution to our Crown corporations, and to tell you, very well done in your job. And again from the bottom of our hearts, thank you so much.

Jack is with his son Ian. And Ian grew up in Regina, and he moved north in 1980 and spent most of his time teaching in La Loche, although he had stints teaching in Turnor Lake and some other communities. But he spent most of his time in La Loche, and that's where I got to meet Ian. Ian is very, very proud of his involvement with search and rescue because he's the vice-president of the provincial body. And one of Ian's efforts is to try and get the year of the volunteer searcher proclaimed. That's something that I think his association would be very, very honoured if that work were to start and that recognition were to be achieved. Ian himself has been involved with 52 searches, Mr. Speaker, and most recently had joined the corps, a group of people that are also involved with aircraft search and rescue.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's important to note that as we sometimes poach teachers from the South, I want to point out that Ian's heart has always been in northern Saskatchewan. I've often in this Assembly bragged about the La Loche schools, the Dene High and the Ducharme Elementary, the staff and the commitment of the teachers and the entire staff right to the janitor, of how dedicated the entire team is towards strengthening La Loche and many of the northern children that attend our schools. And I want to thank Ian as well, because he's contributed a lot to our communities when he was there.

He still goes back and forth, but the incredible volunteerism, his work that he's done with the children, his work with the search and rescue, it's really a testament to some of the work ethic and contribution that his father, Jack, must have taught him. So once again I would ask all members of the Assembly to welcome two very impressive Saskatchewan people, Ian and Jack McNeil, to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Athabasca in welcoming Ian and Jack to their Legislative Assembly. I don't know these individuals personally. Thank you, Jack, of course for your dedication and service to the province. When Ian walked in, I noticed his jacket, Mr. Speaker, and it's a Civil Air Search and Rescue Association jacket, a volunteer organization I'm very involved with — zone 6 Humboldt-Yorkton. Ian is the zone commander, he tells me, of La Loche, that zone up there, Mr. Speaker.

So on behalf of the people of the province and especially all the members of Civil Air Search and Rescue in the province of Saskatchewan, Ian, thank you for your service and your dedication. And if there's one thing that binds a lot of people, Mr.

Speaker, it's commonalities, and aviation is one of those. So thank you for your service, Ian, and welcome to your Assembly.

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister and the member for Athabasca in welcoming the McNeils, Jack and Ian, to their Legislative Assembly, and thank them for their years of dedicated service to the people of this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I was remiss earlier in not introducing a friend who is situated in your gallery: Ms. Katie Emde from Midale. Katie spoke earlier at the rally on the legislative steps. Katie is a parent to three beautiful children. She has a blog and a Facebook group called "A Journey for Avery" that has served as an inspiration for many parents in this province. She's a tireless advocate. She is a friend and confidante to many, not only for her own children but for many children around this province.

So I would like all members of this Assembly to join me in welcoming and thanking Katie for her service.

The Speaker: — Okay. Who didn't get introduced?

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of my constituents who travel along the Hanson Lake Road, No. 106. There are thousands of taxpayers who travel this road for doctors' appointments, shopping, sports, tourism, and for work, but northern Saskatchewan residents should have access to the same quality of cell coverage as southern Saskatchewan residents when they are travelling this highway. Cell coverage on this highway would help residents with safety.

Mr. Speaker, I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to improve cellular service coverage along the Hanson Lake Road, No. 106 for the many northern residents that travel it, and to provide the same quality of cellular coverage that the other southern communities rely on. This would provide support to our northern industry as well as mitigate safety concerns associated with living in the remote North.

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by many good people of the North, but the pages I'll be serving today come from Denare Beach and Creighton. I so present.

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

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

I'd like to read the prayer:

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

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens, people, businesses, communities from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the Sask Party government's choice to increase the PST [provincial sales tax] by a billion dollars, Mr. Speaker, to double the take, Mr. Speaker. Of course this has hit households and our economy really hard, Mr. Speaker. The average household is now paying \$800 more per year than they were just four years ago in the added PST costs. It hurts families, hurts households, has hurt our economy as well, Mr. Speaker.

And as it relates to the Sask Party government's choice to impose the PST onto construction labour, Mr. Speaker, quite simply it's the epitome of a job-killing tax, Mr. Speaker. In this case, we saw the Sask Party government see a slowing economy coming forward and they chose to slam on the brakes, Mr. Speaker. Sadly the results speak for themselves. Projects have been shelved all across Saskatchewan. Permits have plummeted. And thousands of hard-working tradespeople have lost their jobs, Mr. Speaker. So many of those tradespeople in the pursuit of employment have been forced outside of Saskatchewan, a loss for them and their families, certainly a loss for us as a province, Mr. Speaker.

And the prayer reads as follows:

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents from Saskatoon and Regina. 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 calling on the Sask Party government to restore public control over Wascana Park. Mr. Speaker, Wascana Park is a treasured urban park and conservation area that has been managed effectively and responsibly over the last 50 years through an equal partnership between the city of Regina, the University of Regina, and the province.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party a couple years ago sought to throw that partnership into the trash by tabling Bill 50, which gave themselves majority control over the board of the Provincial Capital Commission. As a result of that, we are seeing a growing

commercialization of Wascana Park that is causing a lot of concerns for the residents of Saskatchewan and the residents of Regina in particular.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this 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 yet again a petition to the Legislative Assembly calling for a \$15 minimum wage. And the undersigned residents of this province want to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan now has the lowest minimum wage in Canada; but that a minimum wage should never be a poverty wage; that Saskatchewan people working full time at a minimum wage job are in fact living in poverty; that a \$15-an-hour wage will improve health and well-being and lift Saskatchewan workers out of poverty; and that a \$15 wage will benefit local business and support local economies by putting money in workers' pockets to spend in their communities.

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 today come from the city of Regina. I do so present. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to stand in my place today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to respect the North. Northerners work very hard as trappers, fishers, and hunters to be responsible stewards of the land. That northerners feel disrespected by the current Sask Party government and do not feel as though they are being treated fairly; that northerners want to see resources in fishing, forestry, and mining developed responsibly in full partnership with northern communities; and that northerners are facing many challenges which have only been made worse by layoffs in the mining sector, with the closure of the Buffalo Narrows Correctional Centre, and the sell-off of STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company].

So the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

Call on the Sask Party government to immediately stop disrespecting the North and begin immediate dialogue with northern communities to work towards an agreement for responsible, inclusive resource management.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from Buffalo Narrows, Ile-a-la-Crosse, and Beauval. I so present.

[14:00]

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to fix the crisis in our classrooms. Those who have signed the petition today wish to bring our attention to the following: that the Sask Party government's cuts mean falling per-student funding and fewer supports for students who need a little extra help — in fact, Mr. Speaker, there is \$400 less for every student in this province today than was allocated in 2016; that the Sask Party government's cuts leave educators without the resources that they need to support student learning; that the Sask Party government is ignoring overcrowding in our classrooms by refusing to track and report on classroom sizes; that the Sask Party government's lack of funding for school infrastructure has led to crumbling and overcrowded schools right across this province; and that the Sask Party government's failure to invest in our classrooms is having serious consequences today, as we certainly have seen this week, Mr. Speaker, and will continue to well into the future until we address this issue.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Sask Party government 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 come from the Battlefords. I do so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm rising today to present a petition calling for a moratorium on logging in the Nesslin Lake area. The people who have signed this petition today would like to bring to our attention the following: Nesslin Lake, Ness Lake, and Zig Zag Bay campgrounds bring thousands of tourists to the area annually. It's also the prime recreational area for the residents of Big River and the surrounding area. The Ness Creek site brings thousands of tourists to the area through its numerous events and activities, resulting in an additional 25,000 visitor days annually.

Portions of the forest in the Nesslin Lake area are slated for logging as early as September 2020, which will negatively impact tourism, traditional and recreational use, and its untapped economic potential. A moratorium on logging in this area is critical, as if this logging proceeds, it will cause irreparable harm to the economic potential of the area for decades. Local area residents and businesses need more time to ensure a more sustainable economic plan is put in place.

I'll read the petition:

We, the undersigned, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Sask Party government to place a moratorium on all proposed

logging in the area between Nesslin Lake and the Ness Creek site, as well as immediately north of Nesslin Lake.

And, Mr. Speaker, the individuals signing this petition today are from the communities of Langham and Big River. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Government Support for Education

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, to say the Minister of Education has launched an attack on teachers this week is an understatement. When they were on the campaign trail they promised the world to teachers, students, and parents, but now we can see how little they value public education. The Premier has been all talk and no walk, and now he's not even feigning concern for the conditions teachers and students are struggling in. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? Their record speaks for itself. Each child in our education system is receiving \$400 less from this government than they were in 2016. This government would need to add \$78 million in this year alone to get us to 2016 funding levels.

The minister waxes on about how important it is to support complex needs in the classrooms, but he has presided over cuts in the last three years that leave kids with fewer counsellors, fewer psychologists, fewer speech and language pathologists, fewer occupational therapists, and fewer English as an additional language teachers. Who does the minister think supports children with complex needs?

An NDP [New Democratic Party] government is committed to capping class sizes and working with teachers and boards to address classroom complexity. And if the minister wonders why teachers and students are struggling, he only needs to look in the mirror.

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

Group is Nominated for Two Juno Awards

Mr. Steele: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise today to announce the Hunter Brothers have been nominated for not one, but two Juno Awards. Mr. Speaker, this is their first time for being nominated at the Junos.

From a young age, the boys were born and raised on two things: farming and music. As they got older, they left their family's farm to pursue their education, adventures, and even professional hockey careers. But when that all wrapped up, they returned to the farm in Shaunavon, started farming with their families, and started recording music.

Mr. Speaker, the boys are nominated in two categories: Breakthrough Group of the Year and Country Album of the year. Though the brothers are not strangers to us in the Assembly, we all know that this is a turning point in their music careers.

Mr. Speaker, the Juno Awards are coming up fast and are being held in the great city of Saskatoon. Saskatchewan will be represented well, as a number of artists like Foxwarren and The Dead South are nominated as well.

On behalf of the community of Shaunavon and this Assembly, I wish the Hunter Brothers the best of luck, and after the Juno Awards, we'll be all watching. Thank you.

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

Businesswoman Receives Legacy Award

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Each year in conjunction with the Samuel McLeod Business Awards, the Prince Albert & District Chamber of Commerce honour a business person with the Legacy Award. I was delighted to hear that the 2020 Legacy Award recipient is a long-time Prince Albert businesswoman. Janine Favreau opened her business, Nutters Bulk and Natural Foods, 36 years ago.

The Legacy Award recognizes pioneers in business within the community and businesses who have contributed to our city. Janine is dedicated to her business and ensures that only the freshest and best product is available to her customers. Janine works hard. She took her first whole week of holidays only in her 10th year of operation. That is what makes Janine such a great businesswoman — her dedication to her work and her pride in her product. She is also the longest serving franchisee of the Nutters Bulk and Natural Food chain.

This is not the first time that Janine has been honoured. In 2014 Favreau was the recipient of the Samuel McLeod Business Award for Prince Albert's Female Business Leader of the Year and is a repeat winner of the People's Choice award. In recognition of an extensive remodelling and addition to her store in 2019, she was on the cover and in the lead story of the *Canadian Natural Health Retailer* magazine.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join with me in congratulating Janine in being the 2020 recipient of the Legacy Award. Thank you.

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

Student Receives Economic Development Scholarship

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was an honour to attend a scholarship luncheon last month at Great Plains College in Warman. We gathered to award a scholarship to Kelly Fiddler, a student in the college's M.B.A. [Master of Business Administration] program. The Indigenous Economic Development Scholarship supports a new generation of Indigenous leaders in Saskatchewan. It's awarded through a partnership between Saskatoon Regional Economic Development Authority, the Saskatchewan First Nations Economic Development Network, the college, and the province through the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship.

Great Plains College has an outstanding reputation of partnering with others to award scholarships to their students, and Kelly is a very worthy recipient. He has a history of working with First Nations communities. Some of his achievements include the start-up of the Waterhen Lake First Nation Development Corporation; working on many First Nations projects, including

the M&N Resort, and currently working on the acquisition of another outfitting resort; directed the first Hire First Nations program hosted by FSIN [Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations], which has put more than 650 First Nation people to work in the oil and gas sector.

With his current focus on economic development through the M.B.A. program, I have no doubt that Kelly will continue his hard work that will result in opportunities for First Nations across this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, it is a very special treat to have Kelly's grandmother, Elder Neva Mirasty, attend and say a prayer. You can just imagine how very proud she was. Please join me in congratulating Kelly on this very deserved scholarship.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Lloydminster.

General Manager of Agricultural Exhibition Retires

Ms. Young: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition Association has been a pillar of the Lloydminster community for decades. They host a variety of events, giving all sectors opportunities to showcase their goods, services, and innovations with agricultural partners, colleagues, and the general public. Mr. Speaker, the success of the association results in over 200,000 visits annually to the Lloydminster exhibition complex and to the city of Lloydminster. The Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition Association's dedication to the growth of our community has not gone unnoticed.

But, Mr. Speaker, much of the success that the association has had over the past few decades wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of their general manager, Mike Sidoryk. Mike has been with the association for 38 years, 20 of those as general manager. Many would describe him as an icon in the Lloydminster community.

This makes the recent announcement of Mike's retirement an emotional one for the border city. Mike leaves the association in a very good position, and I can't wait to see how the association grows with the fresh ideas of their next general manager. Mr. Speaker, I now invite all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Mike Sidoryk on his 38-year career with the Lloydminster Agricultural Exhibition Association and wish him all the best in his retirement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

Saskatchewan Snowboarder Wins Gold

Hon. Mr. Goudy: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand here in the House to speak about one of Saskatchewan's favourite athletes, one who inspires not only our own kids but kids around the world. Mr. Speaker, back in January, Mark McMorris became the most decorated snowboarder in the history of the winter X Games. Mark won gold at the men's Big Air competition held in Oslo, Norway — home of the second largest moose in the world, next to our very own, Moose Jaw's bigger Mac.

Mr. Speaker, those who have mountaintop experiences know that you don't get to the top without grinding it out in the valley, and

Mark and his brother Craig quite literally did just that. Mr. Speaker, behind them and their ascent to greatness were two very supportive parents. From building ramps and making snow in the backyard with the pressure washer — Mr. Speaker, who figures that out? — forgoing warm vacations for ones in the mountains, and frequent trips to the emergency room, this was the McMorris new normal.

Mr. Speaker, the fabric of our province is a strong weave of family and their communities, and in this case we have an example of what can be accomplished when a blend of determined children and their supportive parents get together.

Mr. Speaker, there are no greater fans for the McMorris boys than their mother, Cindy, and their father, our very own member from Indian Head-Milestone. I ask the Assembly to join me in congratulating Mark McMorris for all that he's accomplished and celebrate with his parents, especially his mother, Mark's prairie resilience. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Volunteers Make a Successful Winter Festival

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Prince Albert Winter Festival is Saskatchewan's premier winter community celebration and a wonderful tradition that has been going on for more than 55 years. The festival is organized and administrated by a great group of dedicated volunteers from the P.A. [Prince Albert] Winter Festival board. This event has a history of bringing Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan together with many family-friendly community events throughout the festival's 17 days.

Mr. Speaker, some of this year's events included the Country North Show, Voices of the North live concert, Snowmobile Rally, and the Jigging Contest, to name a few. I had a great time at the Tux & Toques Gala where a long-time friend of mine, Gordie Sproull, was celebrated as the honorary Winter Festival Chairperson. Gord has served as a festival sled dog race announcer for over 50 years and has been a humble servant of our community for most of his life. Volunteers like Gord are what makes these events possible and truly memorable.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in thanking Gord Sproull and the rest of the Prince Albert Winter Festival board for their eager volunteerism and making this year's event such a success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Unparliamentary Language

The Speaker: — Yesterday, March 10, 2020, the Government House Leader raised two points of order concerning the remarks made by the member for Regina Rosemont during debate on Bill No. 194, *The Miscellaneous Municipal Statutes Amendment Act, 2019*. The member's alleged to have used unparliamentary language, to which the Opposition House Leader requested I review the record before making a ruling. I've reviewed the record and will now address each of the comments that aggrieved the Government House Leader.

I will begin with the use of the word “hypocritical.” The Government House Leader referenced two Speaker’s rulings from 1961 when the word was ruled to be unparliamentary. The reference is from Beauchesne’s *Parliamentary Rules & Forms*, 6th Edition, paragraph 489, on page 146. If the Government House Leader had turned to page 148, paragraph 490, he would have found that other forms of the word “hypocritical” such as “hypocrisy” and “hypocrites” have been ruled parliamentary. Beauchesne’s in fact states, “No language is, by virtue of any list, acceptable or unacceptable.”

[14:15]

In pointing this out, I want to refer members to a ruling of Speaker Toth, who provided guidance in such matters when he stated December 7, 2010:

. . . that the context and use of the word is key to determining whether or not it is acceptable.

One of the acceptability tests is cited in the *House of Commons Procedure and Practice*, 2nd edition at page 614, which is as follows: ‘Remarks directed specifically at another Member which question that Member’s integrity, honesty or character are not in order.’

In a ruling dated November 19, 2004 Speaker Kowalsky ruled that the word “hypocritical” when applied to an individual is not in order. It is clear from yesterday’s *Hansard*, on page 6845, that the member for Regina Rosemont directed his comments more broadly to government policy and not any particular members of the government. For that reason I find the point of order not well taken in this instance.

The other remark the Government House Leader found offensive is the phrase “filling the pockets of friends and insiders.” I’ve reviewed the record and can confirm the expression was said by the member for Regina Rosemont. I find the way this expression was used to be more troubling. It was used in a context to insinuate that members of the government had acted in an unethical manner. I want to remind members that it is not acceptable to question each other’s integrity, honesty, or character.

There are numerous rulings to this effect in the *Journals* of this Assembly. But I want to point out what Speaker Kowalsky said on June 13, 2003. He said that “. . . the words themselves do not always fall into the strict category of unacceptable language.” But if they convey an unmistakable impression, then they must be reviewed in the greater context such as whether the intent is to impute bad motives such as illegalities or immorality or being unethical. As he said, there are limits to how far members should be allowed to go.

The comments used by the member for Regina Rosemont crossed the line. I’ve had to remind the member for Regina Rosemont about such provocative language in the past. For that reason, I find the point of order well taken and ask the member for Regina Rosemont to rise, withdraw the remark, and apologize. Let’s try to be better when we debate the issues of the day and not disparage each other with insults or insinuations of impropriety. I now call on the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I’ll withdraw and apologize, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Date of Provincial Election and Preparedness for COVID-19 Outbreak

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The World Health Organization has informed us that we are now officially experiencing a pandemic due to COVID-19 virus. There are 14 cases next door in Alberta, 39 in BC [British Columbia], and over 100 across the country. The premier of Manitoba yesterday said, “It’s a good thing we’re not having a provincial election right in the middle of this.” That seems like a pretty obvious thing to understand, Mr. Speaker, but the only reason we’re even discussing an election right now is because this Premier thinks that it’s worth putting people at risk if it’s good for him politically.

Mr. Speaker, no one who is taking this seriously, no one who is actually considering the impact of their actions, would consider calling unnecessarily an event that will bring people together — send people door to door shaking hands, joining in large rallies, inviting seniors to gather together and vote in the same place — while the rest of the world is encouraging people to stay apart for their own health and safety, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier stop blowing these concerns off? Will he take the risk seriously, Mr. Speaker? Will he take the politics out of this pandemic and put aside his plans for a snap election?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, we’ve answered questions in this House and in the rotunda for the last number of days with regards to election timing, Mr. Speaker. And I think it’s important for the people of this province to know first and foremost that to date there are no cases of COVID-19 in Saskatchewan. However, that may change in the days ahead.

The people of this province should also know, Mr. Speaker, that this province has a plan in place to ensure that the health care services that would be required will be there for the people of this province, should they be required, Mr. Speaker. The plan that has been in place has been updated to the people of the province on multiple occasions by our chief medical officer, Dr. Shahab. My understanding is that Dr. Shahab and other medical officials, along with the Minister of Health, will be further updating the people of the province as to the provincial plan that we have in place, Mr. Speaker, should we have some cases here in the province, and it is likely over the next number of days and weeks that we may.

It also should be noted by the people of this province, Mr. Speaker, that we have always made every effort to provide a strong, stable, competent government here in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker, with some of the uncertainty that we may be facing, Mr. Speaker, due to COVID-19, Mr. Speaker, and some of the impending not only health requirements that may be in place, but also some of the economic consequences that are there, Mr.

Speaker, that Saskatchewan comes at this from a position of strength. They come at this with a government that will continue to provide that stable, competent governance that the people of this province expect, Mr. Speaker, and that includes with decisions around the timing of an election.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This Premier is bringing politics into a pandemic because he's too busy planning an election to plan for the pandemic that's coming in this province, Mr. Speaker. It's so concerning to see the Minister of Health say yesterday that up until yesterday there was no specific plan for COVID-19. It's on the front page of the paper, Mr. Speaker

The first case appeared in Canada on January 27. Shortly after, I called the minister's office and I requested a briefing, which he was kind enough to give on February 3rd, and offered continual updates. That was February 3rd. Their plan was released today, Mr. Speaker. Over a month, as the number of cases have grown and grown around the world. No serious updates since that time, Mr. Speaker, just scrambling to put together a plan today because it was on the front page of the paper yesterday, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: what's taken you so long? And now that you've looked at the evidence, do you realize how recklessly stupid it would be to call an election in the middle of a pandemic?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, talk about torqueing the facts. Yesterday when the members opposite were saying there is no plan, there's no planning been done, I clearly stated that there was. Medical officials have been working on it. Dr. Shahab had been working on it, Mr. Speaker, Ministry of Health, the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority].

Mr. Speaker, after a scrum yesterday, I told the media we would . . . because plans were being updated, Mr. Speaker. This is a work-in-progress. Things are changing globally, daily on this, Mr. Speaker. I said I would ensure that we would have something up, Mr. Speaker. A framework for the plan is up right now, Mr. Speaker. More information will be updated next week.

Mr. Speaker, I'm glad the Leader of the Opposition mentioned about the briefing that he had with myself and Dr. Shahab a few weeks ago at his request. At that briefing I told him I'd be happy to arrange any more briefings that he liked, to make sure he was up to date. Mr. Speaker, we had what I thought at the time was a very good conversation about making sure that we were both kept up to date and the people of the province were kept up to date, Mr. Speaker. Instead what's that member been doing? He's been trying to scare and instill fear into the people of Saskatchewan, saying there is no plan. Mr. Speaker, nothing could be further from the truth.

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

Provincial Budget

Mr. Meili: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier is endangering our response to the pandemic because he's too interested in his own political future and not interested in the future and the health of

the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

It's a complete failure to plan, a failure to plan on coronavirus, and a failure to plan when it comes to our economy, Mr. Speaker — the latest example of a government that is always planning for the next election but never thinking about the months and years ahead, what that means for Saskatchewan people, never thinking about the next generation.

Last month this government put a budget to bed that has no resemblance to Saskatchewan's economic reality today, has no resemblance to what people will be facing in the months ahead, Mr. Speaker. The markets continue to drop. The markets continue to drop and people's savings, people's pensions, are going up in smoke, Mr. Speaker.

But it's not just about our finances, though a half a billion dollars — to the Minister of Finance — that is no small hit to our economy, Mr. Speaker, to our finances. It's not just about our finances; it's about jobs. It's about families and their pensions, their savings. It's about the services like health and education we all depend on.

Will the Premier be wise today? Will he stop this pattern of failing to plan? Will he postpone the budget, allow for debate, and give us a plan that actually works for the future of this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I find it rather interesting that the members opposite would panic, they would knee-jerk react. And the other pattern from the members opposite is yet again, prior to a budget, they fearmongered among the people of Saskatchewan. The minute the budget is introduced, that's the last question they ever ask about the budget. That's exactly what they did last year and you just watch and see what will happen this year, Mr. Speaker.

They say we fail to plan, Mr. Speaker, and yet the credit agency has been giving us a AAA credit rating, the highest in the country, because of our plan. And that plan is something that they have criticized time and time again. They would change all of it. They would create a billion-dollar deficit. They would have another billion-dollar deficit in promises . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I find it extremely difficult to hear the response. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, that would be their plan, and that would devastate the finances of the province for many, many generations, Mr. Speaker. So the plan that we have shifts our reliance on resource revenue significantly so that we can weather a downturn in oil prices such as we're seeing right now.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Once again the government fails to recognize the real problems that people are facing, the way that people are stretched and stressed. It's always putting politics before people. But Saskatchewan deserves a

government who will put people first.

This Premier instead is plowing ahead with a budget that he knows is completely out of date. He just wants something shiny in the window as he calls people to a snap election, Mr. Speaker, but he knows that if the Finance minister puts forward the budget they prepared last month, next week, that it's not worth the paper it's printed on.

Will this Premier actually show some leadership? Will he give Saskatchewan people a plan that's a serious response, that's an actual recognition of the real problems facing the households today everywhere in this province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And yet again as I said, this is a pattern. Last year they absolutely created fear around the budget until the budget was introduced, and then that was the last question we had on the budget, Mr. Speaker.

And so I must say, stay tuned, because quite frankly this will be a building budget, Mr. Speaker. We will continue what we have done in the past, which is to build schools in this province, Mr. Speaker. It will be building highways. It'll be building hospitals, Mr. Speaker. It will have an economic stimulus in this budget, and that is without changing. Would I change any of that considering the circumstances? No. I think it makes our budget even more important, and more relevant to our situation today.

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

Negotiations With Teachers' Union

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Those questions were for the Premier, but it seems he's sitting down for Saskatchewan again — failing to plan, failing to plan for COVID-19, failing to plan with the realities of today's economy in mind, for the realities of what Saskatchewan people are facing, and failing to plan by failing to invest in education at all.

We've seen a decrease, according to the SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], we've seen a decrease of \$800 per student since 2010. Classrooms are overwhelmed, Mr. Speaker. There's more students, and there's more students with more complex needs. Life is more difficult in our classrooms, which has been forcing teachers to take a stand.

Our teachers are standing up for our children, Mr. Speaker. And it's unbelievable. It's unbelievable that the Minister of Education would say something so insulting as suggesting that teachers are walking away from our students when everyone in this room knows that it's the Sask Party that's been walking away from students for years, and even worse. And it's only gotten worse since 2017. It's only gotten worse under this Premier, Mr. Speaker.

Will the Premier stand up today? Will he stand up now and say to the students in this room, say to students around this province whose education experience is not what it could be, not what it should be, will he tell them what his plan is to invest in education? Because we haven't seen it.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

[14:30]

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, our record in investing in education on the operating side and on the capital side, Mr. Speaker, it's clear — largest education budget in the history of the province.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there's lots of young people in the House today, Mr. Speaker. I know they are here because they are concerned about the extracurricular activities, Mr. Speaker. This morning, this morning, the member from Lakeview tweeted that the kids are here. "They are asking the province to start talks immediately . . . with the STF," Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the government has never walked away from the table. And to all the people that are standing in this room, Mr. Speaker, all the people that are here, the kids and their parents: the government has never walked away, Mr. Speaker. We had an offer that we were prepared to put on the table last week, Mr. Speaker. The STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] has refused to come back to the table, Mr. Speaker.

The consequences of that is that they've imposed sanctions, Mr. Speaker, and the consequences of those sanctions, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that groups like Hoopla are going to be cancelled, Mr. Speaker. If the union wants to return to the bargaining table, Mr. Speaker . . . If they don't return then Pat Maze, the president of the union, Mr. Speaker, is the grinch that stole Hoopla from them, Mr. Speaker. And those members, those members, Mr. Speaker, are complicit in that.

The people in this room, Mr. Speaker, the parents and the . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Next question. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government has been walking away from students for years, per-student funding falling every single year. When teachers stand up for their students, this government tries to blame everything on them, Mr. Speaker. And now he's not even talking about teachers. He's talking about one organization, one person, when he knows that 90 per cent of teachers were in favour of sanctions, Mr. Speaker, because teachers, our teachers, are standing up for our kids.

Mr. Speaker, he talks about wages, but that's not what teachers are fighting for. It's not about compensation. It's about composition, and he knows it. They want smaller classes and they want more supports because there's more students with special needs, more students who are learning English, more students struggling with anxiety and depression. More students in poverty in the Sask Party's Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, who are coming to school hungry.

How does this Premier have any confidence in a minister who so poisoned the well on these negotiations, who's done such a terrible job, Mr. Speaker? What is his plan? This minister can't continue in this role, Mr. Speaker. There's no confidence in his ability to get these negotiations to an end, Mr. Speaker.

How is this Premier planning for the good of the students here

and in every classroom in this country, to end this incredible mishandling of these contract negotiations?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, how the hell do you negotiate a contract with people that won't come back to the bargaining table? We're willing to negotiate, Mr. Speaker, with the union leadership.

We've put a plan forward on composition. They want it in the collective agreement. The arbitrator, through binding arbitration, said it shouldn't be in the agreement. We're willing to talk about it. We acknowledge, Mr. Speaker, we acknowledge that it's a challenge. We want to find a path forward, Mr. Speaker, but we can't do that if the union, Mr. Speaker, isn't prepared to come back to the bargaining table.

We have an offer, Mr. Speaker. I took the opportunity this morning of releasing that mandate to the public so that the public knows, Mr. Speaker, that the offer from the government is \$1,500 in the first year and 2 per cent in each of the next three years. Teachers are the third-highest-paid group of teachers in this entire country, Mr. Speaker. Our per-pupil grant to the children in the classes, Mr. Speaker, is among the highest in this country, Mr. Speaker.

That shows our commitment to public education, Mr. Speaker. But we can't get a contract. We can't get a contract, Mr. Speaker, unless they return to the bargaining table. And unless they return to the bargaining table and give us an indication by 3:30, Mr. Speaker, Hoopla is done.

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

Mr. Meili: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Teachers have been under incredible stress in this province. The choice of teachers . . . And I was on the phone with a teacher last night who's heartbroken over what's going on with the sanctions because it's so hard for him to see. But he knows that this can't continue. The pressures that teachers are under, the way that that's causing students to suffer, it's absolutely unconscionable, Mr. Speaker.

What does this minister do? He insults those teachers. He insults their everyday hard work. He insults their commitment to the students of this province. It's embarrassing, Mr. Speaker. It's unconscionable. And he has no business continuing in that role because there's no way after he's poisoned this well that there's any way this will finish positively, Mr. Speaker. To this Premier: will you get us a decent Minister of Education?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, this government's commitment to public education is clear, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure how we get a contract with teachers if the union won't return to the bargaining table. It's pretty clear, Mr. Speaker. I've been asking them to return to the bargaining table since they walked away. Mr. Speaker, they chose conciliation . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Finish off your answer, Minister.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, we want an arrangement with the teachers. We want a collective bargaining agreement, Mr. Speaker. We've made it perfectly clear that the government's position on class composition should be nowhere to be found in a collective agreement.

That doesn't mean, Mr. Speaker, that we don't acknowledge that there's challenges in the classroom. We put a plan forward last week which was categorically rejected by the teachers, Mr. Speaker. We want them as part of our committee to determine a good path forward on class size and composition; they refuse to participate. But without them at the bargaining table, Mr. Speaker, a table that the government has not walked away from, we can't get a deal.

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

Health Care for Mental Health and Addictions

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We are joined today by Carey Rigby-Wilcox and her husband, Richard Wilcox. Carey and Rich lost their son Steven in a confrontation with police in December of 2018, after his long struggle trying to get mental health and addictions care in our province. Mr. Speaker, Steven was repeatedly discharged and turned away from hospitals after multiple suicide attempts and while he was still in crisis. Steven fell through the cracks in our mental health system, cracks that persist today. This can't go on. It really is a matter of life or death. Does the minister agree Steven's story illustrates a broken mental health system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome the guests to the Assembly. I had an opportunity to meet with them some time ago and discuss this, Mr. Speaker. While I would word it different, Mr. Speaker, I think I can agree with the member opposite that what this speaks to is that we do need to do more for mental health in this province, Mr. Speaker. You saw a number of initiatives in last year's budget, Mr. Speaker. We're just a week away from the next year's budget coming forward, Mr. Speaker. And while I can't pre-empt the budget, I can say I think you'll once again see an onus on mental health and addictions, Mr. Speaker. And I would offer to, if our guests would like, I'd be pleased to meet with them again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, Steven was in hospital in North Battleford after attempting to take his own life, and was released 45 minutes later. Individuals suffering the way Steven was should not be forced out of our health system because there aren't enough supports. Days before he died, he was admitted to the Dubé Centre with his chart noting his intent to provoke police to shoot him. Despite this, he was released the next day. This should never have happened.

We've been calling on this government to commit to a mental health and addictions stream of emergency care to ensure people in crisis stop falling through the cracks in our health system. Will

the minister commit today to a dedicated mental health and addictions stream for those needing to access emergency care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, while I can't speak to the specifics of a case, I would again point to . . . We recognize the issue with mental health and addictions in this province, Mr. Speaker. We announced a number of new initiatives last spring, Mr. Speaker. You'll be seeing more onus on that in just a week, Mr. Speaker, in next year's budget.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With all due respect, those supports are days late and dollars short. People are suffering, Mr. Speaker, and the efforts this government has brought to bear have not met the need, Mr. Speaker. Steven's story is a tragic one, but it also illustrates the disjointed supports for people grappling with mental health and addictions challenges.

In the final months of Steven's life, he was receiving services from the RCMP, the police and crisis team, multiple hospitals, doctors, and psychiatrists. It would have made an incredible difference if he could have accessed the support he needed before he was in full-blown crisis, Mr. Speaker. With a coordinated approach, all parties could have had the information they need, including the police.

Carey would like to see an inquest that not only includes Steven's cause of death, but she wants an inquest into the health services leading up to the tragic day he died. Will the government commit to a broad inquest today into the factors that led to Steven's death?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to join with the minister and with the member opposite in offering our condolences and our sympathies to the people that are here today. I can't imagine anything more tragic than losing a family member to a suicide under any type of circumstances, so I certainly want to join in and offer my sympathies.

Mr. Speaker, I can indicate that we will have discussions with the coroner. The coroner's the individual that makes the determination as to the process that's followed. We have tried over the last number of years since the appointment of the new . . . [inaudible] . . . to try and depoliticize the process. And I know the coroner has reached out to them, and I think there's been some meetings, but I'll certainly follow up and see what the current status of it is and what should be done.

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

Initiatives to Counteract Domestic Violence

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, last week we asked this government to commit to providing operating funds for

second-stage housing for women fleeing interpersonal violence. The Minister for Status of Women wouldn't commit to this important measure that would help create capacity throughout the support system for survivors. Instead she told the media, "I reject the notion that we haven't done enough" about domestic violence, pointing to, among other things, Clare's Law.

The problem with that is, despite Clare's Law receiving Royal Assent on May 15th of last year, the government has yet to proclaim it into force. They've put out six press releases referencing the fact that they brought Clare's Law forward, which is six more than the number of women that this initiative has helped so far. How can this minister claim they're doing enough when the law they point to over and over again hasn't even been brought into force yet?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the opportunity to get up and discuss Clare's Law. The bill itself contemplates a protocol being developed by the police as to when and how information should be shared, what information should be released from balancing the various privacy requirements that need to be done. It requires the protocols to be developed with municipal police forces and with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police].

Mr. Speaker, we are the first province in Canada to have undertaken this process, and we're pleased to say that the process is progressing well. And for the benefit of the member opposite and for the members of the province in a general sense, I'm advised that the work is progressing very well, nearly complete. And as soon as the work is finalized, which should be in the next number of weeks, our intention is to declare it forthwith.

We know that it's something that we think can provide some benefit to people that are at substantial risk. We want to do it and do it right so that it's not subject to a court challenge or doesn't interfere with a potential prosecution. And I've been following up on it regularly, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Mr. Speaker, this government should be doing every single thing they can to support survivors, including efforts to open more spaces for women in need. There's a project that can do just that, Mr. Speaker, and it's ready to go today. The YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] Centre for Women and Families would expand bed space in Regina and area, as well as supporting expanded prevention capacity.

This is a project that this government has not yet committed to. If this government takes this issue as seriously as they claim to, they should put their money where their mouth is. Our understanding is the federal money is there if the province commits to it as well. Again, will the province commit today to providing funding for this important YWCA project?

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

Hon. Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for this important question. We've had the

opportunity to be able to work with the YWCA over the past 12 to 15 months on this project, Mr. Speaker. In contact with the YWCA, we're waiting for the official notification from the federal government that there is money. We haven't received that, Mr. Speaker. We're looking forward to continuing to work with this project. We would be working with SaskBuilds and other various government agencies to make sure that this project does see the light that it's supposed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the member of the Standing Committee on House Services.

[14:45]

Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. Cox: — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Human Services to report Bill No. 200, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2019* with amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole on Bills? I recognize the minister.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this bill, and the bill and its amendments to be now read the third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 200, and that the bill and its amendments be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — When shall the amendments be read the first time? I recognize the minister.

FIRST AND SECOND READINGS OF AMENDMENTS

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I move that the amendments be now read a first and second time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that the amendments be now read a first and second time. Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — First and second reading of the amendments.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I move that the bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 200 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Third reading of this bill.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 195

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

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

Ms. Beck: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into debate on this bill, Bill No. 195, *The Lobbyists Amendment Act* of 2019. Mr. Speaker, I gave a second reading speech earlier this week talking about the importance of fostering and bolstering trust and respect for the work that we do. And one of the ways that we can do that is ensuring that we are transparent and accountable for our dealings, that not only we have . . . that we hold ourselves to a very high standard, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to things like lobbyists and conflict-of-interest legislation.

So I think that it is important that we do see some amendments. I think these amendments were, if I'm not mistaken, Mr. Speaker, some of those amendments that were advocated by the current Conflict of Interest Commissioner himself, someone who I believe has served this Assembly for many years and we will all have opportunity to meet with by the end of March here, Mr. Speaker. But when there are things that we know that can improve that public confidence and the functioning of the registry, I think we ought to reasonably look at those things and take hold.

Also hearkening back to second reading speeches from earlier this week, I had the pleasure of quoting my friend and colleague

from Saskatoon Centre, and I'm going to take that opportunity again today. We don't know how many more days we have with him and some of my other colleagues, so I'm going to liberally borrow from their wisdom in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, while I have them. I suppose I'll have them in print but while I have him still sitting here in this Assembly.

So, you know, when these changes were announced it was, you know, with some recognition that we needed strengthening of our lobbyist and conflict-of-interest legislation in the province, Mr. Speaker. So I think that again, as I've said on the record already, that is certainly something that we agree with on this side of the Assembly.

But I do think that there were some concerns raised by my colleague from Saskatoon Centre about this legislation simply not going far enough. And I'm going to quote from a news release from November the 25th of 2019 that our ethics and democracy critic put out to the light of day. And he said that "A smaller loophole isn't good enough. Under the new threshold, a lobbyist could meet with a Minister for coffee every single week for more than six months without anybody knowing." Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if that is something that is going on, but certainly reasonably could be going on and would slip under the threshold, which I believe to be 30 hours in this proposed bill.

Again, you know, there are ways around . . . And we see in other jurisdictions that they don't have such a high threshold. And if someone is lobbying, we should see that person or that entity registered and accountable for that lobbying. I think there was some flippant remarks, as have been mentioned and highlighted by my colleagues who've spoken previously on this bill about, you know, running into folks in the grocery store and such. Well I tell you, Mr. Speaker, I don't get spoken to as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] . . . I'm certainly not a minister, but don't get spoken to as much as an MLA more than at the Safeway in Cathedral. And if you ever want to test that I would invite any of you to just go and walk through the aisles at the 13th Avenue Safeway because you have a very engaged and informed group of folks there who would love to bend your ear.

And again I'm not sure if any of that's going on, as my colleague said, over coffee or at the aisles of Safeway or any other place, but when you do have lobbyists who are making their pitch to ministers, to legislators, I think that that is very reasonable that that is registered. I think going by the premise that, you know, being transparent about information leads to public confidence, I think all of that, lowering that registry limit, would all be to the good in that regard.

Reading also from this news release from November the 25th: new amendments to the lobbyist registry have lowered the threshold from 100 to 30. So again, Mr. Speaker, that is progress, but sometimes I think we might want to see a little bit more progress. And another quote from my colleague while I still have him here:

The Sask. Party has a long history of skirting the rules and falling short of what people expect. By failing to implement these long-overdue changes, the Sask. Party government is letting people down yet again.

Mr. Speaker, when we're called to do the right thing, we should

do it in full measures and not in half measures. So I think that that is what we are calling for here.

You know, lowering of that registry limit is really the main substance of this bill but there are some other pieces. I'm reading now from a release from the government on November the 25th of 2019. There are also some additional amendments here to "Create a . . . provision prohibiting in-house lobbyists or consultant lobbyists from providing gifts, favours, or other benefits to public office holders." Currently we are required to disclose all of the gifts that we receive but this would prohibit that altogether and it would also "Require non-profit organizations, without a charitable mandate, to register any in-house lobbyists."

There are notes that there would be an exception for non-profit charitable organizations with less than five employees who spend a total, again, under that 30 hours annually lobbying. I think it would be for the critic to have some of those questions answered: why that limit was chosen, and why the number of five employees was chosen, Mr. Speaker. But I will leave that in the critic's very, very capable hands.

And with that, and signalling to having some more questions and concerns that we will continue to raise and will continue to have questions in committee, I will move to end my own comments and adjourn debate on Bill No. 195.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 196

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on Bill 196, *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act, 2019*. As members of the Assembly, we have to file our disclosure forms with the commissioner. And for this year past, I know I've done that. I've had my meeting this morning with him, so I'm good to go. It's just part of the process that we disclose things, whether it's gifts, different things that we have, if there's any changes in assets that we have. So it goes through a process. And I know members are doing that and they have until the end of this month to file that and do that.

But I know there are some amendments being made, and I know that the commissioner made some recommendations from a report that he had. I believe it was in 2018 he made some recommendations. Whether they're all being followed . . . I don't know if the changes are coming into play, but there's a number of those recommendations that he asked that we amend the legislation to allow.

And when I think about one area, and I know we're going to have more comments and we'll be able to find out in committee, our critic, but the good work that's been done by members on our side and that have been part of that committee to work with the commissioner . . . But having said that, my understanding if I have this right, Mr. Speaker, is upon a member losing an election or retiring, they have, with new provisions in the legislation once it's passed and it comes into law, that they will have to, within 60 days of leaving office or not getting re-elected, file a disclosure so that there's periods that are not missed, is my understanding. And that's the recommendation. So there is no gaps in the time that they serve and the time that they put in their disclosure and the time that they leave office. That way it's covered. If they do, they have to provide that for the length that they were a member sitting if they didn't disclose that to that date.

So unfortunately like everything else, I've said he has more recommendations. The other area that he's looking at . . . I know members, if you have a holding company and my understanding, if I get this exactly how it's going to work, and I know is, if you have a holding company and you have parts or own all of it or parts in a holding company, right now you just have, from my understanding, Mr. Speaker, you just have to disclose that you have a holding company and certain assets. But you didn't have to, from my understanding, put exactly what was in there, what in that holding company were shares and what you owned. I don't believe it was clear, and you didn't have to provide that. Now from what I get from the legislation, you will now have to disclose if you have a holding company in your name or however, you know, you have certain assets, you will have to disclose so that it's public.

So if the public goes and looks into our member's conflict that's put out there when we file those forms, the public and the commissioner will put out — and he does — a report that the public can access to check certain assets that we have and, as I said, gifts. So there is that process, you know, if I'm getting it straight my understanding what I read in the legislation. Just my part, I was asking a little bit about information.

So hopefully, you know, the work that the commissioner has done, has made recommendations, hopefully government will implement all of those changes. I don't know which ones he recommended. But I know my colleague and the critic who works on these files will find out in committee exactly all the details, how many things that he recommended out of his report that we go ahead and implement here, and what things that the government not take part.

So we'll get time to do that in committee, and I know we'll have time to go over that information and have officials explain exactly what's going on.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, I don't have any more comments on this bill so I'm prepared to adjourn on Bill 196.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 197

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

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

[15:00]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter in briefly here this afternoon with respect to Bill No. 197, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2019*.

Mr. Speaker, I've read through the minister's comments with respect to the changes that are being brought forward. Most of these changes would appear to come directly from that Crown corporation itself, Mr. Speaker. And that's a good thing, Mr. Speaker, because that's a very fine Crown corporation that represents incredible value to the people of the province.

I know that one of the changes here relates to appeal mechanisms, and we're going to want to make sure we review what's being proposed on this front. We want to make sure that this government has done its due diligence and has consulted with stakeholders on this front. Certainly it's fair to say that it can be frustrating for somebody who's facing an appeal, Mr. Speaker, and we want to make sure that we have a fair and timely process on that front.

There's other changes here as well that would sort of be a modernization of language, which is a good thing, Mr. Speaker. I think there's questions as well around how some of the changes may be enforced, Mr. Speaker, and those are questions that we can bring to the government through committee. And certainly we'll be engaged with stakeholders across the province.

It's fair to say that we don't have a lot of trust with this government when it comes to our Crown corporations, and for good reason, Mr. Speaker. This is a government that of course in the last election promised Saskatchewan people that they wouldn't privatize or sell off our Crown corporations. And we've seen just the opposite of course, Mr. Speaker, when they came to office after that last term with a big majority where they broke their word and where they brought forward legislation to sell off up to 49 per cent of our Crown corporations.

And in fact this very Crown corporation that we're speaking of, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], represents incredible value to the people of the province. We've got the headquarters downtown here in Regina, those important jobs to those employees and to their families, but to our economy, Mr. Speaker. And to the people of Saskatchewan we have really low-cost insurance when it comes to automobile insurance. And it's one of the things, Mr. Speaker, that I hear from anyone who has paid, you know, insurance, automobile insurance, in other provinces. They just see the massive savings that they have here in Saskatchewan because of this Crown corporation, Mr. Speaker, that's focused on making life affordable for Saskatchewan people. Which is why, Mr. Speaker, we don't have a whole lot of faith in this government when it comes to being stewards of our Crowns. In the case of this very Crown, we know

that that government just a few years ago was engaged in actual meetings to look at selling off a large portion of that Crown corporation, Mr. Speaker.

I won't go on at length on that front, Mr. Speaker, but that's certainly something clear on the record that disturbs and troubles Saskatchewan people. Certainly Saskatchewan people from every corner of the province rose up against that piece of legislation to sell off up to 49 per cent of our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, that rose up against a government that was holding private meetings to sell off a large portion of SGI and SaskTel. Thankfully we saw a government pull back that legislation, Mr. Speaker, but I think what we really saw there were the true colours and true intent of that government at that point in time.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, we'll engage constructively in the consultative process and committee process with this legislation, make sure that we'll look for every opportunity to strengthen this legislation and strengthen that incredible Crown corporation and the value it presents to Saskatchewan people.

With all that being said, I'll adjourn debate at this point on Bill No. 197, *The Automobile Accident Insurance Amendment Act, 2019*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 198

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today and enter into the debate around Bill No. 198, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this bill is quite lengthy. It makes several changes to *The Traffic Safety Act*, some quite substantive, others less so. I'll speak to a few of them for the purpose of this debate.

One of the changes that will be made is ensuring that there is more consistency in the sanctions between two particular offences, one being driving while using or holding a cell phone. The other is driving without due care and consideration. It makes the penalties more consistent, Mr. Speaker, between these two similar charges by allowing impoundments to also become a sanction on the second offence for driving without due care and attention.

Mr. Speaker, there's been a lot of work lately on distracted driving and a lot of consideration paid to that issue and the concerns around distracted driving in our province and the high rates of motor vehicle accidents and fatalities as a result of distracted driving. So we've seen this government increase the

penalties around driving while using or holding a cell phone, and seen subsequently quite an increase in terms of tickets — and quite expensive tickets actually, Mr. Speaker, as well. We'll be monitoring those changes and seeing how they roll out and whether or not it's effective in terms of ensuring that the rates, the high rates of distracted driving become lowered, Mr. Speaker.

Another change in this legislation is around participating in the ignition interlock program. Prior to this bill and as it currently stands, if someone is charged under the Criminal Code with an impaired driving offence, they cannot participate in the interlock program until their issue is resolved in the courts in whatever way. You can understand that if an individual pleads not guilty, as an example, that the length of time between the charge of the offence and the suspension of the licence and the resolution of that can be quite lengthy. Even if an individual pleads guilty, Mr. Speaker, it can take sometimes several months for that charge to make its way through the court system. As a result, it appears the government is seeing a large amount of individuals driving with suspended licences. As a result, they're putting forward this proposed change which would allow participation in the ignition interlock program prior to the disposition of the charge after the driver serves a 90-day suspension. So there'd be a charge and then the driver would have to wait 90 days until they are able to participate in the interlock program.

Mr. Speaker, there as well, if convicted, if an individual is eligible for the program, they also would have to . . . They'll be able to do that before completing mandatory education that's required, Mr. Speaker. The hope is that this will result in higher participation and lower instances of individuals driving while disqualified, which would allow individuals to maintain employment and manage personal and family responsibilities prior to a court disposition.

Mr. Speaker, while this could be beneficial, it also is a little counterintuitive when the goal is to ensure that we are lowering our rates of driving while impaired. In Saskatchewan we have exponentially high rates. Allowing individuals to move on, essentially, from their charge as quickly as possible could potentially be counterintuitive to that problem. However in the same vein, there are many who are, as a result of this charge, unable to maintain their employment or manage their personal family responsibilities. So the interlock program does allow that in the instance while ensuring safety of the public.

It is actually quite . . . From what I understand — and I could be wrong — I believe there's a financial . . . a daily fee that has to be paid to participate in the program that is quite large. While it does make sense to have the burden, or some burden, of that cost that would be payable to the public be borne by the individual, it does self-select, unfortunately, those who are of more limited income to be able to participate in the interlock program.

So what would be interesting from a policy perspective is whether or not those who are driving with suspended licences are of a lower income or are of a more vulnerable population than those who are not, simply because those who are of a higher income bracket, Mr. Speaker, can afford to participate in the interlock program, which could be further penalizing and criminalizing, Mr. Speaker, a more vulnerable, lower-income group.

I would be interested to know what sort of policy research has happened within government about this issue, and what sort of discussions have been going on to ensure that marginalized and lower-income populations are able to access the same programs that others can simply because they can afford it, Mr. Speaker.

There's also some changes around ensuring that the requirement around mandatory training for drivers of semis, or class 1 commercial semi licences, be applied to non-residents as well as residents. There's also a change that requires or puts the responsibility of the proper restraint of children under the age of 16 that are in taxis or ride-share vehicles be on the parents rather than the drivers, as well as allowing law enforcement to lay a charge for an intentional obscured licence plate.

Mr. Speaker, like I said, there are a lot of provisions here. There's a lot of changes here that are quite interesting, that I know our critic is going to be keen to ask questions of at committee, and that I have colleagues who are still interested in entering into the debate around this bill. So to allow for that further debate, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill No. 198.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 199

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

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

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to rise today to enter into the debate around Bill No. 199, *The Opioid Damages and Health Care Costs Recovery Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this is a new piece of legislation. It will allow the government to have a direct action against opioid manufacturers and wholesalers to recover health care costs. This is similar to what we've been seeing other jurisdictions do across the country. I believe it will allow them to enter into some similar actions, court actions that we are seeing. In particular there's a class-action lawsuit in BC against opioid manufacturers and distributors.

This legislation is something that we've called for in the opposition. As you know, Mr. Speaker, and as we all know, the level of addictions in our province is at a crisis level. We have some of the highest rates in the country of addictions, yet we see little in ways of government taking proactive measures to address this concern. The hope is that through this legislation and subsequent lawsuits as a result would provide some further money to come to Saskatchewan for the purposes of addressing the numerous consequences of the rampant levels of opioid addictions in our province. It has a devastating impact on many government services, Mr. Speaker — Corrections and Policing,

Justice, and Health being just a few, Mr. Speaker.

[15:15]

This legislation would allow the government to use statistical information to establish causation and quantify the cost of health care benefits as well as allowing them to do the calculation of health care benefits on an aggregate basis, as well as allowing the government to override limitation periods that currently exist and normally apply to suits under *The Limitations Act*. It also sets out the procedures for determining joint liability of the defendants in a direct action for the recovery of the cost of health care benefits.

We'll be watching this lawsuit as it plays out, Mr. Speaker. We're hopeful for a positive resolution for the people of Saskatchewan. But I will say that this can't be the only thing that happens in this area. And this can't be the only card that the government chooses to play in terms of ensuring that we have adequate supports for recovery of addictions.

Mr. Speaker, not only do we have an opioid addiction crisis in Saskatchewan, we also have a crystal meth crisis in Saskatchewan. We have not nearly enough addictions beds in this province and we don't have a long-term . . . Long-term addictions treatment options in Saskatchewan are unavailable in this province, Mr. Speaker, which makes it very difficult to address the complex addictions issues that are as a result of opioids and crystal meth.

Mr. Speaker, there is a wait-list to enter the beds that do exist right now. And for folks who are in the throes of an addiction, Mr. Speaker, having to wait several weeks before entering treatment is not acceptable. Often you want to catch an individual who is suffering from addictions right at that point when they have hit that point of crisis in their lives that they've finally decided that they need help and they want to deal with the treatment of their addiction, Mr. Speaker. You can't turn to that person and then say, I'm so happy that you want to address this; now can you wait seven weeks before you can have access to addictions treatment? Mr. Speaker, that's not sufficient. It's not helping the province.

We have an addictions crisis in our jails. It's causing concerns around an increased amount of gangs, both in our jails and outside in our wider communities. It's causing an increase in violence in our jails and it's causing increase in . . . not just for the inmates, Mr. Speaker, but for those who work within the jails as well.

So this is a very important issue. I'm glad that this bill is coming forward so that we can move forward with the BC class action. But again this is the smallest tip of the iceberg in terms of what we should be doing to address the addictions crisis in our province. So in no way can the government take this bill and pat themselves on the back as a job well done when it comes to opioid addictions supports in this province.

I know I do have many other colleagues who are keen to enter into debate on this bill, so I am prepared to at this time adjourn debate on Bill No. 199.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Douglas Park has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 199. Is it the

pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 201

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Makowsky that **Bill No. 201 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*** be now read a second time.]

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

An Hon. Member: — Hear, hear.

Mr. McCall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And thanks of course to my colleague, the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy.

An Hon. Member: — Hear, hear.

Mr. McCall: — Okay, it's too much, too much. This can go too far, but you know . . . And thank you, and thanks. With thanks to my colleagues across the room.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, good to take my place and join the debate on Bill No. 201. And it's sort of an interesting bill, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the approach of the government to alcohol and gaming generally over the years, but specifically as regards the wholesaling and retailing of alcohol in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there have been some very interesting turns down the road when it comes to this government's actions. Of course you go back to the early days of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, and there were some . . . I forget. You'll forgive me for this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I forget precisely who said this, but there was at one point some Sask Party grandee said something to the effect that, you know, if a right wing government worth its salt can't privatize SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] before breakfast, Mr. Speaker, then they're not worth their salt.

An Hon. Member: — Who said that?

Mr. McCall: — That's a good question. I'm sorry not to be able to provide the precise kind of referencing to that. Could have been the member from Swift Current. I'm not sure. But certainly that was in the mix. And in terms of the chest-thumping that would go on and again like we . . . You know, those that are paying attention to history around this province know that privatization of public assets is something that is a big part of the ideology of the Sask Party and certainly has been a central sort of issue for them to grapple with as they have gone through different campaigns, Mr. Speaker.

Now of course in 2003 that election turned on privatization and the results of that, of course as you will well remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, were, you know, 28 for the Sask Party, 30 for the NDP, and the NDP got to form the government under then

leader Lorne Calvert. And the next one not so much, not so much. That one turned out a little differently. I think the number for that one was 20 to 38 I think is how that worked out in 2007.

But I would submit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the central actions taken by the new leader of the Sask Party, following on the heels of Elwin Hermanson, but the new leader, Brad Wall, one of the first things they did was say, let's take the pledge on Crown protection, Mr. Speaker. Let's take that one out of the window. Let's stop having the NDP finish our sentences for us, I think was one of the things that that individual said, and let's take the privatization argument off the table for the coming 2007 election. And, Mr. Speaker, far be it from me to doubt sincerity in these kind of actions, but that repentance seemed to be kind of the deathbed variety, Mr. Speaker, but more of a convenience than conviction.

But they took the pledge and, you know, I think that played a big role in what happened in 2007 in terms of, you know, sanding off some of those hard right wing edges of the Sask Party. But you know, cast your mind forward a few years, Mr. Speaker, and they've of course played different games with the whole privatization file. But one thing I'll credit them for, Mr. Speaker, is that they went to the people in 2016 and said, look, we'd like to sell off, I think it was 40 SLGA liquor stores. They campaigned on it, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I may be quaint and old fashioned, but I think you run on something, you get a mandate, and then you get to do it, Mr. Speaker. I disagreed with it. I disagree with it still, Mr. Speaker. But you know, that opened the door and they promptly sold off those stores, Mr. Speaker, and promptly rolled out the red carpet for various home-grown entities like, oh I don't know, Sobey's and Costco, Mr. Speaker, to get into the liquor retail business in a big way in the province of Saskatchewan.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, it's hardly a day goes by where you don't drive around in the city of ours . . . I was up to Safeway on north Albert getting some groceries the other day, and be darned if there isn't a new private liquor store being built in the parking lot. You know, the Lowe's is closing but the new private liquor store, coming along nicely. And again I'm happy to tell my friend from Weyburn-Big Muddy, you know, we got some groceries. It was a good time. They're heart smart, healthy as we can get. I don't know if five pounds of pistachios counts as healthy but, you know, we'll see how that goes.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, the question of this government and the way that they've approached SLGA has been, you know, in part straightforward, but it's also been sort of surreptitious, insidious, Mr. Speaker, in the way that I think it won't be before the decade, the next 10 years is over, Mr. Speaker, that SLGA and the revenues and the well-paid jobs that go to the workers that do the job there day in, day out, Mr. Speaker, where that will be a thing of the past. And it's there, in bold relief, on north Albert, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the north Albert liquor store versus the new private entity across the way. And you know, that's the way it's going to go. That's the way it's going to go, Mr. Speaker.

So when the government comes forward and says, look we've got this specialty warehousing arrangement that we need to get out from under the thumb of BC and Alberta, Mr. Speaker, and you know, provide that opportunity for someone in

Saskatchewan around the warehousing of specialty products, Mr. Speaker, we want to take them at face value. But when we look at the new subsection (4) under the existing provision, powers respecting sale of beverage alcohol, the new provision is that it will provide SLGA:

... authority to enter into agreements with any person authorizing the person to establish and operate a warehouse for the storage and distribution of beverage alcohol and to sell and deliver the beverage alcohol within Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there was a very particular example seized upon in terms of how we need to open up the legislation. But in that regulation, Mr. Speaker, in that subsection of the actual legislation, Mr. Speaker, that would seem to throw the door wide open. And maybe we'll get into a circumstance where, you know, the warehouse aspect of SLGA's operations is suddenly wide open for competition, and that will inevitably see yet another step down the road towards the end of SLGA. And again, Mr. Speaker, the service that it provides, the social oversight that it provides in terms of what is a controlled substance in our society, Mr. Speaker, it's, you know, good to remember from time to time.

And also, Mr. Speaker, of course the revenues that flow to the people of Saskatchewan and the jobs that you can pay a mortgage on instead of just, you know, scratch to get by. And then the bucks go to the owner on top.

Mr. Speaker, we'll be watching with great interest to see how this actually plays out in terms of the legislation. But past of course being prologued, Mr. Speaker, I don't like what this means for something that has been a very good source of revenue for the people of Saskatchewan, a good supply of decent mortgage-paying jobs, Mr. Speaker, and providing a socially controlled service for the people of Saskatchewan.

Also that this government can look back to that Sask Party commentator from early on, Mr. Speaker, and finally sell off a public asset like SLGA. And again sometimes it's a straight-ahead thing and it's, you know ... that's to be preferred, Mr. Speaker. But sometimes it's kind of this sideways, surreptitious approach that is taken. And I would submit that this has all the hallmarks of that kind of effort, Mr. Speaker.

So I know that other of my colleagues will have more to say on this debate, and I look forward to that, Mr. Speaker, because it'll certainly be more insightful and probably better stated as well. But with that, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 201.

[15:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 201. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 203

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 203 — *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Rancourt: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As always, it's wonderful to be able to put my remarks on the record with regards to adjourned debates, and today I'm going to talk a little bit about Bill No. 203, *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*.

When I was reviewing the minister's remarks, which I think is always important before you look at some of the changes — and it kind of describes why the changes to the legislation is going forward — it sounded a lot like the changes to this piece of legislation was with regards to regulating the financial planners and advisors within the province and ensuring that they have the credentials and education that's required to provide the services.

I believe this is something that financial planners and advisors have been asking in the province. There's been a lot of professional groups within the province that are seeing the benefits of being regulated. I'm a firm believer that professionals in the province, professional bodies, should be regulated. It's important to ensure that consumers have that protection, but it's also important to the professionals too to ensure that they could prove that they're being professionals and that they have the appropriate education when providing services. It protects the association.

And so that's one of the reasons why I continue to be a registered social worker. Even though I'm not working in the field, I feel that it's important that I continue to keep my regulations so that I can continue to say that I'm a social worker and to be able to say that across the province. And I think it's also important so that I can make sure that I'm adhering to the ethics and the standards of practice that social workers need to adhere to in the province.

So again bringing it back to financial planners and financial advisors, they've also indicated that that's something they would want, you know, is to ensure that there's a standard of practice and ethics within the profession that all individuals who indicate that they are using that title would have to adhere to.

So I believe that some of the changes here, when the minister was bringing forward this bill, indicated that regulating this ensures that these titles are recognized, and the significance of the knowledge and skills that these financial planners and advisors have. A lot of the changes that are being implemented in this piece of legislation is modelled after the Ontario's *Financial Professionals Title Protection Act*, and so I believe that a lot of the changes that they're implementing are looking to be quite similar to what Ontario has done.

There's not a whole lot of information with regards to what these changes will look like, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The minister indicated in his remarks that a lot of this will be set out in the regulations, which is sometimes a troubling aspect because oftentimes in committee they don't want to talk about what that'll look like in regulations. And so until you follow up after the bill

has been passed, that's where sometimes you see the devil in the details. So I'm sure the critic that's responsible for this bill will be asking a lot of questions within committee.

And one thing that when I met with financial planners and advisors, they indicated strongly that one of their biggest concerns was that the province wouldn't implement a fee for service for them. Because currently the way they get paid for their service is through the companies that they use to provide the financial services and not through the customer themselves. Which allows for people who come from marginalized backgrounds that may not have a whole lot of money but want to invest a little bit so that their kids or that they'll have a retirement in the end, they can meet up with a financial advisor and planner right now because it doesn't cost them anything to do that. And they set them up so that they will have a sustainable future.

And so I think that's very important. I didn't see any information here, but I think those will be questions that'll be discussed within the committee of ensuring that the government's not following through with having a fee for service. And again like I said, individuals we've met with, that's something that they've been really advocating against.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know I have colleagues that would also like to add their remarks with regards to the changes within this piece of legislation, and so I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 203.

Deputy Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 203, *The Financial Planners and Financial Advisors Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 204

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 204 — *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019/Loi modificative de 2019 sur le jury*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Bonjour, Mr. Speaker. I'll enter into the debate now on Bill No. 204, *An Act to amend The Jury Act, 1998*. And it's a very important, a very timely piece of legislation. And it'll be one that when we get into committee that we have some good discussion with the minister, particularly around the consultations. And obviously it's very, very timely here in Saskatchewan when we've had some . . . particularly a very high profile court case in North Battleford a year or two ago, the Colten Boushie case where it was highlighted, the issues around the jury selection. And I think that was one that caught everyone's attention thinking, how can we make sure we can do this better. And is it the best system that we have?

And so today before us we have the bill talking about amending *The Jury Act*. And so it will be of interest to find out if there is a

process that will make parties feel that they've been heard and this is a fair system. It's one that we take a lot of pride in our court system, and that, you know, they say justice is blind and it serves all fairly and equally. And it should, but we know systems sometimes build in processes that lock out others and lock in systemic racism, and we should do all we can to make sure that's not the case.

And so there are some quotes I want to talk about from December 3rd, 2019 in the Minister of Justice's second reading, and he says, "Mr. Speaker, these amendments will make the jury selection process more efficient and help make juries as representative as possible." So we want to know, what is the process? What is he talking about? How will we make sure that happens?

There has been questions raised in, you know, processes of using certain types of identification that may inadvertently give away where people live and then cause some racist attitudes. These are things that we'll be looking for more. And this is something that's very important that we don't have that situation. He goes on to say:

As part of this process, the Inspector of Court Offices will have the ability to determine the specific geographical area from which to summon jurors for a particular trial. Targeting specific areas will allow us to better take travel time for jurors into account. By making it easier for jurors to attend proceedings, we hope to improve jury participation and representation.

So we will look carefully about how they intend to do that.

And I know a few years ago — and this may be corrected now — but for example, we were approached about the use of our health cards. And First Nations people who live on First Nations land reserves have, I think, a letter that's attached to their number and that causes an instant identification that may lead to a racist approach. And so these kind of things are really, really important. And, you know, we want to make sure that we do the best we can.

When we had the situation with the Colten Boushie case, a tragic case that left many wondering about the effectiveness of our court system and whether justice was truly served, that in fact . . . You know, we can't have a situation where we feel that justice is not blind, and in fact, it looks and sees and it discriminates. That's not the justice system that we wish to have here in Saskatchewan, here in Canada.

There's been some changes that they talked about, but I won't get into that too much. What I really want to know, what we really want to know is how we're meeting that need to improve jury selection so it is fair, that it's equitable, and people feel and believe when they enter into the courtroom that justice will be served and that their families will be heard and that all will be on the level.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, it's a large bill. I mean it's very technical and of course it needs to be in this kind of thing. But we will have questions for this in committee. But at this time, I will conclude my remarks and adjourn debate on Bill No. 204. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 204, *The Jury Amendment Act, 2019*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:43.]

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