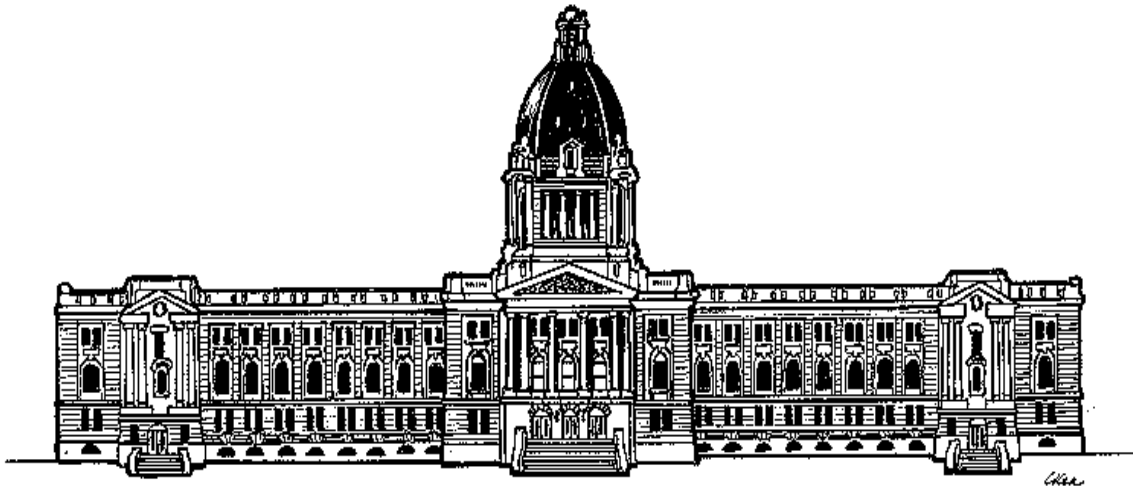




STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

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Mr. Wayne Elhard
Cypress Hills

Ms. Deb Higgins
Moose Jaw Wakamow

Hon. Laura Ross
Regina Qu'Appelle Valley

[The committee met at 15:12.]

The Chair: — Well good afternoon and welcome to the Committee for Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. I am the Chair. My name is Warren Michelson. Also included on the committee is Mr. Greg Brkich, Mr. Michael Chisholm, Mr. Wayne Elhard — sitting in for Mr. Elhard is Mr. Wyant — and Ms. Ross as well as Mr. Quennell and Ms. Higgins. We have several members in the Chamber this afternoon that will be questioning as we go into consideration of Bill No. 161.

Bill No. 161 — *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*

The Chair: — I'd like to welcome Minister Morgan. Minister Morgan, if you'd like to make an official introduction of your official, we'll go from there.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm joined today by Darcy McGovern, director, legislative services branch.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee will know that *The Local Government Election Act* is to be elected at this session and the election ... [inaudible] ... will be amended accordingly. This legislation will require voters to produce approved identification, such as government-issued photo ID [identification].

Mr. Speaker, this Bill will follow the municipal initiative to create similar ID requirements for voters at municipal, provincial, and federal elections in Saskatchewan. Voters are required to show approved ID to vote in federal elections and in provincial elections in British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. This is a standard that the recent federal election used without any particular difficulties that we are aware of.

It is appropriate that Saskatchewan move to meet this evolving national standard for improved voting integrity. Saskatchewan voters will now be required to show identification prior to voting. Those with approved government-issued photo ID who have been enumerated will only need to show that ID in order to get a ballot. Those who cannot meet this ID requirement will be required to show additional forms of identification or information or will be required to have another voter with such ID vouch for them. A person may vouch for only one other voter.

There has been some suggestion that this process will prevent some people from voting. That is not the intention and in our view will not be the result. Our intention is to ensure that elections in Saskatchewan comply with the existing, long-established identity and residency rules for voting. It is not good enough to trust an out-of-date process with something this fundamental to our democracy. To ensure that no one is inappropriately disenfranchised, we will be authorizing in the regulations a broad range of supplementary information that may be used to establish identity and address for a voter.

[15:15]

We will be starting with a review of the existing federal alternative voter ID list for such information and then consider adding any forms of Saskatchewan information that would be of

local assistance. The federal process provides a long list of approved information that a voter will be able to use to establish their identity and address that I read into the record during second reading. These changes are being made to update the ID process and to continue to ensure the integrity of the provincial electoral process.

Provincial voters in Saskatchewan deserve nothing less than a process that is demonstrably fair. This Bill would ensure that our process meets the standards set federally and in other provinces and now also at the municipal level in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Clause 1

The Chair: — Thank you, Minister Morgan. We will now open the floor for questions for Bill No. 161, *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*, clause 1, short title. Ms. Morin, I think you indicated you had some questions.

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Mr. Minister, for appearing before the committee today. I have with me this afternoon, as we are in committee, a constituent from the constituency of Regina Walsh Acres, and she's in the gallery. Her name is Dawn Wilson, and she has some concerns about this piece of legislation, Mr. Minister. And I want to read to you the letter that she sent to me as her MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly]:

Dear Ms. Morin,

I want to tell you about my experience voting in the recent federal election we had on May 2nd, 2011.

When I visited the poll, I took my voter card that was mailed to me and extra pieces of identification, including my fire arms licence and my bank card to prove my name. The poll clerk told me that this was not good enough. She insisted that I must have photo identification. I told her that I have the correct voter card mailed to me by Elections Canada and I could prove my name with my fire arms licence and bank card. The poll clerk continued to repeat that this was not good enough. My husband was even with me with his voter information. The poll clerk continued to insist this was not good enough. The whole situation was humiliating and embarrassing.

Now I am hearing that the provincial government and Mr. Brad Wall want to make everyone produce photo identification when voting. Photo identification is simply unnecessary and it places a huge burden on those who can't afford the photo identification. Governments should be focusing on helping people and delivering services we all need, not spend time making up more ways to prevent people from voting.

Fraud has been and will continue to be prevented without the photo identification requirement. These requirements have determined the 2007 election where the Sask Party won government. Now, suddenly, the requirements need to change? What examples of election fraud existed in 2007 that the new burdensome requirement of photo

identification is now so necessary? I would like to know.

I urge you, as my MLA, to do all you can to stand up for voters and speak against the unnecessary and unfair requirement of photo identification to vote.

Sincerely,

Dawn Wilson

So, Mr. Minister, as you can see, there are a number of concerns that are coming into our MLA offices about this particular piece of legislation and the accompanying piece of legislation with respect to changing the requirement in order to allow people to have their democratic right to vote.

So I'm going to start off with a question that Dawn Wilson actually posed in her letter, which is: what examples of election fraud existed in 2007 that the new burdensome requirement of photo identification is now so necessary?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — You know, we're not, we're not alleging specific examples of fraud. What we're trying to do is ensure the integrity of the voting process. This is a procedure that is now followed in British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec, and it's something that I think goes a long ways to preserve the integrity of the . . .

The Chair: — Order please. We'll have no crosstalking. We will let the minister answer. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I've been involved in elections in this province for a number of years and for a lot of elections, and I don't think I remember working in one where there wasn't allegations of irregularities or improprieties. I can't say that those allegations were correct or not, but I think what we would like to do is ensure that those allegations don't continue to exist and that we have a process that has as much . . . that we have as much confidence in the system as we can, that we take steps to ensure that everybody who is entitled to vote can vote, and also the converse, to make sure that those that are not entitled to vote don't vote or don't vote more than once.

Ms. Morin: — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, I mean as you know, there are always lots of rumours that pass around society regarding all sorts of various and sundry things. And as a colleague of mine just said, you can't kill an urban myth, Mr. Minister, especially if you're not willing to provide any concrete examples of what election fraud has taken place in 2007 that causes the Sask Party government to now think that they need to make these changes, which people in Saskatchewan do find burdensome in terms of the voting process.

So I guess I'll ask the question once more to see if Dawn can get the answer that she's requested. And the answer that Dawn has requested, quite frankly, is a question that has been posed to me by other constituents and by other people in the city of Regina and elsewhere, so it's not an uncommon question: what precipitated the changes that the Sask Party government so feels necessary with respect to changing the requirements for voting in the province of Saskatchewan? So what examples of election fraud can the minister provide this committee with as to why

these changes now need to take place?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — We have the allegations that exist in virtually every election that's there. And I can't say that all of the examples would be there. If they were provable examples, no doubt we would have, you know, steps would have been taken to do that. We know that the Wood River election in 1999 was controverted, and we know that there's controvert applications made fairly regularly throughout our electoral history in our province.

So what we've done is we've taken this as a step forward to try and eliminate the potential for that and to try and bring our legislation in line with that used by the Government of Canada and also with the three most populous provinces to try and ensure the integrity of the system. And I think it's just plain good practice and good common sense to do it.

I also, you know, make the comment that it's done at the NDP [New Democratic Party] at the constituency level. I'm not sure how many of them, and I've certainly seen . . . It's clause no. 7 in the ones that I've seen. And I think if it's advisable there, it's probably advisable everywhere. And I don't say that, you know, out of smugness. I think it's just practical and it's common sense.

With regard to your constituent that's here today, I, myself, had a similar experience when I went to vote in the federal election. My wife and I went to vote. Unbeknownst to me, I had lost the written portion or the written half of my photo driver's licence, so I had my photo driver's licence. I had a number of credit cards. I had my health card, but I had nothing on it that contained an address. The requirements will be that you have to do two things: one, prove your identity, and secondly prove your address within the constituency. Well I had nothing that was there, and after having waited in line for a half an hour — it was a slow process — I had nothing with me that had done that. My wife, however, had already voted, and the electoral clerk said, well perhaps this person could vouch for you and use the vouching system. My wife looked at me and, yes, she said, I've never seen that man before in my life. Fortunately she did decide that we had been married for a long time and decided that she was willing to vouch for me, and we had some humour.

However that is the process that people will have to go through if they don't have photo ID or don't have something that's readily there. To be perfectly candid with you, Ms. Morin, the process will be an additional burden and an additional requirement will be there. People will have to plan what they intend to do on voting day, and my recommendation to them is plan well in advance.

Most people will be able to go to SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] and get a photo ID that has an address on it. The person you'd indicated had gone there with a firearms certificate. And I've got Mr. D'Autremont's firearms certificate and it, you know . . .

A Member: — Is he dangerous?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I'm not questioning whether he feels dangerous or not. But in any event, it has no address on it. So the requirement will be that people will have to bring something

that identifies who they are — and if it's a photo ID, great, makes it that much easier — and a piece that will also have the address to show that they are entitled to vote in that constituency. As you're aware, Health services card has no address on it. A passport has no address on it. A credit card has no address on it. So you'll have to bring something by way of either a utility bill or something that does . . . your lease agreement or something else that shows that that's where you reside.

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Minister, I'm absolutely flabbergasted sitting here listening to the fact that you have had to take the amount of time that you've had to take to explain how people are going to have to prepare well in advance for this new voting process. And yet somehow in your opening remarks, you state, "It is not the intention to prevent someone from voting." It is absolutely unbelievable that one would even think that that is not going to be something that is going to prevent some people from voting because that's exactly what it's going to do.

Your example, Mr. Minister, about your own experience in terms of the voting process in the federal election is a prime example because I can tell you, Mr. Minister, when Dawn had this situation happen to her, she found the experience — I'll repeat again — humiliating and embarrassing because there was a serious lineup of people. You said yourself that you had to wait a half an hour in line till you even got to the process where you were voting, where surely to goodness there's probably another, you know, lineup of people that were going to be waiting another half hour to 45 minutes watching you having to do your vouching with your wife, which takes an extra period of time. So you'd better believe that this is going to be something that is going to cause people to say, I'm simply going to walk away; I'm not going to go through more humiliation. And not proceed with their democratic right, which is their right to vote.

Now the other thing that I'm sure Dawn is curious about is that the minister, Mr. Minister, is not willing to provide any concrete examples of what voting fraud there is. It's simply again anecdotal comments about allegations existing. Of course there's controverted situations in previous elections. It has to do with voting counts and things like that, just like there was recently another NDP seat federally that was, which . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Mr. Minister, it's my turn to speak on the floor, and it's not fair for you to simply interrupt when I have the floor. I have given you the floor to allow you to answer the question, now it's my turn to be able to be able to pose the question.

The Chair: — Order. Will the committee come to order? Ms. Morin, you can complete your question.

[Interjections]

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. So, Mr. Minister, as I was saying, there was just recently a situation in Quebec where another NDP seat was accounted for in the federal election because . . .

The Chair: — Order. Order. Ms. Atkinson, I would like you to apologize for the comment you just made. There was something derogatory toward the Chair. Now either you apologize . . .

Ms. Atkinson: — With all due respect to the Chair, Mr. Chair, I said usually the Chair would stop the minister and let the person asking the question continue. And I said, quite the Chair. You're asking me to apologize for saying, quite the Chair?

The Chair: — Yes I am.

Ms. Atkinson: — Well obviously you're quite fragile, Mr. Speaker, or Mr. Chair, and I will apologize.

The Chair: — Apologize? Thank you. Ms. Morin, if you would like to continue with your question.

Ms. Morin: — Most certainly, thank you very much, Mr. Chair. So as I was saying, there was just recently another seat awarded to the federal NDPs in Quebec because of a recount situation. Those things definitely occur in every election. But, Mr. Minister, without providing any tangible examples of why it is that voting, the voting system in Saskatchewan has to become more strict and therefore more encumbering and therefore have more people become disenfranchised with the experience of voting, it is absolutely unconscionable that the Sask Party government can go forward with these changes with respect to the voting experience in Saskatchewan and still say in the opening remarks of the minister that it is "not the intention to prevent some from voting." The two don't mesh, Mr. Minister.

So, Mr. Minister, I'm asking this question: how is it that the Sask Party government feels that it wants to simply plough forward with these changes despite the fact that these types of changes are before the courts in BC [British Columbia] as we speak? Why would the minister not want to see how that plays out in the court system in BC when it is currently being challenged in another province?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I don't think that we need to wait for a conviction. There's a difference between a controverted election and a recount. A recount is where there's an issue with the number of ballots that were counted and the process that was there. A controvert is when people vote that shouldn't vote or there's other types of irregularity. We don't intend to wait for . . . [inaudible] . . . We want to do our best to maintain best practices with regard to our electoral process. This was done with the three largest, most populous provinces.

And we watched with some significant interest what took place during the federal election, and it was clear during the federal election that the system worked reasonably well. There's no doubt this adds another layer of process to the election, and if that is the price that we pay for a system that has greater integrity, we would certainly support that as I think all members would want to ensure that the system has the maximum amount of integrity.

[15:30]

So our intention is to go ahead with this. We think it's worthwhile. We would certainly welcome input from the members on both sides of the House as to the various types of ID to try and make the system as streamlined and to ensure that those that are able to vote are able to access ID that is either readily at hand or that's there so that people don't end up at the

voting station without having their ID there.

And to use once again my own example, had I checked my ID before I left the house, it would have been easy to have found something else, either a utility bill or looked through my drawer to find the photo ID or the address portion that's there. So my advice to people from my own experience, and clearly from your constituent as well, would be look for something else, or look for something before you go to ensure that you've got the proper ID that's there. And then the system works and worked in the federal election, I think relatively well. I don't think there was a great hue and cry from people that either found difficulty voting or that were turned away at the polls. People did have to go through the process that was laid out, and our process will be a similar one. However we would intend to look at whatever local requirements might be necessary to ensure that people in our province have things that are unique to them.

The Chair: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Wilson: — For leave to introduce guests.

The Chair: — The member from Saskatchewan Rivers has asked leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Leave is granted. The member may introduce her guests.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Ms. Wilson: — I would like to introduce the École Vickers School choir from Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. There's 40 grade 4 to 8 students, and they're accompanied by Mr. Perry Acorn, Mr. Marc Holt, Mr. Justin La. And the chaperones are Mrs. Wendy Skotheim, Mrs. Dorothy Begrand, Mr. Don Cheeseman, Mr. Greg Walker, Mrs. Staci Huston, Mrs. June Schutte, Mrs. Lori Langlois, and Mr. Trevor Klassen. So I would like everyone to give them a warm welcome to their Assembly. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Well welcome. You are sitting in on committee hearings for the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice, and we're just going through one of the Bills, Bill No. 161. So hope you enjoy the proceedings. Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Furber: — With leave to introduce guests.

The Chair: — The member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Leave is granted.

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. It's indeed my honour as the member for Prince Albert Northcote to introduce guests here today. It's a rare occasion when a school comes all the way down from Prince Albert to attend the

Assembly, so I'm certainly pleased that you're here today. And I want to apologize for the rather large footprints that I leave on your playground when I play touch football there in the fall because I'm sure that I am much heavier than about three of you combined. But I want to thank you for the opportunity to use your playground on occasion.

Certainly today we're meeting to discuss a very important Bill to Saskatchewan people. It's the ability to have voter ID or to vote with certain principles that were in existence before. So it's something that's very important to all Saskatchewan people, so I'm glad you're here to witness it. And I want all members to join with me in welcoming this tremendous group of students and their teachers and chaperones from Prince Albert.

The Chair: — The Chair recognizes Ms. Morin.

Bill No. 161 — *The Election Amendment Act, 2010* (continued)

Clause 1

Ms. Morin: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, and welcome to the students and teachers and chaperones to this committee hearing.

Mr. Minister, we were just discussing the issue of the inconvenience that the new regulations . . . legislation, I should say, is going to place on the voting process in Saskatchewan, and the minister has not yet established any concrete examples of why those changes need to take place. And, Mr. Minister, you were talking about your own example. So we can see from your situation that not even you heeded your own advice with respect to planning well in advance.

And, Mr. Minister, you actually sit in this Chamber on a daily basis and know about all the nuances of the requirements. So for those voters all across Saskatchewan who don't sit in the Chamber on a daily basis or decide not to tune in on a daily basis or are not, you know, glued to the media sources that might provide information on these changes, Mr. Minister, one can understand how they will definitely not be prepared well in advance, just as the minister himself wasn't, with respect to the changes that the Sask Party government is putting forward with respect to these Bills.

So another one of those issues that the minister talked about is his wife was able to vouch for him in the situation because the minister didn't have proper ID to be able to vote in a federal election.

Well this presents an interesting scenario, Mr. Minister, because your proposed changes under Bill 161 stipulate that a person can only vouch once for another person. So for instance if someone is bringing, say, five individuals from a care home or from a group home, how do those five individuals then get vouched for when they're being transported there by one particular worker from that particular care home or group home? How does that process then happen in terms of the vouching process? Does each one of them have to be accompanied by a different individual? Is that what the minister considers to be less cumbersome?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I take some exception with the idea that there hasn't been issues in the past. We have a history where, you know, the courts have chosen to controvert elections. So the premise of the question that there hasn't been examples, I can't accept that. But I think that may be a debate for another time.

In the federal election, in spite of the fact that there was another layer of requirements put on, the voter turnout in that election went up.

I use myself as an example because I think it's probably beneficial for people to know that it's worthwhile for them to check their ID before they go out and not to make an assumption either that you have ID with you or that the situation will resolve itself when you get there. But I think my own example is an example of how the vouching system does work and how there are other methods of dealing with it. You know, people ought not rely exclusively on the vouching system. They should also look at their own ID. If they look at their own ID, they may be able to be somebody that would vouch for somebody else.

There is a requirement to comply. I think as citizens we have a duty and an obligation, if not enshrined in statute, but a duty to become informed and to understand about the electoral process, to understand about the issues and the candidates that are running. We also have got a strong obligation on us to actually go out and cast our ballot. And I think that as part of that obligation that you participate as a citizen, that this is not a terribly onerous requirement to prove the identity and residence of yourself as an elector. I think people aren't terribly troubled by doing that.

In the federal election, I watched carefully as to what took place in our province and what took place in other provinces as to the issues that were there. And I was surprised at how little there was. There's no doubt the lineups moved slower. So you know, the best advice I would give somebody is take your enumeration card, take your other ID with you, and then you will make it a simpler process for everybody that's there. I would certainly welcome, and not necessarily today, but would welcome any comments that members of the Assembly would have with regard to the process that might be used or how we might ensure that people . . . that we've listed all of the types of ID that we would want to have.

You make some reference to this, you know, the right to vote. And it certainly very much is a right to vote. And a right to vote is not an automatic right to an anonymous vote. You could very well be challenged by a scrutineer or by an electoral officer under the existing system or the previous system and at that point have to produce ID or swear an affidavit or go through a different process. So I think by having this in place for every voter is probably a better system in that nobody is singled out as saying, you don't fit, you don't have the . . . you don't look right or you're not, you're not somebody that appears to belong at the polling station. So I think by requiring this of all voters, we've asked for something that most people should have a relatively high degree of comfort with.

You can't do very much of anything in our society any more without identifying yourself. You go to a doctor's office; you

have to produce identification. You open a new . . . change pharmacy; you have to produce identification when you go there. You want to speak to your bank manager about your accounts; you have to identify yourself there. You need a driver's licence, your driver's licence renewal. Even if you do something as simple as wanting to change your phone system from one address to another, you have to give some identity to the phone company so you're able to convince them who you are, so that you're entitled to move.

We've moved in the last few years to a higher degree of privacy so that the lists that were once there through city directories and a variety of other things that once existed, it was information was regarded as commonly or readily available, those type of things don't exist any more. And now people's identification is something that is more personal, more private to them, so the expectation would be is that they would go to the polling station, show that identification, plan their trip to the polling station.

We have for, in the case of seniors, had SGI waive the cost of the \$10 fee for producing photo ID. So we've gone a long ways to try and make it as easy or as pain-free as we possibly can, but we're certainly being candid on it.

There is an additional layer that is there that was not there before, and we think that most voters will accept it. This is the price that we pay to have a voting system where we have a high degree of integrity and that people are able to take a comfort in knowing that the system has a high degree of integrity. So I think rather than debate various issues in the past where elections have been controverted or debate the various allegations that are there, we've made the decision to do that, and it's a sound decision. It's a decision made by the Government of Canada, the province of Alberta, the province of British Columbia, provinces of Ontario, and the provinces of Quebec. And in those provinces, it seems to be going fairly well. Now I'm not aware of court challenges that exist in any of those provinces. There may be some, but it appears to be that we're moving towards a system where voters are able to identify themselves. We want to develop a system that works well and makes it so that people can vote. So we will do that and certainly want to welcome it.

And quite frankly, if it's good enough for the NDP at a constituency level, we think it's probably not a bad thing to adopt. I don't usually like to adopt a lot of things from the NDP, but it's one of the things where I say kudos to the NDP for having done that at a constituency level. And to the extent that we borrowed it from them, we're doing it.

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Minister, you want to start playing partisan politics in this committee, believe me, I can bring it as much as you can. So, Mr. Chair . . . I will speak to the Chair. I understand.

The Chair: — I would ask you to direct through the Chair. And let's ask the questions.

Ms. Morin: — So, Mr. Chair, if Mr. Minister wants to bring partisan politics to this committee, I'd be more than happy to.

Because I can produce the constitutions from over 50

constituencies in this province, if not more, that don't require photo ID. So for the minister to pull that spin on this situation in this committee is reprehensible. And let me state that strongly enough. It's absolutely reprehensible that this minister decides to put that spin on this important piece of legislation that we're discussing in this committee today.

[15:45]

And if the minister wants to know what the NDP opposition would do in terms of providing suggestions on this Bill, I can tell you, Mr. Minister, it's simply this. We would demand that the Bill be pulled because we don't agree with the changes in this Bill. And we will not be giving you any suggestions as to what should be changed in this Bill because we don't agree with the Bill, period, Mr. Minister.

Now, Mr. Minister, unfortunately despite the fact that the minister went on at great length describing God-knows-what and what else, he did not answer the question that I posed, so I'm going to repose the question again. I would like to know, and many others would like to know, how exactly people, representatives, sorry, I should say, from a care home or group home who is accompanying, say, five individuals from that care home or group home and is only allowed to vouch for one of those individuals, what are those people supposed to do?

I would like the minister to actually answer the question, and I would like those people to be informed as to what the minister expects those individuals to do. Are they each supposed to bring somebody with them, or how does this situation work when their care home worker or their group home worker brings those five individuals to a polling station?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I thank the member for the question. The simple answer to the question is, you are entitled to vote for one person. The expectation would be that you would not come and arrive with an expectation that you would be entitled to vouch for five or ten or more people. You would vouch for one person. So if you come with a group of people from a care home or a carload of people, you would have to have . . . Half of them would have to comply with your name if they wanted to use the voucher system. Or alternatively the better choice would be for those people to bring and comply with the other sections, which would be one piece of photo ID or a piece of identification, you know, by way of their utility bill, their statement for their care home, or the other methods that would be enumerated in the regulation. But the simple answer is that you cannot vouch, you will not be able to vouch for more than one person. So those people will have to have one of the other methods of identifying themselves.

Ms. Morin: — Ms. Atkinson would like to ask a follow-up question to the question I just asked.

The Chair: — The Chair recognizes Ms. Atkinson.

Ms. Atkinson: — If you are living under the mental health Act in a group home, and if there is, you know, five, six, seven people, you might have two or three staff that are . . . And I have several of these in my constituency. You might have two or three staff that provide care for people living in the group home. Because of the medication that you are receiving, you

don't necessarily, you're not necessarily eligible to have a driver's licence. You don't have the bills sent to you because all of this is looked after by the group home, the utilities aren't in your name, and so on and so forth. I guess my question is: when the enumerator goes to the door, finds out how many people are living in the home, and you get your voter card, why isn't that good enough?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — We would expect to have something else to support the ID, the voter card, so that the voter card doesn't . . . that you know that the right person is there with the right voter card. The purpose of the process is that there would be two things that the voter is required to prove. One would be who they are and the second would be where they live. So the requirement, in addition to the enumeration card, would be something that would prove where the person is.

I'm aware of the issue that you raise with regard to driver's . . . [inaudible] . . . Those people may not be entitled to a driver's licence for their medical reasons, but they would be entitled to an SGI voter's card or SGI identification which is available at any of the SGI locations. So if those people are able to go to that location, that would be sufficient because they would have the card that would have the photo and would in fact have their address on it as well.

If there are other situations where it would be difficult or impossible, you know, we would look to the opposition to raise some of those with us. We're doing as extensive a canvass as we can to determine what situations might arise so we're able to craft the regulations so that the individuals that might be in a care home or elsewhere would have the opportunity to exercise their franchise.

Ms. Atkinson: — If I could, Mr. Chair. My driver's licence photo ID was issued on September 30th of 2010. It expires on September 30th, 2015. It is me on this driver's licence photo ID, but my address isn't on it. So if, you know, there may be people that have this. It doesn't expire until 2015. The election is this fall. I come to the polling station, I have my photo ID, I have my voter card, I have my health card, but I have nothing that says I live at 835 Main Street other than — I'm talking about someone who's in a group home — other than I have the caregiver who can vouch that I live there. This is me. I have my voter card. The caregiver, who receives an income through the province, can vouch for me, but I can't vote. I don't understand that.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — The card that you have is not the newest style of card. The next-generation card beyond that, even though yours has not yet expired, the next-generation card does have an address on it. And there was some discussion when we worked with SGI as to whether they could do those cards in time for the entire province, and they can't before the next election. So we will have to have, in addition to the type of, the old style of card that you have, one additional piece that would indicate . . . [inaudible] . . . There hasn't been a determination made whether that card plus the enumeration card would be adequate. And there's probably a compelling argument to be made when they do the regulation that the photo ID that you have, plus the enumeration card, should likely be sufficient because if the enumerator was there . . . So I think that's a discussion we would want to have with the Chief Electoral

Officer when we put together the regulations.

Ms. Atkinson: — If I could just follow up. So the minister has answered the question. There will be many citizens that will be . . . With these cards, they'll think this is good enough. They turn up at the polling station with their voter card. And I think most people who turn up with a voter card are the person that they say they are. And if they can produce something in their wallet that says that they are who they are, I think, Minister, that should be good enough.

The other point is this: if it's not good enough — and we don't know what your regulations are going to look like because the regulations don't come before this Assembly; they come before the cabinet — but if they're not good enough, I mean this really does limit a person's fundamental right to vote. That's point number one.

Point number two, there are people that . . . There are many people living in a home because of the housing situation, and not everybody has the bill in their name. You may have seven people living in a home and you have one person that can vouch for one of them and five people won't be able to vote even though they all show up with their voter card. The enumerator's been there. And I really think that there are some problems with this that are much more serious, much more serious than some of the issues that you've identified.

There are literally going to be many, many people that won't be able to vote. And I think as a citizen, you should have the right to vote. And if I have a voter card, I should have the right to vote.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I certainly agree that that is the goal of the process, is to ensure that you're able to vote.

During the federal election, we didn't hear from people at the end of it that said, I tried to vote and couldn't. You know, the people that arrived, you know, were virtually minimal and may more likely have been subject to a poll clerk that didn't advise them that those people should have used the vouching system or should have used something else. So there may be some things. But for the most part, that system worked remarkably well.

So anyway your point is taken on using the enumeration card, and it's something that we can have the discussion with the Chief Electoral Officer as to the process that they do with the enumeration cards. If those are done in person at the location, you know, it's a reasonable argument to assume that those should be accepted in addition to one other piece that's there. You know, people do receive other mail at their residence other than utility bills, and so your colleague has indicated that she chooses not to participate in the process of giving us assistance on regulations. I'm disappointed in that and would want to encourage members from all sides of the House to identify the situations that may exist so that we're able to try and craft the regulations in the broadest possible manner so that we ensure both the integrity of the system and also at the same time that we give people a reasonable opportunity to vote without imposing conditions that are onerous or that would disenfranchise them to vote.

You know, the goal of it is of course to ensure that people are

able to vote. So we would want to look at the regulations. As I said before, the two parts: one, who you are, and secondly where you live. So if you have a piece of identification that does not have an address on it, then we have to look at the other pieces or the supplementary pieces that would indicate where you would reside. And we've listed a large number of pieces of correspondence by way of utility bills that would . . . [inaudible] . . . a rental contract would indicate that, a credit card bill that's going to that address, and a variety of other things. And you know, the list was a lengthy list that was used during the federal list, and I think the list that would be used by this government would be longer still because of the unique situations that may exist within our province.

I will give you another example that we would intend to include with it. It's people that live in rural Saskatchewan with a box number. If you live in a box number that is for a post office that is at a community that has residents nearby that could live in two different constituencies, the situation would be . . . Rather than say you live at Box 50, Beechy, Saskatchewan, we would say to that voter, okay you've got your photo ID. You've got a piece that says Box 50. We would accept that. Even though it's not clear which constituency, we would accept the declaration that's there. It would be highly unlikely that there would be voter fraud that would actually go towards getting a piece of photo ID plus a mailbox that could be used in two . . . that a person would actually go to the trouble or be inclined to do. We've certainly know the identity of the individual. They showed up on the other one. We would have a situation where we'd be able to prosecute if the person was inclined to do that. We don't expect that they would.

The goal simply is, is to try and have enough broad situations that we would encompass in the regulations so that people that were entitled to vote would have fairly ready access to do that. And as I said earlier, the issue that people need to go through, that need to identify, is that they have to plan their trip to the poll, and that may be a week or two before. We now know when the date is set, and those people will have to go back, you know, and decide, okay, do I have something that's got a photo on it? Do I have something that's got an address on it? And those people will have to work through those situations as best they can before that. Failing that, then they have to take somebody with them that would be entitled to vouch for them. So we've tried to cover as many of the situations as we can.

In the federal election it worked, and with regrets to the constituents that's in the gallery today, most people that were entitled to vote did. Voter turnout in fact went up in the federal election. So we're thinking that this is working fairly well, and we're going to continue to do our best as we work through the summer months and try and establish what would be appropriate for regulations.

I hope the statement made by the member from Regina Walsh Acres is her own opinion. If she chooses not to do anything, that's certainly her privilege not to. But I know that as MLAs — there are 58 of us around the province — we all hear from constituents on a regular basis. So as those constituents come forward and say this is my situation, I'd urge those people to forward that to the Chief Electoral Officer so that we're able to craft things that are appropriate, fair, and maintain the integrity of our system.

[16:00]

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Ms. Morin, you want to continue?

Ms. Morin: — Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister, it's still very interesting that one has not yet given Ms. Wilson an adequate response to what she's done. For the minister to sit there and say that he's not heard any concerns is absolutely false. I know that I've heard them in my constituency office and so have my other colleagues.

Now Ms. Wilson is unique because Ms. Wilson has taken the time to not only write a letter to her MLA, which we know that every written letter accounts for a certain number of voices. We know that because not everyone is going to take the time to put pen to paper, they're simply saying to themselves, to heck with this, I'm just not going to vote again. That's what others are saying. Now Ms. Wilson has taken the time to put pen to paper and send her MLA a letter.

Above and beyond that, Ms. Wilson is so upset about the proposed changes that the Sask Party government wants to put forward with respect to the voting process that she has taken the time out of her day to come to the legislature, to sit in the Chamber and actually listen to this debate in person. And I have to tell you, Mr. Minister, that again counts for X number . . . a significant number, I should say, of opinions of people of Saskatchewan across the province.

So I commend Ms. Wilson for not only having written a letter but going above and beyond and actually coming to the Chamber, to legislature, to express her concern about the proposed Bill that is not yet passed and that the Sask Party government has the ability to simply pull and do its homework on in a much better fashion as to how this is actually going to affect the voters across the province.

Now, Mr. Minister, when the minister talks about other alternatives for identification, Ms. Wilson makes a good point in her letter. And she states that she took with her the card that was sent to her in terms of her voter registration, which had her name on it, which had her address on it. And I possess here the firearms licence from my dear colleague, the member for Moose Jaw Wakamow, which has a lovely picture on. So not only did Ms. Wilson have photo ID because she had her firearms licence with her, she also had a piece of evidence that she lived at that residence because there was a voter registration card that came to her in her name at that residence. And yet that was not good enough for her to use to vote. So, Mr. Minister, one can see that there are already some inherent problems with the changes that are being proposed by the Sask Party to the voting process that's going forward.

Now the minister says that people can simply go to SGI and get a photo ID and that the cost is waived for senior citizens. Well what about the cost being waived for those that live in homeless shelters? Or what about the cost being waived for those that really, truly don't have the financial means to afford it? But the bigger question yet, Mr. Minister, is what about the people that don't have the ability, mobility-wise, to make all those trips in terms of going and getting their photo ID? What is the government going to do about bringing those photo ID

machines — whatever it is, the cameras and such — to homeless shelters and seniors homes, etc.? And will the government look at considering the cost, waiving the cost of photo ID for anyone who declares that they cannot afford the cost of photo ID?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you. I don't want to minimize the plight of Ms. Wilson. It was a federal election dealt by federal officials, but we, as a province, we treat that as a learning experience. We've looked at it very carefully. I don't know whether hers was a situation where things were not adequately explained by a poll clerk or a poll clerk situation. And that's one of the reasons why we might want to look at whether we would include the enumeration card in addition to one other piece. The argument that's advanced for including the enumeration card is a compelling argument, and we'd certainly welcome the comments of all the members with regard to that.

The Department of Social Services is in fact looking at whether they should provide the fee to be paid to SGI for low-income people so that they would not be deprived of the ability to get a card simply because of the fact that there's a cost. So you know, it's something that bears consideration.

We also have SGI officials and some of the licensing agents are doing some trips through the Far North on a mobile or a temporary basis, where they're able to go out as a . . . [inaudible] . . . team and try and go into communities and provide the photo ID. That's there partly for SGI's own reasons for ensuring that the drivers get photo ID but also for this reason as well. So I think the government wants to ensure that people have access to photo ID. Clearly having photo ID is the best method of clearly identifying who the individuals are.

There's a large list of things that would be acceptable as identification. By way of the identification, some of the ones that we've listed would be a driver's licence — and I accept the fact that it does not have an address but nor does a health card — a Canadian passport, a certificate of Canadian citizenship, a birth certificate, a certificate of Indian status, a social insurance card, an old age security card, a student ID card, a provincial/territorial identification card, a liquor identification card, a hospital/medical clinic card, a credit/debit card, an employee card, a public transportation card, a library card, a Canadian Forces identity card, a Veterans Affairs Canada health card, a Canadian Blood Services card, a CNIB [Canadian National Institute for the Blind] ID card, and as you're aware, a firearm possession and acquisition card, fishing, hunting, or trapping licence, an outdoor wildlife card or certificate, or even a hospital bracelet that would be worn by residents at long-term facilities or at a hospital. So there's a large number of them that would be on the identity side. So if there are others that should be added, we certainly would welcome the comments from the members in the Assembly as to what other things should be there.

But the idea, as I indicated before, is that we very much want to have a list that's broad enough and inclusive enough that we are able to adequately entitle everyone that should vote the ability to vote and at the same time maintain the integrity of the system so that people cannot simply go out and vote at three, four, five or more polling stations by merely presenting themselves and saying, I am so-and-so. So by having a reasonable ID

requirement, we maintain the system that's there. We eliminate the possibility or vastly reduce the possibility of voter fraud.

This is somewhat similar to our system with Canada Revenue Agency. We are all required to pay income tax. It's largely a voluntary system. But at the same time, there's a right to audit, and we have a system of checks and balances so that the rights . . . And we ensure that people pay what they're obliged to pay for. And this is a similar kind of situation from a philosophical approach.

We would approach this with the idea that we expect people to have reasonable identification. And if it's reasonable identification, we don't need to look any further than saying, yes, you have a photo ID by way of a library card, or you have this or that that indicates who you are, and that you've got some supplemental piece to indicate that you live in the constituency and better yet which polling station or which poll you would vote at. So we encourage people to look at the options that are available to them. Most people will have the information in their wallet or purse. And in the event that they don't, they should check for things prior to going to the polling station, better yet to look at it a few days, weeks in advance to try to ensure that it is and watch the list that comes out because they'll certainly be advertising well in advance.

The Chief Electoral Officer has made suggestions as to some of the things that were there, and I'm sure that Mr. Wilkie has looked at the things that took place in the federal election by way of which ID that they had required. And it appears that, you know, he has suggestions as well. We will listen to those and try and be as inclusive as we possibly can with the process.

Ms. Morin: — Well the most inclusive process, Mr. Minister, is to ensure that there aren't any further encumbrances upon people in terms of wanting to express their opinion and their right to vote.

But, Mr. Minister, I find something else quite interesting. So the Sask Party government is wanting to plough through with these changes now regardless of whether there's a court challenge in BC with respect to similar changes that took place there. And I'm quite shocked actually to hear that the minister, being the Minister of Justice, isn't aware of any other court challenges in other provinces across Canada. That surprises me, but you know, I guess the minister can make that inquiry as to what's going in BC after this committee finishes sitting this evening and can get that information.

I noticed something else though, Mr. Minister, and that is that the Saskatchewan health services cards that have been renewed a number of times, the last time being a sticker that was sent around to everyone that says, renewed to December 31st, 2011, and it's my understanding that these Health services cards are going to be replaced at that time and there won't be many more stickers that come out, shall we say.

So what's interesting about that is that the minister talks about, you know, the machinations that people have to go through in preparing for . . . [inaudible] . . . a vote, Mr. Minister. And yet something as simple as a new health services card that could include an address on them — because there's new cards that are going to be fabricated, and these cards would be cost-free to

all individuals in Saskatchewan and would be mailed to their addresses, Mr. Minister — seems to me to be a very simple, easy, and non-discriminatory solution to the concerns that the Sask Party government has about potential voter fraud, which the minister has not yet established in this committee by way of concrete example.

So why is it, Mr. Minister, that the Sask Party government wouldn't go the simplest, easiest, and fairest route and just issue new health services cards to every individual in Saskatchewan who has the ability to own a health services card, and simply put an address on the health services cards?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you for the question. I am aware that there was a challenge in BC. It went to . . . and I'm not aware whether it's still before the courts or not. The last that I was aware, the BC Court of Appeal had upheld the requirement in British Columbia, and if there's a further appeal to the Supreme Court, I'm not aware of the status of that. If there is another challenge, I'm not aware of it. So the last I'd heard was that there was no outstanding challenges, but as with anything, you may be correct or the situation may change.

With regard to including this on the health card, the Privacy Commissioner has long taken the position that the health card ought not be used for anything else, used for getting a hunting licence or something else, that the purpose of the health card is only for provision of Health Services. So there would be an issue with the Privacy Commissioner to use it by way of, as some kind of a greater or an expanded role in that, by way of saying we want now to use this for voter ID, and for that reason we will include an address on it.

For the same reason that they no longer show an expiry date on the card, they do not wish to put an address on the card. If somebody moves or the card becomes out of date, they don't want the cards to become void. So they do not include, they will not be including an expiry date, and they don't include an address on it so that if you move, your card is still good. So for that reason a health card is not an adequate or an appropriate piece of identification to show an address.

A driver's licence has an address component because there are things that are required to be sent to people that hold that hold a driver's licence by way of annual renewals — and they're going to be longer — but you need to have something that shows a current address. And you have an obligation to show a current address so that if you get a number of convictions or your licence is suspended for whatever reason it might be suspended, that they have an adequate or an updated address for you. Those same situations don't exist with health cards.

So you know, it certainly would be the intention that we would take the health card as one of the primary sources to identify who the person is, but they would not be an appropriate tool to use for the address unless there was a change in the position taken by both the Privacy Commissioner or the Ministry of Health. The photo ID issued by SGI is available to everybody in the province and is probably the best method. Having said that, if somebody wishes to come and present themselves with a health card and another piece of ID to show an address, it would certainly be accepted. In the event that a decision is made to accept the enumeration card, then the health card and the

enumeration card would in that situation be successful.

[16:15]

Ms. Morin: — Thank you. One last follow-up question. Given that the minister himself has said that he was driving the streets of Saskatchewan without his valid driver's licence in his pocket, which is a requirement of all of us to have when we are operating a motor vehicle, the minister may also not be aware of the fact that the new driver's licences, one can renew them for five years. So the notion that it's something that's done on an annual basis is in fact not the case any more. I've renewed mine for five years, hoping that I would be able to maintain a licence for the next five years, and took the cheaper option of doing so.

So again there are some things that the minister is describing in this committee that aren't 100 per cent accurate in terms of the information that's being provided. So I would suggest that there is very careful research done with the ID requirements going forward. I'm certainly disappointed on behalf of myself, the other constituents, and Ms. Wilson who is present today. I don't think that this has provided her with many assurances that she won't, or any other individuals won't suffer the same, as she put it, humiliation and embarrassment when they go to cast their ballot in the provincial election if the Sask Party government decides to push forward with Bill 161.

But I am going to close up my . . . I mean stop my questions at this point and allow my colleague Mr. Forbes to pose some questions. Thank you very much.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Morin. Mr. Forbes, do you have some questions?

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you. I have two specific questions. One is around section 72(3) that talks about:

(3) The poll clerk shall note the following in the poll book:

(a) if a voter who is required to do so fails to provide the satisfactory evidence of the voter's identity and ordinary residence required pursuant to section 72.1.

Is that a new category? And will we be able to tell in the electoral results how many people were turned away from the voting because they did not provide appropriate identity and ordinary residence required?

Mr. McGovern: — Darcy McGovern. 72(3) as the member has noted states that:

(3) The poll clerk shall note the following in the poll book:

(a) if a voter who is required to do so fails to provide the satisfactory evidence of the voter's identity and ordinary residence required pursuant to section 72.1; [or]

(b) if a voter who is required to do so refuses to make a . . . declaration.

So that will be in the poll book, which is part of the disclosure as the member notes.

Mr. Forbes: — So will it be counted as a spoiled ballot? Or will it be counted as . . . Will there be a heading so we can see what the analysis of what is actually going to be the results of this Bill?

Mr. McGovern: — Thank you. And that is the intention, and that's something that we'll be pursuing with the Chief Electoral Officer, the Acting Chief Electoral Officer, that that be shown as a category in and of itself.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you. The other . . . and this is back to 71, point 1 and 2, and the minister's made several comments about following the federal experience in this past election. And after the election, I was approached by some of the folks from the Westside Clinic who were able to help with establishing identity. And from what I understand, it was up to about 50 of their clients who were able . . . that they knew quite well, but were homeless and needed help to establish their identity and were able to do that. And I'm not sure what sections they were able to do that under, but I was asked to raise this, as it was very helpful because they were worried about the requirements that were too rigorous about one voter, one voucher type of thing.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I'm going to let the official answer the question. I know there's been some groups that are provided alternate sources of identification at a community level. And I guess it would depend on, a bit on the rigour that they were providing — you know, if they were issuing them without having done any checking, without the people being known to them.

But I think your point is really valid. Those people that would go to a soup kitchen or might be homeless, I think it's really important for us to try and find a way to have some method of identifying who those voters are and ensuring that they're able to vote. At the same time, I don't think you would want to have a system where you would say to somebody that, oh well I'm a community person; give me the right to issue voter ID cards on a large-scale basis. But the concern you raise is valid, and we have some method of dealing with it. And I'll let Mr. McGovern be more specific.

Mr. McGovern: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the secondary information list that's provided by Elections Canada — and I'll presume that this is the method that you're referring to — there was listed in that is a letter, one of the following issued by the responsible authority of a shelter, soup kitchen, student or a senior residence or a long-term facility, and that's an attestation of residence or a letter of stay, an admission form, statement of benefits. So that is something that's already been identified as an alternative that should be considered and will be considered as part of the regulation process.

Mr. Forbes: — Now what happened was that the clinic seemed well aware of that, but the Salvation Army down the street wasn't, from what I understand. I may be wrong. But what I'm hoping is, particularly in my riding where there's several shelters, that there's a consistent message right across or some way that people know that this . . . Because it is an important issue. And people often feel — as we've talked at length about

— disenfranchisement. But my comment would be to urge you to make sure that message is consistent right across the groups that you've identified. And it's important that they be well-established groups. They are, and they take a lot of pride in the service they provide to their clients.

So with that, I think a few of my colleagues have some other questions. I think Mr. Buckley Belanger has some questions. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Forbes. The Chair recognizes Mr. Belanger.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much. A few questions. I think it's important to set the context of some of the arguments that I'm going to have in relation to this particular Bill because I don't support the Bill. I think it's just meant to impact and affect those that typically don't and haven't been providing ID at many of the elections that have been gone.

I don't buy the government's notion whatsoever that there has been problems. I think this is clearly an attempt to suppress the opportunity of Aboriginal people to participate in the electoral process. I think it has an effect on the elderly. I think it has an effect on the immigrant community. I think it has an effect on a lot of people, that I think the matter of fact is that there'll be a lot less people from those particular groups that will participate and will be allowed to vote.

And by no means am I thinking that this is an accident. This is purely planned. And certainly it's not going to affect my decision from this day forward in terms of how I'm going to explain to this to a lot of people and particularly from the Aboriginal communities that I come from.

Mr. Minister, in your profession as a lawyer and certainly as your current capacity as Minister of Justice, how would you characterize, how many times in a ballpark figure would you characterize as times that you've signed affidavits or attestations, or even at work in your capacity as a Commissioner for Oaths? How many of those forms have you signed in your career, would you say? Give us a ballpark figure.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thousands.

Mr. Belanger: — Thousands. That being said, Mr. Minister, would you say that if you were told that you can only sign one, and that was it, that you couldn't sign any more, would you feel that your role is very limited as a person from the legal profession?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — The times have changed. When I started practising law some 30 years ago, and at that time if somebody came into the office to purchase a house or purchase a piece of property, there was no checking on much of anything. The current best practices are now required by the Law Society. You wish to purchase a house and you provide a lawyer with a cheque and want to sign the documents, you must provide the lawyer with photo ID. The lawyer is obliged to make a photocopy of that photo ID and retain it on their file and also in some cases provide copies of it to a lender or to another institution.

So it's not a matter of saying there was these specific cases of fraud. There was a handful of them. But it's a significant burden on the legal profession. But it does preserve the integrity of that conveyancing. I hear the member from Nutana saying it was one. Actually it was one significant one in our province, but there was a number of fairly substantial ones across the country. So because of that, because we don't wish to put people to the expense of insurance claims or other types of litigation, we now have taken the process one step further where we now require that. And it's maybe a bit of a sad statement about our society now, that we are apparently more distrustful, but the reality of it is, these are steps that are necessary to maintain the integrity of both the real estate system and also the system of our electoral system. And we want to make sure that we take every step to do that. And at the same time, as I've indicated throughout this afternoon, we want to ensure that we've got a wide array of options that we make available to our citizens so that it is not onerous to them.

I disagree with the fundamental premise that you put forward that this was done with a calculated intention to reduce voter turnout or to try and attack the elderly or northerners or anyone else. The reality of it is most people have access to ID. Most people, with the processes that were put in, will be able to get ID. And my advice to them, as I stated at the beginning, was we expect those people to try and plan their trip for election day or plan how they're going to prove their identity. We're certainly open to input as to things that may be appropriate, and you as a northerner may have some special suggestions that you would want to make. And we would welcome those suggestions.

I was disappointed in the comments from your colleague from Regina Walsh Acres that she's choosing not to participate in it. If she chooses not to, that is a loss that is for her and for her constituents. She is not able now to represent her constituents or put those positions forward so the people in her constituency that have things that she wants to put those things forward, she will now no longer be able to do that because she has chosen not to do that.

How can she in good conscience say that she is doing her job as an MLA? If she wanted to do her job, she would be open, receptive to listen to the comments of those people and participate in the process where she would put those forward. If she does not wish to deal with our members, it's certainly open to her to put those comments forward in a letter to the Chief Electoral Officer where they would be considered . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I listened patiently, I listened patiently, Mr. Chair, to the members opposite when they put it forward and now I will take my time when I answer the questions and I will answer the questions carefully, methodically, and deliberately. My comment about the member from Regina Walsh Acres was she has chosen not to participate in this process. That is her choice not . . .

[Interjections]

The Chair: — Will the opposition members come to order, please.

An Hon. Member: — This is called ragging the puck.

The Chair: — Ms. Atkinson, will you be . . .

An Hon. Member: — He can be personal with a member of our caucus and you don't call him to order.

The Chair: — Ms. Higgins, Ms. Higgins, will you come to order.

An Hon. Member: — Will you do your job?

The Chair: — Are you questioning the authority of the Chair?

An Hon. Member: — Well you do your job.

The Chair: — Are you questioning the authority of the Chair?

Ms. Higgins: — I don't have a microphone. Sir, when the minister can sit there and berate the job an MLA who was legitimately questioning him does, I would expect . . .

The Chair: — Ms. Higgins, this is not for debate.

Ms. Higgins: — Sir . . .

The Chair: — Are you questioning the authority of the Chair?

Ms. Higgins: — I would question you should have . . .

The Chair: — This is not for debate.

Ms. Higgins: — Interrupted the minister.

The Chair: — Ms. Higgins, I will ask you to answer the question or leave the chambers.

[Interjections]

The Chair: — Now the question was answered to the minister. The minister was giving his retort, and I expect the opposition members to listen to the answer with the same courtesy that was given to the question. Are we coming . . . Mr. Minister, you are allowed to continue.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — In any event, it is our intention to be open and receptive to the members from both sides of the Assembly that wish to put forward suggestions as to how we might ensure that the . . . [inaudible] . . . Those members that choose not to, do so at their own peril.

Mr. Belanger: — Okay, Mr. Chairman. One thing I want to point out is that the minister just blew about seven minutes of time here answering in the most political context the simple question I asked. It was, how many at the stations or requests have you had from a legal background? How many of those forms have you signed? And it took him about eight minutes to answer the question, upon which one of the eight minutes he attacked one of the colleagues for not participating in the process. So it lends credence to my argument that this is purely a political exercise.

[16:30]

And the question that I had was very simple. It was, how many forms did he sign as a commissioner of oaths or a legal person doing . . . at that station for different people? He replied,

thousands. Now obviously I didn't need a lesson on the mortgage rules of Canada. I asked a simple question.

Now the point I raise, Mr. Chair, is that according to the draft rules and regulations here for this particular Act, and I think it's on page 6 and it says on the bottom there: "No elector/voter will vouch for more than one person in an election." And in a further point immediately after that, it says, "a voter/elector who has been vouched for at an election may not vouch for another person at that election."

It sounds a bit contradictory to the whole point of trying to promote democracy. And the reason why I'm saying that is because at the federal election, at the federal election they had a provision and the provision was, at that station of residence issued by the responsible authority of a First Nations band or reserve. Now for the record I want to enter, Mr. Chair, a copy of the forms that the federal government allowed an administrator of a band to sit there during the election and say, yes I can attest or I can vouch for individual A, individual B, individual C, and the list of names can appear there. The bands allowed that process to unfold because the chief directed the bands to do so. Now some of the bands — and my colleague will talk a bit more of that — weren't given that opportunity. They weren't aware of that opportunity.

So based on the regulations that you presented, you are now actually doing something totally opposite of what the federal election, who you counted on for further advice and direction, you're doing something totally opposite that the federal government has accepted as a process of encouraging more First Nations bands to participate.

So the question I would have for you today, I'm going to submit the forms as evidence and as a suggestion from us, from a northern perspective, as to how you can improve the process of attesting that certain people are allowed to vote. And the attesting could come from a directive of the chief and council indicating to an administrator, whether it would be a band administrator or some group of people that are appointed to do so, to attest for many First Nations that want to participate on-reserve. Because I'm hoping that some of the process that you're talking about incorporates some of the work that the federal government did to reduce that problem. How do you respond, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I'm going to let the official answer that, but I'd like to have a look at what you've got.

Mr. McGovern: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And I guess it's a matter of clarity in terms of what you're quoting from, through the Chair to the member. I mean I'm certainly aware that the federal election Act contains a provision in section 143(5) which specifically says that "No elector shall vouch for more than one elector at an election," from the federal election Act.

Now I cannot purport to speak to your specific circumstance, whether that was issuing of identification by the band prior to the individuals voting, for example, but where I bump into is just that bald statement in the election. As the minister said, we certainly would be interested in looking at the document that you've tabled.

Mr. Belanger: — And the process is very straightforward. They're verifying the residency of that particular member on that particular First Nations.

And I'll give you another example. Yesterday I tabled it for the member's information. I'll give you another example. In many of these northern communities, absolutely everybody knows everybody. And if we had a similar process that the First Nations, some of the First Nations in the last federal election exercised in terms of trying to participate and make the, encourage their people to vote, is that a possibility? Because a lot of people get these forms in the mail. My family got these forms in the mail, saying that I was recognized as a resident of that particular community and you're now entitled or registered to vote.

Now I think the enumerators do that. They turn around, they find out who's living where and so on and so forth. So when I went to vote at the federal election . . . There wasn't an advance poll at my home community so I had to go to the neighbouring community of Beauval where there was an advance poll, because my plan was to be here that Monday. But of course things changed. I wasn't here Monday. I could have actually voted in my home community, but I had to travel to Beauval to vote. So when I got there, I never had photo ID. But the people at the polling station knew me and vouched for me. They said, you're the MLA for the area and you're registered to vote. So we know it's you.

Now it's a good thing that the people at the polling station knew it was me because I could not have voted if they didn't vouch for me. Now what happens now, if I'd had 10 people come with me to vote that couldn't be there on Monday, I'd be the only one allowed to vote. Again, suppressing democracy.

And that's my whole point is that this system that the First Nations incorporate to the federal government is a good system, where they have a band administrator or designated staff members, not just one, where they sit in the polling station all day long and they verify the residency of their members to enable them to vote. My member, my colleague from the other constituency of the North, he'll explain a bit further as to what problems existed when one band member, band council didn't do that.

So again the enumeration process, the residency process, the idea that everybody in these small communities know everybody . . . We're not working for Homeland Security or the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] or CSIS [Canadian Security Intelligence Service] here. We're just trying to have an electoral process under way. And that's why I get so angry sometimes that I feel, Mr. Minister, that you're denying a lot of my people the opportunity to vote. And you yourself know from your background that generally the Aboriginal people, in terms of the percentage, a lot of them are incarcerated. They have a high percentage of our Aboriginal population incarcerated. Many of them do not have photo ID, i.e., the licence. Many of them have lost their licence. Many of them are unemployed. Many of them have great challenges in terms of trying to get their grade 12 diploma, and the list kind of goes on. So when I look at these processes in place, naturally I'm saying, it's intended to suppress our vote.

Now your job, I think, is not to give us a political spin to this Bill. Your job is, I think, is to do justice to making sure that people in our background, in our neighbourhoods, and in our communities have every single opportunity to vote, and these regulations do not go far enough, sir. Not far enough in the least bit. And the final point I would make on this Bill, and I take my place and refer the mike to my colleague from Cumberland is that, is it justice or it just us?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — The issue with the federal election . . . We regard the federal election as a good starting point and we're looking to see what things worked or what things didn't work in the federal election. We are aware of situations where people have talked about in the federal election where somebody from the band has been allowed to apparently vouch for a large number of other people. Their legislation or their regulations appear to be the same as ours, that one person can vouch for one other one. So perhaps what took place is that they had one piece of ID and that there something else took place under the regulations where there was a list provided or something else. And I don't know what's happened. And we'll want to know whether the Act was complied with or whether this was something else. And we want to have a careful look at it to try and ensure that those people that are entitled to vote can do it.

We would find it problematic if one person was allowed to vouch for 2 or 300 people, but if they were providing a list of something where these are the list of the people that are the band members that was a recognized . . . This was something, those are the type of things, and so I think we'd want to have some discussion with you.

I'm going to let Mr. McGovern provide some further background as to the type of lists that were available for the federal election. I don't know what took place during that election other than second- and third-hand hearsay, but I think we would want to have a careful look at it.

Mr. McGovern: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and to the member. Speaking to the document that was tabled, it would appear that there's a distinction that's important that I would just note for the members of the committee. What the member has provided is an attestation of residence, which is referred to as one of the original documents that's authorized by the Chief Electoral Officer of Canada for the purposes of identification.

That's separate from the vouching process per se. So the vouching in the process, as the member I'm sure is well aware, is the formal process under the Act. And from what you've described, it may be that this was a process whereby the band was able to provide an attestation of residence in an immediate fashion. And that's what's referred to in the regulation, and as the minister's indicated, that's the starting point I think for the development of the regulations. And I take the member's point in that regard.

The Chair: — Yes, the Chair recognizes Mr. Vermette.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. To the minister, I just want to . . . We look at this, and you've got the documents and I think as a sample to look at. And I'm hoping that this provision will be something you will take in consideration if you move

ahead with this passing of this Bill, provincial election Act, if you go through with that. And I mean, there's regulations and you'll get into that.

But I mean, I think clearly we provided that to show you that there were hundreds of people turned away. And we've got their names, and we're putting them forward to . . . [inaudible] . . . for some of the communities that did not get to vote. And that's going to the Chief Electoral Officer federally. And that will be going and be provided. The names will be provided, and the concern. And I'm sure it's going to go further than that at this point. I just know that the frustration . . . People have a right to vote and in this case, in some communities they did not get that right, and that'll come forward as it needs to be.

But I just want to be very clear. In some communities where there was somebody from the band that was designated by chief and council, which they went through the forms that they were asked to fill by Elections Canada, that was very clear. They designated somebody to show the residency of their band members that lived on-reserve. My understanding, they had to prove their identity with their ID, but their residency clause — because they have box numbers and a lot of it doesn't show the actual resident's street — they were allowed to do for the residency clause, not for the photo ID. I want to be clear: from my understanding, it was on the residency clause. They know who their band members are, live in their houses. Unfortunately they use box numbers in a lot of the First Nations communities. This gave an opportunity for those individuals to vote. And some bands took part in this. Some may not. Some may not have known about it. But the ones that did, I know it worked really well. And those individuals that had the proper photo ID or ID got to vote with the residents. They weren't turned away. We had lots of people who were turned away, and that will be dealt with. As they go through, they're compiling names and getting information, and they will provide that to Elections Canada.

So I just want to add to that. So to hear the minister say that he didn't hear of a lot of problems, maybe in your constituency. But in our community, we have issues and quite a few, actually, names of people coming forward.

So at this time I just want to say to the minister, I'm hoping that, you know, hearing your words, that you're willing to, whether the regulations, to allow certain things so people don't get turned away, that if they come forward and they have the ID, that it isn't a residency clause for some of the First Nations people because it's box numbers. And we deal with that up north. We don't have mail delivery, you know, house to house, which some of the rural communities as well will be faced with and some of the First Nations community in the South.

So I just would provide that. And like my colleague said, I think to be clear that people were turned away and quite a few of them. And we're compiling those names. And hopefully at this point I guess I would just like to say, Mr. Chair, I'm done with my question to the minister.

[16:45]

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you very much. Your point's valid. That's been identified in the south part of the province as

well with rural constituents that have only a box number. So if your question was, if you have one piece of ID that says who you are, would the second piece that just had a box number be appropriate? And the answer is, if that post office box is one that could be within the constituency, then the answer would be yes, it would be.

It's possible that you may have some communities where the post office could actually service areas that are in two different constituencies. And in that case, we'd allow the elector just to do a declaration and say, I live on the Athabasca side rather than Cumberland side even though my address is such and such a one on the mailing address. And we would accept, they would accept that as long as the post office box could be in one or the other of the constituencies, so that we intend to include in the regulations with the Act. But it's a valid point both in the North and in the rural area.

We can't as yet, or SGI's not able to include land descriptions on the driver's licence, or at least they won't. And I guess we should have some discussion on that as well, what might be appropriate in northern Saskatchewan. And we certainly welcome the member's input on that. Thank you.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you, Mr. Vermette. Mr. Quennell, did you have some other questions?

Mr. Quennell: — My colleagues have covered a lot of the territory that I might have addressed, but I have questions about the recommendations made by the Chief Electoral Officer in his report, April 2009. So this has been in everybody's possession for almost two years now.

The recommendations made in that report are based upon concerns that came out of the 2007 election about the integrity of the voting process: people's access to vote, the validity of the voters' list, the quality of enumeration, and so on and so on. I guess my first question is, since the voter ID requirements that are the entire part of this Bill aren't included in any of these recommendations, and the recommendations that the Chief Electoral Officer made two years ago aren't in the Bill, how did the government make the policy decision to ignore every recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer coming out of the 2007 election, in preference to a measure that wasn't recommended by the Chief Electoral Officer?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I thank the member for the question. The Chief Electoral Officer made a number of recommendations, and obviously there will need to be a review undertaken of the Act. And it would be the expectation that that would be completed or would be conducted as soon after this year's election as is possible, possibly in conjunction with redistribution.

The issue of voter identification is one that didn't come from the Chief Electoral Officer. It came as a result of what was taking place in other jurisdictions. And we felt that if there were issues in other jurisdictions that dealt with the integrity of the system, we wanted to deal with that. Having said that, and I don't want to be accused of going over things that we've gone over before, the goal is to try and include as many options, so that as many people can possibly vote as we can. I think maybe Mr. McGovern may want to add something at this point.

Mr. McGovern: — Sorry, I do think that addresses the issue that was raised.

Mr. Quennell: — It really wasn't a technical question, but thank you. Now amongst the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer, based on actual issues arising in the 2007 election were a number of recommendations to facilitate the ability of voters with disabilities being able to cast their ballot. And specifically, and these are just examples:

That *The Election Act, 1996* be amended to:

1. require that all advance polls and Returning Offices be accessible;
2. require that polling places must be accessible to persons with disabilities . . .
3. add the provision that voting places be placed in a convenient location for a majority of voters in the polling division;
4. remove the restriction regarding the placement of polling places and Returning Offices in buildings which have a liquor permit;
5. allow for transfer certificates for:
 - (a) electors with disabilities . . . polling places does not have level access;
 - (b) election officials . . . [and]
 - (c) any elector who presents himself or herself at the wrong polling station as the result of a change in the assignment of polling stations or advanced polls that took place after issuance of the original voter information card to the electors; and
6. specify who can submit the request for a transfer certificate on behalf of the elector.

All those recommendations are to deal with issues that were raised with the Chief Electoral Officer of the time at a public forum on voting and ways to improve accessibility to voters with disabilities in April of 2008. So over three years ago. And these issues were important to voters with disabilities.

Now clearly there has been no discussion between the governing party and the opposition about making these changes to *The Election Act*, but these things could be done, this accessibility improved in regulation. That's not our preference. Our preference if we're going to have election law changes, that we do it the way it's usually done here, and that's both parties working together with recommendations and the Chief Electoral Officer. Not the way this voter ID came forward, with no consultation with the opposition and no recommendation from the Chief Electoral Officer. But these things may be done in regulation.

And could I have the minister's commitment that he would do these things for voters with disabilities in regulation since he saw fit not to do them in the Bill?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — We have legislation dealing with accessibility elsewhere in our legislative scheme although, even though it may exist in a number of other places, it's probably an inappropriate exercise to go through, to include those things not just in a regulation but at some point in the actual legislation. I don't know. I'll let Mr. McGovern answer more specifically as to what could be done by way of regulation. But clearly the goal should be that we comply with the best practices with regard to accessibility for all voters to try and ensure that their rights to vote are there.

I know that we had the issue earlier in the year, when Robin East was here, with regard to visually impaired voters. And I know we looked at that, and I know that the . . . I think they still have some work being done at the Chief Electoral Officer as to what the best technology might be or what the best methodology might be and how well that might meet the needs of a person that's got visual impairment. But I'll let Mr. McGovern supplement that.

Mr. McGovern: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, to the member. And I can't purport off the top of my head to speak to the ability of the regulations to address each of the recommendations that were read in by the member. The member, of course as a lawyer, is well aware that under section 287 of the Act, the ability of the Lieutenant Governor in Council to make regulations under the Act is set out. And it, essentially it speaks to defining any word or expression; prescribing any forms for use, including prescribing contents. It does provide:

prescribing any other matter or thing that is required by this Act to be prescribed; [or]

respecting any matter or thing that the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers necessary to carry out the intent of the Act.

And so there will be an issue in terms of legal capacity to address those questions in the regulations that will necessarily form part of any commitment to review it for those purposes.

The voter ID issue specifically in the Act, I think the invitation has been made. And there was contact made with several groups regarding whether or not there were any unique ID or information requirements in that community that could be identified to be put in the regulations as well. And I think on either of those fronts, that that's something that we're certainly willing to learn about and to look at.

Mr. Quennell: — Okay. Back in 2005, MLAs indicated they wished to use the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer to use provisions for forest fires and floods to be extended to mobile polls, and this was done in the 2000 general election. It was very favourably received by residents residing in mobile polls except that the provisions for forest fires and floods require that an oath be signed even if the voter has been enumerated. And despite the negative feedback on this, due to legal advice received by the Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, there was no option but to require the declarations to be signed.

So again back in 2009, the Chief Electoral Officer recommends that the Act be amended to clarify that eligible voters living in a mobile poll who are on the list of electors no longer have to

sign a declaration to be able to vote, and eligible voters voting in a hospital poll not be required to provide satisfactory proof of the voter's identity and place of ordinary residence.

Again this is a recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer to deal with an issue that actually arose during elections, some recent elections. Again the government's chosen not to act on this recommendation but to act on a recommendation from, I assume, the party he belongs to and the caucus he belongs to, to proceed with something that the Chief Electoral Officer has not recommended. Again why does the government have a problem with the recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer in respect to mobile polls?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — It's not so much a matter that the government has made a position with regard to mobile polls, that we've made a determination that we're either for or against them. That's something that would be looked at in a broader scope of an examination of the legislation. The underlying decision as it was made here or at the present time was that we wanted to have a requirement that voters be able to provide two things: one, a requirement to identify who they are; and secondly, where they reside. And you know, we would expect that that would run as a theme throughout the requirements that voters would be obliged to provide identity.

Mr. Quennell: — I would only note, Mr. Chair, that members of the Legislative Assembly, if the government had chosen to do so, have had two years to work on implementing the recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer. In any other term of government for the past decades, the two parties would have met two years ago and gone over these recommendations and come to a consensus about changes to the election Act based upon the experience of the 2007 election. So that precedent is now gone. That precedent is now broken.

The minister talks about well yes, we should review these recommendations. We should have been reviewing these recommendations for the last two years. So we have no such review. We have no such all-party committee, which is the convention of this House or was the convention of this House. And now we have the eve of the election in the last session of this legislature, a Bill that has nothing to do with any of the recommendations made by the Chief Electoral Officer. The Chief Electoral Officer noted an issue in hospital voting and voting in hospitals. In a 2007 general election, the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region indicated by their actions it was their opinion that the health information protection legislation overruled the charter right to vote. They just simply refused to let the Chief Electoral or the DRO [deputy returning officer] know who was there to vote and couldn't facilitate the vote. At the eleventh hour, when it was made clear that the refusing eligible voters the right to vote was not a fight that the health region would necessarily win, they backed down and people were allowed to vote within the hospital within the constituency.

In 2009 Regina Douglas Park by-election the matter came up again. Now this time the Chief Electoral Office knew that this was an issue and spent seven weeks, but the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region refused to meet with the Chief Electoral Officer, and once again the charter had to be indicated before a meeting was set up.

Following two occasions where people would've been denied the right to vote by the health region if the Chief Electoral Office has not stood its ground based upon the charter not having specific indication in the legislation, the Chief Electoral Officer recommended that the Act be amended to specifically state that *The Election Act* supersedes *The Health Information Protection Act* with respect to the right to vote, and that the Legislative Assembly decides whether a statutory poll should be compulsory or whether knowing . . . or whether the returning officer after consultation with the Chief Electoral Officer be given the authority to decide the stationary poll is advisable in a specific hospital.

Again two years to work on these recommendations, almost four years since the problem first arose in 2007, two years since the problem arose again a second time with warning in 2009. Why has the government ignored this recommendation?

[17:00]

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — We've been dealing with this through the regulations where we would allow a hospital bracelet to be used for proof of identification. So the situation is, it will be dealt with through the regulation. I can't comment on what took place in the past between the health region and the hospital, but I think it's important that people in a hospital be entitled to vote. They're required to identify themselves when they arrive in the hospital. They're issued with a bracelet, and I think the bracelet should be regarded as being sufficient proof of their ability to vote. And that's actually specifically enumerated in both the federal legislation and would be included in ours as well.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. The time being after 5 o'clock this . . .

An Hon. Member: — Were we going to vote?

An Hon. Member: — We're going to vote. We've got a couple questions . . . [inaudible].

The Chair: — This committee will continue by agreement of the committee. Is it in favour that we continue?

Some Hon. Members: — Yes.

The Chair: — Okay. The Chair recognizes Mr. Quennell to continue.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you very much. And we'll see how long the member from Arm River lets me go.

The Chief Electoral Officer also recommended in the same report, April 2009:

That *The Election Act* . . . be amended so that either the voter, poll official or "friend", in the case of a "friend" providing assistance to the voter, or the voter or "friend", in the case of a "friend" providing assistance to the voter, may deposit the ballot in the ballot box.

Now:

Currently under section 75, [of the Act] voters are required to surrender their marked ballots, once completed, to the Deputy Returning Officer. The Deputy Returning Officer removes and destroys the counterfoil . . .

I won't go through the process for all the people that have voted and run for office.

At the [end of the] 26th General Election, as in previous elections, a number of voters have expressed the desire to deposit their own ballots, both to finalize the voting process and to ensure confidentiality of the vote.

Again I take it that the government has some problem with this recommendation of the Chief Electoral Officer because you have had two years to work on it, and we've heard nothing.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — This is once again something that will be dealt with in the next review of the legislation. I think it's surprising, I'm not sure that it's complied with. I've seen a number of situations where you go to vote, and in some cases they allow the elector to vote, and in other cases it's taken from them and it's put in by the Clerk. In either event, the position of the chief electoral is one I agree with and ultimately should be resolved by legislation.

Mr. Quennell: — Appreciating the time and the indulgence of the committee and the fact that we still have to have the vote, I'll end my questions with a short comment if I might, Mr. Chair.

It struck me, and the minister probably wants to respond to this and that's fine, but it struck me that the best argument that has been made or one of the best arguments — and I try to make some good ones — against this Bill was made by the minister this afternoon when he said that he, a member of the federal Conservative Party, if he still is a member of the Conservative Party, but a one-time member of the federal Conservative Party who probably felt strongly about voting in the federal election, probably hasn't missed very many opportunities if any in his life to vote, with a Bill before this House requiring voter ID, being on the record saying that people have to have their identity papers in order if they want to vote in future provincial elections, that that individual himself could not have his identity papers in order, that if it had been an individual not as comfortable with voting as the minister, arriving on his own without an amiable spouse to vouch for him, who did not have his identity papers in order.

And the minister just relayed how someone who's very organized, runs a government department, cannot have the written part of his driver's licence when he goes to vote in a federal election, when he knows what the rules are when he left the house, that he would lose his vote if he wasn't willing to go back, as not all people would be. And the minister said he had lost the written piece, so I'm not sure he could have gone back with it, or if he just misplaced it.

But it's the most eloquent argument as to why we should not be proceeding with this legislation that I've heard, and it came from the minister that had it before the House. He cannot have his identity papers in order in an election which he's very . . .

You know, I hope that he can find his driver's licence before he goes to vote for himself in the next provincial election. Not every single mother dragging three kids with her to the polling station is going to have the same opportunities for a second chance that the minister of the Crown had.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — I thank the member for his comments. Part of the process between now and the election will be education, and I'm more than willing to use myself as an example of where education is required. And I am glad that I had an amiable spouse who, as he refers to, otherwise I would have had to have gone back.

So the message that I have learned is that you should check it before you go. Don't assume that what you think is in your pocket is necessarily what in fact is in your pocket. I was glad also for the fact, pointed out by one of the other members, it is an offence to operate a motor vehicle without it. I'm not sure when my piece of identification was lost, however I did find it and I've since had a new type photo ID obtained as well.

So, Mr. Chair, having said that, I'm willing to admit my shortcomings and urge all electors to get their paperwork in order between now and the next election. We will do our best to try and work to have as broad and all-encompassing range of things that are appropriate so that people are not disenfranchised. And I thank the members for their questions.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Is there any other questions or comments from any of the committee members? Seeing none, we'll proceed with the voting on the clauses.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 10 inclusive agreed to.]

The Chair: — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts the following: Bill No. 161, *The Election Amendment Act, 2010*. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I would ask a member to move that we report Bill No. 161, *The Election Amendment Act, 2010* without amendment.

Mr. Chisholm: — So moved.

The Chair: — Mr. Chisholm. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Thank you, committee members.

Mr. Minister, is there any comments, closing comments that you would like to make?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — None other than to thank the members and the official that was here today for this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you. I thank you, committee members,

and the other members for their questions. We'll ask for a motion for adjournment.

Mr. Brkich: — I move a motion that this committee do now adjourn.

The Chair: — All agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This meeting is now adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 17:10.]