



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

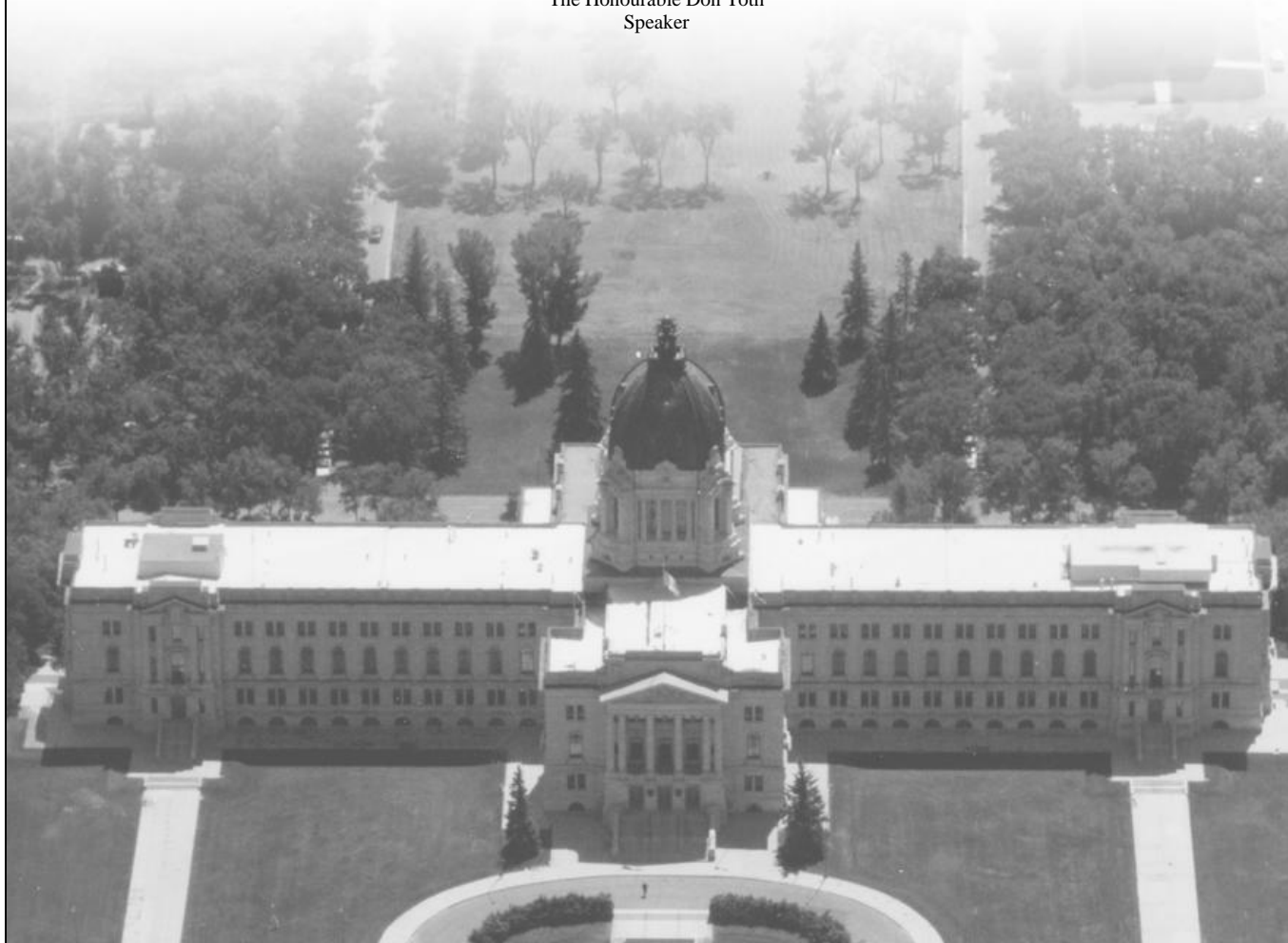
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Dwain Lingenfelter

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly, it's a pleasure for me to introduce two distinguished individuals that have joined us on the floor of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. Joining us are two federal members of parliament: Andrew Scheer, the member for Regina-Qu'Appelle, and Tom Lukiwski, the member for Regina-Lumsden-Lake Centre. In addition to their duties as members of parliament, Mr. Scheer is also the Deputy Speaker in the House of Commons. Mr. Lukiwski is the Parliamentary Secretary to the House Leader.

And more importantly from the perspective of Saskatchewan, especially over these last number of weeks, we know that while they were prevented because of federal regulations in the Investment Canada review process from commenting publicly on the very sensitive hostile takeover deal by BHP Billiton of the Potash Corp of Saskatchewan, they were making Saskatchewan's case — making the case for our province and its people and our potash resource where the case needed to be made, at the very centre of things in Ottawa and with the minister.

And, Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the province of Saskatchewan, on behalf of the government, Mr. Speaker, we want to thank them. And through them, we want to thank the other members of parliament from this province who helped make the case and have got us at least about 25 days closer to a very historic development that is very much in the interests of not just our province but of our country.

And I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming those that helped in this case, the members of parliament that have joined us today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery are two distinguished members of the legal community, Karl Bazin from Swift Current and Terry Kimpinski from Saskatoon, who are down meeting with me this morning on legal issues. And, Mr. Speaker, I think neither one of them have been here for our question period, so I'm expecting the members opposite to be especially polite and courteous today so that we can demonstrate how fine and co-operative that we are in this House — and productive, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask that all members welcome them to their legislature.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the Minister of Justice in welcoming the two gentlemen in the Speaker's

gallery. Karl Bazin and I were classmates at law school and Mr. Kimpinski and I practised law together, so I can be as nice as the minister wants me to be in question period. I won't be fooling those two gentlemen. They know me too well.

Mr. Bazin, you'll note, is not a Provincial Court judge and so the minister has been guilty of some exaggeration in suggesting that all my classmates now are appointed to the Provincial Court. Didn't quite manage to pull that off. Anyways, I would like to welcome both Karl and Terry to the Legislative Assembly. If they hang around for question period, I hope they enjoy it.

While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly a grade 8 class from Caswell Community School in the east gallery and their teacher, Sarah Myers, and chaperone, Angie Jansen. And other than the obligatory meeting with the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], I trust they will enjoy their stay here and their time in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I must join in with the member from Meewasin in welcoming the students from Caswell. It's a very special connection of mine. They occupy my former classroom at Caswell School. So when I walk my dog, we'll walk by Caswell School and I think a lot about Caswell and how important it is. In fact what's interesting is this year they're celebrating their 100th anniversary. So it plays an important part in Saskatoon's history. So I too want to welcome them to their legislature. Thank you.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of concerned citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned over the safety of our highways and the need for improvement to our highways to provide safety for Saskatchewan's motoring public. And I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to construct passing lanes on Highway No. 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and the junction of Highway 1 in order to improve safety for Saskatchewan's motoring public.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by the good folks from Pasqua Lake and Fort Qu'Appelle, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of eliminating poverty in Saskatchewan. And we know that freedom from poverty is an enshrined human right by the United Nations and that all citizens are entitled to social and economic security. And Saskatchewan's income gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to act as quickly as possible to develop an effective and sustainable poverty elimination strategy for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens.

And, Mr. Speaker, I present this for the people who signed this from Regina, Hepburn, Saskatoon, and North Battleford. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, I stand to present a petition in support of occupational health and safety. Mr. Speaker, the true cost of human suffering or loss of human life cannot be measured in dollars and cents. And the government allows the fines levied against companies for violations under *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* to be treated as tax deductible expenses. And the government continues to allow companies to treat such violations of fines which would then appear to be just a regular cost of doing business. Mr. Speaker, the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to amend the law so companies will not be allowed to get a tax deduction for fines levied against them under *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations, and to remove the existing cap on fines levied against such companies.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petitions come from Aberdeen and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petitions once again today on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the two consecutive deficits tabled by this Sask Party and the billions of dollars of debt growth that's accruing under their stewardship, Mr. Speaker. This mismanagement costs all of us. We're talking about \$4.2 billion of debt growth over the next four years. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly condemn the Sask Party government for its damaging financial mismanagement

since taking office, a reckless fiscal record that is denying Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses the responsible and trustworthy fiscal management that they so deserve.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Now these petitions today are signed by concerned citizens from Saskatoon. I so submit.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Biggar.

#### Year of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Citizens across our great nation go to bed knowing they will be safe at night. This is largely due to the work of our Royal Canadian Mounted Police force. It brings me great pleasure to announce that this is the Year of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The RCMP is unique in the world due to the fact that it is a national, federal, provincial, and municipal policing body.

Mr. Speaker, the RCMP pride themselves on being a progressive, proactive, and innovative organization. They provide the highest quality of service through dynamic leadership, education, and technology in constant partnership with the diverse communities they serve.

Our Royal Canadian Mounted Police hold themselves to a higher standard of accountability. Building on its 130-year legacy, the RCMP has set its sights on being recognized around the world as an organization of excellence. They have made it their mission to raise the barometer of public safety to maintain their mandate of safe homes and safe communities for Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, it is impossible to have an organization reach this level of achievement without core values such as honesty, integrity, professionalism, and compassion. I would ask that all members of this Assembly join me in recognizing the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### New La Ronge Seniors Centre

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm rising today in honour of La Ronge Seniors Club. On September the 18th, Mr. Speaker, the club officially opened its new centre in La Ronge.

Mr. Speaker, I say I am rising in honour, because the total cost of the centre was raised by sweat and hard work of the La Ronge seniors members. A total of approximately 250,000 was fundraised through bake sales, rummage sales, bingos, and donations from local support and from businesses. The balance of 50,000 was secured through a mortgage which the club will pay off over the next few years. Not one single dollar came from the government coffers.

I was fortunate to attend the opening ceremony, Mr. Speaker, and hear a few comments from Len Fallows, the president of

Saskatchewan Seniors Association Inc. Mr. Fallows expressed his delight at attending the opening ceremony because he has witnessed so many centre closures over recent years.

Mr. Speaker, the centre will provide a variety of activities for the seniors in La Ronge area, activities such as the exercise program, cooking, nutrition classes, and their fall prevention classes.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in applauding the good work, dedication, of the La Ronge Seniors Club.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

### Battling for Children's Hospital Fund

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, over the last month or so, the people of Saskatchewan have been cheering on our very own Kelly Chase. I know Kelly personally. I know it was probably difficult for him to trade in his hockey skates for a pair of figure skates. After all, during his hockey career Kelly was better known for his toughness and his grit than he was for his grace and beauty on blades.

But I also know Kelly had a big heart. He put on the figure skates in an attempt to raise \$100,000 for the children's hospital of Saskatchewan. Paired with Kyoko Ina, Kelly has gladly strapped on the skates to compete in CBC's [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] *Battle of the Blades* competition.

Kelly was born in Porcupine Plain in 1967. And after playing for both the Saskatoon Blades and the IHL's [International Hockey League] Peoria Rivermen, Kelly went on to play 458 games in the NHL [National Hockey League]. On the ice, Kelly was quintessentially the tough guy, digging in the corners and dropping his gloves when it needed to be done. But off the ice, Kelly always had a big heart.

In 1997-98, Kelly received the King Clancy Memorial Trophy, the NHL's award for making significant humanitarian contributions to the community. He received the award for helping intellectually challenged children get involved in sports.

He's received . . . the recipient of the Order of Canada for his contributions to the province of Saskatchewan.

The *Battle of the Blades* is seen by Kelly as yet another opportunity to give back to his home province. On behalf of all members, I would like to congratulate Kelly and Kyoko on making it this far in the *Battle of the Blades*, and I also would encourage everyone to vote often and to show their support for this great pair on Sunday night. To vote for Kelly and Kyoko, call 1-877-844-8156. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

### University of Saskatchewan Alumni Awards

**Mr. Broten:** — On November 4th, I had the pleasure of attending the University of Saskatchewan's 2010 Alumni Awards gala. This was a special evening for the alumni

association as the community gathered to recognize six distinguished graduates.

The Alumni Award of Achievement was given to Dr. Ernest Olfert, who recently retired after a 40-year career in veterinary medicine on campus. Among his many accomplishments, he is viewed as a world expert on the humane care of animals used in research.

The Aboriginal Initiatives Award was given to Cecil King. Mr. King founded the Indian teacher education program. Most recently he served as the dean of the Saskatoon campus of the First Nations University of Canada.

The recipient of the Humanitarian Award was Garth Herbert, a graduate of the College of Commerce. Mr. Herbert is a chartered accountant and a civil servant in the Ministry of Health. He has served his professional association, has been a member of the national board of the Canadian Diabetes Association, and is an active member of Holy Family Church.

[13:45]

The Mentorship Award was granted to Dr. William Frischke, a graduate of the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. His practice in Ponoka, Alberta has a focus on welcoming many students and interns over the past decades.

The recipient of the Outstanding Young Alumni Award was Kelly-Anne Reiss. Ms. Reiss began her training in engineering but soon switched to English. She is based in Moose Jaw and works as a freelance journalist, is an accomplished author and poet, and recently completed her first film script.

The Service Award was granted to Laurel Krause, a retired educator from Swift Current. Ms. Krause has served on the university senate and the president's round table on outreach and engagement. Ms. Krause cares deeply for her students and has attended dozens of convocation ceremonies. She was also my wife's high school teacher.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the recipients of the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] Alumni Awards and thank them for their outstanding contributions to our province. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Northwest.

### Diwali Festival

**Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November 5th marked an important celebration for our Hindu and Sikh communities in Saskatchewan. This year's festival was one that was extra special. It was the first time in history that the city of Saskatoon, that fireworks permission was given to the Sikh community for the celebration of their event.

The Diwali festival is one that is celebrated by Indians worldwide. It was with great honour that our Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration was able to attend this year's celebration in Saskatoon, and the Minister of Government Services, who was also privileged to attend the

Regina celebration.

Most Diwali celebrations are focused on spending time with family and friends. It is a time to reflect on the past and envision a better future. As Diwali approaches, families clean their homes to escape bad luck in the upcoming year. These families believe that the Hindu goddess of good luck will visit all homes that are brightly lit.

In preparation for Diwali, children make many small clay lamps called diyas. Diyas are created to invite the good luck goddess to the homes of Indian families. Mr. Speaker, this is especially important to Indian children because the good luck goddess is the provider of new clothes and toys. One family may have thousands of these diyas decorating their home.

I would ask that all members of the Assembly join me in congratulating the Sikh community for a historic Diwali festival. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Sacrifice and Service

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I am honoured to recognize all the men and women that currently serve and have served our proud nation, not only at this time of remembrance, but always.

Similar to so many across our province, a history of service to one's nation is part of my family's story — in my case, my grandfather, leaving Saskatchewan a young farmer to serve our nation with the distinguished Regina Rifle Regiment. It is with pride that I have tucked within my suit jacket here today my grandfather's soldier's service and pay book. This pay book was carried by my grandfather from his departure through his landing in Normandy and throughout the Second World War.

It is signed from 1941 through '42, '43, '44, and '45. The final entry is signed by a captain by the name of Orchard, dated on February 18th, 1945, and simply states, "wounded Germany." It was the battle of Molyland Wood that ended my grandfather's service.

These countless stories of sacrifice and service run deep in this province. They cross political divides in communities, and they in part shape us as a nation, a province, as families, and individuals. It is with pride that I not only remember my grandfather but remember all who have served and currently serve our proud nation.

I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in extending our thanks. To quote John McCrae, "the torch; be yours to hold it high." Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook.

### Saskatoon Primary Care Health Bus

**Mr. Allchurch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Canadian Health Services Research Foundation is currently hosting a

conference in Montreal. Delegates from Saskatoon health primary care unit will be there to present on the primary care health bus.

This team is the only Saskatchewan delegation presenting at the conference, Mr. Speaker. Members will recall that our government launched the health bus pilot with the Saskatoon Health Region and MD Ambulance in August of 2008. The health bus is a converted RV [recreational vehicle] that contains a fully equipped examination room. It brings health care right to the people.

Mr. Speaker, the six-month pilot was such a success that our government committed in 2009 to make it an ongoing project, receiving \$350,000 in annual funding. This past year, almost 6,000 clients have accessed services on the bus as it travels into core neighbourhoods eight hours a day, seven days a week.

Paramedics and nurse practitioners perform health checks, blood pressure, and blood sugar checks. They offer information and treatment for chronic diseases, chronic disease management, and disease prevention. They provide health education on topics ranging from bike safety to stop-smoking programs and nutrition. They offer wound care and follow-up care. In addition to improved health outcomes for residents, the health bus also relieves pressure on EMS [emergency medical services] and emergency rooms.

Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members will join me in congratulating the Saskatoon Health Region and MD Ambulance on their continued hard work and success with the health bus program.

### QUESTION PERIOD

#### Foreign Investment in Uranium Industry

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. One of Saskatchewan's members of parliament, Conservative MP for Saskatoon-Humboldt, Brad Trost, has introduced Bill C-436 in the federal House of Commons. This Bill would see the ending of restrictions on foreign ownership of Saskatchewan's uranium.

In a press interview he indicated that the Premier of Saskatchewan fully supports this Bill. My question to the Premier is: does he in fact support Bill C-436?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thanks for the question. Mr. Speaker, the federal government had indicated in a recent Throne Speech that it was their intention to make adjustments to what's known as ENRA [environment and natural resources accounting] that restricts ownership in certain mining operations, obviously significantly uranium.

This is something we've quite publicly said as a government we support. Mr. Speaker, the analogy would be this. We have American-owned potash mines in Saskatchewan today through Mosaic. That's certainly the case. Mr. Speaker, we have the French invested in the uranium industry in the province today through Areva. What was very different about a PotashCorp

takeover was the amount of resource in play and the loss of a Canadian champion, a Canadian company. Mr. Speaker, fully 30 per cent of the world's potash reserves were in play in that one takeover.

Do we still welcome foreign investment into the province of Saskatchewan? Yes we do. Do we welcome foreign investment in terms of our uranium industry? Yes we do. Would we want to see the reserves, the vast reserves of uranium in our province come under foreign control? No, Mr. Speaker. And that's not what this Bill would prescribe.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, the province of Saskatchewan produces about 30 per cent of the world's potash and about the same percentage of the world's uranium. And many people in this province believe that both are strategic to the future economy of the province. In fact some would argue that uranium is even more strategic in the world economy than potash. And while I don't take that position, I think there is a fair degree of debate going on about what is strategic in terms of the economy and how much foreign ownership we should have.

My question again to the Premier is, if there is a takeover move by a foreign entity as encouraged by Brad Trost while he was in Australia — he comments on inviting companies similar to BHP to come and invest — if that were the proposal, would the Premier allow a takeover of the potash . . . of Cameco or other Canadian-owned entities in uranium? Would that be allowed under his guidance, or would he advise the Prime Minister to be opposed to that?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, Cameco, as the member will know, is the product of the merger of two Crown corporations — a federal Crown, Eldorado Nuclear, and the provincial Crown, Saskatchewan Mining and Development Corporation. Those two Crowns were merged. There was an IPO [initial public offering], and the private company Cameco, headquartered in Saskatoon, is the result.

There are significant protections for the interests of the province and the country prescribed, written into the DNA of this new company, including a golden share this province maintains that mercifully the previous administration wasn't able to dismantle, but requires the head office of that company to stay in the province. Point number one.

Point number two, Mr. Speaker, is there are protections from the federal government that prevent the takeover, the foreign takeover of this company. Moreover, my understanding of the member's Bill is that there are protections in it that prescribe the National Defence minister can step in on any particular takeover.

Today in Saskatchewan, we have foreign investment in the uranium mining industry. We have a French company involved. They can only own 49 per cent of an interest in a mine, so they do that on a number of occasions. Do we think that Areva should be able to own majority control of a uranium mine? Yes,

Mr. Speaker, we'd welcome that kind of investment and those jobs to the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, to be clear. While the federal member was in Australia touting that the resources of Saskatchewan were open for sale to foreign investment, he referred to uranium and obviously was referring to potash. That has obviously changed at the federal level because even though the member was there asking for investment in potash, because of the work done by the Premier and the province of Saskatchewan, that was changed.

My question to the Premier is this. Very specifically, if BHP came and wanted to buy Cameco, the Premier then would approve that kind of deal?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Let me be very clear here. The position of the province of Saskatchewan, and then the position of the Industry minister, was that this particular takeover be refused. The position of the Government of Saskatchewan remains this with respect to BHP: we welcome their intention to build a new mine in Saskatchewan.

A new mine represents new investment. It's not a takeover. It doesn't represent a third of the world's potash reserves. It's a new mine for the province much like Mosaic owns and operates mines.

Mr. Speaker, there are protections in place with respect to Cameco. We believe the uranium resource is significant. We would not want the resource, the majority of the reserves to fall into foreign control. But do we welcome foreign investment as the previous administration welcomed in the uranium industry, in uranium mining? Yes we do. If BHP wanted to build a uranium mine in the province of Saskatchewan, would we welcome that? Yes we would. We're interested in jobs in the North. We're interested in wealth creation for the province of Saskatchewan.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

### Road Ambulance Service

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, as of December of this year, the road ambulance service in Neilburg will be cut. Ambulances will be dispatched out of Cut Knife which means people in Neilburg will wait an extra 20 minutes for an ambulance response. Mr. Speaker, when a person's life is at risk, 20 minutes can mean the difference between life and death.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is, why is he putting more people's lives in danger by cutting road ambulance services instead of supporting road ambulance services and enhancing them and saving more people's lives?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll

take notice of the question.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Because of the Sask Party's failure to adequately fund health regions, the Prairie North Health Region has to find \$5 million in savings or efficiencies, as the minister has called it. The need for the health region to find savings has cost the people of Neilburg their ambulance service. Neilburg isn't the only rural community experiencing ambulance service cuts; there's also Cudworth and Coronach.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party's financial mismanagement is putting people's lives at risk, especially in rural Saskatchewan. To the minister: how can he and the Sask Party put a price tag on people's lives?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, again I'll take notice of the question.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Well perhaps since it's a financial question and it's a question about mismanagement, it would behoove the Minister of Finance to actually give us some input on how the budget helps rural Saskatchewan and helps ambulance services and helps save people's lives.

The minister's own report in 2009 said that 2,390 emergency ambulance calls in rural Saskatchewan failed to meet the 30-minute-or-less response time. That means an average of more than six rural ambulance calls per day failed to reach people within the recommended national standard of time.

Mr. Speaker, this is appalling. The minister's own report says there's a crisis in rural road ambulance coverages. Mr. Speaker, what is minister doing to ensure that rural road ambulance services meet the national standard of 30 minutes or less for response to an emergency call?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, again I'll take notice of the question.

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

### Long-Term Care Facility Funding

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the 2007 Sask Party election platform, a number of commitments and promises were made by the Sask Party. One of those promises reads as follows: a Saskatchewan Party government will provide Saskatchewan people with more transparency and accountability than any other previous government. That was the promise made. I'd like to ask the government today to tell us how they're doing with that

promise. Are they keeping it?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting to listen to a question from that member — the member, Mr. Speaker, who in this Legislative Assembly, I understand, held the portfolio of Minister of Finance, but is the only Minister of Finance to never have delivered a budget in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, the previous budget of 2007. The member makes mention of 2007. Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that in 2007, the last year of the NDP [New Democratic Party] government, Mr. Speaker, that the normal projection of a four-year plan, a four-year plan would be outlined by the Ministry of Finance to indicate what would be happening over the course of the next four years.

Mr. Speaker, in the last year of the NDP government, no four-year plan, no projections, no evaluations of where the economy was going. In fact, Mr. Speaker, not even a projection of where the debt was going to go because of the lack of infrastructure that that NDP government did.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, I do note that as the last Finance minister under an NDP government, we did leave the government with \$2.3 billion in cash. And I understand it's not enough because the debt's going up.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what the government needs to know is that I requested, under freedom of information, a number of . . . a lot of information regarding Amicus. And so my question is this: if the government is so committed to transparency and accountability, why did they respond to a freedom of information request about the Amicus deal by releasing 900 pages of documents with most of the information blacked out? What is that government hiding? And most importantly, who are you hiding?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll take notice of that question.

[Interjections]

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, we have a government that promised the citizens of Saskatchewan that they would be the most open and transparent government in the history of the province.

Now we have a government that promises in their Throne Speech that they're going to introduce new, innovative funding models to long-term care in the province. Well let's talk about



that innovative funding model. Now, Mr. Speaker, last spring this government refused to answer questions about this deal that they have with Amicus and how much this deal would cost taxpayers. They said that the final operating agreement, particularly the cost per diem, still had to be negotiated. But we do know this: they guaranteed \$27 million worth of a mortgage for Amicus, and we do know that the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are going to pay for it.

So this is a government that promises to be accountable and transparent. Can they tell us today how much is this loan guarantee ultimately going to cost the people of our province?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government makes no apologies for looking at innovation and health care.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition critic for health care sent letters to communities all around this province telling them that their long-term care facilities were going to be cancelled. Mr. Speaker, that is not true. Shame on them for doing that. Mr. Speaker, that was included in my own community of Rosetown where the project will be tendered in a few months.

Mr. Speaker, not . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, not only is this government building long-term care facilities, like the members opposite didn't, but also unlike the members opposite, we're building highways to get to those long-term care facilities.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — So, Mr. Speaker, the member didn't answer the question. And it's the third time the member didn't answer the question.

The question is this: how much is your sweetheart deal with Amicus going to cost the citizens of our province? Will you keep your promise to be accountable and transparent, or are you going to continue to hide the truth? What are you hiding and who are you hiding?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm proud of this government's record on transparency, unlike the members opposite. Again, in health care we'll look at innovative ways of providing services that the members opposite didn't.

Mr. Speaker, we're building long-term care facilities all around this province. And I'm proud of that record.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Nutana.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, that member may be proud of that record, but that record is not transparent, and it certainly isn't accountable at the moment.

Now in their Throne Speech, they called the Amicus project innovative. Well let's take a look at what they call innovative and new. The lawyer for Amicus, Rod Donlevy, is the brother of the Premier's chief of staff. The CEO [Chief Executive Officer] of Amicus was on contract with the minister's department. A major Sask Party donor received the untendered contract to build the facility, and the government guaranteed Amicus his mortgage without knowing how much it's going to cost the people of our province.

So to the minister: if the Amicus deal is so innovative and new, why are they going to all of this trouble to hide the details from the public? What are they hiding, and who are they hiding?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Catholic Health Ministry owns and operates a number of facilities around the province: St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon, St. Peter's Hospital in Melville, Radville Marian Health Centre in Radville, St. Joseph's Hospital in Estevan. Mr. Speaker, they own and operate a number of them.

In regards to the new facility she's talking about, I have a quote from the Chair of the health authority from August 6th, 2010, Mr. Jim Rhode, Mr. Speaker. And it says:

The new facility will help address the need for additional long-term care services in the province, contribute to freeing up hospital beds, and help reduce acute care hospital service wait times for surgery and other services.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what the member opposite has against this facility being built or the Catholic Health Ministry.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — I'm pleased that the minister today is sticking to the speaking points, but it doesn't answer the question. The fact is this: that Amicus is neither innovative or new. It's the same, old, tired conyism that turns people off politics.

Now this past summer the Minister of Justice was forced to step down as Liquor and Gaming minister after it was revealed that he owned shares in Deer Ridge motels. One of the directors of Deer Ridge is Michael Stensrud, the same Sask Party donor who received the untendered contract to build the Amicus facility. Yet another connection between the people involved in this deal and members of the Sask Party.

So to the minister: how many, just how many connections are there between members of the Sask Party and Amicus? What is the government hiding and who are they hiding?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, I find that kind of sad. She talks about the same old way of doing business. This is from the NDP who, when they were in power, eliminated 136 long-term care beds. Mr. Speaker, it is a new and innovative way of providing health care services. It's going to test a new fiscal arrangement that most importantly, Mr. Speaker, doesn't require the provincial government to provide upfront capital. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

### Crown Corporation Revenues

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, since becoming the government, the Sask Party has taken over \$1 billion from our Crown corporations. As a result, today our Crowns are weaker and less stable, and the Saskatchewan people will have to pay a price for many years to come.

My question is to the new Minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan]: does the minister intend to carry on with the Sask Party practice of the past by weakening our Crowns and stripping all of their profits?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Crown corporations in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, are more focused today than they ever have been in the past. We've seen more investment in our Crowns in the last three years than were seen under about 16 years, Mr. Speaker, of that government.

The dividends paid to the GRF [General Revenue Fund], Mr. Speaker, we see coming into GRF, budgeted at \$393 million this year, Mr. Speaker. We'll be retaining over 164 million, Mr. Speaker. That's a ratio of about 70 per cent dividend payment, 30 per cent retained earnings, Mr. Speaker. That's well within the norm of what the Crown corporations have paid in the past, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, the official opposition has received credible information from insiders that says the Sask Party government plans to strip 100 per cent of SaskTel's profits for at least the next five years. That's what insiders are telling us: for the next five years, the Sask Party government will take every penny from SaskTel.

To the Minister Responsible for CIC: is this part of the Sask Party's plan for our Crowns, and what other Crowns will have every single penny stripped from them over the next five years?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, Mr. Speaker, the Crown corporations pay dividends to the Government of Saskatchewan. That's a long-standing tradition. This year we budgeted about a 70 per cent dividend payment,

30 per cent retained earnings.

The good news, Mr. Speaker, is that we have seen the profits in the Crowns grow to a point that our retained earnings this year will be over 30 per cent. It will only be about a 66 per cent payment with current forecasts, Mr. Speaker. That is good news for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I think the members opposite would be interested in this. We have a 70 per cent dividend this year. In the past, Mr. Speaker, in 2002 under that government, 114 per cent dividend; 2001, Mr. Speaker, 181 per cent dividend. Mr. Speaker, 1998, 114 per cent dividend. Mr. Speaker, this government believes in strong Crown corporations, investing in infrastructure, investing in SaskTel, investing in SaskPower. And we will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, this coming from a government that took 212 per cent — 212 per cent last year, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've seen this show before. You gut a Crown corporation and then you sell it off. That's exactly what Grant Devine did with the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. He weakened it and then used its weakened state as an excuse to privatize it.

My question to the Minister Responsible for CIC is this: is the Saskatchewan Party's long-range plan to weaken our Crowns so much that they can privatize them?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — No.

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, last year, 212 per cent stripped from our Crown corporations. Mr. Speaker, 212 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we see continued stripping of our Crown corporations, and we hear that it's going to continue for several years to come at unsustainable levels, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are hearing from various sources that portions of our Crown corporations are either going to be sold off before or immediately after the next election, Mr. Speaker. Will the minister confirm for us today that they plan to strip our Crowns and sell them off?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If that member, Mr. Speaker, would like to discuss what is unsustainable, 16 years of not investing in our Crowns, Mr. Speaker, is unsustainable. When our government inherited SaskPower, Mr. Speaker, their government had invested roughly \$200 million a year in SaskPower. Over the last three years, we've invested upwards of 600 million a year in SaskPower, Mr. Speaker.

If these members want to talk about weakening the Crowns, Mr. Speaker, I think investments in items such as Channel Lake, that would be one way to weaken the Crown sector. SPUDCO,

Mr. Speaker, those would be ways of weakening the Crown sector.

Investing in infrastructure, paying a reasonable rate to the people of Saskatchewan of 70 per cent — actually it's 66 per cent, Mr. Speaker — that is the way of sustaining the Crowns. Taking their dividends, Mr. Speaker, bad investments, that is a way of weakening the Crowns.

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, we saw the government one year ago take 212 per cent. Mr. Speaker, Crown employees and individuals within the Crowns are telling us that this government intends to take 100 per cent of SaskTel's revenues for the next five years, Mr. Speaker. It's not sustainable.

Mr. Speaker, we see in SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] destabilizing SGI Canada by removing the requirement that you sell SGI products, to have an SGI dealer to issue licence plates and licences. Mr. Speaker, taking market share away, weakening our Crown corporation, Mr. Speaker.

We hear after the 2011 election that the portion of auto insurance, not injury protection but auto insurance, will be removed from the licence plate. Mr. Speaker, this government is destabilizing and going to sell off the Crown corporations. Will the minister confirm it today?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if the members opposite have run out of questions or ideas, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, I think they're to a point where scaring the people of Saskatchewan is their only tactic.

Our government believes in maintaining the Crowns, Mr. Speaker. We have a reasonable return on equity, Mr. Speaker. We have demonstrated that in years past. Those members did not. We are going to stand by our Crowns, Mr. Speaker. And I'm proud to do so.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

#### Whitecap Dakota First Nation Affordable Housing Initiative

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, today our government marks the beginning of an unprecedented partnership in Saskatchewan history. Our government announced that it is investing \$1.7 million in Whitecap Dakota First Nation to develop 12 affordable housing units for its members, 12 units so that more of Whitecap Dakota's members can work and live at home.

Today's groundbreaking ceremony marks the first provincially

supported on-reserve affordable housing project in Saskatchewan's history — the very first ever.

Over the years Whitecap has become a model of economic independence and ingenuity. Under the leadership of Chief Darcy Bear and the band council, Whitecap has experienced an astounding period of growth. In the space of a very few years, Whitecap has developed a world-class golf course and a world-class casino.

But they've also made practical investments. They've developed . . . built new roads, a new school, and expanded a health clinic just to name a few. And now there are more jobs at Whitecap than there are people. Whitecap has clearly embraced growth, and Whitecap embodies the spirit of the new Saskatchewan. That's why today's announcement is so very exciting.

Today we mark a partnership between two like-minded levels of government. Today the Government of Saskatchewan and Whitecap came together because of a shared belief in the power of economic growth and a shared resolve to rise to its challenges. Mr. Speaker, it's yet another milestone on the road of economic growth and prosperity, and it's another partnership that will bring people back home. And people are coming back home. Saskatchewan's population is growing in record numbers and Whitecap is growing. People at Whitecap and across the province now have more economic opportunities to work and live in places that they call home.

It should be remembered, without growth we wouldn't have to make this announcement. Without entrepreneurship and innovation of the people of Whitecap, there would be no opportunities for the members of the reserve to come home. Today's announcement recognizes that economic growth needs to be accompanied by innovative partnerships and smart investments in areas like affordable housing. But first and foremost, it's a celebration of the opportunities Saskatchewan citizens now have to come home.

But, Mr. Speaker, we know there are still affordable housing issues in our province, and we will continue our efforts to meet these challenges. Today's announcement is a good example. It's an unprecedented partnership in our province's history, and it demonstrates that our government looks at things a little differently. We are looking to create innovative partnerships that help us rise to the challenges of growth rather than avoid them. That's exactly what today's announcement was all about — rising to the challenge of growth and embracing economic prosperity as a tool that allows people to live and work in the communities that they love. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to thank the minister for sending over an advance copy. I appreciate that. And of course our congratulations go out to Whitecap Dakota First Nations on this very exciting housing initiative. This is very exciting in that they were able to secure support from Sask Housing, is very, very important.

This is indeed positive news, and we know that housing plays

an important part especially when it comes to sustainable economic development. In fact yesterday the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow and myself were in Moose Jaw at a conference about economic development and housing development, how they go hand in hand, and this is very important.

On our side of this House, when we were government, we were very pleased and proud to work with Whitecap Dakota First Nation and Chief Darcy Bear and the council, especially the work around the casino and Highway 219. This was very important work, and it was very exciting that we were able to be part of that. But I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, that I would urge the minister to temper her words a bit and remember that actions speak louder than words.

And I'd like to quote from a news release, January 6th, 2009, "Muskeg Lake pilot project supports First Nations long-term care needs." And I quote, "Draude says the pilot project is an exciting 'first' for Saskatchewan." And we know what happened this summer with the Muskeg Lake project, and we need to see action. Action speaks louder than words.

Yesterday at the housing symposium, though, we were reminded, Mr. Speaker, what we really need. All these announcements are very, very good, but what we really need and we've been asking for over three years now, a full, comprehensive housing strategy where all levels of government meet.

And it was exciting, interesting to see some members from the government here, from the federal government. We need a housing, a comprehensive housing strategy that involves all levels of government, that meets all the needs of Saskatchewan residents, including First Nations people.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill No. 147 — *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services.

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act* now be introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for Social Services that Bill No. 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act* be now read the first time.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be considered a second

time? Minister of Social Services.

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Next sitting of the House.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### Bill No. 614 — *The Autism Spectrum Disorder Strategy Act*

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 614, *The Autism Spectrum Disorder Strategy Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Eastview that Bill 614, *The Autism Spectrum Disorder Strategy Act* be now read the first time.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Next sitting of the House.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

### Bill No. 615 — *The Seniors' Bill of Rights Act*

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 615, *The Seniors' Bill of Rights Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Eastview that Bill No. 615, *The Seniors' Bill of Rights Act* be now read the first time.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

**Ms. Junor:** — Next sitting of the House.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY****WRITTEN QUESTIONS**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Mr. Speaker, I wish to table answers to questions 36 through 38.

**The Speaker:** — Answers to questions 36 through 38 are tabled.

**SPECIAL ORDER****ADJOURNED DEBATES****ADDRESS IN REPLY**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Gantfoer, seconded by Mr. Wyant, and the amendment moved by Mr. Broten.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Cannington.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to again have the opportunity to address the Throne Speech. I had barely had the opportunity to get started last night before we adjourned.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about the Cannington constituency. The Cannington constituency is seeing a significant amount of growth, Mr. Speaker, that's been happening since 2007 and in large part because of the election of the Saskatchewan Party government.

Mr. Speaker, the oil industry in the Cannington constituency continues to grow at a very fast rate, and because of that growth, we're seeing growth in all of the communities throughout the Cannington constituency. As you drive along the highways, Mr. Speaker, it's not unusual to see a new building going up in virtually every community every week when I travel back and forth.

Mr. Speaker, we even have a new hotel built in Stoughton, a three-storey hotel, Mr. Speaker, that's very welcome in the area, Mr. Speaker. And fact is, all of the rooms in that building were rented out before the facility was even built. That's the kind of growth that's happening in our communities, Mr. Speaker.

**An Hon. Member:** — It's time to cut beds.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — The member opposite from Rosemont wants to get involved in the debate, you know, and he's talking about cutting beds. Well there's one small fact that he overlooks every time and so does the former associate minister of Health. They were the ones who actually closed the hospital in Wawota, Mr. Speaker. They had no concerns at that point in time, Mr. Speaker. They closed the hospital.

In Redvers, the associate minister of Health, the member from Saskatoon Eastview at the time, comes down to another community — Redvers, Mr. Speaker — and cuts the ribbon on the new hospital, Mr. Speaker, the new acute care facility, and

the NDP [New Democratic Party] government didn't put a nickel into that facility. Not one red cent, Mr. Speaker. Not one red cent did they invest in that community. The community paid the entire cost of that health care facility, Mr. Speaker, because the members opposite when they were in government completely ignored rural Saskatchewan.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, one of the first ribbon cutting events I had the opportunity to participate in was the opening of the acute care facility in Oxbow. That facility opened on April the 1st, 1992, and then, Mr. Speaker, the NDP government on April the 14th of 1992 shut the doors to that facility. That's the kind of concern those members had, Mr. Speaker, for the people of rural Saskatchewan.

Not only did they close those two facilities in my constituency, but they went across this province and closed 52 rural hospitals, Mr. Speaker. They closed the Plains hospital, and they cut long-term care beds across this province, Mr. Speaker, including 10 beds at Carlyle.

So, Mr. Speaker, when the member opposite from Rosemont wants to chirp about health care in Saskatchewan, he totally ignores the record of his own former government.

Mr. Speaker, but that wasn't what my speech was about. My speech, Mr. Speaker, is about the good things that are happening in Saskatchewan now. Mr. Speaker, we have subdivisions, new subdivisions going up in many communities across my constituency, something that hadn't happened under the NDP governments, Mr. Speaker, for decades.

Mr. Speaker, this is an unprecedented growth in Saskatchewan that we're seeing. And fact is, in 1905 when Saskatchewan was formed into a province, the premier, Premier Scott at the time, had a vision that this province would have 6 million people, Mr. Speaker. He built this beautiful legislature to be a legislature to govern a province of 6 million people.

Well under the former administration and their predecessors, the CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation], this province declined. We reached a maximum of nine hundred, I think, and about thirty-seven thousand. Then we grew very, very slowly. And that 937,000 was about 1929, 1936 somewhere in that time frame, and we grew to slightly under 1 million by 2007.

So in the 60-some years that they were in and out of government, Mr. Speaker, there was no growth in this province, but that growth is occurring now. We're over, Mr. Speaker, over 1,045,622 residents, Mr. Speaker, of this province. We've set a new record, Mr. Speaker, and we continue to grow. And that's because of the vision of this Premier, Mr. Speaker, and the Saskatchewan Party government.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, our municipalities in Cannington, the urban municipalities continue to expand. They have new businesses in town. They have new homes being developed, Mr. Speaker, as fast as they can develop them. And fact is, we'll be looking at redistribution after the next election. And while I'll be sad to have this happen, there is the possibility that my constituency

could actually shrink, Mr. Speaker, because of all the new people moving into that constituency.

Mr. Speaker, I did mention yesterday that I had the opportunity to go hunting on Saturday. And I just wanted to note, Mr. Speaker, that coming up on November the 15th this year will be the first Hunting, Fishing and Trapping Heritage Day in this province. I think this is something that we need to recognize, that that's part of our heritage, Mr. Speaker, to recognize all those hunters, fisherpersons, and trappers across the province, Mr. Speaker, who contribute to our way of life and to our economy. And I would like to congratulate and thank them for their participation and their enjoyment of our great outdoors, Mr. Speaker.

I'd also like to take the opportunity to congratulate our Premier on the potash decision that was made. It was certainly a trying time, a challenging time for Saskatchewan, for this government, and for the federal government, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with the potential takeover of Potash Corporation by BHP.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier toured the country, speaking in Regina and Saskatoon and Toronto and many other places, Mr. Speaker, about the benefits of potash to Saskatchewan and how the takeover by BHP of Potash Corporation would not be in the best interests of Saskatchewan and would not be a net benefit to the country of Canada.

And the federal government, at the end of the day, after much gnashing of teeth by the provincial citizens and legislature, Mr. Speaker — because it was an anxious moment — did the right thing, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate Prime Minister Harper and his cabinet, and especially the members of the House of Commons from Saskatchewan, for speaking on our behalf, for looking after the interests of Saskatchewan. And I mean all 14 members, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it was critical to Saskatchewan and I believe critical to Canada that the decision that came down to block BHP was the proper decision and the right decision to be made, Mr. Speaker. And I have no doubt that that decision will stand after the time period runs out for appeal.

Mr. Speaker, I did note one item of interest, and I think it was in question period, by the member from Prince Albert Northcote when he talked about First Nations taxation, accusing the Saskatchewan Party of promoting First Nations taxation, namely the PST [provincial sales tax]. And indeed we did that in the campaign in 2003. But it's also worth noting, Mr. Speaker, that immediately after the 2003 campaign, the NDP government of the day implemented the PST taxation of First Nations, Mr. Speaker, on off-reserve purchases — which was exactly the policy that the Saskatchewan Party was promoting, Mr. Speaker. So we would like to take credit for having brought forward that idea, but we can't take credit for actually implementing it because the NDP did it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, some of the other interesting things in this Throne Speech, I think, that are worth noting and that are a benefit to the people of Saskatchewan and continue to provide for growth in our province, is the number of highway miles that are being rebuilt and new construction, Mr. Speaker.

For too many years, for too many years, Mr. Speaker, the roads and highways of this province were left to deteriorate. In fact is, one of the former Highways ministers from the NDP had a policy of turning the roads back into gravel, Mr. Speaker — back into gravel. Now there are circumstances where that still happens, Mr. Speaker, because we have so many highways that need to be reconstructed that we can't get to them all at the same time, Mr. Speaker. But we're moving ahead very quickly.

We've had two record years, Mr. Speaker, of investment into our highway infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. And we are going to continue to reinvest in our highways. In fact is, the Minister of Highways does drive around and tour this province significantly. And I know that he does get approached by the other MLAs to make sure that he is aware of the highways in each and every constituency. And, Mr. Speaker, I won't go down a list of highways that I would like the minister to take a drive on, but I have indeed mentioned a few of them to him from time to time — like 318 and 361 and 47 and 48, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Somebody hollered from behind me, 35. But 35 doesn't go through my constituency, Mr. Speaker. I will let that member talk about his own highways, Mr. Speaker.

One of the other issues that's positive in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, is the number of new licensed child care spaces. My communities have benefited from this as well. There are 2,900 new licensed, long-term licensed child care spaces since 2007, Mr. Speaker. And some of those are taking place in my constituency. I know that Carlyle has a new facility. I know that Oxbow has been expanding, Mr. Speaker, because there are a lot of new employees, a lot of new people who need these kind of services in our constituencies, Mr. Speaker, and that is of benefit.

This year was a challenge in agriculture, Mr. Speaker. And while I would say Cannington was one of the more fortunate areas when it came to heavy rainfall, we did have significant rainfall but not near as much as, say, the northeast part of this province had. But even so, the \$360 million that we invested — in part with the federal government — across the province of Saskatchewan to help out with the flooding will be a real benefit to the agriculture producers of this province.

But agriculture with the good weather that we had in the last month has had the opportunity to get their crops off in pretty good shape, Mr. Speaker, at least in our area. I know some of the others are still struggling. But that means that the farm economy will be better off than it looked like they were going to be the first week of September, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that is showing results, Mr. Speaker, because of this government, is in some of the areas of health care in my own constituency. We have new doctors that have come into both Redvers and Arcola, Mr. Speaker, after struggling for some time because of the lack of doctors.

Under the previous administration, we were training significantly less doctors than we needed in this province. We were relying very heavily on IMGs [international medical graduate], immigrant doctors coming in, immigrant medical graduates to come into this province, Mr. Speaker, to fill in the needs. Well everybody else in the world was looking for those

very same people, Mr. Speaker, and we had to compete.

We've now increased the number of seats for training the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Our students, Mr. Speaker, can go now to the U of S and train to be doctors, and that will greatly benefit Saskatchewan because these are the people who best know Saskatchewan. And so they will hopefully stay here and go into our city clinics, our rural clinics, and provide for the medical services that we need.

In Redvers where I do my medicine — when I go to the doctor, that's where it's at — we have two new doctors, Mr. Speaker, there. The new doctor that I frequent comes from South Africa. And just as a little aside, I went in there a couple of weeks ago and she comes in first thing in the morning and she has her parka and gloves on when she comes into the room where patients go. And I kind of looked at her and wondered what's going on. She says, well I'm still not used to Canada. And it was like 45 or . . . That's Fahrenheit; I'm still thinking in Fahrenheit. So about 10 degrees Celsius, Mr. Speaker. It really wasn't cold yet, but to her it was cold.

But she and the other doctor in Redvers are more than welcome and the community is more than happy to have them in the area. We have three doctors now practising in the Arcola area and they're just as welcome, Mr. Speaker. They are making a huge improvement to the medical services available in those communities. And they will help to relieve some of the pressure as well on the Wawota community.

So, Mr. Speaker, the physician recruitment is improving in this province. And the new physician recruitment agency that the Minister of Health has implemented will carry on further benefits for all of us across the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, we are seeing growth in Saskatchewan because of the vision brought forward by the Premier of Saskatchewan, brought forward by the Saskatchewan Party. We have already accomplished over 100 of our campaign promises, Mr. Speaker, with the rest going to be accomplished soon, Mr. Speaker.

So I will be voting against the amendment.

Now last night one of the members opposite was speaking and at the end of their speech indicated that they would not be supporting the amendment. Now I had a flash of hope there that maybe one of the members on that side had come to their senses, had understood the benefit of this Speech from the Throne and the benefit to Saskatchewan that was being projected for and to be delivered. But, Mr. Speaker, that flash of hope was quickly dimmed when that member restated her position that she would not be supporting the Throne Speech. I will be supporting the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Harper:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to enter into this debate, the debate on the Throne Speech, and to do so on behalf of the people of Regina Northeast that I've had such a pleasure in representing

for a number of years.

I know I've said this before in this House, Mr. Speaker, but I do believe it bears repeating that — and I think we'll all agree — that wherever you travel in Saskatchewan, you meet warm, friendly, hospitable people. And it doesn't matter whether it's in Regina or Saskatoon or Canora or Yorkton or Humboldt or Rosetown or Unity. Wherever you go, you'll be warmly welcomed with friendly faces and friendly people who are always there to answer any questions you may have or, if on the rare occasion you have to ask directions, they'd be more than happy to give you those directions.

And I can say that, Mr. Speaker, that the fine people of Saskatchewan, but equally there are no finer people anywhere than the fine people of Regina Northeast. And it's been truly an honour as well as a privilege to have the ability to represent them in this fine, fine Chamber and to get to know them, I guess, through visiting them at their doorstep.

It was something I've always enjoyed doing each and every summer, is getting out and visiting people at their doorstep. I always tried to maintain a quota of a minimum of 14 polls, and after a while it'd come to a point where a number of people would certainly recognize me at the . . . As soon as I rang the doorbell, they'd come to the door and they would greet me by my first name. And that was very warm and reassuring, and able to have a conversation with them and to find out how things are going for them and their family since the last visit, and hear from them any suggestions or ideas that they may have as far as the role of the MLA and as far as the input into the direction of government.

[14:45]

And I think it's safe to say that we all, Mr. Speaker, when we seek political office, we do it with the intentions of making a change, making things better for those who we serve today, but also better for those who will be coming in the future. And I think we, regardless of political stripe, I think we all strive to do that. So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's . . . I just want to say that I'm honoured and privileged to have had the opportunity to represent Regina Northeast.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to take this moment to congratulate the new member of this legislature, the member from Saskatoon Northwest. I have yet to get to know the member. I've had the opportunity of meeting him and having a brief conversation, but I'm looking forward to getting to know him better. I think, Mr. Speaker, that he will find his new role both interesting and challenging. And we will certainly be looking forward to working with him over the next few months to once again further the cause of people in this great province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I think also at this time of year we need to take a moment or two to remember. With Remembrance Day not too far away, it's time for us to take a few moments out of our time, out of our busy day which we think is so, so busy and so important, to remember those who have given us the opportunity to have a democracy where men and women can gather as representatives of the people of the province and to debate, to put forward ideas, to debate those ideas and thrash

out those ideas and to come up with policy, regulations that will in the long run benefit people of Saskatchewan and to make this a better place for the citizenship.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, we need to reflect on that because it's I think something that many of us, my generation and those even younger who never really experienced the conflict of battle, never experienced the decision to risk everything and to do so for the future . . . And I think we need to remember those within our families who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

We have to remember those who were willing to make that decision to put their life on the line for this great country of ours, for those who did so and came back either wounded or perhaps suffering a disability of some type and paid the price for the rest of their life. So, Mr. Speaker, we owe those men and women a great deal. And I think that taking the opportunity once a year is a small, small responsibility we have to remember and honour those who gave so much.

Mr. Speaker, in all likelihood this will be the last Throne Speech that I have the opportunity to speak to. As you know, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated last spring that I would not be letting my name stand for re-election, nor would I be seeking re-election. Now I say that, Mr. Speaker, that this is likely — I say, you note I say likely — the last Throne Speech in which I will participate because you never know in this game, Mr. Speaker. I, 12 or 16 years from now, may decide to make a comeback and come back in this legislature. You just never know those things. So we'll leave that open. But in all likelihood, Mr. Speaker, this will be my last Throne Speech debate but not my last speech in this House. To the chagrin of the members opposite, I plan to make a couple more speeches before my time is up here, Mr. Speaker. But you just never know what 12 or 16 years' absence from this place might cause you to return. You never know those things.

Mr. Speaker, in Regina Northeast most recently, as a result of my indication that I would not be seeking re-election, the New Democratic Party held a nominating contest. The contest was contested by three very, very good candidates. The political process worked, and we selected a candidate — a very fine young gentleman, Dwayne Yasinowski — who will be the carrier of the flag of the New Democratic Party in Regina Northeast in the next election. And, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Yasinowski will certainly serve both Regina Northeast and the province of Saskatchewan very well as the MLA for that constituency after the next election.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's something that I'm sort of looking forward to, the next election, because it'll be one that I'll be able to work in without the same amount of pressure as I've normally had in the past.

But I find it, Mr. Speaker, interesting that the Throne Speech, theme of the Throne Speech, is taken from Robert Frost's poem where he suggests two roads diverged in the woods and he took the one less travelled. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting when you look at the history both in this province and in other jurisdictions where conservative-minded political parties have gained power. They have enjoyed a smooth, new road for a period of time after they gained power. In this particular case, I can envision that that road would be a four-lane highway, well

paved and in good condition because that was a road that was left to them by the former government.

But as you travel down that road and as time went on and they start to become more responsible for their own actions, you start to notice that that road starts to deteriorate, and it goes from a four-lane highway down to a mere two-lane highway. And you notice that it's patch upon patch already and that the signage isn't as well signed as it was before. And you notice soon that the lines aren't painted. In fact, Mr. Speaker, the shoulders of the road are starting to crumble and deteriorate. Then you go a little further down that road as time goes on, and you notice that that road now narrows even more so because it doesn't even have shoulders any more. And soon you come upon the only sign, the only sign on that highway, and that highway sign indicates that the pavement ends and the gravel starts. And Mr. Speaker, as time goes on under a conservative-minded government, you notice that that road simply deteriorates from a gravel road to a dirt road to a narrow path.

And Mr. Speaker, that's been the history of the results of conservative-minded governments, whether it be in this province or whether it be in our great nation federally. And we see that, Mr. Speaker, as an indication of what happens to an economy, what happens to the province when the conservative-minded policies take hold and start to bear fruit and the government starts to reap the seeds of its own sowing.

With that, Mr. Speaker, we can probably start to, I can start to relate to some of my experiences this summer. As the Highways and Infrastructure critic, I took the opportunity to drive around Saskatchewan. Now I didn't travel every highway in Saskatchewan. I've tried to travel many of them over the last three years. And each summer, I've always taken a few weeks and travelled in different areas of the province over different roads just to experience them myself, to see them myself, and to stop and talk to folks in the community.

Some cases, I've set up meetings ahead of time. In some cases, I just simply took the opportunity to stop in either at the town office or the RM office and in many cases in local coffee shop and have a conversation with the local people there just to get their feedback. And that's why I can say with a great deal of confidence that the people in Saskatchewan are certainly fine and warm and hospitable people. And I'll be the first to admit that not everybody I spoke to was supportive of the New Democratic Party, but they were certainly all willing to share their ideas and their thoughts and, in some cases, many of their experiences.

But what we're seeing, Mr. Speaker, is a lot of the highways that are certainly important highways that are not being looked after, just for example, No. 4 Highway north of North Battleford which is a very important economic thoroughfare because it supports the movement of the finished product from the plants at Meadow Lake to the railhead at North Battleford. And I understand from those in the area that you can expect about 40 B-train loads of product each and every day travelling down that road from Meadow Lake to the railroad to be loaded on the railcars. And that road, Mr. Speaker, certainly shows the wear and the tear of that weight as well as the normal traffic outside of that. And that is certainly one of the highways that has been neglected by this government.



And certainly Highway 35, if you've travelled on Highway 35 certainly you'll notice that that highway is . . . Well to call it a highway, I think, is being very generous. It's certainly short of that. 310 once again has been ignored by this government, despite the fact that it's been brought to the government's attention on more than one occasion, 310 particularly between Ituna and Foam Lake. As one of the local residents told me, it should be called a tow road — not a toll road but a tow road — because if it rains and you drive on that road, you're going to need a tow, according to the local residents.

Highway 22, Highway 22 from Southey through Earl Grey, certainly a main artery to a major grain inland terminal there, but that road has been referred to as a cobblestone road with every second stone missing. And I've talked to people who travel that road each and every day, and they tell me the horror stories of the number of windshields that they've had to replace in short periods of time. In some cases, in a matter of weeks they've had to replace a multiple number of windshields. So the story simply goes on.

Most recently I had the opportunity to accompany a couple of my colleagues, or some of my colleagues actually, to Cumberland House for meetings there. And one of the issues certainly in Cumberland House was the Highway 123 which . . . While we were there, while we were there, a rain came up and it rained for probably an hour and a half, two hours, before we were able to leave. Come around for the end of our meetings and we were able to leave Cumberland House, and I'm glad that I was riding with one of my colleagues who had a truck. I believe it was . . . I think it might be a four-wheel drive. I don't know that for sure, but he certainly had a truck. And I'm glad it was his truck on that road and not my car on that road because after the rain it was a challenge, let me say, a challenge to drive on that road and to be able to do so without hitting the ditch on those occasions when you met a vehicle and had to pass. It became a bit of a, you know, holding your breath for a moment or two while you actually made it past a particular oncoming car. Certainly Highway 135, Pelican Narrows, is something I had an opportunity to be at not too long ago with my colleague from Cumberland constituency.

And I have been on that particular highway in the past, and it is an interesting highway to drive on, to say the least. When I say it's interesting, it's dangerous. It's a very dangerous highway. The first, maybe, 10 or 15 kilometres isn't bad. But after that, it's blind curves, sharp turns, hills, dusty conditions — extremely dusty conditions — and very, very dangerous. We had the experience of driving on that stretch of road around 5 o'clock, 5:30 in the evening when the sun was just setting, and there was times that you just . . . I mean, you held your breath when you're going around a corner because you couldn't see if there was another vehicle there. And that other vehicle could have very easily been a semi trailer unit because the semi trailer units run up and down that road each and every day.

And that's just to Pelican Narrows. And from Pelican Narrows to Sandy Bay, it's even worse. We didn't get to Sandy Bay this time, but I've been to Sandy Bay. I've been on that road and the curves are sharper. The hills are very blind. And it's very, very dangerous, Mr. Speaker, and yet this government fails to act upon that. This government fails to put safety first. This government fails to take into consideration Saskatchewan

people's need for safety in their motoring, for the motoring public. And it's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, because all citizens of Saskatchewan should be able to share in this province, share in the prosperity of this province. And certainly those people in the North, certainly those of Highway 123 and 135, are not receiving their fair share.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when we were in Cumberland House one of the things that I noticed — pardon me, in Pelican Narrows — one of the things that I noticed was that Pelican Narrows community basically straddles the highway on both sides, quite close proximity to the highway. Being a gravel highway and being in an extremely dusty condition, the air was simply full of dust. I can't help but think that day after day after day of that would be certainly a health problem for those folks who have to live there and who breathe that air each and every day.

[15:00]

And it was so bad, Mr. Speaker, that when you drove by you could just see the dust that had settled on the houses and the outbuildings, and the vehicles perhaps sitting in the yard were just coated with that dust. I can only imagine what the inside of the lungs of the people who live there, particularly the children who play outside and breathe in that air on an ongoing basis, what condition . . . That has to be a health problem. It simply has to be a health problem, Mr. Speaker.

And yet this government withdrew the funding that was in place. When the governments changed, there was funding in place to pave 7 kilometres of that highway that rolls right through the centre of that community, Pelican Narrows. Not only would it have been a safety factor as far as people driving there, Mr. Speaker, but it would have been an improvement and a health factor if that pavement would have gone ahead. This government cancelled that out, took the money and spent it elsewhere. And, Mr. Speaker, that I think I find very unfortunate. It's very unfortunate.

Mr. Speaker, we noticed recently that there is certainly indications that this government is looking at furthering their privatization agenda. We see that within the highway maintenance system. There are certainly ads on television. It was stories in the newspaper that suggest that we could be looking at this government's moving its privatization agenda over to the Department of Highways which would include the maintenance crews that we have in this great province who do a wonderful job, a wonderful job in this province despite the weather conditions, whether it be a blizzard in the winter or whether it be a hot summer day. Certainly you'll see the maintenance crews out there maintaining our highways.

And this government is moving down the road of privatization, similar to what has happened in British Columbia where you've seen the quality of roads and the hours of maintenance simply drop under privatization. And I would hope, Mr. Speaker, that this government would reverse its privatization agenda, but we'll be certainly watching that very, very closely and being prepared to notify the people of this great province once the government moves in a more official capacity to privatizing the maintenance crews on our highways.

Mr. Speaker, health care, which has always been a stable for

Saskatchewan people and an issue that they have always been concerned about and an issue that . . . And they should be because there is probably the most important part of our living is being able to enjoy good health. And for those of us who do, we're very blessed. But there are many in our province that don't enjoy the same level of quality of health. And when they need that health care system, when a situation occurs that they need to draw on the health care system, they deserve to have a system that will be there to support them, to benefit them in their time of need, and to provide them the services that they require.

Mr. Speaker, when the present government was in opposition, they were concerned — and they sputtered it out in *Hansard* many times — they were concerned about the number of rural doctors in this great province of ours. And what we are seeing now is a decline in those doctors, Mr. Speaker. Though the government's in place, the decline in rural doctors is certainly evident.

We're seeing that, I guess, all over the province, Mr. Speaker. But I keep a little bit of an eye on the issue of health care in the communities of Kamsack, Canora, and Preeceville, where we're getting fed a steady diet of bypass announcements. And it seems like it's certainly increased. The number of bypass announcements have certainly increased in the last three years under this government.

The doctor shortages is the reason. We have a number of those communities simply are experiencing doctor shortages. The doctors that are there simply can't maintain it on an ongoing basis so that they have to have a break, and when they have to have a break, that particular community goes on bypass.

Well that's fine, Mr. Speaker, if nothing serious happens. But what happens if there is a serious incident? What happens if that particular community is on bypass, the hospital doesn't have the doctor that they normally can rely on because the doctor has had to take a break, and that community goes on bypass and a situation happens that could be extremely dangerous as far as the well-being of the people there?

We've seen that, Mr. Speaker, to the point where the communities have now become so concerned about it that this summer there has been public meetings held, public meetings held in Kamsack in regards to the doctor shortage and the number of times that hospital in Kamsack has gone on bypass. We've seen petitions circulated around the town of Canora calling on the health district to ensure there's an adequate number of doctors available to ensure quality health care to the people of Canora. Mr. Speaker, this is concerning, concerning to us who want to ensure that the people of Saskatchewan enjoy top-quality health care because that is something that they deserve.

It's also concerning, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to that particular part of Saskatchewan. I know from past experiences that somewhere around 13 per cent of Saskatchewan's population are senior citizens. And as I understand it, in that area of the province — the Canora, Kamsack, Yorkton area of the province — about 26 per cent of that population there are senior citizens. So that area has almost twice the provincial average of senior citizens. And yet most recently we hear an

announcement of the closure of 18 long-term care beds in the town of Canora — 14 of them in the lodge and four in the hospital. Mr. Speaker, in an area of the province that has twice the provincial average of senior citizens, we should be expanding long-term care beds, not reducing them. But this government has seen fit to reduce long-term care beds in Canora by 18. That announcement's been made.

On top of that, Mr. Speaker, they've announced the reduction of services in the kitchen at the hospital. No longer will meals for the hospital be prepared in the hospital kitchen. The meals will be prepared in the kitchen at the lodge, transported across to the hospital, and simply served out of the kitchen, hospital kitchen. Hospital kitchen in the Canora Hospital will simply become a staging area and no longer an active hospital, no longer an active kitchen. Mr. Speaker, my fear here is it's what we're seeing as this government is setting the stage for the closure of the hospital in Canora. It's only a matter of time.

Mr. Speaker, that is not what Saskatchewan's people deserve. Saskatchewan people deserve the best of health care services, top-quality health care services, services that react in times of need, react to serve the people of this great province of ours, particularly our seniors. For they are the people who have sacrificed, worked hard, to build this great province of ours and they should, in their senior years, they should have adequate housing. They shouldn't have to fear for housing. They should have the ability to live in a reasonable quality of life. Mr. Speaker, you don't do that by shutting down 18 long-term care beds.

Mr. Speaker, I would think that perhaps one of the reasons that we're seeing the government use perhaps the back door to many of these cuts is because that the mismanagement . . . [inaudible] . . . the finances of this great province of ours and has resulted in this, the debt in Saskatchewan actually increasing over the last couple of years. And we're seeing about a 55 per cent increase. And we're seeing, as a result of that, cuts to programs and services that really affect the ordinary people, the families of this great province of ours.

We're seeing the evidence of that, this government being starved for cash, I guess you would say, because of their policy now to rip away 100 per cent of the profits from our Crown corporations. Most recently, a plan has been brought to our attention of stripping away the SaskTel profits for the next five years.

Not only is this government starved for cash and they're using the cash from the Crown corporations, but it also plays into their plans to weaken the Crowns so they can privatize them, if not before . . . likely not before the next election but soon thereafter. They want to put the Crowns in a situation where they certainly will be able to make the argument to the people of Saskatchewan that the Crowns are now a debt burden to them, to the province, and that they should be sold off to the private sector.

And this is interesting, Mr. Speaker, when you look at what that particular party said when they were in opposition, and what that particular party said when they were running in the last election. They said that by voting for the Sask Party and having a Sask Party government, we would all see our taxes go down.

Well, Mr. Speaker, in some ways they may be right because when you look at potash, you see our dollars from potash going down to Chicago. When you look at oil, you see our dollars from oil reserves going down via Calgary to Dallas. So, Mr. Speaker, that might not be exactly what they meant when they said our taxes would go down, but it certainly is the end result.

Mr. Speaker, every government has a duty and a responsibility to ensure that its citizenship has the opportunity to live in a reasonable and beneficial economy and society that supports people of Saskatchewan. And certainly that should be the government's, any government's responsibility, and that should be any government's goal.

Unfortunately what we're seeing is that no longer do people in Saskatchewan enjoy the lowest utility rates. In fact what we're seeing is that the people in Saskatchewan are about midway up the utility rate scale, and going higher. We're seeing the rents in our great province of ours skyrocket, making it increasingly difficult for those working people who are working on the bottom end of the pay scale to be able to make ends meet and support their family in a reasonable fashion. We're seeing those people on fixed income, many of them seniors, who are experiencing difficulty in making their pension cheques stretch to cover the increased cost of living.

And this government hasn't stepped to the plate to provide any support for those who are finding it most difficult. In fact, this government is doing a lot of the issues that are causing the cost of living to escalate, such as increasing utility rates. Recent announcement of SaskPower rates will be increasing each year for the next 10 years to the point where they will have doubled by that time.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think once again this government is failing the people of this province of ours in being able to ensure that all people in Saskatchewan enjoy the benefits of Saskatchewan, enjoy the prosperity in Saskatchewan, and to do so in a fair and reasonable way.

Mr. Speaker, many of my colleagues who spoke before me mentioned the fact that in the world of agriculture, this last year was certainly a huge, huge challenge. And I can agree with that. I think that not only have I never seen a year that experienced so much rain, but I have talked to many across this great province who've been involved in agriculture their entire life, and some of them, Mr. Speaker, even older than me — although there's probably not too many that would fall in that category — but many of them who shared with me the fact that they could never recall a year where there was constantly so much rain, constantly so wet. They've had wet spells, whether in the spring or perhaps in the fall, but never one that stretched throughout the entire year.

I think most producers are quite pleased and thankful that the month of October turned quite nice. The rain stopped; the sun came out; and they were allowed to harvest the crop, such as it was. And at the end of the day it's surprising how well the crops did turn out.

But there's a huge number of unseeded acres in this great province of ours that simply farmers weren't able to get to. They simply weren't able to seed those acres and as a result of

that, there's going to be a cash crunch on the farm today. Not so much today, Mr. Speaker, as you know and those who've been involved in the agriculture industry will know. It's not the year that you suffer the disaster that hurts; it's the year after.

So there's a little bit of joy out in the farm today because they were able to salvage their crop, and in most cases in a dry condition. Although some of the grains, particularly cereal grains, were not of the quality one would like, the oilseeds came through pretty well.

[15:15]

So that there is some joy out there. But that joy will be short-lived as it rolls into early next year and, as farmers do in about January and February, start planning, putting their plans together to do it again another year, and they start to make arrangements for financing, that it's going to be tough. It's going to be tough because the number of unseeded acres out there simply equal no revenue. And that, Mr. Speaker, is really going to be a challenge for the farmers and for our farm community and for basically our rural Saskatchewan.

And the announcement by the provincial government of a \$30-an-acre program, combined with the federal government — 12 from the province and the balance from the feds — simply comes up short. Simply comes up short. Thirty dollars an acre, Mr. Speaker, nowhere near represents the true costs that farmers experience in putting a crop in and taking it off, or running their operation, and certainly comes nowhere near being enough to bail them out to meet the point where they can probably farm again another year. They're going to have to look at other sources to be able to do that.

And this summer when I was driving around, touring some of the highways, I did something that I haven't done for a long time, and that is I did some cold calling. I would simply stop in at a farmyard and introduce myself, give them a card, and in most cases, Mr. Speaker, I had a very warm reception. I was . . . As is the norm in rural Saskatchewan, you were invited in for a cup of coffee and a chat. And we did that. And we enjoyed that because we were able to sit down and talk to the people on the front lines, people who were experiencing the problems each and every day. And, Mr. Speaker, I've always enjoyed that because you get the straight bill of goods when you talk to those folks who are on that front line.

And in this case, many, many people would share with me that the \$30 an acre that they received was welcomed — it certainly was — but it was certainly inadequate. In many cases it didn't do more than just cover the costs of the chemical and hiring of the sprayer to spray down their unseeded acres to control the weeds. And it certainly left them short of being able to continue to finance their operations and be in a position to be able to put in another crop.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that when we as opposition here spoke publicly about that particular issue, we were suggesting that a fair and a reasonable compensation rate would be more like \$100 an acre. And certainly that does come a lot closer to representing the true cost of the actual costs of operating a farm, a grain farm today. But, Mr. Speaker, in talking to those farmers, they were saying that yes, they would have welcomed

\$100 an acre, and that is exactly what they would need, is \$100 an acre. But if bad turned to worse, push came to shove, they could probably get away with about 75 or 80. And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this government's reaction was a mere \$30 — \$30 an acre and that's it.

Mr. Speaker, it falls far short of what is actually needed for those producers out there to be able to find themselves in a position where they can continue to farm and put in next year's crop.

Today's announcement by the Minister of Agriculture for some funds for livestock producers is welcome. That was something that livestock producers had mentioned to me throughout the summer and throughout this fall, that they felt that they were shortchanged because many of them suffered from this rain, from the surplus of rain probably as bad as a grain producer.

I know one farmer out in the area where I have my land who cut his alfalfa and wasn't able to get it all baled before the rains came. And by the time it got dry enough for him to get back out to get the rest of the alfalfa, the second growth was so rich and so thick that he couldn't extract the cut alfalfa. He tried using a rake, but even the rakes wouldn't pull it out. So he was given no other choice except cut it again, cut the alfalfa again, try to lay one swath on the other, and it picked it up that way. And I believe he did salvage some.

But nevertheless, the quality of his hay, whether that hay be used for market or whether that hay be used for his own purposes, the quality is down. And as a result of that, means that if he's feeding it himself, he's going to certainly have to purchase supplements in order to bring the nutrient levels up to feed his livestock for the winter. If he's selling that hay in the commercial market, it likely won't be worth the premium prices because the quality simply isn't there.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the theme of this Throne Speech, the theme of two roads diverging in the woods, and we realize that those roads . . . the choice of taking the road less travelled was a result, perhaps, of conservative-minded governments and not being able to maintain those roads. So I'm wondering, Mr. Speaker, when that decision is being made to take the road less travelled, maybe the reason it's less travelled is because the people who have experienced the conservative roads in the past simply don't want to go down that road again. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that is the case.

That's certainly what I'm hearing from the good folks across this great province. It's certainly what I'm hearing from the good folks in Regina Northeast. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I will be, when the time comes, I will be supporting the amendment and I will not be supporting the main motion. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Carlton.

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's truly a pleasure to once again stand up and take part in the debate in this Legislative Assembly. And, Mr. Speaker, it's always good when a guy gets to stand up in this House and be able to thank those that got you here.

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member from Weyburn on his feet?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — With leave to introduce a guest.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Weyburn has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Weyburn.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the other members of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce a guest seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, probably the person I've known other than my family the longest, probably my best friend. Mr. Speaker, seated in your gallery is Mark Schmidt.

Mr. Speaker, Mark and I grew up in Halbrite and were school chums throughout our education. Mark lives in Yellow Grass with his wife, Jill. He's a plumber. Mr. Speaker, he's up here in Regina for the next couple of months upgrading his skills at SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology]. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure which is better, having a friend that's a politician or having a friend that's a plumber. But certainly from my point of view, I know which one I would choose. And Mark's been a great friend.

I think, Mr. Speaker, all of the members have those people in our lives that helped to put real life in context outside of this House, and certainly Mark Schmidt is one of those. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming my friend, Schmitty, to the Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from P.A. Carlton.

## SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Gantfoer, seconded by Mr. Wyant, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Broten.]

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying before, it's always a pleasure to get up to be able thank publicly the people who got you here. I think it's incumbent upon myself, as most members have already in their debates, to thank the staff that we work with. My CA [constituency assistant], Lora Parenteau. I've got Joan in my office here; Doug Line. I've got Morgan Bradshaw and Kate Verbeek in the office here that do great work and have for other ministers as well.

But I think it's also very important that we don't forget our families who don't get to see much of us. We spend lots of time away from them, being down here working and of course going

to events and such that we do. So I was able to, you know, take my wife to a few events with me, my daughters as well, this last year. So they truly get a better picture of the kind of work that we do.

But it's good for the people in my constituency to see them as well, to know that without them, I couldn't be here. And I want to thank my lovely wife, Charlene, and my daughters, Alyssa and Mackenzie, for allowing me to do this, putting up with me as well because this is a very demanding life. And some days I come home, it's a quick visit, and I'm on the road again. So it's also great that we are able to thank extended family as well for being there for us.

So I think what I'll just do is I want to welcome the member from Saskatoon Northwest. It's good to see he's here, and it's great to have him on our side and a good battle fought. And it's good to have him working with the Saskatchewan Party government now.

The theme of this year's Throne Speech was, or this particular Throne Speech was "The New Road." And there's so many ways the new road involved good hard work leading up to this new time. And there's some people I want to thank in Prince Albert as well. We have a great population growth in the last three years to over 1.045 million. And there's a few people in Prince Albert that I think are very helpful.

A lot of those people coming in are immigrants. So Marge Nainaar from the Prince Albert multiculturalism society is a great contributor to those newcomers in helping them get settled in Prince Albert, helping them get connected to contribute to the economy and working with them in the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program as well for paperwork.

I think the other person we have to thank or look at as well is Linda Boyer from the Prince Albert Métis housing society, who has been able to work with the government and previous governments too — I'll give credit where it's due as well — in building affordable housing units in Prince Albert for these newcomers now.

On that note, we've been very lucky as a government to work with individuals such as Linda. And since November of 2007, you know, we've actually overseen the completion of 62 affordable housing, rental housing units in Prince Albert, investing over 5.6 million. Plus an additional 58 units are in various stages of development for a total investment of 8.2 million for affordable housing. But again, without the people on the ground working with government, it could never happen. So I want to thank her as well.

Another big piece in Prince Albert is that we see our population increasing. We have a lot of youth, a lot of young families, a lot of kids going to school. The child care spaces are critical to Prince Albert. And two people that have a great role to play with that are Gail Szauner and Donna Strauss from the two representative organizations that they . . . They work with the school divisions in Prince Albert.

We've been able to put in just about 200 seats of child care spaces in Prince Albert for these new families. These new emerging economies that we have allow people to work away

from home, out of home, and have a safe place for the children to be at. That's very critical, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to take time, and it's incumbent upon me to look at what we did in Prince Albert for my old career, policing. We made a promise in the campaign to put 120 new police officers in the streets in this province. And up to this point, we have 90 will be in. So 30 more to go. And I think it's been great for Prince Albert. We were able to give, at this point, 11 officers will be dedicated to Prince Albert. And it's one of those kind of professions that you can never have enough. But when you do give the officers, the chiefs of police use them, and they are able to use them at their discretion and will to meet the ongoing needs and crime trends in our cities.

The other thing I thought was really incredible with this Throne Speech, it continues on the theme of addiction spaces, addictions treatment for not just families but youth as well. We'll have 100 beds, long-term addictions recovery beds funded. But we also have the social brief detox that opened up in Prince Albert recently.

And I just turned sod with the Minister of Health two weeks ago on a new youth detox facility. That will be a 15-bed facility for a lot of youth that are, for whatever their reasons are, they get caught in the quagmire of drug use and addictions. And it's some young people, and it's one of those kind of things. They have nowhere to go. But now they will, which is going to be a great thing for Prince Albert.

There's also talk of another detox centre for families or single parents. Parents that have children can attend there and not be separated from their children. So it's going to be a great thing for Prince Albert. It's not just Prince Albert that has those issues. We recognize it's all over the province. So it's just a nice thing for my hometown to be able to have. And it's part of the ongoing efforts to tackle the issue of addictions in our province, Mr. Speaker.

The thing that is also I'm very proud of, as being the new Minister of Municipal Affairs, is the work that's been done up to this point with Municipal Affairs ministers of the past, our federal counterparts, and our municipalities for the stimulus funding where a lot of the funding projects that I have oversight on are a three-way partnership — federal, provincial, and municipal. So it's good to see that those funds are moving forward.

As everyone's aware of, we had an interesting summer with a lot of rain. I had to answer some questions, upon becoming the minister, about will that funding be there. And right now with the federal government, we've been working with the new Minister Strahl and his officials.

And thanks to Minister Baird, the previous minister of Infrastructure and Transportation, on working with this government to ensure that the funding will be available, with some parameters of course. We've heard about them already regarding the projects that were under water or delayed because of water and rain this summer. So I know that the officials from both levels of government and municipal governments are working together to ensure that we can get these projects done on time so we don't lose the funding, Mr. Speaker.

The other part of my speech today, and I'll be wrapping up very quickly, is to do with the issue of pre-kindergarten programs for vulnerable youth. That's the kind of program that will be addressing the same issue as the child care spaces before. There are a lot of people in this province who before couldn't engage in the economy because they had child care issues. We also have now the issue where we have more people and more jobs posted for those people to work in. And to be able to have those new spaces for vulnerable youth, for three- and four-year-olds, across our province is going to be very important. I know myself, with my wife's job and her school, it's going to be a great thing as we see more of the children that will be contributing to our province's history, their future.

We'll have a chance now. We'll have a hand up. And the families have that to move forward. So that's very important to look at too, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

The thing we have in this province now is a vision. I've said it last year in the budget debate, that it's providing a future for our children and for our grandchildren. It's something that I think every government or good government should be looking at doing, is looking at that kind of a positive role model now, what you leave now for the future. And that's very important, Mr. Speaker. So I know that taking part today in this particular Speech from the Throne debate allows me to talk about Prince Albert and the future.

We see Prince Albert is now ranked as the top . . . of the top 10, it's number 4 overall in Canada's top entrepreneurial cities. So that's a very, very big accomplishment for my city. And it's got nothing to do, I can swear, with me. I know that. But it's the women and men out there that risk their bottom line every day to create jobs, and that's what stimulates the economy. It's those mom-and-pop operations I've always said, Mr. Speaker, that truly give the entry level work and some other professionals a chance to start their careers. And I look forward to my two daughters benefiting from a lot of that opportunity in the future from entrepreneurship.

The thing as well that we look at now in the province is that . . . And I look at the overall issue of the amount of funding that's available as we plan for growth, Mr. Speaker. This particular ministry saw nine applications that represented 52 municipalities in the first intake. So it's one of those kind of initiatives that this government sees as another mechanism, avenue to support this growing province and the growing economies of the province. Intake two, I'm sure, will have a lot more applications. We'll see that in the future.

As a government, we also recognized early on that the municipal economic enhancement program provided money, unconditional funds to our municipalities and cities and towns to utilize for various projects, from recreational projects to roofs on new community clubs and those kind of things. So it's again listening to our partners and working with the municipal leaders to ensure we can still provide that ongoing.

And, Mr. Speaker, along with that line is the revenue-sharing piece that we will be delivering on the full 1 per cent of PST in this year's budget coming up. Again, unconditional funding that

will allow the cities and towns and villages to decide if they want to lower the burden of taxes on their ratepayers, if they want to use it for infrastructure, or what they want to use it for, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So it's one of those things where government's listened. The stakeholders took part in developing a formula to utilize those funds, and I look forward to delivering on delivering that promise after next year's budget.

One thing I think we see across this province, when I toured the province this summer, I saw it happening everywhere — new developments in every city and town I went to. I know in my particular riding of Prince Albert Carlton there's actually new . . . two private developers have come in recently. One is just starting up with some homes. One's been well-developed and established, and they're doing some infill lots there with some bigger homes as well. So it's one of those kind of beginnings that talks about the prosperity and optimism, not just in this province but in my city, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very happy to say that I'm able to support the Speech from the Throne, but not the amendment, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to enter into the debate on the Throne Speech. I would like to take this opportunity, like many of the members here have, thank their family. I'd like to thank my wife for her support. Also back home, the community members that support what I'm trying to do and the message that I'm trying to bring here on their behalf are very supportive. We don't always agree back home on every item — there are different issues — but I can reassure you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that their message gets heard. I bring it forward, whether it's brought here in a petition, whether it's brought here as a concern, whether you try to work with somebody, and you ask the government.

Because I do believe the government is responsible to all Saskatchewan residents — not in the South, the North, the East, the West — I think the government's responsible for all Saskatchewan citizens. That I do believe. And I hope, at the end of the day, after I share my views, my thoughts, and the concerns from the constituents back home, the majority of the members here will have a true understanding of the conditions we're asked to live in in northern Saskatchewan. And I will share that.

I also want to commend my staff who work with me, CAs Al Rivard, Vicky Sanderson, Bernice Custer. I've lost a few of them. They've retired. And that's okay. I wish them all the best in their retirement. But Vicky Sanderson worked very hard, and I just want to thank her for her years she put in, and her dedication has truly been very helpful, her support.

But you know, you go back and there's so many people that you can thank and some of our community members, our elders that give us the wisdom, our leaders that tell me exactly what they're feeling, what ideas they need. And they try to work forward and, you know, I have to be honest, they do. They bring their message to the government and I encourage that. They have to do their job and their due diligence, and they do

that. But when they don't get a good response, then I guess it's up to them to make sure the opposition understands it. And you try to lobby on behalf of the leadership back home.

And I have to be honest with you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and really thinking about some of the issues and some of the process that have happened and the ideas that have come forward. And I see the Throne Speech and they talk about a new road. It's very concerning to me that they say a new road because I look at the old road and I can tell you some of the things that are on the Sask Party's old road that they haven't addressed in the North. And I've talked about the roads; we know that.

But people back home, I'm telling you, all they want is a fair shake. They just want to be treated like Saskatchewan residents. They want to have the same opportunities that all of us have in this province. They don't expect any more, but they sure don't expect any less, and shouldn't. And I have to say, with what's going on in the North in some of the areas — totally, you know — this government should be ashamed of themselves. And I can go into some of the detail. And I don't mind giving credit when credit is due. And some of the things that have gone on, I commend the government. It's helped Saskatchewan residents, northern residents. I commend that.

But there are issues that are not being addressed. And I have to be very clear on those issues. And the message that I'm getting back home, the frustration to sit in community meetings and see some of the community members so frustrated about jobs, opportunity. They see all the economic boom, but they're not getting any part of the boom. They're suffering. And they explain to us why, and to the leadership, why they're suffering. And you know, your heart goes out to them because these are good people. They want to work hard. They believe in their family. They believe in their culture.

We talk about trappers and fishers. They work hard. They do the traditional life and they're very frustrated. And when I see programs that can enhance what they're doing cut or I see new ideas that the trappers want to bring forward to help their youth and they get no support from the government, that is appalling and shameful.

You ask for ideas and they bring their ideas forward. And I see the government failing. And I ask myself, why? And I know they will be asking back home, why? And we look at all the different issues that have come forward, and ideas. And they have many ideas because there's hope. Back home — the leadership, the community members, our elders, our youth — they have hope.

But we struggle. We have addictions. I know we've done some good things. And the leadership has signed an MOU [memorandum of understanding] to deal with addictions, a commitment, terms of reference. They're going to come up with some ideas how they can work with the front-line workers. And I commend that because they do see a need. But they'll need the support.

And I hope, when I hear all the different things on this new road, the new road . . . That when these new ideas come forward, that this government will respond because northerners are tired of being neglected by the current government.

Now you talk about long-term care, and we're moving in that area. There's a committee that has been struck to come together from community members and leadership to come up with ideas. And I think they'll do an excellent job because they'll come up with ways, that if they have to fundraise or whatever.

But it's interesting. I hope we get a sweetheart deal like Saskatoon and some of the other, I guess, organizations are getting, the way the Sask Party is doing new ideas. And if that is a new idea, I hope we get it back home because we truly need it for our seniors long-term care. The waiting list is appalling; it's almost one full year. No senior should have to wait to get into there. They shouldn't have to leave their home. So I say that . . . Shame, shame. Because you know, to take someone out of their community, they're away from their language and their culture. And it isn't 10 minutes and 5 minutes away; they're being taken hours away. And a lot of their loved ones don't have the finances to go to Saskatoon or P.A. and visit with them. So it impacts the family quite dearly.

So I say this: there's more work has to be done. And the government, the current government, Sask Party government has a responsibility. Do something with your new roads. If you say you have the vision, when the ideas come forward . . . I, you know, I challenge you. I do. I challenge you. Do the right thing for all of our residents, especially our seniors. They've put in their time. They're owed that.

We look at, you know, education. Education is an opportunity for our Aboriginal people in northern Saskatchewan. I just think about some of the promises that were made in the Throne Speech about looking at First Nations and Métis education and giving them an opportunity and truly a chance. And I will monitor this. And I know we will watch it because I do want . . . And I commend, if it is truly a commitment and from this government to truly work with First Nations and Métis, on giving them an opportunity at education and a fair, a fair shake. Then I say, right on. But we will monitor that to see.

Because there has been many promises made to First Nations and Métis. And I'll tell you sometimes it isn't for their benefit in the end. You find out. And we're going to monitor that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We'll make sure. We'll work with the leadership finding out from First Nations and Métis communities, is there an impact and is there enough support for opportunity.

And we look at forestry. And there's a new agreement. I know there's a partnership, a new management agreement. First Nations are involved. And I know that the Throne Speech has the comments from Chief Roger Bird. And he makes some positive comments in there, and I commend him on that. He's tried to help his young people to get an education and get in the forestry sector to work. And I hope it works out for him because I will monitor it closely with him. He's a fair man and I like his comments. It's an opportunity for his young people to get some training. I hope that this government will give him the support when the plan comes together: how do we educate these young people to take on the forestry sector jobs?

That I hope this government's willing to give support to Montreal. They cannot just turn around and say, oh well yes, we're using comments and words from the chief or from the

band or from the band memberships. But truly, if they come up with a plan and when they come up with their plan for economics in the forestry sector, that this government will support them with their economics, with training dollars to do some of that. I will monitor that very clearly. I will look at that. I will try to ask the questions and try to get the information from them. So on that note, when I look at that, that's good.

Churchill High School, I look at Churchill High School, and I know in 2008 before the by-election where I was successful being elected, they announced Churchill High School, an expansion. There was a lot of work that went into that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from the community members, the students, the parent council, the board of education, the leadership, organizations that gave letters of support that went to the minister of Education at that time in 2008 before the announcement was made. A lot of work, there was a lot of work that went in — years — to get our project on the capital list high enough. And it was there. And at that time, I was there for the photo ops when the ministers came up. They lined up, and they took photo op, and they made the announcement. And that was a good announcement.

Unfortunately it has taken so long, frustrations by community members, leaders, everybody, students coming to me and laughing, saying, what's going on, appalled that they're treated like this. So you have a government committing to an Aboriginal education, First Nations and Métis. We want to make sure your education is . . . you have a fair education, a fair shake at it. But I see this very frustrating that we haven't even tendered. Well we call for tenders now. Now we'll wait and see. I'm very concerned at the end of the day. There's a time, I guess, a deadline will come in where we'll see the tenders.

[15:45]

But I hope that nothing else will stall this, will stop it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because the students have waited long enough. The students have waited long enough. They have a right to a quality education and a facility that is up to a standard like the rest of the province. So I hope that this happens soon. And we demand that. And I know the community members are demanding that and will accept nothing less. So I hope that happens, and we'll work hard on that. And we'll monitor that as well with them, make sure we work the . . .

So there's been a lot of work done. You talk about employment opportunities, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you know, and they talk about the commitment to First Nations and Métis and everyone else and the prosperity. And that's good. You know, that's good because I'll tell you in northern Saskatchewan if you look at the reports coming out — Conference Board of Canada — I'm telling you there's some serious problems. It isn't good, good.

Some of the community members have the lowest income. And we have some that are doing quite well. Don't get me wrong. Some people are doing well. Some business people are doing wonderful. They have a business; they operate it, and it's doing wonderful. And I commend them on that. And they employ a lot of people, and I commend them on it.

We have a lot of other people that, you know, in the community don't have the opportunities. And whether it's their education,

then we have to work on that, and we'll do that. I mean, there's a role here for the government to play. When the ideas come forward about you doing the training, it's up to the Sask Party government to make sure the funding's there, to make sure we get the training done so that the people have the jobs.

If you look at overcrowding in housing, this track record right now, you're going into your fourth year as a government. There is such problems. Again, Conference Board of Canada report, overcrowding 18 per cent higher in northern Saskatchewan than anyone else. That's appalling.

The health conditions of people, of babies — respiratory problems. It's appalling. All of the different issues that they're faced with. Do I hear anything out? Yes, you know, and that's good. Maybe there's going to be some new houses. But I think there's a focus point needs to be on northern Saskatchewan, on the people, with the numbers that are coming out, overcrowding. And we'll monitor this.

The people back home, they know. You're not going to hide anything from them. They know, and they'll support somebody who's going to speak for them, somebody who's going to try. And I say this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. People elect us all, and they ask us to represent them, to do our best, to make sure the message is here, and that the ministers and the government hears the message. You have an obligation as a government to hear the concerns.

I will continue with it, whether it's a petition, whether it's a voice of the leaders, whether it's in a coffee shop. The concerns that I'm hearing, I bring here, will be the concerns of the Cumberland constituency and the people I represent. Lots are First Nations, Métis, northerners, but they have concerns and issues, and they have a right to the prosperity that the rest of the province has.

And you know, to play games in politics is one thing, but people have a right to a good quality of life, and they shouldn't be bullied. They shouldn't be told how they have to vote or if they're going to vote, if they have photo ID[identification] or don't have photo ID. We want to encourage people to vote, not not to vote. And I just . . . very frustrating to see that. We have isolated communities that don't have the access to photo ID. Like maybe down south there, it's all fine and dandy, but we know that there's a group that will suffer.

And I ask myself, why is that? Why is that group? You know, then you go back and you look at some of the communities like Wollaston Lake, their road. They just want a road. Yes, a new road. They want to join you. Give them their new road. You talk about a new road? They need a new road. The promises are there. They don't see anything. They're unhappy. They're having challenges. So I challenge this government — finish their new road. Give them what they need, so they can take care of their community members, so that we don't have any more incidents that we had this past winter with losing one of their community members on an ice road. It was appalling. It needs to change. The government has the money. It's time to do the commitment. It's time that this happens.

So I look at the different, all the different issues that come up. And I mean they come up many different times when you're



travelling out in the constituency. Mine is a big constituency and I get an opportunity to meet a lot of the members. Well maybe the member from Athabasca thinks it's a little bigger. I don't know about his constituency, but you know, it's an interesting thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to think there are so many issues out there that have to be addressed.

And it is a lot of travelling. I have a big constituency, but I try to go to all the communities and I try to attend the meetings that I'm asked to by the leadership, by community members, to deal with their issues and sometimes their frustrations. And sometimes, you know, they've got good news and there are some good things that happen. Granted, I'll give it. But there's a lot of issues that northern Saskatchewan and this government have to address. The leadership will. And I know the leaders, the community members, will bring all the issues forward. I will represent them. I will bring those concerns, whether they're petitions, whether they're notes, letters to ministers asking for support. I will represent the Cumberland constituency to the best of my ability and I will do what the leadership asks, what the community members ask, and also what our elders ask us to do.

And you know, we have to be respectful. I've got some members, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that sit in the coffee shop and say, Doyle, show respect. You might be frustrated, but show respect. There's 58 of you members. You're elected to represent the people. Show respect.

So I will try to respect. I will honour that. I hope that the government and their members will respect that. I do. When I have community members and elders telling me that, I will respect that. I will try my best.

But I tell you, the frustration sometimes when you see the community members back home and you see our young people, the education, the health conditions, the addictions, the suicide rates, when you see the frustration of community members, sometimes it's hard. But I will do my best.

But you know, there are many issues. But there are positive things that the communities are trying. And I commend all of my community members that I represent because, you know, the leadership, they're trying new approaches, new programs, and they're doing new things within their communities. They're trying to help their community members. They're trying to help the youth. They're trying to make sure they have communities that are flourishing. Our trappers, they do a lot. They do a lot of good work, lot of economics. Our fishermen, they do a lot of hard work.

You know, there's a lot — and I know there's other people want to go on — there's a lot of issues that we're facing in the North. But I have to be honest with you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We try to solve a lot of them. We come up with ideas. And I commend the leadership, the community. They do come up with ideas. They don't always lay blame. They don't always blame. They say, here are some solutions, and they bring those solutions forward.

And they ask this government, when those solutions come forward in good faith, as members of this province they ask you to deal with them in fairness, deal with them with the respect

that they deserve. And that's all we ask. We just have to be treated with respect and dignity as a people, as residents of this province. We have many issues and needs like everywhere else. We just ask to be treated fair. And that's the way I look at it.

And I will continue to work on behalf of the Cumberland constituency. I will do all I can to bring the issues forward to my colleagues for their support, to the members opposite for their support.

And you know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't want to forget because I was a member that was elected new, and I had members from the opposite, members from my own caucus that greeted me and welcomed me aboard. And I don't want to forget to acknowledge the new member to the House. Saskatoon Northwest member, I would like to welcome you. I hope you have a good career. I hope it's not a long one here, but a good one. But I just want to say I wish you all the best in your endeavours, and welcome to the House.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, at this point I've gone over a number, and I know there's a lot of different, I guess, issues that I would still like to raise, but I know we're getting into a time. But I would just like to give this last one a little bit of a . . .

The duty to consult and accommodate First Nations and Métis, it has been a big issue. And I ask the government and I demand of the government that you deal with First Nations and Métis and the duty to consult with respect and the right way. It's time, time to move on.

Resource revenue sharing is an issue that needs to be addressed. No longer can we ignore it. No longer can we say we don't want to discuss it. It needs to be dealt with and, once and for all, a deal needs to be developed. Whether it's under that government, I don't know if that will happen, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it's time that it's addressed.

I know our leadership, our leader is willing to discuss it and willing to move. I know that. I believe in that. And I think it's time. That will give us an opportunity, a level playing field. It will happen. It's going to take some time, but it will happen.

You know, I talk about protected lands. And we've seen what went on, protected lands that were sold off by the current government. I find it very appalling that now they want to bring in legislation to, whether it's protected lands or do a different thing, a different spin on it. I think there's been such an outcry. And to see what happened . . .

And I guess we talked about some of the process that some of the ministers have to deal with. And it's unfortunate they get dealt with the way they do. Somebody says, this is what we're doing, and I guess somebody ends up having to carry that message. And sometimes I guess that's part of the job. But it's unfortunate for anyone to get . . . [inaudible] . . . place where they are now. And I know what some of my colleagues have said that, but it was a tough lesson to watch. And I guess if that's politics, it's an interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, very interesting. I'm glad I'm not on that side.

But at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would just like to say I will be supporting the resolution, the amendment. I will be

supporting the amendment and not supporting the Throne Speech.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm glad to be able to rise and participate in the Throne Speech debate today.

To state off the top, just so there's no . . . So I might clarify for the member from Thunder Creek or for the member from Canora-Pelly, I'll be supporting the amendment and voting against the resolution.

But that being said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I want to first welcome the new member from Saskatoon Northwest to the Assembly. Congratulations on your by-election win. It was certainly a hard-fought affair, and we'll look forward to your contribution to this Chamber in the days to come. As my colleague from Cumberland had said, we wish you a good time here, but perhaps not a long time. But certainly, along with the member from Cumberland, I know what it's like to come into this Chamber through a by-election and it's certainly an interesting experience, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because you're in a bit of a hot seat come the by-election. So again, kudos to the member for getting through that process, for standing up in front of his neighbours, and congratulations on his win here, and may he bring something to this place, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I also want to thank my family for the supports and the love that they continue to give me, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As is often said, this is not . . . You know, we may give the speeches. We may be the front people. But if you don't have a supportive family behind you in this effort, I don't think you'll last for very long in this. And in my case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there have been some changes in my family circumstance that have been, to be quite honest, a challenge, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But for that, I'm thankful for the goodwill and the love and the support that my family has shown me and that I've been able to work my way through some of these things.

I want to particularly mention my mother, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This past year, this past Halloween, she celebrated her 80th birthday. And it's always great to celebrate a birthday for my mom, taking some time out from the trick-or-treating and all of that. Over the years, she's got a bit of short shrift, because of course the focus on Halloween in terms of the birthday celebrations. But we were still able to get together as a family and to celebrate her reaching this milestone.

There's a change in the living circumstance between her and my father. And I know that different members in this House have had experiences through the years in terms of, as their parents get older, trying to navigate and negotiate the circumstances that come with, say, a parent going into long-term care. And that's certainly been the change that my mom has had to deal with.

[16:00]

I know that the member from Melfort made a pretty courageous announcement in terms of his efforts to work through a

diagnosis of Parkinson's. And I respect the work that he's done in that regard and commend him for that. And again it's always a bit of a mug's game getting too personal in these remarks, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but that is the diagnosis of my mother's. And I know that Parkinson's has had a pretty negative impact on her life.

And it's kind of . . . It's hard to watch sometimes the struggle that is involved in trying to come to terms with these things, the impact that that has on my father. And he and my mom, having been together for so many years and been through so much . . . And it's the way that they're facing this challenge and this struggle in their life. And I guess from that I draw a lot of inspiration, watching them both do the best they can and bearing up the best they can in the face of a pretty significant challenge. But it's all part of the long march of life, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I guess again I draw inspiration from watching them bear up in these circumstances.

I guess the fact that we're here on the eve of Remembrance Day and, you know, just . . . or not long away from Remembrance Day, I want to draw attention to that fact as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the fact, you know, many of us are wearing the poppy and the commemoration that was held today here in the Assembly and the marking out of those who served and died in terms of the memorials located here on these legislative grounds.

My great-uncle, Roy Calder McCall, died in northern Italy during the Italian campaign as a corporal for the Royal Canadian Signal Corps. And he left behind a wife, a pregnant wife and a child who he never saw be born, become a teenager, become an adult, and to see the grandkids.

And I know that again a lot of what we do in this place is secured and was fought for and paid for in blood and sacrifice by people like my great-uncle, Roy Calder McCall. And it's with a lot of pride that I know his name is on that memorial on the legislative grounds. It's with a lot of pride for the family that his name is marked out on the veterans cairn in Montmartre.

And again for me, I don't want to try to single out the McCall family because I know there are many families that that is their story in terms of loved ones that went to war and never came home . . . and to this very day, those who serve under arms to further the peace and security and prosperity that we enjoy in Canada and the sacrifice, the terrible sacrifice that is often paid by those people for this tremendous thing that we have here in Canada, this tremendous life that we're able to live.

So it is with thinking of those individuals, those sacrifices, I think about the responsibility that we have here. I think about the democratic freedoms that we have in this Assembly and in Canada. And I think about the terrible responsibility that's involved in making certain that if we are to send troops into harm's way, men and women under arms into battle, then we better make sure that it's for a bloody good reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we'd better make sure that it's done with making certain that all of the other options are exhausted because, for all the families that know what it's like to lose someone — and we have people that work in this building that know what that cost is like — and for whom Remembrance Day this year will

be as painful as it has been in days past, our hearts go out to them . . . But as legislators, as elected officials in this parliamentary democracy that we call Canada, and in Saskatchewan, I think that we do well to be ever more mindful of the responsibility that we hold as elected representatives.

Just down from the memorial cairns, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on these legislative grounds, there's a memorial to Woodrow Lloyd. And of course, you know, one-time minister of Education, one-time head of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, elected first in 1944, and served the Biggar constituency for many years with distinction, before becoming the leader and premier of the province, leader of the CCF in Saskatchewan and premier of the province and did so in the teeth of the medicare dispute. And his life verse of course was Robert Frost's, the road less taken. And I guess when I think of the life's work of somebody like Woodrow Lloyd compared to what we have offered up in this Throne Speech that lays claim to that same kind of inspiration and same kind of idealism, I think this Throne Speech entitled "The New Road", Mr. Deputy Speaker, suffers dramatically in comparison because in a lot of ways it's down the same old road of recycled promises, financial mismanagement, health care privatization, and dressing up things that have been examined or discarded in the past and trying to pass them off as new. And I guess it doesn't add up.

This new road, it reminds me of something that one of the speakers at the recent Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Assembly had to say about this government, where he said that this government, I give them an A for rhetoric but I give them an F for action. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, you know, this is one commentator's take on the record of this government when it comes to First Nations and dealing in the province of Saskatchewan. But I certainly think that holds up for this speech as well.

The new road in terms of the rhetoric, there are a lot of things that sound really great in terms of action on rural health care, in terms of innovative approaches to long-term care, in terms of actions on addictions, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But again when you examine the record more closely . . . certainly there are some things that you can hang your hat on as the government currently can, and you know, fair enough. But in terms of whether or not this new road is better than what has gone before, in a lot of fairly key areas, that is not the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It's interesting to note the emphasis that's placed on addictions and responding to the terrible circumstances that many youth find themselves in and many people find themselves when it comes to addictions. And certainly the member from P.A. Carlton spoke not long before us in the debate and spoke, I thought, with great compassion and interest in terms of people that are affected with this great blight which is addictions and the pride that he takes in the expansion of addiction services.

On the one hand, there's that, Mr. Speaker. But on the other hand, there is the news we hear very recently of the closure of addiction services beds in the city of Meadow Lake. And again, Mr. Speaker, that's, I think, a direct consequence of last year's budget where, again, they put out the restrictions on the health districts and said, you know, here's your targets. You go chop

what you have to chop. Come back with the savings to us. And so it's one thing to proclaim the importance of addiction services in the Throne Speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But the way it plays out in the budget and the way that these things, you know, have a way of working through, come the time for health regions to make their decisions, well we've seen the circumstance of Meadow Lake where addictions services have been cut. So again the rhetoric and the action do not add up.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the member from Arm River-Watrous was talking with pride the other day about the work that's been done with Kawacatoose Cree nation and the Touchwood area and the great work that's been done around tourism. And it's interesting. Perhaps that member from Arm River-Watrous could have consulted with his seatmate, the then minister for First Nations Métis Relations, when they cut the Aboriginal employment development program that actually funded a lot of that community development work around the tourism initiative that Kawacatoose has been very heavily involved in. So it's great to say that there's good work being done on that front, but how this is actually playing out on the ground, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is the rhetoric is not matched by the actions and the deeds.

We see long-term care projects. You know, the announcements that have been made in past and then cancelled and then maybe they're back on or maybe they're not, you know. I don't think there's anything innovative about raising people's hopes like this and then coming in with the Amicus deal where we see a huge blackout when it comes to the information and the detail as to who's paying what at the end of the day. And I know we're going to hear more about that deal in the days to come, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and we're going to be certainly demanding, as an official opposition, accountability and transparency on that deal and what the taxpayers of Saskatchewan are going to be paying at the end of the day for that deal.

I think about the for-profit clinics that are being heavily introduced or referenced in this speech. And again these are initiatives that you're taking dollars that could have gone to things like the surgical care centre in the city of Regina that had been planned, that had been endorsed by that government but then is cancelled out. And then you know, lo and behold, we see a private initiative up in its place. And we'll see what kind of private dollars go to the bottom line for individual companies that should be going to providing health care in this province.

I think about, you know, bottom line, Mr. Speaker, the fact that they say in this Throne Speech that they've eliminated debt. And of course, you know, there's a bit of a shell game that's going on here in terms of the Crowns and the net financial position of the province. And this is something of course that would have had the members turning back flips when they were in opposition. But you know, things that they once criticized, now they're past masters at the practice thereof.

So when they say that debt has been reduced by 40 per cent, well it's actually increasing by 55 per cent or \$4.2 billion over the next four years. And again that's a lot of money. And that's, you know, in the out years, and how does this play out? Well the way it plays out is that the addictions services in the town of Meadow Lake get cut because the health regions get

underfunded. The way it plays out, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the primary employment development initiative that this government had around Aboriginal employment gets cut. But you know, apparently members on that side don't take notice, and they continue to talk about the good work that's been done and being done under programs that have already been cut. So it makes us wonder on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, if they're not asleep at the switch over there or if there's some kind of in-group that's making all the decisions and expects everybody else to just clap along.

One thing I will say good about the recent actions of the government, Mr. Speaker, we're glad to see the campaign for the no on potash and the BHP Billiton deal, but we think this points up a number of other, a number of other public policy areas that need to be addressed. Are the people of Saskatchewan getting a fair return for their resource which the members opposite were quite happy to talk about?

It's been interesting listening to the revision of history in many cases, Mr. Speaker, in terms of, you know, who did what in the history. Every year that that Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan was in existence under the then Blakeney government up until 1982, it turned a profit and returned a profit to the people of Saskatchewan, and it was only in 1982 of course when it got driven into the ground. And then of course it's a fairly familiar tactic out of the old neo-conservative playbook. You turn an organization like that into a basket case, and then you go to the people and say, well we've got no choice; we've got to sell it off.

So of course, you know, they mismanaged it for a number of years, up to and including the sale of PCS [Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.] in 1989. And again, Mr. Speaker, the deal in and of itself was something like a \$1 billion-plus bath for the people of Saskatchewan in terms of debt that was taken on into the General Revenue Fund, in terms of making Potash Corporation more appealing for sale, the undervaluing of those shares when they were sold off. So again it's pretty interesting to see the actions and the rhetoric of the government these days when it comes to what was that historical record on the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan. And for many people they think, you know, if that resource had been gainsaid and held in the interests of the people of Saskatchewan, what would that return be over time to the people of Saskatchewan?

[16:15]

So again I think I'm happy to see the campaign, the vigorous campaign that was mounted by the Premier, in terms of campaigning for no, and so I congratulate him for that. And I congratulate the people of Saskatchewan for bringing that pressure to bear and helping those members opposite. And certainly the federal Conservatives know, when all the different market research outfits were phoning madly to get the polling done, to get the public opinion survey work done, that that deal was a no go and that there would be political consequences for people that went ahead with it. So I congratulate the people of Saskatchewan for making it very clear that they thought their interests weren't being served by that BHP Billiton deal in that circumstance.

But it opens up a broader question, Mr. Speaker. Are we getting

a fair return for potash in terms of the royalty levels? Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan in particular has had a dismal record in terms of engagement with Aboriginal people, with First Nations and Métis people when it comes to employment. And what are the plans going forward in terms of that better engagement?

Again last year's budget saw the doing away with the Aboriginal employment development program which was the main initiative on the part of the provincial government in terms of engaging First Nations and Métis people in the economy, in the employment. And we'd had some talk around what would the replacement be for it from that side. But of course, Mr. Speaker, we've seen nothing. And when it comes to employment and procurement and all of these things, as potash generally relates to First Nations and Métis people in this province, there's a tremendous opportunity here that needs to be realized.

And once again, this is in particular a situation that underlines the importance of unfinished treaty business. We're all quite happy to proclaim that we're all treaty people in this Assembly. Well if that is the case, what was the spirit and intent of those treaties? And what did that mean in terms of the sharing of prosperity and the mutual respect? And how does that relate to something like resource revenue sharing?

We've seen in recent days esteemed scholars such as Jim Miller from the University of Saskatchewan or Tom Molloy, who's been very involved in the negotiating of modern treaties, say that the province should get to the table in terms of resource revenue sharing. And we hear other things, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that this government has played it backwards and forwards in terms of whether they're into resource revenue sharing or whether they're not or whether they want to call it something else so then they can square all the circles they're involved in.

But I think what they should do, Mr. Speaker . . . and if we're going to have certainty and if we're going to have stability in the development of these resource riches in this province, and if we're also going to do something about the poverty that exists in the midst of this plenty, then that unfinished treaty business such as resource revenue sharing is something that needs to be addressed and not just played games with.

Again in the days to come, Mr. Speaker, we're going to have a very close eye on what happens with potash, whether or not Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan lives up to their pledge to the people of Saskatchewan, and whether or not in fact that pledge was adequate to addressing what should be the needs, what are the needs of the people of Saskatchewan.

In this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, housing was again paid some lip service to.

And we had an interesting announcement here today in terms of the proceedings on Whitecap Dakota Nation, you know, 12 units being built there, the claim it's historic by the Minister of Housing. And again, we on the opposition side, whenever that particular minister proclaims something to be historic, we think about the Muskeg Lake First Nation long-term care home and how that was proclaimed as historic. And of course they've had

to close that home down, Mr. Speaker.

So we wish the folks of Chief Bear and Whitecap Dakota Nation the best of luck with this housing project. We're interested to see what the details are, whether or not this will be made available to other First Nations around the province or whether or not this is designed in a particular way to curtail the uptake on housing from First Nations for on-reserve housing.

But it gets into the broader question of housing as a whole, Mr. Speaker. And, you know, the very first budget that those members brought to this House, there was really nothing in it for housing. In fact they took \$8 million-plus back from Sask Housing at that time, and they've continued the raid on the reserves of that corporation. It is the primary instrument by which the province participates in housing.

And they've ceded the field to Habitat for Humanity. They've made a good policy change in terms of providing operational dollars for Habitat for Humanity, and we applaud them for that. But I want to say this very clearly, Mr. Speaker — thank God for Habitat for Humanity, because in the inner city of Regina they're the only ones building new units.

And again, it's good to see those families taking up the habitat challenge and the kind of joy and stability and benefit that that brings, not just to those families but to the neighbourhoods, many of which I have the privilege to represent. But also the fact that you could count them on one hand, Mr. Speaker, the new units that are being built. Well on the other hand, institutions like Regina Housing have wait lists on the order of 400-plus.

And I think in particular, Mr. Speaker, about a First Nations elderly couple that spent April, May, June — and July they were able to finally find housing — but they spent that time, Mr. Speaker, on the powwow trail and living in a teepee behind the sweat lodge on the old RCMP firing range. And these are two individuals that do an awful lot for their community, that do a lot for the collective Saskatchewan community, and that are the first there to give. And that they would be put in such a circumstance where they were unable to find housing, Mr. Speaker, I think speaks volumes about the kind of choices that have been made with an abundance of resources on that side of the House, Mr. Speaker — their inability to manage them, to really meet need, and the way that ordinary people pay the price for this.

I think about the dramatic rent increases that are having a huge impact on poor families, on working families, on people that are just struggling to keep their households together. And certainly, Mr. Speaker, again, you know, the first budget they had they took 8 million out of Sask Housing. When it dawned on them they had to do something about a housing crisis, they appointed a task force. And what has come of that task force?

Well this last budget, we had an announcement of a big outlay of housing from HomeFirst. Well where are those houses, Mr. Speaker? So when they can't even live up to the houses that are promised in a budget, when they can't even deliver any of those, Mr. Speaker, when they come around for yet another time in the Throne Speech, and meanwhile the housing crisis worsens, on this side of the House we say that is a government

that is out of touch. That is a government that is not responding to the needs of the people on the ground in the communities that we represent.

And again, Mr. Speaker, that this is done at a time of record revenues, and also at a time of, apparently, record inability to financially manage, we think goes very hard for the people of Saskatchewan.

As I'd said at the outset, Mr. Speaker, we're coming up on Remembrance Day and there's a lot of talk about our democratic freedoms and how those have been fought for and secured at great price, Mr. Speaker. And we find it more than a little strange that this budget contains what has been described by different columnists as a dog whistle to their right wing base — the introduction of photo identification as a requirement for voting. And again, this is part of a larger sort of pattern of behaviour, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that this government has meddled with the selection of the Chief Electoral Officer and the fact that after every election there's a bipartisan committee that goes over the way that the election practice played out, and of course the issue of photo ID was nowhere in the report of that committee.

But again we see this initiative coming in under the guise of democratic reform, and again and again when pressed to produce examples of where this has gone wrong or issues of different balloting polls, all they are able to offer up are anecdotes, Mr. Speaker. But it's also interesting that this comes at a time when the chief of the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, Guy Lonechild, is going to some length to encourage First Nations people to participate in federal elections and in provincial elections.

So on the one hand, you have First Nations leadership encouraging First Nations people to get out there to that ballot box and to use that vote and to vote their aspirations and to vote their priorities. And on the other hand, we have a government that seems more interested in throwing up road blocks for what is, for the most part, Mr. Speaker, in terms of people that have challenges around photo identification, are seniors and First Nations.

So we think it's pretty thinly veiled over there, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what they're trying to do, in terms of trying to block people from participating at the ballot box. And we think it's fairly shameful, Mr. Speaker. And again this is something that there's a fair, open process by which electoral reform has been conducted in the past in this province, Mr. Speaker, and they've thrown that out the window with this initiative as well.

I can only hope that it goes the same way of their marquee initiative around cutting into the needle exchange program, and the way that that was highlighted in a Throne Speech last year. And again when, you know, their own report was coming back saying that this is a program that works, that it saves money, that it has a health benefit for people that are in a pretty, pretty desperate circumstance — and not only that, but to do that in the middle of what is an HIV/AIDS [human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome] epidemic, Mr. Speaker — again it made no sense. And they ultimately have stood down on that.

And I guess we'll see, you know, whether or not common sense prevails in terms of their approach on photo identification and this urgent need to go out there and solve a problem that hasn't been identified by anyone other than their brain trust, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to the environment, you know, there's a lot of talk about wind power and EnerGuide, but the greenhouse gas emission plan has yet to really come forward. And we'll see how that plays out in the workings of organizations like SaskPower and SaskEnergy, Mr. Speaker, and how that, in turn, impacts the people of this province, both through whatever kind of slipshod deals are signed for power generation and I think . . . or secretive deals.

I think about the Northland's deal. This is a power generation project in The Battlefords area where it's not a stone's throw from a project that SaskPower is doing. You know, you've got the public project cheek and jowl with the private project. It's a project that could have been done by SaskPower itself. They've got the expertise. They've got the track record. There was nothing unique about this in terms of cogeneration, in terms of using waste heat that would have made that beneficial, or partnering with a First Nation for example. There was nothing more to that deal, Mr. Speaker, than a desire to privatize. And again how that plays out in the workings of organizations like SaskPower and like SaskEnergy, and how do people invariably wind up paying the cost for the privatization misadventures of the members opposite. We're going to be standing guard and we're going to be making sure that we say our piece and that we hold them to account and that we try to hold up the facts for the people at the ballot box to make their decision.

One of the other things I want to say about the Throne Speech that was kind of interesting was the air ambulance is riding again in terms of the helicopter ambulance deal that's being ballyhooed with STARS [shock trauma air rescue service]. And of course, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that this deal had been promised and then it had been considered and then discarded and now it's been propped back up again. And we'll see how this plays out over the long haul.

But again, Mr. Speaker, you get the sense that this is more about papering over whatever sort of cracks remain in their to-do list in terms of trying to go to the public with a straight face and saying, oh yes, we kept all our promises. But just the way that the turbulence involved in this particular deal, Mr. Speaker, you know, perhaps this is a good deal for the province. But you have to sit back and think, okay, they promise it; they consider it and discard it, and now they're promising it again. You know, it doesn't add up, Mr. Speaker.

So meanwhile on the ground we've got ambulance service that, as was very eloquently pointed out by the member from Saskatoon Eastview today, the Health critic for the official opposition, we've got actual ambulance service that is suffering and not doing the job that needs to be done for the people of Saskatchewan.

Also on the health care front, Mr. Speaker, there's the health care ombudsman. Again, something that was promised and then played around with, and now they're coming up to the election so they want to be able to paper it over and say, oh no, it's on

its way. Well I guess in some regards they've promised transparency, Mr. Speaker, and I think this is a fairly transparent attempt to play around with the public record.

One thing that was of special interest to me, Mr. Speaker, and I'm proud to be the MLA that represents Mosaic Stadium, the home of the Saskatchewan Roughriders, and certainly the work that's been done around the domed stadium, a lot of that centres in the riding of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. And we've had different discussions about that project, Mr. Speaker, and I guess what I want to add to that discussion at this point is this: for a project that is potentially, you know, \$400 million, possibly half a billion dollars worth of investment and expenditure and something that has been ballyhooed as a game-changer and a generational project by the members opposite, it was completely absent from the Throne Speech.

[16:30]

And again, it's sort of hard to keep track over here, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the promises that were made and then the way that they'd been considered and discarded or new initiatives have been taken on and then just sort of dropped or massaged in terms of the public relations campaign. So again, here you've got a project that's many hundreds of millions of dollars in terms of the size of the project, and it didn't even rate a mention in terms of this Throne Speech. So we find that more than just a little strange on this side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

Something else that is of critical importance to the riding of Regina Elphinstone-Centre, Mr. Speaker, is the North Central Shared Facility. And of course this is the replacement of Scott, of Scott Collegiate, a high school in the middle of North Central, the youngest neighbourhood in the city of Regina, the replacement of that facility with something new and that builds out community schools from the very bricks on up.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we brought in the planning dollars that helped that project move to number two on the capital list. And in the summer of 2007, the then minister of Education for the first Sask Party budget brought in the education dollars to take care of the education portion of that project, but it hasn't moved since. And I know that those members opposite have been challenged on providing progress on this project by Paul Martin when he was through town, by the people that have put a lot of thought and effort and painstaking calculation into this project. And again, we don't see any real progress on this important initiative for the inner city of Regina and, I dare say, for the city of Regina and for education in Saskatchewan in general.

So again, the health care component of that budget is one of the problems, as is getting the feds to the table to provide their share of the funding. And we look very closely to see what happens with that. But to date, the money sits in the bank. It hasn't moved on to the next planning stage. And the frustration grows because this is an institution that again should be providing tremendous education opportunities, and not just that, but a new approach to education, one that really builds on the decades of experience with community schools and SchoolPlus in this province, and that has had a lot of thought put into it. And it could be something unique, not just in Saskatchewan, in Canada, but also in North America. But there it sits, Mr.

Speaker. And the frustration of the people in the neighbourhood I represent and where I live grows around that project.

I want to close out by saying a few things about First Nations and Métis Relations, along with the Provincial Secretary and the office of francophone affairs, SaskPower, SaskEnergy — the critic areas that I have been entrusted with by my leader, Dwain Lingenfelter . . . Pardon me, Mr. Speaker.

I'm glad that the Leader of the Opposition has been able to give us, to give me those responsibilities. And I'm glad that we have a leader that's got experience, that's got fortitude. And I think we saw that in the potash debate, Mr. Speaker. And I think we see that on different files where that experience and that fortitude is brought to bear. So again, I'm quite thankful to have these responsibilities, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to close out by saying some things in particular about First Nations and Métis Relations and as it relates to this Throne Speech. And a lot of this is informed, Mr. Speaker, by my tenants at the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations fall assembly this past month at the Dakota Dunes on Whitecap Dakota Nation.

And one of the more interesting points with that assembly, of course, Mr. Speaker, was the attendance and the presentation made by the new First Nations and Métis Relations minister for the Saskatchewan Party. And I congratulate the member from Silver Springs in that appointment, and I look forward to seeing the work that he does and holding him to account in this Assembly and in the other committees of this government.

And it was interesting, Mr. Speaker, because of course, this is the third First Nations and Métis Relations minister from that government in three years. And you know, each one of those ministers comes in and talks about the importance of relationship-building and we're all treaty people and we want to work in partnership and respect with First Nations and Métis people. And you know, Mr. Speaker, that tends to wear a little thin over time.

So I don't know if it's some kind of tactic on the side of the members opposite where they don't want to use up a minister too much, so they shunt him out and then fire in a new one. But that's certainly how it seems from my place in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, is they want to use a new minister to appeal to that inherent respectfulness and politeness in terms of First Nations. And the First Nations in the Assembly, the leadership tends to sit back and say, well we'll give the new minister a chance. And again, I think two ministers so far, we've seen how that has worked out. And I don't think it's worked out very well for First Nations and Métis people, Mr. Speaker.

And again I think of the presentation that was made by the one commentator who said that this government, I give them an A for the rhetoric, but I give them an F for action when it comes to square dealing with First Nations in that case, Mr. Speaker.

So we'll see how things like the cuts to Aboriginal employment development, how that plays out, and how that could have been a useful tool in terms of building on that experience and in terms of better engagement across the province in the different sectors of the economy. The then minister for First Nations and

Métis Relations, the member from Regina South, had said that Aboriginal employment, the work there was done, thank you very much.

But something we see around potash in particular, but throughout other sectors of the economy, is that work is very much not done, that it needs to . . . In terms of the pursuit of a representative workforce and the prosperity and the security and the ability to support your family and the way that that benefits a community and neighbourhood, that has not been realized, Mr. Speaker. And we see a program that should have been bolstered, but instead was cut by this government.

And we see those chickens coming home to roost, and we'll see them more in the days to come, Mr. Speaker, in the way that the potash industry conducts its business. And we'll also wait to see what the response of that government was, taking a useful tool, discarding it for nothing but rhetoric.

The way that we see things like — and this was commented on fairly frequently at the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] assembly — the way that something like treaty land entitlement, which has been ongoing since 1992, Mr. Speaker, and which has been described by different commentators as one of the most important economic initiatives in past decades in terms of raising the field for First Nations and participation in the economy; we hear concern at the FSIN assembly about how that program is not being lived up to, how the resources that are provided for it are not adequate to the job. And we also hear about how the different selections that have accompanied treaty land entitlement are being held up by an uncooperative provincial government.

And again, Mr. Speaker, this is an initiative that has been held up as one of the most critical, one of the most important economic independence initiatives when it comes to participation of First Nations in the economy, and when it comes to First Nations self-sufficiency, and when it comes to living up to the original terms of the treaty.

So again, if we're all treaty people, there is a responsibility to make sure that something like TLE [treaty land entitlement] is lived up to. And we'll see if that doesn't wind up in court, Mr. Speaker. There's been an undertaking made by that minister to address certain of the criticisms that were raised at the assembly, and again we'll see what that minister acts upon.

But we know this. Before the minister's presentation, there was a report on different court actions being taken. And after the minister's representation, there were more reports on other court actions being taken. And increasingly, the way that First Nations see as the main means of engagement with this government, it would seem to be through the courts.

And again, in a province where our motto is "from many peoples, strength," and in this Assembly where we like to proclaim that we're all treaty people, that one of the main forms of engagement, or fora of engagement with First Nations people is through the courts, I think that's a sad commentary on the state of affairs in this province. And when it comes to things that they've checked off their so-called promise list, Mr. Speaker, one of them was improving relations with First Nations in this province. So I don't see how, you know, more

court actions, more legal actions equates to better relations with First Nations between the provincial government.

One of the other things we heard about was roads. This is of course a government that cancelled the roads to reserves program. And again the minister stood at the front and said, don't worry. We're with you, chiefs. We're going to address your concerns.

But again and, you know, I'm sure most would agree there's nothing more fundamental than transportation. And if you're going to get population to opportunity, basic infrastructure is one of the asking prices for that. And you think what are the growth communities in Saskatchewan, and First Nations and Métis communities are up in the vanguard of what are growth communities.

So again that you have a government that comes in, cuts the roads to reserve program one budget, then comes around in the fall and says, oh don't worry about that. There's a new road. Well the people in many communities in this province, many First Nations and Métis communities in this province will believe it when they see it. And they will be paying very close attention come election time.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, on the duty to consult and accommodate, you know, one year we saw \$3 million allocated for this important initiative. And fully, I believe it was, \$2.4 million of it went unexpended. And again, talk is cheap. And again, you know, they like to ballyhoo the \$3 million at the front end. And then on the back end, the fact that they didn't spend 80 per cent of the money, well you know, tough luck. I guess there wasn't an interest from First Nations and Métis people when it came to the consultation front. And again, Mr. Speaker, that defies belief.

But if this is what their new road is made of, that rhetorical road, again I think this speaks poorly of where we're headed. So again we're going to be watching very closely on the duty to consult and accommodate.

But I would urge the members opposite to take the advice of people like Tom Molloy, people like Dr. Miller from the University of Saskatchewan and make good on the different rhetorical games they've played, make good on what we hear were undertakings made behind closed doors and get to the table on resource revenue sharing. They've got to get that work done, Mr. Speaker. And before that work is done, we're going to see a lot more in terms of action through the courts. And one of the times where this came up was during some of the actions around Enbridge.

And unless they want to, you know, unless they want to have an equitable deal, and unless they want to take up that unfinished treaty business, it's going to continue to hamper not just First Nations' ability to provide economically for themselves and their families and their communities, but it's going to hamper the province as a whole in terms of the impact that has on investment, in terms of the impact that has on economic development. So it's got to be straightened out, Mr. Speaker, and if it isn't, we'll continue to not live up to our potential in this province.

I want to say a few things about the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. And again we're coming up to the close of the Year of the Métis. About a year ago this time, we celebrated the launch in the rotunda, November 16th. We're coming up to the anniversary of the death of Louis David Riel. And certainly the Back to Batoche celebrations this year, Mr. Speaker, there were a lot of things there to be proud of, a lot of things to enjoy. And certainly I was quite happy to participate in different of the things that happened there.

But again, as we had said on this side of the House with the launch of the Year of the Métis, it should be the Year of the Métis every year. And we see a situation where the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan continues to exist in a fairly precarious situation. There was a good move made by this government on the Clarence Campeau Fund in the last budget. But in terms of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan as a whole, they are on such a precarious footing in terms of living up to the duties that have been constitutionally discharged to them. That is a very, very neglected situation in the lifeblood of this province, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

So again in summation, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that this new road lives up to its billing. I think that the new road is a lot of new rhetoric. I don't think this serves the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre well. I don't think it serves, you know, not just the people who helped me through my riding association and do the good work there — not just Leane Goldsmith, my constituency assistant that I have the pleasure of working with — it doesn't help their circumstance. It doesn't help the people that have entrusted me with their support and send me to this legislature. And it doesn't help the people of Regina Elphinstone-Centre as a whole. So for the reasons that I've listed and for the way that it impacts the different files that I've been entrusted with by my leader, Mr. Speaker, I'll be voting against the Throne Speech motion, and I'll be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from P.A. Northcote.

**Mr. Furber:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with pleasure that I rise in the Assembly to speak to the Speech from the Throne. And I suppose it's always with pleasure that you get an opportunity to rise and represent the constituents in Prince Albert, the folks in Prince Albert Northcote who put me here to represent them as ably as I can. It's always a humbling experience, and so I thank them for that.

I'd like additionally to thank my wife, Michelle, who is an incredible support for me. And we spend a ton of time apart, and she's very, very supportive of the work that I do and the work that we do as elected members here in the Assembly.

I'd also like to thank my family. My mom and dad in Prince Albert, my brothers and their families because they are, while very supportive of the work that I do, are also very flexible in their own schedules. And we have a number of family events that are either timed early or put off so that I can be there when I'm not in Prince Albert. So I'd like to thank them for that. And that goes right down to Brandon, Brooklyn, Alyssa, Camryn, Elyse, and Jaelyn — my nieces and nephew who have on a



number of occasions had their birthday parties delayed or held in advance, not on the correct date, so that I can be there. Such will be the case three times during this fall sitting. So they deserve some thanks as well for the patience that they show.

I'd also like to thank my constituency assistants, Rose Rothenburger, who does an incredible job not only for me but with the literally thousands of hours that she volunteers for many organizations in Prince Albert, lots of which support women's issues and equity issues. And so I'm very thankful for the work that she does for me, but also thankful for the work that she does in our community. Additionally I'd like to thank Caroline Bendig for the great work that she does. And when Rose is away, she handles the office very ably and aptly, and I'd like to thank her for that.

I'd also like to thank the teammates that I've got on the various teams that I play on because not only am I limited in my ability at the age that I'm getting to, but I'm also not there as often as I should be. So I'd like to thank them as well.

Now I'd like to, in the interest of time, speak very specifically about what this Throne Speech says and doesn't say, specific to the city of Prince Albert and its immediate surrounding area. It's notable that it doesn't include anything to address election promises. And as an opposition, as Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition it's certainly our task to hold the government to account for the promises that they make, whether it's prior to an election or after.

And so in that spirit, I'm here to again bring to the attention of those viewing and listening and reading in *Hansard* the complete lack of attention to any of the promises the Saskatchewan Party made prior to and during the last election campaign. And they're very specific promises, and they're very large promises. And it's exceedingly frustrating that I have brought them up now since the election at virtually every occasion, and they have done zero. Nothing. And again there's nothing in this Throne Speech that would lead me to believe that they've become aware themselves that it's been three years and nothing's been done. And so I fully suspect that these will be promises that go unanswered.

And the first of these promises is probably the most obvious to the people of Prince Albert. If you'll remember, during the election in 2007 the now member for Prince Albert Carlton took out an ad that said, "A vote for Daryl is a vote for the mill open and people working." And so you would assume, you would assume as a voter that if they're going to carry out this promise that they would have a plan to do so. And you would assume that for a number of reasons. One, because you would think that they would be honouring their promises and commitments, but also because the member for Batoche went out as the head of a forestry task force and travelled the province on taxpayer dollars to produce a report that nobody's ever seen or heard of, that has produced results that have been exceedingly damaging for the forestry industry, and certainly for the pulp mill in Prince Albert. And it's a sad commentary when you would make a promise to a community with no intention or no ability or desire to fulfill that promise.

And I'm not sure if that's what's happened here, Mr. Speaker, but it's clear from the actions that brought about the promise to

now, we are three years later and no action whatsoever. And I would argue this: that if something happens where that pulp mill does open, it would open not because of the Saskatchewan Party or any of its members, but in spite of them. It would happen solely because of a company that takes the onus to do it, and not because anything is done or has been done on the file by this government.

Additionally we should talk about some other promises. And certainly the promise of a second bridge is a pretty big promise. It is one of the most popular topics on coffee row in Prince Albert and has been for the last 10 years. There are occasions where there are emergencies on the bridge, where there is an accident or somebody's using the bridge that takes up virtually every lane hauling things to the North. And so we lose access to the ability to go back and forth across the river, and normally that's concerning for the community.

And so in light of that, and with the knowledge that it's a hot topic and very much of interest for Prince Albert residents, the Premier took the opportunity to do some campaigning. And so he stood on the bridge with the then mayor of Prince Albert, Jim Stiglitz, and thought that he would have a photo op and provide some commentary. And so what did he do, Mr. Speaker? Well he said that the city should have a second bridge, and did it in order to curry favour with the electorate in Prince Albert.

And so what has been the result? What have they done on the file in the interest of getting a second bridge since then? Absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the fact that we've asked in committee, I've asked in committee what their plans are. The answer was as vague an answer as you could possibly imagine.

And so again, the crass and almost vindictive nature that it would take to come into a community and promise something that you know you're not going to deliver is unfortunate. It's unfortunate. But the chickens will come home to roost on these promises.

Now the third major promise that is very specific is with respect to airport improvements. Again the now Premier flew into Prince Albert, unannounced and unbeknownst to city council and the mayor, and announced that, if elected, they would provide funding for airport improvements in Prince Albert, especially for but not entirely exclusive to lengthening of the runway, but also airport improvements to the terminal.

And when asked by reporters later that day, the mayor replied that he was uncertain as to why he hadn't been consulted. He also suggested that they would be better able to deal with issues on their own, and would appreciate the money and had other priorities for it. And in spite of that and in spite of the promise by the Premier and in spite of him flying in unannounced and unbeknownst to the mayor and council and doing again something that you shouldn't ought to do if you respect the electorate and the people in Prince Albert, make a promise that you're not going to keep.

And so that's again what's happened here on a very specific and very large promise. Now what has taken place since then is the residents and council have taken it upon themselves to fund

some improvements. There's been over \$1 million of the people's money in Prince Albert spent through the city council on airport improvements and not one thin dime spent by this government to fulfill a promise made by their Premier. It's a sad, sad commentary and it's unfortunate that the people of Prince Albert are paying the price for the government that's elected.

Now there are more issues obviously in Prince Albert that are being neglected by the government than just the promises that they've made. Health care is a big issue across the province. It's certainly no more or less in Prince Albert. The citizens there value their health as much as anywhere.

And so I find it interesting that, in spite of having over \$10 billion in revenue, or huge increases of over \$2 billion more than the previous government had, the health region is grossly neglected and wildly underfunded. And believe it or not, their own statistics suggest that since 2007, surgical wait times in Prince Albert are worse than they were in 2007. So to this point, surgical wait times are longer under this government, with all of the resources that they've got, than they were in 2007. It's unfortunate again that the people of Prince Albert have to pay the price for this government's inability to manage the province's finances.

And so these are just a few of the many things that are being neglected by the Saskatchewan Party government. But very specifically, I'd like to call on this government to fulfill the election promises that they made to the city of Prince Albert. It's simple and it shouldn't be too much to ask that they simply do what they say they were going to do. I can't imagine why — well I guess I know why, sitting in the government benches — but I think it's a sad, sad thing to abuse the people of Prince Albert by promising things that you know you're never going to deliver on.

And so with that, and seeing nothing in this Throne Speech to address those promises and many other issues that are negatively affecting the city of Prince Albert and its residents, I'll support the amendment and not the Speech from the Throne. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a privilege and an honour to stand in this Assembly and reply to the Speech from the Throne for 2010.

[17:00]

As has been indicated by many members, you know, I believe that this is the 16th Throne Speech that I've had the privilege of listening to both as an opposition member and as a government member. And I know there are many, Mr. Speaker, in this Assembly who have indicated that their replies and . . . Mr. Speaker, for the benefit for those who don't quite understand the workings of the Legislative Assembly, we basically, as MLAs, have two opportunities to do a significant response here in the Legislative Assembly. That's either the Throne Speech, or it is the reply to the budget address which occurs in the springtime.

And, Mr. Speaker, a number of MLAs on both sides of the House have indicated that this may be their final Throne Speech or this may be their final budget address in the springtime because they did not participate in the Throne Speech address. So, Mr. Speaker, to those members I say, thank you for your contribution to public service, because a number have been here for a while, in fact maybe even a few more years than me. And as I indicated, I've been here for 16 years.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech that was delivered by this government I think indicates very clearly the path that we have started on in this four-year plan has come to fruition, and in fact we see a change. We see a new Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, before I get into the comments about the items that are very important to the people of Canora-Pelly, I do want to indicate my appreciation, first of all, to my family. To my wife, Gail, who's been superannuated as a teacher administrator now . . . She's into her third year of retirement, and I think she's beginning to enjoy that a little bit better than she did in the first year, and has been a strong support to me in terms of being able to advise me and help me through. Because as every member in this Assembly knows, there needs to be a significant contribution from family. There needs to be the ability for family members to even do something as simple as understand what we're doing and how we do it.

I also want to extend my appreciation to my son and my daughter-in-law and even my little grandchildren. Because I have to tell you, Mr. Speaker, in my previous responsibility as minister of Education, I was responsible for daycare in this province, and as minister I looked at her for advice as a child who was involved in a daycare program, Mr. Speaker. And I say that of course in a humorous fashion.

I also want to extend my appreciation to my daughter Lindsay, who lives in Calgary. And we don't have that opportunity to see her often, but she does send me emails, press releases, about the price of oil, Mr. Speaker, and the kinds of things that now I am responsible for as Minister of Finance. So to family, I want to say thank you.

To my constituency staff, my constituency assistant in Canora who manages that office . . . And by the way, Mr. Speaker, we relocated to a brand new office this year after 15 years of being in one particular location in Canora. We're now on Main Street in Canora. And I want to extend my appreciation to Bob Blahay, to all of his years of service with me, Mr. Speaker. I think he's probably up around 13 or 14 years being with me as my constituency assistant. I also want to extend appreciation to Carol Sleevea, who serves in two capacities: one in my constituency office as a constituency assistant, but also here as a part-time ministerial assistant, to act as that liaison.

My staff, Mr. Speaker, at the ministry office here has . . . As I've indicated, we did do a change on June the 29th when the Premier asked me to become the Minister of Finance. And that has also meant that we have had new members join us, and we've also had other members who've stayed with us. And I want to thank Jane and Susan as well as Fred from my ministry staff. But especially I also want to recognise the fact that a new individual has joined me as my chief of staff, and I want to welcome Diane Ford, who's only been with me since

November 1st. So she's on a steep learning curve, but I know that she's going to do extremely well, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to say congratulations to the member for Saskatoon Northwest. You know, periodically there are by-elections, and this time the member from Northwest has shown very clearly that the polling that took place this past weekend was a continuation of what took place on October the 18th. And I know that the member for Saskatoon Northwest will do just a terrific job as the member representing that area of the city of Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quickly, quickly review some of the great things that have happened in Canora-Pelly because of the initiatives taken by this government. Whether they're initiatives that have been looked at by the Minister of Highways or whether they're initiatives that have been looked at by Municipal Affairs, Mr. Speaker, many great things have happened.

And I want to begin by indicating that in the constituency of Canora-Pelly, provincial dollars that have flowed into towns and villages and rural municipalities in Canora-Pelly over the last three years, Mr. Speaker, total \$5.6 million. Mr. Speaker, that's very significant when you look at some of the things that the town of Kamsack has been able to do. Mr. Speaker, you know, there's been a bridge replacement in that community that has been needed for years, and it has been completed.

Mr. Speaker, the communities of Canora and Norquay continued with street paving — very essential in ensuring that those communities attract residents. So congratulations to them. Mr. Speaker, water and sewer treatment improvements occurred in Kamsack, Endeavour, Pelly, Preeceville, Springside, and Hyas, Mr. Speaker. That's a significant number of communities that have either put in place new wells or they have improved the water treatment plants. And they have used provincial dollars to assist them in moving forward a very significant program.

I also want to commend the RM [rural municipality] of Good Lake, Mr. Speaker. The RM of Good Lake is responsible for a number of communities around Good Spirit Lake and they have expanded the rural water pipeline program to Canora Beach. And now the quality of water that comes from the Canora area is going to be enjoyed by those residents as well.

Mr. Speaker, three major projects occurred for recreational facilities, and I want to identify a couple of them, Mr. Speaker. The Kamsack arena green ice project is a geothermal heating and cooling system, and it also involved energy-efficient lighting. You know, I want to compliment the council there, the mayor, and the individuals on the recreation board who saw fit to put together a project — significant amount of dollars, over \$717,000 for that community, shared one-third by the federal government, one-third by the province, and one-third by the town of Kamsack — to put in place a geothermal heating unit.

They recognized that they needed to lower the costs of operating their community rink. It is the, you know, focal point in many smaller communities. The community rink is the place in the wintertime. And they saw fit to ensure that they could put in place an upgrade that would be good for years and years and

would also save them money.

It was interesting seeing the pipes being laid, Mr. Speaker, in the parking lot. That is exactly where all the pipes are laid for the geothermal system. And they're drawing the heat for the piping for winter months and they're also of course using the cooling for summer months. So it's just an extremely good project.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that happened in the town of Canora . . . The town of Canora has always had a swimming pool that has been heated the traditional way by either using, you know, power or natural gas. And they decided that they would apply to the MRIF [Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund] program and would convert the heating of that pool to solar heating. And, Mr. Speaker, they've done that.

They've moved ahead with the construction of a building worth about \$180,000 and the building actually has . . . It's equipped with a solar panel roof. And now the actual heating of the water during the season occurs by use of the sun's rays. A tremendous improvement, a very good green initiative, and of course it saves dollars for years and years.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other programs that occurred, that the community of Sturgis took advantage . . . And, Mr. Speaker, there are so many other programs that have taken place throughout. I'm just going to highlight a few of them. But I do want to mention specifically the town of Sturgis, one of the smaller communities. Obviously Canora, Preeceville, and Kamsack are the largest ones and Sturgis, you know, is sort of in the next tier.

Sturgis understood, of course, and I was . . . Interesting listening to the mayor at the ribbon cutting at the town hall when he said he wanted to thank the insurance company. That's what he began, by saying thank you to the insurance company. I thought, well that's interesting that the mayor would stand up at the ribbon cutting.

Well what it was is the insurance company said, we're going to close your building and you have a specific number of years to either renovate it, improve it, or close it because we are not going to offer you insurance. So the town of Sturgis took upon themselves, and the community, a major project, Mr. Speaker — \$1.75 million for a brand new community hall. And of course they used the municipal rural infrastructure program, the MRIF grant as I indicated, where they receive \$250,000 from the province. They also received 62,000 from the municipal economic enhancement program and they also did fundraising, Mr. Speaker. They've raised already \$160,000 towards that, Mr. Speaker.

But you know, it also left them with the debt of \$1.39 million. And they understood, that community understood, that they're going to benefit by constructing that hall. So they've applied for debentures through the Municipal Board and in fact now the debentures sold almost instantly. And for the next 20 years, the community of Sturgis is going to enjoy that hall while they continue to pay off those debentures.

Mr. Speaker, the highways initiatives in my constituency have been significant when we've had bridges replaced on Highway

49 at both the junction of Highway 49 and 9 as well as near Preeceville. We've had tremendous amount of work done. Highway 16, a very significant primary highway, a large chunk of that highway by Springside is through my constituency and repaving has occurred there with the cost of a lot of dollars. Mr. Speaker, 34.7 kilometres highway projects were improved in my constituency alone to the tune of \$15.5 million. So, Mr. Speaker, the Highways minister has recognized that we need to ensure that the deficit that was left, the infrastructure deficit that was left is upgraded and we need to ensure that safety continues to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, one of the important education initiatives in my constituency was the opening of a project in Norquay, the Norquay School initiative. Norquay School, Mr. Speaker, has had a project dedicated to them and the board has worked tirelessly to ensure that it opened. And, Mr. Speaker, a \$2.8 million addition to the Norquay School, upgrading old facilities as well as adding new construction, has meant that the students at that school will have an environment that is conducive to good learning.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the very important things, and I think members across the province recognize, many urban centres . . . I know my colleague, the member from Melville-Saltcoats, and I had the opportunity to be in Langenburg to open a daycare. But, you know, Mr. Speaker, it's occurring all over the province. We're hearing from MLAs that there are initiatives where boards are getting together.

Mr. Speaker, prior to 2007 for the election of the Saskatchewan Party government, there were no daycare spaces in Canora-Pelly constituency. Mr. Speaker, since then, 137 daycare spaces have opened in Canora worth a total of \$496,000. Mr. Speaker, Kamsack opened in April of 2008 with 33 spaces; Canora, Mr. Speaker, has opened with 25 spaces, and we've just allocated again, in the spring of 2010, an additional 10 spaces for a total of 35. Mr. Speaker, the communities of Sturgis, Preeceville have gotten together and were approved for 36 spaces in March of 2010 — 10 preschool spaces have been granted in a temporary location and 26 more will be added when the permanent location is completed.

Mr. Speaker, the small community of Pelly. Pelly now has 33 spaces allotted to them, Mr. Speaker, and on Monday, November the 15th, the Pelly daycare board, in fact, is going to open up their facility in what was known as the former elementary school. It is a building that the village of Pelly owned, and now they are transferring that ownership to the village and we will have a daycare opening in Pelly on Monday with the prospects of moving up to as many as 33 daycare spaces.

Mr. Speaker, one of the areas that we recognize in Preeceville and the great job being done by one group and that's called the MacKenzie Society. The MacKenzie Society recognizes of course that there are individuals who require assistance, students and adults of course with disabilities. Mr. Speaker, the MacKenzie Society Ventures corporation owns and operates homes in Preeceville, Sturgis, and also now a home in Canora. I want to commend the group that's involved there, Mr. Speaker, because there is one group home in Sturgis that has six spaces. There are three group homes in Preeceville, two that have a

three-space allotment and one that has a six-space allotment. And now, Mr. Speaker, in Canora there is also a three-space group home.

So, Mr. Speaker, now we have a total of 21 individuals that have intellectual disabilities and they are being cared for by the MacKenzie Society Ventures. This expansion has now created at least 10 permanent full- and part-time jobs.

[17:15]

Mr. Speaker, the final point I'm going to talk about my constituency is that last fall we had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to see the completion of a project, and that is of course the opening of the integrated health care facility, the hospital and the long-term care facility in Preeceville.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the program began with the explanation of how the project came about, and the title on the program was called "The Journey." The journey, Mr. Speaker, lasted 10 years. At a time in 1999 when the NDP announced the project, they were estimating that the project would cost about \$4.6 million, I believe, and of course, Mr. Speaker, as in all projects across Saskatchewan, 35 per cent of the share has to be raised locally. So the community looked at that and they were excited. They were pleased. So they began to raise 35 per cent of that 4.6. Well, Mr. Speaker, years went by, and I think in about 2003, the estimate was that if it was going to go ahead, it was going to cost \$6.1 million.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting; it's interesting how the former government . . . And I'm not going to get into too much discussion about the former government, but I know the Minister of Health did mention this, so I have to, Mr. Speaker. You know, I have an article from the *Preeceville Progress* and it's dated September the 25th of '03.

Mr. Speaker, September 25th, '03 . . . You have to remember that the election of 2003 was held on November the 5th. Mr. Speaker, the then minister of Health arrives in Preeceville to announce that the project is still going ahead. Keep in mind, they announced it for the first time in 1999; this is '03. And in this photo, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that there is the board Chair of the health district, the Co-Chair, the CEO of the health district, the mayor is in the photo, Mr. Speaker, and the NDP candidate. Nothing to do with health, nothing to do with this project, but he's in the photo, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, people in Preeceville recognized this, that this was very much a political picture, and there are still people that are very angry about that.

Now last year, as I indicated, Mr. Speaker, last fall finally, Mr. Speaker, last year, finally the Saskatchewan Party government has completed the project. But you know, Mr. Speaker, I indicated that the project was announced at just over \$4 million. Mr. Speaker, the project is in fact smaller because the costs were skyrocketing, and it's over \$10 million, Mr. Speaker. The community is now responsible for 35 per cent of that 10 million. So the delays by the former government have ensured that the community now is on the hook for \$3.5 million. So, Mr. Speaker, that's something that the NDP have to understand very clearly: that they were not building for a growing province, they were willing to see things stay as they were.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other things that have happened this year in the Canora-Pelly constituency . . . And it's interesting when you watch *National News* and there's an article that suddenly talks about the RM of Invermay, and it caught my attention rather quickly because of course that's the RM that I live in. Mr. Speaker, the RM of Invermay, as according to that news report was the RM — in all of Saskatchewan, the 297 RMs that we have — it received the most moisture per inches of rain or millimetres of rain in all of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, tremendous amounts of acres that have not been able to be seeded.

But, Mr. Speaker, you know, the Minister of Agriculture recognized this very quickly and worked with the federal government. And we announced, Mr. Speaker, through the expansion of quarter 1 results, the financial results, we announced a program of \$30 an acre. That's in addition to, Mr. Speaker, the crop insurance amounts that the minister talked about before. So I'm not going to get into an explanation there. But, Mr. Speaker, \$360 million of that announcement is going to come to the province of Saskatchewan.

The provincial share, we're going to be responsible for probably \$144 million of that. But you know, Mr. Speaker, because of a growing economy, because of a province that has been leading in so many initiatives, we are able to meet that challenge.

And as indicated, the minister today was able to add to that program because the minister has understood that there were a certain group that were, I guess you would say, they were left out by the federal government to a degree, and that's the cattle producers. That's those who have the responsibility of growing forage and ensuring that their pasture lands are there. And, Mr. Speaker, today the announcement was very well received, very well received by cattlemen in my constituency and all through the Canora and Kelvington-Wadena constituency, because now they'll have the opportunity to receive some assistance for trucking feed, because we know in certain parts of the province there's an abundance of feed. We just need to move it.

And the other thing, Mr. Speaker, is they're going to be able to receive a payment, a per acre payment for lands that have flooded. And the forage that was on those acres needs to be reseeded, and they're going to receive that information. Mr. Speaker, the information will be provided. I think the minister's already identified a hotline, and farmers will be able to call and to be able to then submit their applications.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other items that I wish to talk about for just a few minutes . . . And of course it's listening to the member opposite, the member for Rosemont, who has a tendency to talk about . . . I won't say they're exaggerated numbers, but they're certain numbers that he likes to mention. Mr. Speaker, you know, one of the things that the member opposite . . . And I know that he wasn't here so I can't fault him, Mr. Speaker. But the document that he should read, Mr. Speaker, is the document of the Saskatchewan provincial budget, and it's dated '07-08. It's the last budget of the NDP government. And, Mr. Speaker, the budget that was presented . . . an interesting twist because for years government outlined its next four-year projections. And in this document, Mr. Speaker . . . and people in the province need to understand this,

is that the government in 2007-08, the NDP government did not do a four-year projection. In fact, Mr. Speaker, on page no. 19 of their document, they indicate the previous four years. They don't talk about what's going to occur in the next four years. They talk about the previous four years.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, the debt, the debt as indicated in this document, Mr. Speaker, was \$12 billion, the Crown and general government debt, \$12 billion. Mr. Speaker, we've been able to address that debt. We've been able to look at reducing government debt. And, Mr. Speaker, we have reduced the government debt down to where we're now at \$4.1 billion.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's interesting. The member opposite stands and he said, well you have to look at your document; on page 62 it shows that your debt is going up. Absolutely, Mr. Speaker. Because you know, Mr. Speaker, I took a look at the Crown corporation debt under the NDP, and throughout 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, it remained relatively flat. You know why, Mr. Speaker? Because they weren't planning for growth. They weren't planning for replacing an infrastructure that, Mr. Speaker, by everyone's analysis needs to be upgraded, Mr. Speaker, needs to be upgraded. So, Mr. Speaker, we are doing that.

One of the first responsibilities, Mr. Speaker, that I had when I was a member of CIC was to look at ensuring that we would have natural gas turbines to ensure that we could have power produced. Mr. Speaker, we had to put an expenditure and get our order in so that those generators could be produced to the tune, I believe, of \$450 million. So, Mr. Speaker, companies like SaskTel, like SaskPower, like SaskEnergy are all going to be expanding. They're all going to be improving their infrastructure. They're going to be ensuring that the fact is that we have 1.045 million people in this province now, Mr. Speaker. Our Crown corporations are going to move forward.

You know, and it was interesting listening to a member today talk about . . . in question period where he said, you know, reveal your plan. You must be wanting to privatize, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're going to spend literally millions of dollars, hundreds of millions of dollars to ensure that SaskTel and SaskEnergy and SaskPower can continue to build the infrastructure that the people of this province have become accustomed to and understand that these are quality programs, Mr. Speaker.

So while the member uses certain numbers to talk about debt, he has to understand that the debt, even as forecasted in the fourth year of this document, Mr. Speaker, is going to be less than the debt that was under the NDP, less than the debt that was under the NDP. So, Mr. Speaker, we're very proud of the fact that we have been able to get the debt under control.

Mr. Speaker, two initiatives that, I believe it was . . . the member from Cumberland was the speaker this afternoon. I think it was the member for Cumberland. And he said, you know, deliver your promises. Show some respect. Well, Mr. Speaker, we made two very important promises in the election platform of 2007. One was on infrastructure spending. One was municipal revenue sharing, and another one was on ensuring that the education property tax would be fulfilled. Mr. Speaker, I want to indicate to the people in this province that since we

have become government, almost \$3 billion — that's with a "b," Mr. Speaker — \$3 billion have been spent on infrastructure. And it's infrastructure in highways. It's schools. It's affordable housing. It's provincial parks. It's in municipal projects, Mr. Speaker. It's all over the province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I listened very intently this afternoon to the member talk about education and the fact that the promise of a school in La Ronge was, in his opinion, delayed, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that project has been on the books for years and years and years. And, Mr. Speaker, it is going to be delivered. It is already into the process stage. And, Mr. Speaker, when I went there in June because I had heard through the member opposite that there were problems . . . Mr. Speaker, the \$34 million project is going forward. The commitment is there by this government. And the commitment is there of course by the school board. And that \$34 million project is going to get built in La Ronge.

Mr. Speaker, one of the other innovative things that I think we've looked at is being able to work with the First Nations and Métis Relations office as well. Very rarely do we have a project that is jointly shared between INAC [Indian and Northern Affairs Canada] and the province in terms of the Ministry of Education. INAC is responsible for education on-reserve. But you know, Mr. Speaker, in the community of Turnor Lake . . . Turnor Lake is a First Nations reserve that was looking at constructing a brand new school, a very significant cost. But, Mr. Speaker, there was a need for other students not on-reserve to attend that school. So, Mr. Speaker, we have committed and that is already a commitment that has been completed. The school is open. And, Mr. Speaker, the commitment was over \$3.2 million, \$3.2 million, Mr. Speaker, that went to a First Nation school on-reserve to ensure that quality education is delivered to everyone.

And I understand the member opposite saying, well show respect to northern people. Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what we're doing. That's exactly what we're doing. We're trying to ensure that people across this province — whether they're in the South or the North or whether they're urban or rural — ensure that the benefits that this government provides are equitable for all.

Mr. Speaker, I do have to spend a moment talking about municipal revenue sharing, because you know, Mr. Speaker, we made a promise. We made a promise in the platform that said over the course of the term of our government, we were going to implement a revenue sharing that was going to be understood. It was going to be transparent. It was going to be there for everyone to understand. And, Mr. Speaker, we're going to keep that promise. Mr. Speaker, the March 31st provincial numbers from the province of Saskatchewan, through the auditor's office, indicate that the revenue that has been received by the province in the category of provincial sales tax is \$1.84 billion.

[17:30]

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's very specific because now we are going to implement a 1 per cent . . . In other words, 1 per cent of that 5 per cent PST — and I know for people that might be confusing — has contributed to building that pot. We're going

to ensure that we fulfill that promise. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? That 1 per cent, that's going to translate to \$216.8 million. That's what's going to be given to the municipalities.

And I have some figures. I do have to go back to my '07-08 document when I look at the last year of the NDP. You know on the urban revenue-sharing transfer, the rural revenue-sharing transfer and the northern revenue-sharing transfer, Mr. Speaker, in the last year of the NDP, do you know what that total was for all three of them — \$122 million. Mr. Speaker, this is going to move that number to \$216 million.

Mr. Speaker a couple of comments about the education property tax. Mr. Speaker, the education property tax has been a sore spot in many . . . In fact, Mr. Speaker, you know the first NDP to criticize the property tax was Tommy Douglas, Mr. Speaker. Tommy Douglas said that there needs to be a promise made to the taxpayers where the education tax has to be removed from . . . from the property, I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker.

And in fact, Mr. Speaker, at the 2003 SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] convention, 2003, then premier says, and I quote: "Our top priority in tax reform for government over the next several years must be the matter of funding education. The status quo is not on." That was the NDP premier in 2003. Well you know, let's move forward to March 3rd, 2006. Same premier says, "Three years ago, I very publicly stated that the level of education tax being taken from farm land was both unfair and too high, a problem that has been with us for decades." Mr. Speaker, for decades, for decades the NDP government didn't understand this. In fact, Mr. Speaker, there was a time when 150 rural municipalities launched a tax revolt, Mr. Speaker. They were understanding that the NDP government was not willing to look at that, not willing to look at the burden that the education property tax was placing on landowners.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're going to fulfill that promise. We're going to ensure that the promise made of 20 per cent reduction for all residential commercial properties and an 80 per cent reduction for agriculture is going to happen, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech has indicated a path that we need to move forward on. Mr. Speaker, we've already heard from the members in this Assembly about very significant tax cuts, Mr. Speaker, the tax cuts that affected low income people. And one of the things, Mr. Speaker, if I could find my notes here, would be the tax exemptions. Mr. Speaker, one of the changes that we implemented very quickly was to change the personal exemption. And the personal exemption, Mr. Speaker, since '07 until 2010, this government, Mr. Speaker, this government has increased the exemption by over \$4,000. Mr. Speaker, that's \$4,000 tax-free dollars that we have put into the taxpayers of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to conclude my remarks in a couple of minutes, but I do want to make mention, and I know that members opposite will want to get on board. Mr. Speaker, there's a CBC program, and I know the member opposite watches CBC often. The *Battle of the Blades* is under way. The *Battle of the Blades* involves a very specific individual that my colleague, the member of Kelvington-Wadena, mentioned today and that's Kelly Chase. Mr. Speaker, the decision made by

Kelly and his skating partner, Ina, is that if they are successful, if they are successful in winning the \$100,000, they're going to donate that money to the Children's Hospital Foundation in Saskatoon.

But, Mr. Speaker, I do also want to mention . . . And this is why people should get on board and vote because Kelly and his partner were successful in staying on in the competition after last night. But, Mr. Speaker, the Garth Brooks — and I know the member opposite from Regina Rosemont is a great Garth Brooks fan — Garth Brooks foundation has also indicated that whoever wins, whoever wins, they will match the \$100,000. So, Mr. Speaker, I challenge all the people in the province of Saskatchewan, including the NDP, to vote. Let's help Kelly Chase and his partner win the *Battle of the Blades* because the winners will be the children of the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm going to conclude by mentioning just some of the outstanding things that have happened as a result of the role that other countries have brought to Saskatchewan. One of my responsibilities is that of Deputy Premier, and I get an opportunity to meet with ambassadors and councils of so many different countries. Mr. Speaker, honestly it has been a very busy schedule, meeting with all the individuals.

And I had the opportunity to be in Ukraine a second time just a short while ago. And I want to highlight one of the things that is going to happen. I had the opportunity to visit five oblast, or provinces as they're called, to look at possible trade agreements with Saskatchewan, to look at water improvement, to look at uranium development, to look at clean coal, but also to look at some agricultural things — things even as simple as land registration, Mr. Speaker, because right now in Ukraine, they don't have the ability to have a land registration system because there's a moratorium on land sales.

But one of the provinces, Zhytomyr, the governor is going to be coming to the province of Saskatchewan during Agribition, during one of the largest, of course, recognized international agricultural displays and sales. And he's going to be coming to sign an agreement that is being worked on right now with our Premier, the Premier of Saskatchewan, to ensure that additional trade can take place in livestock, embryos, genetics and all of the things connected with livestock. It's a very exciting competition, Mr. Speaker, because you know, there are other provinces that are looking at offering the same things to Ukraine. But Ukraine understands that Saskatchewan has so much to offer, and they're coming here to make the deal with us.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech I think just highlights for the people of Saskatchewan that we're on a path of growth. We're on a path that's going to move this province forward. We're going to ensure that we recognize that there are things that we must do, that we must do in health, we must do in the infrastructure. We must provide the benefits that people in this province expect and, Mr. Speaker, this Throne Speech is laying that out. So, Mr. Speaker, I will not be supporting the amendment of the NDP but I definitely will be supporting this Throne Speech.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the amendment presented by the member from Saskatoon Massey

Place, seconded by the member from Regina Coronation Park that the following words be added to the government's motion:

And, that the government has lost the confidence of this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan because of the government's lack of vision for the future of our province and its failure to address the important issues facing Saskatchewan today in this Speech from the Throne, including maximizing the benefits for Saskatchewan families from our resources, improving the quality of our health care, addressing critical issues of affordability, and returning to sound financial management.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the motion say aye.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Aye.

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the motion say nay.

**Some Hon. Members:** — No.

**The Speaker:** — I believe the nays have it. Call in the members.

[The division bells rang from 17:38 until 17:43.]

**The Speaker:** — Those in favour of the amendment, please rise. Order. Order.

[Yeas — 18]

Lingenfelter	McCall	Belanger
Harper	Trew	Higgins
Junor	Atkinson	Nilson
Forbes	Vermette	Brotten
Furber	Yates	Iwanchuk
Taylor	Wotherspoon	Chartier

**The Speaker:** — Those opposed to the motion, please rise.

[Nays — 31]

Morgan	Bjornerud	Norris
Draude	Krawetz	Eagles
Duncan	Huyghebaert	McMillan
Harpauer	D'Autremont	Harrison
Hickie	Reiter	Hutchinson
Brkich	Elhard	Hart
Stewart	Allchurch	

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I'd ask members to allow the vote to proceed without interference.

Weekes	Ross	Wilson
Gantfoer	Michelson	Wyant
Ottenbreit	Chisholm	Kirsch
Bradshaw	Heppner	

**Clerk:** — Mr. Speaker, those in favour of the amendment, 18; those opposed, 31.

**The Speaker:** — The amendments debated being . . . Order . . . being passed. Order. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:46.]





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