



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

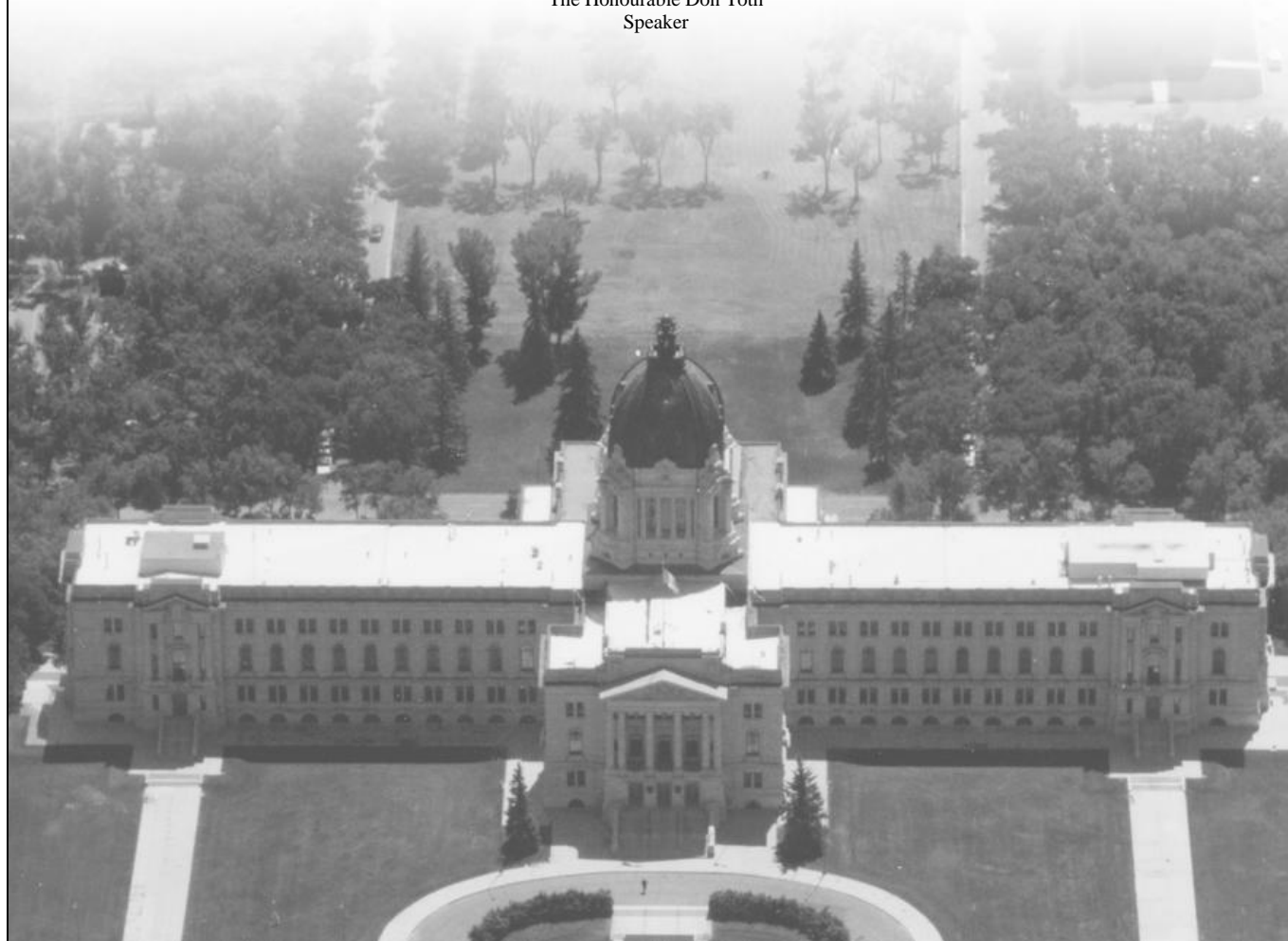
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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.]

Clerk: — I wish to inform the Assembly that Mr. Speaker will not be present to open today's sitting.

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the minister for advanced labour and immigration.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I've a couple of introductions. To you and through you to all members of the honourable Assembly, I'd like to introduce to you, to begin with, the grade 7 classes from Greystone Heights in Saskatoon. Their teachers are Michelle Pantel, Deanna Fast, and Jamie LeMay. They've also been accompanied by chaperones Michael Diakuw, Ruth, McKeown, Ray Sperling, and Wes Walker.

Mr. Speaker, these students embody the great spirit of Saskatchewan, and already they're on their way as far as taking up leadership positions right across their community. And we're delighted to have them join us in their Assembly, and I'll have the opportunity to meet with them just after we're through in the Chamber today.

I'd also like to, if I could, Mr. Speaker, introduce some individuals that are here with us celebrating International Education Week, celebrated in more than 80 countries around the world. I'd like to introduce Veronika Mueller, Robert Helmich, Philipp Galewski, Javier Sanchez, Victor Guredam who is at once both a poet and an engineer as he demonstrated today over lunch. We also have Dupindra Rai and Satoshi Shibata. A representation of a few of those thousand students, almost 4,000 this year, studying from around the world here on our campuses in Saskatchewan.

I'd also like to add to that representatives that will be familiar to many if not all in the Assembly: President Kyle Addison, president of the University of Regina Students' Union; Chris Stoicheff, the president of the University of Saskatchewan's Students' Union; as well as Tyler Willox, the vice-president for student affairs at the University of Regina; and a number of others that have joined us from both institutions.

We appreciate those that are studying in Saskatchewan and those that are supportive and engaged in international education. We know that the goal here is to ensure that they enjoy and profit from their studies. But we also want them to consider not just studying in Saskatchewan but staying and succeeding in the new Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I will ask all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming both groups to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with

the minister in welcoming these guests to the Assembly. To Tyler, Chris, and Kyle, thank you for the work that you do on your respective campuses in representing students' concerns in your own area and then of course in the broader Saskatchewan scene. To the international students who are guests here today, thank you for all that you do here in Saskatchewan while you are studying, and thank you for how you enrich our campuses here in our province. So I'd ask all members to once again welcome these guests to the Assembly. Thank you.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In the gallery today we have representatives from Wawota save our beds committee as well as representatives from rural administrations and communities around Wawota. I would like to welcome them to the legislature today.

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

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House, seated in the west gallery, a constituent from the city of Weyburn. George Kalman is with us today. Mr. Speaker, George is a retired RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officer and a former city councillor from the city of Weyburn. And so I would like all members to welcome George to his Assembly.

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to take a moment to also introduce two very special guests that travelled a long way, so please bear with me. I'll quickly introduce them.

In your gallery is Senator Pat Campbell, and with Senator Pat Campbell is Ray Campbell, and they're from the English River First Nations which is known as Patuanak. And they come today as Johnny Cash and Waylon Jennings. That's how they want to be introduced here in the Assembly, but I want to welcome them here today.

It's always very special to have visitors that come a long ways, and they're here as part of a justice symposium, and also to give the Minister of Highways some grief over their road.

But I want to say that two people spoke Cree in this Assembly before me, one being Keith Goulet and the other being Lawrence Yew. But I think I was the first MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] to speak Dene. So I want to try my Dene with them, saying . . .

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Dene.]

So please welcome our great guests from English River, known as Patuanak.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Walsh Acres.

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you, through you, and to all members of the Legislative Assembly someone that's seated in the Speaker's gallery. She's with the international students. It's someone I have known for many, many years. Her name is Melissa Berwald, and perhaps you could stand and give a small wave. Thank you, Melissa.

Melissa is a proud graduate of the Regina German Language School in Regina, of which obviously I am very proud of as well, and currently has her young son enrolled in the brand new preschool class which is seeing its initiative year in the German Language School. So I want to welcome her to the legislature, thank her for putting her faith once again in the German Language School in Regina, and ask all my colleagues to welcome her here today as well. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm here to present a petition protecting renters from unreasonable increases in rent. Mr. Speaker, the prayer goes that:

To cause the government to consider enacting some form of rent control with the view to protect Saskatchewan renters from unreasonable increases in rent.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people who have signed the petitions are all from throughout the Saskatchewan cities, towns, and villages. And I so present.

The Deputy 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, concerned over the deterioration of our highway system as well as the safety factor. 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 the safety for Saskatchewan's motoring public.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to present yet another petition on behalf of the citizens of Wawota and surrounding areas, and:

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to your attention the following: that the Deer View Lodge long-term care facility provides a valuable and vital service to the community of Wawota and surrounding area by ensuring the physical health and emotional well-being of the senior citizens of Wawota and surrounding area; and that the Wall government's closure of three long-term care beds and two respite beds at the Deer View Lodge is negatively affecting the entire region by putting unnecessary emotional and physical stress on long-term residents, their family, and loved ones, by forcing them to be separated; that the closure of these beds will increase the already long-standing wait-lists for placement in the Deer View Lodge; that to build new spaces in other communities in the region is far more costly than to use the already available spaces in Wawota.

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the government to immediately and without delay recognize the harmful emotional and physical stress the closure of these five beds at the Deer View Lodge is causing to the people of Wawota and surrounding area, and to immediately understand the importance of properly caring for the senior citizens of Wawota and surrounding area; and in doing so, to cause the government to commit to reopening the three long-term care beds and two respite beds at the Wawota Deer View Lodge.

These over 1,000 signatures are from the communities of Wawota, Kipling, Kennedy, Maryfield, Langbank, Kenosee, Kenosee Lake, Carlyle, Manor, Invermay, Markinch, Arcola, Stoughton, Redvers, Whitewood, Fairlight, Rocanville, Wapella, Fleming, Welwyn, Kelso, Moosomin, Glenavon, Regina, Humboldt, Windthorst, Muenster, Esterhazy, Fort Qu'Appelle. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of eliminating poverty here in Saskatchewan. And we know that citizens living in poverty have identified affordable solutions that can work. Recent national and provincial initiatives, including the Saskatoon health disparities report and the Canada Without Poverty, Dignity for All campaign, all call for a comprehensive poverty elimination strategy that includes income, food, and housing security. 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 as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Hepburn, Saskatoon, Regina, and Meadow Lake. I do so present.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of expansion of the graduate retention program, Mr. Speaker, a program that currently excludes master's and Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] graduates. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately expand the graduate retention program to include master's and Ph.D. graduates.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the city of Regina. I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present yet another petition from the good residents of Furdale. The government ministry has directed SaskWater to cut off supplies of water for domestic use to Furdale customers. This same government ministry has directed that customers may no longer treat non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health. Now the Furdale residents, in dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for their domestic systems and in-home treatment equipment as well as for livestock and irrigation lines.

The alternative water supply referred to by the government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost, with no guarantee of quality, quantity, or availability of water, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its order to cut off non-potable water to the residents of the hamlet of Furdale, causing great hardship with no suitable alternatives; to exempt the hamlet of Furdale from further water service cut-offs by granting a grandfather clause under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* and *The Water Regulations, 2002*; and that this government fulfills its promises to rural Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Saskatoon and Corman Park. I so present.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, I rise today and present a petition in support of occupational health and safety. Mr. Speaker, the government allows fines levied against companies for violations of *The Occupational Health and*

Safety Act to be treated as tax deductible expenses. This allows companies to treat such violations and the fines levied for them as the regular cost of doing business. Mr. Deputy Speaker, the prayer 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.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And the petitions are signed by residents of Davidson, Sovereign, and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions 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 deficit budgets and the billions of dollars of debt growth projected under this government. And what's of huge concern is that Saskatchewan people are being asked to pay the price for this government's mismanagement. I might reference a community like Wawota who now has five beds that have been cut as a result of this government's mismanagement, Mr. Speaker, all at a time of record highs in revenues, Mr. Speaker.

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.

These petitions are signed by good folks and concerned citizens from Assiniboia, Moose Jaw, Macdowall, and Regina. I so submit.

[13:45]

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Louis Riel Day

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, I am proud and honoured . . . Louis Riel Day and the life of Louis Riel. Especially in 2010, Year of the Métis, Saskatchewan citizens and all Canadians should celebrate the courage of Louis Riel and the Métis people.

In both Manitoba in the 1870s and in Saskatchewan in the mid-1880s, he demanded that Western concerns be addressed. Mr. Speaker, we see today that little has changed over the years. Mr. Speaker, Riel was one man who took up the cause of the Métis people. He fought and died for his beliefs. My colleagues and I here in the Chamber can learn a great deal from his examples of dedication, self-sacrifice to one's people. Our constituents rely on us to advocate for them in this Chamber, just as Riel's people relied on him to fight for the Métis homeland years ago.

Although we celebrate his life today, we must also realize that 125 years ago he was executed for asking questions of authority, for standing up for his people. Mr. Speaker, we must do the same today. We demand a level playing field for the Métis people of Saskatchewan and Canada. This still endures us more than 100 years after Riel's death. We must learn from our ancestors. We should celebrate and learn from the life and times of Louis Riel and his people. If we learn these lessons, we may also reveal much about ourselves. Thank you.

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

International Education Week

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today as we join with 85 countries around the globe in celebrating the 11th annual International Education Week.

In Canada, Building a Society for the 21st Century is this year's theme. In Saskatchewan we are taking action to internationalize our campuses, export Saskatchewan's educational expertise, and increase the mobility of our students. We have established the International Education Council to build international education opportunities in Saskatchewan. The council works on developing strategies to identify more study-abroad opportunities for Saskatchewan's students and improve international student recruitment in efforts to make Saskatchewan campuses more diverse.

Just this morning, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration announced changes to its Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program that will help international graduate students trained in Saskatchewan stay and succeed in the province.

In addition, the program student category will allow master's and Ph.D. graduates who studied in Saskatchewan greater opportunity to successfully apply for permanent residence to stay in our province. This is an excellent opportunity for Saskatchewan to retain more of the bright minds that we have helped foster at our own institutions, who are now ready to contribute to Saskatchewan's vibrant economy and move our province forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Louis Riel Day

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When I think of Riel and the fact that we're celebrating Louis Riel Day, I feel

great pride in my heart. I am proud, Mr. Speaker, because we are recognizing a person who fought for his people and many others.

Times were much different back then. Frontier days for many on the Prairies involved invasion and colonization of Métis, First Nations, and others. Rules and laws were written by people wearing suits and ties living many, many miles away. These same people tried to rule and run affairs in our Western land.

Louis Riel and others stood up and resisted in Manitoba. He led a provisional government, was convicted a criminal, and then won election to the Canadian House of Commons twice — sworn in, but never seated.

He went into exile, was persuaded to return to Canada and Batoche to lead the community. The eastern march continued into the West as surveyors would change land holdings. Métis and First Nations were ignored and oppressed. A major army was sent from the East, and the people fought back nobly. But in the end, modern weapons of the day and numbers won out. The resistance was lost. Louis was captured, tried, found guilty, and hung a few short miles from here, Mr. Speaker. And many times, many central Canadians cheered.

Louis Riel has not been forgotten, and it's the duty of all Canadians to continue to share his story of rebellion on behalf of those he fought for. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw North.

Habitat for Humanity in Moose Jaw

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of participating in the official sod-turning ceremony for the first Habitat for Humanity home in Moose Jaw. Habitat for Humanity is a successful program to give a helping hand to individuals in need of housing. The program provides an opportunity for people to own their own home where they can work, build dreams, and raise their families in our friendly community.

This is a tremendous partnership that will not only put affordable home ownership within the reach of a Moose Jaw family in need, but will also help to revitalize the neighbourhood.

Habitat For Humanity is one of the best examples of communities coming together to provide home ownership opportunities for deserving families.

Lee and Taryn Guse were selected as the new recipients of this first home. Over the course of the next six months, they will be part of the construction process, dedicating their time and donating their labour under the careful watch of site supervisor Fern Paulhus. Congratulations to Lee and Taryn Guse. Their children, Carson, Hunter, and Giles will hope to be settled in their new home sometime in May or June of next year. And thank you to the Habitat For Humanity for beginning of the construction of the very first home in Moose Jaw. Thank You.

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

Concern for Assyrian Christians

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday over 150 people marched to the Saskatoon city hall in memory of 58 killed in a Baghdad church this past October 31st. They demanded action be taken to protect Assyrian Christians who have faced horrible atrocities since the beginning of the Iraqi war.

The people marching were of Assyrian Christian descent and are deeply concerned for their loved ones left in Iraq who are now being terrorized for religious reasons. Sixty-six churches have been bombed, and tens of thousands have died. In one night alone, 500 businesses were torched. And women especially are being targeted in these acts of genocide.

Today there are now over 1,000 Assyrian Christians who call Saskatoon home, and they're asking for our help and support.

Mr. Speaker, Assyrian Christians are the original indigenous peoples of Iraq, having ties to northern Iraq that go back to 5000 BC. They make up about 8 per cent of the Iraqi population — some 1.5 million people — but since the war began, about 50 per cent have found it necessary to flee the country.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Martin Luther King warned us that, and I quote:

We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people.

Indeed, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it is time we stand and speak with our new neighbours as they urge our leaders at home here and in our province and in our country's capital to heed their call for action for peace in their homeland, Iraq. Thank you very much.

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

Aviation and Aerospace Week

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. As a member of the aviation community, it brings me great pleasure to announce that this week has been named Aviation and Aerospace Week in Saskatchewan. This week marks an opportunity to reflect upon the significant contributions of the aviation and aerospace industry in our province.

From the community regional airports to larger urban centres, the aviation sector helps to link businesses and tourism quickly with provincial, national, and international markets and clients. Airports also have a role in sustaining our quality of life, such as supporting policing, firefighting, and air ambulance services.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to recognize the Saskatchewan Aviation Council, who since 1989 have been improving aviation in Saskatchewan. What began as a small group of pilots has grown to include members from all facets of

aviation and today is the province's single most influential voice of aviation.

Mr. Speaker, I'd be remiss if I did not mention the Saskatchewan Aerial Applicators Association. In conjunction with Agriculture Saskatchewan, they operate an aerial applicator training program that ensures present and future applicators are well qualified. The SAAA [Saskatchewan Aerial Applicators Association] brings aerial application to a new level of professionalism, efficiency and effectiveness, stewardship, safety, and recognition.

The Canadian Business Aircraft Association also plays a role in our province by acting as a common voice for business aviation and by representing and promoting Canadian business aviation interests as well as advocating safety, security, and efficiency around the world.

I would like members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing the hard work done by our aviation section. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Allen Sapp Gallery Curator Retires

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Dean Bauche has retired as the city of North Battleford's director of galleries and as the curator of the now world-renowned Allen Sapp Gallery.

Mr. Bauche has been with the Sapp Gallery for 22 years. He was there at the very beginning of this very unique gallery, the only public gallery named after a living artist in Canada. In his own words, Bauche says:

Our motive isn't to sell art. Our motive is to actually take the profound insights, the extraordinary vision that this man, Allen Sapp, brings and the cultural history that he depicts through his work and share it with all Canadians.

And Dean Bauche has certainly been successful, most notably with the exhibition *Though the Eyes of the Cree*, which has travelled across Canada, including a showing at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa.

Originally from Australia, Bauche came to The Battlefords in the 1970s to follow his wife who was completing a psychiatric nurse training program at the Saskatchewan Hospital. He got to know Allan Sapp and Dr. Allan Gonor, and through that relationship and his own art, Bauche won a competition to take on the director of galleries position. He tackled the job with the determination that built cultural bridges and took the little prairie gallery to the world.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I call on all members of the Legislative Assembly to help me recognize the outstanding contribution made over the years by The Battlefords' own Mr. Dean Bauche.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from

Saskatoon Centre.

Support for Low-Income People

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Premier is failing Saskatchewan families. This morning Food Banks Canada announced the number of people using food banks in Saskatchewan has increased by 20 per cent in the last year — the second worst rate of any province in Canada, nearly 23,000 people. Most Saskatchewan food banks have reported an increase. The Door of Hope food bank in Meadow Lake for example reports a shocking 60 per cent increase.

To the Premier: how can he claim that people have never had it so good when the numbers clearly show that more and more families are unable to make ends meet?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I think everyone in the province finds it distressing and heartbreaking when there is need for any food banks in Canada. Unfortunately food bank usage is up right across Canada. And although there has been an increase here in Saskatchewan, we still compare favourably to other jurisdictions.

The national average for food bank usage is 2.6 per cent of the population, and in Saskatchewan we're below the national average at 2.2 per cent. Mr. Deputy Speaker, demand at Manitoba's food bank is two and a half times higher than in Saskatchewan, and the population is about the same. And Saskatchewan's demand ranks behind Alberta, BC [British Columbia], and Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, I remember when Premier Romanow declared that the NDP [New Democratic Party] was going to end poverty and make food banks unnecessary. And what really happened? The percentage of population in 2006 living in poverty reached its highest peak in the decade, and food bank usage peaked in 2006.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that minister can hide behind stats. I'm not sure how accurate they are, but we know what social assistance caseloads are today.

Well, Mr. Speaker, the Premier yesterday said that he needed to get the product right for his new ad campaign. Well let's look at his failed policies and what they've produced. Ten thousand children are now using Saskatchewan food banks. Ten thousand children, and more than 15,600 children are on social assistance. That's higher than the national average. And the Humboldt food bank, whose MLA was the former minister of Social Services, says the number of children they're serving is rising. And one in seven people, more than 3,000 people, have a job yet they still can't make ends meet without relying on a food bank.

To the Premier: will his new ad campaign include the fact that

thousands of people with jobs have to rely on the food bank to survive? Is that his idea of getting the product right?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talked about the children that have to use the food bank. And we know that Saskatchewan's population has the highest proportion of children of any place in Canada. And I know that we need to do better, Mr. Speaker. I know that, but we are making progress.

After peaking in 2006 under the NDP at 14.6 per cent of the children living in low-income families, that number has now decreased to 9 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That's 12,000 less children living in families struggling financially than there were under the NDP in 2006. Children in low-income single family . . .

[Interjections]

[14:00]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. Order. I will ask the members to come to order so I can hear the answer. I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, children living in low-income, single-parent families have decreased from 37 per cent to 20 per cent since the number peaked in 2006.

Mr. Speaker, yes there's more to do. We know there's more to do. We've initiated a number of issues like reducing the provincial income tax, and we removed 80,000 low-income people from the taxes.

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

Mr. Forbes: — I'd like to see the proof on the 80,000. I would really like to see the proof for that.

Well we know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, a recent study found that the cost of providing nutritious food for a family of four in Saskatchewan ranges from \$185 a week in Regina or Saskatoon to more than \$250 a week in northern Saskatchewan. But we also know, according to CMHC [Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation], the average rent for a two bedroom apartment in Saskatoon is now more than \$900 a month and rising fast. It's obvious what's happening, Mr. Deputy Speaker: thousands of families in our province are cutting back on food in order to pay their rent.

To the Premier: why are more people, more families than ever before forced to choose between a roof over their heads or food? Is this his idea of getting the product right?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, there are many, there are many issues that we are dealing with as the

government. And I know that actions on poverty and people that are needing affordable housing is an issue that we're dealing with. And we know there's more to be done, but we're dealing with it.

Mr. Speaker, we have to talk about the job that we are doing and the people that have been helped. We've doubled the low-income tax credit in this province. We've nearly doubled the number of seniors eligible for benefits under the seniors' income plan. We've doubled the amount available to low-income seniors through the seniors' income plan. We've increased the amounts paid for utilities for the TEA [transitional employment allowance] clients. We've doubled the caregiver tax credit. We've increased the disability tax credit. We've introduced a low-income senior drug plan. We have increased the minimum wage three times.

Mr. Speaker, there is a lot to be done in this area, and that's because the members opposite ignored the issue for 16 years.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, even the Sask Party's own candidates know that the government hasn't quite got it right. The CEO [chief executive officer] of the Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre, who's also the Sask Party's candidate in Saskatoon Sutherland, says, and I quote, "Times are very difficult for those who do not have a living wage. Affordable housing is at crisis levels, and this is definitely affecting our clients."

To the Premier: even his own candidates call it a crisis. So why has his government failed these families by freezing the minimum wage until after the next election while refusing to even consider options for keeping rents affordable? Why does everyone see this as a crisis except for the Premier?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I think that people in this province know that Saskatchewan is the best place in the country to live. We know that we have great numbers, and we're proud of it. Have we got more to do, Mr. Speaker? We definitely do.

Mr. Speaker, the affordable housing issue is something that we've been looking at since we've been in government. We've increased funding for our housing programs by 45 per cent. We've opened over 700 affordable housing units. We've got 1,250 more units that are under way.

Mr. Speaker, we're looking at our students as well. I think it's interesting, and the members opposite should understand, that the funding for student housing projects has increased by 3,000 per cent since we became government. Mr. Speaker, there's a lot to be done in this area. I'm proud of the work that we're doing, and I know there's more to be done.

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

Arrangements Regarding Long-Term Care Facilities

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this government has signed a \$27 million loan guarantee with Amicus in a desperate attempt to hide and take debt off the provincial books. But, Mr. Speaker, if you co-sign a loan, you're still responsible for paying it, and it affects your credit rating. It's treated the same as debt.

This is understood by families, companies, farms, banks, credit unions, and bond rating agencies, Mr. Speaker. To the minister: why did this government think they have a different set of rules? Debt is debt.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, stemming from the Patient First Review when the commissioner, Tony Dagnone, said that we needed to look at different funding options to deliver health care in this province, Mr. Speaker, this is one example that we have chosen. We've entered into a partnership with the Catholic Health Ministry to put together this possible long-term care facility.

But, Mr. Speaker, we'll take no lessons from the opposition now. When they were in government, when they went into partnership, I believe they went into a public-private partnership, about 1996, on something called SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company], Mr. Speaker. The only difference between that public-private partnership and this public-private partnership is the private sector's putting all the capital up. In that, the private sector put up zero, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our priorities are on seniors in this province. Their priorities were on potatoes.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the only thing creative about this project, Mr. Speaker, is its financing. Debt is debt, and that government's hiding it, Mr. Speaker.

This government has signed an agreement that if either Amicus or the government decides to terminate the contract, the government will, I quote, "pay to Amicus the amount required for Amicus to repay the outstanding balance."

We know this government has signed a \$27 million guarantee with Amicus. It's right there in the FOI [freedom of information] request, spelled out in black and white: "Saskatoon Regional Health Authority loan guarantee." What we don't know is how much this could end up costing taxpayers.

To the minister: how much taxpayers' money has this government put at risk while short-sightedly cutting beds in Wawota to save a measly \$100,000?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, this is a new financing

arrangement with the Catholic Health Ministry. The Catholic Health Ministry has been in the health care business within Saskatchewan for decades, Mr. Speaker, absolute decades. They have done a very good job.

But the member opposite poses an interesting question: what could be done or how much will it cost for the \$27 million? My question back to him . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would ask the opposition, they asked the question, I would hope that they would want to hear the answer. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, what I would say to those members opposite, what would \$37 million in 1996 dollars do for long-term care in this province today, Mr. Speaker? It would build about five Amicuses around the province, Mr. Speaker. We're getting it done; they never did.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people don't trust this deal. It's inequitable. It's unfair. It's untendered. It utilizes creative financing, and it's full of conflicts of interest . . . [inaudible].

So let's review the facts, Mr. Speaker. The lawyer for Amicus, Rod Donlevy, is the brother of the Premier's chief of staff, Joe Donlevy. The CEO of Amicus is on contract with the minister's own ministry. A major Sask Party donor received the untendered contract to build the facility. And the government guaranteed a \$27 million mortgage without stating how much it could cost taxpayers. At the same time it's cutting five beds in Wawota and shelving 13 long-term care projects, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: why is this government cutting beds in rural communities like Wawota to save \$100,000 while cutting sweetheart deals and signing \$27 million loan guarantees with Sask Party insiders?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, this deal that will have seniors aging in place, that will have seniors aging with their spouse, Mr. Speaker — something that was never done under the opposition, Mr. Speaker — is a good deal.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at some seniors right now in Saskatoon are living in acute care settings. Absolutely inappropriate. That was fine under the NDP. In fact, Mr. Speaker, for 16 years . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — I would ask some members on the opposition to listen to the answer. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, in 16 years under the NDP government, they never built a new long-term care bed to

add to the complement of long-term care beds in this province, Mr. Speaker. We're getting it done. But not only did they not build any new long-term care beds, they closed 52 hospitals across this province, Mr. Speaker, one of them in Wawota. And what they also did is close 136 beds, long-term care beds, in the last five years of their government. We'll take no lessons from those members opposite.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. While the minister talks about closing beds, they've closed 88 in six months. So they haven't learned much.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the gallery today are members of the Wawota save our beds committee and rural administrators from the Wawota area. They're here representing hundreds and hundreds of people who have attended town hall meetings and signed petitions and written letters to the minister to ask him to keep the five beds open at the Deer View Lodge in Wawota.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, what does the minister have to say today to senior citizens in Wawota who can't age in place with their spouses and their families? They're being separated from their spouses and their children and their grandchildren and their friends because his government is closing five beds at the Deer View Lodge in Wawota.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, let's start by correcting some of the inaccuracies in her first question, Mr. Speaker. Number one: 88 beds were not closed by this government in the last six months. That's absolutely false. I'd love to know where she got those. As the former questioner said, I don't know where she ever got those statistics from, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, on the issue of Wawota, it is very disconcerting, Mr. Speaker, absolutely. I've had the opportunity to meet with representatives from Wawota here in the legislature. I can tell you unequivocally that the member from Cannington has been in my office on a number of occasions, Mr. Speaker, lobbying for the Wawota . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order, order. There's been increasing number of remarks, mostly from the backbench of the opposition. I would ask that they allow the minister to give an answer. Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the member from Cannington has been in my office raising the concerns of the people from Wawota. It is very concerning. I had talked to the group, and one of the things they wanted me to do is try and get them a meeting with the health region sooner. I phoned CEO, or the Chair of the health region, Mr. Speaker, to see if that could happen.

But what it boils down to, Mr. Speaker, is ultimately it is the health region's responsibility to deliver care in that area, Mr. Speaker. And we have to listen to what they say, the direction

they want to go, Mr. Speaker, and that's the case in this situation.

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

Ms. Junor: — To the minister's first comment about where are the 88 beds, I can think of 50 or 60 of them off the top of my head: 30 in Muskeg Lake, 5 in Wawota, 15 in Melville, 13 in Canora, and 5 in Esterhazy. Just off the top of my head, those are closed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Sask party underfunded the health districts, which caused cuts to health services and long-term care. Now they have no money left, and people are suffering for the Sask Party's fiscal mismanagement.

When the people of Wawota raised the Deer View Lodge bed closures with their MLA, the member from Cannington, he said, "People complained about highways and now they're complaining about these beds. Which do they want — highways or health care?"

Mr. Deputy Speaker, does the minister agree with the member from Cannington? Do the people of Wawota need to choose between highways and health care?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, I'm very aware of the situation in Wawota. I have spoken to the CEO and the board Chair on the situation. The member from Cannington has raised the question, Mr. Speaker. I have met with people from Wawota, in the legislature, in my office, Mr. Speaker, I'm very aware of that situation.

But the delivery of health care is the responsibility of the regional health authorities. Well I'm hearing all sorts of laughing and everything else from the members opposite. I would ask the members opposite, who set up the regional health authorities? It was under an NDP government that set the health authorities up, the regional health authorities. Now if they set them up and not expecting to take any advice from them, that's very . . .

[Interjections]

The Deputy Speaker: — Order. I would ask the member from Regina Walsh Acres, who seems to be entering debate quite a bit, and I would ask that, listen to the Minister of Health. I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the regional health authorities are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of health care in this province as set up by the former government. I would be very interested if what they're lobbying for now is that it should be all directed out of the Minister of Health's office. Is that where the health care decisions should be made, directly out of my office? That's what she's implying.

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister picks and chooses what decisions he wants to step into. But he can't forget that he appointed the health boards. They are the ones making the decisions, but he appointed them, and he funds them.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is an obvious need for these beds. Right now there's a constant wait-list to get into Deer View Lodge. And as a result of the bed closures in Wawota, Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region is experiencing an influx of patients, causing them to open beds in Broadview to make up for the closed beds in Wawota.

[14:15]

The bed closures in Wawota are causing a rippling effect into the Regina Health District. Mr. Deputy Speaker, when the minister cut lab services in Nokomis and ambulance services in Neilburg, people in those communities wrote letters and publicly opposed the decision. Because of the public pressure, the minister saw the light and changed his mind.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the minister: the people of Wawota have signed petitions, attended town hall meetings, met with the health region, and now come to the Legislative Building to oppose these cuts. Will the minister change his mind and reopen the beds at the Deer View Lodge, or doesn't he have any money left?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the 12 health regions along with the Cancer Agency make decisions on a daily basis regarding day-to-day delivery of health care services. Sun Country is no different, making decisions that they've made, as has Saskatoon Regional Health Authority, as has P.A. [Prince Albert] Parkland or Prairie North, Mr. Speaker.

Those decisions were made by the health regions. If they decide to put some of those decisions on hold, it isn't through the directive of me. It's through the decision of their board and their management team, Mr. Speaker. That's who decided to put the situation in Neilburg on hold or change the decision on other facilities around their health region, Mr. Speaker. It is the health region that makes those decisions, Mr. Speaker, as in Sun Country.

Mr. Speaker, yes those boards were appointed by our government, just as the boards previous were appointed by the former government. Those boards closed 136 beds in the last five years, Mr. Speaker. Did they pull back those boards? No they didn't. You have to allow those boards to make their decisions.

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

Support for Post-Secondary Students

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, it's a bit rich for the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration to claim at a news conference this morning the Sask Party government wants to ensure international master's and Ph.D. graduates will

stay in Saskatchewan. After all, this is the same minister who has steadfastly refused to fix the Sask Party's flawed graduate retention program in order to ensure that it benefits master's and Ph.D. graduates.

My question for the minister is this: does he finally recognize the error of his ways and will he fix the flawed program once and for all?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, thanks very much for the opportunity to provide an update to the people of this province, not just regarding the graduate retention program — the most aggressive youth retention program in the country — but the level of support that we've offered to students right across the province.

Mr. Speaker, in fact what we've seen is recently a student leader refer to our funding post-secondary education as generous. That's why you've seen a 5.1 per cent increase in post-secondary education funding over the course of the last year, the second highest, Mr. Speaker. All the member opposite needed to do was read the Speech From the Throne, Mr. Speaker, and see specific reference to graduate students and new supports that are going to be coming shortly, Mr. Speaker, to this province.

What we see, student loans are cheaper now, Mr. Speaker. We've taken vehicles out. We've made sure that the repayment plan is easier. We've taken away some of the limitations on hours of work, Mr. Speaker. We're going to be moving forward on a scholarship.

The member opposite can pinpoint a couple of specific questions that he has, but the people of this province know that we support post-secondary education.

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

Mr. Broten: — Well, Mr. Speaker, one thing is certain in this province, and that's life for Saskatchewan students is much more expensive now under the Sask Party government. We know the Sask Party loves to hold big events and have balloons, cut ribbons and eat cake. They love the pomp and circumstance. But there's more to that than being government, Mr. Speaker.

Even Enterprise Saskatchewan has told this government to extend the graduate retention program to master's and Ph.D. graduates because it just makes sense. So if the Sask Party is really serious about keeping master's and Ph.D. graduates in the province after their studies are done, will they do the right thing today and extend the program so it benefits these graduates?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Advanced Education and Immigration.

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite relates a question about affordability and post-secondary education. While the NDP ruled for 16 years, Mr. Speaker, they saw, students in this province saw their tuition go up at the

University of Saskatchewan by 99 per cent, at the University of Regina by 88 per cent, and at SIAST, 263 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

What we've seen, Mr. Speaker, are record investments in post-secondary education, more than \$2 billion in 3 years, Mr. Speaker. And the graduate retention program, yes, Mr. Speaker, graduate students are enjoying it because as they're graduating from their undergraduate degree, whether from institutions within our province or around the world, they're entering graduate school and they're able to benefit as graduate students, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we continue to invest in post-secondary education in record amounts. As the member, as my colleague has said, more than 3,000 per cent increase in student housing, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite ought to look elsewhere for questions, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the minister's argument is flawed. The international students that are in the gallery today, Mr. Speaker, did not do their undergraduate degrees in Saskatchewan, so they would not benefit from the program. It's clear the Sask Party is not one bit concerned with doing the right thing and fixing their flawed program so it benefits not only undergraduate students, but also master's and Ph.D. students. Contrary to everything the minister said this morning at his press conference, the Sask Party is not concerned about keeping master's and Ph.D. graduates here. They just like to put on a show.

So my question to the minister is this: will the Sask Party's new marketing campaign tell viewers that master's and Ph.D. graduates need not apply because they are simply not valued by the Sask Party government?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, not only are we supporting more students, Mr. Speaker, we see enrolments going up. We see that the prospects for the future are going up with record population of 1.045 million, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, regarding the specific question, the member opposite has probably missed along the way. He missed that we actually expanded the parameters, Mr. Speaker, and that is we recognize programs from not just across the country, but around the world, Mr. Speaker. I'll send him the press release, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 158 — *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010*

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Policing and Corrections.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

Speaker, I move that Bill No. 158, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Minister of Corrections and Public Safety has moved first reading of Bill No. 158, *The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Deputy Speaker: — When shall the Bill be read a second time?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Next sitting of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 144** — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill No. 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*. I have read some of the comments that have been made previously by members of this Assembly, and I think some of them bear some repeating just for a historical perspective.

And what I've found when researching the Act is that originally it was passed in 1973, and it was passed with the purpose to provide the provincial government with authority to address litter-related issues. And certainly I think the entire Assembly can agree that that's a good thing and that we should do all that we can to ensure that we're being responsible with respect to the environment and litter-related issues.

It was also created at that time . . . and created with it related regulations and established a provincial beverage container collection and recycling program. And again I think that we would all recognize that those were important measures and that it showed a serious amount of foresight in 1973 to create this legislation, to introduce it and pass it, and to look forward with respect to the environment.

Additionally if we look a little further ahead, there were changes again made, this time in 1988, where *The Litter Control Act* was amended to create a program for recycling

designated containers. These containers will include most common containers that you will find in any grocery store including drink containers, water, tea, juice containers, etc.

Now the program at that time imposed an obligation to pay and collect a refundable deposit and an environmental handling charge on any designated beverage container. And the money that was then collected through the program became a funding source for the administrators of the program, which has been operated for many years by the folks who operate SARCAN.

And I think again that each of the members of the Assembly will agree that SARCAN's done a tremendous job with the program and that the foresight shown in 1988 and the work that was done in 1988 to create this legislation was forward-looking and thinking and welcomed, and we certainly enjoy the benefit of it today.

But if you look, there are some additional issues that have been introduced in the 2010 version of this Bill that cause the possibility for some concern.

If you look at what has happened with an issue related to a claim made against the government for the collection of the handling fees that are to go to SARCAN, a piece of litigation has been brought against the government that would see the middle person so to be speak — i.e., somebody that buys a beverage container for resale only — has been charged when the legislation would only allow currently that the end user be charged solely for the use of the container at the time of purchase. And so what we have currently is an issue related to that lawsuit that the government wants to clean up.

And well, while I'm not going to prejudice the value or the validity of their concern, the concern of the government, you certainly have to take great care when you are creating — as is done in this case — a piece of legislation that's retroactive. And this legislation is retroactive, to my understanding, back to 1998. So it will erase 12 years of history for the government.

Now we certainly will, as an opposition, do our job to consult with the people with respect to the removal of certain rights of Saskatchewan citizens when they lose their right to bring litigation against the government. Certainly as an opposition, you will have a good deal of concern and should have. And so we'll consult with people with respect to that issue and bring some questions to committee with respect to that.

Certainly the Bill in its origin, in its changes in 1998 and some of the changes currently, that we would agree with many of them. Because the Bill, again going back to 1973, has been an important piece of legislation to help curb issues related to litter, to help control problems with respect to the environment.

[14:30]

And if you have done any travelling throughout — well, somewhat in Europe but certainly in certain parts of the United States where they don't have the legislation with the strength that this legislation has — you will note recyclable beverage containers that are littered amongst the streets and thrown away as refuse. When you don't create provisions that would charge up front a fee that can be recovered later, you need to provide,

as this legislation had originally and continues today, that encourage people to recycle, to make their environment a better place to be and certainly work together to control litter. So there are certainly parts of this legislation that we would find to be palatable and good for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now in terms of the retroactivity of the Bill, I can't remember a specific case where that's happened in the three years, off the top of my head, in the three years that I've been here. It's certainly something that's quite rare in terms of the legislation that's brought before the Assembly, so again another one of the reasons why we must strongly consider the implications of bringing forward a Bill that's retroactive for 12 years.

And so with the many questions that we've got with respect to that, I would move today to adjourn the debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member from Prince Albert Northcote has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 148

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Bjornerud that **Bill No. 148** — *The Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased this afternoon to stand and enter debate on this very important piece of legislation. I have to say up front that we support this Bill. The concept is one that I think every Saskatchewan citizen does support. We all do, and should, support the concept of protecting animals from abuse, Mr. Speaker. So in doing so we, as members of this legislature, should step forward and try to enhance the provisions within legislation to prevent abuse, whether it's from the owner of the particular animal, Mr. Speaker, or from others who maybe in some way have them in their charge, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, the concept is one that seems fairly simple to understand, Mr. Speaker, and is one that makes sense for our province and for the livestock producers in our province, Mr. Speaker, and for other agencies that have a responsibility for ensuring that animals within our province are protected. They're not abused, are treated in a humane manner, Mr. Speaker.

It does, however, raise a number of questions about particular situations and circumstances, Mr. Speaker, and what distress would mean in a number of various circumstances and what the government may consider as abuse. But those are the types of questions that need to be asked in committee. There needs to be detail that . . . normally asked of officials and those who will be

responsible for implementing the legislation and regulations that come into effect with the legislation, Mr. Speaker.

So at this time, because our real concerns, if any, are those that would be asked in committee, are detailed to make sure that there is clarification for the producers in Saskatchewan and for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, at this time we'd move this Bill to committee.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is Bill No. 148, *The Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I designate that Bill 148, *The Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2010*, be referred to the Standing Committee on Economy.

The Speaker: — The Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

Bill No. 147

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Draude that **Bill No. 147** — *The Public Interest Disclosure Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and it is a pleasure to enter into this debate. You know, the title of the Bill of course is public interest disclosure, and that's a very important concept particularly in the modern-day era where we have such a professional civil service who really do have our interests, I believe, our interests at heart. And it is important that we understand that there is a very important relationship between the public, who have a right to know about how things are going in the internal workings of the government . . . Because the government is there to represent their interests — both because that's the way our democracy is set up, and we have elected people to assure that our hopes and our dreams are carried out. But the problem is in the reality often that something is lost.

And that's why we have civil servants who have that sacred trust to do the right thing about the issues at hand. But sometimes that doesn't always happen. And we know that it is a good thing that there can be a public disclosure without penalty or fear of reprisal, because then if you have a civil service that is afraid of its political masters, then things can really go off the rails pretty darn quick, and that's unfortunate.

So we are interested in this issue. We're interested in this Bill. But really I do have to agree with my colleagues who have talked about how it seems to lack a lot of teeth. It lacks the teeth to make it really meaningful. When you bring things forward like this there can be a lot of misunderstanding. And for example when the Bill talks about you can only report if a law is broken — and that's fair enough — but it may be a lot of people think, well what about policy? Where does policy fit into this as well?

Because when the government comes forward with a stated intent of what they are about to do — and they have been elected and it's their duty to carry out their mandates and they have a policy — and yet if for some reason that is not being carried out or it's being carried out in a way that is wrong or unethical, then I think there should be some way of correcting this. And so this doesn't address that policy issue. That's a real, a real concern for our side, a real concern.

And another concern I would have, Mr. Speaker, is, how did this Bill come about? I don't know if this government did hold some hearings or any kind of discovery process about how can they make a public disclosure really work. Or was this something that was carried out at the ministerial level, at the executive level within the government? Who was actually involved in this? Because I think it's important to have all players come forward, not just the political players, the MLAs here, who sometimes receive this information. We know the media receives this information as well. We know other people receive this information. So there's a real concern. Were those people consulted?

I mean, we know this government's track record in terms of consultation is one that lacks real credibility because we've seen issues where — there was labour issues, environmental issues, wildlife protected lands — they seem to want to consult after the fact. This is a very important issue. And I think once we've opened this up, we should really talk to people out there. Because I understand what they want to do is to create another position within . . . an officer reporting to the legislature. And I think that on one hand we have to ask, is that the best place? Is this something that should be going to the Ombudsman? Or is this something that we have . . . Are we going to have a whole host of officers reporting to the legislature, or is there a limit to how many you should have? I mean, can we have 10 or 20 or 30? Will there be one for each department?

I know at one point I was really hoping that Environment would have an environmental commissioner reporting to this legislature, but that never came about. So I think we have to be careful about when we get down the path to officers of the legislature because we have really created some very good positions now, and I would hate to see that kind of go off the rails as well. So, Mr. Speaker, I do have some concerns about this. I don't know if it's as well thought out as it should be, it doesn't go as far, doesn't have the teeth it needs to have.

And then when they talk about an officer of the legislature, I'm not sure if that's been explored as well, and particularly, particularly when one side brings it forward but doesn't involve the other side. I think that really to be meaningful and to have a strong foundation, both sides should have been part of that process and said, listen, we think we need another officer for

the legislature.

But when the government brings it forward, that tends to be one-sided. Do they have somebody already in mind? Do they have somebody . . . How will that process be in terms of hiring? I think that this will be one that I think we have some real questions about.

We know for example in Public Accounts, the Chair for Public Accounts is a member of the opposition, and I think that adds an air of credibility because you can say this is well balanced — the Chair is a member of the opposition, clearly, how can you have questions about conflict of interest? But when you have the government proposing an officer of the legislature and bringing it forward without any prior consultation, I do have to ask some questions about whether that is the best plan.

And we know that there have been some examples here of people who have come forward, and some who haven't come forward, who brought issues forward to the opposition. There's been a recrimination against them, and we don't know if that's been appropriate. I'm thinking of the situation, Corrections, Public Safety, where there was somebody who was fired for what was believed to be whistle-blowing, but it really wasn't the case. In fact they were incorrectly fired. But I think this was a real issue for this government because they have put down a real air of fear within the workplace. We think we see it because I think that things aren't as best as they could be.

So I have a lot of questions about this. We know that this . . . what the title says and what is actually happening, there's a big difference, a big gap between the two, and why this should be more than just window dressing for the Public Service Commission. I mean if this is a real issue, then they need to involve a lot more people, bring forward meaningful legislation, involve everyone who might be involved in what happens when whistle-blowing takes place.

As I say that it's unfortunate that, you know, it's like in a workplace where the boss often thinks they know best. They can figure it out. But you know, really, a good boss will say to the workers, what do you think? What should we do here? You know? And they might even ask their customers, what do you think? What should we be doing here? Not after the fact. Not, how do you like it now? But, what could we do better? And I think that we've seen that good workplaces really do well because of their engagement with people.

We rely so much on our public civil service that it's very important that we continue to maintain that trust. In fact the best thing that could happen with this is that people feel that they are trusted and valued enough in the workplace that they can come forward at any time. But if there is a problem, that they do have protection of the law. And I'm not sure this covers this. In fact I am concerned that actually it doesn't and a lot of people may be under the false impression that in fact it's a good thing.

And I do have some questions and concerns about what this will be because there will be government on one hand saying, hey listen, we have guaranteed the rights of people who work in the public sector, where really they haven't because they've only focused on the law aspect of it. And of course we know

the law. We have actually police officers who can deal with that part, I assume. I mean obviously if it's a law, it's the police we deal with. But if it's policy, that's where we get the civil service really involved.

[14:45]

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this would be, this is going to be one that I think we're going to talk an awful lot about. Because especially if we involve, as I said, a new officer of the legislature and because it's only come from one side — there hasn't been a suggestion from both sides — I think there's some real concerns here that it won't have the credibility that it should have.

And I think that this has come out . . . You know, when I read some of the comments here of the minister in the Regina *Leader-Post*, November 10, 2010, she talks about, and I quote, "There won't be a large budget requirement, she said, noting there are three other provinces with similar offices and they sometimes field just a few complaints a year."

Well I think . . . I don't know if the minister is anticipating that there will only be a few because there's only a few that need to come forward, or that the system will stop it before it gets to that point, or what will be the actual need. So I think that in her own comments, it seems very evident that more work needed to be done.

I mean she does go on to say she's considering having this as a role within the existing Office of the Ombudsman. If that happens, then we need to make sure the Ombudsman's budget is bounced up because we've seen that issue around the Health budget, the Health ombudsman idea, where we see a government that has been really dragging its feet around increasing funding for our legislative officers and yet they're adding more and more work to them.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I think that I would take my seat now, and I'd like to move to adjourn debate on this Bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 149

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 149** — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to stand on Bill 149, which is *An Act to amend*

The Income Tax Act, 2000. Bill 149 was announced December 3rd last year in a Government of Saskatchewan press release that I have in my hand, dated that day, and it is a press release touting the value of this income tax amendment. But, Mr. Speaker, the news release is short on some of the details. We have some concerns. In opposition, we have some questions.

I want to say at the outset, we welcome any effort to bring new jobs into Saskatchewan. There's what, 10,000 more people unemployed today than there was a year ago in Saskatchewan, and that just tells us that though there are a few more jobs in Saskatchewan today than there was a year ago, they seem to be going further and further behind. There's much more need for good incomes today than there was even a year ago. And certainly the 10,000 new people on the unemployment lines would certainly appreciate job opportunities and particularly, good job opportunities.

The mining industry, Mr. Speaker, went . . . A little history, one of the joys of being a senior MLA here is I can give a little mini history lesson. In 1991 Saskatchewan was the fourth largest mineral producing province in Canada — that is we produced the fourth largest dollar value of minerals — and we, the New Democrat government of the day, introduced some measures and encouragements to incent mineral exploration, mineral development in Saskatchewan. And we worked very hard on a relationship with the Saskatchewan Mining Association, and we were able to move it successfully from Saskatchewan being fourth to being firmly in third place right across Saskatchewan in terms of total value of mineral production.

So the proof of the pudding is that we have a commitment to the mining industry and the good jobs that go there. We have a commitment to the environment. Every mining activity had to meet the rigorous environmental standards that we had imposed, and it's a record, frankly, Mr. Speaker, that we're very proud of.

In this Bill 149, clearly it talks of a need for an investment by a mining company, an investment in Saskatchewan. And it guarantees 75 jobs or, I believe, the income tax incentive would not exist.

One of the questions I have, Mr. Speaker, is, if a milling operation, because I'm pretty confident that that's what this is all about, is a milling operation . . . a mining operation mines the mineral outside of Saskatchewan, brings the raw ore into Saskatchewan and mills it, but what if that mill has 60 employees? Then no tax incentive.

And these are the questions that we look forward to asking and getting the direct answer when we get into committee, Mr. Speaker, because it makes quite a difference. This speaks of the Bill implementing a five-year tax holiday for mining corporations that make an investment in Saskatchewan and maintain at least 75 full-time employees. And again I say, on the surface of it, we welcome 75 jobs. But we want to know, what happens if a promise is made by a mining operation and they fall short of that promise?

I look at the recent history where we've had Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan with promises of head office jobs in Saskatchewan, having senior management in Saskatchewan. As

recently as certainly in October if not also this month of November, full-page ads by Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan touting that they were going to have its senior management team in Saskatchewan. And not to denigrate the management folks that are located up in Saskatoon right now, but they're considerably short of having the full senior management team at Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

So we want to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that when we're doing this Bill 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*, that in fact we have some clear agreement what can be expected from both parties. Indeed we want to head off concerns at the outset, as I spoke a few moments ago about our relationship with the Saskatchewan Mining Association and our proud history of that relationship. And indeed we've got friends throughout the mining industry, right from the depths of the potash mines to the office towers. And we're very proud of all of that and what mining can do.

So some of the questions we have is, how much is the benefit to Saskatchewan? How many tax dollars will be spent in this tax expenditure? Because . . . Well I want to be very clear about it, Mr. Speaker. That's what we're proposing or what's being proposed in Bill 149, is a tax expenditure.

Governments can collect tax from its various sources, and they can do tax expenditures, in this case a tax expenditure to encourage a new operation, a new milling operation in Saskatchewan and to encourage, incent some jobs for Saskatchewan. But the question is, how many millions of dollars is going to be spent in that tax expenditure? Is it the best tax expenditure to spend perhaps hundreds of millions of dollars?

I don't know what the dollars are. Is it tens of millions of dollars, or is it \$3 million? If it's \$3 million, Bob's my brother and away we go. I know the saying is, Bob's your uncle, but in my case, Bob is my brother. The point is we need to know what is the best expenditure of the money, so to decide that we need to know how much is likely to be spent in drawing this milling operation to Saskatchewan.

We also would like to know, Mr. Speaker, if this Bill actually has an inadvertent problem in that does it incent a mining operation to mine the raw ore outside of Saskatchewan to actually . . . I'll use an example that comes to my mind. And I'm not trying to suggest that someone might, but if the dollars are right they just might.

Potash goes at a depth of roughly 3,000 feet, and I know it varies, but it actually crosses the provincial border. So my question would be, is this legislation incenting, incentivizing a mining operation to in fact mine the potash on the Manitoba side of the border and then transport it to the Saskatchewan side of the border and thereby get a five-year tax holiday for the mining corporation? Would it in fact be doing that, Mr. Speaker? Because I don't think the government's intention is to incentivize any corporation to actually do the mining outside of the province and then draw the minerals here.

This Bill I believe is . . . There is one, what I'll describe as a unique geographic challenge, a unique situation where they can actually put the workers up in a Saskatchewan community that

is fairly close to the border. And this can work. But again my question is, what is it that we're giving away in terms of tax incentives to get that mill in Saskatchewan? So, Mr. Speaker, again I say that on the surface of this we are not displeased with the proposal, but there sure are a lot of questions.

It looks right now like it's a blank cheque, an open-ended cheque, and that's just not the way that New Democrats operate in opposition nor in government. We've had to watch the dollars, the taxpayers' dollars far too closely to just let this slide because it's, again as I say, the way it looks right now to me, it's just an open-ended cheque. If it's a fair value expenditure for fair value, then away we go and we would very much look forward to it.

Perhaps I'm overly sensitive about it because, as one of my colleagues just pointed out, PotashCorp just had its best third quarter ever. And yet I see most of the senior head office jobs are still just out of Chicago, not here, not in Saskatchewan, not in Saskatoon or any other place in Saskatchewan. And yet it was crystal clear what the intent of previous legislation was surrounding that.

So we're looking for some clear indication of the number of jobs, of the dollars involved. And we need to have a clearer understanding that there's a clear benefit to the people of Saskatchewan, to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan, and that there's not just a six-month benefit but a long-term benefit to our great province. I think the people of Saskatchewan have earned that right and deserve it.

So, Mr. Speaker, respecting the Act to amend *The Income Tax Act*, 2009, this Bill, which would implement a five-year tax holiday for mining corporations, because we have so many questions around it and because we want to do a little further research before we allow this Bill to move on to committee, at this time I move to adjourn debate on Bill 149.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Coronation Park has moved adjournment of debate on Bill 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*, 2010. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 150

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 150 — *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join in on the debate here today in discussion on Bill 150, the superannuation Act, Mr. Speaker, *An Act to amend The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act*.

Now this Bill has basically two provisions to it, Mr. Speaker, and we want to understand both those intended consequences and the unintended consequences as a result of those two provisions.

The first provision as we interpret here, Mr. Speaker, is that there's some clarification of how spousal survivor benefits are to be calculated in the case of a person who may have been married more than once, Mr. Speaker, and who may have both current and former spouses who claim to be qualified to receive some type of survivor benefits. So this would appear to be some changes here to the Bill that responds to some needs to provide some clarity, Mr. Speaker. And on the face of it, Mr. Speaker, we would support the merit of what the government is proposing within this specific provision.

We want to make sure we have a better understanding of what the potential impact is on individuals, Mr. Speaker, on families. We want to make sure we understand specifically how it may impact vulnerable people, Mr. Speaker, and we want to do some consultation to make sure that all the understanding of the unintended consequences of these changes have been contemplated. And of course we're going to be doing that with our stakeholders, Mr. Speaker.

But on the base of it, this first provision as it relates to spousal survivor benefits, Mr. Speaker, it's something that we see some merit in and likely support, Mr. Speaker. We just want to make sure we understand all the potential impact though, Mr. Speaker, and to make sure that the consultation that is required to make these sorts of changes has occurred, Mr. Speaker.

We know that this government has failed time and time again to consult with the meaningful stakeholders for whom are affected by legislation. We want to make sure that's not the case in this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker.

Now moving on. So on the first provision there, I think we see some merit in that. We want to make sure we've gotten it right, Mr. Speaker, and we want to make sure that it doesn't have unintended consequences that aren't helpful to Saskatchewan people.

But on the second provision, we see some troubling, a troubling aspect of this Bill, Mr. Speaker. We see a continuation, Mr. Speaker, of the pattern of hiding information from the public under this government, Mr. Speaker. We see that trend continuing, Mr. Speaker. Of course we see that on so many fronts.

We see that in having inappropriate accounting processes to account for our provincial finances, the only province, Mr. Speaker, that is out of line with public sector accounting standards, Mr. Speaker. A black eye, Mr. Speaker, for this province, and something that this government has its heels dug in on and is not willing to change.

We see it on many other fronts, Mr. Speaker, whether it's a freedom of information request, Mr. Speaker, where information should be available to the public to understand the decisions of government, to seek clarity, Mr. Speaker, and we don't see that.

So when we're looking at a Bill like this, we're concerned that in fact we're erasing transparency and accountability that Saskatchewan people deserve, Mr. Speaker. And as a result, Mr. Speaker, we don't support the second aspect of this Bill, this second provision.

And just to be clear what this second provision does, is the government is proposing to remove from public reporting the amount of money paid in benefits to individual superannuates, Mr. Speaker.

So what we believe, Mr. Speaker, is that we're best served when the Saskatchewan public, when our accounting organizations and others across this province, are engaged and can understand where their dollars are flowing, Mr. Speaker. To be moving backwards on the front of reporting to the public to whom and what individuals are receiving payment from government, Mr. Speaker, we see that as a step backwards. We see it stepping away from transparency and a step away from accountability, Mr. Speaker. And we see it holding with the pattern of a government that is continuing to hide more and more information from the Saskatchewan public that they are served best by having accessible and available to them, Mr. Speaker.

So we can't support this aspect of this Bill. We can't support this provision. And we're going to seek clarity on through, certainly through committee, on where, how this was derived, why it was derived. But we're skeptical, Mr. Speaker, and we are concerned. And we want to state our position outright that we don't support this provision.

This government should know full well that any amounts of \$50,000 and over paid to an individual, whether that's through a ministry or through a Crown or through Executive Council, are disclosed to the Saskatchewan public, Mr. Speaker. And we think that that's something that's important for the Saskatchewan public to have available to them. It's simply . . . It's not a costly process to make this available. In fact it wouldn't cost any extra dollars to make this information available to the Saskatchewan public. We see no use to go and remove this information from the purview of the Saskatchewan public.

And so a question would be if we believe, and certainly we do believe, that the information of who's on the payee list, who's being paid more, paid sums larger than \$50,000 in a given calendar year . . . We believe certainly this should apply as well to superannuates, Mr. Speaker, to those that have retired and left the civil service, Mr. Speaker. Why we would want to black that out or not disclose that information, Mr. Speaker, I think is a problem, something that we're going to make our point. And I'm certainly doing that here today, Mr. Speaker.

Every other employee of the public service knows full well that if they earn more than \$50,000, that amount is going to be documented and available publicly. It should just simply be the same for those that have retired, Mr. Speaker. And this kind of accountability and transparency is important to the public. It's important for good management and allows a participatory democracy where organizations, individuals can participate in a meaningful way and understand how their dollars are being expended. And it also fights, Mr. Speaker, against corruption,

Mr. Speaker. It fights against questions as it relates to ethical decisions as to who's receiving dollars. And this information rightfully should be made available to the public.

What could result from this, Mr. Speaker? Well for example, if we don't have those dollars documented as to who is receiving those sums over \$50,000 from a retiree, we don't know where those dollars have been spent.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, the government can enter back into a contract with those individuals. Might be the term . . . Double-dip would be a term that many individuals would associate here, double-dipping, Mr. Speaker. And that could occur here, Mr. Speaker, and no one would be the wiser. And it's important, Mr. Speaker, that we are fully aware of who this government is contracting under its services. We need to understand what amounts they are paying to an individual in entirety. So we need to know that as it relates to a retiree or superannuate, and we need to know that any additional contracts that they might receive down the road.

It really begs to question, why would you make this change? Why would you go in the wrong direction as it relates to transparency and accountability? Why would you hide this information? Why wouldn't you just make it clear to the public, Mr. Speaker? And we're talking about hundreds and hundreds and in fact thousands of individuals, Mr. Speaker, who are receiving these dollars. And these are dollars, Mr. Speaker, that taxpayers across Saskatchewan have put into our collective pool, whether it's through running their business or doing their hard work, Mr. Speaker. And they deserve to be able to scrutinize it in a meaningful fashion, Mr. Speaker. To do that, they need to have the information available to them. To step backwards here, we see is a shame.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, we see this Bill, in many ways it's a sort of a re-entry of a Bill that was failed by this government, that they put forward right out of the gates of their new election. That was a Bill 9. It was known as the double-dipping Bill, Mr. Speaker. And it was defeated and taken off the order sheet, Mr. Speaker, a Bill that never succeeded. But this Bill in effect does basically the same thing, Mr. Speaker. It allows individuals to come back in and be contracted by government and to receive those dollars but not to have that accounted back to the public. And we're talking about retirees who are already receiving a pension, Mr. Speaker, and then coming back in and contracting.

And by removing this transparency and accountability, no one would be the wiser. And anybody who's trying to keep an eye to the finances of this province and trying to make sure that the dollars are being expended in an appropriate way — that contracts are tendered in appropriate fashions, that individuals are hired following the best practice in professional civil service are applied, Mr. Speaker — this really defeats those purposes, Mr. Speaker. And it's a Bill that really reflects a government that's lost its way as it relates to accountability and transparency.

And really on these fronts, Mr. Speaker, at all levels, at all jurisdictions, transparency and accountability as it relates to the spending of dollars, Mr. Speaker, is something that we need to have more of, that we need to be providing more information, be more open and transparent and allow individuals to

scrutinize the spending of government in as meaningful a fashion as they can.

Because these are their dollars, Mr. Speaker. The people from across the province will have collectively pooled their tax dollars through their business and through the profits that they pay tax on, Mr. Speaker, or the income tax that they pay through their salary. And we need to make sure that we have the best stewardship as possible overtop of those public monies, Mr. Speaker. And this is certainly a step in the wrong direction. It certainly points to a government that on many other fronts is not being accountable, is not being transparent.

We see specifically . . . And we talked about it here today in question period, Mr. Speaker. And of course this is a big issue that is going to be talked about in many, many more question periods and on many different fronts, Mr. Speaker, because there's so many aspects to study what we've now come to know as this sweetheart deal on this long-term care, Mr. Speaker. Up in Saskatoon, we see a \$27 million project that has been untendered. Mr. Speaker, untendered, going to a company, Mr. Speaker, who is a major donor of the governing Sask Party. Mr. Speaker, untendered money: \$27 million. This is the public's money untendered, Mr. Speaker, and we can't get the information on this, Mr. Speaker.

That kind of project needs to be tendered. And we're going to fight like heck, Mr. Speaker, to stand up for Saskatchewan taxpayers as it relates to making sure those kind of projects, and in fact basically all spending of money, is tendered, Mr. Speaker. That's a shameful departure, Mr. Speaker, from best practice in good stewardship of the public dollar, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to fight that.

But further to that, there's all sorts of conflicts of interest, Mr. Speaker, in this sweetheart deal, \$27 million untendered project in Saskatoon. Conflicts of interest that are of huge concern, Mr. Speaker. And there's so many different angles to continue to look at this deal from, Mr. Speaker, whether it's just from the unfair and inequitable treatment that is being received by those rural communities that have had their projects shelved or that are still fundraising 35 per cent as a local portion, where this deal up in Saskatoon of course was funded fully, Mr. Speaker: loan guaranteed, fully backstopped by government, an untendered project, Mr. Speaker.

And what we know is that we need to, when it relates to spending of government dollars — public dollars, people's dollars, Mr. Speaker — we need to have all the protections built in to make sure that we're getting best value for our dollars, that we don't have processes that are suspect to corruption, Mr. Speaker. That we don't have processes that are suspect to abuse, Mr. Speaker, that we don't have processes that allow for the wasteful use of public resources, Mr. Speaker. And we see this provision within this Bill as a harmful departure to ways that are totally outdated as it relates to modern governance and making sure that the public resources are protected, Mr. Speaker.

We know that we're best served by being more accountable, more transparent, by providing as much information as the public needs, Mr. Speaker, to understand the financial welfare of their government, to understand the choices that government

makes and the processes that government makes as it relates to tendering and contracts. Mr. Speaker, to see this government deliberately, through this Bill, driving those kinds of protections and safeguards and accountabilities and transparencies underground, Mr. Speaker, hiding more information from the Saskatchewan public is hugely problematic, Mr. Speaker, and hugely concerning.

It suggests certainly, you know . . . One of the themes that we hear so regularly from Saskatchewan people is that they don't trust this government with their resources, their financial resources, with the finances, Mr. Speaker. And we see . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And I hear the member from Regina South here, heckling here, Mr. Speaker. But I know what the member from Regina South should be aware of, Mr. Speaker, is that in this Bill right here, in the second provision . . . And here we are, a reasonable opposition saying we support the first provision as it relates to the changes and addressing the needs of spouses.

But on the second piece here — and I suspect the member from Regina South may not even understand what's going on in this Bill — but what it does is it takes away information that allows accountability and transparency to the Saskatchewan public. It takes away the reporting of dollars that are provided to superannuates or retirees, Mr. Speaker, that's been provided to Saskatchewan people.

[15:15]

This is an important thing. We believe that the full disclosure of government is an important thing. We believe that we're best served when we understand where our dollars are being expended. And certainly it fits the theme that we hear everywhere we go, Mr. Speaker, is that, where did all the money go? And they count the billions of dollars. They look at the billions of dollars that were left to this government with the booming economy. They look at the fact that the revenues are at all-time highs. And I regularly, Mr. Speaker, sit down with business leaders across this province, with financial officials across this province. And we sit down and we break down basically where all the money went. And it's a hugely problematic exercise.

What this government wants to do is it wants to hide more information, Mr. Speaker, and it wants to make information less available. What it wants to do, Mr. Speaker, is to allow them to contract to individuals to have double-dippers, Mr. Speaker, making extra contracts and receiving services. Mr. Speaker, receiving payment from this government without allowing the public the ability to scrutinize that . . . at least be aware, Mr. Speaker.

And we believe, and we're going to stand up on a very principled debate on this front here, that the public is best served when they can engage in their democratic process in a meaningful fashion. And in large part, Mr. Speaker, they need to know where their tax dollars are being spent. To hide more of that information and drive it underground is representative of a government that has lost its way, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to accountability and transparency, Mr. Speaker.

I provide the Amicus example, Mr. Speaker, where really it has

nothing to with Amicus as an organization, Mr. Speaker. It has everything to do with some Sask Party insiders, Mr. Speaker, whose fingerprints are all over this deal that's been untendered.

Mr. Speaker, \$27 million that's jumped the queue ahead of other projects, Mr. Speaker. And that when we've sought clarity, Mr. Speaker, when we've asked questions, Mr. Speaker, and we've put in a freedom of information request, Mr. Speaker, we've received basically no information back from this government. Hundreds and hundreds of pages received all blacked out, Mr. Speaker.

We think that's the wrong direction to go, Mr. Speaker, and I know the Saskatchewan public doesn't trust this deal. And the Saskatchewan public doesn't trust a government that's going to be providing less information to them as it relates to the expenditure of their taxpaying dollars, Mr. Speaker.

So we see that this pattern of secrecy and lack of accountability and transparency continue. We now see a specific Bill put forward by this government, Mr. Speaker, to do just that, at a time where at every jurisdiction at all levels of government, Mr. Speaker, should be seeking more accountability, more transparency, more understanding of where our dollars are being expended, Mr. Speaker. We see wanting to make sure that protections are in place to protect the taxpayers, Mr. Speaker.

We know that we have a government in power that has been very willing to reward its political friends. Now we see, Mr. Speaker, them putting, by way of Bill, measures in place to prevent the opposition and the public from actually being able to scrutinize and understand where those dollars are being spent. This government, from the moment it was elected, was very willing to find ways to get money back into the hands of those closest to them, Mr. Speaker.

We saw massive increases in the positions of chief of staff, Mr. Speaker, at a time where Saskatchewan people are fighting to receive very modest increases in their collective bargaining agreements, Mr. Speaker. Chiefs of staff under this government have received 100 per cent increases in some cases. Mr. Speaker, 100 per cent — a doubling of their salary from what they were under the former New Democrat opposition, Mr. Speaker.

And recent information that we've had released from Executive Council highlights that many individuals who are in fact lifelong friends of this Premier, Mr. Speaker, have received massive increases, Mr. Speaker. In the case of the Premier's lifelong friend, Mr. Speaker, received a \$20,000, almost \$20,000 increase, Mr. Speaker, at a time where the government is working to collective bargaining agreements with individuals that barely, barely, in fact doesn't reflect the rate of inflation in this province. So \$20,000 for select friends of this Premier, Mr. Speaker, and not even the cost of living for everybody else, Mr. Speaker. Two standards, Mr. Speaker.

And then we see a Bill introduced in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, that serves one purpose, and that's to eliminate the information provided to the public as it relates to those being paid by government. It eliminates the pensions, Mr. Speaker, the payments to retirees and superannuates, Mr. Speaker,

opening up an opportunity if an individual wanted to abuse it. Mr. Speaker, and we don't trust this Premier on this front, if an individual wanted to abuse it to then contract those individuals. A double-dipping-type circumstance, Mr. Speaker, and the public wouldn't be any the wiser.

And what we say, Mr. Speaker, is if you want to make those kinds of decisions, the public needs to be fully aware of what's being paid to one individual whether they're retired or whether they're a civil servant, Mr. Speaker. We're just best served by having as much information as we can.

So we see the gravy train as it relates to the friends of the Premier, Mr. Speaker, receiving massive salary increases. Twenty thousand dollars, Mr. Speaker, in one year, which is absolutely ludicrous when you look at the many across this province who can't even keep pace with wage increases that reflect cost of living. We see contracts, Mr. Speaker, that seem to always be available to the very close and select friends of this Premier, Mr. Speaker.

We see a deal, Mr. Speaker, with a sweetheart deal on this long-term care facility in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, \$27 million that went untendered. Mr. Speaker, that's unfair and inequitable as it relates to the circumstance and how long-term care is funded in rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And we see conflicts of interest all over that project, Mr. Speaker, and that's going to be an ongoing discussion for some time with many more details to be exposed.

And I hear the member from Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, heckling. But what he should be aware and what he should be standing up for, is he should be informing his caucus that he doesn't support this Bill, Mr. Speaker, because this Bill is a Bill that takes away information of where dollars are being spent, taxpayers' dollars are being spent, Mr. Speaker. And this is information that doesn't cost the government any more to provide to the public, and it simply allows them to put a system in place that is less transparent, less accountable to the public, Mr. Speaker.

And unfortunately that's the consistent pattern under this Premier, Mr. Speaker. And it allows the potential for abuse, Mr. Speaker. It allows the potential for corruption, Mr. Speaker. From a perspective of good governance, you need to have systems and legislation that, at the very core, promote best practice, and best practice, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to the management of our public resources — the taxpayers' dollars.

The many individuals who contribute and pay taxes across this province need to be able to be in good stead as it relates to understanding that there's processes in place to protect their dollars, Mr. Speaker. And they need to be able to have that information available to them to understand where dollars are being expended, Mr. Speaker.

So from those very specific reasons I've cited, certainly we don't support this second provision within this Bill. We see it as a reckless Bill, Mr. Speaker. We see it going in the wrong direction as it relates to good, accountable government. We see it removing important transparency, Mr. Speaker. We see it as a Bill that is not consistent with public finance across Canada, not consistent with public financing across international

perspectives, Mr. Speaker, and being able to make sure that individuals have the information they need to be able to participate and understand where government dollars are being expended.

To take and remove from the payee list all the superannuates, Mr. Speaker, is something that we oppose. We need to make sure that Saskatchewan people are able to understand where their dollars are going. It puts at risk the individuals who are receiving contracts by this government, Mr. Speaker, and to not have that full disclosure.

We say, the more information the better, Mr. Speaker. Let's make that information public to Saskatchewan people. They can evaluate it and engage with it in a meaningful way, Mr. Speaker. If a government's making certain decisions as it relates to contracts or hirings, we would fully expect, Mr. Speaker, that they're following best practice in civil service, Mr. Speaker, and best practice to protect the public dollar. So that would mean that they should be able to defend any time that they had an example where there was dollars being provided to an individual.

To take away that protection and safeguard to Saskatchewan people from their hard-earned money, Mr. Speaker, is something we fully don't support. It's a regressive step, Mr. Speaker. It's consistent with a government that has consistently moved in a direction of being less transparent, less accountable, Mr. Speaker. It's the wrong way to go, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to oppose that. We're going to call on the government to explain their position, but secondly to make the changes required to make sure that the taxpaying public of Saskatchewan are served well by the processes and legislation within their province, Mr. Speaker.

Any time you weaken these transparencies and accountabilities, Mr. Speaker, any time that you're hiding information from the public, the potential is there for abuse, the potential is there for corruption, the potential is there for waste, Mr. Speaker.

We talk about that deal up in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. We're concerned about all of those aspects, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to payees and who's receiving money from this government. Mr. Speaker, we're going to call on this government to continue to provide that information. And at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, we do have more questions on this front. We want to get into further dialogue and discussion with stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, for whom it impacts.

As I've said, we support the first provision, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to spousal changes, as it relates to the spousal benefits, Mr. Speaker, and some clarity on that front. But the second provision, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to hiding the information or no longer disclosing the information, Mr. Speaker, of superannuates and retirees and what they're being paid, Mr. Speaker, we don't support that regressive step that goes against best practice in government, Mr. Speaker, that goes against having systems in place to safeguard public dollars, Mr. Speaker, and that opens up systems that are easily suspect to abuse, corruption, and waste, Mr. Speaker. We're going to fight this kind of legislation every chance we get, Mr. Speaker.

At this point in time, I will move adjournment of debate, Mr.

Speaker, and look forward to having further discussion as we move forward. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 150, *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 153

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 153** — *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to join the debate on Bill 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*, and to give a few comments about the Act. And I guess we definitely . . . There's some changes being proposed. Some of these seem very worthy, Mr. Speaker, and I think we can see that. Others have serious questions and require more information, I think more debate, more discussion, making sure that we talk not only to the government staff but we also talk to people outside of government as well to make sure where are we going with legislation.

And, you know, when you look at making these changes . . . I think before we could support this, Mr. Speaker, we'd have to make sure that it's very clear who's going to be impacted and who will benefit. There are some questions. Who's asked for the changes? And some of my colleagues have spoke on this previous Bill and I know they brought up some good issues and debate. And it's good to get into debate, Mr. Speaker, to discuss some of the, I guess the questions, or I guess some of the questions that need to be asked, and make sure it's very clear. So if we're going to support this on behalf of the people of our province, Mr. Speaker, we have to make sure that Bills that come through this House are debated properly, those questions are asked. And I think we all have an obligation, Mr. Speaker, to do that.

The Bill repeals the civil division of the Provincial Court and transfers some of the responsibilities to a Justice of the Peace. Now we're not sure exactly what type of situations will this encounter using provincial, I guess, justices of the peace versus a provincial judge. There are many questions, and I know we'll have time to discuss that and we'll have time to ask. And I think it's an opportunity for the opposition to make sure we go through and ask the questions, making sure that any Bill that goes through this House is debated, talked about. We make sure it's clear and I know there's a process to do that. And I say again, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join the debate and discuss and try to have some clearing.

So if you're going to change the civil division and allow, I guess, justices of the peace to deal with some of the matters and moving our provincial judges away from civil matters . . . And

it sounds like there are those questions, and they're dealing with that. But having said that, at the end of the day I think the people that we represent, whether they're dealing with the justice system or not, have a right to a fair hearing, a right to be heard.

And, you know, Mr. Speaker, these people appear in court, and I guess we're asking a new process to go through and ask the justices of the peace to deal with some of the matters, whether they're civil. And I understand. But we're not sure and I guess exactly we need to find out more details. Who will be impacted? Which communities will these justices of the peace be dealing with? All communities, or it's only where there's provincial judges right now currently hearing cases?

[15:30]

Or will this be opened up and they'll have an opportunity to go everywhere and deal with some of the concerns and some of the civil matters that affect some of the northern communities, the isolated communities where we have the fly-in justice go in there and deal with that?

Will a community member, a Justice of the Peace that is a Justice of the Peace, have a right, an access to hear civil cases and make decisions on that? We have to look at the different people and how many justices of the peace are out there. Does this Act change anything? Does it actually give opportunities for, I guess, a speedier way of dealing with the justice system? And we're hearing different things. You look at the arguments.

And we need to find out exactly what are the caseloads. And we'll ask those questions. Who's being impacted? And I guess I sometimes wonder, you know, the cases that'll be handled by a Justice of the Peace, will people feel like they have a fair trial? And are their rights being impacted? And if their rights aren't being impacted, then I think we have to watch this closely. And it should be watched closely. We're changing the way we normally do business, having a judge hear civil matters. All of a sudden you're going to a Justice of the Peace, and I think for some people it may raise concerns.

But for others that are out there dealing with this, they may say this is a tool that will help them and help the justice system move along. We know there's a backlog of cases, and we understand that. And I don't know if that's a cause of this government's not putting enough finances in place because of some of the mismanagement of the finances and the priorities that this government has seen. Maybe that's impacted this as well, and not giving a fair shake.

And I don't know if crime's going up, whether it's civil matters or criminal charges. I don't know if that's going up. But I do know that they're asking for a total change. And, Mr. Speaker, that's fine if this is going to help out sometimes. But we'll have to make sure that before a Bill passes that we make sure we have an opportunity to ask the questions, seeing who's going to be impacted.

We have an obligation to the people back home. That's who elects us. They ask us to make sure that when we're passing Bills and we're going to amend a Bill like this one, Bill 153, we have to make sure that we're amending this . . . We have to

understand as best we can, representing those individuals, Mr. Speaker, and make sure we ask the questions, and we debate them properly. That we make sure the people feel comfortable that as official opposition — and I know myself, as a member of the official opposition — we have a role to do and we will do that role.

And we try to ask those questions and make sure that we go through a process. But we don't try to do it . . . And I have to be very clear, Mr. Speaker. We try to do that in a very positive way, in a respectful way, that we know that the business of the day of this House and this legislature has to be done. But we have to make sure we do our job, and our job is debate Bills and law that are coming into effect to make sure that there is a good understanding.

We don't want to get in the way of that. We don't want to hold things up where we can move it forward. But sometimes we have concerns, and we have to make sure that we ask the questions.

And I think we're fortunate here to all get an opportunity to debate any Bill that comes up, as official opposition to have a chance. And when I saw this one coming up, northern Saskatchewan and northern people, we have a lot of cases amongst our community members. We know that. And maybe a lot of them are civil, and they could be dealt with a Justice of the Peace. Isolated communities, remote communities, you know, there are many issues that will be, you know, could be addressed. And the amendments that we're looking at, they might do some good things. But I know there's serious . . . Some questions that we have require more information and making sure that it's very clear there, Mr. Speaker, on where we're going with this.

I want to emphasize the rights of individuals to a fair trial. We want to make sure that that's happening, that nobody's rights are in jeopardy or anybody's rights are not being dealt with in a proper manner. Any Saskatchewan resident that comes before the court system should have a right to fair trial. And I think that's very clear. We want to make sure that people feel like they're getting a fair trial and they're being dealt with fair.

And I say fair because we want to make it very clear we say that — fair. And I think this could help the justice system. If it is truly seen as a fair process and you're using justices of the peace to deal some of the matters and they know some of the civil stuff that's out there, maybe some of them will personally know what's going on in the community and have a better understanding of it to deal with that. I'm not sure. I hope that's the case.

But we've got to make sure that when we're bringing Bills forward like this one, like I said, Mr. Speaker — we're dealing with Bill 153 — that we're dealing with it and asking the questions. And I'm not sure at this point who's requested the change, whether it's the justice system, whether it's concerns that have been in a discussion, whether it's based on with all provincial judges, the chief judge. I don't know who's asked for this Bill and who's brought it in. Is it the minister on request from lawyers, individuals, community leaders, members? We don't know. But I mean, I think at the end of the day, you know, it'd be nice to know who's requested this change. And

maybe we'll find out.

So we talk about impacts of people and the rights and privacy. And all these things are coming into play these days with privacy. And if you're going to, say, a Justice of the Peace — and we place a lot of trust and work in those individuals — I guess the privacy thing can come up too on some of the stuff that they will be hearing, and that they adhere to that. And I think those concerns have to be addressed, and I hope they will be addressed in this Bill.

And those are some of the questions, Mr. Speaker, that we have with this Bill, and some of the concerns that may arise, and they may not. But I think overall I see this as maybe a good Bill going forward, moving it. The justice system is struggling. I know there are many questions that will need to be answered, and we'll bring those questions forward.

I know for northern Saskatchewan we want to make sure that the people in the North have a fair share and a fair deal on justice as well. We want to make sure if a provincial judge needs to hear a court case, and there might be criminal matters . . . And I understand that it sounds like that's not what's being asked here. It's truly a civil division, and that's being asked so that justices of the peace can deal with those matters.

And I'm hoping that at the end of the day, after all of the debate and the discussions, this Bill will pass and it will go forward and do the work it's required to do. But having said that, Mr. Speaker, we wanted to make sure . . . And I'm pleased to have an opportunity to get into the discussion to make sure that I've done my duty and my role to debate a Bill that's coming in here.

So at this time, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this motion.

The Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 154

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 154** — *The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010/Loi de 2010 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Yes, Mr. Speaker. With pleasure I join the debate on Bill 154, *The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act*, and to give a few comments on it.

My comments on this Bill will flow from my comments on the previous Bill, Bill 153. But I guess it's asking for amendment

to *The Small Claims Act* and to allow the government to repeal the civil division of *The Provincial Court Act* and transfer certain responsibilities again to justices of the peace versus a provincial judge overseeing this. And, you know, you go through it and some of the questions I previously have asked and I guess debated, it's an opportunity to discuss and ask some clarification.

And I think some of the comments that I had in the previous response I made to Bill 153 will come in line with 152 and it's a process . . . 154, and it's a process, Mr. Speaker, to deal with. You know, who's going to be impacted by these changes? Who's requested it? I think we've asked that. Are rights going to be dealt with fairly? And I believe we'll get those answers and we'll move forward on this.

But it's, you know, using provincial judges or versus using justices of the peace, that is the question that people have to make sure that they're getting a fair trial. And I go back to, who's requested this? And it's probably just following through with Bill 153. So at this time, at this time, Mr. Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 154.

The Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 154, *The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the . . .

[Interjections]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 155** — *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to enter into the debate on Bill No. 155, *An Act to amend The Natural Resources Act*. And this is a very important piece of legislation, and so we'll have some questions and some concerns about this.

On one level it seems relatively straightforward, but we do have some questions because for many people this is a very important fund, the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. It's one that hunters and anglers and fishers are aware of, but a lot of people in Saskatchewan may not be aware of the fund because it isn't one that gets a lot of media, a lot of press unless you're following the kind of things that is funded out of the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, which really is making sure that there are ample stocks of fish and that there's the environmental projects that promote biodiversity here in Saskatchewan.

This fund does really good work, exceedingly good work, and it's an important fund that we make sure is managed well. It was a visionary piece of legislation that was put forward many years ago, and we think that we have to make sure that we are good stewards of this kind of initiative. And so when we bring forward things about the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, again there are some concerns that we have.

And as my colleague last night actually gave a very good speech about some of those concerns, particularly when it talks around how the government funds are going to be spent, the whole issue about accountability, that we make sure not only is there internal accountability to the stakeholders that are involved, those groups such as the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Nature Conservancy of Canada, the different fishing groups. All of those groups are very important and I know that the minister actually I think gave a list, read the list into the record. So it was a good thing to do. I won't repeat that list today, but it's in the record.

But it's important that those people, those groups, they do good work. And as the voluntary sector when they do things, it's not easy to do that kind of work because we know that it's not just for the pay, not just for the wage, but clearly those organizations have a vision about what kind of province we want to have in Saskatchewan. And biodiversity and the ability to hunt, fish is a clear important role within that. And so we want to be on the record and I know that we will be on the record of supporting those groups and the work that they do, day in and day out. And they do look at this kind of legislation to see what kind of roles do we have here.

But we also have to think about the other people in Saskatchewan too who often aren't fully engaged in the same way around the legislation because they're not paying attention to it in the same way. They're not sure what's happening every day in terms of the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. They may have never heard of this, but they do appreciate the good work that organizations do and the good work that the Ministry of Environment does every day to make sure that it's administered well and it's fully accountable.

So that's our role as MLAs — to make sure that we represent their views and how that money is spent. So we do have some questions about the accountability of the fund and what will be happening there and of the decisions that will be made.

[15:45]

I do want to go into two specific . . . well three specific areas, one being, of course, the whole funding aspect. And I know others will speak to it more fully. But the one, the second issue, I think it's very, very key that we talk about this. And in the explanation notes, they talk about amendments to section 11, I believe, where they talk about including the addition of two new subsections to allow the fund and advisory council to contract services that are deemed necessary for the management of the fund. These services could include contracting expertise from groups such as the Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Nature Conservancy of Canada, or Ducks Unlimited for management of land within the fund.

And also I'll get into reading the actual legislation so we have

the wording, and maybe I'll do that now, Mr. Speaker. But what talks about the acquisition, and this is section 20 or 11(1)(b) being amended, repealing the clause and substituting the following:

“(b) the acquisition, by purchase, lease or otherwise, of any equipment or materials or the retention of any services that the minister considers necessary to restore degraded fish or wildlife populations for fish or wildlife habitat, to create new fishing, hunting or trapping opportunities or to manage fish, fish habitat, wildlife or wildlife habitat”;

So it's more than just land. Talking about the actual things that happen within all those environs. And so that's that. And then they also go on to (e):

“(h) the assessment, evaluation, or management of any waters in Saskatchewan with respect to their fish or fish habitat potential or any land for its wildlife or wildlife habitat potential”; **and**

(f) by adding the following clauses after clause (i):

“(j) the engagement of any services that the minister considers necessary to manage the fund;

“(k) the payment . . .”

Well I'll leave it at that because I think those are the key parts, bringing in the expertise from non-governmental organizations, often referred to as NGOs, or some even call them environmental non-governmental organizations, ENGOs.

I just want to say that these folks have great knowledge, great expertise, but I think often on our side we think of strong partners. And what that means by having strong partners and strong partnerships is that internally each of those partners have strength and capacity. We know Ducks Unlimited and Nature Conservancy and the Wildlife Federation are very capable groups with very capable staff, and so we're not worried about their expertise. And in fact if there's opportunities, I think it's good to work with them.

I am worried with what happens within Environment. Are we going down a dangerous trend of hollowing out the capacity with Environment, and this is the first step on a slippery slope? Because if we turn over some or a lot or all of the expertise to manage this fund, what happens internally within the ministry? And I think this is a dangerous slope because we know when the folks opposite brought forward legislation last year, they talked about the lack of capacity within the province, within young people, to get work within those environmental areas, and this would be a prime one. Biologists, people who are experts on biodiversity, where are they going to get work? Well they're not going to be looking in the civil service now. They're going to be looking at the NGOs.

And I think there was a good partnership before. I would hate to see one tip more towards the other, and especially away from the civil service, because I think we need good people in our civil service. We need good long-term people in our civil service who have the vision about what it means to have a

healthy environment in Saskatchewan which includes fish and wildlife. And this fund is just one component of it. But that's what I mean. Are we on a dangerous slope here?

The third part I wanted to talk about, Mr. Speaker, and I found it very interesting, new sections 20.1 and 20.2.

20.1 talks about “No member of the public service is eligible to be appointed as a member” of the council. I'm worried about that because I'm not sure why that's important, why that's in there. Not even just for an oversight purpose to have one person there . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes. Yes. So I think that it's important that we have some oversight.

I know on many of the councils we often have somebody from the civil service on the board. Often it's the deputy minister or somebody at executive level, as an oversight. Because we have public funds invested and there needs to be somebody on the board or on the council to ensure that there's public oversight. We know, and I'm fairly well aware of this . . . We know on the Sask Housing board there is somebody from the government. And so I'm very worried about that, Mr. Speaker.

But I also go on and I read the next one: “A majority of the members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council must be members of the organizations that represent hunting, fishing and trapping interests.” The key word there is majority. If they're not all from those groups, well who else is on there? You aren't going to have anybody from the civil service. You have a majority from the hunting and fishing groups, the wildlife groups, but who's going to be the other one or two people? What are they going to bring to the table?

So I have a question for the minister there. I'm not sure what he means by this when he says a majority from the stakeholders; no civil servants. That sounds like there's a gap. So I need to know, we need to know who's on this council, because they're expanding their services, they're doing a lot more, they have more control over the money. But we need to know what they're going to be doing.

Mr. Speaker, I talked about a sea change last year, worried about the kind of changes this government is bringing forward, and I continue to have that concern. And I think this is a dangerous first step. We need to hear some answers to these questions. And so with that, Mr. Speaker, we'll look forward . . . I know many people on our side will want to engage in this debate so I will now move to adjourn debate on this Bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave of the Assembly to move a substitution on the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. The Government House Leader has asked for leave to move a motion to change the makeup of the standing committee. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Substitution of Member on the Standing Committee on Human Services

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That the name of Gord Wyant be substituted for that of Joceline Schriemer on the Standing Committee of Human Services.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I'll ask the House to come to order to deal with the motion before the Assembly.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The motion before the Assembly is the motion presented by the Government House Leader, by leave:

That the name of Gordon Wyant be substituted for that of Joceline Schriemer on the Standing Committee of Human Services.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried. 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 this Assembly do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:54.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Norris	6053
Broten	6053
Junor	6053
Duncan	6053
Belanger	6053
Morin	6054

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Belanger	6054
Harper	6054
Junor	6054
Forbes	6054
Broten	6055
Morin	6055
Iwanchuk	6055
Wotherspoon	6055

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Louis Riel Day	
Vermette	6055
Belanger	6056
International Education Week	
Wilson	6056
Habitat for Humanity in Moose Jaw	
Michelson	6056
Concern for Assyrian Christians	
Forbes	6057
Aviation and Aerospace Week	
Ottenbreit	6057
Allen Sapp Gallery Curator Retires	
Taylor	6057

QUESTION PERIOD

Support for Low-Income People	
Forbes	6058
Draude	6058
Arrangements Regarding Long-Term Care Facilities	
Wotherspoon	6059
McMorris	6059
Junor	6060
Support for Post-Secondary Students	
Broten	6061
Norris	6062

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 158 — <i>The Correctional Services Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Huyghebaert	6062

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 144 — <i>The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Furber	6063
Bill No. 148 — <i>The Animal Protection Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Yates	6064
Bjornerud (referral to committee)	6064
Bill No. 147 — <i>The Public Interest Disclosure Act</i>	
Forbes	6064
Bill No. 149 — <i>The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Trew	6066
Bill No. 150 — <i>The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Wotherspoon	6067
Bill No. 153 — <i>The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Vermette	6072

Bill No. 154 — <i>The Provincial Court Consequential Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
<i>Loi de 2010 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Vermette	6073
Bill No. 155 — <i>The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010</i>	
Forbes	6074
MOTIONS	
Substitution of Member on the Standing Committee on Human Services	
D’Autremont	6076

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier of Saskatchewan
President of the Executive Council

Hon. Bob Bjornerud
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Crop Insurance Corporation

Hon. Bill Boyd
Minister of Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations
Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation

Hon. June Draude
Minister of Social Services
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Education
Provincial Secretary

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Enterprise
Minister Responsible for Trade

Hon. Darryl Hickie
Minister of Municipal Affairs

Hon. Bill Hutchinson
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert
Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

Hon. Ken Krawetz
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Tim McMillan
Minister Responsible for Crown
Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for Information
Technology Office
Minister Responsible for Information
Services Corporation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor and
Gaming Authority

Hon. Don McMorris
Minister of Health

Hon. Don Morgan
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Workers'
Compensation Board

Hon. Rob Norris
Minister of Advanced Education,
Employment and Immigration
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for Uranium
Development Partnership

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority

Hon. Laura Ross
Minister of Government Services