



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

## **Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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# **DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

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The Hon. Dan D'Autremont  
Speaker



## MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

Speaker — Hon. Dan D'Autremont  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Cam Brotén

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotén, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D'Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Hon. Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Hon. Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I would like to introduce to the House a group of very special students from Yokohama, Japan. Also with them, Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery is Bob Stevenson and a group of Regina students.

Mr. Speaker, these students come to Saskatchewan from Yamate Gakuin High School, which has had an international exchange program since 1969. Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this exchange is to enable students to experience family and school life in another country and to develop friendships and to promote international understanding.

Mr. Speaker, the students from Yokohama are here for two weeks — just in time to enjoy our beautiful spring weather. And I understand, Mr. Speaker, that the Regina group will be travelling over to Japan this summer. Mr. Speaker, I know that they have a busy schedule while they are here, and I hope that they enjoy themselves in Regina and Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and I wish them all the best. And I ask all the members to join me in welcoming them to Saskatchewan and the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you a group seated in the east gallery. They are from the Piapot urban, students with the Southeast Regional College adult basic education program.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, if you want to see an impressive group of people, if you want to see a group of people that are determined and I think are showing that good way forward, you know, look no further than the east gallery. You've got a group of people that have made some decisions about improving their education, not just for themselves but I'm betting for their families. And certainly it's really good to see them here at their Legislative Assembly. I look forward to meeting with them later, to catching up, getting their take on question period. I know I'm going to get some good questions after, but it's really good to see these people from Piapot urban First Nation, Southeast Regional College adult basic education program here at their Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Moosomin.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I note that we have joining us today in your gallery a gentleman who's no stranger to this Legislative Assembly. In fact this individual served as this Chamber . . . when I was first elected, was Clerk of the Chamber, and then later served in the Senate. He most

recently served us very ably as the lieutenant governor of the province of Saskatchewan. And to my colleagues, I would ask each and every one to join me in welcoming to this Chamber a former lieutenant governor of the province of Saskatchewan, the Hon. Gordon Barnhart.

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

**Mr. Brotin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I would like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Dr. Barnhart to the Assembly. It's a pleasure to see him here today. Of course we're all so familiar and accustomed to seeing him at various events throughout the province. And now as he's entered a new chapter in his life, we trust it's going well and wish him all the best. And it's a true pleasure to see him here today in the Assembly. So welcome once again.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Greystone.

**Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'll follow the previous two speakers in offering an introduction to Dr. Gordon Barnhart. He is here today accompanied by Mr. Rodney Orr. As many people will know, Dr. Barnhart is the Chair of the International Minerals Innovation Institute, and Mr. Orr has recently been named the CEO [chief executive officer] of that institute. And so it's in that capacity that I would ask all members to welcome these two individuals, and certainly leaders as far as minerals, mining, and innovation, to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like join with the member opposite and welcome Mr. Rodney Orr in the International Minerals Innovation Institute and thank you for your attendance in your Assembly here today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It gives me great pleasure to introduce to you and through you to members of the Assembly a constituent of Saskatoon Silver Springs, Mr. Mike Couros. Members of the Assembly might be familiar with Mr. Couros. He has a segment on Monday mornings, I know, on the John Gormley show — Mike and Lise in the morning. We get our mornings off right if you're listening to the station. I know they were talking about Oprah Winfrey this past Monday, and they had some real insights.

Mr. Speaker, Mike is involved with many charitable organizations in Saskatoon. He was a founding member of Care & Share and the Progress Club along with former member Ted Merriman as well. He's one small-business person that's working hard to make Saskatchewan a better place. I ask all members to help me welcome him here to his Assembly.

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and

through you to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a number of guests in your gallery, scattered throughout, and I'll just ask them to hold up their hands or stand as I go through their names. We welcome them today in recognizing the announcement of the funding to the Parkland College in Yorkton for the new trades and technology centre, and they came down for the event this morning.

With us is executive director, Dr. Fay Myers, president; also Del Killick on the floor down here, board of governors chairperson. Also with us are board of governors: Doris Stelmackowich, Sally Bishop, and Linda Cyr — Lydia Cyr. Sorry, Lydia. Staff members Michael Cameron, Larry Pearson, Natasha Katchuk, Dale Holstein, William Litchfield, Brendan Wagner, Sharron Rurak, and my good friend and coffee buddy, Mr. Darrell Landels. I'd ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the official opposition and as the Advanced Education critic, I'd like to welcome the folks from Parkland here, Fay Myers and the team both from the board and staff. It's good to see you here at your Legislative Assembly. I hope that you didn't have to come here to get the new trade centre and take it all the way back. I hope it's going to take place out there.

But anyway, good to see you here at your Legislative Assembly. And this is a good news announcement certainly for the province, and we look forward to seeing how this continues to develop in the days ahead. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the members in the Chamber here, I'd like to introduce three people sitting in the west gallery. First of all is Jeff Stusek who is the president and CEO of ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan], as well as Shawn Peters who is the CFO [chief financial officer] and Angela Bethune who's with communications.

They're here no doubt to see the tabling of the ISC report that we may even hear a little bit more of in question period. I'm not sure. I'd rather not. I'd rather just talk about it out in the rotunda. But if there are questions, I've been very well briefed by those three individuals in the gallery to make sure that I have a very good understanding of the excellent year that ISC has gone through this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to briefly join with the member opposite in welcoming the folks from ISC here today, CEO Jeff Stusek. And certainly the annual report being tabled this morning, I'd like to welcome

these individuals to their Legislative Assembly.

And as to the questions, we'll see how their briefing worked out. We'll do our best to see how that has worked out. They did the best with what they got, for sure. Anyway I'd like to welcome those individuals to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I just want to introduce one of the guests who's here with the SSTI [Saskatchewan Social Sciences Teachers' Institute on Parliamentary Democracy] group. And I just want to pay a little bit of attention to the individual. And I know they were introduced yesterday, but this individual, I just want to give him a little recognition. He's from my constituency. His name is Devin Bernatchez. He's a teacher at Senator Myles Venne School, but also he's truly an advocate for sports, culture, recreation in northern Saskatchewan.

And I'll be reading a member statement a little later here explaining his role and his commitment with a group that took part in an event in February. So I just want to say, Devin, thank you for your commitment to northern children, to First Nations children education, and your commitment to our communities. I just want to welcome you to your legislature and say, thank you for all you do. Tiniki.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am very proud to stand today to present a petition in reference to cellphone coverage in northwestern Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

To undertake, as soon as possible, to ensure SaskTel delivers cellphone service in the Canoe Lake First Nations along with the adjoining communities of Cole Bay and Jans Bay; Buffalo River First Nation along with the neighbouring communities of St. George's Hill; English River First Nations, also known as Patuanak, and the hamlet of Patuanak; and Birch Narrows First Nations along with the community of Turnor Lake, including all the neighbouring communities in each of these areas.

Mr. Speaker, and the petition has been signed from all throughout Saskatchewan. And this particular page, Mr. Speaker, are people that have signed are primarily from Cole Bay, Saskatchewan. And I so present.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to introduce a petition calling for the reconsideration of passing Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. And since the Act was introduced in December, literally hundreds of hours of study and comparison have been carried out in the interests of due diligence. And we know there is no labour relations crisis to fix and no necessity to rush this omnibus bill through that will likely govern workplace relations for decades to come. And we know that stable labour relations in all sectors

run the risk of being thrown into turmoil of the result of the sweeping changes in the bill. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to not pass Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* in this current session before the end of May, and to place it on a much longer legislative track to ensure greater understanding and support for the new labour law.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Imperial, Wolseley, Grenfell, Whitewood, Montmartre, Raymore, Moose Jaw, Cupar, and Saskatoon, Muenster, and Nipawin. I do so present. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Boston Marathon Tragedy

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm sure all members and people throughout Saskatchewan were shocked and saddened by the news from the Boston Marathon yesterday. Many Saskatchewan people were especially touched by the tragedy including 22 marathon participants from our province, their family and their friends, and the many Saskatchewan people with loved ones in Boston. My thoughts and prayers are with the families of the victims and with all the others affected by this tragedy.

Mr. Speaker, the Boston Marathon is a symbol of courage and determination. Racers from all over the world pour their heart into qualifying for this event and in return have the opportunity to run an exhausting and inspiring 26.2 miles past thousands of supporters cheering them on. Yesterday's incident is one that we will all remember, as we should. But we must never let anger defeat us. Instead we must take a lesson from those that run and continue moving forward one step at a time towards a better and more peaceful tomorrow. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Emergency Telecommunications Week

**Mr. Hickie:** — Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to acknowledge that our province has proclaimed April 14th to the 20th as Emergency Telecommunications Week in Saskatchewan. During this time, Saskatchewan joins with the rest of Canada and we turn our attention to emergency telecommunicators and the work that they do. It provides the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, for us to acknowledge the dedication of individuals who are our first line of contact, that initial reassuring and helpful voice on the other end of the line when we are at our most vulnerable.

The people of our province depend on the skill, dedication, and expertise of these professionals, not only to dispatch emergency resources but to provide support and assistance when our citizens need it most. Mr. Speaker, I am truly impressed with

the level of service that we receive from our dispatchers, including those from police, fire, and emergency medical services.

Mr. Speaker, our government's plan for growth is about balancing priorities and improving the quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. It's important that we not only provide opportunities for the people of this province, that we are protecting those that need our help as well. Emergency telecommunicators have earned the public's trust and confidence. For this I am both grateful and I congratulate them. We want to remember, Mr. Speaker, that these are everyday heroes.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of government MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and all the people that our telecommunicators have supported over the years, I say thank you.

[13:45]

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

#### Festival for Northern Youth

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, close to 200 youth representing the five northern recreation regions gathered in La Ronge in mid-February to participate in the Northern Sport, Culture, and Recreation District Festival. The purpose of the festival was to bring youth and communities from northern Saskatchewan together to participate, learn, develop, and celebrate through sports, culture, and recreation.

Sport activities during the five-day event included basketball and broomball tournaments. Cultural activities included preparation and tanning of moose hide and the identification and use of traditional plants. Art activities included filmmaking, hip hop dancing.

Michael Linklater, a professional basketball player with the USA All-Stars, International Basketball League, was the keynote speaker at the banquet. Michael is originally from Thunderchild First Nation near North Battleford. He encouraged the youth in attendance to follow their dreams and to believe in themselves and to be willing to work hard to achieve their goals.

This event couldn't have happened without the dedication and commitment of coaches, chaperones, and volunteers, and of course the athletes. The pride of the northern culture was so proudly displayed by participants.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the northern sport, culture, and recreation district committee for facilitating and coordinating this major event.

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

#### Family Treatment Centre Opens in Prince Albert

**Ms. Jurgens:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Friday was a great day for Saskatchewan. I had the pleasure, along with the

member from Prince Albert Carlton, to bring greetings on behalf of the Minister of Health to the grand opening of the Prince Albert Family Treatment Centre.

Mr. Speaker, most of us know well the challenges that come with parenting. It is a very demanding job even when things are going well. For the mothers with addictions, things are not always good. This centre addresses that reality through its innovative approach to treatment. The residential facilities and on-site child care and school services will help to remove barriers to care. The family treatment centre will offer much needed services to mothers in need and will help families to access care together.

Mr. Speaker, up to eight mothers and their children will be able to access treatment at a time. This facility will also include a separate 10-bed child and youth mental health in-patient unit which replaces the former 10-bed unit.

The family treatment centre will be engaged with other service providers, agencies, and government ministries to coordinate care and the transition back to a patient's home community to ensure a successful and well-rounded approach to healing. That is why this government contributed almost \$10 million to this innovative facility.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating the Prince Albert Parkland Regional Health Authority on the grand opening of the family treatment centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Batoche.

#### Grade 10 Student Provincial Science Fair Winner

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in this Assembly today to share the recent accomplishments of a young constituent of mine. When Tawnee Dupuis, a grade 10 student at École St-Isidore, won first place in the local science fair in Bellevue last November, she thought it would be a good experience to participate in the provincial event, never imagining it would go any further. Last month she found herself among the top three at the provincial fair, ensuring her a spot at the Canada-wide Science Fair in Lethbridge this coming May.

Tawnee's project, an eco-house, uses solar panels, wind turbines, insulated concrete forms, and geothermal system, make it a complete self-sufficient house. It also includes a water system that makes rainwater drinkable. Tawnee chose an eco-house for her project because she's been considering going into environmental engineering as a career and felt it would be a good place to start.

Tawnee is the third student from École St-Isidore to make it to the national competition in the last six years.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Tawnee on her success at the provincial level and wishing her the best at the Canada-wide Science Fair next month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Yorkton Terriers Win Canalta Cup

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy to rise in the House today, instead of the member for Humboldt, to recognize my constituency's hometown hockey team, the Yorkton Terriers, as the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League champions for 2013 who took home the Canalta Cup . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . She's heckling me.

This past Sunday the Terriers claimed the cup in game 6 of the tournament against the Humboldt Broncos, and in their defence, Mr. Speaker, they have won the cup over and over again the last number of years so . . .

In game 5 on Saturday, the Terriers had a close game and went into triple overtime to secure the win. The final game came on Sunday. It was tied 3 to 3 until the Terriers racked up the final point with 28 seconds left in the game and claimed the league title.

Mr. Speaker, this is the Terriers' first Canalta Cup win since 2006, so all of us in Yorkton are ecstatic and proud of them for their victory. The Terriers now advance to the Western Canada Cup, April 26th to May 5th in Nanaimo, BC [British Columbia]. The winners of that tournament will advance to the RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] Cup Junior A championship tournament, May 11th to the 19th in Summerside, Prince Edward Island.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly join me in congratulating the Yorkton Terriers organization and coach Trent Cassan on their Canalta Cup win and wish them the best of luck in Nanaimo at the end of the month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

#### Party Divisions

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The first task of any new political leader should be unifying the party. But the new leader of the NDP [New Democratic Party] appears to be failing this test.

There was an article posted yesterday on The Huffington Post website called, "The divisions within Sask. NDP." It shows that there are some pretty clear divisions between the NDP leader and his chief rival, Dr. Ryan Meili. When asked about running for a seat in the next election, Ryan Meili would not commit. He said, "We'll have to see if we can work together . . . if Cam wants me there." Not exactly a ringing vote of confidence. On top of that, Dr. Meili says he opposes the NDP leader's position on the Keystone XL pipeline which he originally voted against but now supports.

Mr. Speaker, we know that many of Ryan Meili's supporters share the same concern. One prominent NDP blogger recently wrote that the new leader has made no effort to reach out to the Meili camp at all except for a single email asking for money.

Mr. Speaker, we know that in the last election many NDP supporters simply could not support the leadership of Dwain

Lingenfelter. They may have a different leader, but they still have the same old problems within the same old NDP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

## QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Funding for First Nations and Métis Education

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Deputy Leader of the Opposition tried to move a motion in this Chamber last March for Shannen's dream for equitable education funding for First Nations children, the Sask Party refused to even discuss the motion. It was debated and passed unanimously by all parties in the federal parliament, but here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government wouldn't even discuss the issue.

My question to the Sask Party government: have they now changed their position on this policy? Do they now fully recognize that equitable education funding for First Nations children here in Saskatchewan is an issue of huge importance?

**The Speaker:** — When a member is asking a question, they need it to direct it to someone other than the entire government. So I would ask the member to direct his question to a minister. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Broten:** — To the Minister of Education: has the Sask Party government now changed its position on this policy?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps that's a rookie mistake. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan takes very, very seriously the education of all children in the province of Saskatchewan and yesterday, at a very exciting event, we received the report of the joint task force.

Mr. Speaker, \$3 million that the government has set aside to begin to deal with the recommendations of the task force is a beginning, Mr. Speaker. It's seed money. And one of the prime recommendations that came out of that report, Mr. Speaker, was the commitment to pursue, with the federal government, the whole area of mitigating and dealing with the disparity in educational funding for students on-reserve in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the joint task force on First Nations and Métis education and employment outcomes recommended that the provincial government lobby the federal government to provide equitable education for First Nations children. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, in the meantime, the task force recommended that the provincial government provide interim funding to reduce the cost for First Nations students, Mr. Speaker, the First Nations that send their children to off-reserve schools.

My question to the Education Minister: until he can finally

convince the federal government to step up to this issue, does he intend to provide interim funding as outlined in recommendation no. 4 of the task force report? If so, when will this funding be coming and how much will it be?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, we have made a commitment through our partnership with the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] on the joint task force, Mr. Speaker, to deliver on that disparity, Mr. Speaker. As referenced, a recommendation refers to interim funding, Mr. Speaker, and that's exactly what we're going to do.

We're going to pursue with the federal government, in conjunction with Vice-chief Bird, to pursue with the federal government discussions around how we go about dealing with that disparity in education funding, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, in January, in response to yet another report on this issue, the Premier was interviewed regarding the underfunding of on-reserve schools. A story on the CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] website reported:

Wall, on Tuesday, said it was time for governments to stop passing the buck when it came to addressing the issue.

"The time is over for the federal government to say 'Go see the province,' and the provincial government to say, 'Go see the feds,'" Wall said.

Wall noted the province is providing adult basic education on reserves and more programs could follow.

That's what the Premier said back in January, Mr. Speaker. But then just a few months after that bold proclamation by the Premier, Mr. Speaker, we saw a Sask Party government that devoted only \$3 million to deal with the recommendations coming forward from the report that is tabled by the task force.

My question to the Education minister: how far can \$3 million go in meeting the recommendations of the task force, and how much of that \$3 million, Mr. Speaker, will be going to recommendation no. 4 in the report?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the \$3 million investment does not represent government's full commitment to the agenda of First Nations and Métis success in schools, Mr. Speaker.

There are a number of initiatives that appeared in the 2013-14 budget that deal directly with First Nations and Métis initiatives. For example, one and a half million dollars committed to adult basic education, Mr. Speaker, on-reserve; an additional half a million dollars to support skills training, Mr. Speaker; an additional one and a half million dollars committed

for employment development to support continuation of the Northern Career Quest, Mr. Speaker; 50 new kindergarten, pre-kindergarten programs, Mr. Speaker; an additional million dollars for capital in early learning, Mr. Speaker. And I could go on.

The \$3 million is seed money, and it will go a long way in helping us to begin to address the issues, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Brotén:** — Mr. Speaker, we know that improving educational outcomes for First Nations and Métis youth in our province is not only imperative from a moral perspective, Mr. Speaker, but it's important from an economic perspective as well because the entire province will benefit when everyone is reaching their full potential. Economist Eric Howe has highlighted this, Mr. Speaker, by how closing the Aboriginal achievement gap, Mr. Speaker, it could mean \$90 billion for our province.

We know the Premier's views on this issue has evolved, Mr. Speaker, since last March when he wouldn't even debate the issue of Shannen's dream. Now he admits, Mr. Speaker, that it's time to stop passing the buck. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the dollars, we see a Sask Party budget that has brought only \$3 million to the table to deal with the recommendations from the task force. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, they're happy to spend \$6 million on a computer program for standardized testing, but only bring \$3 million to deal with the recommendations from the task force.

My question to the Education minister: why doesn't he bring dollars to the table to back up the talk?

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

[14:00]

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the gap in educational outcomes for Aboriginal students, in the last decade, Mr. Speaker, under the NDP, the non-Aboriginal high school completion actually increased from 17.3 per cent to 21.6 per cent, Mr. Speaker. The gap in educational outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal actually grew, Mr. Speaker. The answer is, Mr. Speaker, did they have a plan . . . The question is, did they have a plan? The answer is, there was no plan, Mr. Speaker.

Our government's acceptance of the joint task force, Mr. Speaker, is testament to our commitment to move to narrow that gap and make our commitment to First Nations and Métis students successful so that they can benefit from all the successes of our province, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I would ask that members put their comments, from both sides, through the Chair. I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

### Information Services Corporation

**Mr. McCall:** — Well sure thing, Mr. Speaker. Today's Information Services Corporation annual report highlights

another year of dividends for the province. This year's dividend of \$19.1 million brings the total dividend that ISC has provided to the people of Saskatchewan over the past five years to \$83.3 million. Those millions of dollars help to pay for health care, for seniors' care, for education, and for highways.

To the Minister Responsible for the Information Services Corp.: why is the Sask Party moving to privatize the profitable and well-run Information Services Corporation?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I've said before, the great work by the management and staff of ISC has put the corporation in a very good position, certainly a long ways from when it was originally founded under the NDP. But it's a company that is doing very well in the province right now.

A lot of their success is not only because of the management and staff, but also the success that we are realizing here in the province today. Mr. Speaker, we're seeing property values go up, which helps the bottom line of ISC. We're seeing the number of corporations increase, Mr. Speaker. There are a number of aspects that have led to the success of ISC.

ISC has had a very good year this past year, Mr. Speaker. And with that, Mr. Speaker, we think it's a great candidate for people to open it up for IPO [initial public offering], so that people can invest in this company, so it can carry its great product around the world, Mr. Speaker, across Canada and around the world, something that the opposition had full intentions of doing, Mr. Speaker, but they were trying to sell a dog at that time, Mr. Speaker. They weren't very successful. We have an extremely successful company, Mr. Speaker, and I believe the IPO will be very successful as well.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party will be handing over ISC dividends to the private sector for a one-time profit, but the people of Saskatchewan will pay the price for this Sask Party privatization for years and years to come.

The \$83.3 million in dividends over the last five years have helped to provide valuable services like health care and education, and they have helped to keep taxes competitive. When the Sask Party gets firmly down the road of privatizing the Information Services Corporation, what happens after the one-time money is gone? Will they be raising taxes or cutting services like health care and education, or both? What's the plan, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, we can certainly see how the opposition thinks. They don't think about growth. They don't think of growth of a company, Mr. Speaker, that will be more successful not only within this province but we hope around, across Canada and around the world.

Mr. Speaker, this is not uncommon. I mean their brothers and sisters in Manitoba just simply privatized their land registry, Mr. Speaker, but for some reason we can't do that here in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, if you looked at some of the quotes from the Manitoba Finance minister, he saw great reason as to turn their company, their land titles over to Teranet, a private company out of Ontario.

That shows you, Mr. Speaker, I think, that jurisdictions around the world are looking for expertise in this area. We happen to have it here in Saskatchewan, and we're going to allow the rest of the country and the world to benefit from our expertise.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister isn't answering the question. ISC provides a much-valued service to the people of Saskatchewan. The men and women that work at ISC do a great job, as evidenced yet again today in this annual report. And instead of profits going into a small number of private pockets, the dividends of ISC help to keep taxes competitive and pay for services in health and education to the tune of \$83.3 million since 2008.

After the Sask Party government gets through spending the one-time money, what happens then? The Sask Party government didn't tell the people of Saskatchewan about their privatization plans during the last election, and could they now at least tell people what the plan will be to deal with the impact of this decision when it comes to millions of fewer dollars for keeping taxes low or going towards valuable services like education and health care?

Will they tell the people the plan? Will they have the decency?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, it's no secret. We've talked about it on the floor of this House before. The government will retain about 40 per cent of the shares of ISC. We expect that 40 per cent share to be worth more and produce dividends well into the future, not to mention the corporate tax that the other 60 per cent will be paying back into the coffers of the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we see this as a growth opportunity not only for ISC, Mr. Speaker, but for the company as a whole throughout the nation.

It's interesting, Mr. Speaker, that they're so, so upset that we would be moving ISC to an IPO. When they were in government, Mr. Speaker, and they put the Crown protection Act — I don't know if they want to hear this again — but when they put the Crown protection Act in place, ISC was in the Crown protection Act. The member from Lakeview should very well know that, except he has amnesia on this matter, Mr. Speaker. He was part of the legislative instruments committee that oversaw taking ISC out of the Crown protection Act so that those members could sell it many, many years ago, Mr. Speaker.

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

## Combatting Discrimination and Bullying

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Halla Scott is here with us in the gallery today. She, like other students, are interested in forming gay-straight alliances in their schools. And the Premier said last week here in question period, and I quote, "... these clubs can be formed in schools today in the province of Saskatchewan. I don't think the Government of Saskatchewan would stand in the way of that happening." But, Mr. Speaker, when we asked if the Sask Party government would simply update the government's website to include information on how to form GSAs [gay-straight alliance], they refused.

To the Minister of Education: why can't the ministry put up information about GSAs on its website so that interested students and teachers have resources about how to form GSAs?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member opposite for the question. Mr. Speaker, we take these matters very, very seriously. We believe that all children in our schools, in our school system have a right to a warm, caring, and safe environment to learn in, Mr. Speaker.

Over the course of my career, Mr. Speaker, I've dealt with many, many different kinds of issues, Mr. Speaker — name-calling, colour of hair, the side of the street you live on, the side of the town you live on, Mr. Speaker, racial slurs, clothes, and, Mr. Speaker, sexual orientation. Mr. Speaker, dealing with bullying really comes down to respecting differences.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan will do all that it can to ensure that our children learn about respecting differences. And we will continue to work with the Legislative Secretary, and I don't want to preclude any kind of results from that, as our Premier has already alluded to, Mr. Speaker. And so we will continue to look at that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Supporting GSAs is the right thing to do to create safe spaces in our schools. This morning in a radio interview, Halla talked of her struggles to form or start a GSA in her high school. She looked for help in forming one but felt that she didn't have the support.

The school board says forming a GSA is a straightforward process. An official from the school board said students or teachers are to, and I quote, "... approach a principal, and the principal relays it to me, and I basically give the application to our director of education." Mr. Speaker, it sounds as if simply more information is needed by all parties. This is an easy solution and the government can play a lead role today. Mr. Speaker, why can't the Sask Party government do the right thing and put the information about GSAs and how they are formed on the government's website?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, the solution to bullying is

not simple. It's a community, it's a community issue, Mr. Speaker. There is a great deal of information that needs to be gathered, that needs to be discussed with many different community partners — our young people most importantly, Mr. Speaker.

I know that our Legislative Secretary will be conducting forums throughout the province where she will talk directly with students to find out how they perceive life in their schools and how safe they feel. And through that whole process, Mr. Speaker, again which is a complicated process, we will hopefully come to a Saskatchewan action plan on bullying, Mr. Speaker, that will include GSAs and the many other differences that we need to learn to respect, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, students, parents, teachers, school administrators all know, they all know that GSAs are a positive option about creating safe spaces in our schools. But the Sask Party government is being stubborn and is out of touch with today's Saskatchewan. Students need simple, easy-to-understand information about how GSAs can be formed and who they should talk to in their schools to create one today.

Will the government admit they made a mistake last week? Will the minister direct his officials to put helpful information on the government's website for students and teachers interested in forming gay-straight alliances today?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, again thank you to the member opposite for the question. This is a serious matter, Mr. Speaker. When I found out about the situation that was reported in the media this morning, I immediately had ministry officials contact the school division for confirmation. And indeed, they reported that it's not the case, that they would be prepared to . . . In no way, shape, or form would they prohibit the formation of a GSA in their school, Mr. Speaker. And so we trust that and we will continue to work with them.

Mr. Speaker, another part of our student achievement initiative that will help us to gauge the environment in our schools is the Tell Them for Me survey, Mr. Speaker. It's a student perceptual survey that will provide endless data on student perceptions, community perceptions, and teaching perceptions of what goes on in the schools. And hopefully by gathering that data, Mr. Speaker, we'll be able to protect our children, all children, Mr. Speaker, and respect all differences.

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

### Repairs to School Gymnasium

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, this morning CBC Radio reported on problems with the gymnasium at Sacred Heart Community School here in Regina. Last week, what are thought to be structural problems resulted in the scoreboard falling off the wall in the gym. Thankfully no one was hurt. But access to the gym has been restricted, and the school and the Regina Catholic School Board are uncertain as to what will come next

and what will happen with the gym. Will that minister and this government work with the Regina Catholic School Board to fix the gym at Sacred Heart?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member opposite for the question.

You know, Mr. Speaker, the safety of our students and staff in our schools is always number one priority when it comes to our students. And I'm aware of the issue with the gymnasium at Sacred Heart, Mr. Speaker, and we're working closely with the officials there and my officials are working with them. I understand that engineers are currently working to assess the situation, Mr. Speaker, and will provide us with recommendations to ensure that the gym is safer for all students, teachers, and community members, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the Regina Catholic School Board had first identified concerns with the gym at Sacred Heart to that government five years ago. What has been a problem is now unacceptable. Will that government start seriously working with the Regina Catholic School Board and get the job done for the students of Sacred Heart Community School? Will they fix the gym at Sacred Heart? When will the kids and community of Sacred Heart be able to use the gym again?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, on that matter we're working with the officials, both mine and the Catholic school division, Mr. Speaker, to deal with that matter. But I need to remind the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, that we inherited a \$1.2 billion infrastructure deficit, Mr. Speaker, remind them that over 70 per cent of our schools are more than 40 years old, Mr. Speaker, and Sacred Heart is older than that, Mr. Speaker. Our government is increasing in this budget \$7.2 million for capital, raising that total to \$119 million, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in our first six years, total school infrastructure allocation has increased by 264 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party, six years, we invested \$600 million, Mr. Speaker. In their last six years, \$165 million, Mr. Speaker. I have no trouble justifying the investment in educational infrastructure that we have, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Speaker, when those members took over government in 2007 there were \$2 billion cash on hand in terms of a surplus, as opposed to the fact, 1991, when there was the whole deficit, deficit problem, Mr. Speaker.

Over the years, I've had a lot of things to say about the great

things happening at Sacred Heart, Mr. Speaker. The students are engaged in learning. The teachers and staff do tremendous work. Further evidence of this came just recently with principal Starla Grebinski being recognized as one of the best principals in Canada. This is an awesome school of which the neighbourhood is very proud, and the school's gymnasium plays a crucial role in all of the great things happening at Sacred Heart, from gym class to assembly to community gatherings. Very simply, Mr. Speaker, when is that government going to work with the school board, work with the school, to get the gym fixed?

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

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the third time, the answer is that we are working with our officials. My officials are working with their officials to, number one, to determine what the problem is so that we can properly provide emergent funds to repair the gymnasium. We don't want to put . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order.

**Hon. Mr. Marchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure the safety of our students and staff, and obviously we want our students and staff to be back in the gym doing the things. But first of all, Mr. Speaker, we need to be certain that what we're fixing is going to work, Mr. Speaker. And I need again to remind members opposite that we've invested over \$620 million to try to catch up to the \$1.2 billion deficit that we inherited, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Performance of Government

**Mr. Brotin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we see from the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, is a failure to think and act with a long-term view. Mr. Speaker, we see it with the issue of closing the Aboriginal education achievement gap. We see a task force, we see a report being tabled, but we don't see resources being brought to the table to make sure there's action, Mr. Speaker.

We see actions, Mr. Speaker, by the Sask Party government not allowing all Saskatchewan people to benefit from Crown corporations that are here in the province. We see a stubborn bureaucratic refusal, Mr. Speaker, to take a common sense approach in putting some information on a website about the benefits of GSAs. And, Mr. Speaker, we see a refusal to take the issue of a gym here in Regina seriously, so that students in north central Regina have the opportunity to have the exercise, to have the activity that they need.

My question to the Deputy Premier: when will the short-sighted thinking, when will the short-sighted decisions and actions stop? When will they start acting on a long-term view?

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, since the budget was presented on March the 20th, I've had the opportunity to travel around the province and talk to many individuals. I'm very glad to see that Saskatchewan is again setting the way, setting the way, Mr. Speaker, for growth. Setting in place the province that has now grown by 82,000 people, Mr. Speaker, in the last five years.

Mr. Speaker, last year alone, last year alone, there were 15,035 births in the province of Saskatchewan, something that the NDP never even knew about, Mr. Speaker, because for their years in office, they planned for decline, Mr. Speaker. School closures were common, Mr. Speaker, under their watch.

Mr. Speaker, today we're seeing growth. We're seeing the opportunity to move forward, to shorten the wait-list, Mr. Speaker, for surgical wait times, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to move forward and we're going to continue to build, Mr. Speaker, infrastructure this year over \$847 million.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 315 to 317.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled answers to questions no. 315 to 317 inclusive. I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to order answers to questions 318 to 356.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has ordered answers for questions 318 to 356 inclusive. I recognize the Government Whip.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 357 to 363.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled answers to questions 357 to 363 inclusive.

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

##### **Bill No. 94 — *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2013***

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2013*.

Mr. Speaker, this bill increases the tobacco tax rate from 21 cents per cigarette, tobacco stick, or gram of tobacco to 25 cents. On a package of 25 cigarettes that sells for about \$12, this amounts to a tobacco tax increase of \$1.

Mr. Speaker, the changes contained within this bill are expected

to yield approximately \$45.2 million in additional revenue in 2013-14. This is revenue that will continue to help pay for our vital public services required by Saskatchewan's growing population, including health care.

When it comes to comparing ourselves with our neighbouring provinces, Mr. Speaker, my notes did say that Saskatchewan is at the same price per cigarette as Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, we've just received the information about the Manitoba budget, Mr. Speaker, and a line in their budget now says this: the tobacco tax will go up by 4 cents a cigarette to 29 cents effective midnight tonight. So, Mr. Speaker, Manitoba will be much further ahead. And we have just learned also, Mr. Speaker, that British Columbia is also raising their tobacco taxes.

Mr. Speaker, public education and awareness, bans on smoking in public places, and tobacco taxation are all key factors to reducing smoking rates. Over time those lower rates lead to improved health and fewer smoking-related deaths which, according to health groups, is the number one preventable cause of sickness and death in our province.

Right now the percentage of Saskatchewan residents who smoke is the lowest it's ever been. We are strengthening provincial efforts to create environments where it is easier for children, youth, and their families to live healthy, active lives. Preventing young people from starting to smoke and reducing exposure to environmental tobacco smoke is a major part of this work.

Health care groups have already praised this tax increase, the first in three years, Mr. Speaker. Unfortunately our province's smoking rates remain stubbornly high, among the top in Canada. This is a statistic we desperately want to change. Studies indicate that higher costs for tobacco products will help. Mr. Speaker, careful thought went into this budget as we balance the needs of a growing population with decreasing resource revenues and many competing expenses. We believe an increase to discretionary costs is a responsible way to generate more revenue. Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2013*.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Finance has moved second reading of Bill No. 94, *The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased and honoured to be able to stand today to respond to this bill. I think what's really important, Mr. Speaker, is that obviously I think from our perspective as the official opposition, that trying to find ways in which we would encourage people to not take up smoking and certainly discourage those that are currently smoking, it's obviously a very good effort on behalf of all of our parts as MLAs when we address this issue on behalf of the province.

Mr. Speaker, there's no question that what they refer to as sin taxes — whether it's liquor tax or whether it's cigarette tax — obviously sin taxes are a good way, a deterrent, if you will, for people to stop buying the products, Mr. Speaker. But the question that we have in the opposition is really how much of a deterrent does increasing taxes for cigarettes and for alcohol

and so on and so forth, Mr. Speaker, how much of a factor does it make when we make an effort to discourage people from doing things like smoking, Mr. Speaker? So I think it's really important that we assess that particular aspect of this particular tax.

I think one of the things that I would certainly concur with in a sense that folks that want to see less smoke in our community, there is a lot of groups and organizations that have advocated for this over the years. They certainly see this as one avenue in which they would discourage smoking.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm very lucky, and I think my three children are also very lucky. We haven't taken up the notion of smoking. And I think really, quite frankly, it was really some of the efforts in the old days of trying to discourage young people from picking up that cigarette and beginning a long life of smoking because it is really a very, very nasty problem for young people to get into. And cigarette smoking, Mr. Speaker, does contribute to a lot of problems with your health at later stages of your life.

And, Mr. Speaker, I can say from our perspective as the official opposition, when we began to work when we were in government to discourage smoking — things like putting a curtain over cigarettes that were in stores so young kids wouldn't see that; discouraging advertising; I think some of the notions of discouraging smoking in restaurants, Mr. Speaker, and smoking in bars — at the time, Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of fights. And I can remember my colleague from, the former minister of Health, we had discussions in cabinet about the whole notion of smoking and the dangers of smoking, Mr. Speaker. And we had a lot of lobby groups coming our way to encourage us as government to take the proactive steps.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's what's really important on this particular file, on Bill 94, is to not only have the government tax the cigarette smokers, Mr. Speaker, because it is a huge problem, but to continue the effort and the work on the other fronts, of education, of reaching out to the young people, of making sure that smoking, cigarette smoking is something that we would discourage, Mr. Speaker.

So I think it's really important that we tell the groups out there that are paying attention to Bill 94, which really in fact increases taxes on a package of cigarettes by \$1 as proposed by the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, and we are saying, what other initiatives, what other proactive measures are you taking to complement the intent behind Bill 94?

If this is all simply a tax grab from the cigarette smokers, Mr. Speaker, it defeats the purpose of what a lot of the advocates say when it comes to trying to encourage people from not smoking. So my point is, Mr. Speaker, is we would encourage those groups out there that have an opinion, that have some advice and certainly have the solutions within their own organizations, to come forward and tell the government that you need to be a bit more proactive on some of these other fronts, not just view this particular sin tax as a tax grab to try and balance your books.

What's really important, Mr. Speaker, is that we see the effects of the long-term smoking. It is very dangerous. It is very costly

to the health system, and it costs a lot of lives, Mr. Speaker. We've known all the stats. We see all the evidence. And time and time again, different groups bring these issues forward and they explain to us exactly what the problem is. So it's not as if the government don't know, Mr. Speaker. It's not as if the people themselves that partake in the cigarette habit don't know. There is advice out there. There is information. There are awareness campaigns. There is heightened information out there through the Internet. There's thousands and thousands of reminders every day for people not to smoke.

[14:30]

So I would hope, Mr. Speaker, on this particular bill, Bill 94, that there are many other complementary efforts undertaken by the Sask Party government to discourage smoking in our province because it is really, really important that government show that particular effort, Mr. Speaker.

Now what I want to say in some of my closing comments, Mr. Speaker, 21 cents per cigarette is what the tax rate is now. The government is increasing that to 25 cents per cigarette. Now, Mr. Speaker, that obviously increases the total overall package of cigarettes by roughly \$1.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's important that we also ask the question is, based on the current taxes that you're collecting, this increase and the other increases, exactly how much of a tax do you collect from smoking and exactly how much of that particular tax is going towards the education programs? That's something that we ought to know as an opposition and certainly something that we will strive to undertake, Mr. Speaker.

And again, the whole notion of our preliminary discussion and some of the points that we want to make today is the fact that if Bill 94 is intended to increase taxes on cigarettes, (a) what are the other complementary efforts that are being taken by the Sask Party to reduce smoking prevalence in our province, Mr. Speaker? And which part of this tax grab that they're undertaking today is going to be used to achieve the results that we all want, and that means less smoking in Saskatchewan? A dramatic, drastic cut is needed, Mr. Speaker. We support that notion and we encourage people to find out more information. And we encourage those people that are advocating for that to join the opposition, give us more information, because this is too important to be partisan and we must undertake all the efforts whenever necessary and wherever necessary.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, we have some questions on this particular bill, and we'll go through the process and we'll try and get that information from the Sask Party government. But rest assured. Any tax grab from the sin city, or the sin taxes, as is the case of the cigarettes, we want to see what kind of corresponding programs that they have to educate the public and discourage smoking. So on that notion, I make a motion that we adjourn debate on Bill 94.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 94, *The Tobacco Act Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 95 — *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Act***

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of the office of public registry statutes Act. Mr. Speaker, these bills are companion pieces to Bill 69 which sets out the process for the sale of shares in ISC to the public. These bills address the ongoing governance of these registries by the government and their day-to-day operation and management by ISC on behalf of the government. An English bill and a separate related bilingual bill are required. The bill will provide legal authority for the government to enter into service agreements with a private sector ISC for the delivery of public registry services. It will confirm the continued government ownership of the information and records in a public registry. It will create a new office of public registry administration within the Ministry of Justice for the various public registry officers and provide a series of consequential amendments to a variety of Acts to reflect a new operating arrangement.

Mr. Speaker, these bills authorize the execution between government and ISC of detailed service agreements addressing the powers, duties, responsibilities, and remedies relating to the operation and management of the public registries by a private sector ISC. Where a service agreement has been entered into with respect to a public registry statute such as *The Land Titles Act*, it will authorize ISC to operate and manage the public registry on behalf of the government subject to the detailed terms of that agreement.

Mr. Speaker, these service agreements, which will be tabled in the Assembly, will address a full range of duties and responsibilities for ISC as the contractor and will include such matters as the expected outcomes to be achieved by the contractor in its management and operation of the public registry statute; the performance objectives of the contractor; the acceptance by the contractor of its responsibilities to exercise the powers and fulfill the duties and functions under the public registry statute and the service agreement and the relationship between the contractor and the Government of Saskatchewan under the public registry statute and the service agreement; the establishment of fees to be charged for services and functions required to be provided pursuant to the public registry statute and the procedure for reviewing those fees; and the remedies for non-compliance with the terms of the service agreement, including the obligations of the parties and penalties for non-compliance; and finally the settlement of disputes.

Mr. Speaker, it is important for members of the public to know that this bill will ensure that the legal position of members of the public using these registries will not change as a result of the new operating arrangement. It will be business as usual for users of these registries.

One significant change from the existing process is that the position of the registrar of titles, director of corporations, registrar of personal property registry, and the controller of surveys will now be established within the Ministry of Justice.

This change is being made to ensure their independence as statutory officers and so that the conduct of their quasi-judicial functions will remain within government. Their decisions will continue to be subject to all applicable judicial oversight and/or appeals. There will be no change in the statutory process in this regard.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to confirm that the existing government assurance of land titles will remain with the government and will not be transferred to ISC. All actions taken by ISC as a contractor under a service agreement are taken on behalf of the Crown, and the Crown remains responsible for the public registries in that regard. The government will have a right of indemnification for liability caused by ISC in the operation of a registry.

On an ongoing basis, Mr. Speaker, the Ministry of Justice will retain responsibility for government policy development, supervision, and review of registry functions that will be provided by ISC. Mr. Speaker, as previously announced, this bill confirms that the vital statistics registry will not be subject to the service agreement provisions. The registry will be transferred from ISC to eHealth Saskatchewan so that it remains within the government.

Mr. Speaker, this bill also makes a series of related amendments to various public registry statutes currently administered by ISC to reflect the transition of ISC to a private sector company and to consolidate the administration of these Acts under the Minister of Justice. Mr. Speaker, I'm confident that this legislation provides a strong framework to facilitate the operation of these public registries by ISC under the terms of the service agreements while ensuring that the ongoing governance of these public registries is maintained and most importantly the interests of the public remain fully protected.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to move second reading of the office of public registry statutes Act. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 95, *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am going to offer initial comments on this particular bill. And obviously, Mr. Speaker, the bill itself is really talking about preparing ISC for the eventual sale.

The Information Services Corporation, as we heard in question period today, Mr. Speaker, they have made millions of dollars over the years. And this is really a sad day, Mr. Speaker, when you see how the notion of Bill 95, which we're speaking about now, of how it is a complementary bill to the original parent bill, Bill 69, which is really talking about the sale of the Information Services Corporation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I noticed in question period today, my colleague mentioned a lot about the value of the Information Services Corporation. And what's happening with this particular bill is they're trying to separate the corporation itself, to take away people's personal information and to put it under eHealth and thereby preparing Information Services

Corporation for public sale. Now, Mr. Speaker, make no bones about it, this is the first step in a privatization agenda, from our perspective, and this particular bill is attached to the overall, what I would call the overall mother bill, Bill 69, which is clearly the sale of ISC.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we sit in opposition here. And I noticed today that the minister that was talking about ISC actually mentioned the fact that he was talking about this on the floor for a number of months. Well, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we noted as a result of his comments during question period was the fact that he never mentioned this before the last election. The people of Saskatchewan are going to be very, very angry I think overall when they see that the Saskatchewan Party government, through bills of this sort, you know, where they're preparing Information Services Corporation for public sale, Mr. Speaker. If they begin to see that trend — and this is obviously something that the opposition has been talking about for quite some time — then I think the people of Saskatchewan will get very angry, and they'll start realizing that there is a hidden plan by the Sask Party to come back and finish off Saskatchewan.

And one of the best ways to do that, Mr. Speaker, is start robbing the people of Saskatchewan from owning their own Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. It is a huge, huge issue, and the opposition is going to make every effort, Mr. Speaker, to expose the Saskatchewan Party government for their privatization scheme that's identified through this particular bill, Bill 95, which is attached to Bill 69, which specifically talks about the sale of Information Services Corporation, Mr. Speaker.

That corporation makes us millions of dollars, and, Mr. Speaker, there's great value. Now I look back and I'm wondering, why are the Tories selling off our Crowns, Mr. Speaker?

And you know, I look at the historical perspective. Certainly when they formed government in 2007, six or seven months later they're putting out billboard ads saying that they have reduced debt by 40 per cent. Now, Mr. Speaker, the question I have — and the Minister of Finance is here — how do you reduce debt in six months of your term by 40 per cent if there's no money left in there, Mr. Speaker? There's obviously a lot of money left in there from the previous NDP government, Mr. Speaker. And that's how they gloriously proclaim after six or seven months in power they paid off 40 per cent of our debt, Mr. Speaker. They took out big billboards, took out big billboards saying, we paid down 40 per cent.

And surprise, six years later, Mr. Speaker, six years later we're at the same debt level that we were in 2007, Mr. Speaker. In a full six years they got us right back to the level of debt that we were in when they took office, Mr. Speaker. So now the Tories are in a quandary. Now they're in a quandary, Mr. Speaker. Now how do we keep, how do we keep things going here?

Well obviously, Mr. Speaker, the next two things we've got to do is we've got to sell off the Crowns, which this bill is talking about, Mr. Speaker. And then you've got to . . . What's the other trick they have up their sleeve? They've got things called P3s [public-private partnership] where they're going to punt the debt down the road, Mr. Speaker, where our grandchildren will

be paying for that.

That is a typical Tory government, Mr. Speaker, where they come along and they claim credit for something they had absolutely nothing to do with, Mr. Speaker, and then they make all these fancy billboards that try to hoodwink the people of Saskatchewan by these fancy ads saying we paid 40 per cent down of the debt when all that money was left in the account, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP were tossed out of government, Mr. Speaker.

And now the problem is they're back to the original debt that they were six years ago. And now they've got to figure out a new way. They've got to figure out a new way to hoodwink the people, Mr. Speaker, and the best way is start selling off the Crowns as identified in Bill 95. That's what they're going to do here — start selling off the Crowns. And then we'll use the magical formula of P3s where we'll punt the debt down the road.

Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of people paying very close attention to this particular bill, a lot of people paying very close attention to this particular bill. And I want to recap to the people out there that are listening, Mr. Speaker. And the people that are listening, I want to tell them this very clearly. When the Sask Party took over office in 2007, they had hundreds of millions — by our account, \$2.3 billion in the bank, Mr. Speaker, \$2.3 billion in the bank.

They come along, they ran a bunch of expensive ads, a bunch of billboard ads saying, we paid 40 per cent down on the debt, six or seven months after they formed government, Mr. Speaker. Where in the world could a government six or seven months into their term pay down 40 per cent of their debt, Mr. Speaker? Because the money was there. The money was there. And they put on this facade that they're doing all these wonderful things, and then years later, because of their mismanagement, now we're back to the same levels.

So now the Tories are sitting there thinking, what do we do now? Well how about we start selling off the Crowns? How about if we start selling off the Crowns, and we buy people with the money that we make off the Crowns. And then we'll invent a process called P3s, so we'll punt that debt further down the road, Mr. Speaker.

So that's what the Tories are up to now, Mr. Speaker. They are now in a situation where Bill 95 is preparing Information Services Corporation for a public sale, for a public sale, Mr. Speaker. And we challenge and I challenge the entire Sask Party caucus across the way to come clean with the people of Saskatchewan. Tell them exactly why you're selling the Crown corporations. What corporation is next on the chopping block or the sale block, Mr. Speaker? People have a right to know.

And Bill 95 is doing exactly that, Mr. Speaker. It is preparing Information Services Corporation for sale, and that's the bottom line. That's the bottom line, Mr. Speaker, at what this particular bill is doing. It is a complementary bill to simply prepare the sale of Information Services Corporation.

And no matter how much assurance they give us that all people's private information is going to be protected under

eHealth, Mr. Speaker, I tell the people of Saskatchewan this. Information Services Corporation has made us millions of dollars over the last seven or eight years that it built itself up. That money, I think it's \$80 million if I'm correct, \$80 million goes to pay for highways, goes to pay for education, goes to pay for health. That's how Saskatchewan has been able to thrive and how Saskatchewan has been able to build itself up over the years, as the Crown corporations are a vital part of how we govern our province, Mr. Speaker. It is an integral part of what Saskatchewan's all about.

[14:45]

And now we sit here and we see the Sask Party government, in their sly way and certainly in their way of stealth, Mr. Speaker, coming along and proposing bills and certainly complementary bills that prepare the Crown corporations for sale, Mr. Speaker.

So now the Tories are in a quandary now. The conservatives over there are in a quandary because how do we get this whole notion that we're exciting, and how do we spend more money? Well obviously you blew your wad that you inherited. You blew it all because six years later, we're back in debt the same level we were in 2007. And it's right in your books. It's right in their own books, Mr. Speaker.

So now they've got to figure out a way they can get more money to continue hoodwinking the people of Saskatchewan, and the best way to do it is sell off the Crowns. The second best way to do it is create P3s and punt that debt down the road. And, Mr. Speaker, that is the conservative way of dealing with people of Saskatchewan, and that's why for years, Mr. Speaker, for years they languished in opposition.

And my prediction is, this particular bill and that particular effort to sell off Information Services Corporation and the Premier's musing about the other Crown corporations, the people of Saskatchewan are going to start paying attention. And this is not what they campaigned on. The Sask Party, like a cute little kitten, didn't say nothing in a corner about the Crowns during the election campaign, Mr. Speaker. They didn't say a word.

And for the minister to come along and start saying, oh we talked about it on the floor of the Assembly . . . That's why you guys think it's a secret. We've been talking about it on the floor of the Assembly. You were talking about it on the floor of the Assembly after the election — after the election.

So now the Information Services Corporation is being prepared for sale under Bill 95. And that's the first step, Mr. Speaker. That is the first step of the formula for failure that the Sask Party government is prescribing to the future growth and stability and opportunity that the people of Saskatchewan expect from their government, and the province of Saskatchewan certainly deserves better, Mr. Speaker.

So Bill 95, as the minister alluded to, is a complementary bill to quite frankly separate the private information from Information Services Corporation to eHealth so that there's all the rules and regulations to put that process into place. That's what this bill is. But clearly as he indicated, that this is a complementary effort as a bill to support Bill 69, which talks about the sale of

Information Services Corporation, Mr. Speaker.

Now the other point I'll raise, Mr. Speaker . . . This is not just one example. I'll give you another example about the private liquor stores that they certainly are beginning to implement, Mr. Speaker. It is my prediction and it's certainly my bold prediction that the Sask Party government will do anything to position those private-run stores, the liquor stores, to be very successful. Why, Mr. Speaker? Because they want those private stores to be so successful that the next time they want to sell off a public-owned liquor store which generates a lot of profits for the people, then they can argue, well look, it makes more money privately than it does publicly. That's what they want to argue.

But, Mr. Speaker, the fault and the faulty thinking from the Tories on this one is they're giving the private liquor stores an additional 16 or 17 per cent marketing edge. They're giving them a 16 or 17 per cent break on some of their costs. So the other people — and I'm thinking about some of the other folks that may run taverns or people that may run lounges or off-sales — well they don't have that advantage of these three new liquor stores. The government is positioning those privately owned liquor stores to be wildly successful to qualify their effort to sell off all the other liquor stores which generate millions of dollars for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And the problem they have is they're being exposed by some of the other businesses out there that say, well why are these guys, these new guys, setting up these three new stores, have a 16 to 17 per cent advantage over the private sector? Once again they're meddling in the economy.

And the sad part about this all, Mr. Speaker, the sad part about this all is people expect and think that the conservatives know how to build a vibrant economy, Mr. Speaker. Not true. They have failed on every front. And the sale of ISC, as complemented by Bill 95 today, proves to me and proves to a lot of people that their agenda from day one was to sell off the Crowns, to sell off the Crowns, and that's what this bill does, Mr. Speaker. That's what this bill does.

So at the end of the day, you punt down debt down the road for P3s. You come along, and you sell any asset that you have that generates revenue such as ISC. And then you put the province into debt, Mr. Speaker. What does that spell? That spells a lot of trouble for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren down the road. And, Mr. Speaker, that is a crying shame. That's why the people of Saskatchewan do not tolerate things of selling off the Crowns when you clearly said before the elections that they wouldn't do it. And now, Mr. Speaker, you're seeing a number of steps as identified in Bill 95 to accomplish the sale of Information Services Corporation.

And where does that money go once they sell it, Mr. Speaker? Where does that money go? It goes down to doing some more, some more of their debt management planning, Mr. Speaker. And once again they may have a billboard that shows that we're going to do this great work, and then three years later, they're back to where they started. Again there's a lot of confusion that the Sask Party is showing in terms of trying to manage the economy, of trying to manage the finances. People in Saskatchewan just don't buy it. And the opposition don't buy it,

Mr. Speaker.

So let's be very clear. This bill and the next bill that's going to be introduced by the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, clearly positions ISC, Information Services Corporation, that's made \$80 million over the last five years in profit for the people of Saskatchewan, for health care, for highways, for a wide variety of needs, education, Mr. Speaker, all those needs — \$80 million. And guess what, Mr. Speaker? That money's now going to the private sector.

And what price, what price is going to be accepted by the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker? Is it going to be a very promising price? The people of Saskatchewan don't even know that discussion is happening because they've never ever had that experience before. And now they're having the experience because the Sask Party is hell bent on privatizing our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. I want to be very, very clear . . .

**The Speaker:** — I would like to ask the member to be very careful about his use of language. He used some unparliamentary language there and needs to apologize and retract it. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I apologize and I withdraw that comment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the thing that really, really is important to the people of Saskatchewan is Bill 95 and the next complementary bill are positioning Information Services Corporation to be sold. That's what this bill is and the next bill. It is going to be sold, Mr. Speaker. And the people of Saskatchewan are going to find out about it, and they're going to know about it, Mr. Speaker. We are going to make sure, as the opposition, they know this is their first step towards privatization. And they're using the guise of trying to build a brighter future for the province when, Mr. Speaker, they've had that experience and they failed miserably.

So once again, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot more things that I want to say and members of my caucus want to say and the public want to say and New Democrats want to say and the forward-thinking people want to say on the future of our Crowns. And they simply don't trust the Sask Party in handling the future of our Crown corporation.

And this evidence, this evidence today under Bill 95 clearly shows that they do have an agenda. And the whole notion of trying to organize a sale of our Crowns by stealth, now it's fully blown. It's fully open. This is what they intend to do, Mr. Speaker. And the NDP are calling them on it, Mr. Speaker, and they're telling the people of Saskatchewan, they betrayed your trust on the future of the Crown corporations, and Bill 95 is another nail in the coffin of our Crown corporations. And I hope the people of Saskatchewan wake up and toss the Sask Party government out of office for their betrayal on the future of our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker.

We have a lot more we want to say on this, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot more people who are going to get engaged, and this is the first stage of what I think is going to be a huge fight coming up to the next election when the people of Saskatchewan are going to be asked the question, who do you

trust with the future of the Crown corporations? The Sask Party government who are on their way of selling all the Crown corporations? Or the New Democratic Party that's going to protect the Crown corporations and not punt debt down to the future generations as the Sask Party is doing under their P3 scheme? So on that notion, Mr. Speaker, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 95.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 95, *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 96 — *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Consequential Amendments Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant des modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Act****

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I hereby rise today to move second reading of the office of the public registry statutes consequential amendments Act, 2013.

This Act makes amendments to certain bilingual Acts related to *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Act*. The changes to *The Co-operatives Act, 1996*, *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995* are made to make uniform the appointment, fee, and transition provisions between several Acts formerly administered by ISC as a Crown corporation. The amendments to *The Vital Statistics Act, 2009* reflect that this registry will not be operated by ISC under a service agreement, and that instead it will be transferred from ISC to eHealth Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of the office of public registry statutes consequential amendments Act, 2013.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 96, *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am once again pleased to stand up and offer initial comments about this particular bill. And as I mentioned at the outset when we spoke about the privatization of the Information Services Corporation, Mr. Speaker, this bill certainly complements the parent bill or the major bill, Bill 69, which talks about the sale of Information Services Corporation.

And I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that from our perspective, when we began the process of privatizing liquor stores, we began the process of looking for a sale of Information Services Corporation. When we began the process of privatizing some of SaskTel's services, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan really thought that the Sask Party wouldn't do any of these things. And, Mr. Speaker, there's proof in the pudding. There's

very clear evidence today that the sale of investment . . . or Information Services Corporation is well under way, and this particular bill, Bill 96, is once again a complementary bill to achieve that particular plan. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan are going to find this out very, very quickly, and they're going to have a huge sense that they had been betrayed by the Sask Party when it comes to the future of the Crowns.

And, Mr. Speaker, what's really more important is that the conscience of the sale of ISC as identified in this particular bill, this bill that we're talking about right now, the sale of Information Services Corporation and the whole process to sell off all our Crowns is going to be on the conscience of the people that are advocating, and that is the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. Why would they sell something of significant value to the people of Saskatchewan? Bill 96 clearly once again positions the Government of Saskatchewan to be able to hive off information of the private nature from Investment Saskatchewan to prepare Investment Saskatchewan . . . or sorry, Information Services Corporation for sale, Mr. Speaker. That is the end objective of this particular bill.

And the people of Saskatchewan would simply say that the Sask Party ought to be ashamed of themselves for (a) allowing this process to go under . . . to go along as long as it has; and secondly is to not be clear with the public during the campaign, the election campaigns. They didn't mention once that they ever had a plan to privatize Information Services Corporation. And lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, here we are in the middle of their second term, and now they begin the process of selling off the Crowns. Why? Because it gives them a little bit of separation between the next election and the past election and, Mr. Speaker, they figure maybe we can fool the people of Saskatchewan one more time on this front. And the opposition, we're going to let people know that the process has begun.

And the last time they tried to sell off the Crowns, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact that they had a lot of support throughout Saskatchewan, was 2003 when the people of Saskatchewan had a referendum on the future of the Crown corporations, and that referendum was called an election. And, Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan clearly stated that they don't want their Crowns messed with. They don't want any meddling in their Crown corporations. And above all else, they don't want the Crown corporations sold because the Crown corporations are owned by the people of Saskatchewan. They generate dividends. They create high-value jobs, Mr. Speaker. And these are some of the values of the Crown corporations of the province of Saskatchewan. And yet, Mr. Speaker, the Tories across the way simply want to sell . . .

[Interjections]

[15:00]

**The Speaker:** — I was listening carefully to the member in his comments, and he seemed to be indicating a political party opposite which is not the name of the political party opposite that he referred to. So I would caution the member to use the proper political names rather than his preferred ones. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that the

whole notion of the privatization of the Crowns, Mr. Speaker, people in Saskatchewan know this is going to happen. And I indicated at my earlier comments, if you look at how the Sask Party has been managing the economy, Mr. Speaker, the economy has been moving along very well. The economy has . . . [inaudible] . . . because, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is an exciting place to be, Mr. Speaker, in spite of the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker.

And I can remember the member from Kindersley was talking about the projections of potash and how at one time he was almost \$2 billion off, you know, Mr. Speaker. So the point is, the point that we're trying to make is that if he's \$2 billion off the mark on potash revenues, Mr. Speaker, then my question, I would point out to the people of Saskatchewan, how could we actually trust them to manage the economy and manage the finances of our province when the minister of economic development is only — what? — \$2 billion off the mark.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's only 2 billion that he's off the mark, and yet today they expect us to have confidence in a right wing government that is really quite frankly trying to hoodwink people when it comes to the management of their Crowns and the future growth of our province and, Mr. Speaker, managing the finances of our province for years to come.

The sale of Information Services Corporation is wrong. You shouldn't be selling any Crown corporation. The people of Saskatchewan didn't give you the mandate to sell our Crown corporations, so you shouldn't be doing that. The people of Saskatchewan said, no. The people of Saskatchewan have said, no, we want to keep our Crown corporations and public ownership because people from La Loche, people from Kindersley, people from Creighton, we all have ownership of SaskPower. We all have ownership of SaskTel. We all have ownership of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], and we all have ownership of Information Services Corporation. And each of these Crowns, each of these Crowns generate revenues. Each of these Crowns create high paying, really high-skilled jobs. They attract people here to make Saskatchewan stronger, Mr. Speaker.

But the Tories, Mr. Speaker, quite frankly are trying to come along, and they're trying to confuse the issue and say, look, we need to sell our Crowns because we're having some financial difficulties. And they're trying to guise the sale of Information Services Corporation as necessary for the future success of our province. And that is not true, Mr. Speaker, not in the least bit.

So I'll tell the people of Saskatchewan this. I want to recap because I'm given the opportunity through Bill 96, Mr. Speaker. I want to recap. So when the Saskatchewan Party government took over office in 2007, they had \$2.3 billion in the bank left to them by the former NDP government. Not only did they have \$2.3 billion in the bank, Mr. Speaker; they had a booming economy, Mr. Speaker. And not only did they have a booming economy; they had a rapidly growing population. So everything that was going so great for the province, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party, the Sask Party inherited that.

So now after six months of being in office, they took out these big billboards saying, oh we paid down debt by 40 per cent. Well, Mr. Speaker, you know why they paid down the debt 40

per cent? Because they had the money in the bank left to them by the NDP.

So now, six years later, they're back to debt, where we were when they took over office. Once again they're back to the debt, to the debt where they were since they took over office. So now what do they do? What do the right wingers do? Well let's start selling off assets. They sold off social housing, Mr. Speaker. They sold off the social housing units, kicked out the low-income people out of their homes in the city and said, we're selling off these assets. Good luck to you; we hope you make it. Mr. Speaker, wrong to do that, wrong to do that.

The second thing they've done, Mr. Speaker, now is they looked at how they're going to sell off and privatize SaskTel, and how they're going to turn around and they're going to sell off other . . . the liquor stores as an example, Mr. Speaker. They're selling off the liquor stores. And not only are they selling off the liquor stores; they're giving these new, private liquor stores a 17 per cent advantage over the existing private sector liquor stores, Mr. Speaker. How does that work? The reason why they're going to do that, they're going to do that, Mr. Speaker, because they want to prove, even if they have to artificially prove it, that a private liquor store can make good money.

Well, Mr. Speaker, that private liquor store can make good money (a) if it's for themselves, and (b) if they're given a 17 per cent advantage over other competitors, Mr. Speaker, that are in the same business as them. So how is that the right thing to do, Mr. Speaker? How is that the right thing to do? It is not the right thing to do.

And once again Information Services Corporation, this particular bill, Bill 96, it is preparing Information Services Corporation for sale, Mr. Speaker. And every single member of the Sask Party ought to be ashamed of themselves for allowing this process to proceed to the point it is today because they never asked for the mandate. They didn't tell the people of Saskatchewan before the last election they were going to do this, Mr. Speaker. And they're still insisting on trying to do this by stealth.

And this is one more example, Mr. Speaker, of bit by bit, bit by bit, they are debasing, they are weakening, and they're selling off bits and parts of our Crown corporations in the hope that nobody notices. Well, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party ought to be put on notice today that the people of Saskatchewan are going to start paying notice to what you're doing, and the opposition is going to make sure that people of Saskatchewan know exactly what's your plans.

Once again, selling off ISC is wrong. You shouldn't do it. You never got the mandate to do it. You're doing this at the detriment of the future of Saskatchewan. And they ought to be ashamed of themselves, Mr. Speaker. They ought to be totally ashamed of themselves because this is not what the people of Saskatchewan asked for. They didn't ask for that . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Now some guy's chirping over there. I don't know what that individual, where he's from, Mr. Speaker, because I never hear him at all in the Assembly.

But I'll say this. I'll say this. The people of Saskatchewan better

go to every single, every single Sask Party MLA and tell them, why are you selling off our liquor stores? Why are you selling off bits and parts of SaskTel? Why are you selling off Information Services Corporation? You never got the mandate to do that, and they ought to be ashamed of themselves.

And every single forward-thinking person, put it in their mind that the Saskatchewan Party government has betrayed your trust on the Crown corporations. And Bill 96 simply asserts that they're going to do this, Mr. Speaker. It's as plain as this document, Mr. Speaker. They are on the road, and they're on their way to sell off Information Services Corporation. And we're going to tell absolutely everybody throughout Saskatchewan that this is their plan. And we're going to let the people know, Mr. Speaker, we're going to let the people know exactly what the Sask Party is up to, and that is selling off Crown corporations that generate jobs and profit for our children and grandchildren because, Mr. Speaker, they have ruined our financial position. They have put us so deep in debt, they have no other option today to start selling off assets like our Crown corporations.

And, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more to say about this particular bill. All our caucus does. We're encouraging organizations out there to get active. We're asking the voting public to pay attention to what the Sask Party is doing to their Crowns as evidenced in Bill 96, Mr. Speaker, and to show very, very close attention to the language they use on the future of our Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker. And that's what's really important, is that people of Saskatchewan don't know the Sask Party has a hidden agenda to sell off the Crowns. They have the hidden agenda. And once more 96, Bill 96 is evidence of that plan, Mr. Speaker.

So they can laugh and giggle from their seats, Mr. Speaker. They think it's funny. They think it's funny that we're debasing a great Crown corporation, and they think it's funny that . . .

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

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — With leave to introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to the members of the Assembly, four constituents of Melville-Saltcoats, but more importantly they're also a reeve and councillors from the RM [rural municipality] of Churchbridge.

Maybe they can give me a wave when, give us a wave when I mention their names. Neil Mehrer is the reeve of Churchbridge. David Zerr is councillor. Kenny Waldherr is councillor. And George Haas, I think many are familiar with, is also a

councillor from the RM of Churchbridge.

Mr. Speaker, I might also add that on Friday night, I had the good fortune of going to a ratepayers' banquet in the RM of Churchbridge. And of course it's just over the hundredth-year anniversary of the RM of Churchbridge, so it was partly the celebrations to do with that, but also the acknowledgement of the good work the council does out there. So I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to their legislature.

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

## SECOND READINGS

**Bill No. 96 — *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Consequential Amendments Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Act****  
(continued)

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too want to welcome on behalf of the opposition, the members that are joining us today, the folks from the RM of Churchbridge. And there's no question, Mr. Speaker, it's always important to have people join us in their Assembly so they're able to witness some of the discussions and some of the issues that are raised in this Assembly.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'll go back to my point on Bill 96. I think it's important that the people of Saskatchewan again pay very close attention. Now some of the folks that are chirping from their chairs, you know, and they kind of giggle and laughing over there when we talk about some of the job losses that might occur if the ISC is turned over to the private sector. And what's more important, Mr. Speaker, what's more important is where does the profits of the operations of investments services corporation go? It doesn't go back to the taxpayers or programs in Saskatchewan. It goes to the owners, the private people who are friends with the Sask Party. They're the ones who are going to get the profits from Information Services Corporation.

And what's really important too, Mr. Speaker, is that the prices that the new corporation under private ownership will begin to charge our people. And Information Services Corporation, Mr. Speaker, have a variety of services. They have a great lineup of services. That's why they are so profitable. Well guess what? If there is a private firm that owns Information Services Corporation, there's not a thing that any Sask Party MLA can do to stop them if they decide to increase the rates for the services they provide to the people of Saskatchewan. And those rates will increase.

If they are going to invest in Information Services Corporation they are not going to say, well after we buy it off you Sask Party guys, can you guys decide our prices for us? That's not how it works.

The private sector will decide how they are going to charge their customers. They alone decide that, not the government. And that is, Mr. Speaker, a really important point. The future increases in services, there's not a thing that the Sask Party

government can do about it because once it's in private hands, Mr. Speaker, the private sector will decide how they're going to get their money back that they invested in the Information Services Corporation. And they will not let the politicians across the way decide what rate they charge anybody from any RM or any village or any city. They will decide what rate they want to charge because they want to recoup their investment as quickly as they can. And that profit, Mr. Speaker, will not be used for the future growth of our province.

We don't know who is going to buy Information Services Corporation but, rest assured, once again the Sask Party government more than likely will sell this thing to the highest bidder, who may be from eastern Canada, who may be from the States, or who may be from some overseas country, Mr. Speaker. If it's for sale, they want to get the highest bid, and they have no control as to who . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker.

Now the member from Dewdney . . . I'm not sure which constituency he is from, Mr. Speaker. When we brought him in to run, we . . . I think the Sask Party government brought him back from, was it Calgary? And they created a position in SaskTel, the vice-president of some position in SaskTel, to position him to run for the Sask Party in the 2007 election, Mr. Speaker. We paid him triple figures — triple figures for two or three years — and then he jumped in to be the MLA. And the most amazing thing is, that Crown corporation of which he was a vice-president of, they didn't even fill that position after he left. So what it was, it was a holding strategy for some of their candidates to bring him back from Calgary.

So my argument is, we have, we have a million-dollar man right there, Mr. Speaker. A million-dollar man, just to get him to come back to Saskatchewan to run as an MLA, that's what it cost us, through the Crown corporations. So when he chirps from his seat, when he chirps from his seat, I say hello there, million-dollar man. Because that's exactly what it cost us to get him to move back from Calgary.

And I think we got ripped off, Mr. Speaker. I think we got ripped off terribly on that front because the bottom line is, if he was that good as vice president of SaskTel, (a) why didn't they keep him; and secondly, why did they not fill up his position after he left? Because the position was a redundant position. It was a holding pattern for him until he was able to join the Sask Party as a candidate, Mr. Speaker. We know that in this Assembly.

[15:15]

So when we say as MLAs it's going to cost us millions of dollars, we use him as an example of how it costs millions of dollars to add more politicians to this Assembly. Instead of doing the right thing and holding the cost down for politicians, Mr. Speaker, and invest that money into programs and opportunities for our young people, it's very simple: use the opportunities that we have now for the young people. Very simple, it's called sacrifice, Mr. Speaker.

And why would they sacrifice a vibrant, thriving Crown corporation like Information Services Corporation, just to fulfill and to backfill their mismanagement of our economy and our mismanagement of our finances? And, Mr. Speaker, I say today once

again that every Sask Party MLA across the way ought to be ashamed of themselves for proposing this particular bill, to support Bill 69, which sells off Information Services Corporation because (a) they never asked the people of Saskatchewan for that mandate; and more importantly, Mr. Speaker, they betrayed the trust of the people who thought they wouldn't do this once they became government.

And, Mr. Speaker, today is the first day of that rude awakening for the people of Saskatchewan that Sask Party is bent on selling off our Crowns. And they're banked on things like P3s to punt their debt further down the road so our grandchildren pay for that. And I'm asking every Saskatchewan man, woman, and youth to stand up and tell the Sask Party that's not what Saskatchewan wants nor needs. And it's time for them to be very, very loud on that front. So, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more we want to say on this bill, so I move that we adjourn debate on Bill 96.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 96, *The Operation of Public Registry Statutes Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 91

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 91 — The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 91, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Act (No. 2)*. And this is legislation that relates to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, which is a long-standing institution in Saskatchewan.

For people who don't know about this plan, its head office is in Kindersley, and it has provided a method for people in Saskatchewan to invest in a pension plan that allows them to basically have another product available to them. Now it used to be that this pension plan was originally set up to allow for people who didn't have ordinary sources of income or declared income to actually put money into a pension plan. It was especially popular with spouses who weren't working when their other spouse had a pension plan at work.

Unfortunately the federal rules changed and so that forced a change in this pension plan, and so now it is effectively the same as a registered retirement savings plan option. But there are many people who invested money over the years in the plan who have a great deal of respect and trust for the investment

that's there. And they have continued in this plan to have good investments. So over the last couple of years now since the change, it operates effectively the same as a registered retirement savings plan.

Now this particular legislation is being brought forward at this point by the Minister of Finance because the federal government has introduced legislation around pooled registered pension plans. And what this legislation does is effectively give the Saskatchewan Pension Plan the opportunity to set up a special part of their operation that can offer pooled registered pension plans to their existing investors but also to new investors.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the next two bills that I'll be speaking to, Bill 92 and Bill 93 will have more detail about the pooled registered pension plans. But I'll make a few comments here as we proceed around what the Minister of Finance is trying to do in this particular situation.

In Canada there's been debate around how prepared are Canadians for their retirement. And what one looks at is, well what kinds of savings do people have as it relates to a number of different types of investments? We in Canada end up having an old age security system which is basic and general right across the board for everyone, and it's in place and it has been in place for a long time.

Then as a second tier we have the Canada Pension Plan which relates to employment income and gives people the chance to or actually requires people to put aside a certain portion of their income in a Canada Pension Plan on top of the old age security system. The debate over the last decade has been whether the Canada Pension Plan should be expanded because it is a very efficient system. Administratively it doesn't cost a lot of money either for employees or for employers, for companies or businesses that hire people. And that discussion still continues.

The federal government made a choice to not expand the Canada Pension Plan at this time. We had understood that the present Government of Saskatchewan, the Sask Party government, was still in the camp of pushing forward with a request, as many provinces have, for an expansion of the Canada Pension Plan. That was what we understood until we saw the budget documents in this session where it appears that the Minister of Finance has taken a different perspective and is much more in line with the federal Conservatives and Prime Minister Harper.

And so what we have is another third layer of a system which sets up these registered, pooled registered pension plans. And that is a system that probably . . . Well we don't know it's going to cost more than a Canada Pension Plan expansion but it may end up costing slightly less or similar amount to a registered retirement savings plan. So where we have another piece of the system, in some ways you have to also, you know, mention the ability to invest money in tax-free savings accounts as another tool that's available for individuals.

As you can tell from what I've said so far in quite a concise way, this gets to be even more complicated than most people want to understand. Plus it ends up taking money voluntarily and so sometimes when people are short of cash — especially

when they're younger and have all the pressures of, you know, buying a house, children, those kinds of things — they end up saying, well I'll maybe not put money into the pooled pension plan or the RRSP [registered retirement savings plan] because I can maybe have the room later; same with the tax-free savings account.

One of the advantages of expansion of the Canada Pension Plan was that it was compulsory, and it would be something that was clearly there. This whole plan that's part of this bill, Bill 91, is a voluntary plan and it has some, there are some issues around that, the fact that it is voluntary.

So what we have in this legislation is basically, quite simply, the authorization to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan to set up a separate non-profit corporation to administer the pooled registered pension plan. This will clearly cost something to the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, and obviously they'll have to figure out their fees and their costs and spread that over the people who are part of this particular plan.

I know that they're optimistic that they will get enough investors in the plan that it will pay for itself, and I think that that's, you know, I wish them well on that, but it does beg this broader question about whether our national government has made the right choice for Canadians. I think this will continue to be a debate as we move forward to the next federal election. It may be that this whole concept of pooled registered pension plans will continue, but if there is a change of government on the national level, I wouldn't be surprised that it would be complemented with an expansion of the Canada Pension Plan which is I think what the majority of Canadians would like to see happen.

So on this particular legislation, I think that there are some questions, although the practical aspects of it are relatively straightforward. But I know that some of my colleagues are interested in making comments about the legislation, and so at this point I will adjourn debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 91, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

## Bill No. 92

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 92 — The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Act** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 92, *An Act respecting Pooled Registered Pension Plans and making consequential amendments to certain Acts*.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is the legislation presented by the Finance minister to implement the use of a new national government initiative, which is to pool registered pension plans. What happens is that there are certain regulatory issues that have to be dealt with by the provinces as it relates to any federal pension legislation, and what this particular legislation then tries to do is to make sure that Saskatchewan people are protected as it relates to money that they will invest in a pooled registered pension plan.

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the clauses of the Act, Bill No. 92, are quite extensive, but what they do is effectively put in place the rules that protect Saskatchewan people. And so what we have then are basically the regulations that apply to how these pension plans will be used in Saskatchewan. And so what we have is very much something that tries to complement — or mimic I guess maybe is another word — the rules that we have around registered retirement savings plans with the appropriate adjustments to cover this new system.

[15:30]

The new system ends up basically trying to follow rules, so it doesn't get too confusing, but as I had mentioned just a little while ago, when we have these pooled registered pension plans, they're effectively a third- or fourth-tier type of investment for retirement. And so we have at the top ... Well I guess maybe we'd even say fifth. At the top would be just money that you might be able to save that has the tax paid on it so you don't have any worries about it later.

Then you would end up having the old age security as a layer of protection. And for some people with low income, they might get a supplement, but probably not if they're involved in all these other kinds of programs.

Then you have the Canada Pension Plan, which I think most Canadians see as a positive initiative in the country. And I think probably a majority would have preferred that the federal government expanded the Canada Pension Plan rather than introduce the pooled registered pension plan. So you have that layer.

Then you will have registered retirement savings plans, which are good tools for everybody except that you get a deduction when you put the money in. So in other words you don't pay the tax on it when you invest in it, but when you take the money out of a registered retirement savings plan, you have to pay income tax on that money that comes out.

We also then have tax-free savings accounts that have been set up and allow for a certain amount of money to be put into a tax-free savings account. Those have some other rules around them, how they can be used in saving money for specific purposes. They can be used whether for retirement purposes, but they can also be used for other purposes in your own personal life.

And then now we have these pooled registered pension plans which effectively give people in smaller companies the ability to have something similar to large pension plans like you might have if you worked for the province of Saskatchewan or if you work for John Deere or if you work for many of the other larger

companies in the country. And the rules here are such that you'll get those same protections that a regular pension plan would have.

And so when we look at what's in this particular legislation, some of the things that are here relate to what happens if somebody tries to sue you and wants to get access to your money. It sets out the rules of whether or not any of these funds are available for execution, seizure, or attachment, execution being seize it and take the money, and attachment is the old system of grabbing your payments as they come out to pay off a debt. It sets out how the rules apply to that.

It also deals with the question of maintenance and support orders. If you have an obligation to a family member and you haven't been making those payments, it sets out the rules here of how these payments can be attached for that particular purpose. And it also recognizes that any money that would go into a pooled registered pension plan is an asset of an individual and therefore it can be divisible if a person is in a marriage or in a relationship that's covered under *The Family Property Act*, that this can be then divided up according to the rules that we have in the province of Saskatchewan. I don't think there are any special rules other than they want to make it absolutely clear that this isn't a place where you would be protected from the normal rules around division of community property.

So what then goes on is a whole discussion of how the information that's in these particular plans will be protected and what the rules are as it relates to that. And it has a whole appeal procedure which is clearly something that is important for some of the issues that are here. It is quite interesting to note that the regulations section, section 20, has the ability to create regulations. And normally we might have 10 or 12 areas where regulations will be created. This particular legislation, I think, has almost 40 different places where regulations can be created. That may be as a result of trying to anticipate all of the federal government's moves over the next while so that you're going to cover off any possible changes so that they can be done quite quickly as opposed to done in legislation. So I don't necessarily have a problem with it, but it is interesting that this legislation is not exactly simple legislation. It has quite a few complicated parts to it, and that's a recognition that it's a part of Canada's taxation law that we're really dealing with here.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation is legislation that implements federal policy at a provincial level. The Finance minister has indicated that he's wanting to make sure this gets through. I just make the comment that we shouldn't forget the fact that I think the majority of Canadians still want an expansion of the Canada Pension Plan, as it is the more efficient method of saving for retirement and it's one that people know exactly how it works. But in this particular case, I think we support what's being done here, but we still end up having quite a few questions about how it works.

I know that some of my other colleagues want to speak to this particular piece of legislation, and so at this point I will adjourn the debate. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 92. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 93**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 93 — The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Act** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and speak to Bill No. 93, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this is legislation that's being brought forward in this format because we need to amend certain laws of Saskatchewan in both English and in French. And the importance of that is that over the years in Saskatchewan some of our crucial legislation for individuals is bilingual legislation, and so we see here that we have to have the text for the changes of legislation in both English and French. And so the piece of crucial legislation that's most directly affected is in English, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1997*. And what it says is basically that you have to, you know, define the entitlement to the pension and make sure that it can be attached, if required, for payment of support. And that legislation is in both English and French and so there's, in Bill 93 we have the same definition that's going to be included in the French definition. I think this is, you know, obviously important, and it does fit with the long-term plans of the province to have our legislation in both of the official languages of Canada.

I think practically what we have here is a recognition that these pension funds are important for families, but there are certain times where there is a priority that needs to be taken to make sure that maintenance orders are paid, and it deals with how that particular issue is dealt with under *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Act, 1997*.

I know that I don't have too many more comments on this legislation, but I think we'll, I'll end up requesting that debate be adjourned on this one as well so that it can move in conjunction with Bills 91 and 92. So at this point I request that the debate be adjourned. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 93, *The Pooled Registered Pension Plans (Saskatchewan) Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 81**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 81 — The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter a brief discussion here today as it relates to Bill No. 81, *The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act*, and to certainly seek clarity from the minister at the committee level. Committee structure is what I'm looking forward to.

So I'll offer a few brief comments here today. And the opportunity I look forward to is to seek further questions and answers, certainly to I guess put forward questions, seek answers from the minister as it relates to the changes that are put forward for the Global Transportation Hub.

Certainly the hub itself is a concept that has a lot of merit. It's one that's been worked towards for a long period of time, that has the potential to offer strong economic benefits back to the people of Regina and our province. But there's, in the end, there's been many concerns that have arisen as it relates to the management and structure and operation of this Global Transportation Hub under this government. And we need to make sure that with the significant investment that's been made by Saskatchewan people into this hub, into this infrastructure, that we're maximizing our return, that we're receiving the value for dollar that's required, making sure that it's operating in a fair manner with municipalities, with stakeholders across our province. And those are the kinds of questions that I'll be looking to put to the minister and will be looking for answers and responses on those fronts.

What we see in this legislation is another shift from this government to take a lot of control potentially away from local decision makers, from municipalities. We see that in Bill 90 as well where we're seeking further clarity, where we certainly see the potential for a very heavy hand from government. And we need to make sure that government works in a democratic fashion, in a co-operative fashion, one that works with our municipalities and understands the pressures and priorities that they're working towards and making sure that the investments that are being made by the people of this province are there to benefit all of Saskatchewan and certainly an entire region.

This decision takes full control of this public asset, something that's been invested in by Saskatchewan people in a massive way. We need to continue to seek from this government the total investment that's been placed into the Global Transportation Hub, not just on the site but also all the related infrastructure, to make sure that it's being managed in a fashion that's representing value for money and making sure that it's serving the best interests of the taxpayer's dollar and the people of our province.

It's interesting to see legislation move forward that gives this government, gives that independent authority full control of all land use planning, full control of governance structure and subdivision planning, approval planning — all the aspects that

are done in a traditional sense through democratic governments, through local governments and now taken under full control by this independent authority. And I think many people may ask when they look at these changes, would ask who this new structure under this government is accountable to. And maybe we'll . . . Those are the types of questions we'll be bringing to committee.

[15:45]

But certainly we need to make sure that this hub that has taken significant investment from the people of this province is offering the benefit back that it should to people and to the region from an economic perspective, as well as from a perspective as it relates to the organization of infrastructure. We need to make sure that it's listening and reflective of the needs of the municipalities, both certainly the city of Regina as well the rural municipality, and the broader interests of the province. And the comments by the minister as it related to the introduction of this bill certainly haven't delayed any potential concerns on that front.

Not only is this a bill that places this hub, that's been paid for by the people of Saskatchewan with their tax dollars, into full control of this government in a fashion that can certainly be, certainly has caused some concerns around its democratic accountability, but it also does so in a fashion that takes that information of that hub and potentially makes that information secret and private, exempting it from freedom of information requests, not making it a government entity or that can be called upon with the freedom of information requests by the people of this province, which denies the access to what should be argued was public information and available to the public.

So there's been a presentation that's been put forward, a request by the Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner on this front to make sure that this legislation is amended to ensure that freedom of information requests will occur or can occur as it relates to this hub. And certainly that's something that we see as being certainly very important because not only does this government with the change in legislation take control of this entity that's been paid for with taxpayers' dollars, full control, they now are driving into secrecy the decisions of that entity and as well the information of that entity.

And we need not look much further then the IPAC [International Performance Assessment Centre for geologic storage of CO<sub>2</sub>] affair of this government, where it entered into funding circumstances that have huge questions on value for money, huge questions as it relates to waste of taxpayers' dollars, and no level of accountability from that government that we need to understand why it's in the best interests of the public to have access to the information as it relates to the entities that they've paid for, that they have purchased with their tax dollars, Mr. Speaker.

We need to as well make sure, as I say, that the total investment into this hub is quantified by this government. And that's not simply the development of the site itself. It's also the development of related infrastructure, from highways and bypass infrastructure, and by all partners, whether that be Crown corporations or municipal governments or the provincial government itself, and just how many millions of dollars have

been invested into this infrastructure, and is it being managed and organized in a way that's offering the return that it should to Saskatchewan people.

Are Saskatchewan people receiving the value for money that they should from something that was a strong concept worked towards for many years, but certainly now in its operation leaves many questioning whether or not it's delivering the value for money that it should, making sure that it's deriving the benefit that it needs to for the region, for the city, for the municipalities; making sure that it's respectful in its relationships in doing so and ensuring that it's not undermining municipal planning, infrastructure planning, or the benefits that are important to our city, to our municipalities, and to the people of the region; and it's also making sure that it's operating in a fair way as it relates to ensuring it's not undermining the commercial investment, commercial interests of the region. And these are questions we can certainly put to the minister, and we'll be looking for information or actions of this minister to respond to these questions.

So it's fair to say that we have concerns with the operation of this hub and the direction of this hub under this government. We certainly see merit in the model, have supported the concept, but we need to make sure that we are getting it right. We need to make sure that the economic model is sustainable and that it's delivering for Saskatchewan people in the way that it should. And there's pretty valuable questions and concerns that people are asking as it relates to, as I say, their investment, their tax dollar in this hub.

We also, you know, have to recognize that there is other pressures and challenges that this government's facing with this hub. Of course there's the expropriation of land that has resulted in lawsuits, Mr. Speaker. And I don't know the full detail on those lawsuits; we'll certainly clarify some of that at the committee level. But certainly it's asserted by individuals that government came in and dealt with them in a less than fair way in expropriating their land and in controlling the designation and classification of that land. And the case that they put forward is that they've then been denied the market value for that land.

And of course when land is being expropriated, it's not something that's done in a co-operative fashion. It's not by their choice. And I believe, in the range that's been put forward by way of the loss to, potential loss to those that have land expropriated has certainly been shared, has been a significant range, I believe, being paid for land as it's been related to me for — I'm not sure we'll seek from the minister the detail on this — but a price per acre anyways that's far less than they would assert would be its full market value. So we'll make sure we seek answers from this minister on this front.

Certainly, as I say, there's various concerns that we need to make sure are addressed. And it does represent, as I say, some concerns that seem to be emerging with this government that seems to be interested in taking control over decisions that are, in many cases and really in all cases, best left to those locally elected decision makers, decisions around regional planning where there's a role for government to organize and co-operate.

But it seems that with Bill 90, this government seems to be

bringing a very heavy, heavy hand to the table and taking a lot of control away from municipalities, and in this case taking full control of an entity, and in fact, as I say, taking full control of land use planning, of municipal planning, of governance structures that are otherwise made by elected individuals, leaving so many asking, who is this structure accountable to? So keeping in mind that this has been a structure that's been built by the people of Saskatchewan with their tax dollars, there's good questions to bring to the minister on this front. And we'll be seeking that sort of information at the committee structure.

And certainly we urge the minister to make sure they're working to bring forward the changes that are required to ensure that information will be accessible to the people of Saskatchewan, that they're not denied that access to that information, that freedom of information requests will be allowable and that that's supported through the legislation, something it's currently not.

Because certainly in a structure that's so . . . that's removing the control from municipal leaders, that's removing democratic levers, we need to make sure that Saskatchewan people have access to the information around their investment and the return on their dollars.

At this point in time, I will not offer any further questions or comment to this legislation, other than to say that for all parties, all stakeholders that have questions, that have concerns with, as it relates to this legislation, not to hesitate to connect directly with the opposition and certainly the minister, to bring forward those concerns, those questions. And we'll do our best to seek clarity through the committee structure that'll be ahead of us. At this point in time, I have nothing further to say as it relates to Bill 81.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question? The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of the Economy that Bill No. 81, *The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

### Bill No. 83

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 83 — The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act** be now

read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it's my pleasure today to rise to speak to Bill No. 83, which is *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*. An interesting bill, and one I think that certainly is timely in consideration of the activities that are taking place within the province these days in relation to foreign workers.

The minister in his comments indicated that this is the first of its kind in Canada. And I would say with the growth of foreign workers coming into Saskatchewan and the success of the immigrant nominee program, which he highlights in his comments as well, is certainly something that is required to protect innocent and vulnerable people when they come here seeking a better life, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The minister indicated that the number of nominees in the nominee program grew from 200 nominations in 2005 to 4,000 annually now.

And that's a very significant growth and obviously an indication of the success of the program itself, where immigrants were given opportunities to move here to Saskatchewan and to ensure that their families came as well, which was much the same for when my grandpa moved here in 1909 and his parents came out later. And then his wife, who was my grandma, eventually moved out as well. So it's something that I think that we can be proud of. It's a sign of growth in the economy and a sign of growth in our province. And we need those workers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We see the shortages in many industries right now and the demand from employers.

But of course when people come from a foreign country, especially where they don't speak the language here, the predominant language of English, where they aren't familiar with our customs and our ways of life, they are very vulnerable. So this type of bill that is established to protect them is something that's very timely and very responsible on the part of this government.

There's a number of interesting aspects in the bill. First of all, it's not entirely clear which minister is going to be responsible for this bill yet. So we don't know yet what ministry will end up with the responsibility. Currently it was introduced by the Ministry of the Economy. And the minister himself, in the first definition section of the bill, the minister is responsible is described in clause (n) and the definition there reads:

**“minister”** means the member of Executive Council to whom for the time being the administration of this Act is assigned.

So at this point in time, we don't know which ministry will be responsible for it, but I guess that will bear through once the Executive Council passes an order after the bill is passed. So it's a bit unfortunate we don't know which ministry will be responsible for it, but that's the way the bill has been drafted.

Another important definition in this bill is definition (q), recruitment services, and these describe the types of services

that foreign nationals or employers use to obtain a foreign national to come and work in Saskatchewan. And I think most of us are familiar with those types of companies.

Certainly I've talked to some of them since I've been elected, and we understand the difficulties that these services often have with placing foreign nationals in employment here in Saskatchewan. But there's a fairly extensive definition of what those services are because this Act circulates a lot around the types of activities that those services would provide to foreign nationals or employers.

And part II of the new bill, there's the establishment of the director. And again it depends on what ministry will be responsible, but this minister will appoint the director. And the director then is responsible for establishing the new registry under this Act, so it's another public registry. We're not sure whether this is something ISC will be responsible for as a registry, or if it will remain within the government responsibilities. But at this point there's nothing in the Act that describes where the registry will be managed. I'll get into those clauses in a bit, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Part III talks a lot about how and when people in Saskatchewan can provide services for foreign workers and what kinds of fees they can charge. So the first thing in part III it sets out is who must have a licence. No one in Saskatchewan will be able to hold themselves out as a recruiter or a consultant or provide any kind of immigration services unless they get a licence. So that's the new regime that's being created by this Act.

[16:00]

Secondly, it doesn't apply if you're involved in recruitment services to find foreign nationals. It won't apply to a number of people. You don't have to have a licence if you're doing it for your own business, or if you're doing it for free, or if you're doing it on behalf of a government or municipality, or if you're doing it on behalf of a post-secondary educational institution, or prescribed classes of persons which would be established under regs after the bill is passed, or people who are exempted by an order of the minister. So obviously there's some discretion on the part of the government, but by and large if you are . . . You don't need to get one of these licences to provide the services if you're doing it for your own workplace or you're doing it for free or for a public institution basically.

And that same rules apply to immigration services as well. So recruitment would deal with getting a job, and immigration would obviously deal with relocating a person here with the proper immigration papers. And in that case if you are a lawyer, you do not have to have a licence either. Or someone who's doing it for free or representing somebody under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act*, those people don't require licences either.

So it goes on in section 5 to establish that "Only an individual is eligible to be issued a licence as a foreign worker recruiter or immigration consultant." And there's a number of sections that deal with how the licences will be issued and the terms and conditions of the licence: how they will be amended or suspended or cancelled and what the effect of the suspension or cancellation is. So that's part III of the Act.

Part IV goes on to describe how employers can recruit foreign nationals, and any employer who wants to recruit foreign nationals must have a certificate of registration. So this is a new requirement on employers. They must obtain a certificate of registration unless there's some exemptions, and that again is prescribed classes of employers or employers that are exempted by an order of the minister. So there is an out for the minister, and there is some discretion through the regulatory process to exempt certain employers from this requirement. But basically the way it stands right now, unless there is regulations applied or on an order of the minister, there's no employer in Saskatchewan who can recruit foreign nationals for employment without a certificate of registration.

So I think the point of this is to ensure that there's a clear disclosure on the part of any employer who is recruiting foreign nationals that they are in that business, they are actively doing that, and that they are disclosing themselves to the government. If they don't, they'll be subject to the penalties and fines that are found later on in the bill.

And again there is a number of clauses that, in this part IV, that deal with the nuts and bolts of registration. And the new director, whoever that will be, will be responsible for monitoring that.

Part V of the new bill is called the prohibited practices and standards of service, and there's a number of prohibited practices in here. And I think is something that the public really needs to pay attention to and be aware of because this is what you cannot do or can do if you are a consultant or a recruiter of foreign workers or immigrants in Saskatchewan. And I'm just going to read them off because there's about one, two, three, seven of them that are in this clause. So:

No foreign worker recruiter, employer or immigration consultant shall:

- (a) produce or distribute false or misleading information;
- (b) take possession of or retain a foreign national's passport or other official documents or property.

And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, just pausing there, we hear stories of other countries where someone goes to work as a foreign national and they have to turn their passport over to the employer. And I've heard that in other jurisdictions, particularly nanny services and things where the workers are vulnerable. So this clause is very important, I think, that no one can secure someone's passport. That's just not allowed.

The third clause, "(c) misrepresent employment opportunities . . ." So, including things like the position, the duties, the length of employment, wages and benefits. So you can't make promises you can't keep. As an employer or a recruiter, you can't lie. You can't tell and encourage somebody to come without holding true to those terms.

The other thing you can't do is threaten. This is:

- (d) threaten deportation or other action for which there is no lawful cause.

Using the threat of deportation can be very, very threatening to a vulnerable foreign national or immigrant, and this Act makes it very clear that you can't do that.

Finally . . . Or sorry, there's three more:

- (e) contact a foreign national or . . . [their] family or friends after being requested not to do so . . .

So again, I think if a foreign national comes here for some reasons of their own, the employer cannot contact their family if they've been asked not to do so.

- (f) [says] take action against or threaten to take action against a person for participating in an investigation . . . [under this law.]

And finally, no recruiter, employer, or immigration consultant can:

- (g) take unfair advantage of a foreign national's trust or exploit a foreign national's fear or lack of experience or knowledge."

So again, we're dealing with very vulnerable people here, and those people who have power or control over them are prohibited from doing all of these things that could take advantage of these vulnerable immigrants and new Canadians.

Section 23 deals with a recruitment fee. And the only people that can be charged a fee for recruitment is the employer, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and not the employee, so I think that's a very important clause. And then there's a number of clauses that require disclosure of those fees and licences. So again I think these are important provisions that are going to be helpful in the case where foreign workers are being exploited.

For example clause 27 has a number of requirements for what has to be in the contract. The contract has to be in writing, and that's very important, is to have . . . not have verbal contracts. We see what happens I think in even in the case of sole-source contracts that this government has entered into, that it's important that it be in writing, it be written in clear and unambiguous language, and that it states clearly what the terms will be, what the services are going to be, and all of those factors.

Again, you know, I know when people don't speak the language that the contract's in, I'm not sure if this is enough protection for these vulnerable workers. But at least it's in law, and it's encapsulated in law so that there is an avenue for these foreign workers if they get in trouble and get some good advice from people who understand the law, then they may be able to avail themselves of the law at that point. I don't know that they would know at the point of arriving in Canada that they have these rights, but certainly and hopefully through the services provided by the government and the state, they would have access to that kind of protection.

The next, part VI, sets up the registry. Section 30 says that the director shall establish and maintain a registry that contains information respecting the licences and the employees that are registered. Under part IV, there's no name for this registry, so

we don't know what it's going to be called. But I assume it would be the foreign worker recruiter and immigrant consultant registry. It's a long name, but that seems to be . . . That's the heading that we find in section 30. So we will now have a new registry here in the province that has the names of all these consultants and recruiters and employers, and it will be published in any way that the director feels is appropriate. So that will all be made available publicly.

I think the part that's probably most important in this bill is the part VII where we get into the enforcement procedures that will ensure that people follow the law. Division 2 of that part talks about inspections and investigations. And I think this is the crunch here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. With these types of bills, you create a new registry. You create a director. You have a really nice law with a lot of provisions to protect these vulnerable workers. But the question is, where is the money and support behind it?

We've seen this government cut the public service by 15 per cent in the last four years. This kind of investigatory work is going to require resources and staff, and that's the one thing the minister didn't talk about in his comments, is what kind of staff and what kind of financial support this government is willing to put behind this registry and behind the director to ensure that the inspections and the investigations described in division 2 are going to be able to be done. And we see it with the things like the inspections that the Sask Water Security Agency has to do when it comes to illegal flooding, and we know that they're behind six months to a year and that they just don't have the staff they need to make those kinds of investigations.

So unless this government is willing to put the proper funding and support into the investigations and inspections and the work of the director and the new registry, it will just be good words on paper, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So we'll certainly be looking very closely into that once this service gets . . . once this registry is established. And then we'll see. The proof is in the pudding as I often say. And this is something where we have a fairly well-written-out concept here, and this law presents a nice framework. But whether or not it'll be helpful depends on how much support the director has from the government in terms of the investigations and the inspections.

Section 36 is the inspection section. It has a number of things that the director can do, very comparable to a lot of other investigations and inspections in different kinds of bills where people have the authority to do those types of things, and I won't get into detail on that.

Section 37 is the investigations process. And this is where the director can actually go to a judge and get a warrant for search and seizure, very powerful types of powers that are being given here to the director. And so these warrants allow the director to enter and stop, search vehicles, open . . . For example in clause 37(2)(c) the director can, with a warrant, can open and examine the contents within any trunk, box, bag, parcel, closet, cupboard or other receptacle, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So there's a lot of things that the director will be able to do under this bill.

And in fact he can go in without a warrant. And you don't see this very often, this very discretionary power being given to a public official. But in section 37(3)(b) the director can go in

without a warrant if he believes that for example that there'll be loss, removal, or destruction of evidence. So he can just walk into an employer's place of work if he believes and has reasonable grounds to believe that if he doesn't go in today, right now, that the evidence that that employer has will be destroyed. He can actually go in and do that without a warrant. So it's a very broad power that's being given here.

Division 3 deals with the offences and penalties associated with infractions under the Act, and there's a number of things — at least eight or nine — that are described in section 40 as the type of offences. But basically they have to co-operate with the director. They have to provide any information that the director requires. They can't destroy records. They can't fail to produce records or provide assistance or unlawfully obstruct or interfere with the director. So there's a number of things that they cannot do there.

And of course if they aren't . . . if they are providing . . . If they are not acting with a licence or a — I forget the other term — a licence or if they're not registered, then they are also subject to fines under the Act. So if an individual is guilty of an offence under the Act, it's a \$50,000 fine. And if it's a corporation, it can be up to \$50,000 that is . . . And in the case of a corporation, it'd be up to \$100,000. So there's a significant fine that is associated with failing to comply.

Division 4 goes into enforcement. And the minister indicated in his opening comments that the initial impetus behind the bill and the way the director will carry out his or her activities is to work on education first. And so although the director has all these extraordinary punitive powers and investigative powers, part VII deals with the decisions, hearings, and appeals.

And I think section 48 is the one to look at if people are interested in this law, where the director has, once he's decided he's going to investigate one of these hearings or one of the activities of an employer or an immigration consultant, they can, they have to . . . the director has to provide written notice of his or her intended action and the reasons. And then the person that receives the direction has an opportunity to write back to the director and saying why the director shouldn't take that action. And so the director has a lot of discretion within section 48 in determining whether or not he or she will proceed with the action that he is intending to deal with. The rest of the section deals with things like reconsideration, appeals, and this kind of a decision of the director can be appealed to the Court of Queen's Bench of Saskatchewan.

And then finally part IX deals with the regulatory authority that I referred to earlier. There's a number of things for which the Lieutenant Governor in Council, the Executive Council can make regulations. And that's basically the guts of this bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So although . . . As I indicated in the outset, this type of bill is new. It's innovative. It's something I think that will provide a good support for vulnerable foreign nationals and immigrants who come here at our invitation or at an employer's invitation to be part of this economy in Saskatchewan. However until we know what kind of financial support the government can provide to the director in the support of his or her investigations and the necessary work to give teeth to the bill, we'll see how

successful it is.

[16:15]

So at that point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know other of my colleagues would like to speak to this bill as well. It was just introduced very recently here. I guess, sorry, it was introduced in December. But there are definitely other ones of my colleagues who want to speak to this. And my only concern at this point is how this government will implement the bill. So that's something we won't know until after the fact once it's passed. So I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 83.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 83, *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 89

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 89 — *The Creative Saskatchewan Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter debate as it relates to Bill No. 89, *The Creative Saskatchewan Act* here this afternoon. Certainly in one context this bill certainly speaks to the creative individuals that make their lives all across our province — the entrepreneurs, the artists that really tell our story, enrich our province in so many ways. And it speaks to both those individuals that have worked to develop their craft, their skill, their art, and that they share it with community and with others and with our world.

It also highlights many entrepreneurs, many businesses that have worked so effectively to take that product that we're all so proud of to market. And certainly we're supportive of supporting structures that support further enhancement of that activity, that marketing.

When I look at this piece of legislation, it looks to organize a structure that will serve the creative industries, some of the creative industries from a marketing perspective. And certainly on that front we're supportive of supporting those efforts. What we need to do though is make sure that, as a government, and that that government is understanding of the unique nature of each of the different industries that it's impacting, the various arts and industries for which this bill impacts and ensures that it doesn't deal with it in a catch-all sort of approach, and I think that's a flaw of this piece of legislation.

But certainly having a government put forward some initiatives to work with our artists, with our industries to enhance the marketing of those works that are produced here in Saskatchewan is something that we would be supportive of. So

this bill where it's drawn critique has been that, hasn't consulted with all industries, I understand, necessarily in a fashion that they feel was adequate. But also maybe treats all industries in very similar fashion as opposed to understanding the unique nature of each of the arts.

It also speaks to and it uses the words film in this piece of legislation and that's an area for which we see a significant separation between us and the current government, the official opposition New Democrats and the current government. And I see it as distasteful too for a minister or for government to suggest that somehow this bill is supporting the film industry here in Saskatchewan when it's that very government that through hasty short-sighted decisions has effectively driven the film industry out of this province. And I know first-hand many, many individuals whose lives were turned upside-down by that decision. Many, many hard-working Saskatchewan people that have been forced out of our province, uprooting families, taking their efforts, their energies, their talents to other jurisdictions. And as well driving away, driving away the investment of many entrepreneurs and businesses that were improving the economic life of our province; hiring individuals, training individuals, and creating a brighter future for many.

So where this bill speaks of Creative Saskatchewan and where its merits in this bill may be as improved marketing for some industries, where its flaws are is that it treats all industries the same, doesn't respect the unique nature of the various industries, and does nothing to address the short-sighted and damaging decision to eliminate the film industry here in Saskatchewan, an industry that has certainly benefited all of Saskatchewan from an economic perspective but also benefited us as a province in being able to highlight our pride as a province, our story as a province, our history, and has added vibrancy to our communities. And in many ways, I know it's that very cultural vibrancy that so many families are looking for within their communities and their province. And it's something that we should continue to aspire to enrich.

And we see a government that's chosen for us at a time of really unprecedented opportunity as a province, for our government, for our province to be less instead of more, Mr. Speaker, to eliminate that cultural vibrancy, those offerings, to eliminate that creative industry, to eliminate that investment and those entrepreneurs, to eliminate those creative, hard-working jobs and the families that are directly impacted, and creating that sense of vibrancy within our communities that adds to the quality of life, that adds to our health as a community.

And I think in many ways, it's that vibrancy that is also very important as we develop and as we progress as a province. In fact, it sort of goes hand in hand with making sure that from growth that we make sure there's progress, making sure that that vibrancy is part of our communities.

And I know I'm always encouraged when I meet a new family that may have chosen to take up work in our province. I know some that have certainly moved from other jurisdictions such as different parts of Ontario, Mr. Speaker.

But it's my belief that certainly it's that job that's important, but it's going to be, over the long haul, our ability to retain that

family and for them to become a full part of our province is going to be based on our ability to meet the needs in the classroom, our ability to meet the needs in the community, our ability to make sure that we're a vibrant place to be. And the kind of actions we see with the elimination of the creative industry, or the cultural industry that is the film industry, is certainly a damaging cut on that front and something that created some unique diversification from an economic perspective in communities right across our province.

We know that this government made that decision in the absence of information, that they pushed ahead, that that Premier pushed ahead with those cuts without looking at the facts. And when they were provided the facts, when they were provided the evidence, they couldn't recognize that error in their ways. They couldn't recognize the mistake and they chose not to address the problem they had created. And they're forsaking an industry and forsaking the lives of so many people in this province for whom have been impacted.

And I know we had a minister that had received report after report, a Premier that had received report after report, a new minister that's received report after report, with the evidence being pretty clear and strongly in support of the film tax credit and measures to ensure we have a strong film industry, and something that this government has chosen not to listen to.

And it does represent as well a government that on so many files chooses to have selective hearing and listens to a couple of close friends and insiders but doesn't listen to the many. He doesn't listen to those who are impacted and certainly didn't listen to the film industry.

And really what we saw was a government make a decision out of an ideological place, a political place, a partisan place, but certainly not a place that was in the best interests of an industry and certainly not in the best interests of a province. And then after that, instead of recognizing the mistake that they had made, they dug their heels in and they scrambled to push forward with as much spin control as they could. And certainly the impact has been felt by many across this province.

It also has basically put our sound stage, which is just across the lake, Mr. Speaker, that certainly is something that can serve us proud from an international perspective . . . And it once had film production companies from around the world lining up at the gate to film here in Regina, bring their dollars, bring their investment, and fill that sound stage just around the other side of Wascana Lake. That sound stage is now at risk of being shuttered. It's an investment that was once made by Saskatchewan people that was going to serve us many generations forward, that served to diversify our economy; to bring new investment, new people, new families to our province, that are now being driven away.

And it's a very short-sighted approach of this government to deny that investment in our province, to uproot families and send them packing or to see the many families that I know as well, Mr. Speaker, who have had their livelihood taken away and are now by way of the family roots and the other jobs within a family, who are now trying to juggle to find other employment and, in many cases, precarious employment in an interim perspective to make ends meet.

And that's not a fair approach from government and it's certainly not fulfilling the kind of future that we should all be working towards. I say at the time of unprecedented opportunity here in Saskatchewan, we should be enabling the creative industries, all of those creative industries, and that includes the film industry, to be a part of the future here in our province. And I find the fact that this government fails to address their elimination of the film industry here in Saskatchewan in this bill, failing to address that challenge is certainly unacceptable and certainly is where we have a distinct difference between the New Democratic Party opposition and the Sask Party government as it relates to our creative province.

So as I've said in comments here, this bill seems to focus its efforts from a marketing perspective toward some of the creative industries. Certainly those efforts are likely something that we can support by way of . . . on an individual basis. But to treat all of those creative industries, all of those artists, as the same and to put forward catch-all structures in legislation is probably not the best approach when we're looking at the unique natures of each industry, each art.

And when I look at the discussion as well where we're talking about building that sort of vibrant community that has the sort of services that are going to build families, build communities that we need to aspire towards . . . And I talked about the importance of a film industry on that front.

I also recognize the importance of the classroom in our communities in fulfilling that important role in the very early developments of the creative industries. And that role of the classroom, the role of the teacher, the role of community organizations, and of community to ensure we're providing the opportunity for our young people — the next generation of artists in Saskatchewan, the next generation of entrepreneurs in Saskatchewan — the opportunity to enrich their talents, to be afforded the opportunities that they should have.

And when I see the cuts that are going on in our classrooms, as but one example, and the impacts on the elimination of opportunity that we need to be extending to our young people, I recognize that that's not helpful, certainly from building a creative Saskatchewan or a strong Saskatchewan into the future. I recognize a member on his feet.

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — To introduce a guest, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, thank you for the opportunity to introduce some guests. And thank you to the Deputy Leader of the Opposition . . . [inaudible] . . . for allowing me to introduce some very special guests. In your

gallery, from Yorkton are some, I think I can honestly say, a lot of very good friends of mine. They're here on behalf of a team from Yorkton for the Full Gospel banquet that will be held later this evening, this afternoon in the cafeteria downstairs.

In the front row is Ms. Mary Thomas. She's from Regina. She's married to one of the main people of Full Gospel in Saskatchewan. Next to her is a friend of mine from Yorkton, Ms. Marlene Swan. And then in the row behind them on the far right is Mr. Dave Schmalz, Mr. Elwin Schindel, Ms. Sharon Schindel, and my brother from a different mother but the same father is George Cote. So I'd ask all members to welcome these special guests to their Legislative Assembly.

[16:30]

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont. I see the member from Yorkton has more guests to introduce.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Yes, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I just noticed another couple of special guests walk into the Assembly, and I thank the Deputy Leader of the Opposition for allowing me to introduce some more.

On the right is my mother, currently from Regina. Her name is Pat Ottenbreit. And along with my mom is my cousin, Mr. Tony Walsh, who has a long history of working for the Government of Saskatchewan, over 35 years with Government Services before he retired, long, extensive history serving our county in the military as well, among other duties, a lot of volunteer duties as well. So I would ask all members to welcome my mom, Pat, and my cousin Tony to their Legislative Assembly.

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

##### **Bill No. 89 — *The Creative Saskatchewan Act* (continued)**

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And it's nice to have the guests that have just joined us here today, and certainly I welcome all of those individuals that have come in and joined us on an annual basis with Full Gospel, and we appreciate that relationship. And I know many are looking forward to the evening here tonight, and thank you for that. And also a pleasure to welcome the member from Yorkton's mother to the Assembly. I hope you're keeping your eye on your son here and keeping him in check, because sometimes the Speaker has trouble doing so. But it's a pleasure to have you here, and certainly we respect your son as well.

And shifting back to the legislation at hand, we are looking at the Creative Saskatchewan legislation, Bill No. 89 before us here today. And as I say, this legislation, we support parts of it. We certainly support parts where we see improved marketing efforts for industries in this province. And when we are looking at this industry, these are the artisans and the artists and the

entrepreneurs that in many ways have given us such pride to each of our respective communities and in many ways have showcased who we are as a province to the rest of the world. And certainly it's important for us to make sure we are supporting those efforts — whether they're in music or whether they're in dance or whether they're in the publishing industries — to make sure we are supporting those industries and allowing those artists, those businesses, those entrepreneurs to fulfill their futures here in Saskatchewan and share their talents and their arts with the world.

Where we are very disappointed by this government is with the elimination of the film industry here in Saskatchewan. And this bill doesn't address the cut that occurred last year — a cut that was made without the evidence, a cut that denied the reports that were put before this government, independent reports that shared that this was in the best interests of our province. And as I say, a cut to the film industry that has caused entrepreneurs to be sent out of Saskatchewan, placing investment in other jurisdictions. We need that investment in our communities here in Saskatchewan that has sent far too many families packing, uprooted families that have had long roots here in Saskatchewan, and families that are a full part of our communities. And I think of all the economic benefits that have been derived by the film industry in Saskatchewan, the investment that's there, the employment that's there. And that's all very important, and it's extended right across our province.

But I also think of what it means to us in telling the story of who we are as a province to the rest of the world, to showcasing our talents, to creating a cultural and community vibrancy all across this province. And I think of organizations or events such as the Yorkton Film Festival as just a prime example of bringing together these talented individuals, these entrepreneurs showcasing that work. And that film festival has done such a fine job of showcasing that artistic talent and as well the work of those entrepreneurs.

And I find it so disappointing that this government has failed to recognize the error in the cut they made in last year's budget when they had every opportunity to do so, Mr. Speaker. And I know, as I say, I know first-hand so many individuals, so many families that have been impacted by this cut, that have been forced to move to other jurisdictions, that have been forced to take on precarious employment causing economic insecurity for their families, lessening the opportunities.

And this all at a time, Mr. Speaker, where we have the opportunity to seize the full potential of our province, the tremendous opportunity we've been presented, and a government that's deliberately choosing for us as a province to be less instead of more, Mr. Speaker, to be cutting something that means something from an economic perspective, from a cultural perspective, from a community perspective by way of the vibrancy and quality of life that it derives.

And that's where my critique as it relates to the actions of this government and the creative files lays. And certainly it's disappointing as it relates to Bill 89, *The Creative Saskatchewan Act* that's been put before us to not see a government recognize the error in their ways and to take actions to fix the mistake, Mr. Speaker.

But I've made those points, as have our critic and so many members on this side of the Assembly. Certainly we'll be working together with all of Saskatchewan to be that voice for film industry as well in Saskatchewan, and to do what we can to rebuild that once proud industry here in Saskatchewan.

At this point in time I don't have a whole lot else to say as it relates to Bill 89. I know our critic has been engaged in consultations with all industries and will be bringing forward questions and those consultations to the committee structure. I'd urge the minister at this late time to reconsider the damaging approach of his government as it relates to the film industry and to see if there's some efforts that can be brought forward to support that industry, to rebuild that industry, recognizing the importance of that industry to the communities all across our province and to the lives of so many families all across this province.

But as it relates to Bill 89, I know our critic will be there to offer her perspective. Certainly there's parts of this bill that we would be supportive of, but we're also cautious in the fact that we need to make sure, in treating these artists and these skills and these industries, that we're treating them in a way that's respectful to the unique nature of each of those disciplines, each of those industries, and not treating them in a catch-all manner, Mr. Speaker.

But at this point in time as it relates to Bill 89, *The Creative Saskatchewan Act*, I will now adjourn debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 89, *The Creative Saskatchewan Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 90

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 90 — The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2013** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm very pleased to be rising today to speak to this bill, Bill No. 90, *An Act to amend The Planning and Development Act, 2007*.

And I could tell you this is one of the bills where I really wish I had been a fly on the wall in the Executive Council room when this bill was being prepared or proposed on the part of the minister. It's a curious bill. It was one that came to us very late in the session; it was just introduced on April 8th. So we haven't had a lot of time to check in with constituents and with the people of Saskatchewan to see whether this is a bill that is meeting the needs of the municipalities.

But in many ways as I looked through this bill, I just can't help but think that this is forced, in a way, a forced amalgamation. It's a very draconian bill. It's one that has . . . We see the implementation of a new section in the bill for regional planning authorities that gives the minister incredible powers to force municipalities to do things where they may not ordinarily agree to work together or have a need to work together.

And so we know that this is a fairly heavy-handed bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and one that really overrules, if the minister thinks necessary, the independence and autonomy of individual municipalities. It seems to be targeted towards situations where the minister thinks municipalities should be getting along for whatever reason and, for whatever reason, they're not getting along. We've seen his comments in the press about when he would step in with the extraordinary powers that he now would have under this bill. But it really seems to override the abilities of municipalities, over the last 100 years, who have managed to work things out and sort them out amongst themselves.

If you look at the original planning and development Act, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what it did, is it provided a vehicle and a framework for municipalities — urban, rural, neighbouring municipalities — to work together and give them a framework for planning ahead, looking at the future of their respective jurisdictions. When you know there's lots of back and forth, when there's urban growth and expansion into rural areas, *The Planning and Development Act* of 2007 has proved to be very functional and one that worked as long as the municipalities had a reason to work together.

And I think what's happened, and we've seen some press lately where there's been some difficulties with urban and rural municipalities not being able to find mutually acceptable . . .

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Ask leave to introduce a guest, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — This probably will be the last one for today, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In your gallery on the far, far right — it's fittingly so; far, far right — Mr. Randy King; a good friend of mine from Yorkton, a singer, songwriter, and welder, and also the president of the Yorkton chapter of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship. So I'd ask all members to welcome Randy to his Legislative Assembly.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

## SECOND READINGS

## Bill No. 90 — *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2013* (continued)

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I've managed to misplace some papers I was looking for, and I think I'll have to go on without them.

So I'll just get into the meat of the bill now in terms of what this bill seems to be attempting to do. The first few changes are just really introducing a new concept in *The Planning and Development Act* of 2007. The minister is creating a new entity called the regional planning authority and my first question is, why is this necessary when we already have ample provisions in the existing Act to create planning districts with accompanying planning commissions? So it's a very curious move on the part of this government to create an entirely new entity when there's already provision in the bill for the creation of a similar entity. But when I started digging into it a little bit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think I understand the goal of the minister in this case. And I think it's supported by some of the conjectures that we found in the media as well.

So what we have to do is look very closely at Division 4. This is a new division that's being inserted in the bill, and it allows for the creation of a regional planning authority. But the very most interesting part of this is that the municipalities have no say. This is a situation where the Government of Saskatchewan's imposing itself and forcing municipalities to do things together, where the municipalities have absolutely no option to get in or out of this authority. They are going to be told by the minister what they must do and they will do it.

And that's exactly what Division 4 seems to set out: the powers of the minister are clear and strong and forceful, and I would say, probably draconian in many instances where the minister can direct these municipalities to do many, many things, including creating a regional plan, who the members are going to be, what the makeup of the authority is going to be, the terms and conditions that the minister considers appropriate in establishing this planning authority, anything else that the minister considers necessary.

You go on and look at the different sections of Division 4. Basically it's section 119 and it goes on to a number of subsections there. Interestingly enough — and this is why it's being introduced now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is because it's a budget bill — there is a provision, we know, in this year's budget of \$250,000 to provide for funding for these types of authorities. So in section 119.2, the minister, with Treasury Board approval, can determine what amount any regional planning authority would get. The question is, why couldn't the minister just do that for district planning . . . for district planning commissions and district . . . the planning districts? I'm sorry, get the language right here.

Planning districts already are established. There is already room for them to do that kind of work, but he won't provide money for the planning districts in this bill. The only people that are going to receive money or funding for these types of

organizations are the regional planning authorities. So right away, the planning districts are being cut out of the good work that they're doing already in Saskatchewan. There's a number of successful planning districts. And I mean they're certainly not without their bumps and warts, but at least this municipalities working well together.

So he's reserving funding solely for the ones that he creates under his own authority without any consent. And I think the most powerful section in this entire part is section 119.3(1) where "The minister may, by order, direct the regional planning authority to do all or any of the things mentioned in section 119.5." And it goes on to say:

After undertaking any consultations with the regional planning authority that the minister considers appropriate, the minister may direct the regional planning authority to undertake or address a matter on any terms and conditions that the minister considers appropriate.

[16:45]

So you can see here the type of extraordinary powers that the minister is being given under this Act. And as I said earlier, I can only question what kind of discussions must have taken place for this government to take this extraordinary measure.

I'm also curious to know about what the member from Melfort has discovered because he was appointed Legislative Secretary last May to deal with these types of issues, and we haven't heard a word since then. So I don't know what the member from Melfort is working on, whether he's going to reveal what he's been working on to this Legislative Assembly. He is a Legislative Secretary and we haven't heard a word yet on any of the work that he's been doing in terms of these planning districts. So it seems that either the minister is superseding the work of the Legislative Secretary and has overruled his work, but we're really not sure what's going on over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And we sure would be interested to find out whether the Legislative Secretary's work has had any impact at all on the rather heavy-handed approaches of the minister in this bill.

The other section I think that's really, really telling — and this is the one that gives me the most concern and I'm going to really impress upon you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the importance of this section — section 119.4(2). This is the composition of these regional planning authorities. And the regional planning authorities under section 119.4(2) are going to be made up of, here's the first one, "one council member from each included municipality." And here's where they deviate from the previous district planning authority, "one or more representatives of the Government of Saskatchewan." And then the third is, "any other persons that the minister is satisfied have an interest or expertise pertaining to community planning."

Now what's really, really telling about that section, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is if you looked at who will be found on a planning commission under the planning district portions of the Act, and in that case, I'm going to look at the section itself — I think it's section 95 — of the existing Act, there's a glaring omission in the current section when you look at the section 95 of the existing Act. And in there we see that the makeup of a planning

commission . . . Hang on, I've just got to find the right page. Sorry, I think it's not section 95. It is section 97(2)(a)(i), and in the district planning commission under the same Act that the minister's proposing this new regional planning commission, you would have a person from the council of each affected municipality. That remains the same. But in a district planning commission you would also have representatives of Indian bands affected by the establishment of the planning district.

Why has the minister left First Nations out of this bill? I think it's a glaring omission and I think it's one that should be fixed by amendment as soon as possible before this bill is passed because there's no way that First Nations should be eliminated from the makeup of these commissions. And if the minister is using his very draconian powers that are establishing this bill to force municipalities to work together, why would he leave out First Nations in the area? It's beyond belief to me that he would deliberately omit First Nations from the makeup of these new regional authorities.

Finally, if you look at that it's the municipalities themselves in the district planning commission who are able to decide who the other experts should be on the commission — not in the case of this new planning authority, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Here we see that it's only the people that the minister is satisfied should be on the commission.

So it just shows you the incredible powers that are being provided to the minister in this new . . . the amendments . . . this Bill 90, which is amending *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*. So I'm just astonished at the need of a government to take these kinds of draconian actions.

If you look at section 119.8(2), there's no way that the municipalities can get out of this. They shall adopt any regional plan. They have no say whether they can amend it or anything else. If the plan is made, they shall adopt it. And I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's just a whole bunch of other provisions under the new section 119 that seem to be very, very, very powerful on the part of this government. And one can only wonder what's driving them to pass this type of law.

Even in the dispute resolution clause, section 119.93(1), in the event of a dispute by municipalities, the minister can direct the municipalities "to follow any dispute resolution methods that the minister considers appropriate." And that language is repeated throughout the entire part.

And so there's just a couple more comments. I think we're going to have some really serious questions about this, and again we're going to have to watch this government very closely to see why they decided such a drastic change was needed to *The Planning and Development Act*.

There is a piece in the *Leader-Post* from Tuesday, April 16th, which is today. Oh no, sorry, it was published on Wednesday, April 3rd, and it was when the bill was introduced. And the speculation in the part of the media is that there's difficulties with the city of Regina and the neighbouring RM of Sherwood on the talks that they are supposed to have to develop mutual interests. And apparently what's happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that after 50 years the Regina-Sherwood District Planning Commission was terminated at the request of the RM

of Sherwood last year.

So obviously those two municipalities had some difficulties after 50 years of working things out. We know that the Global Transportation Hub is located within the RM of Sherwood and certainly the interests of this government in relation to that hub is pretty apparent, that they're very involved in what's going on at the hub. And so we just have to wonder why the government is going to force municipalities to get along and force municipalities to do planning on the government's direction, not on the part of the municipalities themselves.

The only other point I wanted to make at this point on this bill, Mr. Speaker — and we're surely going to take a closer look at it in committee — is that the previous minister was making great gains in this area through mutual support of the municipalities themselves. And a perfect example of that is WaterWolf down in the Outlook area where we have a number of municipalities and First Nations who have formed a planning commission or a regional plan on their own, with support from this government, but certainly one where there's mutual respect. And I think that's part of the concern in this instance is where, you know, people are being forced to do planning together even though there isn't a respect on both parts.

And the last comment I want to make is from a paper of 2009, and the author's name is Paul Christensen. And it talks about regional planning and the barriers to regional planning. And what this said is that they had a meeting with a number of project participants and advisers to discuss barriers to greater regional co-operation involving infrastructure services.

Interestingly, virtually all agreed that the principal barriers were cultural rather than institutional/legal. Cultural barriers included: (i) entrenched decision-making practices, (ii) perceptions of risk (financial and political) and (iii) governance issues (capacity building, infrastructure service standards, funding mechanisms, etc.). Perceived institutional/legal barriers . . . appear to reinforce the cultural barriers that exist.

So what this bill is doing is forcing people who aren't getting along to continue to exist even though they're not getting along. And I think that's a recipe for disaster, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So at this point, I think we're prepared to see this bill being discussed in committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 90, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2013* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — Second reading of

this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 86

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 86 — The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 86, *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act*. And it's a very short bill, Mr. Speaker, but it's one that again is very curious on the part of this government because, in my view, it's completely unnecessary. This is just adding more red tape to ministries, forcing them to do stuff that they're already doing and that they're already charged to do in terms of responsible legislators, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This bill forces each ministry to review its regulatory responsibilities and, quote, modernize them, whatever that may mean. And I'm not exactly sure why the Minister of the Economy would think this is something that's necessary when it's already a responsibility that exists. So it seems to be unnecessary legislation that is redundant and certainly creating a lot more red tape in the instance where it's designed to reduce red tape. So I'm not understanding why the minister thinks this is necessary.

I'm certain that it is important to streamline and modernize regulation in any government; that's not under any question at all. So by forcing ministers to create reports, which he does in section 3(1), then it just creates more work for ministers to ensure that they are doing what their job is in the first place. It's unnecessary legislation.

I think it also creates a signal that regulation is a burden on business and I think that's the wrong message to send. Regulation has a very important role in the evolution of any institution or industry within the province, and we certainly know the role of government is to protect everyone and that includes the people that are operating industry and the people that are doing business in the province. So the message seems to be a bit unclear, but I'm worried about the message that this bill sends and I'm also worried that it's creating additional red tape in the instance where the goal of the bill is to reduce red tape.

So it's a fairly short bill. There is not much to comment on further than that, Mr. Speaker, and again it's one that we're going to watch this government and see exactly sort of what

purposes they do want to put to, to effect by forcing each minister to do these reports under *The Tabling of Documents Act* in section 3(1). So at that point those are my comments on this bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question? The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of the Economy that Bill No. 86, *The Regulatory Modernization and Accountability Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall this bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committees this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried. This House stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:58.]

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