



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE

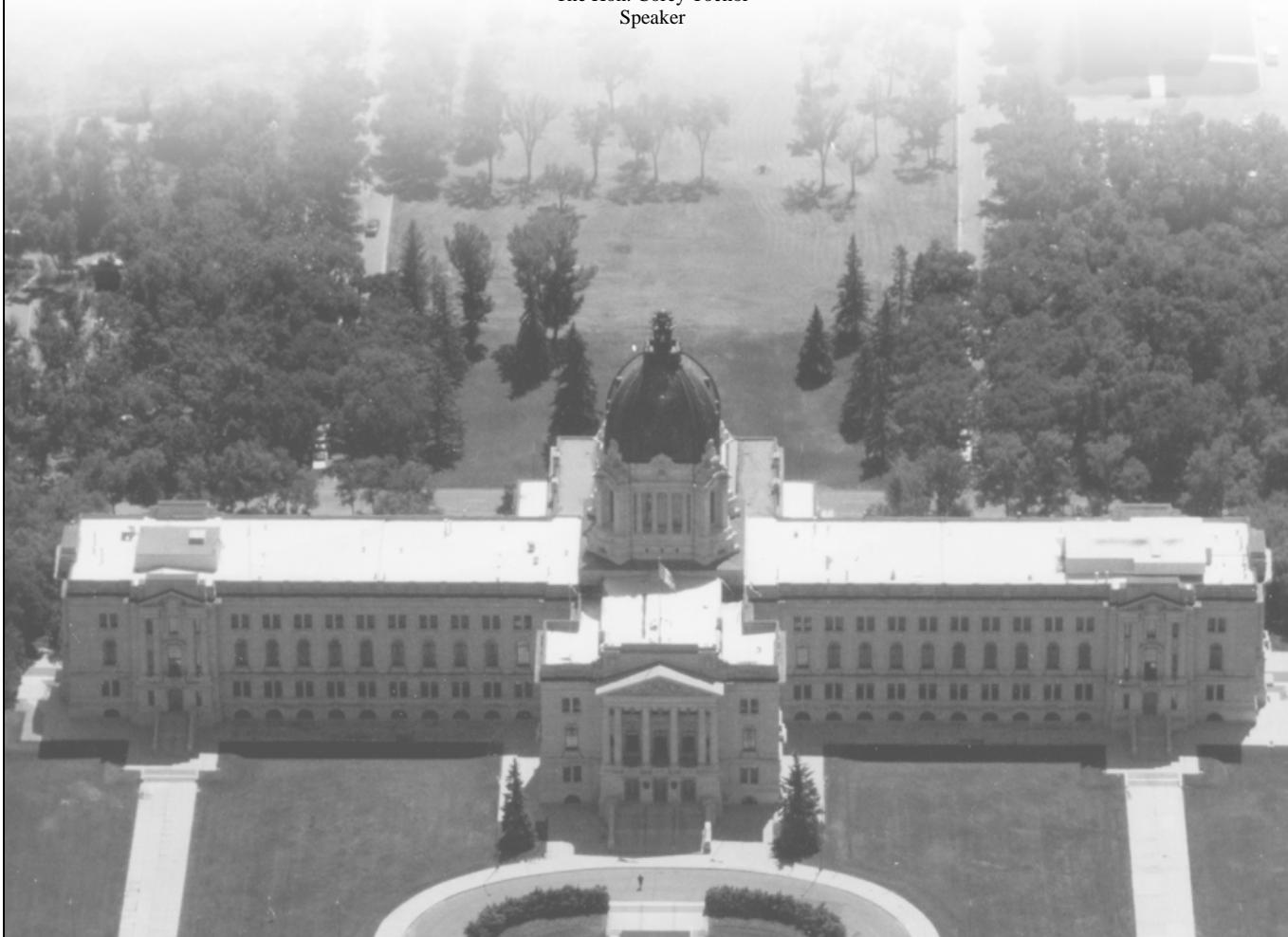
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

DEBATES and PROCEEDINGS

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Corey Tochor
Speaker



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2nd Session — 28th Legislature

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Party Standings: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 48; New Democratic Party (NDP) — 12; Vacant — 1

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[The Assembly met at 14:00.]

The Speaker: — Members of the Legislative Assembly, ladies and gentlemen, please remain standing for the entrance of the Lieutenant Governor and the Vice-Regal party.

[Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor entered the Chamber at 14:02.]

Her Honour: — Pray be seated.

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

Mr. Speaker, Members of the Legislative Assembly, honoured guests, people of Saskatchewan, welcome to the opening of the Second Session of the Twenty-Eighth Legislature of the Province of Saskatchewan.

We meet during the season of prairie fellowship.

Harvest is nearly completed and people are gathering in town halls, church basements, and schools across the province.

It is a time of community, and a time to give thanks for the blessings of Saskatchewan.

Ten years ago this month, a journalist acknowledged our good fortune in a beautifully written Thanksgiving column in the pages of the *Regina Leader-Post*.

“Let it be known that I am grateful,” wrote the late Ron Petrie.

“Grateful to be where I am, for starters. As a younger man, brash and full of swagger, I considered my calling to be Vancouver, Montreal, even New York. Only now do I appreciate that what I actually fancied was merely the ideal of my farm boy self, destined for the big city . . .

“Where I am is Saskatchewan. Thank goodness.”

Ten years on, there is even more reason to be thankful we call Saskatchewan home.

Saskatchewan has enjoyed a decade of growth.

Our population is growing faster than it has since the earliest days of our province.

During our decade of growth, Saskatchewan has grown by more than 160,000 people, reversing the decline of the previous two decades.

During our decade of growth, Saskatchewan recorded the second-best job creation record, and had the second-highest growth in average weekly incomes.

We led the nation in retail sales and manufacturing sales growth, and our exporters set new records, with agriculture leading the way.

Our farmers are the best in the world at what they do, and they have taken off another good crop, despite the challenges posed

by nature.

Saskatchewan people are responsible for the progress of the past decade, and my government is committed to ensuring this growth continues.

The Saskatchewan Plan for Growth focuses on international engagement, innovation, fiscal responsibility, and investments in infrastructure and education and training.

My government remains committed to the principles of the Growth Plan at a time when there is much cause for optimism.

Our economy is expected to grow by 2.1 per cent this year, higher than originally forecast.

Government debt is \$400 million lower than forecast at budget time.

Today, Saskatchewan’s operating debt is more than \$1 billion lower than it was in 2007.

And last month, Moody’s confirmed the province’s Triple A credit rating – the highest rating possible – citing my government’s strong fiscal management and its three-year plan to balance the budget and reduce the province’s dependency on resource revenues.

With our economy growing stronger, we are better able to sustain quality of life in Saskatchewan.

HEALTH CARE

A growing economy has enabled my government to greatly improve health care services during our decade of growth.

Since 2007, we have recruited more than 750 new doctors and 3,400 nurses of every designation.

Thirteen new long-term care facilities have opened, and new hospitals have been built or are under construction, including the Jim Pattison Children’s Hospital in Saskatoon and the new Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford.

The number of people waiting more than a year for surgery is down by 80 per cent since 2007, while people waiting more than three months for surgery has been reduced by 45 per cent.

Saskatchewan has gone from having the longest surgical wait times in Canada a decade ago to having among the shortest wait times today.

My government’s innovative two-for-one approach to increasing access to diagnostic imaging is helping patients get care sooner.

Since March 31, 2016, 905 people have purchased an MRI with a corresponding number being provided at no cost to the health care system.

That means more than 1,800 scans have been provided with no added expense for taxpayers.

Despite this progress, my government understands there is more work to do in health care.

This year, accountable care units were established at Pasqua Hospital in Regina and St. Paul's Hospital in Saskatoon as part of an effort to improve service.

Accountable care units create a unique team environment, with physicians, nurses, occupational and physical therapists, social workers, and dietitians working closely together to provide prompt, effective care for patients.

In the coming year, more accountable care units will be created in Regina and Saskatoon.

This year, my government accepted recommendations made by an advisory panel that examined the administrative structure governing health care in Saskatchewan.

The panel recommended the consolidation of the province's 12 regional health authorities into a single Saskatchewan Health Authority.

The Saskatchewan Health Authority will begin operations in December.

Over time, the authority will further reduce administrative costs while improving the coordination of care and enhancing the accountability of our health care system.

Saskatchewan's rate of organ donations is low compared to the rest of Canada and many other countries.

Last year, my government asked the Legislature's Standing Committee on Human Services to review the province's current organ donation approach and recommend ways to increase the rate of donations.

During this session, my government will implement a new organ donation program, building on work undertaken by the Standing Committee.

The program will be led by donor physicians who will provide education and support to fellow health care providers and champion organ donations across the province.

My government will also expand the pool of donors by amending regulations to allow for a donation after cardio-circulatory death and by implementing a mandatory referral program.

In addition, we will continue to explore the option of moving to a presumed consent model of organ donation.

This session, my government will fulfill its commitment to provide individualized funding for children under the age of six diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, or ASD.

The initial funding level will be \$4,000 per year for each child, for a total investment of approximately \$2.8 million next fiscal year.

This funding is in addition to the nearly \$8 million my

government already provides to support ASD services within the health care system.

EDUCATION

The first week of September was special for thousands of Saskatchewan schoolchildren and their families.

This year, 21 new schools, accommodating more than 11,000 students, opened their doors for the first time.

Eighteen of those schools are joint-use facilities built using a P3 - or public-private partnership model - that reduced construction costs by \$100 million.

Those schools are located on nine sites in Regina, Saskatoon, Warman, and Martensville, and were completed in less than two years.

Altogether, my government has constructed or renovated 65 schools during the last decade, including several new community schools.

In Regina alone, the new École Connaught Community School and a new Sacred Heart Community School opened, along with māmawēyatitān centre, a unique integrated facility that includes a new Scott Collegiate, a recreational complex, a public library branch, a community police station and a First Nations Elders' ceremonial room.

My government's unprecedented \$17 billion investment in Kindergarten to Grade 12 education over the past decade has also paid for 875 more teachers and the creation of nearly 6,000 new child care spaces.

My government believes parents and students should have the right to choose the schools that work best for them.

Earlier this year, a court decision put that right in jeopardy by ruling the government must cease funding for non-minority faith students who attend separate schools.

During the session, we will introduce legislation that will protect the right to school choice by invoking the notwithstanding clause of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

My government has taken action to improve the learning experience in Saskatchewan classrooms.

We have worked with school divisions and teachers on the province's first Education Sector Strategic Plan, which has led to higher graduation rates and more students reading at grade level.

My government has collaborated with Indigenous leaders to develop programs to assist First Nations and Métis students, such as Help Me Tell My Story and Following Their Voices.

In the coming year, my government will continue its efforts to improve education for all Saskatchewan children.

A pause on curriculum development has been lifted and

curriculum renewal will continue in a number of subject areas.

My government continues to hear concerns from parents about their children's proficiency in mathematics.

We are also monitoring the math scores of Saskatchewan students in international tests, and they are disappointingly low.

To improve math scores and ensure all Saskatchewan students are well-schooled in the basics of math, my government will expand math reinforcement and supports, broadening access to common-sense methods that have been proven successful in the past and in other jurisdictions.

New international models will also be explored.

Saskatchewan, like other provinces, is having difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers and early childhood educators in French and French immersion.

In the coming year, my government will work with other provinces, including Quebec, to build partnerships that will lead to higher quality French and French second-language instruction for our students.

We will also begin the development of a computer coding curriculum to help prepare students for careers in science, mathematics, engineering, and technology.

My government is committed to ensuring post-secondary education in Saskatchewan remains accessible and affordable.

Since 2008, we have provided \$8.3 billion to support post-secondary education, including nearly \$1 billion in direct support for students.

This includes the Graduate Retention Program, the most aggressive student attraction and retention program in Canada.

Since 2008, nearly 70,000 students have taken advantage of the Graduate Retention Program, receiving about \$345 million in tax credits.

That's 70,000 post-secondary graduates who have chosen to begin their careers right here in Saskatchewan.

My government also provides direct financial support to students through the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship, which offers all Saskatchewan Grade 12 graduates up to \$500 a year to help cover tuition costs to a maximum of \$2,000.

Since 2012, more than 38,000 students have received over \$33 million through the program.

Expanding access to post-secondary education for First Nations and Métis people is a priority for my government.

During the last decade, the number of First Nations and Métis students enrolled at post-secondary institutions in Saskatchewan has jumped from 12,186 to 16,357, an increase of 34 per cent.

Last year, 854 First Nations and Métis students graduated from Saskatchewan Polytechnic, up 138 or nearly 20 per cent from

the previous year.

This year, my government will allocate nearly \$45 million to support post-secondary programs and skills training and employment initiatives for Indigenous students.

This includes \$9.4 million provided to the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, which has received a 114 per cent increase in funding from the province since 2007.

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES

Earlier this year, the federal government announced its intention to legalize the non-medical use of marijuana by July, 2018.

This decision has far-reaching consequences and was made without adequate consultation with the provinces.

In July, Canada's Premiers raised concerns about the feasibility of the federal government's implementation date, noting that more time may be needed to address important concerns like safety, distribution, taxation, and public education.

Despite these concerns, the federal government has not changed its timetable.

Therefore, my government has no choice but to prepare for this historic revision to the Criminal Code.

My government is in the midst of a review process that includes an online public consultation that received nearly 35,000 responses.

This review is guided by four objectives: preventing the growth of the underground marijuana market; restricting access to minors; ensuring road and workplace safety; and protecting public health.

Once the review is completed this fall, my government will introduce legislation that will govern the sale and distribution of marijuana and outline measures to protect public health and safety and enhance public education.

Saskatchewan has the highest rate of impaired driving among the provinces.

During the last decade, more than 600 people have been killed, and more than 4,000 people injured in accidents involving drivers impaired by alcohol.

In the past year, my government has introduced a number of measures to address a preventable tragedy that has shattered so many lives.

These actions include:

- Increasing the age at which drivers are prohibited from having any drugs or alcohol in their bloodstream from 19 and under to 21 and under;
- Introducing a three-day vehicle seizure for drivers over the age of 21 who are found to have blood alcohol levels between .04 and .08 for the first time; and

- Making Saskatchewan's ignition interlock laws the toughest in Canada.

But additional steps can be taken to reduce impaired driving.

Any time an individual makes the terrible decision to drive while impaired, there is always a better option.

My government will work to create one additional better option.

We will be urging municipalities to allow ride-sharing services to operate within their jurisdiction.

My government will also introduce legislation enabling SGI to offer affordable insurance to drivers working for ride-sourcing companies like Uber and Lyft.

And we will work with smaller communities to attract or establish a ride-sourcing network so people have another option for a safe ride home.

My government has heard that more must be done to prevent crime in rural Saskatchewan.

To address these concerns, we appointed a committee of government MLAs to consult on measures that might strengthen public safety.

Acting on the committee's recommendations, my government has created a new Protection and Response Team (PRT), consisting of 258 armed officers who have the authority to arrest and detain those suspected of committing crimes.

The PRT is composed of:

- 120 police officers from the RCMP and municipal police services;
- 40 Commercial Vehicle Enforcement Officers, who have been given expanded powers; and
- 98 Conservation Officers.

The Protection and Response Team will improve response times to emergency calls and increase the visibility of uniformed officers in rural Saskatchewan.

My government has committed nearly \$6 million to support the PRT and other initiatives arising from the committee's report.

During this session, my government will take further action to protect Saskatchewan citizens.

Cyberbullying through the unauthorized sharing of intimate images is a despicable crime, one that most often victimizes young people.

But it has proven difficult to rely on the Criminal Code to deter this crime because the burden of proof – beyond a reasonable doubt – is so high.

My government will amend *The Privacy Act* to allow the victims of the unauthorized distribution of intimate images to

sue for compensation in a civil action.

The amendments will also create a reverse onus requiring the defendant to prove the plaintiff consented to the release of the images in question.

In addition, my government will remove the requirement that an action of this type be commenced in the Court of Queen's Bench.

Once *The Privacy Act* is amended, the victims of "revenge porn" or "sexting" can seek redress through Small Claims Court, which will be less costly for them.

In Saskatchewan, most renters and landlords have a respectful relationship.

But there are exceptions where one party fails to meet their obligations to the other.

This session, my government will look at creating a process to improve the disclosure of decisions made by the Office of Residential Tenancies.

This will assist in ensuring problem landlords and problem tenants can be readily identified in the marketplace.

In July, amendments to *The Victims of Interpersonal Violence Act* and *The Residential Tenancies Act* came into force.

The new provisions permit victims of domestic violence to obtain a certificate allowing them to end a fixed-term lease of residential premises, without penalty, if they are in danger.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Trade-dependent jurisdictions like Saskatchewan require modern and well-maintained infrastructure to ensure they can compete and prosper.

During the last decade, my government has invested more than \$26 billion to renew and expand Saskatchewan's infrastructure.

Of that total, \$7.4 billion has been committed to the province's highway system.

This record investment has resulted in the repair and improvement of 12,000 kilometres of highway and the completion of significant projects, such as Saskatoon's Circle Drive South Bridge, the St. Louis Bridge, the twinning of Highway 11, and passing lanes on Highway 7 and Highway 10.

This year, work continues on the Regina Bypass, overpasses at Martensville and Warman, the Saskatoon North Commuter Parkway Bridge, twinning projects on Highways 39, 16, and 7, and passing lanes on Highway 5, among many other projects.

CROWN CORPORATIONS

Our Crown corporations support economic growth and quality of life in Saskatchewan.

Last session, my government passed Bill 40, legislation that

would allow for the sale of up to 49 per cent of a Crown corporation.

This legislation would have enabled a Crown corporation to enter into a partnership beneficial to the province, while ensuring the government remained the majority owner of that corporation.

Over the last few months, my government has heard from many Saskatchewan people concerned about this legislation and the potential sale of even a small stake in a Crown corporation.

Consequently, my government will repeal the provisions of Bill 40 that allow for the sale of a partial equity position of a Crown Corporation.

In the year ahead, our Crown corporations will continue to invest in Saskatchewan.

Demand for electricity has grown by 25 per cent since 2007, and is expected to increase by another 13 per cent by 2025.

SaskPower has responded by investing nearly \$8 billion during the last decade to meet increased demand and to restore and replace aging infrastructure.

This year, the company expects to allocate another \$1.1 billion on capital projects.

Since 2008, SaskTel has invested more than \$2.6 billion to improve telephone and internet service in the province.

But we have heard from the people of Saskatchewan that cellular and internet service must be further improved.

Too many rural areas still have poor cellular coverage and slow internet service.

This year, SaskTel will spend \$300 million to expand and enhance its network, with a total of \$1.1 billion expected to be invested in the next four years.

My government's goal is to ensure that Saskatchewan is the best province in Canada in terms of cellular and internet coverage.

My government's plan to create a more open, competitive, and customer-friendly liquor retailing system is moving forward.

To date, Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority stores in 24 locations have been converted and new private operators are providing retail liquor service in those communities.

This includes five communities where the new private ownership is made up either partially or entirely of former employees, with one more employee-owned store scheduled to open this fall.

In addition, there are new private retailers open in Aberdeen, Pilot Butte, Osler, and Hague — communities where there was no government liquor store operating before.

An expanded private retail liquor system is expected to be

completed by May 2018.

ENSURING PROSPERITY AND COMPETITIVENESS

International engagement is a priority for my government because trade drives Saskatchewan's economy.

More than 100,000 jobs in our province depend on exports.

During our decade of growth, Saskatchewan exports to emerging markets, particularly in Asia, have grown by staggering amounts.

Saskatchewan's exports to China have increased 530 per cent over the past decade to \$3 billion last year.

Exports to India are up 272 per cent to \$1.5 billion; exports to Pakistan are up 293 per cent to \$548 million; and exports to Indonesia are up 132 per cent to \$543 million.

My government will continue working to expand our export markets through further trade missions to these and other countries and through support for trade-focused organizations like the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership.

As negotiations on a new North American Free Trade Agreement proceed, we will join with others in Canada in reminding our trading partners about the benefits of free trade and the dangers of protectionism.

My government will also continue to advocate for freer trade within Canada.

Saskatchewan stands to benefit from the new Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA), which came into force on July 1st.

The CFTA will reduce barriers to trade, investment, and the mobility of workers.

However, we are concerned other provincial governments do not share Saskatchewan's commitment to free trade.

An impartial trade panel has ruled Alberta's rebate program for small brewers discriminates against brewers in Saskatchewan.

The panel also determined the rebate program is not in accordance with Alberta's trade obligations to other provinces.

Alberta is appealing the ruling.

My government is considering a range of retaliatory measures in response to Alberta's unfair trade practices.

This year, capital investment in Saskatchewan is forecast to be \$14.5 billion.

While this is down from a few years ago, it is still 43 per cent higher than capital investment in 2007.

Saskatchewan's favourable business climate has played a major role in attracting investment.

In the last provincial budget, my government increased and

broadened the provincial sales tax to reduce our dependency on resource revenues.

But even with those changes, Saskatchewan has the lowest provincial sales tax among provinces with a PST.

We have reduced income taxes for all citizens.

Saskatchewan's manufacturing and processing tax is the lowest in Canada.

Competitive taxes and sensible regulations helped build the Saskatchewan Advantage, and my government will do everything it can to defend the Saskatchewan Advantage.

In the spring budget, my government committed to keeping Saskatchewan competitive with our neighbouring provinces by moving to the lowest corporate tax rate in western Canada, matching British Columbia's rate of 11 per cent.

Since then, two things have changed.

First, the BC government has announced it will raise its corporate tax rate to 12 per cent - the same as Alberta and Manitoba.

And second, the federal government introduced tax changes that could have had a significant negative impact on Canadian small businesses.

While we are pleased the federal government has backed down on most of its proposed tax changes that would have hurt small businesses, my government has decided to refocus its business tax reduction plan on Saskatchewan small businesses.

Effective January 1, 2018, we will raise the small-business income threshold from \$500,000 to \$600,000 - the highest threshold in Canada.

This is the amount of income up to which small businesses pay tax at the significantly lower two per cent small business tax rate.

We will also return the corporate tax rate to 12 per cent - the same as the other western provinces.

My government is monitoring developments in the potash industry, particularly the merger of PotashCorp and Agrium into a new company called Nutrien.

My government's priority is to ensure Nutrien's continued head office presence in Saskatoon and increased employment in Saskatchewan as the merger moves forward and market conditions improve.

My government will continue to lead the national discussion on competitiveness in the resource sector.

With multi-layered reviews and climate change initiatives being advanced by the federal government, there is a high level of uncertainty in energy and mining.

Our energy sector is one of Canada's greatest strengths, yet its

economic potential is being hamstrung by our own national government, even as Canada continues to import thousands of barrels of oil every day from other countries.

In the past year, energy projects worth more than \$56 billion have been abandoned, including the Energy East pipeline, which would have moved Saskatchewan oil to tidewater, enabling our province to get full value for the oil it produces.

My government will continue to call for transparent, predictable, and timely approval processes for resource companies.

This fiscal year, my government will introduce a new targeted Mineral Development Strategy.

The strategy will include a mineral exploration incentive to cover a portion of the costs associated with ground-based exploration activities.

AGRICULTURE

Thanks to the efforts of our farmers, ranchers, researchers, and processors, agriculture remains a pillar of our economy.

In 2016, Saskatchewan shipped \$14.4 billion worth of agricultural products - more than half of all exports.

And we are on track for another strong year of agricultural exports.

In the coming year, my government will continue to provide strong support to farmers, ranchers, and agri-businesses.

We will stand up for our agricultural sector in opposing a federal carbon tax and federal small business tax changes that will hit farmers and ranchers hard.

We will work to expand access to important markets across the globe.

And we will continue to invest in research through the Agricultural Development Fund, the Global Institute for Food Security, and the Livestock and Forage Centre of Excellence at the University of Saskatchewan.

Our support extends to Saskatchewan's value-added food processing industry, which has grown tremendously through the years.

There are now more than 300 food companies operating in the province generating more than \$4 billion in revenues and employing 5,000 people.

To build on this momentum, my government will launch an Agriculture Value Added New Growth Incentive intended to attract more investment into the sector.

ENVIRONMENT

My government recognizes that climate change is a reality.

We must do more to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In Saskatchewan, important steps have already been taken by my government.

SaskPower is expanding renewable power to as much as 50 per cent of its total generating capacity by 2030.

This represents a doubling of renewable generation in less than 15 years.

The expansion of renewable power will help SaskPower cut its current greenhouse gas emissions by 44 per cent by 2030.

We have invested \$1.3 billion in the world's first commercial power plant equipped with a post-combustion carbon capture system.

SaskPower's Boundary Dam 3 project has cut Saskatchewan's carbon dioxide emissions by 1.6 million tonnes, the equivalent of taking 400,000 cars off our roads.

Today, our province is a world leader in the advancement of carbon capture and storage technology, which has been identified by the United Nations and the International Energy Agency as a crucial technology if global emissions are to be reduced.

Saskatchewan contributes in other ways.

In 2015, our farmers sequestered nearly 12 million tonnes of carbon in our soil, in large part thanks to zero till seeding technology developed in our province.

Increasing production of pulse crops like lentils and peas, which fix nitrogen in the soil, is helping to reduce emissions.

Uranium mined in Saskatchewan is used to generate emission-free electricity around the world.

Meanwhile, the companies operating in our energy and mining sectors are investing in the latest technologies to reduce their environmental footprint.

Those companies provide good jobs that support thousands of Saskatchewan families.

The federal government's carbon tax will put those jobs in jeopardy and threaten Saskatchewan's competitive position, while having no significant impact on emissions.

This session, my government will introduce further actions that actually reduce emissions while we continue to oppose the imposition of a federal carbon tax on Saskatchewan, including through a legal challenge if necessary.

PARKS AND CULTURE

Saskatchewan's 35 provincial parks are the natural jewels of our province, offering breathtaking beauty and a diversity of recreational opportunities.

During the last decade, my government has invested \$100 million to maintain and upgrade facilities in provincial parks, more than double the amount invested in the decade prior to

2007.

Saskatchewan residents and those from outside the province have responded by visiting in record numbers.

Since 2007, higher attendance at provincial parks has helped boost total tourist visits from 8.46 million to 12.24 million, a 45 per cent increase.

Total visitor expenditures have grown by nearly 35 per cent to \$2.15 billion a year.

This session, my government will continue to invest in our provincial park system with the creation of a new park in the Porcupine Hills, located southeast of Hudson Bay.

This is the second new provincial park created in the last five years.

My government continues to support arts, culture, and sports throughout Saskatchewan.

This year, Creative Saskatchewan will allocate nearly \$5.3 million in grants to support our province's creative entrepreneurs, who work in a variety of sectors, including film, television, interactive digital media, music, publishing, visual arts, and the performing arts.

Creative Saskatchewan will also provide \$1.5 million to support operations and programs at Saskatchewan's seven creative industry associations.

My government continues to explore innovative ways to support Saskatchewan's creative industries with new grant programs announced this past summer.

SOCIAL SERVICES

My government believes growth is not only an economic necessity, but a moral imperative as well.

Growth gives us the opportunity to improve the quality of life for all Saskatchewan people and build a fairer, more tolerant province.

Growth enables us to help those who are most vulnerable among us.

Because of the economic progress of the last decade, my government was in the position to invest \$3.7 billion to support people with disabilities.

In 2009, we created the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program, and since then we have increased benefits paid to recipients of the program four times.

My government supports more than 4,000 individuals and families with respite, residential, and day programming services.

And over the past decade, we have more than doubled support for crisis prevention and outreach support services, and nearly doubled the number of group homes in Saskatchewan.

There are 96 group homes operating in Saskatchewan today that did not exist a decade ago.

Helping seniors in Saskatchewan is also a priority for my government.

In 2012, we created the Personal Care Home Benefit to support seniors residing in personal care homes.

Since 2008, my government has tripled the Seniors Income Plan benefit from \$90 per month to \$270 per month.

In the coming months, my government will introduce the Seniors Education Property Tax Deferral Program.

This program will give seniors with household incomes under \$70,000 the option to defer the education portion of the property taxes on their home.

These measures, together with tax reductions which have saved a couple with an income of \$50,000 more than \$13,000, will put more money in the pockets of seniors.

CONCLUSION

So much has changed in Saskatchewan during the past decade of growth, and today, my government is making the decisions necessary to ensure Saskatchewan keeps growing stronger in the decade ahead.

Saskatchewan is truly blessed, and there is so much to be thankful for.

“Where I am is Saskatchewan. Thank goodness.”

May divine providence continue to bless our province and guide this Assembly in all its deliberations.

God bless Saskatchewan.

God bless Canada.

God save the Queen.

The Speaker: — I invite Elder Betty McKenna to come forward.

Ms. McKenna: — [Elder McKenna spoke for a time in Ojibwa.]

It's a beautiful day. I ask for a blessing from the Great Spirit, our heavenly Protector, to give all Saskatchewan people a blessing on this day, a blessing of prosperity and growth, a blessing of respect and honour, a blessing of love and forgiveness. Most of all, a blessing of safety.

In this time of turmoil, I ask that the Creator give Saskatchewan the ability to be that place of peace and an oasis of safety for every reserve, hamlet, town, village, and city and family farm. I ask the Creator to bless us all with safety in our daily lives as we stand in the middle of four directions.

I ask a blessing to those brave men and women who put their

lives on the line to protect us and give us that safety.

Bless our leaders of this province. Give them strength and prayerful guidance in their daily lives.

Bless our children and youth, that they may seek to be strong leaders tomorrow.

Bless our educators who work with those children, that give them the light down that path to the future.

[Elder McKenna continued in Ojibwa.]

The Speaker: — I invite Pastor Rick Parkyn to come forward.

[14:45]

Mr. Parkyn: — Would you join me in prayer at this time please.

Dear Lord, we're so thankful for your word. Your Bible said in 1 Timothy 2:1-3:

I urge you first of all to pray for all people. When you make your requests, plead for God's mercy upon them and give thanks. Pray this way for kings and for all others who are in authority so that we can live in peace and quietness, in godliness and dignity. This is good and pleases God our Saviour.

Dear Lord, let your word encourage us to come with hearts of thanksgiving. We thank you for your blessings on our province of Saskatchewan. We acknowledge it is your blessings that have moved us from a have-not province to a have province. We are so blessed, and we are thankful.

We also pray for all people who live in this great province of Saskatchewan. We ask you to show your grace and mercy especially to the poor and to the hurting and those who, though the province has been blessed, many feel they are disenfranchised in this day.

We pray for the widows and the orphans, as we're instructed to by your word, to care especially for them.

As directed by the Bible, we now pray for our Premier and the Leader of the Opposition as well, and for every elected member of this Legislative Assembly as this session begins. As each item of business is considered, Lord, I would pray and we would ask that there would be a majority of caring, considerate, and committed members from both sides of this House to set or, if necessary, reset the moral compass of our province.

We believe, Lord, that when we pray for our leaders, we will continue to live in peace and quietness, in godliness and in dignity.

We now pray part of the great prayer that Jesus taught us, that has been the prayer of great leaders in this Legislative Assembly here from the time of Reverend Tommy Douglas to our present Premier. This was Mr. Douglas's favourite prayer: “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven.”

And I say, amen.

And PS, one last thought: Lord, help the Roughriders.

The Speaker: — Thank you. Thank you, Elder McKenna and Pastor Rick. That was wonderful.

[Her Honour retired from the Chamber at 14:49.]

The Speaker: —

Present us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works, begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and finally by thy mercy attain everlasting life. Amen.

Please be seated.

I recognize the Premier.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Pro Forma Bill

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move that a bill respecting the Administration of Oaths of Office be now introduced and read the first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Hon. Premier that said bill be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Introduction of Pages

The Speaker: — I wish to inform the Assembly that the Pages for the session will be: Sherrilyn Bzdel, Jessica Fahlman, Samara Mamani, Paige McAlpin, Kaylen Merasty.

TABLING THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE

The Speaker: — I would wish to inform the Assembly that in order to prevent mistakes I have obtained a copy of the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor which I will now lay on the Table.

I recognize the Premier.

MOTIONS

Speech from the Throne

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor be taken into consideration on Thursday, 26 October, 2017.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Premier:

That the speech of Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor be taken into consideration on Thursday, October 26th, 2017.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that we do adjourn the House.

The Speaker: — Before putting the question on the adjournment motion I have a few announcements to make.

I would like to thank all guests and members of the public for joining us today.

I'd like to thank the members of the judiciary from the Court of Appeal, the Court of Queen's Bench, and the Provincial Court for your attendance today.

I'd like to thank you, Elder Betty McKenna and Pastor Rick Parkyn, for taking part in today's ceremony.

I would like to introduce the school groups that are with us today. In the west gallery we have grade 12 students from the Regina Huda School, and in the east gallery we have the grade 12 students from Miller Comprehensive Catholic High School also from Regina. I would like to thank all of you, along with your teachers, for attending today's ceremony.

Welcome also to the Vocal Jazz group from Regina's Michael A. Riffel High School. They are seated in the west gallery and I will be calling on them to sing for us in a few minutes.

I would also like to thank the members of the following Saskatchewan-based regular and reserve forces units for providing us with the guard of honour earlier this afternoon: 15 Wing Moose Jaw, Royal Regina Rifles, Saskatchewan Dragoons, 38 Signal Regiment, 38 Service Battalion, 16 Field Ambulance, and HMCS [Her Majesty's Canadian Ship] Queen.

I would like also to thank the 10 Field Regiment, the Royal Canadian Artillery for the 15-gun salute, and Sub-Lieutenant Field for his playing of the Vice-Regal Salute.

I would like to invite everyone to join Her Honour, the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition, and members of the Legislative Assembly at the Speaker's tea which will take place immediately following the Chamber ceremony. The tea will be in two locations — in room 218 in the west wing and in the library reading room in the east wing.

It has been moved by the House Leader that this House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

I would now like to welcome the Vocal Jazz Choir from Michael A. Riffel High School under the direction of Stacy Allen. They will be singing two songs for us — “There is Peace” and “The Water is Wide.” Ladies and gentlemen, the Riffel Vocal Jazz Choir.

[The choir sang.]

The Speaker: — On behalf of everyone, I would like to thank the choir for that very, very fine performance.

One final announcement. I would ask that members and guests observe the following order when departing the Chamber: the Speaker’s party; Her Honour’s party; the Premier and Provincial Secretary; Leader of the Opposition; judges of the Court of Appeal, Queen’s Bench, and Provincial Court; members of the cabinet and their spouses; other members of the Legislative Assembly and their spouses; and guests.

This House stands adjourned until tomorrow, Thursday, October 26th at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:54.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SPEECH FROM THE THRONE	2585
INTRODUCTION OF BILLS	
Pro Forma Bill	
Wall	2593
ANNOUNCEMENTS	
Introduction of Pages	
The Speaker.....	2593
TABLING THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE	
The Speaker.....	2593
MOTIONS	
Speech from the Throne	
Wall.....	2593

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CABINET MINISTERS

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Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Steven Bonk
Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Trade

Hon. Kevin Doherty
Minister of Advanced Education

Hon. Larry Doke
Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations,
Métis and Northern Affairs

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water
Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Water
Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Education
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Joe Hargrave
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Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
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Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Finance

Hon. Nancy Heppner
Minister of Energy and Resources
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Hon. Gene Makowsky
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Liquor
and Gaming Authority

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds

Hon. Paul Merriman
Minister of Social Services

Hon. Don Morgan
Deputy Premier
Minister of Justice and Attorney General
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
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Hon. Greg Ottenbreit
Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Health

Hon. Lyle Stewart
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation