



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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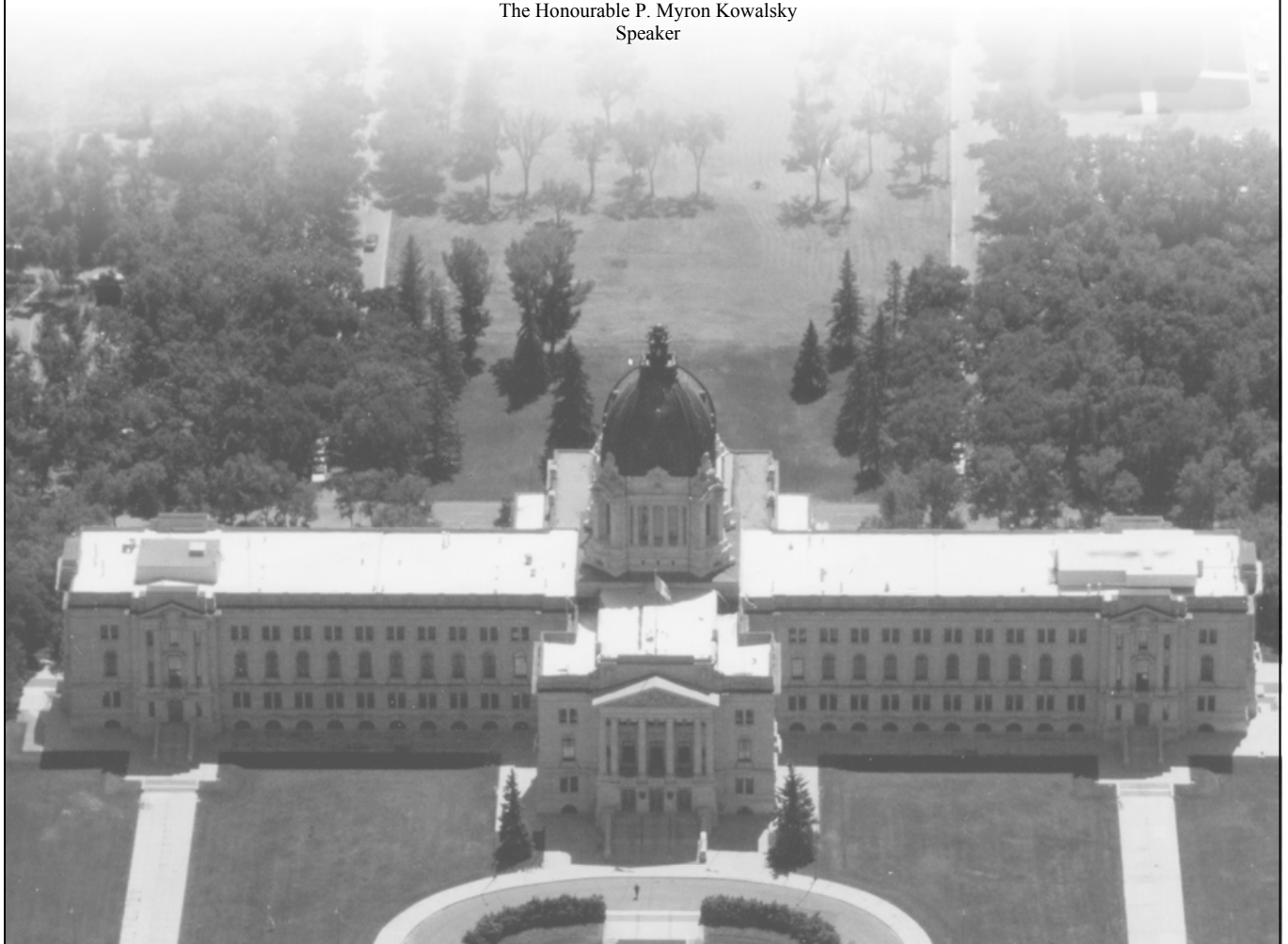
**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of

The Honourable P. Myron Kowalsky  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. P. Myron Kowalsky  
 Premier — Hon. Lorne Calvert  
 Leader of the Opposition — Brad Wall

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Addley, Graham	NDP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Bakken Lackey, Brenda	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
Belanger, Hon. Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Borgerson, Lon	NDP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Calvert, Hon. Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Cline, Hon. Eric	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Crofford, Hon. Joanne	NDP	Regina Rosemont
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Dearborn, Jason	SP	Kindersley
Draude, June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, Hon. David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Hagel, Glenn	NDP	Moose Jaw North
Hamilton, Doreen	NDP	Regina Wascana Plains
Harpauer, Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Higgins, Hon. Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Kowalsky, Hon. P. Myron	NDP	Prince Albert Carlton
Krawetz, Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lautermilch, Eldon	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMorris, Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Ted	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Prebble, Hon. Peter	NDP	Saskatoon Greystone
Quennell, Hon. Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Serby, Hon. Clay	NDP	Yorkton
Sonntag, Hon. Maynard	NDP	Meadow Lake
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Thomson, Hon. Andrew	NDP	Regina South
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Hon. Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Mr. Speaker, I stand today to present a petition on behalf of constituents who live along Highway 32 and are concerned about the deteriorating condition of that highway.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take immediate action and make necessary repairs to Highway 32 in order to address safety and economic concerns.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, the notorious condition of that highway is recognized by signators from the communities of Medicine Hat, Leader, Swift Current, Prince Albert, Fox Valley, Eatonia, Red Deer, Kindersley, and Saskatoon, as well as hundreds of others. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Swift Current.

**Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure again to rise again on behalf of constituents concerned about the amount of residential support offered to people with lifelong disabilities in my constituency. The prayer of their petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to provide the funding required for additional residential spaces for Swift Current residents with lifelong disabilities.

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

Mr. Speaker, all of the petitioners representing today are from the city of Swift Current. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have another petition to stop the forced school board amalgamations by people who think that they will not be a benefit to students. Mr. Speaker, the prayer of the petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to rescind this decision to force school boards to amalgamate.

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

And Mr. Speaker, the signatures on this petition are from the fine community of Dinsmore. And I'm pleased to present it on their behalf.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

**Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present another petition on behalf of 600 children under six years old and their parents in the constituency of Saskatoon Silver Springs regarding a much needed elementary school in the Arbor Creek area of Saskatoon. The prayer of the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to implement an allocation of financial resources to build an elementary school in Arbor Creek.

The petitioners today live on Wright Crescent, Peters Cove, and Buckwold Cove in northeast Saskatoon. I so present, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition here that, to halt crop insurance premium hikes and coverage reductions.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to take all the necessary actions to reverse the increase in crop insurance premiums and reduction in coverages.

And in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signed by the good citizens from Kenaston. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to present another petition to revisit the effects of the TransGas Asquith natural gas storage project. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately address the concerns of all individuals affected by this project, pay 100 per cent of the costs involved to rectify disruptions to water supplies, produce an environment assessment study encompassing a larger area outside the scope of the project, disclose the project's long-term effects on these areas, and consider alternative sources of water for the project.

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

Signed by the good citizens of Perdue, Dinsmore, Saskatoon, and Grandora. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kindersley.

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour today to rise in the Assembly and present a petition on behalf of citizens of south, west central Saskatchewan concerned with the rerouting of Highway 51.

The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary steps to ensure that Highway 51 is rebuilt to go through the town of Kerrobert so that local business may be given the opportunity to promote themselves to and gain business from patrons passing through Kerrobert.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition today is signed by citizens of the towns of Kerrobert and Wilkie. I so present.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to be able to present a petition on behalf of constituents who are very concerned with this government's reluctance to implement the SARC's [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres] human resources plan and the negative impact that it's having on Deer Park Villa. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly will please consider implementing recommendations as outlined in SARC's human resources plan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, come from the communities of Kelliher, Ituna, Hubbard, and Goodeve. I so present.

#### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

**Deputy Clerk:** — According to order the following petitions have been reviewed and pursuant to rule 14(7) are hereby read and received:

A new petition calling on the government to allow parents to place their children into involuntary drug treatment. That's sessional paper 815.

And addendums to previously tabled petitions being sessional papers nos. 63, 640, 666, 716, 720, 798, 808, and 814.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair of the Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure Committee is recognized.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure

**Mr. Harper:** — Mr. Speaker, I've been instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure to report Bill No. 104, The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2005 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on Bill 104. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time? I recognize the minister.

#### THIRD READINGS

##### Bill No. 104 — The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2005

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 104, The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2005 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair of Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure

**Mr. Harper:** — Mr. Speaker, I've been instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure to report Bill No. 105, The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2005 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? The Chair recognizes the minister.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Government Relations has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole for Bill 105. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time?

The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 105 — The Local Government Election Amendment Act, 2005

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill 105 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair of the policy committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure

**Mr. Harper:** — Mr. Speaker, I've been instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure to report Bill No. 106, The Municipalities Act, without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole for Bill 106. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted.

When shall this Bill be read a third time? I recognize the minister.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 106 — The Municipalities Act

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill 106, The Municipalities Act, be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure

**Mr. Harper:** — Mr. Speaker, I've been instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Infrastructure to report Bill No. 107, The Municipalities Consequential Amendment Act, 2005 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole for Bill 107. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time? I recognize the minister.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 107 — The Municipalities Consequential Amendment Act, 2005/Loi de 2005 sur les modifications corrélatives découlant de la loi intitulée The Municipalities Act

**Hon. Mr. Taylor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill 107, The Municipalities Consequential Amendment Act, 2005 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy.

##### Standing Committee on the Economy

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 88, The Health Labour Relations Reorganization Amendment Act, 2004 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The Government House Leader has requested leave to waive consideration of Bill 88 in Committee of the Whole. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Government Relations.

The Chair of the Standing Committee on Economy is recognized.

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, with leave I would like to report Bill No. 88, with amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in the Committee of the Whole?

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has requested leave for consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall the amendments be read a first time? I recognize the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes once again the Minister of Labour.

#### FIRST AND SECOND READING OF AMENDMENTS

##### Bill No. 88 — The Health Labour Relations Reorganization Amendment Act, 2004

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that the amendments be now read a first and second time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Labour that these amendments be now read a first and second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — First and second reading of the amendments.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be read a third time? The Chair recognizes the Minister of Labour.

#### THIRD READINGS

##### Bill No. 88 — The Health Labour Relations Reorganization Amendment Act, 2004

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — Leave is required to move this a third time. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. It has been moved by the Minister of Labour that this Bill No. 88 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy is recognized.

##### Standing Committee on the Economy

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 95, The Ecological Reserves Amendment Act, 2005.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in

Committee of the Whole? The Chair recognizes the Minister of the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of the Environment has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole for Bill 95. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time? The Chair recognizes the minister.

[13:45]

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 95 — The Ecological Reserves Amendment Act, 2005

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of the Environment that Bill 95, The Ecological Reserves Amendment Act, 2005 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — The motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — The Chair of the Standing Committee on the Economy is recognized.

#### Standing Committee on the Economy

**Mr. Lautermilch:** — Mr. Speaker, I was directed by Standing Committee on the Economy to report Bill No. 98, The Prairie and Forest Fires Amendment Act, 2005 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? The Minister of the Environment is recognized.

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Environment has requested leave to waive consideration of the whole on Bill 98. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave has been granted. When shall this Bill be read a third time? The minister.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 98 — The Prairie and Forest Fires Amendment Act, 2005

**Hon. Mr. Forbes:** — I move that this Bill be now read a third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of the Environment that Bill 98, The Prairie and Forest Fires Amendment Act, 2005 be now read a third time and passed under its title. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — The motion is carried.

**Deputy Clerk:** — Third reading of this Bill.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member from Martensville.

**Mr. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a privilege today for me to introduce to you and, through you, to all members of this House two people in your gallery, Alma Neudorf and Rita Guenther, and I'd ask them to give a wave, please. Alma is the wife of past MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] Bill Neudorf from the constituency then of Rosthern, and Rita is Bill's sister.

I had the good fortune years ago to be involved and be the nominator at Bill's first nomination. And it was a small nomination, Mr. Speaker, only about 1,500 people were there, all of them members. Bill was highly respected in the political area, in sports, and in his community as well. And Bill is one of the reasons why what used to be the Rosthern constituency — is now the Martensville constituency, Mr. Speaker — has never voted CCF [Co-operative Commonwealth Federation] or NDP [New Democratic Party].

Would all members of the House please join me in welcoming them to the House.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Moosomin.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join with my colleague in welcoming Alma to the Assembly today. I'd like to acknowledge the fact that Bill and I became very close friends, and we worked together an awful lot.

There's one thing about Bill that seems to just have followed his legacy. Mr. Speaker, we all remember how Bill, when he got a little irate, he could stand up; he could shake his finger. And I think the current member from Rosthern is pretty good at that as well. But we'd like to extend our welcome to Alma and to her sister-in-law Rita and welcome them to the Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cannington.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with my colleagues in welcoming Alma and Rita to the Assembly. I had the privilege of also serving in this House with Bill. And fact is this was his desk, and I sat right behind him. And I do very much remember Bill wagging his finger at the government, and then he would rant and rave, Mr. Speaker, sit down in his chair, turn around and wink at me.

And, Mr. Speaker, Bill enjoyed this House, and I think Alma and Rita will enjoy being here today. I'd ask everyone to welcome them again.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today and introduce to you and, through you, to all members of this Assembly 27 grade 10, 11, and 12 students from the John William Head Memorial Education Centre at Red Earth, Saskatchewan in the beautiful Carrot River Valley, Mr. Speaker.

Today the students are accompanied by teachers Linda Bernauer, Judy Mahoney, and Marcel McKay, as well as chaperones Cameron Head and Joe Whitecap.

Mr. Speaker, as well as welcoming these students, teachers, and chaperones to their Assembly, I would also like to say that I'm looking forward to meeting with them for pictures and drinks shortly after question period. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Athabasca.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my colleague from Carrot River Valley in welcoming the students here. I see many of them are, or all of them are Aboriginal students. And in Cree . . .

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

And I just told them in Cree, Mr. Speaker, that I'm very, very pleased that they're here today. And ask all members . . . if I may join with my colleague inviting the students from Red Earth here today and hope they have a wonderful day. Thank you very much.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Rosetown-Elrose.

**Mr. Hermanson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am too pleased to welcome a school group to our Assembly today. From the

Eston Composite School we have 29 grade 4 and grade 5 students. And they're sitting up in the east gallery. If they all give a wave so that all of my colleagues know that they're from Eston.

They are accompanied by their teacher, Jodi Bjornerud, who also has a special interest in the legislature. And Jodi was here for the Social Science Teachers Institute, and after having met her, I've decided that perhaps the member from Melville-Saltcoats isn't as old as I thought he was.

Mr. Speaker, as well as these fine students and teacher, we have chaperones Tawna Hansen, Debbie MacKeracher, Luana Bahm, Cindy Gardiner, Lynne McEvoy, Rob Lobdell — and Rob's been here before — Brian Anderson, Brian Tysdal, Lyle Olson, Pat Toner, Arlene Robinson, and Cheryl Skwara. I would like to welcome them here. Also not all of them are sitting up in the gallery. We have one student, Jordan Andrew, who has joined us right down here at the eye level behind the bar, and we're pleased to welcome Jordan Andrew here as well.

I'd ask all of my colleagues to welcome them. We'll be having a little meeting later, and we'll talk about the proceedings here in the legislature and any questions they might have pertaining to what they're doing today and what they've seen. So please welcome the grade 4 and 5 students from Eston to our Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is with a great sense of pleasure and pride that I introduce to you, through you, and to all members of the Assembly, Inspector Chuck Orem who is with us in your gallery today. And perhaps Inspector Orem could stand for a moment. Inspector Orem is with "F" Division of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police posted in Regina and works in the field of contract and community policing and acted as Chair of the Queen's Golden Jubilee statue project.

Mr. Speaker, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] is such a valuable entity to the people of this country, province, and city. Not only do they serve to protect us as citizens, but they are also very community-minded in their volunteer activities as well as being a very proud symbol for us as something that is uniquely Canadian and has an amazingly revered reputation worldwide.

As my brother, Sergeant Gerald Grobmeier, also of the force says, it's in your blood; once a Mountie always a Mountie. And I think we can witness that when we speak to our members of security here in the legislature, as many of them are ex-mounted police as well.

Mr. Speaker, Inspector Orem was well acquainted with my late father-in-law, Superintendent Cliff Morin, and through him I would like to thank the RCMP for their dedication, representation, and welcome him to the legislature today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!



**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Kindersley.

**Mr. Dearborn:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with my colleague from Rosetown-Elrose in welcoming again Mr. Rob Lobdell to his legislature. As I've mentioned before in this Assembly, he was central in getting West Central Road and Rail up and running which moves a great deal of the grain in the Eaton and Eston area. It's a producer-car facility, and it has greatly helped the economic stability of both those communities. And Mr. Lobdell is a business leader in west central Saskatchewan and I welcome him back to his Assembly again today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Qu'Appelle.

**Hon. Mr. Wartman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Transportation and myself, I would also like to welcome Rob Lobdell who has been a principal in the development of West Central Road & Rail, a grain logistics concept that really could be a whole new paradigm for moving grain in Western Canada. I think a tremendous asset to that area, as the member opposite has said, and certainly in helping keep the railroad there. There was threat that the rail was going to pull out. West Central, with one of its prime movers being Rob, did tremendous work there. And we're always happy to see him here in the legislature and thank him for his work and ask all members to join me in welcoming him.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It's my pleasure, members, to introduce to this Assembly a small group seated in the Speaker's gallery front row who are with the visitor services branch. Patrice Tremblay, D'Arcy Frohlick, and Denise Gregoire have just recently been hired on to the visitor service teams as bilingual information officers. I hope their work experience here in the Saskatchewan legislature serves to be a very interesting and rewarding experience. They are accompanied in the gallery by Lorraine DeMontigny, director of visitor services, and Marianne Morgan, assistant director of visitor services.

Please join me in welcoming our new bilingual information officers and directors to the Assembly here today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Also members, seated directly behind them are Murray and Lucille Scheidl. They are here today to observe the proceedings in the House and to observe their daughter in action in the Chamber today, this being Pam Scheidl, one of our legislative Pages.

And I also want to mention that Murray Scheidl was in a classroom when I was just a starting teacher back in Prince Albert many, many years ago and he managed to survive it and raise a family as well. So welcome here to the Legislative Assembly.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Moose Jaw North.

### Saskatchewan Dragoons Celebrate 100th Year of Service

**Mr. Hagel:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As we celebrate our Saskatchewan centennial so too are the Saskatchewan Dragoons commemorating their 100th year of service to Canada.

This past weekend the Saskatchewan Dragoons celebrated their storied existence with a reunion, parade to city hall, and rededication of their Vimy memorial crosses.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Dragoons perpetuate the 46th Battalion and King's Own Rifles of Canada and carry the battle honours of the 46th Battalion which served so bravely in World War I.

Young Saskatchewan men and their families gave hugely for the cause of justice and peace in our world. Of 5,374 men who served in the 46th Battalion, 4,917 were killed or wounded. We owe them much.

On Sunday the Saskatchewan Dragoons and congregation of St. Aidan Anglican Church honoured the memory of the valiant Prairie men who died at Vimy Ridge on April 9 and 12, 1917, by rededicating the Vimy memorial crosses.

Today, Mr. Speaker, noble men and women from southwest Saskatchewan serve their country and their world in the cause of peace and good order as reservist soldiers in the Saskatchewan Dragoons. Based out of the armouries in Moose Jaw, from the Swift Current and Moose Jaw region they are ready to serve at the call of their country.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all hon. members to join together in honour of 100 years of service by the men and women of the Saskatchewan Dragoons by saying thank you, congratulations, and happy centennial.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

### Herb Sparrow Charity Roast in North Battleford

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, on Saturday, May 14, I had the pleasure of attending a roast in the honour of the Hon. Herb Sparrow. As you know, Mr. Sparrow served in the Canadian Senate for 37 years, being summoned to the Senate in 1968 at the age of 38 by the then prime minister, Lester Pearson, and retiring in 2005 at the mandatory age of 75.

During his years as senator, Herb served Canada, Saskatchewan, and his community of North Battleford in many capacities, holding numerous positions in numerous organizations and committees. His 1984 Senate committee publication, *Soil At Risk: Canada's Eroding Future*, set the standard for North and South American soil conservation methods and made Senator Sparrow a recognized leader in soil conservation through out the world.

As mentioned, Herb is very active in his home community and one of his many achievements was the school lunch program which he ran out of his office at the local Kentucky Fried Chicken. This program made sure students at schools in North Battleford did not go hungry.

The North Battleford Rotary Club hosted the evening, which Senator Sparrow would not agree to unless the proceeds went to a charity — \$22,000 was raised and will go towards the Senator Herb Sparrow Rotary Club splash park.

The roast brought together family, friends, colleagues, and other dignitaries for an evening of good humour and a hearty serving of wit as those roasting the guest of honour gave their shots and received the usual quick comebacks from Herb.

Thank you, Senator Sparrow, for your dedication and achievements and for an enjoyable evening.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Lakeview.

#### Norwegians Celebrate Constitution Day

**Hon. Mr. Nilson:** —

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

That's the national anthem for Norway, and it's sung on this day to celebrate Constitution Day in 1814. In Saskatchewan we have many people who are Norwegian descendants who celebrate May 17 here in Saskatchewan.

This past weekend in Saskatoon, there were quite a number of people that gathered at the Western Development Museum with other Scandinavians to celebrate this event. At Birch Hills they have an annual event as well.

Mr. Speaker, there are many, many people who are proud of their roots in Norway, and we have many of those people in Saskatchewan. And in fact in Canada we have the most Norwegian descendants of any province in the country.

So on this day I would like to ask all of us to celebrate Norwegian Constitution Day along with the members from Regina Coronation Park, The Battlefords, Rosetown, Biggar, Saltcoats, Saskatchewan Rivers, Lloydminster, and all of those others who wished they were Norwegians here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Northwest.

#### University of Saskatchewan Female Athlete of the Year

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in this Assembly today to congratulate Kelsie Hendry on

her achievements. Kelsie Hendry is the recipient of the Mary Ethel Cartwright Trophy which honours the Female Athlete of the Year at the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, fifth-year Kelsie Hendry led the number one University of Saskatchewan Huskies women's track and field team in successfully defending the CIS [Canadian interuniversity sport] championship title in Winnipeg. Hendry made CIS history as she was named the CIS Female Athlete of the Year and first female to ever do this. She went on to be crowned the CIS gold medal champion in the pole vault for the third straight year, beating the record she set last year with a jump of 4.22 metres.

Hendry entered the national championship ranked number one in the country at the 2005 Canada West Championships. She won gold medal in the pole vault and set a new conference record and was named Female Field Performer of the meet for her accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, as you know the University of Saskatchewan, the U of S Huskies, has one of the most competitive and successful sports programs in Western Canada.

I know Kelsie personally, and I know both her mother and father are very proud of Kelsie.

I would ask that all members of the Assembly join myself and the official opposition in congratulating Kelsie Hendry and her fellow students and teammates for the tremendous efforts. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

#### Statue of Her Majesty and Burmese

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, one of the major events that will take place during Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's visit will be the unveiling of a statue of Her Majesty and her horse, Burmese, created by Susan Velder of St. Walburg.

Mr. Speaker, Burmese was a beautiful, pure black, gentle-tempered horse born at Fort Walsh, Saskatchewan in 1962 and was later selected to perform in the RCMP's world-famous musical ride as the lead horse. Burmese performed with distinction and in 1969 was among 150 horses presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II during a musical ride tour in England. She quickly became Her Majesty's favourite mount in parades up until 1987 when Her Majesty began riding in an open carriage.

Mr. Speaker, my father-in-law, P.J. Clifford Morin, was a member of the RCMP musical ride during the Burmese presentation to Her Majesty. And he served as the officer in charge of the musical ride for a good portion of the 23 years he spent with the ride.

Mr. Speaker, Cliff was also instrumental in assisting Ms. Velder with her creation of the statue. Throughout the project, he was called upon often as a consultant to provide the artist with his

knowledge and expertise with respect to Burmese. Mr. Speaker, my father-in-law always spoke with pride and enthusiasm about the RCMP musical ride and Burmese, and he was very pleased to be able to be of assistance in the creation of the statue.

It is unfortunate that Cliff passed away last June prior to its unveiling. But I know that he took great pleasure and great pride in knowing that this statue of Her Majesty and Burmese, with its association to the musical ride, would one day grace the grounds of this legislature. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

### Saskatchewan Beef Industry

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this week is the two-year anniversary of the discovery of BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] in one Alberta cow which marked the beginning of a dark period in Canadian agriculture. Following this discovery, the US [United States], Japan, Korea, and other countries that imported Canadian beef closed their borders.

This blow to the beef industry has cost the Canadian economy billions. Before the discovery of BSE, Saskatchewan was exporting about 23 million worth of beef per month.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan beef producers are still suffering through this ordeal and now have to deal with a provincial government that refuses to fully fund the CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] program and has designed an inadequate set-aside program. Our program works out to be about half of what the Alberta government, per animal, has put in for their farmers.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP government has provided a pre-feasibility study with a price tag of about \$55,000. But, Mr. Speaker, that's a paltry sum in comparison with the 37 million that has been provided in Alberta for market expansion and research.

The government has done little to attract new packing facilities in the province as well as encouraging the development of the feeder cattle industry to support an expansion in Saskatchewan's packing industry.

Mr. Speaker, this government has made commitments and then turned around and broke those commitments. Currently the feeder cattle industry faces challenges in growing due to the lack of infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, we had the opportunity to turn a disadvantage into an advantage for Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan producers, but as usual we point the finger to someone else to take the leadership role when it comes to farm families in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina

Elphinstone.

### Great Excursions

**Mr. McCall:** — Monsieur le Président, je voudrais dire quelques mots au sujet de Monsieur Claude-Jean Harel et sa compagnie de voyage, Great Excursions.

[Translation: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say a few words about Mr. Claude-Jean Harel and his company, Great Excursions.]

Mr. Speaker, Great Excursions is a Regina-based company that specializes in providing clients with enriched travel packages where adventure, discovery, and learning are integral parts of the travel experience. Mr. Harel is fully aware of what a great place Saskatchewan is and how much it has to offer. Great Excursions works with partners who share in his belief that Saskatchewan, with its rich natural and cultural heritage, has the potential to be a destination of international appeal.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Harel recently attended Rendez-vous Canada 2005 in Saskatoon and says that Great Excursions had its best Rendez-vous ever. The company is receiving commitments to list Saskatchewan products in greater numbers than ever before with tour operators, wholesalers, and partners from France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, England, the United States, and India, Mr. Speaker.

This is due in no small part to Claude-Jean Harel's passion for Saskatchewan's history, geography, flora and fauna, and people. As one of his customers has said, "Through Great Excursions, I have discovered the diversity, exoticism, and magic of Saskatchewan."

Mr. Speaker, I wish to thank Mr. Harel for his work in ensuring that the world gets a little more Saskatchewan.

Une autre fois, merci et félicitations à Monsieur Claude-Jean Harel sur tout son travail. Merci, Monsieur le Président.

[Translation: Once again thank you and congratulations to Mr. Claude-Jean Harel on his work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.]

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

### Condition of Provincial Highways

**Mr. Weekes:** — Mr. Speaker, the Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association of Saskatchewan has a simple question for this government. Why is the gas tax filling holes in the budget rather than holes in the road? Mr. Speaker, why is that?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. While the members will know that the Highways budget was

increased by \$5 million last year, we're up to \$300 million. We're honouring our commitment, Mr. Speaker, of \$2.5 billion over 10 years that goes towards road improvement and maintenance. And we're also honouring our commitment of 1.2 billion over four years, Mr. Speaker.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the travelling public that we apologize for the inconveniences that they will experience this summer, because there'll be lots of construction this summer, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Mr. Speaker, travel the roads of this province. You can experience first-hand our crumbling infrastructure. The association compares our roads and urban streets to those of downtown Baghdad. Mr. Speaker, we have First World taxes and then some. Why do we have Third World roads?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well again let me talk about the facts, Mr. Speaker. We recognize it's springtime in Saskatchewan. We recognize that there are potholes in the road, Mr. Speaker. It happens every year. It doesn't matter how much work you do, Mr. Speaker, there will always be potholes on the roads in the springtime in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

Having said that, Mr. Speaker, the crews are out there. They're doing temporary patching right now. They're waiting for the surfaces to dry out. And as I say again, we apologize to the travelling public, Mr. Speaker, but there will be construction crews out across our province everywhere this summer, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the facts are that the government takes in \$65 million more than they spend on roads and highways in this province. Mr. Speaker, the Road Builders and Heavy Construction Association of Saskatchewan has hired a consultant to look at the Highways department budget. The conclusion is simple — fixing roads is not a high enough priority.

The mayor of Regina agrees, saying his city's roads are in deplorable condition. Mr. Speaker, when will this minister show some leadership and make fixing our crumbling infrastructure a priority?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well the Conservatives opposite say one thing but here are the facts. Mr. Speaker, the amount of revenue taken in is correct. The member is correct — \$365 million. But it is from vehicle fuel tax; it is

from aviation fuel tax; it is from locomotive fuel tax.

Mr. Speaker, the amount of revenue that we collect for vehicles is about \$320 million. The amount of expenditure on our highways budget is about \$300 million and the amount that goes through to municipal government for road improvements is, I'm told, about \$34 million. Strikes me that's 334 million — just slightly over what we collect in fuel tax, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Mr. Speaker, I have a few facts of my own. Five years ago the people of southwest Saskatchewan were so frustrated by the state of their highways they undertook to fix them themselves. North of Val Marie we had patching crews. East of Climax, No. 18, we had patching crews. A constituent of mine sent pieces of pavement to the minister on a weekly basis from the community of Burstall.

Mr. Speaker, last week I called every administrator from each community along Highway 32 from Leader down to Cabri and here's what the administrators along that piece of road had to say.

From Sceptre the administrator said, it's deplorable. I don't know what else I can say. From Abbey, it's absolutely dangerous. From Lancer, the administrator there said, the area between Lancer and Abbey is atrocious. The children riding the school bus shouldn't be allowed on that road because it's so dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, why does the minister continue to allow these dangerous road conditions to exist?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Mr. Speaker, we have the economy humming and again the only thing that is depressing in this province of ours is the members opposite in opposition, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the member refers back several years ago . . . and there will always be challenges as I've indicated. But, Mr. Speaker, there have been significant improvements in our roads in the last number of years, Mr. Speaker. We have taken many of those thin membrane surface roads that have seen significant shift from rail to road, significant pressures on those thin membrane surface roads. Mr. Speaker, we have converted now, Mr. Speaker, roughly 1,750 to 1,800 kilometres to structural pavement, Mr. Speaker. Those have been upgraded to structural pavement and I think that's something we should be proud of. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to fix the roads here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Cypress

Hills.

**Mr. Elhard:** — Mr. Speaker, Highway 32 is no longer primarily a grain road. Mr. Speaker, the town administrator in Prelate won't drive down Highway 32. She won't drive family members down 32; she won't let them on the road. And she says that people are choosing not to do business in that area because of the poor condition of the highway.

Mr. Speaker, the town administrator from Cabri won't take the highway to her ranch even though it's the closest route to that destination. The highway is simply too rough for her ranch vehicles.

All the while, Mr. Speaker, this government will potentially take a windfall of profit out of the Shackleton gas fields that will present about 20 per cent of the province's resources to this government's budgetary requirements. Mr. Speaker, all that money coming out of that area and no money for Highway 32. Mr. Speaker, why will these dangerous conditions continue to exist under this administration?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Look I've said we recognize the need for infrastructure and we need to keep working on the roads, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, let me ask this question. If those members opposite — the Conservatives, Mr. Speaker — if those members opposite would have us take money from someplace else, Mr. Speaker, please to tell us where that money should come from, Mr. Speaker.

We've increased . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, they say gas. I listened to the Finance critic a couple of days ago, Mr. Speaker, talk about the price of oil, Mr. Speaker, set at . . . he pegged it at \$54, projected apparently that it was going to stay there forever. I don't think it's there any more, Mr. Speaker.

I say, Mr. Speaker, you need to be responsible when you put your budgets together. That's what we've done. We've increased the budget by \$5 million. We'll continue to fix the roads here in the province, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Lake Diefenbaker is a tourism gem in southern Saskatchewan but its potential has not been realized and development around Elbow, Mistusinne, and Douglas Park is pitifully slow despite a world-class golf course, marina, and a beautiful, clean lake. The main reason seems to be the lack . . . for the lack of development around these communities seems to be Highway 19 from Highway 42 to the community of Elbow.

Mr. Speaker, those driving on Highway 19 have a difficult decision to make. They can dodge the deer or they can dodge the potholes. The highway is a major route to recreational areas, Mr. Speaker. It's not a back road. Mr. Speaker, why is Highway 19 perpetually in such poor condition?

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, let me first of all say that in case members are not aware, last year and this year, it's the first time it's ever happened that we've had the most extreme weather conditions as it relates to freezing and thawing in Saskatchewan's history.

Well you hear them hooting from their desks, Mr. Speaker. But, Mr. Speaker, professionals have been talking about this for some time. In Western Canada we've had two years of extreme weather conditions. Mr. Speaker, let me say this, let me say this to the Conservative . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order please, members. Order please. The Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — . . . when you get into the fact that . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I want to be able to hear the responses, members. The Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well if they don't want to listen to the facts I guess I'll say this for the public across the province, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I encourage those members to support this government and support this budget. I encourage those members to support . . . to contact their cousins in Ottawa as well, those Conservative members from Saskatchewan, our MPs [Member of Parliament], as well to support the budget to deliver even more money here to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Thunder Creek.

**Mr. Stewart:** — Mr. Speaker, earlier this month the Canadian Automobile Association released the results of a survey that said Canadians are more concerned about highways than any other part of public infrastructure. Roads in Quebec and the Prairies are seen as the poorest in Canada. And Saskatchewan roads are certainly the poorest in the Prairies.

Mr. Speaker, this government has an obligation to its citizens to maintain basic services like roads. Mr. Speaker, why is this minister shirking that responsibility? Why isn't Highway No. 19, from Highway 42 to Elbow more of a priority with this NDP government since it is the only access to one of southern Saskatchewan's main tourist attractions?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well each one of the questions that have been asked they identify an area of the economy that are doing well, Mr. Speaker. They talk about first of all the oil and gas. We see significant oil and gas development in the province. While certainly that is something that we desire, we'll continue to promote and develop in our province, Mr. Speaker, it continues to put pressure on the infrastructure.

They talk about tourism, Mr. Speaker, another area of the economy that's doing very well, Mr. Speaker. And we see year over year, Mr. Speaker, increases in the number of tourists that come to visit this beautiful province of Saskatchewan. I know that'll happen in even greater numbers this year during our centennial year.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize, we recognize the importance of infrastructure and that's why we've increased our budget this year during this spring's budget, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I recently received an email from a constituent who is very concerned about the condition of the highway that has been in a terrible state of disrepair for the last five years. Mr. Speaker, this constituent was driving on the section of Highway 22 between Earl Grey and the junction of 20 when she was . . . met an oncoming vehicle and was unable to avoid a large pothole and sustained significant damage to her vehicle, Mr. Speaker. But that was only part of her concern, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to quote from her email . . .

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — Order please, order please, order please. I'm just having a difficult time hearing the member and that's because there are too many other people talking at once and I would ask members to come to order. The member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said, damage to her vehicle was only part of her concern and I'd like to quote from her email. She says and I quote:

My deepest concern is what could have happened considering my two children, ages five and three, were in the car with me. If the . . . [oncoming car] . . . I could have hit the oncoming car, and/or the ditch, or worse. I . . . [don't] feel safe driving on this . . . piece of pavement.

End of quote, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Highways: when is he going to fix Highway No. 22?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If the members have forgotten, Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has more roads than Alberta and Manitoba combined, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's a huge challenge for a province like ours where you see significant transfer of goods and services from rail to road, Mr. Speaker.

But let me just say for the Conservative Party opposite, Mr. Speaker. What we did last year, Last year alone, the department improved over 600 kilometres of provincial highway system, including resurfacing 281 kilometres of pavements and upgrading 154 kilometres of thin membrane surface highways to a paved standard, Mr. Speaker.

There is lots to do. There will be lots happening this summer, Mr. Speaker. And we will continue working on our roads and fix them up, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister said there would be lots happening. Well nothing's happened on that section of highway in the last five years except it's getting worse every year, Mr. Speaker.

Coincidentally I received another e-mail dealing with that particular section of highway from an alderperson from the village of Earl Grey. The community of Earl Grey and the surrounding RMs [rural municipality] have been in discussions with the officials from the Department of Highways, Mr. Speaker, about getting their highway fixed. And I'll quote from this e-mail, Mr. Speaker:

A number of meetings have been held with representatives from the Dept of Highways — but no action has been forthcoming. At the last meeting, it was fairly bluntly stated that the RM and/or the Village of Earl Grey needed to step up to the plate with an offer to "partner", otherwise that portion of highway . . . will be turned back to a gravel surface. That is quite [an] ultimatum — put up or shut up!

Mr. Speaker, will this minister quit playing games with the people of this province and just fix their highways?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, as I travel around the province we recognize there is work to do. But we are fixing the roads, Mr. Speaker. There have been significant improvements in the quality of roads across this province, Mr. Speaker. We have taken significant numbers of thin membrane surface roads as I've indicated, something over 1700 kilometres, Mr. Speaker, and moved that into a paved structure, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are pleased with the contribution from the federal government as it pertains to the national highway system, Mr. Speaker. We have accelerated the twinning of our national highways of Nos. 1 and 16 where they will be completed now by the year 2007.

Mr. Speaker, the roads are being fixed. We're proud of that. And we should all be celebrating this year, 2005, here in Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

### Recommendations for Development of the Rural Economy

**Mr. Brkich:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our rural economy is like our highways, it is in need of repair. The Saskatchewan Party has given this government numerous ideas to fix this problem. Mr. Speaker, from *One Hundred Ideas to Get Saskatchewan Ready for the Next 100 Years*, idea no. 32, support the expansion of career training; idea no. 10, create Enterprise Saskatchewan, a one-stop agency for developing the economy; idea no. 21, establish new growth tax incentives to spur private sector investment. And from our policy book, eliminate corporate capital tax on new investment. Well, Mr. Speaker, when will this government implement these ideas so Saskatchewan families can have a better economic future?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to answer this question by responding to what the Leader of the Opposition, the Conservative Leader of the Opposition said about a month and a half ago, Mr. Speaker. This is quote, he says:

You know, Mr. Speaker, we don't really care whose ideas they are.

And he was talking here about ACRE [Action Committee on the Rural Economy], Mr. Speaker. And today, Mr. Speaker, I get a . . . Today, Mr. Speaker, I get a response, Mr. Speaker. Today, Mr. Speaker . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order, please. Order, please. Order. The member for . . . Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, I get a fax from Audrey Horkoff who is the Chair of the ACRE committee, and she says this, Mr. Speaker, about the question that the member opposite asked me about his ideas, and she says this: I know that they say they were first when they released their ideas, but they were not.

We released the ideas first, Mr. Speaker, is what she said. And then she goes on and says this, Mr. Speaker, both Dick and I are, she says this both Dick and I are insulted by what the committee reference as their material, Mr. Speaker. I know it's just politics, but we don't play that game and don't appreciate anyone else using it, Mr. Speaker.

Apologize.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm-River Watrous.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you one thing. This government is not first on anything that's for sure. ACRE has asked the minister for more funding for entrepreneurs, a one-window contact for business approval in the start-up process. A PST [provincial sales tax] exemption on manufacturing equipment, and finally the systematic elimination of the corporate capital tax.

Mr. Speaker, these are great recommendations. At the same time they match the ideas we've been asking this government to implement for some time now. Mr. Speaker, will this government show some vision and implement these recommendations from ACRE now?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I have in front of me here, Mr. Speaker, the news story from the *The StarPhoenix* on Thursday, November 25, of which the Leader of the Opposition, Conservative Leader of the Opposition was talking, Mr. Speaker, about their tax policy changes, Mr. Speaker. And there was absolutely no mention, no mention of the PST adjustment, Mr. Speaker, at that time anywhere.

And I'll tell you why they didn't mention it, Mr. Speaker, because the policy draft recommendations by ACRE, Mr. Speaker, were released the following day, Mr. Speaker. They were released the following day. And lo and behold what we see, Mr. Speaker, in the Saskatchewan Conservative Party's new 100 ideas that they allude to is the policy from the ACRE recommendations, Mr. Speaker. That's what we see.

If the Saskatchewan Conservative Party members, Mr. Speaker, would at least, Mr. Speaker, give credit to those people whose ideas they are instead of adopting them as their own, Mr. Speaker. Just give those Saskatchewan people their ideas back.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Arm River-Watrous.

**Mr. Brkich:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'll ask the minister opposite to table that letter, that fax. If the government will not use the Saskatchewan Party ideas, they should at least implement ACRE's recommendations and implement them quickly. It's been far too long since this government showed some serious commitment to rural Saskatchewan.

Will the minister stand here today and guarantee that he is doing everything in his capacity to make rural Saskatchewan more prosperous? Can rural Saskatchewan trust this government to bring in ACRE's recommendations so rural Saskatchewan will once again have a strong and vibrant

economy?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Serby:** — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting today that the member from Arm River would stand up and quote information and that of the ACRE report, Mr. Speaker. Because I have here, Mr. Speaker, a number of quotes that the Saskatchewan Conservative Party has been using over the last little while. And I want to quote this one, Mr. Speaker, from the member from Saltcoats-Melville and he says this, quote:

ACRE members are being paid a per diem to find more ways to drive [a] . . . nail into the rural Saskatchewan coffin.

Mr. Speaker, that's his quote. He goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, that:

One ACRE member [has said] . . . Rural Saskatchewan is going to die anyway [Mr. Speaker].

That's the quote from the representative from Melville-Saltcoats, Mr. Speaker. Then he goes on to say, Mr. Speaker, and the most recent quote Mr. Speaker, from the member from Arm River who says, Mr. Speaker:

I'm afraid [that] the government will take . . . the wrong way and they will cut the infrastructure in many towns.

Mr. Speaker, this is what they're quoting, Mr. Speaker. The member . . .

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Canora-Pelly.

#### Saskatchewan Business Council

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Labour has a good working relationship with organized labour, but I wonder about her relationship with the men and women who create jobs in this province. I would ask her to explain her letter to Warren Michelson, past president of the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce, dated May 11, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, the tone of this letter is snarky, unprofessional, rude, contemptuous, and unbecoming a minister of this government. In this letter the minister states, and I quote:

. . . the Business Council's unending stream of public statements, news releases, open letters and advertisements contribute nothing of value.

Mr. Speaker, is that what this minister thinks of the men and women who create jobs, that they contribute nothing of value?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:30]

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, just to point out that in the ad that was in the paper last night, and it talks about the proposed changes and myself saying that the proposed changes are the same as in other provinces. Then the Business Council, the Saskatchewan Party Business Council, stands up and lists five things, only one of which has any changes proposed to it. The other four, Mr. Speaker, the other four, as the same as the Saskatchewan Party has done over the last number of years, cherry-picked the items out of The Trade Union Act that they don't agree with.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Canora-Pelly.

**Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as I said, the Saskatchewan Business Council represents over 51 organizations and the majority of businesses in this province. Mr. Speaker, the tone of this letter is unprofessional and scathing at best. The letter is full of condescending attacks on the very men and women who create jobs and opportunities for our young people. The minister goes as far as to categorize the concerns of these men and women as input. Mr. Speaker, input is in quotation marks. This suggests the minister thinks very little of what the men and women who create jobs in the province have to say.

Mr. Speaker, how does the minister hope to build a positive working relationship with the job makers of this province when she ridicules their concerns and advice?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member opposite wishes to quote from letters, I would like to quote from a letter December 14, 2004 to Mrs. Pollon at the CFIB [Canadian Federation of Independent Business]. This letter came from Brad Wall, Leader of the Official Opposition, and at the end of the letter it says, and I quote:

I would also like to offer my co-operation and any resources which may be of assistance to the Saskatchewan Business Council in opposing this policy of government directed hours.

Mr. Speaker, they've been behind this from the very beginning and they haven't got the nerve to stand up on their own feet and do it. They hide behind the Business Council and, Mr. Speaker, it's unacceptable.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier of



this province. Not a moment ago his Minister of Labour stood up and wrote off all of the businessmen and women, all of the co-ops, SIGA[Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority], all of the members of the Business Council, by calling them the . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, she just wrote off all of the members of the Business Council. She called them the Saskatchewan Party Business Council. Universities, Mr. Speaker, municipal organization, co-ops, small-business men and women, larger businesses to be sure — she, Mr. Speaker, insulted them all, calling them all, writing them off as a partisan organization.

Mr. Speaker, the question to the Premier is clear. Will he ask that minister to stand in her place and apologize to the business community for those remarks?

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order please. The Minister of Labour.

**Hon. Ms. Higgins:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, this government has supported the economic development within this province and believes in the business community in this province. And, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the Saskatchewan Party front of the Saskatchewan Business Council — when the Saskatchewan Party has offered their co-operation and any resources to help in this — Mr. Speaker, I guess the big question here is that caucus resources they're offering that are paid for by the taxpayers of . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order. Order please.

#### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

#### Saskatchewan Transportation Company Launches Special Youth Pass

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm certainly pleased, was pleased to announce that Saskatchewan Transportation Company earlier today launched a special centennial program that will allow Saskatchewan youth to see their province during this historic centennial year. The Celebrate Saskatchewan youth pass is an excursion pass for summer travel during 2005.

The Legislative Secretary for the Centennial, the member for Moose Jaw North, joined me and many youth representatives from SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], the First Nations University of Canada, and the University of Regina, along with officials from STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company], Tourism Saskatchewan, and the Centennial Office this morning to unveil this exciting youth excursion bus pass.

For a one-time cost, Mr. Speaker, of \$75, Saskatchewan residents between the ages of 15 and 25 have unlimited access

to STC bus service throughout the months of June, July, and August, Mr. Speaker. It's important during the celebration of our 100 years as a province that our young people have the opportunity to see as much of the province as they can. We want to have as many young people as possible sample our province's beauty, Mr. Speaker, during this our centennial year.

The passes will be available starting Friday, May . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order please. Order please, members. Order. The Minister of Highways.

**Hon. Mr. Sonntag:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The passes will be available starting Friday, May 20, at any STC depot or agency throughout the province. Starting June 1 they can be used as often as desired on any routes that STC travels in our province. The Celebrate Saskatchewan youth pass is an affordable way for young people to enjoy travelling right around Saskatchewan. A person would only have to use the pass once, Mr. Speaker, for a Regina to Prince Albert return bus trip, and the pass will have paid for itself for the rest of the summer.

With STC serving 275 communities throughout Saskatchewan, this youth bus pass is a great opportunity for young people to see a great deal of our province. Whether they are using it to attend homecoming celebrations, visiting family and friends, catch some of the action at the Canada Summer Games, go the beach, go to a concert, cheer on our Riders, or just to explore the province — our young people will have affordable travel with the STC Celebrate Saskatchewan youth bus pass.

And I am pleased that here in Saskatchewan we have a publicly owned bus company that is available . . . that is able, I should say, to provide this great centennial opportunity for Saskatchewan youth. We hope hundreds of young people take advantage of this great deal this summer to discover all the wonders that there are here in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the member for Carrot River Valley.

**Mr. Kerpan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and respond to the ministerial statement on the centennial youth pass announcement that the Minister of Highways just rose in his place and presented, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, a rare occasion perhaps today in this Assembly — at least of late — where you may see the opposition, the official opposition saying to the government, good idea. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in fact, Mr. Speaker, it's such a good idea that I'm surprised it's not in the Sask Party's book of 100 new ideas. It's a good idea. Mr. Speaker, obviously the government is taking some direction from the philosophy of the Saskatchewan Party in implementing something that is of some value.

Mr. Speaker, I think it's a good thing that we as a government and STC would want to carry a bigger passenger load than normally might be the case on their regular routes throughout Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. My thinking being that if the buses

are running anyway, we might as well run them full as well as partially full. The downside of course, Mr. Speaker, was highlighted during question period today was the fact that — and we talked about this last week in question period — one of the STC buses chose to take a detour on a side road in order to avoid the poor piece of highway that it would normally travel over. That is the real disappointment and the downside of this.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps this idea might want to be considered down the road as something that STC would want to implement every summer. Of course we know that this summer is special with our centennial, but it's the kind of program that I believe will increase the opportunity for young people to see the province first-hand, as some people that don't ever get a chance to see the perhaps the farther remote parts of the province.

Perhaps it could be in fact extended to include seniors or perhaps low-income earners, Mr. Speaker, who maybe don't have the opportunity to get out of the cities of Saskatoon or Regina and get the opportunity to travel throughout the province at a reasonable cost. And it's something that maybe STC may want to consider — should — in the future.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, with tongue-in-cheek just a bit, perhaps we ought to . . . we know that we have a tremendous drain of young people throughout Saskatchewan going to other provinces and to United States. Perhaps we ought to make this program so that the buses stop within 100 kilometres of any border of Saskatchewan so that young people from this province aren't tempted to leave Saskatchewan under the heavy oppression of this NDP government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in conclusion all in all I want to say to STC, good job on this particular program. I look forward to many young people travelling the buses of the province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I'm extremely pleased to stand on behalf of the government and table responses to written questions no. 1,250 through 1,270 inclusive.

**The Speaker:** — Responses to questions 1,250 to 1,270 inclusive have been submitted.

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

**The Speaker:** — The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Van Mulligen:** — Mr. Speaker, both the Crown and Central Agencies Committee and the Human Services Committee of the Legislative Assembly have a very heavy workload. To enable them to do their work, I move the Assembly do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until Tuesday next, 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:45.]



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