



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATURE

of the

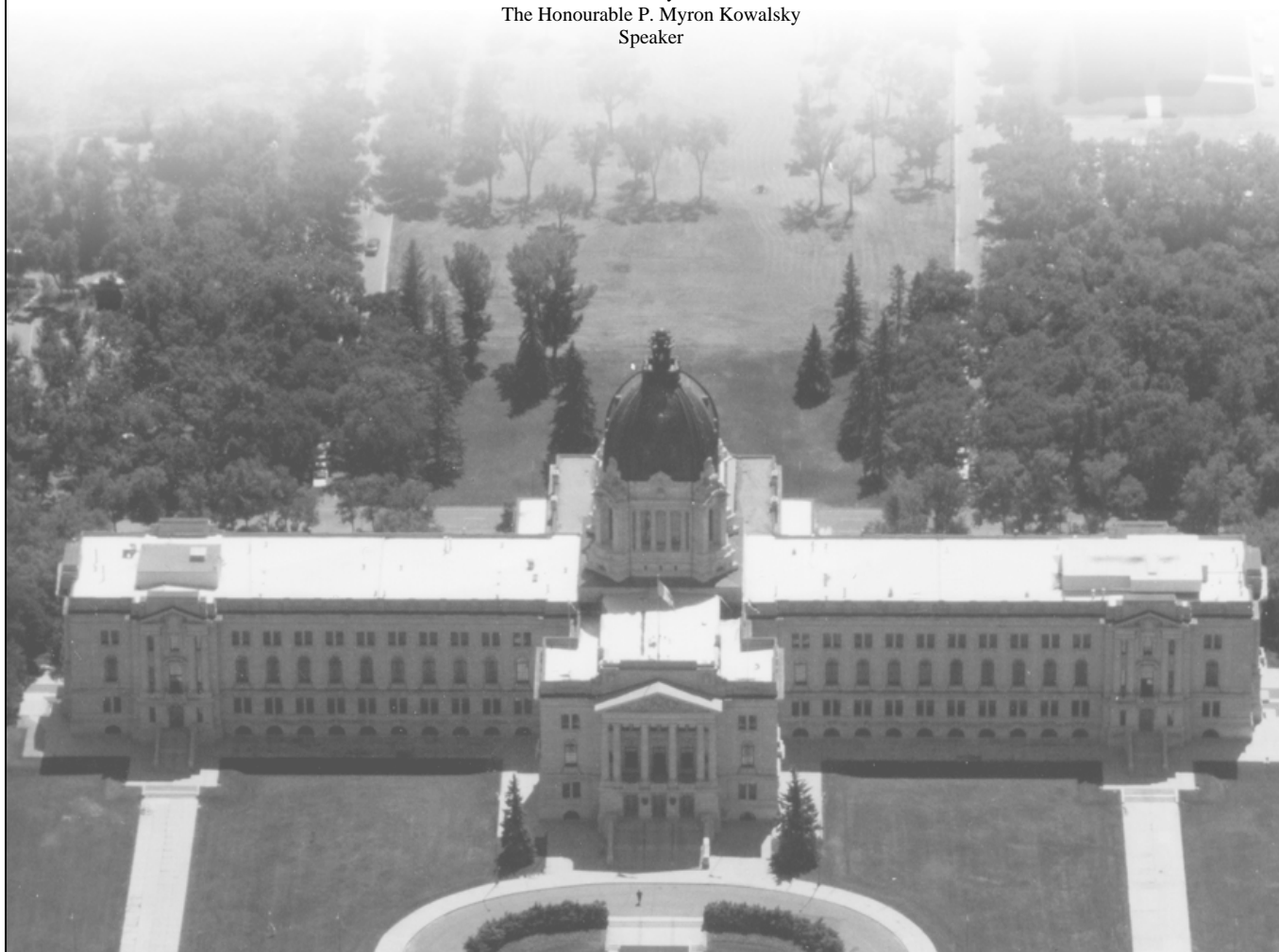
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Hon. Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Beatty, Hon. Joan	NDP	Cumberland
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Heppner, Ben	SP	Martensville
Hermanson, Elwin	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
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Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kerpan, Allan	SP	Carrot River Valley
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Morgan, Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, Hon. John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
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Taylor, Hon. Len	NDP	The Battlefords
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Wakefield, Milton	SP	Lloydminster
Wall, Brad	SP	Swift Current
Wartman, Hon. Mark	NDP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Yates, Hon. Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney
Vacant		Weyburn-Big Muddy

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the start of another week I present the petition on behalf of constituents from the area of Highway 32, the communities that run along Highway 32 from Leader to Cabri. The prayer reads as follows:

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.

Today's petition, Mr. Speaker, is signed by individuals from the community of Sceptre and Leader. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition for timely cancer treatment in Saskatchewan. 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 actions to give cancer patients timely access to medical treatment.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition has over 700 names behind it. It's just been collected over the weekend, so in a short time well over 700 names have been put on this petition. And I know there are hundreds more coming in each day, and I'm sure we'll get very familiar with this petition. The petitioners on these sheets are mainly from the Meath Park-Prince Albert area. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Chisholm: — Mr. Speaker, I also rise today to deliver a petition regarding the timely cancer treatment in Saskatchewan. 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 action to give cancer patients timely access to medical treatments.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petitioners are from the Maidstone area. Thank

you.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Humboldt.

Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I have several pages again today of citizens concerned of the safety of Highway No. 5. And 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 action to upgrade and widen Highway No. 5 from Humboldt to Saskatoon.

And the signatures, Mr. Speaker, are from Englefeld, Saskatoon, Meacham, Wadena, Buchanan, Martensville, Prud'homme, Kelvington, Humboldt; Calgary, Alberta; and Winkler, Manitoba. I so present.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to present a petition from citizens who are concerned about safe driving conditions on Highway No. 3. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to resurface and properly maintain Highway No. 3 from Fairholme to Turtleford and the Livelong access road.

Signed by the good citizens of Livelong and district. I so present.

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

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to present a petition on behalf of residents from across Saskatchewan that are concerned that Saskatchewan is the only province besides PEI [Prince Edward Island] that does not have a dedicated children's hospital. 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 before the next election to build a provincial children's hospital in Saskatoon.

The petitioners today live in Erindale, Arbor Creek, and Silverspring 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 for timely cancer treatment in Saskatchewan.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to take the necessary action to give cancer patients timely access to medical treatments.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

This particular petition is signed by the good citizens from the town of Davidson. I so present.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition regarding autism spectrum disorders. I will read briefly from the petition, Mr. Speaker. It talks about:

Wherefore your petitioner humbly prays that your Hon. Assembly may be pleased to act upon recommendations made by the Government of Saskatchewan caucus committee on human services. Among those recommendations are: to coordinate among the departments of Health, Learning, and Community Resources and Employment, with input from stakeholders, to formulate a provincial comprehensive autism spectrum disorders treatment program, and to continue to provide intensive behavioural intervention and other therapies for as long as an individual's lead medical professions deems it to be required.

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

This petition is signed by good citizens from Saskatoon. I so present. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 as additions to previously tabled petitions being sessional paper nos. 5, 7, 8, 64, 67, 638, 639.

NOTICES OF MOTIONS AND QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Wood River.

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 47 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Property Management: did management of the department have established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2002?

And I give notice I shall on day no. 47 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Property Management: how did management of the department monitor any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2002?

And to the Minister of Property Management: does management of the department have any knowledge of any actual or suspected fraud or illegal activity within the department during the year 2002? If so, what is the nature

of this activity?

To the Minister of Property Management: what did management of the department find as a result of its monitor of any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risk or detect fraud in the year 2002?

To the Minister of Property Management: is management of the department aware of any allegations of fraud or illegal activity within the department or its agencies in the year 2002, such as information received from employees, former employees, customers, clients, suppliers, or others? If so, what is the nature of the activity?

And, Mr. Speaker, I have similar questions for the year 2001.

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

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice I shall on day no. 47 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister of Agriculture: with whom did the minister and his officials meet with concerning the veterinary medical Act, Bill No. 28? At what dates and times did these meetings take place?

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

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on day no. 47 I shall ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: is management of the department aware of any allegations of fraud or other illegal activity within the department or its agencies in the year 2002, such as information received from employees, former employees, customers, clients, suppliers, or others? If so, what is the nature of the activity?

Mr. Speaker, I have a similar question to the same minister for the year 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 47 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: what did management of the department find as a result of its monitor of any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risk or detect fraud in the year 2002?

Mr. Speaker, I have a similar question to the same minister for the year 2001.

Mr. Speaker, I give notice that on day no. 47 I will ask the government the following question:

Again to the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: did management of the department have established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or to help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2002?

And, Mr. Speaker, I have a similar question to the same minister for the year 2001.

And, Mr. Speaker, I shall also give notice that I shall on day no. 47 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: how did management of the department monitor any established programs and controls to mitigate fraud risks or to help prevent or detect fraud in the year 2002?

And I have a similar question for the year 2001. And, finally, Mr. Speaker, I give notice that I shall on day no. 47 ask the government the following question:

To the Minister Responsible for Investment Saskatchewan: does management of the department have any knowledge of any actual or suspected fraud or illegal activity within the department during the year 2002? If so, what is the nature of this activity?

And, Mr. Speaker, finally and again I also have a question — a similar question — to the same minister for the year 2001. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Regina Elphinstone.

Students to Test Marketing Strategy in China

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. For the last two years the University of Regina's Faculty of Business Administration has been sponsoring a competition for fourth-year students entitled Bridges to International Practice.

This competition is a particularly good example of a very positive partnership between the university and the business community, and it provides students with an opportunity to gain valuable practical experience of the real-world business environment.

This year, Mr. Speaker, the challenge for students was to develop marketing strategies to help Hypor Canada, one of the world's leading suppliers of swine genetics, to expand its operations in China.

Team proposals were assessed by a panel of judges representing the Business Admin faculty, Hypor, and the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership.

Mr. Speaker, the winners of this year's Bridges to International Practice are Jocelyn Lanoie, Treena Amyotte, and Krista Loydl. And I'm pleased to say that Krista, in addition to her studies, has also been working at the Saskatchewan New Democratic Party office — just another New Democrat with a great head for business, Mr. Speaker.

The three winners will be travelling to China on behalf of Hypor to test their marketing strategy first-hand. They will not only receive course credit work for what they do in China, Mr. Speaker, but I'm sure the experience will stay with them for the

rest of their careers.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Jocelyn, Treena, and Krista on their achievement and to acknowledge the University of Regina Faculty of Business Administration and Hypor Canada for providing students with this very valuable learning opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Citizens Fight Floods in Northeast Saskatchewan

Mr. Kerpan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as all members are well aware, this past weekend northeast Saskatchewan has been again devastated by flooding as a result of spring thaw. The Carrot River has been running at five times its normal rate of flow and has spilled over its banks, flooding farmers' fields and people's homes. Mr. Speaker, this flooding has also forced over 1,000 residents from Red Earth First Nation from their homes.

Mr. Speaker, I think I'd like to ask all members of the Assembly to congratulate the Red Earth First Nation band; their chief, Miller Nowakayas; The Prince Albert Grand Council; and the emergency crews that they assembled to deal with the flood waters and the great job they did over this past weekend. Volunteers worked tirelessly to erect sandbag barriers to stem the rising water and their work contributed to the protection of a number of their homes.

Mr. Speaker, we should also recognize the cities of Saskatoon and Prince Albert for doing their best to accommodate residents of Red Earth during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, last fall Porcupine Plain and Arborfield were both hit very hard with heavy rains that flooded much crop land. They are again hit hard this spring with spring runoff, ruining bridges and roads and chasing people from their homes.

But, Mr. Speaker, the point I want to make here today is that I believe and I truly want to recognize and congratulate the people of northeast Saskatchewan for their strong-willed community mindedness and their resilience in times of, tough times such as this spring's flood. And I'd like them to know that we are thinking of them here today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[13:45]

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

Saskatchewan's Telecommunicator of the Year

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week was emergency communicators week in Saskatchewan — a national event honouring the many Saskatchewan professionals who help to provide emergency assistance by responding to emergency telephone calls, dispatching

emergency personnel, and helping people in emergencies to stay calm, competent, and confident that help is on the way. Mr. Speaker, they are 911 operators and other emergency service dispatchers from police, fire, and emergency medical services who handle emergency calls all over Saskatchewan.

As part of the week's activities, Mr. Speaker, Rhonda Chalupiak, a telecommunications officer with the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] divisional operational communications centre in Regina was named Saskatchewan Telecommunicator of the Year.

She was selected by her peers for outstanding dedication to her work and for being an excellent communicator, exhibiting sound judgment, calm, and courage every day. Ms. Chalupiak will represent Saskatchewan at a national event later this year.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Corrections and Public Safety had the privilege of attending the evening and presenting the award. And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, the minister is still talking about what a wonderful evening it was and what a great time he had. Quote: "One of the funnest events ever" is, I think, how he put it. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to join me in congratulating all of the province's emergency communications professionals, in particular Rhonda Chalupiak, Saskatchewan's Telecommunicator of the Year.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Congratulations to Volunteers

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. National Volunteer Week and on behalf of the official opposition, it's an honour to stand in this Assembly today to recognize the men, women, youth, and children across Saskatchewan who contribute to the well-being of this province through their community volunteers.

Saskatchewan is Canada's volunteer capital. Each year 323,000 Saskatchewan residents volunteer an average of 154 hours each to better their neighbourhoods and communities, whether it's through the more than 5,000 incorporated charities in our province, the 12,000 culture and recreation organizations, and countless CBOs [community-based organization] who are on the front line delivering health and human services to the people of Saskatchewan. Saskatchewan volunteers continually demonstrate an energy and passion for their communities which is fundamental to who we are as a province and a people.

To the businesses who support volunteer organizations both financially and personally, to service clubs around this province such as Kiwanis, Progress, Rotary, Kinsmen, Care and Share, and many, many more, Mr. Speaker, volunteers are what make this province the great place it is to live. And I ask all members to join me in congratulating all volunteers in our province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Assiniboia Farmer Receives Organic Farming Award

Mr. Borgerson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Organic Crop Improvement Association international with offices in Canada, the US [United States], Latin America, Asia, and Europe is one of the world's foremost organic organizations. And it has created an award, the Outstanding Organic Farmer of the Year award, to recognize individuals who excel in cropping and livestock practice, who are responsible stewards of the natural environment, and who are committed to the organic community.

Mr. Speaker, this year the OCIA [Organic Crop Improvement Association] international award for excellence in organic farming went to Dwayne Woolhouse who, along with his wife and four kids, farms just south of Assiniboia.

Mr. Speaker, the Woolhouses are mixed farmers, running bison on hilly land and raising them as naturally as possible. They use a crop rotation based on cereals, legumes, and green manures, careful soil building and a diversity of cash crops. Mr. Woolhouse uses a wide variety of techniques for weed control including crop rotation, increased seeding rates, and delayed seeding, but he's also developed innovative new weed control machinery.

As is so often the case, Mr. Woolhouse's stewardship extends into the community. He has been active as a 4-H and Scout leader, and as a volunteer at the town library and museum. And he has served on local, provincial, and international committees to help regulate, improve, and promote organic agriculture.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Mr. Woolhouse on this award. It is clearly well deserved. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Wood River.

Minister's Trip to Fort McMurray

Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday our office received an interesting news release from the government, and it reads: "Minister and Saskatoon group explore business opportunities in Fort McMurray."

While it's encouraging to see someone from the NDP [New Democratic Party] government finally get out of their offices to help Saskatchewan's economy prosper, it's a case of too little, too late. The minister's trip to Fort McMurray comes almost three months to the day after the Saskatchewan Party leader, Leader of the Opposition and members of the Saskatchewan Party went to Fort McMurray. At that time the Minister of Industry and Resources said this, and I quote:

"It's fine for a politician to fly to Fort McMurray for the day, but we've been more interested in working with individual businesses in Saskatoon and other places in Saskatchewan to get them interested in going to Fort McMurray."

And that was in the . . . February 1 in the *The StarPhoenix*.

Apparently the minister disagreed and disliked our idea so much that he decided to copy it for himself. The minister did not want to imitate his own leader, so he decided to copy our leader. This proves that the tired, worn out, old NDP government just plays lip service to securing Saskatchewan's economic prosperity. They're out of ideas, and are an anchor around the Saskatchewan economy.

You can add the minister's trip to Fort McMurray as just one more example of a good idea from the Saskatchewan Party that the NDP has taken.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Students Named Energy Ambassadors

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last fall I had the great pleasure to work alongside about 160 volunteers helping some low-income Moose Jaw residents get their homes ready for winter. Improvements included preparing windows and doors for winter, installing a working smoke detector, putting in low-flow shower heads and faucet aerators, and installing an Energy Star programmable thermostat.

It's all part of an energy conservation initiative called Share the Warmth, a project coordinated in Moose Jaw by a team of architectural technology students from our SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] campus in partnership with SaskEnergy, Moose Jaw Canadian Tire, and other community groups.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased that these SIAST students are among 39 students from across Canada who have been named as winners of this year's Energy Ambassadors competition. Energy Ambassadors is an annual competition sponsored by Natural Resources Canada, and it focuses on the role of energy efficiency in reducing consumption and conserving energy and recognizes and rewards undergraduate post-secondary students for developing practical solutions and innovative technology to reduce energy consumption.

Mr. Speaker, Share the Warmth was one of only 20 projects across the country to be recognized, and I ask that all our members would please join me in congratulating the student coordinators of the Share the Warmth project on winning this prestigious award.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORAL QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Waiting Time for Cancer Care

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in

December Saskatoon lost yet another oncologist, this one to British Columbia. My question to the minister: has this position been filled?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I think as you and other members are aware, recruiting of oncologists is an international challenge. Mr. Speaker, oncologists are in significant demand. The Saskatoon Health Region and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency have been seeking two oncologists for the city of Saskatoon and area. Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that one oncologist has been recruited, will be starting in September, and recruitment efforts are underway to bring in the second one.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, in light of the number of oncology positions that remain vacant in the Saskatoon area, can he tell this Assembly what the average wait time is for a cancer patient who is seeking an oncologist visit for the first time in the Saskatoon health care region?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatoon Health Region, as I indicated, has a shortage of two oncologists. One has been recruited and recruitment efforts are under way for the second. The optimum wait time from physician referral to oncologist seeing was about 9.5 weeks, Mr. Speaker. The Saskatoon Health Region and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency are working diligently to ensure that that wait time is addressed and does not increase.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Emily Morley of Meath Park is 57 years old. In January of this year she found a lump in her lymph node. Emily waited one month for a biopsy which confirmed it was a secondary cancer. She waited another month for a CT [computerized tomography] scan to find the source.

Mr. Speaker, now that it is confirmed that she has cancer, Emily is being forced to wait three months or longer for her first visit to an oncologist. This is absolutely unacceptable. Cancer doesn't wait.

Why is the NDP government forcing patients to wait three months or longer for an initial visit to an oncologist?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The

New Democratic Party government, as the member opposite would suggest, is not responsible for long waiting times when oncologists are not available within a community.

Mr. Speaker, the latest budget that this government brought down added an additional 17 per cent of dollars available to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency which includes dollars for recruitment. Also, Mr. Speaker, last year the budget increased the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency's funding by 15 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, this government is very concerned about the wait times between physician referral and being seen by an oncologist. Mr. Speaker, we would like to ensure that those wait times are reduced.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, last week that Health minister stood in the rotunda and said he's ultimately responsible for the health care provided in this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I think all of us as MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] should put ourselves in the shoe of Emily. She knows she has cancer. She doesn't know the source. She's been told that she has to wait over three months for her first visit to an oncologist before treatment can even be started.

Emily would like to know where she stands. Her family who are in the gallery today also would like to know where Emily stands. Will the minister commit to committing to sending her out of province if he cannot provide timely treatment in this province?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This government is committed as a first priority to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. We have provided additional money in each of the last two years and are assisting the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency with their recruitment efforts.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I might add that several years ago this government and the representative ministers of Health at that time recognized some of the challenges that physicians and patients have with receiving timely care and put in place quality of care coordinators.

Mr. Speaker, the very first line of authority with regards to addressing wait times are the quality of care coordinators. I would hope that the member opposite, when he learned of this case, directed the individual to the quality of care coordinator because that's where action takes place first, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Emily was too weak to make the trip here to the legislature today. But she was not too weak to put her feelings down on paper, her feelings about the state of cancer care under this NDP government. And here's a quote from Emily:

How many people, diagnosed with some form of cancer, are awaiting an appointment with an oncologist . . . of whom there are few [of] in Saskatchewan, while the finance minister spends a half million dollars on an advertizing campaign . . .

Why does this government seem to think it's a higher priority about self-promotion and blowing its own horn about the budget and not giving people of this province, especially cancer patients, the timely care they need?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I sympathize with the individual in question. I can't imagine what it is like to be waiting a diagnosis and a referral to an oncologist. Mr. Speaker, I share that concern and am doing all that we can within our power to ensure that there are oncologists in the province who can do the work that needs to be done.

Secondly, Mr. Speaker, this budget does put an additional \$10.3 million into the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency to be able to do the work that needs to be done, indicating the commitment that this government has to cancer patients and their families throughout this province.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Indian Head-Milestone.

Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Emily and her family know they are dealing with a very serious illness. Right now they have no idea what they are dealing with or what their options are. Not only is Emily fighting for her life; she is also fighting the health care system. The family fears that without immediate attention, Emily might not live long enough to make her first visit to an oncologist, which is over three months away. Mr. Speaker, Emily writes, and I quote, "How long do we wait, dying, while the NDP government plays God with our lives?"

Mr. Speaker, if this minister cannot guarantee timely care in this province, will he look at other options like sending her out of province so timely care can be given?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan Health has reciprocal agreements with other provinces, and, Mr. Speaker, we will utilize those references out of province when the individual's physicians and quality of care coordinators reach agreement on the inability to meet emergent care. But, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon Health Region has initiated a number of procedures to ensure that cases that require immediate care, when brought to the attention of the quality of care coordinators, are dealt with in an efficient and relatively fast manner.

Mr. Speaker, I just had the opportunity recently to take a look at the National Cancer Institute of Canada 2004 statistics reporting that Saskatchewan has one of the lowest cancer death rates in the country. And the most recent cancer society cancer statistics, Mr. Speaker, indicate that Saskatchewan women have the lowest lung cancer mortality rate in the country, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Recovery of Stolen Funds

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, earlier this week Evelyn Hynes, a former Department of Community Resources employee, was charged with one count of fraud over \$5,000. Mr. Speaker, as I'm sure you'll remember, Hynes was the Saskatoon woman who was manager in charge of dispensing emergency welfare payments. She was fired by the NDP government after \$1 million was found to have been stolen from some of the poorest of the poor. The Provincial Auditor says it was a sophisticated fraud that involved the creation of 16 fictitious welfare clients who required emergency payments.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us what action is now being taken to recover the money that was taken?

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Community Resources.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as soon as we learned of the problem, this government acted and acted very quickly. We looked at all the cases that came to our attention. We suspended the employee involved and eventually terminated the employee. We referred the matter to the RCMP. We notified the Provincial Comptroller and the Provincial Auditor, and of course the RCMP investigation began. Mr. Speaker, we implemented new controls to ensure that this type of activity does not happen again — the controls certainly around handling cheques, the segregation of all duties for employees — and we also implemented the government-wide policy of employee criminal record checks.

Mr. Speaker, we acted very quickly. And all I can tell the member opposite is to allow the courts and the RCMP to continue that work. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the issue now is about recovery of the funds. The Saskatchewan Party raised this issue during last fall's sitting of the legislature. The former minister of Community Resources told this Assembly, quote:

This matter was turned over to the RCMP. They are still conducting their investigation, and so we will not be in a position to take further steps until they've decided what charges to lay.

She also had this to say to CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news about recovering the money that was taken, quote, "I know it is the intent of our department to claim in every way we can once there's an actual charge laid."

Mr. Speaker, an actual charge has now been laid. Can the new minister now tell us what is being done to recover this amount of taxpayers' dollar that has now been taken from the poorest of the poor, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister for Community Resources.

Hon. Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious matter. And I think it's important, as that member would understand, is to allow the court process to unfold and allow the evidence to come forth and allow the court system itself to make a determination of guilt versus non-guilt. Following that process, then of course we will do all that we can, and we'll certainly stand by the previous minister's commitment to do all we can to protect Saskatchewan taxpayers' interests.

And I'm sure the member knows the process involved. And I reiterate that we must allow the RCMP and the courts to deal with the matter as quickly and efficiently as we can, and we cannot get involved until the time comes for a verdict to be read. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the minister will know that there's a significant difference between criminal and civil responsibility. The criminal process is now under way. The charge has been laid. The question that we now have for this government is, what steps are they taking by way of civil remedies to recover this sum of money?

The previous minister had indicated that she was going to take steps once charges were laid. Charges have been laid. Now we look to this minister to see what is going to happen by way of similar remedies to try and recover this sum of taxpayers' dollars that has gone missing — over \$1 million, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, if any member across the way understands how this works, it would be the member from Saskatoon Southeast . . . well if anyone does. Mr. Speaker, while this criminal matter is proceeding, there won't be any civil action. The member from Saskatoon Southeast should appreciate that. He should also appreciate that there is the ability within the criminal court to make orders in respect to compensation and restitution, but that is up to the court to decide.

But while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, this member, the member from Saskatoon Southeast had earlier alleged that the prosecutors in this case were in the process of either covering up or at least slowing down this matter. And I wonder if he would like to take this opportunity to withdraw the remarks and apologize to the prosecutors involved.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the minister can throw things back, whatever he likes. But right now we have a province that is short \$1 million of taxpayers' money, and the citizens of this province want to know what that minister and what that government is going to do about it.

Evelyn Hynes had a previous fraud conviction and spent time in jail in another province. The NDP government knew nothing of this until the CBC uncovered the prior conviction. After much pressure from the opposition and public, the NDP finally introduced retroactive criminal record checks for current employees dealing with money or children.

There's only one catch, Mr. Speaker. The government has given a five-year window in which these retroactive checks have to be done. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: why is the government giving five years? Isn't that the amount of time needed to get an official pardon?

Mr. Speaker, why is this happening, and why can't we do the criminal record checks now? Why can't we get on with dealing with recovery? Why can't we deal with getting on with some basic competence from that side of the House, Mr. Speaker?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for the Public Service Commission.

Hon. Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, what I can tell the member opposite is that we have the most comprehensive criminal record check policy in Canada. I can also tell the member opposite that we have done over 560 criminal record checks since we implemented the policy in the fall, Mr. Speaker. What I can also tell the member opposite is that there are individuals within the public service that have come forward and voluntarily provided criminal record checks for the positions that they hold.

What I can also tell the member opposite — and he must understand this — that we have given the public service an opportunity to get criminal record checks. We've given them the opportunity to do this over a five-year period. And no other place in the country, Mr. Speaker, is retroactively making people do criminal record checks.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Changes to Education Funding

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're hearing a lot about this budget on TV and radio thanks to ads financed by Saskatchewan taxpayers, but we're not hearing about the property tax hikes hidden in the budget. Perhaps it's because, Mr. Speaker, as the former Finance minister said, it's unpopular to talk about taxes at election time.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure the residents of Weyburn would like to know if they're facing a property tax hike. The South East Cornerstone School Division had its operating grant cut by 56 per cent. That's \$5.6 million gone with the stroke of the Finance minister's pen.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister explain why she did not tell the people of Weyburn and Saskatchewan why there are hidden property tax hikes in the budget?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, consistent with the commitment that this government made in May 2004, we've seen a number of significant changes in the operating grant for the '06-07 year. And that really results in a simpler, more transparent, more equitable funding for our education system. Mr. Speaker, this has been worked through over the last number of years.

And yes, there has been some differences in the foundation operating grant, mainly because of the zero-grant boards that have been moved into larger divisions. Mr. Speaker, this provides for more equitable funding and consistent services across the province of Saskatchewan.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, in today's *Leader-Post* there's an article on the property tax hikes facing the Southeast. The headline reads, "Southeast mill rate increases likely." It goes on to say that the South East Cornerstone School Division will receive about \$4.2 million from the province, with taxpayers having to make up the difference of the \$70-million operating budget.

Mr. Speaker, we're talking about a massive difference here, and it falls on the taxpayers in and around Weyburn. Don Rempel,

the director of education for the South East Cornerstone's School Division says, "mill rate increases of 50 per cent are possible" in the rural area around Weyburn.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain how this differences are going to be made up and who will bear this outrageous drop in funding?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite also has to take into consideration that there was three zero-grant boards formerly in the Estevan-Weyburn area. And this is a result of the high assessment with the oil and gas, the pipelines, the various other resource areas that are contained within this division.

Mr. Speaker, this process has been worked through. The divisions have been consulted. They were well aware of the changes that were taking place. So when the member says that it was some kind of hidden agenda, he is totally inaccurate. Mr. Speaker, the zero-grant boards and the move to the amalgamated divisions provides for more equitable system and better services right across Saskatchewan for all students.

And another issue, Mr. Speaker, the foundation operating grants fluctuate on a year-to-year basis depending on assessment and also enrolment declines.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier stood in Birch Hills, Saskatchewan, just over a month ago and said at the time that he was providing, quote, "... education property tax relief that fulfils the province's commitment to farmers and farm families."

Well, Mr. Speaker, is this commitment going to be sucked up by increased mill rates in this province due to this government's incompetent management of amalgamation? Another case that the left hand doesn't know what the extreme left hand is doing.

Mr. Speaker, how can the Premier explain that hidden property tax increases in this budget somehow fulfill tax relief to farm families around Weyburn? What is the Premier going to do about his commitment? Taking these extra monies out of farm families around Weyburn and justify them by the incompetence of this amalgamation process.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Learning.

Hon. Ms. Higgins: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite seems to have a bit of a short-term memory and seems to have forgotten that there was \$67 million that was put towards property tax reduction for agricultural property in the province

of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, traditionally there are fluctuations within the foundation operating grant. But previously there were zero-grant boards, and three of those boards are now within the Cornerstone School Division in the southeast corner of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, that does have an effect on the school division, but it also speaks to the high assessment in the area in the property values to the oil and gas, to the coal resources in that area.

Mr. Speaker, we are still working towards that equity within the systems right across Saskatchewan, that there should be regional pooling and better services delivered.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

[14:15]

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

Canadian Agricultural Income Stabilization Program

Mr. Bjornerud: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. Mr. Speaker, considering that the government, the NDP government has approximately \$1 billion windfall from gas and oil and considering that the price of a barrel of oil today is \$11 higher than the budget accounted for and considering that there's a \$154 million shortfall for the CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] program, will the Minister of Agriculture commit today to fully fund the CAIS program for Saskatchewan farmers?

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as our history will show, every year that we have been in the CAIS program, we have fully funded that program.

What we have done in this past year is to commit to '04 and '05 funding in the same year. We moved the agenda ahead about six months, Mr. Speaker, and in this budget we have clearly indicated that we will be providing the base funding according to the agreement with the federal government. And there is little doubt in my mind that when we get to the third quarter, as things are unfolding today — which I will again repeat is six months ahead of agenda — when we get to that third quarter, I have little doubt that we'll be fully funding the CAIS program. Thank you.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

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

Mr. Bjornerud: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to know exactly where in the budget that money shows up. Where is that money coming from? Because I

looked all through the budget, and I couldn't find that 154 million anywhere.

And, Mr. Speaker, additional, on top of that cut, there was a \$12 million cut to crop insurance in a year when farmers are right up against the wall, don't have money to put this crop in, and that NDP government sees fit to cut about \$166 million from the agriculture budget for the province of Saskatchewan.

Why don't they just put it upfront? They've got an excess of gas and oil money. They have the ability to put that money upfront this year and not wait for the eleventh hour. Will he do the right thing? Commit to farmers that he will fully fund CAIS, and they might be able to get an operating loan from the banks, Mr. Speaker.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Agriculture and Food.

Hon. Mr. Wartman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, very clearly we have funded CAIS fully over the years. Mr. Speaker, we have come to the table far beyond CAIS funding for the province — \$700 million last year in full funding in support of agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have spent any resource revenues that we have received in this province many, many times over. They continue to do that. What I want to know is, where were they when it came down to the crunch, when we were going down to meet with the federal government, with agricultural producers? Where were they when we were going down asking for the \$575 million to help farmers through this year? Where were they? Sitting here, Mr. Speaker. Too bad.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Government Whip.

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the government I'll be tabling responses to written questions no. 887 to 892 inclusive.

The Speaker: — Responses to 887 to 892 inclusive have been submitted.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 53 — The Economic and Co-operative Development Amendment Act, 2006

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Thomson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today as the Minister Responsible for Information Technology in the government to move second reading of An

Act to amend The Economic and Co-operative Development Act.

As part of its mandate, the Information Technology Office is consolidating IT [information technology] services across government, creating an IT service partnership of departments and agencies. The Act that is before the Assembly today will provide the authority to do that through The Economic and Co-operative Development Act.

When a department or agency voluntarily agrees to join the partnership, the ITO [Information Technology Office] becomes responsible for all of that agency's IT organization and functions. This includes helpdesk services, network management, equipment acquisition, and application development. The individual departments retain control of their own IT budgets, and the ITO then provides IT services to these departments on a chargeback or a cost-recovery basis.

To date, Mr. Speaker, 16 executive government departments and agencies have joined the ITO service partnership. This includes major departments such as Agriculture and Food, Learning, Finance, Industry and Resources, and most recently Environment. The remaining departments are expected to join the partnership by the spring of 2007.

The amendments that are being contemplated today through The Economic and Co-operative Development Act will simply give the ITO the legal authority to provide and charge for the IT and related services it provides to public agencies that are not part of the executive government. There are a number of agencies, boards, and commissions that currently receive IT services from executive government departments.

As a result of consolidation, the ITO has inherited some of these historic relationships and service delivery agreements. These organizations may decide to continue that relationship with the current department as it joins the ITO partnership, and as such we require additional authority under this Act to allow us to move forward with those consolidations. This amendment will simply allow us to add these to the partnership agreement by regulation on a case-by-case basis. As such I would move the second reading of An Act to amend The Economic and Co-operative Development Act.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for Information Technology that Bill No. 53, The Economic and Co-operative Development Act, 2006 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak briefly on second reading on Bill No. 53, An Act to amend The Economic and Co-operative Development Act. Mr. Speaker, in this day of information technology it is extremely important that the government uses its resources as efficiently as possible. And certainly the concept of making available the services of the Information Technology Office or ITO is an effort that is worthwhile and probably deserves consideration.

Mr. Speaker, as we move forward it seems that in the world of information technology, as we strive to have this technology available across government, across businesses and other agencies, there has to be the expertise to make sure that this technology continues to function and operate properly. Certainly government and government agencies have become very dependent upon this technology and I think all of us understand how critical it is when our own systems fail, even for a short time, that this technology is available to be looked after and serviced properly.

Mr. Speaker, in addition there are all kinds of hazards that exist in the technological world with potential viruses and things of that nature that can infect the technology and make the systems susceptible to these kind of attacks. And as a result whole departments and agencies can end up with their technology failing them and the availability of the service is severely jeopardized as a result.

Mr. Speaker, on first blush this seems to be legislation that is appropriate to improving the availability of the informational technology office services across greater government agencies and other agencies outside of government and that it is appropriate that if these services are provided that there is a mechanism for them to charge for these services.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we look forward to speaking to people in the technological field to make sure that this is an efficient way of using our resources and doesn't inordinately impose itself on the private sector who provide the services on a routine basis. And we look forward to consulting with the stakeholders in this regard and in order for that to happen, Mr. Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Melfort that debate on second reading on Bill 53 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 52 — The Meewasin Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2006

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Water Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After my brief remarks I'll be moving second reading of The Meewasin Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2006.

I have a great appreciation for the importance of the Meewasin Valley and the whole urban park system. Mr. Speaker, the Meewasin Valley Authority has added greatly to the quality of life in Saskatoon and enjoys broad support from the people of Saskatoon.

Now The Meewasin Valley Authority Act has not been updated since 1998. The amendments are intended to better assist the Meewasin Valley Authority in fulfilling its mandate to protect the environment and heritage resources of the South Saskatchewan River Valley within and adjacent to the city of

Saskatoon.

With the support of the city of Saskatoon, the University of Saskatchewan, and the Government of Saskatchewan, Meewasin undertakes programs and projects in river valley education development and conservation. By creating opportunities for public awareness and enjoyment, Meewasin strives to increase understanding and to ensure a vibrant and healthy river valley. The park offers year-round recreation and sightseeing opportunities for everyone from cycling and walking to cross-country skiing and picnicking.

Currently the Act exempts any provincial Crown lands from the MVA [Meewasin Valley Authority] if they were occupied or in use at the coming into force of the Act. The amendments before us will allow most of that land to become subject to the Act. Also, lands owned by the Meewasin Valley Authority will become subject to the Act as well. This addition of approximately 2 kilometres of riverbank land means an additional level of protection along the shoreline of the South Saskatchewan River.

Protection of natural and heritage resources in the valley is one of Meewasin's primary goals. With these amendments, the government is reconfirming its commitment to the Meewasin Valley Authority and enabling it to meet its goals more thoroughly.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of The Meewasin Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2006.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan Water Corporation that Bill No. 52, The Meewasin Valley Authority Amendment Act, 2006 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? The Chair recognizes the member for Saskatoon Southeast.

Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to make comments on this Bill. The Meewasin Valley Authority has had a proud history in Saskatoon and makes the riverbank in Saskatoon more of a jewel than it was before. It's one of the few things that brightens an otherwise bland landscape in our province. And I was born and raised in this province and I've had a great appreciation for all of the landscape in this province, but in particular when you have something as nice as the riverbank where it flows through Saskatoon, it's absolutely essential it be preserved and protected and beautified for generations to come.

Meewasin Valley has done an outstanding job over the last number of years and are now dealing with the changes that are necessary by the south downtown development, and are working to have outside amphitheatres, the move of the Persephone Theatre to that area. And we're pleased to see that steps are taking place.

We've had only a very brief opportunity to look at this Bill, and we'll want to do some consultation with stakeholders and members of the public to ensure that it meets its ongoing purpose of supporting the original goals and mandate of the Meewasin Valley Authority. It looks like it's something that we

would want to support, but we will of course want to go through the consultation process. Mr. Speaker, I would like to move adjournment of debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Southeast that the debate on second reading of Bill 52 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 48 — The Parks Amendment Act, 2006

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's provincial parks system is important to me and to Saskatchewan people. There's no doubt that we take a great deal of pride in our provincial parks. Parks allow residents and non-residents to enjoy Saskatchewan's many natural environments and participate in outdoor activities.

The 2,161 cottage leases are an integral part of Saskatchewan's provincial parks and the department has a long history and tradition of good relationships with cottage owners and their association. The government has been in discussions with the provincial park cabin owners association over the last 18 months to resolve the issue of a new cottage fee structure. The working group had the opportunity to express their thoughts and views during discussions. This has led to a desire to reconfigure park cottage fees from the current system to a two-part fee consisting of a service fee and a land lease fee.

[14:30]

The amendments before us will provide the following: first, setting a framework for a new fee structure for Saskatchewan provincial parks cottages, whereby cottage owners will be charged annual fees comprised of a service fee that will be determined in a manner prescribed in regulation and a land lease fee that will be determined in a manner prescribed in regulation for the land that is the subject matter of the lease. It will also provide authority to set by minister's order the rate of distribution of the service cost to cottage leases based upon permanent or seasonal occupancy of the cottage lot.

It will provide authority to make regulations allowing for appeals of any values upon which annual park cottage fees are based. And it will create a measure to limit action that may be taken against the government for past fees relative to the Supreme Court's Eurig decision, notwithstanding any appeals that are made pursuant to the regulation, as well as provide for retroactivity of regulations to April 1 of the fiscal year in which the regulation is assented to.

The amendments also make minor changes of a housekeeping nature, such as the recognition of privately owned cottage lots at Greig Lake north subdivision in Meadow Lake Provincial Park which were erroneously designated parkland, when such a designation cannot apply to private property, and corrections to

boundary errors discovered through the digital mapping of Meadow Lake and Makwa Lake provincial parks.

In general, Mr. Speaker, these amendments will establish the authority to determine by regulation the details of annual fees for provincial park cottages taking into consideration the results of discussions with the Saskatchewan Provincial Park Cabin Owners Association. The amendments also provide authority to establish by regulation the appeal process for the 2004 and 2005 cottage fees that were based upon assessed land and building values as promised to park cottage lessees.

Mr. Speaker, I now move second reading of The Parks Amendment Act, 2006.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Environment that Bill No. 48, The Parks Amendment Act, 2006 be now read a second time. The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantfoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak briefly on second reading of Bill No. 48, an Act to amend . . . The Parks Amendment Act, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister outlined, there really are two parts to this Act that are of greater and lesser significance. Of lesser significance is the part that corrects the boundary definitions of Meadow Lake Park and Makwa Lake Provincial Park to appropriately make sure that the definitions of the boundaries are appropriate. And while it no doubt makes some significant difference to the property holders at Greg Lake resort, this I think is a matter of common sense and should certainly proceed without interruption.

Mr. Speaker, there are other parts of this piece of legislation though that are going to require some significant amount of consultation. The minister has indicated that a significant part in the legislation is it changes the way the annual fees are calculated and payable for recreational leases in our provincial parks. Mr. Speaker, I think people who have properties, who lease property in our provincial parks and have cottages on these properties, are going to be very interested in how this recalculation of fees is going to occur.

As I see the Bill, it talks about a number of sort of subsets to what has been a single annual fee for use of recreational property. The service fee is one component of this which is set and determined by the minister in accordance with regulations. So basically the minister can set these resignations and fees in such manner as he sees fit. And I do not hesitate to guess that it's going to result in an increase in fees.

There's going to be a land lease fee determined by the minister in accordance with regulations as a separate component of this general annual fee. And then it also says that "The annual fee required by this section is in addition to any other fees payable pursuant to the recreational lease." So all of this can be on top of fees that are currently set in these provincial parks.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it's very clear that we are going to have to exercise our due diligence in this regard and talk to people

who have recreational properties in our provincial parks and see if they have been consulted in the preparation of this legislation, and what exactly is going to be the anticipated outcome of these changes in the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, it isn't a lengthy piece of legislation. There are only seven clauses in this Bill. However I think you can see that there's a potential very serious significance that's going to happen as a result of these proposed amendments to The Parks Act. And in order for this consultation to occur, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Melfort that debate on second reading of Bill No. 48 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 55 — The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Industry and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cline: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise and move second reading of The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act. This legislation serves several purposes, all of them consistent with the goal of building a green and prosperous economy for Saskatchewan.

The Act establishes a uniform legal framework for returning Crown land held under surface lease back to the province when mining activities have been completed. This includes full decommissioning and reclamation of the site to acceptable standards. It establishes clear custodial responsibility for long-term monitoring and management. It also specifies the legal, financial, and administrative arrangements whereby the province will accept this responsibility and establishes an institutional control registry. The registry will be administered by our Department of Industry and Resources. Its overarching purpose will be to maintain a comprehensive record of all decommissioned and reclaimed mine and mill sites on provincial Crown land.

The Act also enables establishment of an institutional control monitoring and maintenance fund along with an institutional control unforeseen events fund. Lastly it provides regulation-making powers in support of the Act on an as needed basis.

This legislation will be of benefit to the industry. It is also a positive step for other stakeholders. The public and neighbouring communities have every right to be assured that there are clear lines of responsibility for a given mine site once the operator is gone. The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act gives them that assurance.

It's important to note this legislation was jointly developed by our Department of Industry and Resources, by Saskatchewan Environment, and Saskatchewan Northern Affairs at industry's request. The Act is not news to industry or unwelcome by

industry. It was developed with their input and advice every step of the way.

It's also important to note the legislation does not expand the regulatory regime within which our mining industry operates, but simply brings those rules into clearer focus. This is something industry welcomes. In addition, the Act reflects input from other stakeholders such as the local environmental quality committee in northern Saskatchewan. And because some of these sites will no doubt be uranium mine sites, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission was kept fully advised on the progress of the legislation and supports its development.

It took several years, Mr. Speaker, for the process of discussion and consultation to bring us to where we are today. However that process does not stop with the passage of this legislation. The open door policy that helped bring the Act into being will continue through the implementation phase in the years ahead.

This legislation addresses a clear industry need, specifying the final responsibilities mining companies have to meet before they can be released from their obligations on leased mine sites on Crown lands.

Much of Saskatchewan's mineral treasure house is in the North. This Act reassures northern residents that decommissioned mine sites will be properly managed in perpetuity. It therefore speaks to additional public priorities of protecting our environment and protecting human health and safety.

It's also another step towards an improved investment climate for Saskatchewan. Industry of any kind, including the mining industry, values clarity. What they cannot abide is uncertainty in the rules under which they operate.

It's fair to say this is an area where we're building on strength. Saskatchewan's investment climate for mining is already perceived as very positive. In March of this year the Fraser Institute released its annual survey of mining companies, the purpose of which is to rate the policy attractiveness and mineral potential of mining jurisdictions in North America and internationally. Sixty-four different jurisdictions were surveyed in 2006. This included nine Canadian provinces and the three territories.

Saskatchewan was ranked seventh out of 64 on the policy potential index and fourth among provinces. This index provides a measure of how attractive policies are and rates things such as regulation and taxation.

Our province is ranked 12th out of the 64 and third among provinces on the current mineral potential index. This measures whether or not a jurisdiction's mineral potential under the current policy environment encourages further activity. One executive was quoted as saying, quote: "Saskatchewan is a mining province and government is willing to work with exploration companies to encourage new investment."

This suggests industry's perception of Saskatchewan's regulatory regime was already fairly positive. The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act can only make it better. I say this because Saskatchewan is the first province in Canada to have developed legislation of this kind.

Mining is one of Saskatchewan's largest industries. And with agriculture, it is tied only behind oil and natural gas. Our mining industry accounts for an estimated 6 per cent of Saskatchewan's gross domestic product and last year recorded record sales of \$3.5 billion. The mining sector contributes over \$200 million in direct revenue to the province every year. It supports 20,000 jobs, including almost 2,000 jobs in northern Saskatchewan. The industry contributes \$2 billion annually in wages along with the purchase of goods and services.

Does mining matter to Saskatchewan? Yes. Does the environment matter to Saskatchewan? Yes of course. We're committed to responsible environmental management of our non-renewable resources including our mineral resources. This legislation contributes to continued sustainable development of our mining industry. It is another tangible step towards building a green and prosperous economy. Lastly, it is a positive example of business, government, and other stakeholders working together towards this common goal.

I will be pleased to answer questions concerning the Act when it is discussed in Committee of the Whole. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Industry and Resources that Bill No. 55, The Reclaimed Industrial Sites Act be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? The Chair recognizes the member for Melfort.

Mr. Gantefoer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak on second reading of Bill No. 55, An Act Respecting the Monitoring and Maintenance of Industrial Sites After Reclamation.

Mr. Speaker, I think that this piece of legislation certainly is indeed potentially very important to the well-being and the future of our province. Mr. Speaker, as we have industrial sites, particularly mining sites, developing in our province, I think it is only responsible that we make sure that there are a clear set of guidelines and rules set out for the industry so that they know what their responsibilities are when they develop these opportunities, and that it is well thought out and well developed in terms of all aspects of this legislation. Mr. Speaker, I am encouraged to hear the minister state very emphatically in his remarks that industry was widely and broadly consulted in terms of the development of this specific legislation, and I think that that is very important.

[14:45]

In looking over the legislation, I think there certainly seem to be a number of steps that are reasoned and balanced in terms of establishing funds that are set up in order to allow the minister, if need be, to exercise his responsibility to reclaim a site in an environmentally appropriate way, and that I think is very good.

Mr. Speaker, on first blush in looking over this Bill while I heard the minister say there was a great deal of consultation in developing the legislation, I was unable to quickly see a mechanism that ensures that ongoing consultation is going to be

demanding. I note that the end of five years there is going to be a review to make sure that the funds that have been established in establishing the approvals for developing a site are going to be reviewed to make sure that they are adequate to deal with the minister's responsibility in terms of reclaiming sites, and I think that that is worthwhile. But I think it's also important to make sure that industry is consulted in a meaningful way on an ongoing basis as this legislation is implemented and goes forward.

Mr. Speaker, I also note on the final clause of the Bill under coming into force that the Act comes into force on proclamation. And I think that there needs to be something a little more specific in terms of commitment by the government to say and define when this is going to happen because as you know, Mr. Speaker, proclamation is something that really occurs at the pleasure of the minister and the government. And therefore I think industry is going to want to know exactly when this is going to move forward.

Mr. Speaker, in principle it looks like this legislation is very important and that there has been a significant amount of work put into it. We certainly as well, as the official opposition as part of our responsibility of scrutiny, will want to speak to the industry stakeholders to make sure that this legislation in fact lives up to the expectations that they had and the consultations that occurred between themselves and government. And in order to allow this to happen, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Melfort that debate on second reading of Bill No. 55 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

Bill No. 56 — The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006.

Mr. Speaker, The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 is new legislation that will replace The Residential Tenancies Act currently in force in Saskatchewan. This legislation will update and modernize our residential tenancy legislation and clarify the rights and obligations of landlords and tenants in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the current Act was enacted in 1973. Although amendments have been made to the Act on several occasions, the general scope and operation of the 1973 Act remain intact.

In the meantime, there have been significant changes in the rental marketplace that need to be addressed. The experience of the Rentalsman in dealing with residential tenancy disputes has also identified areas where change is required. Changes have occurred, not just within the nature of the rental marketplace itself, but also in the reasonable expectations that landlords and tenants have regarding residential tenancies.

The need for new legislation has been heightened by new legislation in other jurisdictions. New residential tenancies legislation was enacted in Alberta and British Columbia in 2004.

Mr. Speaker, it should be remembered that this legislation deals only with residential tenancies. Commercial leases and other rental properties that are used for business are not encompassed by this legislation.

Residential tenancy legislation in Saskatchewan has always sought to maintain the necessary balance between a tenant's need for secure and affordable accommodations and a landlord's reasonable and legitimate expectation of profit from their rental properties. This Bill, Mr. Speaker, will not only maintain that balance but it will enhance the position of both tenants and landlords by lending clarity and predictability to the legal relationships with each other.

Mr. Speaker, this new legislation employs modern language that will be more readily understood by landlords and tenants. This approach is particularly important in the context of residential tenancies legislation where landlords and tenants often enter into tenancy agreements and generally seek to resolve their disputes without the benefit of legal advice.

Part I of the Act sets out the definitions that are critical to the operation of the Act. The term landlord has been expanded to ensure that persons exercising a landlord's rights will also be bound by the provisions in the Act, the regulations, and the tenancy agreement.

In addition, a distinction is made in the Act between residential property and rental units. Typically rental units are apartments and residential properties, the building or land on which the units are located.

Part I also defines a service or facility by itemizing the various appliances, furnishings and utilities often provided in the context of residential tenancy in one, easy-to-understand list. This list will assist landlords and tenants in identifying services or facilities that become part of a rental agreement.

As is the case under the current legislation, a landlord who wishes to reduce the services or facilities provided to an existing tenant will be required to obtain their consent to the reduction. Failing that, the landlord must obtain an order from the director of residential tenancies. The director will determine whether to allow the reduction in services or facilities, and if so, the conditions under which the reduction can take place.

Mr. Speaker, a definition of standard conditions is also introduced in the new legislation. A list of the standard conditions will be prescribed in the regulations as terms that apply to every tenancy agreement. These terms, which will reflect provisions found in the substantive provisions of the Act, outline the core set of undertakings made by the landlord and tenant under a tenancy agreement. The inclusion of these terms in a single, easy-to-understand list in the regulations will provide landlords and tenants with easy reference to their basic rights and duties.

Part I also outlines the scope of the Act. Several changes have

been made to the scope of the current Act. First, the geographic restriction contained in the current Act is eliminated. The present Act restricts the operation of the Act to the rental of residential premises in a city, town, village, or hamlet. An order under the current Act extends the operation of the legislation to mobile home sites within a 5-mile radius of a city, town, village, or hamlet. Mr. Speaker, the government believes that the protection of the Act needs to be extended to tenants in rural areas as well.

It should also be noted that the inclusion of these tenancies under the legislation will allow landlords in rural areas to evict tenants by using the cost-effective remedies under the Act, and without having to incur the cost of obtaining a court order under The Landlord and Tenant Act as is currently the case. Residential tenancies in rural areas where living accommodations are rented along with land or buildings used for agricultural purposes will continue to be excluded from the operation of the Act, as are all tenancies where living accommodations and business premises are rented under a single agreement.

Mr. Speaker, the government has conducted extensive consultations regarding the tenancies that have historically been excluded from residential tenancy legislation. It has been determined that although many existing exemptions will be maintained, it would be more appropriate for specific exemptions to be contained in the regulations.

For example, the new legislation removes the existing blanket exemption for room and board arrangements. As a general matter there is no sound policy reason for depriving tenants of the protection of the Act simply because they receive meals as part of their arrangement with the landlord. For the same reason the Bill does not contain a general exemption of all tenants who share a portion of the living accommodations with their landlord.

However the government recognizes that there are situations where room and board arrangements as well as situations where tenants share living accommodations with their landlord that for various reasons need to be excluded from the operation of the Act. Exempts include housing provided by organizations such as the Salvation Army, dormitories operated by educational institutions, or situations where a tenant receives care or treatment from a landlord with whom they share accommodations.

In the place of general blanket exemptions, regulations under the Act will exempt specific tenancy agreements that do not reasonably fall within the ambit of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the new legislation will also follow the legislation recently enacted in other jurisdictions by applying to vacation and hotel and motel accommodation where the term of the tenancy exceeds six months. In those cases the hotel rooms, cabins, and lodges are clearly being used as living accommodations as opposed to temporary accommodations associated with vacation or travel. Traditional exemptions for hospitals, health centres, personal care homes, psychiatric and rehabilitative care facilities have also been maintained.

Mr. Speaker, part I of the Act also contains several provisions

that stipulate the manner in which the Act will be applied. Examples include a provision that will continue to prohibit landlords and tenants from contracting out of provisions of the Act. Another section confirms that landlords are now able to seize a tenant's goods for nonpayment of rent or any other breach of a residential tenancy agreement.

Mr. Speaker, part II contains the administrative provisions of the Act. The Office of the Rentalsman under the current Act will become the office of residential tenancies, and the Rentalsman will become the director of residential tenancies. This change reflects current drafting protocols and is consistent with provisions in other regulatory legislation in Saskatchewan and across Canada. Although the name has changed, the responsibilities of the director in the new Act will be largely those currently performed by the Rentalsman. However, the proposed provisions will now facilitate a public education function for the director.

Part III of the Act outlines the necessary elements of a tenancy agreement, including the creation of the agreement, the provisions regarding security deposits, and the terms that will become part of a tenancy agreement. It provides that standard conditions will become part of each tenancy agreement whether or not the agreement is in writing.

Mr. Speaker, a provision in this part will prohibit landlords from imposing application or processing fees. Although this is a practice seldom used by landlords in Saskatchewan, it is nevertheless a potentially abusive and unfair practice that is prohibited in several other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, landlords under the new legislation will continue to be able to collect security deposits from their tenants. Tenants will continue to be able to pay security deposits in two instalments — one-half at the time the agreement is entered into, and the balance within two months of taking possession of the rental unit. Landlords will continue to be required to hold security deposits in trust for tenants and to repay those deposits with interest to tenants at the end of the tenancy agreement unless they can demonstrate to the director that as a result of damage caused by the tenant to the rental unit they should be entitled to retain the deposit or a portion thereof.

Mr. Speaker, existing tenant protections are carried forward in the new legislation. Prohibitions remain in place against the collection of future rent and the use of acceleration clauses that make the balance of rent payable under a tenancy agreement immediately payable where the tenant is in default of any term of the agreement. A new provision specifically confirms the tenant's obligation to pay rent as it becomes due, and landlords will be obliged to provide a receipt to tenants who pay their rents in cash.

The new legislation will contain specific rules regarding a landlord's right to enter the rental unit. In order to reduce the many disputes that have arisen under the current legislation, the new legislation outlines in detail the notice that must be given by the landlord in different circumstances. The new provisions strike a fair and reasonable balance between a tenant's right to privacy with the landlord's legitimate need to enter the rental unit under certain circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, other provisions in this part will lend predictability and certainty to matters that have given rise to disputes in the past. The legislation contains prohibitions against either the landlords or tenants changing locks to a rental unit without the other's consent. Also included is a provision that outlines the obligations of the landlord to maintain the rental unit and the residential property in a good state of repair and fit for habitation, use, and enjoyment by the tenant in compliance with health, safety, and housing standards required by law.

Tenants must also maintain reasonable health, cleanliness, and sanitary standards in the rental unit and repair any damage to the unit that they have caused. The prohibition against subletting without the landlord's consent is carried over from the existing Act.

Mr. Speaker, the new legislation also contains a provision that sets out tenants' obligations at the end of a tenancy. The tenant must leave the rental unit reasonably clean and undamaged except for reasonable wear and tear. Although this provision coincides with everyone's reasonable expectations of tenants, the inclusion of these duties in the Act will assist tenants and landlords in better understanding of their obligations should a disagreement arise.

The provisions relating to the notice required for rent increases have been carried forward from the existing legislation. Landlords will continue to be required to provide a minimum of three months notice of rent increase. However an additional provision allows for a longer period of notice for rental increases for mobile home sites to be prescribed in the regulations. The current provisions sometimes work a hardship in the case of owner-occupied mobile home. Mobile homes are very expensive to move, and significant increase in rent can be devastating to tenants who cannot afford the increase and do not have the financial resources to move in a short period of time. This has led in some cases to a forced sale of a tenant's mobile home, often for much less than market value.

Part V of the Act outlines the circumstances under which the tenancies can be ended. Although the Rentalsman has generally relied on precedents established in court decisions that have . . . [inaudible] . . . in some restrictions on a landlord's ability to evict, the current Act does not require that the landlord demonstrate a valid reason for terminating a tenancy. As a result certain landlords have sought to terminate tenancies for inequitable reasons or for reasons extraneous to the tenancy agreement. The new legislation follows the lead of legislation in British Columbia and Alberta by requiring that landlords provide reasons for termination of the tenancy that are based upon the provisions outlined in the Act.

Under the new legislation, tenancies can be terminated by appropriate notice being given by the tenant or by a landlord's notice for non-payment of the rent. A landlord can also provide notice of termination of the tenancy for cause where a tenant has not fulfilled the obligations under the tenancy agreement or engaged in misconduct or neglect of the property. Although the reasons outlined in the new legislation in this regard do not differ widely from the statutory conditions in the existing Act and the common law precedents currently used by the Rentalsman in making determinations, these provisions

nevertheless provide a concise and easily understood guide.

One new provision in this regard applies to landlords who have tenants in their principal residence, typically a rental suite in their basement. The Bill provides that a tenant who smokes in contravention of a written notice from their landlord cannot be evicted without further notice. Specific provisions deal with the termination of tenancies for tenants employed by their landlord, as well as new provision detailing circumstances under which a landlord is entitled to terminate a tenancy due to the plans the landlord has for the use of the property.

[15:00]

Although these provisions again outline circumstances generally accepted as valid reasons for termination of a tenancy, the new legislation once again provides clarity and predictability to an area that has given rise to many disputes. The specific reasons for termination under this section include the sale or demolition of the property; conversion to condominiums, a housing co-operative, or non-residential use; renovations requiring vacancy of the rental unit; or rental of the unit to a close family member or friend.

Mr. Speaker, the new termination provisions will lend more certainty and predictability for both tenants and landlords regarding the termination of tenancies. Currently there is some question as to whether the Act requires landlords to provide a warning to tenants in breach of certain statutory duties e.g., to refrain from creating a nuisance or disturbance to others in adjacent residential premises. Landlords have expressed difficulty with tenants who, having received a warning, create further nuisance and disturbance prior to vacating the premises.

The amendments will make it clear to both parties the circumstances under which no warning is needed for termination of the tenancy. The director has the discretionary authority under the proposed legislation to terminate a tenancy under any circumstances where it is just and equitable. The experience of the Rentalsman has been that the circumstances under which an application for termination of a tenancy are so diverse and varied that it would be impossible to expressly provide for all the scenarios under which tenancies should reasonably be terminated.

Mr. Speaker, the new legislation provides the tenant with the right to dispute a notice to terminate and provides the director with the ability to award compensation to a tenant who has suffered a loss as a result of a landlord who has provided notice that was not made in good faith. An example would be a situation where a landlord terminates a tenancy on the basis that the property is to be demolished but then rents the property to another tenant.

Part VI of the Bill contains a dispute resolution mechanism under the proposed legislation. It is taken, with some modification, from the current Act. However under the proposed legislation, the director of residential tenancies will have exclusive jurisdiction to hear disputes. Under the current legislation, the Rentalsman and the Court of Queen's Bench have concurrent jurisdiction over residential tenancy disputes. Historically this provision was felt necessary due to the jurisdictional limitations of the Rentalsman regarding issues

involving the title to land. However subsequent case law has removed those concerns.

All residential tenancy disputes will now be heard at first instance by the director, subject to the monetary limit on the amount claimed which will be contained in the regulations. A new provision will allow for the director to correct or clarify a decision or order where an obvious typographical, grammatical, or arithmetic error has been made, where there's been an inadvertent omission in the order or the decision or order requires clarification. The provision will allow the matter to be resolved without having parties incur the expense and delay inherent in an appeal to the court.

Part VII of the Act outlines offences and penalties under the Act. The penalties are carried forward from the existing legislation. Individuals found guilty of a summary conviction offence under this section are subject to a fine not exceeding \$500 and six months imprisonment and \$1,000 in the case of a corporation. Directors of corporations who participate or acquiesce in an offence may be subject to fine of \$500 and six months incarceration.

The provisions continue the authority for the court to order a convicted individual or corporation to pay compensation to someone who has suffered loss or damage as a result of their actions in addition to any other penalty.

Mr. Speaker, the enactment of a new residential tenancies Act will modernize the law relating to residential tenancies in Saskatchewan. This Bill offers landlords as well as tenants more clarity in understanding their respective rights and obligations, and both tenants and landlords will be afforded more certainty and predictability in making decisions regarding tenancies.

This legislation will strike the important balance between the needs of tenants for safe, secure, and affordable living accommodations with a legitimate need for landlords to obtain reasonable profits from their rental properties. In so doing, this legislation will help maintain a viable and profitable residential housing industry in Saskatchewan that will benefit landlords and tenants alike. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that the Bill No. 56, The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 be now read a second time. The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to speak to Bill 56, an Act Respecting Residential Tenancies and making consequential amendments to other Acts. Mr. Speaker, it's a very, very lengthy Bill as you see, and it has obviously a lot of items in it and the minister stated many categories and areas where the Bill is trying to address. Some of the major points I believe is that concerning the creation and dissolution of tenancy agreements, rent increases, rights of tenants, landlords, ending a tenancy, order of possession of a rental unit, applications, arbitrations, proceedings and orders. That just touches the highlights of the many categories, Mr. Speaker, that

this Bill speaks to.

Some of the other items I understand that's in the Bill, is it's going to replace the Office of the Rentalsman with a new director and office of residential tenancies. And also the Act provides a more expanded and specific list of clauses attaching the landlords to tenants and particularly covering the end of any agreements.

Mr. Speaker, obviously with this length of a Bill and the process that we do in the legislature, the Saskatchewan Party will be speaking to the stakeholders concerning this Bill. And we are going to do our research and meet with the various groups that this Bill will affect and we will certainly do our homework. And so at this time I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Biggar that debate on second reading of Bill No. 56 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried.

**Bill No. 57 — The Residential Tenancies Consequential
Amendment Act, 2006/Loi de 2006 portant modification
corrélative à la loi intitulée The Residential
Tenancies Act, 2006**

The Speaker: — The Chair recognizes the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to move second reading of The Residential Tenancies Consequential Amendment Act, 2006. Mr. Speaker, The Residential Tenancies Consequential Amendment Act, 2006 contains amendments made necessary by The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006. Although the majority of the consequential amendments are contained in that Act itself, the amendments to The Co-operatives Act, 1996 are bilingual and form a separate Bill.

The Co-operatives Act, 1996 allows a housing co-operative to make an application to the Rentalsman for an order of possession of a housing unit if a person's membership in the co-operative has been terminated. In addition the housing co-operative can apply to the Rentalsman for an order authorizing it to dispose goods abandoned by a former member of the co-operative. The amendments will replace references to The Residential Tenancies Act and the Rentalsman with references to The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 and the director of residential tenancies or a hearing officer under the new Act.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of The Residential Tenancies Consequential Amendment Act, 2006.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 57, The Residential Tenancies Consequential Amendment Act, 2006 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? The Chair recognizes the member for Biggar.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure again

to rise and speak to Bill 57, An Act respecting consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Residential Tenancies Act. And, as the minister pointed out, the major points are because of the introduction of The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006 and the new provisions in that Act replacing the Office of the Rentalsman with the new office of residential tenancies and the Rentalsman with the director of residential tenancies.

This Act consequently amends sections of The Co-operatives Act which are affected by the new legislation. Certainly these — Bill 56 and 57 — really go hand in hand, and when the official opposition, the Saskatchewan Party, when we will be discussing this with the stakeholders, as well with the affected groups and we will certainly, I'm sure, have questions in the future concerning both of these Bills. So at this time, I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Biggar the debate on second reading of Bill No. 57 be now adjourned. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Motion is carried. The Chair recognizes the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Hagel: — Mr. Speaker, in order to accommodate the work of the policy field committees on the Economy, as well as on Crown and Central Agencies, I move this House do now adjourn.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government 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: — Motion is carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:10.]

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Premier

Hon. Graham Addley
Minister of Healthy Living Services
Minister Responsible for Seniors

Hon. Pat Atkinson
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