



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

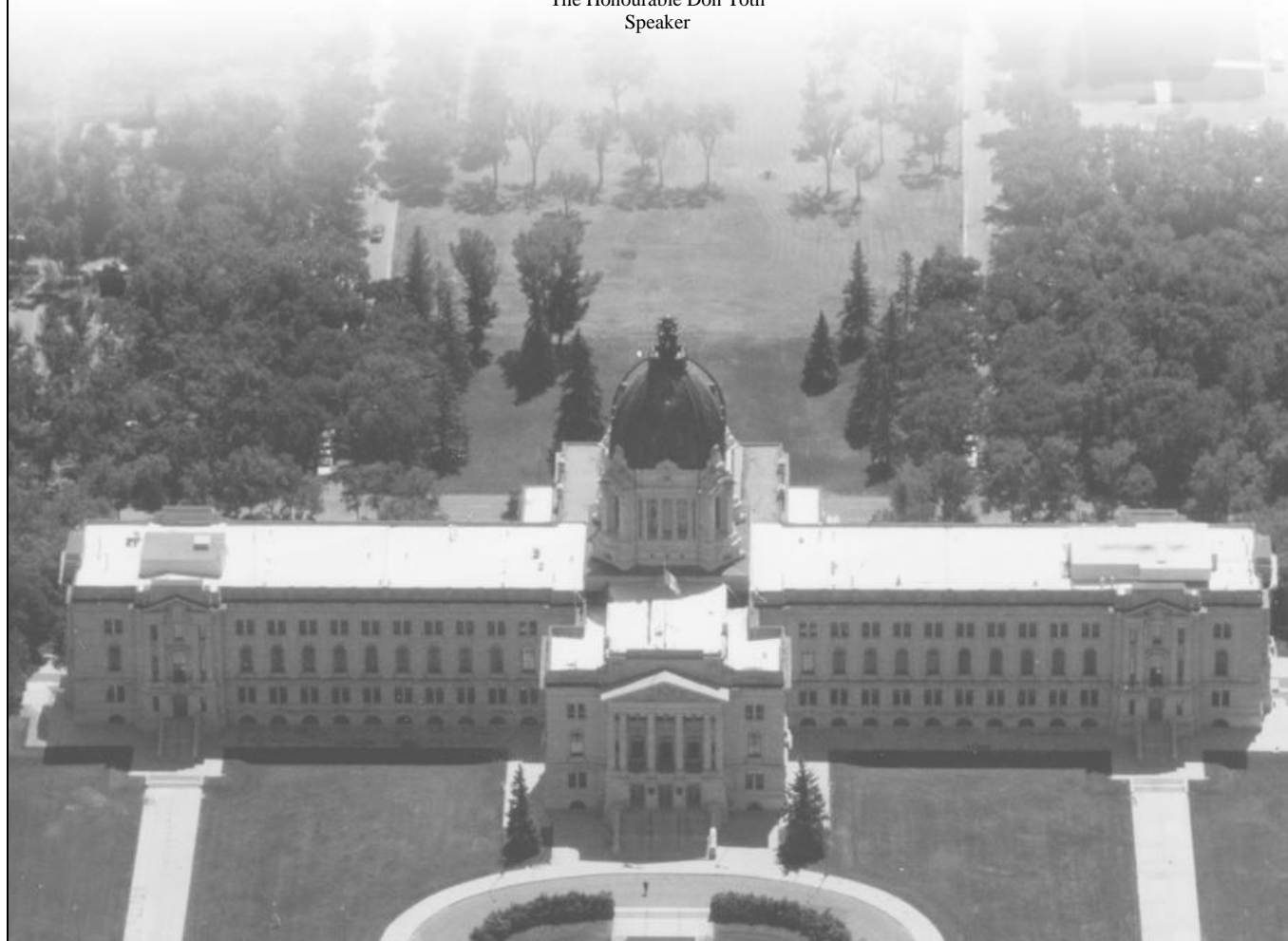
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Lorne Calvert

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Calvert, Lorne	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Hon. Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Yogi	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
LeClerc, Serge	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Toth, Hon. Don	SP	Moosomin
Trew, Kim	NDP	Regina Coronation Park
Van Mulligen, Harry	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney
Vacant		Cumberland

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce to you and through you some of the members of the Regina Council of Women.

The Regina Council of Women was founded in 1895 and has a long, proud history of serving people in Regina. And as the past president, I am especially proud of our role in building the city's first hospital, and our ongoing contribution to the welfare of women in Regina. I salute the women who helped build our city, and I look forward to working with the women who shape our future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Schriemer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce someone through you and to you that is sitting in your gallery. And he's a regular attendee at these proceedings. His name is Richard Lepp, and he's with the Saskatchewan House of Prayer, which is a non-partisan Christian organization, and he's helping us spiritually to do what is right.

I'd also like to say I worked with Rick in Saskatoon in the police service. He let me drive for about 30 minutes one day, and I had to let him take over the wheel because he was clawing up the passenger's side of the dash. So I'd just like to add that Rick is one of the people that you meet in life that is truly spiritual and possesses the Holy Spirit. Thank you.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy today to introduce some people to this Assembly, their Assembly, constituents of mine from Yorkton. It's the Sliva family: Robert, Lydia, their daughter, Stephanie, and son, Joseph, today. But that is not whole clan. They are much more in number than that.

They're a very talented family. They're here today on an educational trip for their kids. They're a home-schooled family and are very good at it. Their kids are very well known in the community and very good stewards of the community. They are very talented singers and very, very adept and talented Ukrainian dance family. And I'd like all members to just say hello them and invite them to their Assembly today.

**Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm presenting petitions today with the concerns that citizens have in this province with respect to two Bills that have been introduced, Bills 5 and Bill 6, the essential services Act and The Trade Union Amendment Act. And the prayer reads as follows:

We respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan urge the new government to withdraw The Public Service Essential Services Act, Bill 5, and The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2007, Bill 6, and hold broad public consultations about labour relations in the province.

And I'm presenting these petitions on behalf of the good citizens of Saskatoon, Wilkie, Landis, Mervin, Turtleford, Cochin, Edam, Spruce Lake, Livelong, and Regina. I so present.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, I wish to present petitions today in support for Station 20 in Saskatoon and in opposition to the government's withdrawal of the funding. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your Hon. Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately restore funding to the Station 20 project.

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

The petitions are signed by the people of Saskatoon.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Estevan.

### Earth Day Celebrations

**Ms. Eagles:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today in recognition of Earth Day. This day is a special time set aside to honour the earth, our only home. Earth Day, which began in 1970, is recognized as the birth of the environment movement. It's a day to raise awareness about humanity's increasingly large ecological footprint and to stimulate positive actions aimed at local, regional, and global issues.

Mr. Speaker, in celebration of Earth Day, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, in partnership with the city of Regina,

hosted their annual Earth Day event on Sunday, April 20. It was a very successful day attended by approximately 600 people who came out and enjoyed a number of activities planned to make people more aware of Earth Day.

There was an Our Mother, The Earth tour in the museum's First Nations gallery and an opportunity to do some bracelet crafting. There was live musical entertainment and First Nations survival demonstrations presented by the Aboriginal group, Kakwa. Regina Girl Guides provided a compost bin building demonstration, and the Science Centre was there with its GO! science games and activities to entertain and educate.

There were composting demos by the Regina EcoLiving and the city of Regina water division. And people went home with a Shand Greenhouse tree seedling. The royal museum continues to partner with institutions, and I would like to thank them, Mr. Speaker, for their informative programs to promote and celebrate Earth Day. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### A Memorable Earth Day

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, today people around the globe are actively participating in Earth Day. This year will likely be the most memorable Earth Day since its inception in 1970, as this year Earth Day groups are demanding serious action on climate change.

Mr. Speaker, there are a number of activities that are taking place this week in Saskatchewan. Just to give a few examples, on Sunday a collaborative effort between the city of Regina, the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, and the Saskatchewan Science Centre provided the opportunity for environmentalists, conservationists, families, and children to take part in various activities together.

This morning at 9 a.m. participants in Regina joined walkers from 13 cities across Canada in Aveda's five-kilometre Walk for Water event to raise awareness to the necessity for global clean water rights. In developing countries, it is common for water collectors, usually women and girls, to have to walk several kilometres each day to collect water.

Mr. Speaker, the environmentally conscious community of Craik will be hosting an Earth Day film festival taking place from April 25 to 27, commencing with a social and dinner at Solar Garden Restaurant in the Craik Eco-Centre.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all my colleagues to applaud the efforts of those in our community who are putting forward the extra effort to raise awareness of the importance of protecting our global environment and the serious consequences of global climate change.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let me ask you a question. What is the most valuable publicly traded company in Canada today? Is it an oil company headquartered in Calgary? No. Is it a bank based out of Toronto? No. It's the Potash Corporation, Mr. Speaker, of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, based on yesterday's closing share price, PotashCorp is now worth \$66.6 billion. The value of potash can be seen throughout our province, Mr. Speaker. Take for example Mosaic Potash's recent announcement of \$1.7 billion expansion. That means . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. It's become increasingly difficult to hear the member that's been recognized to offer his statement. I recognize the member from Yorkton.

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The value of potash can be seen throughout our province. Take for example Mosaic Potash's recent announcement of \$1.7 billion expansion. That means 700 new jobs, Mr. Speaker, 300 in Esterhazy alone. My home of Yorkton is sure to see some of the spinoff from that development. Great news, Mr. Speaker, great news for PotashCorp and great news for Saskatchewan and a far cry from where our potash industry was back in the '70s when it was almost destroyed by the NDP [New Democratic Party] and its ill-conceived, ideologically driven takeover of the potash industry.

Mr. Speaker, thank goodness times have changed and thank goodness the government has changed. And just in case the NDP ever gets an ill-conceived idea about wanting to change and take it over and wreck the potash industry again, our government has introduced legislation to prevent that from ever happening.

We lead the country in population growth, economic growth and sales growth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Women in Politics

**Ms. Atkinson:** — In March 2008, after winning the Spanish national election, President José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero appointed a remarkable cabinet. For the first time in history, the majority of cabinet ministers are women, including first vice-president María Teresa Fernández de la Vega.

The list of cabinet ministers, female cabinet ministers includes the ministers of Public Works, Education, Equality, Labour and Immigration, the Environment, Public Administration, Housing, Science and Innovation.

Especially noteworthy is the appointment of Defence minister, Carme Chacón Piqueras, a 37-year-old pregnant mother. After receiving her doctorate in Law from the University of

Barcelona, Señora Piqueras conducted postgrad studies in Canada.

In 2007 in countries throughout the world, women held about 18 per cent of national elected seats. In Canada the national average is about 21 per cent women, with Saskatchewan presently matching the national average. I'm aware of the many economic, social, and political obstacles that women face. We need to seek and encourage more women to join us in the political arena.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in acknowledging the first cabinet in history with a majority of women and also acknowledge the contributions of women who have helped lead the way to help build our own nation and province through their roles at various levels of government.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **King George Community School's Outstanding Reading Program**

**Hon. Mr. Hickie:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm especially proud to stand in the House today and speak about a fine group of elementary students in my constituency of Prince Albert Carlton. King George Community School has won the 2008 Exemplary Reading Program Award for Saskatchewan from the International Reading Association and the Saskatchewan Reading Council.

The award recognizes outstanding reading and language arts programs in schools at all grade levels throughout Canada. Mr. Speaker, King George's reading program was introduced in the school five years ago to improve the reading skills of the kids. About 200 students from grades 1 to 8 are in the program today. It includes one-on-one after school tutoring and an after-school reading club.

King George teacher Cathy Anderson and school division staff member Sandra Quayle will accept the award on behalf of the school during a convention on May 4 in Atlanta, Georgia.

Education is extremely important to this Saskatchewan Party government, and we commend the day-to-day work of teachers and school divisions across this province. So today, Mr. Speaker, as I ask all members to join me in congratulating the staff and students at King George Community School in Prince Albert on a job well done.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### **Celebrating Sexual Diversity**

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This past Friday, April 18 the Avenue Community Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity in Saskatoon held its annual gala, Carnevale 2008. My colleague from Saskatoon Meewasin and I were able

to attend this wonderful evening as both the everyday contributions of the Avenue Community Centre and some very good people who stand up daily for sexual diversity in Saskatchewan were celebrated.

Glen Horton, a long-time volunteer at the centre and a member of the Bridge City Chorus received a well-deserved Community Service Award. He is well known for helping out in the background, but perhaps more importantly for his work on the support phone line, a very critical service in the LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] community.

[13:45]

Jennifer Brockman from Prince Albert also received the Community Service Award, actively involved in the Prince Albert queer community. She was instrumental in bringing about Prince Albert's first Pride Parade. She also helped establish the Two Spirits of the North group. Special Merit Awards went to M.A.C. [Make-up Art Cosmetics Inc.] AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome] Walk for Life team. The staff at M.A.C. cosmetics is the biggest supporter of the annual AIDS Walk for Life event, so this merit award is very well deserved. Diva's Gender Bender Players, a local queer performance art group, were also recognized for their outstanding community work.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating these groups, Glen, and Jennifer for their outstanding contribution in celebrating our sexual diversity and making Saskatchewan a great place to be. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

#### **Drawing the Line Against Sexual Assault**

**Ms. Ross:** — Mr. Speaker, I've recently had the honour of taking part in an event that raised awareness of two important issues — victimization and healing. Last Saturday, I gathered with dozens of others in the courtyard of Regina City Hall to, quote, "Draw the line against sexual assault."

Dozens of shirts were hung on a clothesline to represent sexual victims. The event was organized by Regina Women's Community Centre and the Sexual Assault Line in conjunction with the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General victim services.

Mr. Speaker, providing a voice for victims is critically important function in our society. They often feel powerless and alone. By gathering together shoulder to shoulder reminds them that they are not alone and that we stand with them and they can start down the healing path.

As sexual assault survivors, these men and women bear the stigma of being assaulted in a way that our society still struggles with. By drawing the line against sexual assault in such a public fashion, a healing light can be cast into dark corners chasing away shameful shadows that can haunt these victims their entire life.

After taking part in last Saturday's event in city hall, I received many thank you notes. I just want to thank the organizers for allowing me the privilege of taking part in such important event. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Sources of Electricity Generation

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The outgoing NDP government's Green Power portfolio was based on a vision of environmental sustainability and renewable energy. We promised in 2003 that any new electricity coming on to the grid would come from renewable sources. And, Mr. Speaker, we delivered on that promise.

For three years now Saskatchewan has led the nation in terms of electricity generated through wind power, electricity which is totally greenhouse gas emission free. In the space of just a few years, we went from producing zero megawatts from wind to having enough wind power generation to power 73,000 Saskatchewan homes.

To the minister: on this Earth Day, what is the Sask Party government's plan to expand wind power generation in Saskatchewan?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to take that question on Earth Day. I have always said, in Saskatchewan, SaskPower, the generation, it's not an either/or question. Certainly we're in favour of electrical generation. We're in favour about talking about nuclear generation. We're in favour of hydro generation. And yes, Mr. Speaker, we're in favour of wind generation.

And SaskPower has stated very clearly that they will accept any proposal that's brought forward. They will look at it. They've had a request for proposal. Anything to do with wind generation, they will consider it. And if it is accepted, it will be done on a net metering basis where commercial rates will apply.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has led the way in terms of wind power, but sadly we are clearly in risk of losing our way. Other provinces are actively pursuing wind power. Manitoba Hydro recently announced they've shortlisted 10 companies wanting to sell up to 300 megawatts of power to

Manitoba Hydro. BC [British Columbia] is now looking at Canada's first offshore wind project. And Ontario is looking at 2000 additional megawatts of renewable energy, including significant investments in wind power.

To the minister: what is being done to maintain Saskatchewan's nation-leading position on totally renewable wind power generation?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, again thank you to the member for his question on Earth Day. It is an appropriate question that we should be asking ourselves here in Saskatchewan, and the answer is a favourable one.

Surely the member opposite knows that wind generation is not part of the base load emphasis in the province. It is something that can be done on a peaking basis. And again SaskPower has made it clear that they will entertain any offers from the private sector or others outside the province that want to do work in Saskatchewan that involves wind energy, and we'd be most favourable to looking at that.

I would remind members opposite that the demand curve for energy in Saskatchewan is certainly increasing because of the economic activity generated by the businesses and the people of Saskatchewan. That will entail increased generation from wind energy, from hydro, from electric, from all sources. And that's what we'll be looking at, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party government is axing environmental spending devoted to renewable energy such as wind. And they're doing it despite having more than \$1.3 billion in the bank.

New Democrats' totally renewable centennial wind power project cost \$250 million for 150 megawatts of new additional power.

The Sask Party has plans to spend at least four times that on their fossil-fuel-gulping clean coal initiative which seems to have been written on the back of a paper napkin. We still haven't seen any business plan. We still haven't seen any projections. We still don't know how this will affect power rates. And we still don't know if the minister's faith in private sector investors is pure fantasy or merely fiction.

Mr. Speaker, there was no due diligence done. To the minister: why is the Sask Party government putting all of their eggs into one clean coal project, especially when there is still so much to be done and so much potential for alternative projects such as wind power?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, I think I've answered the member opposite's questions in my previous answers, but again for his benefit I'll go through it.

It's not an either-or situation in Saskatchewan. Because of the demand that our province is creating — it's a good problem to have — we will be looking at each and every source of electrical generation. We will be looking, we will be looking at wind power, as he questioned earlier. We will be looking at hydro power. We will be looking at clean coal technology because yes, it is a fact that Saskatchewan relies on coal for electrical generation. We will do that in the auspices of a federal program that gave us \$240 million out of \$250 million. We will continue to do that. Will we negotiate with the federal government? Yes, we will. Negotiations are continuing. And I would add that's a lot farther than the clean coal project that we saw from members opposite.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Personnel Changes in the Public Service

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, the government is now facing at least four lawsuits as a result of its handling of civil servant firings. Media reports state the plaintiffs claim their firings were without cause and done in a way that tarnished their professional reputations.

In the Deputy Premier's haste to convince the public that his axing of lifelong public servants were justified, he has gone over the top and put taxpayers' dollars at risk. If he had been more focused on dismissing long-term civil servants with an ounce of compassion and tact and less focused on getting big pay raises for Sask Party buddies, perhaps the whole mess could have been avoided. To the Deputy Premier: how many more lawsuits should taxpayers expect as a result of your incompetence?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the deputy leader.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank that member for another transition question, Mr. Speaker, because it's very clear that this transition team has moved forward in a much more respectful fashion than what the NDP did in 1991. The record is clear as to what they did when they were putting in place their transition changes. There were people that were dismissed on Christmas Eve. There were people that were dismissed after being told that in fact they weren't going to be dismissed.

Mr. Speaker, there is a process in place. There have been people that have been released without cause, and without cause enables those individuals to work on a solution that is negotiated between their legal representatives and our legal representatives.

There are some individuals who, through a state of negotiation, want to enhance their position, and as a result we're seeing some of the court cases or the lawsuits that the individual has referred to.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, in January the Deputy Premier said it would take a week or two for him to come up for the cost of these severance packages. It is now April, and the Deputy Premier's telling reporters it will take a year to find out the cost.

He had no problem giving an estimated cost of severance for legislative staff dismissed by our government before negotiations were complete, but now he thinks it would be better to wait and see. How convenient. To the Deputy Premier: the public has waited long enough. What is the cost of severance so far? And what is the estimated cost of providing severance to all civil servants he fired without cause?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, the circumstances around dismissals, whether they were the dismissals that were handled by the former NDP premier in releasing the 150-plus members that were employed within this building, there is an estimate. There is an estimate that was provided to the media. It's an estimate that we are not sure is going to be realized because in fact some of those employees have been re-employed by this government in this building. So therefore there is a change.

There will be uncertainty, Mr. Speaker, as we move through the course of a year, whether or not some of the conditions that are involved in the release and some of the conditions that were negotiated with those employees are in fact realized. Mr. Speaker, I've indicated that it will take about a year to ensure that the entire process is allowed to continue to its end, and in the final stages I am prepared to release all of that information which will appear in the public accounts documents anyways, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, we still don't know where the buck stops when it comes to the Deputy Premier's purge of lifelong civil servants. We know the Deputy Premier went to work immediately, canning eight lifelong civil servants, including

some who worked and served politicians of every political stripe. Then the Deputy Premier threw due process to the wind, doing the Premier's bidding by axing an additional 70 civil servants that he claims didn't fit the Premier's philosophical approach — whatever that means, Mr. Speaker. We know the government has more people on their list, Mr. Speaker.

To the Deputy Premier: how many civil servants has he fired, and how many more are at risk to get pink slips?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, since November 8 when I was entrusted with moving the transition process forward, we have had a process of renewal. We have had the ability and the opportunity to look at individuals to ensure that the objectives of a new Sask Party government are in fact realized. Mr. Speaker, there have been changes made. There have been changes that are far fewer — they number less than 100, Mr. Speaker — unlike the NDP who did a wholesale change of hundreds and hundreds of people in 1991-92.

Mr. Speaker, there will continue to be changes. There always will be changes, Mr. Speaker, because of retirements, because of the fact that there are other individuals who move. The fact, Mr. Speaker, is that we're in the process of debating a budget, and in that budget there were changes made to within ministries. And within those ministries, Mr. Speaker, there will continue to be changes.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Yates:** — Mr. Speaker, the government's commitment to a professional public service is evaporating faster than dry ice in July. We recently learned that the Premier's good friend, Ron Dedman, is looking after recruitment to the civil service, something that used to be done by the Public Service Commission. But it seems Mr. Dedman needs to do something to earn his \$14,000 a month salary, so he ships resumés of political allies over to the Public Service Commission for consideration. I'll remind the members opposite that they were vehemently opposed to the politicization of the public service when they were in opposition, but they seem to have forgotten, Mr. Speaker.

To the Premier: was it all just an act? Why is it okay for the Premier to pay his friend over \$170,000 a year to politicize the public service?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

[14:00]

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, I think there's one very important thing that that member has forgotten about. Mr. Speaker, he's forgotten about what the NDP have done in the past. Mr. Speaker, I want to again enter into the record the quote from the *Leader-Post* dated Wednesday, October 23, 1991, in which then Premier Romanow is quoted as saying this:

He said if they are politically incompatible with an NDP administration, "it makes the person not competent to carry out the job."

Mr. Speaker, that was the position taken by the NDP. That was the position taken by former Premier Roy Romanow. It is the position that that group adheres to, Mr. Speaker. So for him to suggest that we cannot make changes to ensure that we have a political philosophy that is understood, that we can have people that will carry out the objectives, is ludicrous, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

#### Measures to Assist Low-Income Workers

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, the government is continuing its attack on the working people by cancelling the Saskatchewan workers' health benefits program, a program that was recommended by the commission on vulnerable workers. Not content, Mr. Speaker, with the axing of the Station 20 West project and the cancellation of the dental sealant program, the members opposite made another petty, vindictive cut, this time axing a program that helps working people transition from social assistance to the labour market.

To the Minister of Labour: the government claims it doesn't have anything against the poor, so how does it explain another attack aimed squarely at some of Saskatchewan's most vulnerable workers?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the program that the member talks about was a program that had very, very little uptake. In fact there were, I don't know, I think there was about maybe 50 or 60 vulnerable workers that were on that program. They will see their benefits continued, Mr. Speaker. That program has been cut. In other words, there is no more money going into it than what is in there right now that will continue to see the workers that are there being serviced, Mr. Speaker.

But when it comes to other programs, and we've talked about them already, there are many challenges left from that former government, that NDP government, Mr. Speaker, that we have to deal with. We have to deal with many issues as far as infrastructure issues and as far as human resources, Mr. Speaker. We've made good decisions for the people of Saskatchewan.



**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, what about the future of the workers in Saskatchewan? That's what the question here is. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan workers' health benefits program is designed to help low-income workers access additional health services. The program provides drug coverage assistance, eye care assistance, and other services to individuals who earn less than \$21,000 per year. While the members opposite were giving \$60,000 increases to their friends, they were stealing benefits right out of the hands of workers living below the poverty line, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it is this type of callousness, it is this type of mean-spiritedness, it is unacceptable at any time but especially when the government is sitting on a mountain of money. To the minister: will the government stop its attack on the poor and restore funding to the Saskatchewan workers' health benefits program?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, as I said before, workers that were accessing that program will still have those benefits covered. It was not taken up. It had a very poor take-up, Mr. Speaker. But what I can tell you, for workers around this province under a new Saskatchewan Party, there are jobs available for all, Mr. Speaker. There are high-paying jobs for all, Mr. Speaker.

Many of those workers that were working for very low wages will see opportunities like they've never seen before, opportunities that they never saw under an NDP government, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the benefits of a strong economy will be spread to all including high-paying jobs.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, now that the cabinet has declared war on the working poor in Saskatchewan, I'm not sure if the Premier feels his job is done, or perhaps there's maybe more. But, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite seem to be cutting programs simply because, as mentioned, they are NDP programs. Station 20 West, the dental sealant program, and now the Saskatchewan workers' health benefits program are three casualties of that vindictive government.

The members opposite, in a vengeful and backward approach to politics, seem more interested in trying to hurt the NDP, Mr. Speaker, than in helping Saskatchewan's most vulnerable citizens. To the Premier: will he stop putting politics, putting politics over people, start acting like a premier, and commit to doing the right thing for Saskatchewan people?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I'm more than happy to stand today to answer that member's ridiculous question. We were no sooner elected, Mr. Speaker, when, in the city that he lives, we came to an agreement with the city council to give increased funding so that they could continue to have discounted bus passes. That was to help the most needy in the city of Saskatoon. Mr. Speaker, we just recently announced the largest increase ever to the Saskatchewan employment supplement.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the minister.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We just announced just last week the largest increase ever to the Saskatchewan employment supplement. That's to help families of lower-income individuals to supplement . . . the amount of children that they have. It was a substantial increase to help the lower-income working people to remain in the workforce. That's because we believe the prosperity of Saskatchewan should be shared with the people of Saskatchewan.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### Government Appointments

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been well over a month since the Minister of Labour swung his axe squarely at the Labour Relations Board. The minister has spent a month telling us why the firings . . . or he has spent a month avoiding telling us why the firings occurred in the first place.

Can he update the House on the status of the severance negotiations with the three members of the Labour Relations Board? Can he tell us how much his bungling is going to cost the people of our province? And can he assure members of the public that the outgoing Labour Relations Board members are going to continue to hear and complete their cases?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the question regarding the Labour Relations Board. Mr. Speaker, what we're happy to say is, obviously under the competent leadership of Ken Love things are proceeding nicely.

What we're doing is holding an open competition for the Vice-Chair position, Mr. Speaker.

And as I've said before, Mr. Speaker, I'm not prepared to speak to the specific cases that the member opposite makes reference

to. What we can say is that we had cases going back to 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007 and, Mr. Speaker, that's a shameful record, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province ought not to have to put up with. And that will be a thing of the past under the new leadership of Ken Love.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, we do remember how that minister was pressured into holding a competition before filling the vacant Labour Relations Board Vice-Chair position. First he refused to answer the question and then about 24 hours later he claimed that it had always been his intention to hold an open process. We're not so sure about that.

But in any case, I'd like today to table the ad the minister referred to, advertising the vacant position, as well as the ad that was placed two years ago. There are a couple of interesting differences. The successful applicant no longer needs any litigation experience in labour, nor does he need any or she need any training and experience in mediation and conciliation.

Can the minister explain to us why he decided to lower the bar, and does he have some candidate in mind?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. Mr. Speaker, we're holding an open competition. We said we would do that, Mr. Speaker, and obviously I'm not going to comment on the candidates at this time, Mr. Speaker. What we can be assured of is that there are qualified, capable candidates that will be coming forward, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite certainly have an interesting selection process when it comes to filling vacancies of arm's-length agencies. When it comes to Vice-Chairs, all this minister does is lower the bar, and when it comes to Chairs, it seems that he doesn't like competitions at all.

We've got Ken Love, who got himself a \$180,000 job at the LRB [Labour Relations Board] based on his work on his government's transition team and his experience representing employers before the board. At the Workers' Compensation Board we've got David Eberle, who donated thousands of dollars to the Saskatchewan Party and served on the Sask Party management committee.

To the minister: why is it that the only things that appear to be

ready for growth are the pocket books of some Sask Party supporters?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question. It reminds me of a movie called *Groundhog Day*. I think we've covered this territory before.

Mr. Speaker, what we can say, Mr. Speaker, is that obviously we're very pleased with the skill set, with the competence, with the capability of Mr. Love and Mr. Eberle as they're showing leadership within those respective organizations, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, it is Groundhog Day because the member opposite obviously hasn't seen his shadow . . . [inaudible] . . . prepared to answer the question.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we have documents that I want to table today that show that the minister's hand-picked Workers' Compensation Board Chair will get about \$20,000 more than the previous Chair and almost \$40,000 more than the previous Chair started out with in 2001.

So we have the Sask Party appointment of Ken Love. He gets a \$60,000 raise. Then we have Mr. Eberle. He gets a \$20,000 raise. I guess the question is, why is it that Love gets \$40,000 raise versus the \$20,000 raise for Dave Eberle? Does it have something to do with Mr. Love's participation in this shadowy transition team process?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — You know, Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to finally get a question regarding the Workers' Compensation Board. What we can say, Mr. Speaker, is there's been a surplus this year — obviously reinvestments in the Injury Fund, Disaster Reserve Fund, Occupational Disease Reserve Fund, Second Injury Reserve Fund, Economic Stabilization Reserve.

What we can then turn and say is under the former NDP what we saw was the committee of review, they sat on 69 recommendations, Mr. Speaker. What we've seen most recently, Mr. Speaker, is the message from the CEO [chief executive officer] where increasingly what we've seen is the current injury rate of 3.8 per cent is the lowest level since 1992. That's the type of questions the member opposite ought to be

asking.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

#### Commitment to the Environment

**Hon. Ms. Heppner:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today April 22 is the 39th annual celebration of Earth Day. Across Saskatchewan, across Canada, and around the globe citizens, businesses, communities, and governments are taking actions to express their commitment to protecting our environment.

Mr. Speaker, it gives me real satisfaction as this government's first Minister of Environment to stand in the legislature and confirm our commitment to the environment. This year we have committed an additional \$10 million to fund green initiatives in Saskatchewan, bringing the total funding to seventeen and a half million dollars. This is in keeping with our promise to the people of Saskatchewan to more than double the funding for green initiatives.

The money will be used to deliver on our commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Saskatchewan by 32 per cent by the year 2020. It will be used to support innovative technologies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions right here in Saskatchewan at the Technology Research Centre and the International Test Centre for Carbon Dioxide Capture. It will be used to research climate change impacts and adaptation on the prairies, research that supports the Premier's commitment to a national strategy on climate change adaptation. It will be used to support recycling through an increase in funding to SARCAN's beverage container program, an increase that reflects the growing participation of Saskatchewan people and the recycling programs across this province.

Mr. Speaker, we are already seeing this government's commitment to the environment being put into action. Earlier this month, we announced a 20 per cent rebate on SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] insurance premiums and registration fees for the owners of hybrid and fuel-efficient vehicles. This keeps our promise to help Saskatchewan people go green on the road.

And we're leading by example within provincial government. The central vehicle agency of the Ministry of Government Services has purchased 440 flex-fuel vehicles. In addition all vehicle purchases will be hybrid or in the top 20 per cent for fuel efficiency in their class.

In addition new buildings are being designed and built to comply with a leadership in energy and environmental design, or LEED, certification standards. This includes the Regina Provincial Correction Centre, the Saskatchewan Disease Control Laboratory, and new courthouses in both La Ronge and Meadow Lake.

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, while we celebrate Earth Day on April 22 each

year, what we are all really talking about are the choices that we make each day, and the impact those choices have on the environment. Our government is committed to making sure people of Saskatchewan have the support they need to make the choices that count. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Ms. Morin:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the minister for getting me this statement. I appreciate that. But I also want to recognize, that this isn't truly a ministerial statement; however I will make a response.

Earth Day is very important, Mr. Speaker. It's an occasion to reflect on the current situation and to recommit to addressing the issues facing our environment. Mr. Speaker, it might make the minister feel better to stand up and take credit for the many initiatives that had their beginnings under the NDP government, but the Sask Party's record tells a different story than the minister does.

They question the science on climate change, and there are many quotes to substantiate that. They cut the green initiatives fund from \$320 million to a \$40 million commitment on their behalf. They abolished the Office of Energy Conservation. They also abolished the office of climate change secretariat.

The minister went for a jaunt to Australia instead of dealing with a report by Environmental Defence that Saskatchewan is bearing the brunt of air emissions as a result of oil sands development in Alberta despite ... a development Environmental Defence calls, "the most destructive project on earth."

The science is clear on this, Mr. Speaker, and in case the Sask Party is confused on that, they simply need to refer to the quotes of their members. In spite of all the NDP programs that the minister has just mentioned — that the Sask Party has not yet been able to cut — the minister and her party still have no issue on the credibility of the environment.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice to report Bill 15 without amendment.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that this Bill be now read a third time . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Oh I'm sorry. I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill now be read for the third time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Municipal Affairs has requested leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 15, The Northern Municipalities Amendment Act, 2008. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 15 — The Northern Municipalities Amendment Act, 2008

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

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Municipal Affairs that Bill No. 15, The Northern Municipalities Amendment Act, 2008 be passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 4 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 4, The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2007. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 4 — The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2007/Loi de 2007 modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur l'Assemblée législative et le Conseil exécutif (élections à date fixe)

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 4, The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2007 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

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

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 30 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be considered in committee?

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

the Bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 30, The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 30 — The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act

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

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 30, The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

#### Standing Committee of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 11 without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the Bill be considered in committee?

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill now be read the third time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 11, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2008 and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 11 — The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2008/Loi de 2008 modifiant la Loi de 2002 sur l'exécution des jugements canadiens

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

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 11, The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2008 be now the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

#### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 20 without amendment.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill be now read the third time.

**The Speaker:** — Order. The Minister of Justice has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 20, The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2008 and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 20 — The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2008/Loi de 2008 modifiant la Loi sur l'administration des successions

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

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 20, The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2008 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried.

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

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

##### Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 12 without amendment.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on this Bill and that the Bill now be read the third time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 12, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, 2008 and that the Bill be now read the third time. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. The minister may proceed to move third reading.

#### THIRD READINGS

##### Bill No. 12 — The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, 2008

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

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 12, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, 2008 be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 35 — The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2008

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Finance, and move second reading of Bill 35, An Act to amend The Income Tax Act, 2000.

Mr. Speaker, during last fall's election, our government made a number of commitments to Saskatchewan people. Our budget, delivered on March 19, fulfilled over 40 of those commitments, Mr. Speaker. This Bill will enable the implementation of three of those key initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, we made a promise in our 2007 election platform to double the personal income tax credit for caregivers. This tax credit will help families caring for elderly parents and adult disabled children living at home. Our budget not only doubled the amount of the caregiver tax credit but also, Mr. Speaker, enhanced the other disability . . .

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this Bill doubles the caregiver tax credit amount to \$8,190 for the 2008 taxation year. The infirm dependent tax credit amount is also doubled to \$8,190. In addition, Mr. Speaker, the disability tax credit and the supplement to that credit for individuals under 18 are both increased again to \$8,190.

These increases ensure Saskatchewan people living with severe and prolonged disabilities and those who are supporting elderly or disabled relatives are better able to deal with the costs associated with their care.

Mr. Speaker, our 2007 election platform also included a key commitment to give families with young children a tax break on children's activities. Our budget, Mr. Speaker, delivered on this commitment with the introduction of the active family benefits starting in 2009. Mr. Speaker, for parents of children between the ages of 6 and 14 years of age, the active family benefits will rebate up to \$150 per child for cultural, recreational, and sport activity fees.

You will recall, Mr. Speaker, that the active families benefit

was introduced in a Bill tabled by my colleague, the Hon. Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport. That Bill set out the eligibility criteria for the new benefit. Amendments to The Income Tax Act, 2000 will allow the active family benefits to be administered through the provincial income tax system as a refundable tax credit, Mr. Speaker.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we made a commitment to Saskatchewan graduates to introduce the most aggressive graduate retention program in the country, Mr. Speaker. This year's budget delivered on this commitment by introducing the graduate retention program to provide tuition fee rebates to our post-secondary graduates beginning January 1, 2008. This new program replaces the previous graduate tax exemption. Mr. Speaker, the graduate retention program will rebate up to \$20,000 in tuition paid by graduates of Saskatchewan post-secondary institutions. To fully qualify for a tuition rebate, graduates must remain in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, for seven years after graduation.

Mr. Speaker, the graduate retention program was introduced in a Bill tabled by my colleague, the Hon. Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. That Bill sets out the eligibility criteria for the new tuition rebate program. Mr. Speaker, amendments to The Income Tax Act, 2000 will allow the tuition rebates to be paid through the provincial income tax system as a refundable tax credit.

Mr. Speaker, the Finance minister will be pleased to answer questions concerning the amendments to The Income Tax Act, 2000 when discussing the Bill during committee review. Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of the Act to amend The Income Tax Act, 2000. Thank you.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Crown Corporations has moved second reading of Bill No. 35, The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2008. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased this afternoon to enter into debate about this very important Bill. As the member has indicated, this Bill puts into place their commitments during the last provincial election and their commitments, yes, of this budget, Mr. Speaker.

It does a number of things, including putting in place increased credits for disability assistance, Mr. Speaker, for those who are providing assistance for those with disabilities. It also puts in place two new programs that they have put forward in their platform, their graduate retention program, and the Saskatchewan active families benefit, Mr. Speaker.

Those particular new benefits to Saskatchewan families are contained in this particular piece of legislation, as well as individual pieces of legislation, Mr. Speaker. But at this time because of the nature of this particular Bill and our need to consult with stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, I would move we adjourn debate.

[14:30]

**The Speaker:** — The member from Regina Dewdney has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed.

### Bill No. 38 — The Corporate Capital Tax Act

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Crown Corporations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again it is a pleasure to rise today on behalf of my colleague, the Minister of Finance, to move second reading of The Corporate Capital Tax Act, Bill No. 38.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to declare that this Act will be treated as a confidence vote. Mr. Speaker, the government is introducing an amendment to The Corporation Capital Tax Act to increase the threshold amount for small financial institutions in order to maintain their eligibility for lower corporate capital tax rates. The threshold amount is being increased, Mr. Speaker, from 1 billion to \$1.5 billion of aggregate taxable paid up capital, effective for fiscal years ending on or after October 31, 2008, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, increasing the threshold will encourage small financial institutions to continue to expand and provide quality financial services in Saskatchewan. In turn, Mr. Speaker, the financial services offered by these institutions will encourage small business to expand and be a part of the growing economy that we enjoy today, both now and well into the future, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move today second reading of The Corporate Capital Tax Act. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Crown Corporations has moved that Bill No. 38, The Corporate Capital Tax be read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Dewdney.

**Mr. Yates:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This is a very small Bill that deals with a very particular problem, one that helps smaller financial institutions in our province. Mr. Speaker, in fact, this particular Bill, as I would understand the situation in our province, helps a single financial institution, Mr. Speaker, a smaller institution that has difficulty being competitive against the larger financial institutions in our province and perhaps in other parts of the country as well, Mr. Speaker.

There is some concern about this enhancement and its ability to help this particular financial institution, Mr. Speaker. We need to check with individuals from that institution and clarify facts around this particular change, Mr. Speaker, so at this time I'd move we adjourn debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Regina Dewdney has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed.

**Bill No. 24 — The Trade Union  
Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2)**

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2) be read a second time.

Through the amendments to our legislation today, we are providing flexibility in the number of vice-chairpersons appointed to the Labour Relations Board. Specifically we are proposing an amendment to subsection (1) to provide for the appointment of not more than two Vice-Chairs to the Labour Relations Board. This change means that we are able to have one vice-chairperson on the Labour Relations Board, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our government is strongly committed to ensuring that the Labour Relations Board delivers timely, responsive, and effective services to Saskatchewan's labour relations community. In stark contrast to the glut of cases that were allowed to linger recently at the LRB under the previous government, our government is focused on improving service at the Labour Relations Board.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that believes in finding new, innovative, and efficient ways to accomplish our goals in a manner that will benefit this province not just today but in years to come. Permitting flexibility in the number of Vice-Chairs to the Labour Relations Board is yet another example of how this government is moving forward on an agenda that we feel is about serving the people of this province.

Today's amendment reinforces our commitment to this province and to ensure that we keep our promise to help foster a fair and balanced labour environment in Saskatchewan. We are working to promote co-operative and productive work environments for employers and employees while ensuring that Saskatchewan is competitive with other Canadian jurisdictions.

Our focus is on enhancing the service delivery of the Labour Relations Board, and I believe that today's amendment to The Trade Union Act will be a simple but important part of this process. Once again, Mr. Speaker, I move second reading of Bill 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour has moved second reading of Bill No. 24, The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 be now read a second time. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When the Sask Party was in opposition, on a number of occasions they complained about the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board, and they said that the Labour Relations Board was unfairly biased against business, despite the fact that former Chief

Justice Frank Gerein concluded that there was, and I quote, "no evidence" to, and I quote:

... to conclude that bias exists within the Saskatchewan Labour Relations Board or that there is justification for a reasonable apprehension of bias.

To conclude otherwise, this court would be acting on pure conjecture or fantasy. That is not good enough.

Now this is a quote from former Chief Justice Gerein when people took a decision from the Labour Relations Board to the court and he concluded that there was absolutely no evidence of ...

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I'd ask members, if you have personal discussions, if at all possible to either tone it down or actually behind the House would be greatly appreciated in order to hear the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party raised the spectre of political interference in 2006 when one of two Labour Relations Board Vice-Chairs' terms was not renewed upon expiry. They alleged that this Vice-Chair's term was not renewed because the NDP and labour saw this person as too, and I quote, "pro-business." That being said, at no point leading up to and including the election did the Sask Party mention any changes to the Labour Relations Board.

The Sask Party was elected on November 7, 2007, and in their very first legislative session one month later they introduced Bills 5 and 6 to bring balance, and I quote, "balance to Saskatchewan's labour environment." Bill 5 is essential service, though the Sask Party had told reporters in the days leading up to the election that this would not be legislated, and Bill 6 includes a number of amendments to The Trade Union Act, and both Bills, no doubt, Mr. Speaker, should see passage during this sitting of the legislature.

On March 6, reports surfaced that in the middle of a Labour Relations Board hearing, the Chair and the two Vice-Chairs of the Labour Relations Board were fired. One Vice-Chair read into the hearing's proceedings the letter received from the Justice officials on her firing.

In the weeks that followed, there has been a lot of confusion as to how cases currently incomplete before the board will eventually be settled. The government initially claimed that the outgoing members were instructed to continue on with their current cases but not to start any new ones. But there have been conflicting stories and opinions as to whether these members have any legal authority or obligation to do so. As of now I believe this matter is unresolved. We've tried to get answers from the minister in question period, and this minister is not forthcoming at all, Mr. Speaker.

On the day of the firings, the Minister of Labour wasn't able to comment. The government's executive director of communications denied any political moves for the firings. That person did confirm that the firings were without cause, and that person assured the public the following day, a new Chair would be announced. She went on to say that the new Chair would be, and I quote, "... someone with a great reputation who's been



around on both sides of the labour equation . . .”

The following day the minister did reveal the name of the new Chair, a man by the name of Mr. Love. He'd been hired without an open selection process. And since 1997 it's been the practice to hire Vice-Chairs based upon an open competition through the Public Service Commission — which I note this existing competition, that the minister referred to in question period, is not through the Public Service Commission; it's through his department — and for the Chair position to be filled by promoting someone who served as the Vice-Chair when there's a vacancy.

The government news release regarding Mr. Love provided some information on his professional credentials. However the news release failed to mention that he was a long-time Saskatchewan Party and Conservative Party supporter and a lawyer. And in a media scrum, the minister admitted, and I quote, “that there has been a connection to the party.”

Now government spokespeople have since confirmed that, contrary to the earlier statement, Mr. Love has almost exclusively been a management lawyer and that the only times he represented workers has been when they're trying to decertify, Mr. Speaker. In the following days, it's been noted that the new Chair will be earning a salary \$60,000 higher than the outgoing Chair who'd been on the board for a number of years, and may I say, Mr. Speaker, had significant experience as a management or an employer lawyer before he was appointed as Vice-Chair of the board, and he went through a competitive process.

The minister has consistently refused to answer why the firings took place, other than to point to renewal and the normal course of events following changes in government. The Premier has stated that he wants, and I quote, “. . . Labour Relations . . . members [who] will consider what the government has said publicly in opposition and in government, that . . . we seek a balance . . .”

The Deputy Premier, who is the head of the government's transition team, has similarly stated, and I quote, “We need to be assured that the objectives of the Saskatchewan Party government are going to be in line with the people that are working.” And I presume he means on tribunals.

It's later been revealed that Mr. Love had in fact done work for the Deputy Premier in relation to the government's transition team. And the transition team was, of course, the body which interviewed the outgoing Labour Relations Chair and suggested his replacement. The Deputy Premier has claimed that Mr. Love, in his duties related to transition, had nothing to do with the Labour Relations Board or his own nomination as Chair.

It's been interesting to note that the transition team has been largely headed up by a man by the name of Doug Emsley. Mr. Emsley was the one who spoke to the three Labour Relations Board members prior to the termination. And it's been revealed since that time that he had previous interaction with the Labour Relations Board as his company, Vision Security, had lost several cases before the board.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Association of Labour

Lawyers has released an open letter to the minister claiming, among other statements that, and I quote:

The recent actions of the government have not only called into question the independence and integrity of the Labour Relations Board, but [it's] . . . raised the spectre [the spectre, Mr. Speaker] of political interference in the workings of the tribunal essential to maintaining legal rights in the workplace . . .

The government . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Can you spell spectre?

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Oh, I can spell spectre. I absolutely can. And I can also spell stunningly incompetent.

**Some Hon. Members:** — Hear, hear!

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Mr. Speaker, the government has now indicated that rather than hiring two Vice-Chairs, the size of the board is going to be reduced to one, Mr. Speaker. Now this was to cover their increase in the salary for Mr. Love by some \$60,000. And the minister . . . [inaudible] . . . that, well we're reducing the cost because we're only going to have the Chair and the Vice-Chair; at the same time, we're going to speed up work.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the minister is introducing an amendment to The Trade Union Act, which will now allow the Labour Relations Board to have up to two Vice-Chairs. And this is how he covers himself, I guess, in terms of his misspeaking in the last few months.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we note with interest that there is now an ad in the Regina *Leader-Post* calling for people to apply for this new Vice-Chair's position. And what's so curious about the ad is that it makes no reference to having any kind of experience in terms of labour relations. I mean, you should have some knowledge. But knowledge is different, as we all know, from experience, Mr. Speaker. And it also makes no reference to having any experience in terms of mediation and conciliation, understanding labour relations. There's nothing like that. So we really do question whether the minister has someone in mind.

[14:45]

Now in the past when these administrative tribunals ran advertisements, the Vice-Chair of the Labour Relations Board, resumés and letters were sent to the Public Service Commission. And I note this time that it's being sent to the Ministry of Advanced Education, Employment and Labour. And one really does need to understand whether or not this is a Public Service Commission process or is this going to be the minister deciding who's going to be chosen for this new position, Mr. Speaker. I suspect the latter, Mr. Speaker.

We have a number of consultations that we want to undertake regarding this particular amendment to The Trade Union Act and so, Mr. Speaker, what I would ask is to adjourn this particular debate at the moment in order that the opposition can do its proper consultations.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Nutana has moved adjournment of the debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to accommodate the good work of the committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried. This House stands adjourned to facilitate the work of committees until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:46.]



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>	
<b>INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS</b>	
Ross .....	1045
Schriemer .....	1045
Ottenbreit .....	1045
<b>PRESENTING PETITIONS</b>	
Morin .....	1045
Iwanchuk .....	1045
<b>STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS</b>	
<b>Earth Day Celebrations</b>	
Eagles .....	1045
<b>A Memorable Earth Day</b>	
Morin .....	1046
<b>Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan</b>	
Ottenbreit .....	1046
<b>Women in Politics</b>	
Atkinson .....	1046
<b>King George Community School's Outstanding Reading Program</b>	
Hickie .....	1047
<b>Celebrating Sexual Diversity</b>	
Forbes .....	1047
<b>Drawing the Line Against Sexual Assault</b>	
Ross .....	1047
<b>QUESTION PERIOD</b>	
<b>Sources of Electricity Generation</b>	
Trew .....	1048
Cheveldayoff .....	1048
<b>Personnel Changes in the Public Service</b>	
Yates .....	1049
Krawetz .....	1049
<b>Measures to Assist Low-Income Workers</b>	
Iwanchuk .....	1050
McMorris .....	1050
Harpauer .....	1051
<b>Government Appointments</b>	
Atkinson .....	1051
Norris .....	1051
<b>MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS</b>	
<b>Commitment to the Environment</b>	
Heppner .....	1053
Morin .....	1053
<b>PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES</b>	
<b>Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice</b>	
Kirsch .....	1053
<b>THIRD READINGS</b>	
<b>Bill No. 15 — The Northern Municipalities Amendment Act, 2008</b>	
Hutchinson .....	1054
<b>Bill No. 4 — The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council (Fixed Election Dates) Amendment Act, 2007</b>	
<b>Loi de 2007 modifiant la Loi de 2007 sur l'Assemblée législative et le Conseil exécutif (élections à date fixe)</b>	
Morgan .....	1054
<b>Bill No. 30 — The Statutes and Regulations Revision Act</b>	
Morgan .....	1055
<b>Bill No. 11 — The Enforcement of Canadian Judgments Amendment Act, 2008</b>	
<b>Loi de 2008 modifiant la Loi de 2002 sur l'exécution des jugements canadiens</b>	
Morgan .....	1055
<b>Bill No. 20 — The Administration of Estates Amendment Act, 2008</b>	
<b>Loi de 2008 modifiant la Loi sur l'administration des successions</b>	
Morgan .....	1055
<b>Bill No. 12 — The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, 2008</b>	
Morgan .....	1056
<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
<b>GOVERNMENT ORDERS</b>	

**SECOND READINGS**

**Bill No. 35 — The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2008**

Cheveldayoff.....1056  
Yates.....1057

**Bill No. 38 — The Corporate Capital Tax Act**

Cheveldayoff.....1057  
Yates.....1057

**Bill No. 24 — The Trade Union Amendment Act, 2008 (No. 2)**

Norris.....1058  
Atkinson.....1058

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