



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

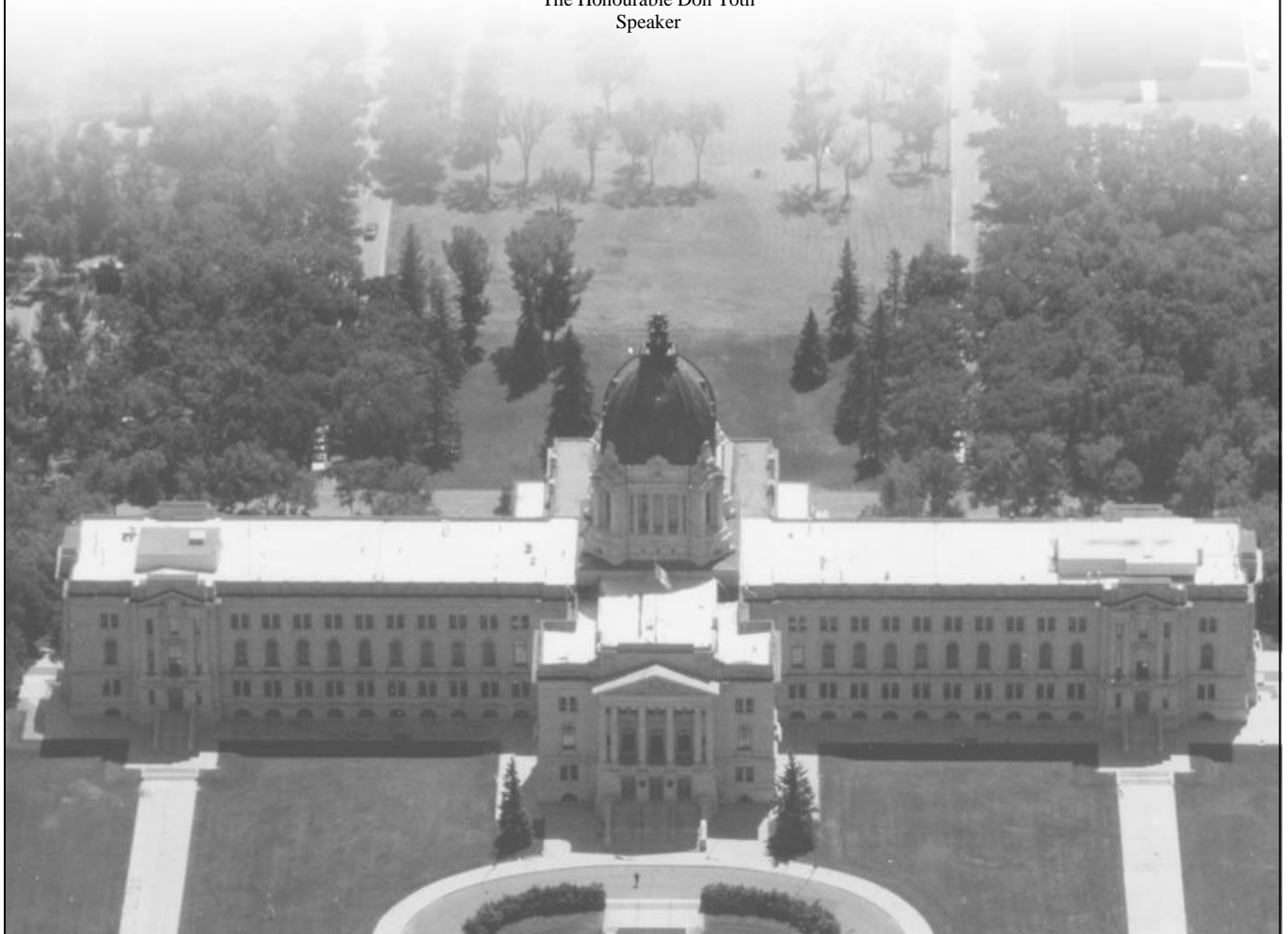
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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 — Dwain Lingenfelter

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
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Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
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Elhard, 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, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
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Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Iwanchuk, Andy	NDP	Saskatoon Fairview
Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
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McMillan, Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
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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, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, 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
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to members of the Legislative Assembly it's an honour to be able to introduce a special guest that's seated in your gallery today, a bona fide Canadian and Saskatchewan hero, and a resident of our capital city. Joining us today in the Assembly is Warrant Officer Jeffrey Dickson, known to many who listen to certain sports radio shows simply as Sarge.

Mr. Speaker, he has served 22 years in the armed forces of our country — four tours in Bosnia, one in Cyprus, and was part of the first tour in Afghanistan in 2006. He and his wife are raising William here in the great city of Regina. And he's currently at 10 Field Regiment in the Queen City, where he is a mentor to many who have volunteered to be reservists. And, Mr. Speaker, he's joined us to witness the proceedings in his Legislative Assembly today. I'd ask all hon. members to give him a warm welcome to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly a great-looking group of students seated in the eastern gallery. They are from Sacred Heart Community School. There are 40 grade 4s and 5s. Have you got a big wave? Give us a wave. Yes. There we are. They are headed up by their teachers Carey Dziaduck and Darlene Wurm. They're also accompanied by a chaperone and Sacred Heart institution, Mary Giambattista.

We had a really excellent meeting, Mr. Speaker. They've elected leadership in advance of their visit to the legislature, so leaders Friday, Sparvier, and Fiddler put me through my paces. But I think this is a group of students that knows what it is to be wanting to be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

So I've got some bit more to say in a member's statement about the great school that is Sacred Heart, but certainly these are some exemplary students from a fine school and an excellent riding in Regina Elphinstone-Centre. Please join me in welcoming all these students and their teachers and Ms. Giambattista to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I wish to introduce our victim services volunteers and would request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to all members. Mr. Speaker, this is Victims of Crime Awareness Week in Saskatchewan, and seated in your gallery are 13 individuals who serve with the police-based victim services programs in Saskatchewan. And I won't be introducing them individually, but would like to ask them all to stand up while I introduce them.

Earlier today it was my pleasure to present each of them with a gift commemorating their 10 or 15 years of service as victim services volunteers. As time does not allow for individual introductions, I will mention only the victim services volunteers work out of the Churchill River, Moose Jaw, Northeast, Parkland, Prince Albert, Regina, Southeast, and Southwest victim services programs.

Mr. Speaker, as our victim services programs have evolved over the years, dedicated volunteers such as these have given of their time and energy. They have connected with victims in their communities and supported them throughout the criminal justice process. I would ask that all members join me in expressing our appreciation for all of these dedicated individuals and all of our victim services volunteers for their years of service to the people of their communities.

I would remind the volunteers that this is only a milestone, not a retirement. And I hope to see many of them again five years from now to commemorate their 15th and 20th anniversaries and for another five years after that. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the opposition, I would like to join with the minister in welcoming the victim service volunteers to their Legislative Assembly. If history is any indication, Mr. Speaker, the minister does not need to be concerned that they will be back here in five years and, in many cases, in 10 years.

I had occasion, sad occasion sometimes, as Minister of Justice to visit victims of serious crimes in the province of Saskatchewan, people who were still living with the ongoing fear of violence or threat of violence in some cases, Mr. Speaker. And the support, forget the tangible work that these people do, but the support and being there I know is invaluable to their neighbours who they assist. And so again I want to join with the minister in welcoming them here, thanking them for their service. And I appreciate those aren't very comfortable seats, but I hope you had more comfortable ones when you received your honours that you so well deserved earlier today. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Along with the minister and the critic, I would like to recognize one special

member of the group today. Not only is he involved with this group, he's involved with many groups that I've been involved with myself. His name is Eugene Dutchnitski. Give me a wave, Eugene. I've known Eugene for quite a number of years, not the least the group we are involved with is CASARA or Civil Air Search and Rescue, myself as a search pilot and Eugene as a navigator and spotter and safety officer. He's done some amazing work in the Yorkton area, not only with victim services but many other groups that he's involved with. So I'd ask members to especially welcome him to this Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery are two guests that I would like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, John and Eleanor Moore. If you could give us a wave. John and Eleanor are the parents of Stephen Moore who works in our caucus office.

And while I'm sure they came all the way from Saint John, New Brunswick to visit their son, I think the real reason they came was for their granddaughter's confirmation which occurred over the weekend. So it's not every day we have guests from New Brunswick here in the province, or here in the Assembly at least, so I would ask all members to join me in welcoming John and Eleanor to the Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I'm happy to introduce some members in the west gallery, members of SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network] Matters who are concerned about the way in which this government has dealt with this matter. I can't see everybody up there, but I see Heather Malek who is a film and television editor. Give us a wave here. Heather is a film and television editor living in Regina. She moved here from Alberta in 1998. She's worked on many SCN-supported documentaries and dramas, and she's concerned that if SCN is terminated, she'll have to move to another province to find work.

I'd also like to introduce Robin Schlaht who is a producer. His company is Zima Junction Productions. He too actually has come from out of province and has been in Saskatchewan for 21 years, and he's concerned that he will also have to leave Saskatchewan. So I'd like everyone to join in welcoming the members of SCN Matters to the legislature. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of concerned citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned over the condition of Highway 123. Mr. Speaker, this is a highway that is the only link to the outside world for the community of Cumberland House. And as you know, Mr. Speaker, it's the one road in and the one road out. And this petition goes on to say that this highway has so many potholes that it requires considerable

manoeuvring in order to avoid getting stuck in the mud. Mr. Speaker, the prayer goes on to read:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintaining and repairing of this highway.

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

And this particular petition is signed by the good folks of Cumberland House, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Ms. Higgins: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of the protection of wildlife habitat lands, and it speaks to the issue that *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* protects 3.4 million acres of uplands and wetlands or one-third of all wildlife habitat lands in Saskatchewan in its natural state.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

To cause the provincial government to immediately and without delay recognize the importance of the protection of wildlife habitat lands and immediately withdraw proposed amendments that will negatively affect the protection of wildlife habitat lands;

And in so doing cause the provincial government to commit to meaningful and adequate consultation with all stakeholders that will be affected by future legislative changes to *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of citizens of Biggar, Saskatoon, and Grandora, Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition from residents of Saskatchewan who are in support of a seniors' bill of rights. And many of them say that seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical and emotional and financial abuse, and they do have a right to social and economic security and a right to live free from poverty and that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation. The new petition reads:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

To enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

I so present on behalf of residents from Regina and Saskatoon.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for protection for renters from unreasonable rent increases. We know that Saskatchewan renters are facing a combination of rising rents and low vacancies in many communities, and in fact the majority of Canadians, some 80 per cent, live with rent control guidelines including Manitoba, BC [British Columbia], Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the government to consider enacting some form of rent control with a view to protect Saskatchewan renters from unreasonable increases in rent.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Regina and Regina Beach. I do so present. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of Highway 135, concerns of Saskatchewan residents. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to pave the 7 kilometres of Highway 135 through the community of Pelican Narrows as committed on August 24th, 2007.

The petition is signed by the good people of Pelican Narrows. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand to present a petition that is in support of calling on the Sask Party government to address high tuition fees in the province. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to addressing the burden placed by high post-secondary tuition fees on Saskatchewan students.

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

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition are from the city of Prince Albert. I so present.

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

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition in support of the expansion of the graduate retention program. The petition is circulated because the

Saskatchewan Party government specifically amended the program to exclude master's and Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] graduates, as well as post-secondary graduates from outside Saskatchewan. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to immediately expand the graduate retention program to include master's and Ph.D. graduates.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition is signed by folks from the city of Prince Albert, St. Louis, and Paddockwood. I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition today on behalf of rural residents of Saskatchewan who are dealing with yet another water issue. The Furdale residents, dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for domestic systems and in-home treatment programs, for equipment. And an alternative water supply referred by a government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost with no guarantee of quality, quantity, or availability of water. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to withdraw its order to cut off non-potable water to the residents of hamlet of Furdale causing great hardship with no suitable alternatives, to exempt the hamlet of Furdale from further water service cut-offs by granting a grandfather clause under *The Environmental Management and Protection Act, 2002* and *The Water Regulations, 2002*, and that this government fulfills its promises to rural Saskatchewan.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, these petitions are signed by the good residents of Furdale and Saskatoon. I so present.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition in support of maintaining quality health care services in our province. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan must recognize the value of all health care providers by having a commitment to adequate funding and the installation of a good-faith bargaining process. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Saskatchewan demanded a conciliation process as part of the collective bargaining process and then misused the process to put forward an unacceptable final offer to the health care providers. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your

honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to negotiating a fair and just collective bargaining agreement with health care workers in the province of Saskatchewan.

This petition is signed by residents of Radville. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition signed by residents of Saskatchewan concerned about this government's disregard for legal, constitutional, and human rights. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to direct marriage commissioners to uphold the law and the equality rights of all Saskatchewan couples and to withdraw the reference to the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal that would allow marriage commissioners to opt out of their legal obligation to provide all couples with civil marriage services.

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

Today the petition is signed by residents of Saskatoon, and I so submit.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the two consecutive \$1 billion deficits and two years of debt growth under the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly condemn the Sask Party government for its damaging financial mismanagement since taking office, a reckless fiscal record that is denying Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses the responsible and trustworthy fiscal management that they so deserve.

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

These petitions are signed by concerned residents of Muenster and Saskatoon. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased again to rise today to present a petition in support of the Saskatchewan film and television industry. The petition is signed by concerned residents who believe this government has let the film and television industry languish over the last two years and now, without due process and without consultation with the independent board, has kicked a very important institution,

SCN, to the curb. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly take the following action: to cause the provincial government to make changes to the film employment tax credit that will allow the Saskatchewan film industry to be more competitive with other provinces, to reverse its decision to shut down the Saskatchewan Communications Network, and to work with the industry to reverse the decline in film production.

This petition is signed by residents in Saskatoon and Regina. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

World Hemophilia Day

Ms. Schriemer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Since 1989, patient groups and treatment centres have been coming together on April 17th to celebrate World Hemophilia Day. Over the past 20 years, World Hemophilia Day has become a unique opportunity to increase awareness about hemophilia and other bleeding disorders. April 17th was chosen to honour the birth of Frank Schnabel, a hemophiliac and founder of the Canadian Hemophilia Society and the World Federation of Hemophilia.

Hemophilia is the most common disease of all inherited bleeding disorders. It affects up to 1 per cent of the population and affects women and men. Mr. Speaker, hemophiliacs often require transfusions of blood that can help prevent or stop bleeding. Canada is one of the few countries with a federally coordinated blood transfusion surveillance program.

The theme for 2010 is, meet the many faces of bleeding disorders, united to achieve treatment for all. This year's theme celebrates the whole bleeding disorders community — people with hemophilia and symptomatic carriers, men and women with von Willebrand's disease, as well as those with rare factor deficiencies and inherited platelet disorders. Mr. Speaker, together we can bring bleeding disorder issues into the light and ease the suffering of many people, especially those who suffer from bleeding disorders here in our province. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Local Students Win Battle of the Books

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate four students from Sacred Heart Community School who won the Battle of the Books on March 9th, 2010. James Iwasienko-Adams, Destin Martin, Noah Fayant, and Dominique Middleton demonstrated their superior reading comprehension skills while competing against teams from 16 other Catholic elementary schools.

In the Battle of the Books, teams of four read eight different books over the Christmas holidays, including titles from notable

Canadian authors Gordon Korman and Eric Walters. The teams were then asked specific questions about each of the books, and that, Mr. Speaker, is when the close readers were separated from the skimmers.

Teams that answered more questions correctly moved forward in the competition, and at the end of the battle the four Sacred Heart students emerged victorious. Their proud coach, teacher/librarian Carolyn Yaskowich also deserves much credit for her team's performance.

Mr. Speaker, Sacred Heart is a school that champions the importance of reading. They proudly display the number of books that the students have read this year on their sign at Elphinstone and 7th Avenue. The tally as of this morning was 21,325 if you can believe that, Mr. Speaker. Excellence in English reading comprehension is crucial for personal and economic success. I would like to sincerely congratulate these fine students, their teachers, and all the reading champions at Sacred Heart Community School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Innovative Emergency Room Unveiled

Ms. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to recognize the unveiling of the newly renovated emergency department at the Regina Pasqua Hospital. On April 14th I had the opportunity, along with the Minister of Health and the member from Moose Jaw North, to see the excellent example of innovation in the ways health care services are being delivered. One of the most important features that ensured this ER [emergency room] would suit everyone's needs is the fact that the front-line staff designed the plans. That is why the dispensing room for medication is located in the centre of the plan and is an equal distance from all other areas.

The WOW, which stands for Workstation on Wheels, is an electronic patient record provided to doctors and nurses that will contain the patient's X-ray results, blood work results and the entire patient file. Everything from the enclosed ambulance bay which shelters the patients and the staff from harsh Saskatchewan climates to the patient status screen or the GPS [Global Positioning System] clocks to ensure accurate time stamps will all assist doctors and nurses in delivering timely and patient-focused care.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating the staff and the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region for planning and designing an ER that is truly patient-centred. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Organ Donor Awareness Month

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. April is Organ Donor Awareness Month in Canada. Organ donation is literally a matter of life and death. This month is about increasing public awareness. A single donor can save or enhance the lives of many people. It is often true that there are enough people who

say they would donate their organs to meet the need, yet the number of people who have taken the steps necessary to be counted as an organ donor doesn't begin to reflect that high support.

People can choose to become an organ donor at any age, regardless of medical history. Minors need only the permission of a parent or a guardian. Citizens of Saskatchewan can quickly and easily register to become an organ donor by signing their organ donor card and carrying it with their health card at all times.

Mr. Speaker, at a time when the Sask Party government should be encouraging organ donation and making it easier for people to receive organ transplants, they have done nothing to restart the kidney transplant program in Saskatoon. One hundred and six patients and their families are anxiously waiting for the opportunity to start a new life with a new kidney while this government does nothing but repeat their same old rhetoric and turn a cold shoulder to the patients.

During this Organ Donor Awareness Month, it is absolutely essential that the kidney transplant program be immediately restarted, giving a clear signal of the government's commitment to organ donation.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cypress Hills.

Constituents Part of Huskies' Victories

Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, on March 21st of this year, the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] men's Huskies made basketball history by winning both the Canada West title and the Nationals for the first time in their 103-year history.

Now although this has been covered previously, I wish to share a Cypress Hills twist to this story. Brothers Clint and Chris Unsworth, along with their teammates, were named the 2010 CIS [Canadian Interuniversity Sport] national champions in Ottawa, Ontario.

What you do not know about these two young men is that their father Art played on the U of S Huskies team in 1972. Sporting a green moustache and a stetson hat, proud father, Papa Art Unsworth from the town of Piapot supported his sons all the way to the final winning game. If you had an opportunity to watch the game, you would have witnessed Art's presence, and he was really quite a media sensation, Mr. Speaker.

This past Friday evening, I had the opportunity to attend a celebration in Maple Creek to honour the Huskies and the Unsworth brothers known locally as the twin towers. This event included a potluck supper and video highlights, while Chris and Clint proudly displayed their trophies and banners. The community welcomed home these true ambassadors of the U of S Huskies and the entire province of Saskatchewan. I was honoured to address the crowd and acknowledge the important roles played by individuals, players, coaches, and fans in the run-up to this championship game.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, would you please join me in congratulating Chris and Clint Unsworth and their father, Art, for their participation as players and supporters of this

history-making team.

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

Exercising Judgment

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, this government continues to show the people of Saskatchewan that the Sask Party lacks the ability to exercise good judgment. And in order to understand why, we need look no further than the so-called leadership of the Premier himself. This Premier showed poor judgment by completely disregarding a ruling from the United Nations body. The UN [United Nations] had condemned the Sask Party's legislation, but this Premier fails to take leadership and repeal this legislation immediately.

The Premier and his party are involved in a court case related to millions of dollars for another political party, affecting their ability to run candidates in the next election and therefore altering the outcome in 2011. This Premier's government is refusing to exercise good judgment by accepting the candidate for Chief Electoral Officer as recommended by a bipartisan committee and as endorsed by a majority of party leaders.

When the Premier was working for the Devine government, he personally authorized delivery of thousands of dollars of booze and ice to a minister of the Crown at the taxpayers' expense. This was an offence that *The StarPhoenix* said should be "Cause for jailing" and that "These cases are despicable, not just for their scale but for their intent." The Premier had the opportunity to show good judgment and true leadership by repaying the \$19,000 to Saskatchewan taxpayers, but he did not.

Quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, the people of the province deserve better judgment and true leadership from anyone elected to the position of Premier.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Thunder Creek.

New Television Series Coming to Saskatchewan

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier today the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport in conjunction with Vérité Films, CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation], and SaskFilm announced that a new television series is coming to Saskatchewan.

Vérité Films, the same producer who brought *Corner Gas* to the height of international fame, is now bringing a new series to our Canada-Saskatchewan Sound Stage. The new series, which is a comedy called *Insecurity*, features a group of high-level security personnel who don't always operate with the greatest of efficiency.

Attracting this new series to Saskatchewan shows how strong industry leadership can produce enterprising results, Mr. Speaker. The government and SaskFilm worked together to create a new program which helped to attract the new series and which will be available to all filmmakers. This new program from SaskFilm is the series incentive initiative. This incentive program will waive the rent to a maximum of \$140,000 for the

Canada-Saskatchewan production studios for the first year of a continuing series production or for producing a pilot.

The new series incentive initiative demonstrates government's commitment to Saskatchewan's film and television industry. With programs like this and the efforts of the industry to work together to create new opportunities, we will further enhance our competitiveness in attracting new productions to Saskatchewan, and we'll look forward to seeing even more new productions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Status of Member

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, there are many unanswered questions after the news of late last week, but the most fundamental question here is the judgment of the Premier. This is a quote from the maiden speech made by the Premier's legislative secretary for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing:

... when I asked the Premier of our province would my background cause a problem, and he said your background will give you an expertise of what we want to do as a government for the least of, the most vulnerable of, for those who need a solid and strong government to live by their word and their actions, then I took that invitation and I allowed my name to stand in Saskatoon Northwest.

To the Premier: will the Premier confirm that he personally recruited this individual to his government and that he stated that a background of criminal activity amounts to expertise?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we want to obviously state for the record today, in the wake of the events of Friday, that immediately upon hearing of the notional potential for some laws to have been broken with respect to drugs, to illegal drugs, that all that information was provided to the Regina Police Service for their further direction, consideration, and potential investigation, Mr. Speaker.

As leader of the party, I'm involved in encouraging people to run in constituencies. This particular riding had a contested nomination, and so the party would have been encouraging people to step forward.

And, Mr. Speaker, I would just say this, that with respect to the background of the individual that's just been raised by the hon. member, there are ... What has not changed today, notwithstanding what we find out from the resolution of all of this information, what has not changed today is the fact that many young people's lives have been changed, markedly for the better. Young men have been able to break free of an addiction as a result of the work of Teen Challenge and other efforts on the part of this particular member of the Assembly,

now independent. And, Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the information that's come forward, none of that good work has changed.

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

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, the individual who the Premier appointed as his legislative secretary for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing was on the *100 Huntley Street* TV show last May. Near the end of the interview, a photo of the individual's swearing-in ceremony was shown in which he was signing the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] registry.

Referring to the Premier, the host said, "He'd had a dream after reading your book that one day you'd be signing this book in the legislature." The Premier's legislative secretary for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing replied, referring to the Premier's quote, "He thought it was predestination I'd be signing this book, and he told me while he was watching me that he kind of teared up."

To the Premier: will the Premier confirm that the reason he recruited this individual to his government is because he had a dream and believed it to be predestined?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — No, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, as a result of this recent news, the people of Saskatchewan are questioning the Premier's judgment. To the Premier: what assurances can the Premier give to the people of Saskatchewan that he will exercise better judgment going forward? Will he at least consider referring the allegations to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner immediately?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the course of action that has been taken to date by the government is to turn over all the information to the Regina Police Service. That's the appropriate body to determine if further investigation needs to occur, Mr. Speaker. The government undertook that action with the counsel of the . . . Well the Hon. Leader of the Opposition's shaking his head. The Ministry of Justice actually counselled the government and said that is the appropriate action to take. Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what we've done.

When there was an NDP [New Democratic Party] caucus scandal before this Legislative Assembly, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner's investigation did not occur at the same time as the police were investigating the situation, which was the right thing to do then, Mr. Speaker. It would be appropriate to let the police look at everything and make their decisions, and then whatever happens after that can be the subject of some discussion and debate, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina

Dewdney.

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, we know that the Premier's focus in such situations is often misplaced. When his government mistakenly released a dangerous sex offender last fall, the Premier went on a witch hunt instead of addressing the real issue. To the Premier: how can the people of Saskatchewan trust that his actions in this case will be any different? Has he at least attempted to track down the laptop of his legislative secretary for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing so that it can be examined?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the premise of the hon. member's question with respect to the corrections worker is false.

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

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, I'd ask the Premier again: can the people of Saskatchewan trust that his action in this case will be any different? Has he at least attempted to track down the laptop of the legislative secretary for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, so that it can be examined?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the hon. member that the member refers to has indicated that that laptop . . . He does not have that laptop any longer . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, the Opposition Leader maybe wants to ask a few questions or get in on the debate, and that's reasonable. We want to answer the questions. The answer to this question is that the laptop in question is said to have been lost by the member in question. Mr. Speaker, the information though has been turned over to the Regina Police Service — all the information that the government has. We've also requested that CBC turn over the original of the audio recording to the Regina Police Service. Mr. Speaker, it's my understanding, as of just moments ago, that CBC has said they're going to provide that tape to the member, the now independent member for Northwest. And I assume then it will go to the police as well.

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

Mr. Yates: — Mr. Speaker, we know from past examples that the Premier's preferred approach in such situations is simply to shield himself from further embarrassment rather than getting to the bottom of the issue. To the Premier: how can the people of Saskatchewan trust that he will not devote any taxpayers' dollars or government resources to shield himself from embarrassment or to cover his lack of judgment?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, we've worked very hard as a government over two years plus to do the things that we said we would do in the election campaign, to keep the promises that we made, Mr. Speaker, to do those things we said we would do, and to not do the things that we said we would not do, Mr.

Speaker. And I know that the government has — you know, as any government will discover — has had moments where there have been challenges, Mr. Speaker.

But I would say this: if the recent information last week out is any indication, the people of the province also agree that the government is one that keeps its word. Mr. Speaker, we have said quite publicly that we will not be providing any resources to the member in question in terms of clearing his name, to use his quote. And, Mr. Speaker, we'll keep that commitment.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Support for Film and Television Industry

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Veronica Gamracy, Chair of the board of SCN, was never consulted about the government's decision to shut down SCN. According to Saturday's *Leader-Post*:

. . . what Gamracy finds offensive is that the government would arbitrarily eliminate SCN without seeking consultation and without attempting to understand how SCN fits as an intricate part of Saskatchewan's film industry puzzle.

Actually, Gamracy would have even been happy with the simple courtesy of either of the Sask Party government's culture ministers meeting with her or the SCN board in two and half years of government.

To the minister: how could this government kill SCN without even consulting with its independent board?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I want to thank the member for her question. Mr. Speaker, when we were formulating the 2010-11 budget for the province of Saskatchewan, certainly there were very . . . number of difficult decisions that had to be made, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this provincial government cut the budget of the province of Saskatchewan by one and a half per cent, Mr. Speaker, and that's not done without making some very difficult decisions.

Mr. Speaker, when it was determined through the budgetary process, Mr. Speaker, that SCN was going to be, the operations of SCN were going to be wound down, Mr. Speaker, that decision was one that was a difficult one to make, but, Mr. Speaker, one that was made by this government. And it's one that stands, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, the article goes on to say that the Saskatchewan government's line “. . . that only four per cent of Saskatchewan people watched SCN is wrong and — worse yet — dangerously misleading.”

SCN's last annual report says that, according to a survey, 16 per cent of Saskatchewan people had watched SCN at least once in the previous week. In a 500-channel universe, Mr. Speaker, those are impressive numbers and a sign that Saskatchewan people want to see Saskatchewan stories.

To the minister: what is the government's purpose in spreading misinformation about SCN?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, through this entire process I have stated from the start that the decision to wind down SCN was a decision that indicated that the government felt that it was no longer in the business of being a broadcaster, Mr. Speaker. But it wasn't an indication that government wasn't going to be involved in the film and television industry, Mr. Speaker.

I can tell you that this budget provides funding to the film employment tax credit of over \$8 million, Mr. Speaker. SaskFilm budget has remained intact, Mr. Speaker. And also, as the member has obviously heard, the sound stage remains intact. And, Mr. Speaker, we had a very good announcement today where we've announced that a major, a major national production is coming to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And it shows that the province of Saskatchewan is very competitive when it comes to film and television industries.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, this minister is bragging about the \$8 million that we spend here in Saskatchewan on the film employment tax credit. They spend double the amount to our neighbour to the east.

Mr. Speaker, SCN matters to people in southwest Saskatchewan who have depended on SCN to provide a regional newscast. SCN matters to families because it provides non-violent children's programming. SCN matters to our economy because it keeps talented people here and attracts millions in outside investments. SCN matters to people right across the province. According to a recent survey, a mere 3 in 10 residents support the decision to fade SCN to black.

To the minister: now that the true impact of this decision should be clear to the government, will the minister reverse his decision to kill SCN?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think that same survey indicates that this Premier leads that Leader of the Opposition by 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I could also tell that member without changing the film employment . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I'd ask the member from

... Order. I'd ask the member from Prince Albert Northcote and the member from Regina Walsh Acres to allow the minister to respond to the question placed by the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, in the preface of her question, talked about competition that we face from other jurisdictions, particularly from the province next to us, Mr. Speaker, to the east. I can tell that member that this production that was announced today for the province of Saskatchewan, they looked at Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, and they chose Saskatchewan. I think that shows that we're very competitive when it comes to the film and television industry.

I can also say, Mr. Speaker, that a large working group was brought together on Friday, Mr. Speaker — I believe 20 members of the community, not only from the film and television community, Mr. Speaker, people from SaskFilm, from my ministry, from other agencies. Mr. Speaker, that work is going to continue going forward over the next couple of weeks as we come up with some very creative ideas of stabilizing the industry, Mr. Speaker, like what we saw today with waiving the first year of rent at the sound stage for a series, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, no broadcast licence means no access to funding bodies which means no production, which means waiving the costs on the sound stage is a bit of a moot point.

Mr. Speaker, an article today in ... Pardon me. SCN ... I'm all over the place here. Mr. Speaker, an article in today's paper quotes Robin Schlaht, a 21-year film industry veteran who's thinking of leaving our province:

“Without SCN, our product volumes are going to drop. We know how the system works and we know there's no mechanism (to) replace (SCN).”

And a young filmmaker in a weekend letter to the editor wrote:

Those of us who are thinking of leaving are not doing so because we simply forgot about other resources like SaskFilm and ... employment tax credit. We're ... [leaving] because we understand our industry and SCN's vital role in it.

To the minister: why is he driving talented and creative people out of the province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, I don't know that member could call today's announcement a moot point. Mr. Speaker, \$10 million in spinoff that will be created by this one series alone, Mr. Speaker, and 120 people, full-time equivalent

positions created by this one production, Mr. Speaker — that's very significant for this industry, Mr. Speaker. It's going to put people back to work that have faced some challenging times over the last couple of years, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

We're going to continue working with the larger working group that's been brought together, Mr. Speaker, to identify some other ways like we've done on waiving the sound stage fee for the first year on rent, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, and we're also, as I've told the member opposite, the expression of interest process began officially on Friday, Mr. Speaker.

So we're going to see over the next couple of weeks what type of interest comes in for somebody to continue with the broadcasting of SCN or of that licence, Mr. Speaker. And I look forward to hopefully having a successful proponent come forward. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

911 Response

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Kerri Canepotatoe, an 18-year-old woman from northern Saskatchewan, died in the area near Big River when she attempted to walk for help after the car she and three other people were travelling in was stuck in the mud on a logging road.

Mr. Speaker, three 911 calls were made, and nobody responded. Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Public Safety: this minister and this government needs to explain why nobody responded to these frantic calls for help.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we're always saddened when a tragic incident occurs such as this, and our thoughts and prayers go out to the family involved. But I think the member opposite doesn't have his facts quite correct.

There was three attempted 911 calls. One went through. The 911 dispatcher then contacted the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] dispatcher because the call came in for a tow truck. And this was the correct procedure. What happened with the RCMP dispatcher is now under an RCMP investigation because they were concerned as to what happened with the phone call that was transferred from the 911 operator over to the RCMP dispatcher.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the minister misses the point. It doesn't matter if there's one call or three calls. And don't go blaming staff members as well. You are responsible, sir. You are the minister. It goes directly to him, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, along with Kerri in the stranded car was her stepsister, Melissa Rabbitskin, and two children, 10-year-old

Cashton and five-year-old Jerome. Not for two days, not for three, not for five, but for seven excruciating days they waited — cold, wet, and scared — in the car for help, assuming help was coming, believing a tow truck was on its way. Mr. Speaker, nothing happened. No tow truck came; no rescue team; nothing.

To the minister: what happened to the 911 call, and what is he doing now, without pointing a finger at anybody else, to make sure a tragic event like this never happens again?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I just explained to the member that the matter is under investigation. I don't know how clear I can be that the phone call went from the 911 dispatcher to the RCMP dispatcher. If he wants to call that shuffling blame, I don't know how I could explain it any clearer to him.

Now there is an investigation by the RCMP. They have elected to do an investigation as to the conduct of what happened from the dispatcher of the RCMP. Now I understand they get an awful lot of call for such things as tow trucks, and so this is why the investigation is going to take place.

What we have done and been asked for from the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing is to provide an independent observer to the investigation. And, Mr. Speaker, that is in fact what we will be doing. We have appointed an independent observer from the Saskatoon Police Service to observe the proceedings of the investigation. And I don't know how much more clear that could be to the member opposite because we are . . . There is an investigation going on and we are providing an observer.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, we don't need an observer. We need a new minister, Mr. Speaker. And I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Canepotatoe's uncle, Paul Rabbitskin, says, and I quote:

They have to correct things or this could happen to somebody else. They can't just take serious 911 calls and then forget about them. The 911 system failed. It failed. And now we have a dead young woman who would have gone on to become a great mother.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister make the results of the investigation of this tragic event so the people of northern Saskatchewan know that he's taken this issue seriously? And what does he have to say today to the family of Kerri Canepotatoe?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated, the investigation is taking place. We will look at the investigation when it's completed and determine if there are other initiatives that need to be done through the RCMP.

The 911 call that was placed to the 911 dispatcher was handled in accordance with procedures, so now it's a matter of seeing if the dispatcher of the RCMP handled it in accordance with their procedures. That's what the investigation is for. We will be an observer at the investigation. The investigator is appointed by the deputy minister of Justice. That individual is required to give a confidential report back to the deputy minister of Justice and at that time we'll have a look to see what the recommendations are.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Health Care Issues

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday after hard questioning by the media and the opposition, the minister had an aha moment and said he "has certainly learned a lot more about the kidney transplant program than he knew on Monday."

Mr. Speaker, that's a very disturbing admission by the Minister of Health. To the minister: the kidney transplant program has been closed down since July of 2009. That's nine months. Why did it take pressure from the media, the public, and the opposition before the minister would pay attention, do his job, and finally look into the problem?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I did say at the end of last week that certainly by Thursday I knew more about the transplant program as far as vascular surgeons, all the specialties that go along, specialties that are available that can do both procedures of the vascular surgeon as well as the other specialists. Mr. Speaker, that isn't the detail that I was aware of before Monday and before we went through the process. So, Mr. Speaker, I am, absolutely I know more about the program today than I did last Monday, Mr. Speaker.

That being said, we have been working with the Ministry of Health as well as with the health region to ensure that this program is up and running. I have set a very tight timeline of three to four months to have this program up and running. Mr. Speaker, the ministry has had conversations with Dr. Shoker, Mr. Speaker, already. Mr. Speaker, I have as well. And I think we're on the same page to have this program up and running in the near future.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — For two and a half years the minister has laughed and joked his way through his responsibilities. Last week in one aha moment, the minister had an awakening and said, oh, he is responsible for the health system.

Mr. Speaker, is the minister finally going to take responsibility for failed contract negotiations with health care workers, the torn up contract with the chiropractors, the almost 50 per cent increase in physician vacancies since 2007, the failure to build a children's hospital, the broken promise to build 13 long-term care facilities in rural Saskatchewan, the decision not to build

an ambulatory care centre in Regina, the failure to build a mental hospital in North Battleford, the decision to send patients to BC and pay a premium on the surgery, and the broken promise to fund the Moose Jaw Union Hospital, to name but a few?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I will stand in my spot and defend what the Ministry of Health has done and what this government has done in two and a half years of our government, and I'll compare it to 16 years of their government any day. Mr. Speaker, if it comes to funding Avastin, those members turned their backs on hundreds and hundreds of people, Mr. Speaker. We've covered Avastin. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, if it comes to signing a partnership agreement and having peace with the nurses, something that government never did — in fact they absolutely ignored the plight of nurses — and it's really interesting coming from that member who likes to prop herself up as the head of nursing in this province for many years when that government simply turned their back on them.

If it comes to physician recruitment, Mr. Speaker, I'll put our record against their record any day, Mr. Speaker. And I will put our record of 13 new long-term care facilities in this province against 52 hospital closures under that government, Mr. Speaker. I'll defend our record every day in the week.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I'd ask the members to come to order so we can hear the reading of the introduction of Bills.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 1,459 through 1,496.

The Speaker: — Questions 1,459 through 1,496 are tabled.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 104

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 104** — *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)*

be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise in the Assembly here today and speak to Bill No. 104, *An Act to amend The Summary Offences Procedure Act, 1990*, Mr. Speaker. This piece of legislation has aspects and objectives for which certainly the opposition lends support. The question, Mr. Speaker, as in any piece of legislation, lies in the actual impact, Mr. Speaker, of this legislation and what the actual implications and consequences are because what we know about the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, is that they lack the oversight and the scrutiny required to put forward legislation that actually fulfills the objectives that they desire.

Now what gives me some confidence in this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, is that I understand the Saskatchewan association of police chiefs have offered their support to this legislation, and in fact the objective that's trying to be achieved through this legislation is supported by those individuals, those chiefs, Mr. Speaker, who are an integral, important aspect of our province, Mr. Speaker, in providing the kind of community safety required. So that offers some confidence that we're moving in the right direction with this piece of legislation.

We do have questions, Mr. Speaker. We need to make sure that we understand fully what the changes within this legislation are and making sure that they do achieve the objective that we support. Certainly as it relates to the Act allowing for tickets to be served via mail, this is a change, Mr. Speaker, from the status quo where a ticket must be served in person. And this would appear to be a decision that we would support by the principles of becoming more efficient and making sense from that perspective.

And when you think about it, likely many of our . . . I don't know the statistics on this, but many violations, many tickets might be the result of individuals from out of province or in very remote circumstances or from out of country. It would make sense to be able to find a more efficient way to present a ticket on this front, Mr. Speaker. It would be our goal to make sure that in creating this efficiency that we can allow our police chiefs and our police officers and our forces to continue to do what they do so incredibly well, Mr. Speaker, and that is of course fighting crime, making our communities safe places. Mr. Speaker, they do a great job of that.

What we do need to do is make sure that this legislation allows those efficiencies to be passed on to where they should be, Mr. Speaker, that being benefits within the community. And I know that's where, in speaking with my constituents, Mr. Speaker, within Regina Rosemont, that's what's important to them as it relates to this legislation: making sure that we have created efficiencies that enhance the service provided to Saskatchewan people from those individuals for whom we trust and do a wonderful job of fulfilling those requirements, Mr. Speaker.

We certainly have many, many questions that we will be needing to ask in committee, Mr. Speaker. We have more consultation to do. It's become a trend of the Sask Party to completely not consult as they derive legislation. This is

something that we need to make sure is done at this point in time. We need to be speaking with others for whom this legislation affects, Mr. Speaker, and we will certainly be doing that.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we need to always be urging the government to be addressing the big issues of the day, Mr. Speaker, that as we meet around the province in all communities in every corner of this fine province, Mr. Speaker, that are being raised with us — and that's the Wall government's failure as it relates to health care, Mr. Speaker, the Wall government's failure as it relates to cost of living, and the Wall government's failure as it relates to financial mismanagement.

[14:30]

Those are the big issues of the day that we're being urged to bring back to this Assembly and to focus the attentions of this Assembly. And it's my pleasure to take that every opportunity that I have to urge the government to be addressing those big issues, Mr. Speaker, because when we're out meeting and we're doing so regularly in every corner of this province, those are the issues that are affecting Saskatchewan people — specifically, Mr. Speaker, as we look at health care and we look at the Wall government's broken promises as it relates to doctor recruitment within rural Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

What we see is the vacancies, the need for doctors is growing under the Wall government and Saskatchewan people recognize this as a complete failure, Mr. Speaker. And it amounts to broken trust, Mr. Speaker, with a government that this is becoming all too common on so many fronts, Mr. Speaker.

So as I speak to Bill No. 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Act*, it's important that I drill down on what's important and what we're hearing from my constituents, Mr. Speaker, and constituents and residents from across Saskatchewan in every constituency, Mr. Speaker.

It's our fear, Mr. Speaker, that too many of the constituencies in this province don't have a voice, Mr. Speaker, that in many of the cases where a Sask Party MLA represents many, many ridings in this province, Mr. Speaker, that we're hearing time and time again, whether that be in coffee shops or in legion halls or in seniors care homes or in our own offices that the Sask Party members aren't taking their issues and (b) listening to them. Many of them are simply phoning our offices or making contact with us because they have no other outlet, Mr. Speaker. And then they feel that they are not advancing that agenda at the caucus table and certainly not advancing on the important priorities of Saskatchewan people.

We think it's a shame, Mr. Speaker, to be at a point in time with a government that's completely ignoring the needs of Saskatchewan people as it relates to health care, cost of living, and financial mismanagement among many, many others, Mr. Speaker. And we urge this government to put that on their radars, on their caucus meetings, at the cabinet table and to make that the kind of focus that they . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I'm just bringing to the member's attention I'm having difficulty tying the current

comments from the member to Bill No. 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act*. I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I guess I come in with such sincerity just as a bit of, by way of background as we are speaking to Bill 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Act*. This Act, we do support the principles and objectives that are outlined within this Act.

What I want to mention and make sure . . . And I made the commitment, Mr. Speaker, to many people throughout the weekend that I would raise these issues when given the opportunity, Mr. Speaker. And it's important to me, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that when I know many of the MLAs opposite don't take those messages to the caucus table and cabinet table, that when I get the opportunity to speak to the public and to the government, to the Premier, Mr. Speaker — who I know is certainly not listening to the message here and now, Mr. Speaker, but people are asking that Premier to start listening to these important issues — that I'm going to take every opportunity that I can, Mr. Speaker, to raise these issues as it relates to the failure of the Sask Party, specifically as it relates to health care and surgical wait times, doctor recruitment within this province and retention, Mr. Speaker, and the cost of living that is a burden and a challenge for so many families and businesses within this province, and of course, Mr. Speaker, the grave consequences of the gross financial mismanagement that we've seen in this province, the reckless fiscal management, Mr. Speaker, that we've seen. And that's why, when I had a quick opportunity within this Bill, I want to make sure that I outline the priorities of the people at the same time.

As it relates to Bill 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Act*, there are many questions that we want to ask within committee, Mr. Speaker. I think there's good questions as to making sure that the Bill fulfills the objective that we certainly support, Mr. Speaker, and finding efficiencies to get traffic offences out to individuals or tickets and offences out to people across Canada and possibly around the world, Mr. Speaker. We want to make sure that we're finding a best use of our resources, Mr. Speaker.

And we know one thing, Mr. Speaker, is that when you have the Saskatchewan association of police chiefs, a fine group of individuals who lead within every . . . across Saskatchewan and within our communities, when they are pushing for this kind of change, we need to make sure we get it right, Mr. Speaker. And so the objective is certainly something we support, something that's endorsed and pushed by the Saskatchewan police chiefs.

But we need to make sure that this government, a government that does not have the ability, it would appear, to put forward legislation that actually fulfills the needed objectives of Saskatchewan people, we need to make sure that that's gone on. So it's our job as the official opposition — and unfortunately this shouldn't always be the case — but we need to make sure the kind of scrutiny and consultation that is required goes on, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that what we put forward is in fact a Bill that's effective in meeting the objective that it's trying to meet.

We need to make sure that the consequences are the intended ones, Mr. Speaker, the goals of the police chiefs and of

Saskatchewan people and not unintended consequences that may not have been contemplated because of a lack of consultation. That's all too common, Mr. Speaker, with a government that chooses not to consult, Mr. Speaker. And I could give you speech after speech as you would know, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to a lack of consultation and why we need to make sure we get it right in this piece of legislation here, Mr. Speaker.

But the basic principle of where I stand, Mr. Speaker, is with the constituents of Regina Rosemont and the individuals and citizens from across Saskatchewan who are wanting and desiring us to find some efficiencies within police forces, and for police officers who bring peace and safety, structure to our communities, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we can fight criminal activity and make sure that we have the kind of communities that we're so proud of, Mr. Speaker.

So in our goal to make sure that this legislation meets its needs, we need to make sure that the impact and the result is that we enable and pass along that efficiency that we're trying to create here to the very people, Mr. Speaker, who are making our communities safer on a day-to-day basis. My greatest thanks goes out to all the police officers within Saskatchewan, certainly all of those that I represent in Regina Rosemont, and the police chiefs, Mr. Speaker, who are standing up for a piece of legislation that appears to make sense, Mr. Speaker.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, the opposition New Democrats are urging this government to make sure we get this piece of legislation right, Mr. Speaker, that we bring the kind of efficiency that we know that it can be achieved, Mr. Speaker. And we need to make sure the intended consequences are exactly what's going to be achieved, Mr. Speaker, and that there's not a host of unintended consequences that are problematic for police forces, Mr. Speaker, for police officers, and for communities, Mr. Speaker.

There's certainly questions we have as it relates to the actual process of mailing out these tickets, Mr. Speaker, potentially out of province and in many cases out of country, the actual timelines there and the security aspects around that to make sure that the integrity of our system is in place, Mr. Speaker, and that privacy concerns are being addressed. Those are just simply the types of questions that'll be well served at the committee table, Mr. Speaker. And we need to make sure we fully understand because the minister has been incredibly vague on this, as to how we ensure that the tickets in fact have been received by somebody who may not be in our country at all, Mr. Speaker.

And what this amounts to — because in many cases we're going to be dealing with individuals receiving tickets or enabling that process outside of our province, Mr. Speaker — is we're talking about people that are visiting our province that we want to welcome to our province, Mr. Speaker. But we want to make sure that if in fact they haven't come in and been in accordance with our laws, Mr. Speaker, we want to make sure that they're accountable for that, Mr. Speaker. And that's an important aspect of this legislation.

And I think of the numerous, numerous people who come in from a tourism aspect to our province for hunting and fishing

specifically, Mr. Speaker. And we invite these individuals from around the world. And in fact if we have anybody tuning in here today, Mr. Speaker, throughout . . . from afar, through the United States or anywhere else, Mr. Speaker, I would say, come and find some of the best hunting and fishing in our province, Mr. Speaker. We have outfitters that are world-class, and we can provide just an incredible experience.

And at the same time, something that the vast, vast, vast majority of those individuals coming to our province for this kind of tourism do, Mr. Speaker, is they conduct themselves in a lawful manner, Mr. Speaker. And we certainly know that would be the case, so I provide that invite. I know in many ways our outfitters are struggling at this point in time within our province. And I would remind all those watching, Mr. Speaker, about the incredible game within this province as it relates to animals and fish and the great products of our land and our natural environment, Mr. Speaker.

So I urge the legislators here today to continue to ask the valuable questions to stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that the important intent that we support is achieved, Mr. Speaker. And we know that that's going to be able to occur at the committee structure. We know that those meetings have been ongoing; they've been valuable, valuable meetings.

I want to take one last time to thank the police chiefs of Saskatchewan, particularly their association for the leadership they provide to our communities and specifically the leadership that they've provided in urging this Bill, Mr. Speaker. And we need to work with those exceptional leaders in our communities to make sure we have it right, right here, Mr. Speaker, to make sure this is exactly what they need, Mr. Speaker, and to make sure that at the same time the consequences of that legislation are appropriate, Mr. Speaker. Certainly we support the objectives that are laid out here, Mr. Speaker.

So at this point in time there's valuable questions, Mr. Speaker, that can be asked at the committee table. As I've said — with many, many meetings, Mr. Speaker, throughout this past weekend — people across our province are wanting us to urge our attention, to focus our priorities on that government, on their failures as it relates to health care, cost of living, and financial mismanagement, Mr. Speaker. And at every moment that that government can focus that attention, Mr. Speaker, we ask them to do so. And I'm proud to stand up and share the people's priorities here in their Legislative Building here today within our chambers.

At this point in time, with more questions to be asked on a piece of legislation for which we support the principle, for which we thank the input and continue to invite the input of the police chiefs of Saskatchewan, we'll refer this Bill to committee where much of that work and scrutiny can occur, Mr. Speaker. What I would say is that we need to get out of a habit that the Sask Party has gotten themselves into where they derive legislation in a vacuum. They don't scrutinize and understand the consequences of their legislation, and they make mistakes, Mr. Speaker. And we need to make sure that this piece of legislation fulfills the objectives that it's intended to and that's something the opposition New Democrats are committed to, Mr. Speaker.

So at this point in time, it's been a pleasure to speak on this

Bill, one that we need to stay focused on the point of providing efficiencies back to police officers and to police forces, Mr. Speaker, so that they can address the important issues of community safety and crime within our communities, Mr. Speaker, something that they do an incredible job of addressing. Mr. Speaker, we need to make sure this enables them to do even more and provide them the latitude to make our communities even safer, Mr. Speaker. At this point in time, I'll urge questions and discussion to be related at the committee level and I now refer this Bill, Bill No. 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Act* to committee, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

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

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I designate that Bill No. 104, *The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)* be referred to the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

The Speaker: — The Bill stands referred to the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

Why is the member from . . . Government House Leader on his feet?

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With leave to move a motion on substitutions on committees.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to move a motion regarding substitution of committees. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Substitution on Committees

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. By leave I move:

That the name of Delbert Kirsch be substituted for that of Serge LeClerc on the Standing Committee on Private

Bills, that the name of Delbert Kirsch be substituted for the name of Serge LeClerc on the Standing Committee for Privileges, and that the name of Jim Reiter be substituted for the name of Serge LeClerc on the Standing Committee for Human Services.

I so move.

The Speaker: — It has been moved the Government House Leader by leave:

That the name of Delbert Kirsch be substituted for the name of Serge LeClerc on the Standing Committee for Private Bills, that the name of Delbert Kirsch be substituted for the name of Serge LeClerc on the Standing Committee for Privileges, and that the name of Jim Reiter be substituted for the name of Serge LeClerc on the Standing Committee for Human Services.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 114

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 114 — *The Small Claims Amendment Act, 2009/Loi de 2009 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les petites créances*** be now read a second time.]

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

[14:45]

Mr. Trew: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to stand and speak on Bill 114, *An Act to amend The Small Claims Act*. This is a Justice Bill. And I want to state very clearly for the record that on this side of the House, the opposition side, we're always supportive of any improvements that can be made to small . . . well, to the judicial system, period. But relating directly to this Bill, any improvements that can be made in small claims court are welcome, and indeed we would be supportive of it.

I want to further say that I was a much younger man when the Al Blakeney government introduced the small claims first legislation in Saskatchewan in the 1970s. And that was viewed as a massive step forward in justice for people that weren't necessarily overly monied, that is, people that for whom hiring a lawyer at whatever fees was a bit of a problem.

But it's much more of course than simply whether or not an individual or a family or people involved can afford a lawyer. Really, small claims, Mr. Speaker, is all about providing what people on the street would, that you'd run into would say, this is justice. This is a case of us able to sort out in the least

complicated way, issues of justice.

The small claims court provides for anything under \$20,000 in value for individuals to go to small claims court. Don't need a lawyer, it's a less formal hearing, and you stand a good chance of reaching a resolution that's hopefully a little fairer because it's not solely based on a point of law, but there is more of a sense, I think, of justice coming into small claims.

And I can just hear my calls coming in to my constituency office as I say this from everyone who's been to small claims court, thinks that the result wasn't exactly what they were looking for. I want to say that justice is the goal at all steps, whether we're talking small claims court or Court of Queen's Bench or the Supreme Court of Canada or any other judicial system. Justice is what we would strive for, but it isn't always pretty and it isn't always effective. And it isn't always, it doesn't always reflect what we might wish for as an individual.

So *An Act to amend The Small Claims Act*, Bill No. 114, is a welcome Act. We are welcoming of it, but we have some serious questions because you see, Mr. Speaker, the first change explicitly will let a judge, it allows for a judge to order an enforceable judgment against the party summoned to small claims. Well we'd have less problem with that than where it may have come from.

In Bill after Bill after Bill — whether it's this one or the previous one spoken to by the honourable member for Regina Rosemont or any number of Bills that I and other colleagues have spoken on — the one thing that, the absolutely common thread in virtually every Bill is the lack of meaningful consultation done by the Sask Party government, the lack of talking to people that are in the know, the people that the very legislation would affect. That lack of prior consultation often leads us to a bad result.

And we don't need to look terribly far. I mean there was no, there just could not have been any consultation before the Sask Party government dropped the contract with chiropractors. There clearly was no, it's publicly documented, no consultation prior to the axing of SCN — SCN that we had questions of in question period earlier this day, and last week we had questions.

Clearly the pattern is one of the Sask Party government not doing consultation in any significant or meaningful way and just deciding unilaterally to do something. I know in SCN the claim is they're going to save some money.

I know on Dutch elm disease, where there was previously half a million dollars in support for municipalities to monitor and then deal with elm trees if they became under attack or diseased with Dutch elm disease, but for a mere half a million dollars in a land of plenty, the Sask Party just unilaterally axed it. Then when opposition raised legitimate and serious questions, they had to do a partial reversal and say, well no, we are going to restore some of that funding because there are situations where clearly the public good has to be served and clearly the provincial government would be the funder of that public good.

So unilateral action without consultation is clearly causing grief throughout the piece, clearly causing problems for the people of Saskatchewan. And we just have to wonder whether this Act to

amend *The Small Claims Act* isn't yet another example of simply changes for the sake of changes or changes that are, the changes that someone's hobby, hobby horse . . . Someone really wanted to get that change in, but in a vacuum.

If the changes were made because there had been a consultation with people who had, individuals and companies that had dealings with small claims, it could as simple as a survey, a questionnaire: did you find the small claims experience resulted in a judgment or in an outcome that you could support that was helpful? Did it in fact result in a quicker answer at a lower cost? These are the sorts of things you could ask. You could also ask people who'd been through the small claims system, how would you improve it? If you were the benevolent dictator for a day, how would you improve the small claims court experience? These are legitimate questions, and that's a legitimate way to do consultation, but it didn't happen that way.

And so we really have concerns, Mr. Speaker, around things that, like the very first change that allows for a judge to order an enforceable judgment against a party summoned to small claims court if that person or party fails to appear at a case management conference between the two parties. Previously what judges could do was issue an appropriate order. But now it's an enforceable judgment that can come down, and it may well be an improvement. It may be, but we have some questions around that. We have some serious questions. Where did it come from?

I know that earlier today in question period I heard the Premier say that the government wants to move to meet its election promises, to keep . . . the words he used were, keep our election promises. Well forgive me for being skeptical, but the vacancies of rural doctors throughout rural Saskatchewan is up over 50 per cent under the Sask Party watch. The promise to reduce wait lists for surgeries is going the wrong way. In the Premier's own health district, the wait list for surgeries is up nearly double what it was when he became, the first day he was Premier.

So this from a party that now governs, that had all of the answers the day before the last election in 1997 and seems to be going backwards in so many critical areas. It seems to be just sliding and going backwards, and this from a government that inherited a \$2 billion surplus and has turned it into a \$1 billion deficit. It's more than a \$3 billion turnaround in two and a half years, and it leaves us wondering, well where did the money go?

I mean there was 13 long-term care homes that had been slated to be built in rural Saskatchewan, and they're on hold, indefinite hold, and that's under the Sask Party watch. More than half of the unionized workforce in the health system province-wide is without a contract, and that's under the Sask Party watch.

So we've got huge questions, Mr. Speaker, around any changes in legislation. We don't know where it came from, what basis it's there, and we're even a bit skeptical who the legislation is designed to help.

With respect to Bill No. 114, *An Act to amend The Small Claims Act*, the second change mandates that a document that

begins a claim — what we would think of I guess as the summons — that it be delivered personally or by registered mail. And this is so that the other party knows that they're involved in a claim.

But we think that that's certainly laudable for the other party to know that the claim is made against them, but our concern is this piece of legislation, this amendment seems to restrict or narrow the potential ways in which that message can get through to the other party. We think it's narrowed the process as opposed to expanded it.

So we'll have some questions certainly in committee about how that's going to roll out, how it's going to work, and if . . . Our questions of course will be, is it possible for one side or the other to fall through the cracks, so of speak, and get missed under this new legislation proposal? And of course we do not want that.

We want that the summons would be deliverable and that the way it's deliverable should be in a straightforward manner that would reasonably and surely reach the party that's being summoned. Because you don't want somebody . . . You don't want a situation where someone should know that they're being sued or being asked for some restitution and that party not even know that there's a problem or not know that there's a court date or not know that they're being required to appear before the small claims court. So we need, Mr. Speaker, to make as certain as we can that that in fact happens.

The third change in Bill No. 114, an Act to amend the small claims court, will allow a judge to consider evidence that, in a Court of Queen's Bench would not, strictly speaking, be legal evidence. It might be done on a much less formal way. It might be more a case of one of the parties saying, well you know, listen, this is the way it happened. This is what I did and this is what they did and this is what happened.

And you know, it's important that people be allowed to express their views in a small claims court. It is important that all parties be given the opportunity to express their version of what happened. That's clearly a part of what small claims was intended to be, and we would be very supportive of that notion of relaxing some of the rules because it's got to be intimidating, in the first instance, if I were on either side of it. If I was seeking a judgment against someone, it's sometimes difficult to look them in the eye and say, no, I want \$1,000 for that car you sold me, or whatever the situation might be.

[15:00]

And on the other hand, it would be maybe even more difficult if I were the recipient and someone was trying to seek some restitution from me, claiming that I owed them some money. And the only reason I say that might be a little more difficult is I'm very proud that, I don't think, I owe anybody any money that's not current. I probably have a credit card bill that's paid off monthly, that sort of thing, but I don't believe that I've got any outstanding debt to individuals . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Sure enough, I've got a colleague that wants his \$20, and I want to assure everyone that that's bogus.

But, Mr. Speaker, it is intimidating certainly to appear in small

claims court.

But the flip side of this, and I think we'll have some questions, are there guidelines for the judge in small claims court to make sure that, when someone is giving their version of what happened or their version of the evidence, that it's germane and that it's focused? Because we've all been around in situations where there's no good beginning for a story and clearly no end for a story, just an endless middle, an endless middle.

And, you know, we wouldn't want that to be the situation in small claims court either. Because you have to have some focus or it just becomes irrelevant and becomes some — not to denigrate tea parties, but — it just becomes some afternoon social or a tea party as opposed to a serious look at finding a resolution to a potential or a real legal problem.

So we're concerned with where that came from. We're wondering where that recommendation came from. Was it based on people's experience with small claims court? Or did it just seem like, you know, we've got to do change for the sake of change or we've got to make a change, so let's do something, and this is the something that got done? We want it to be workable. We want it to in fact help people that appear before small claims court.

Mr. Speaker, the fourth change refers to a setting aside of default judgments, that a party would now be able to get judgment in the absence of the other party. What we think this is going to do is we think it's going to remove the ability of someone being summoned to simply not show up and thereby avoid responsibility. We think that this change is a good one. We think that's what it does, is just doesn't let you duck and hide forever, Mr. Speaker.

But it's important that there be a protection because not everyone who doesn't show up for their day in court doesn't show up because they simply want to not be there. Sometimes there's some . . . sometimes they didn't receive the summons; sometimes there's some medical emergency or crisis that they simply have to deal with. The obvious immediate things that come to mind are health problems, be it as, you know, as simple as a gallbladder attack which is not by any means a simple thing, but it certainly is debilitating enough that you would not appear before any court. So we've got to make sure that you can't impose a judgment that's binding without recourse for the person that that judgment has been bound, been made to.

So this amendment imposes a 90-day limit on the ability to appeal or to set aside a judgment. So if I had a judgment made against me, as I understand this legislation that's being proposed, once the judgment was made, the clock would start ticking and within 90 days I have got to speak up or that judgment is binding.

I'm not sure how it is that we're certain that I would even know that judgment had been made against me. The quickest example that I can think of, without getting into the name, but at a high school, a principal that relayed the story of another person of exactly the same name from the same area. And the one of course was a deadbeat, and my teacher claimed not to be. And actually I know he was not. He was a very, very fine, very fine gentleman. And in many ways, I owe a significant part of the

credit for my being here in the legislature to that very fine teacher.

But in this instance, we have two people with the same name from the same general area. And what if there had been a judgment issued against one but that judgment delivered to the other person of the same name? Then where does that leave my friend, the high school teacher? What recourse would he have in the future?

So there's some very legitimate questions around this. And I raise that question, Mr. Speaker, not because I want for a minute to slow a justice process or to cause there to be roadblocks; on the contrary, on our side of the legislature we want to make sure that the legislation is well-thought-out, well-crafted, and that it in fact makes improvements for the lives of people of Saskatchewan. We really do want this Bill No. 114, the Act to amend *The Small Claims Act* to work on behalf of Saskatchewan people.

We're wondering what other measures there are pertaining to this subject matter that have been or were considered. What went into the considerations of the drafting? What were the drafting instructions? What went into this Bill as it went from a gleam in somebody's eye, a thought to reality of a Bill in print before the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan? So we want to know what the thought process was. We've already . . . I've already said we don't think the consultation process was adequate but we want to know what the thought process was. What was it they were trying — the drafters — thought they were going to fix?

The amendments certainly seem to be reasonable, for the most part. There are questions. I think I've . . . I know I've tried to outline the questions as best I can, Mr. Speaker, questions around this Act to amend *The Small Claims Act*. We do want to make sure that the amendments get the intended results, that the targeted results are what they would be. That's absolutely what we want and it's very important. It's very important that the Act to amend *The Small Claims Act* effectively improve the lives of working people.

As I said at the very start, it was in the '70s that the first small claims court Act, this first legislation came in, in Saskatchewan in the '70s under the leadership of Allan Blakeney and the New Democrats. The last amendments happened again under our watch. And I'm pleased that these amendments are being put forward. It gives us an opportunity to ask in committee.

We've raised the issue here in our second reading speeches, so certainly the ministry and the minister should have a pretty good idea of what some of our concerns are and hopefully that minister and officials will be able to answer most of the questions upfront in their introductory comments when we do get into committee.

But there's no shortage of concern about the lack of consultation. We've seen it. We see it where . . . Well you see it where chiropractic coverage was just simply axed in the last budget and there was nowhere — nowhere — that there was a recommendation that that would take place. Nowhere was there consultation done that would result in chiropractors being axed.

There is nowhere that there is a recommendation — and in fact this is a matter of public record — even the board of SCN wasn't consulted, wasn't told, wasn't given a heads-up. They just simply, as a matter of a budget decision, axed.

And what's even more astounding about SCN being axed is it was introduced at a time of much greater financial problem — much greater financial problem — when the Conservative Party was in office and Grant Devine was the Premier, and in his dying days of his government, he introduced and initiated SCN at a time when we couldn't afford to keep it going, but there it was. And now axed at a time when, in the Premier's own words, Saskatchewan chose not to participate in the recession.

And yet, there's no money now. No money for things they don't believe in, but there's money for their friends. And I can't, I just can't quite figure what's happening there. I can't figure out why when they inherited the \$2 billion surplus that there's . . . The number of rural doctor vacancies has increased more than 50 per cent under the Sask Party watch. And I just don't understand how that could possibly happen, Mr. Speaker. It's just bizarre that a government prides itself, says that it's largely rural in membership — not exclusively, but largely rural — that they would focus on rural problems. And we see the very problem that they were focused on, that of rural doctor vacancies, having grown by half — grown 50 per cent under the Sask Party watch.

We know that they've targeted . . . much hullabaloo about patient first and reducing and eliminating, ultimately eliminating, the wait-list for surgeries. But we see surgical wait-lists growing in virtually every health district, nearly doubling in the Swift Current Health District. And you've got to wonder what's happening there in terms of focus by the Sask Party government.

Are they focused on the things that really matter to people, or is there something else, some other agenda? We know that they're into privatization by stealth. We know that because we've seen a couple of examples of SaskPower where they have purchased new generating capacity when there's absolutely no reason to purchase it. It should be done in-house where you don't have to add a component of profit for some out-of-province corporation, where SaskPower would simply deliver the most efficient service at the lowest possible cost.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've talked much about the need for things to happen with respect to Bill 114, *An Act to amend The Small Claims Act*. I know that we're supportive of any improvement to *The Small Claims Act*. We're supportive of anything that brings some notion of justice and fairness to the people of Saskatchewan. We're in favour of things that make that process easier not just for my constituents but for all of our constituents, for all of the people of Saskatchewan.

We want the small claims experience, we want it to happen seldom because there's no need for it. But when it happens, by gosh, we want it to work. We want it to work in an efficient, timely manner. And that's indeed one of the great advantages of small claims court is the timeliness. And we want individuals to be able to present their information to the best of their ability and for that information to be respectfully heard and respectfully dealt with.

We've got lots of questions on this. There are four changes that have shown up in this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker.

[15:15]

I just want to say this one more time. The ministry and the minister has had ample opportunity to hear the concerns registered by members of the opposition in our second reading speeches on this Act. We've had lots of opportunity . . . or the minister's had lots of opportunity to hear some of my colleagues and certainly myself now explain some of the concerns we have with respect to this Bill, this Act to amend *The Small Claims Act*.

I'm hoping that as a result of our speeches, that the ministry and the minister are able to address these concerns in the opening remarks of the committee so that we don't have to glean through our speeches or somehow drag out the procedures because that certainly wouldn't be our intention. We would simply want to make sure that we can expedite legislation, but we absolutely have to get it right. That's the critical part, is we have to make sure that there's been an adequate time for consultation and an adequate time for people and companies and anyone who has a view on it, adequate time for them to comment in, either to us or to the government directly or to the Ministry of Justice in this case, for the Act to amend *The Small Claims Act*.

We want to make sure that people have the opportunity to have their say. And you know, that's fairly, a fairly reasonable thing to ask. Because that's really part of what this Act purports to be about, is giving individuals and companies an opportunity to state their point of view in a less formal way, but to say here's the way I saw it happen, and then you have an unbiased third party that sorts it out and helps the two parties come to a resolution that they can both live with, hopefully, but at least it is a fair resolution of the problem.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've got lots of questions. I hope that there's an equal number of answers when we do get to committee. And we want to be able to ask the questions so that we can be sure that the answers are forthcoming. We want to make sure that the intended consequences of this Act are what happens. So I move that Bill 114, *An Act to amend The Small Claims Act* proceed to Committee of the Whole. Thank you.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the Bill No. 114 presented by the Minister of Justice, that *The Small Claims Amendment Act, 2009* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

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

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this Bill stand

referred? I recognize the Deputy Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I designate that Bill No. 114, *The Small Claims Amendment Act, 2009* be referred to the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee.

The Speaker: — The Bill stands referred to the intergovernmental and justice affairs committee.

Bill No. 125

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 125 — *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to rise today to enter into the debate. This particular Bill, Bill No. 125, *An Act to amend The Crown Minerals Act*, it looks like a relatively straightforward Act. We have some questions. And as we've said many times on this side of the House, our aim is to make sure it's well thought out, that there are no unintended consequences, that we're getting directly to a matter that needs to be served, that the intentions are straightforward.

But, Mr. Speaker, before I go too far, I have to tell you that I've learned some very interesting things about how we do business in Saskatchewan and Canada. I don't know if you know this interesting stat, but 60 per cent of mines that are publicly traded are traded through Canada, primarily the Toronto and Vancouver Stock Exchange. And the reason for that is because Canada has such a strong reputation of having very good regulations so that when people are investing in our country and our province, they know what they're getting. There's not a lot of room for misinterpretation. The goods are relatively straightforward. And I think that's a real feather in our cap, that we take a lot of time to do the legislation well, and we make sure that around the world . . . because people around the world invest in our province. And they've got to know, they've got to have the confidence that they're getting the straight goods.

And so that's why we take this very seriously when we talk about potential amendments to legislation that has stood the test of time. And so as we go through this, there will be some questions. Of course we want to make sure that there has been thorough consultation and that the work has been well done. We know, as we've seen on other pieces of legislation, let us ask a lot of questions about whether this government can be trusted in terms of the work, the quality of work that they've done.

But you know, Mr. Speaker — and I was just reviewing the fact sheet — when it comes around Crown minerals, it plays a hugely important role in Saskatchewan. So it's very important that we get this right, that we're not . . . We cannot at all think that minerals play a small part in Saskatchewan's economy. In fact they play a major, major role.

If I look at the fact sheet that the government produces, this one's from July 2009, our GDP [gross domestic product] in 2008 was some \$64 billion — \$64 billion. Half of that, almost

half of that, came from the value of mineral sales, and that was 23 billion. Of course some minerals were having a banner year in 2008, and of course we look at potash which had a sale of over \$7 billion. And of course that was wonderful. We saw what happened. Unfortunately 2009 was not so good.

But we have values of other minerals that come up, step up to the plate, but clearly potash, petroleum, other minerals which include potassium sulphate, ammonium sulphate, sodium sulphate, bentonite, in the South here, coal, uranium, natural gas, salt, gold, and other base materials.

And we think of those rare earth materials which are hugely important especially when we see we're talking now about a new green economy, and we're talking about batteries and power vehicles. And we know those rare earth minerals, Saskatchewan's very fortunate. In fact we're one of the few places in the world that has rare earth minerals — largest deposit in the world — and no doubt we're blessed to have that. So we have to make sure we do the right thing and that there's no confusion when you have investors coming in to take a look at this.

And of course uranium is one that has caused a lot of conversation in Saskatchewan, but clearly in the North, it plays a major role. And many of us on both sides of the House have toured the uranium mines up north and their role in strengthening our economy.

And of course the exploration of the potential sites for new mines plays a big role in terms of how well we do our business. And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we have to make sure we do it right and that we get what we want to accomplish through the legislation actually done.

Now I understand that this legislation mainly focuses on the amendments to the existing Act. And the Act was first introduced in 1984 on how we govern Crown mineral rights and how they're granted and how that whole process happens. Of course there is a lot of work to be done in this area because clearly in the southern part of the province a lot of surveying has been done, and we have clear descriptions of land and ownership of land and explorations. But as we go up north, it's not quite the same.

And I know, and I know my colleague from Regina Northeast had a lot of time up north talking to folks. And in fact I know this played into the labour standards a lot, particularly when it came to exploration and how do we allow that to happen because clearly that needs to happen in a way that makes a lot of sense. And in the North, that really depends a lot on the weather and when you can get out there to actually do the exploration. And so you know, it's interesting that we're going into this modern era when we're talking about online registries, but you still have to get out there, cut the bush, do some exploration, and find out what the rock is underneath.

And so this is hugely important that, as we move forward, that we get it right and there is confidence not only by the industry but the investors because, as I said earlier, investors look around the world at what's happening in the province of Saskatchewan. And we have a huge land base, and so there's a lot of stuff under our soil. And people are looking at that and

going, well if I invest here, they have to have the confidence that they're getting the straight goods.

So I see that one of the sections, section 17 allows for more regulation making. On one hand that allows for flexibility, but we do get nervous about that because we do like to think . . . to see changes come back to the House unless they're a very good reason. When you leave too much in the hands of cabinet, things may go a little astray, and we get worried about that. We get a little nervous about that — when you have the powers to make regulations when for many years things had to come to the House.

And so why is it now after some 25 years that we're finding that things weren't working as well? I'd like to know more about that. What changed in the 25 years since when this first piece of legislation was introduced to now that they need to have more powers to make regulations? I think it's . . . I have some questions about that.

Of course section 21 is, the proposal is to change it to allow the minister to withdraw and reopen land using the online website instead of the *Gazette*. And this does follow other shifts that have gone online, and for example oil and gas expiration notices, I understand, began to be published online in July of 2006. So clearly that was during our tenure, so they're keeping up with that good work and that seems to be working well.

And so hopefully that is one that will go forward without any hitches. And so we'll be asking questions about that in committee, about really, what does that all mean? What are the minerals and what's the timeline? What are the schedules? And is it going to go ahead in a way that makes sense for industry? Which will be the minerals that will go forward, and will we be ready for that?

And part II creates a Crown mineral dispositions electronic registry known as MARS or also known as mineral administration registry Saskatchewan — and this will handle the Crown dispositions — and also outlines parameters for the operation of this registry. So that seems to make some sense. I mean as we're moving into this modern era, that if we can modernize the work, then clearly we need to take a look at that. We have to look at the benefits. We have to make sure we understand what are the downside of it, if there are any, and try to minimize the downside of that. We know more and more in this world that things are going online. There have been hitches with that, and clearly we want to minimize that as much as possible.

And so, you know, one of the stated reasons for the timeline in terms of how long does it take to, the rate of communicating to industry the changes that are out there and who's picking up the dispositions and that type of thing, we think that sounds like a good plan. You know, the question will be in the detail; the devil's always in the detail here. Hopefully we will still be doing good, thorough work. We've been known for doing thorough work — clearly we don't want to lose that reputation — but if we can increase the speed and also the public access to that information, then that's a good thing. That's a good thing because we know in this day and age people have come to expect that.

[15:30]

But it's the integrity of the system that really we have some concerns about in this government. Often there's been a question about the integrity in terms of the trustworthiness, in terms of the consultations, the intentions of their work. And so I do have some questions about that. How will they maintain that? I know they talk about an electronic signature, and that's not uncommon. But we want to make sure that when people are accessing online data that it is the right stuff, that it has not been altered, and it cannot be altered by anyone other than those who are supposed to be doing that.

And the whole issue around privacy is hugely important. And so if there are any concerns about privacy in terms of investment, that's important to make sure that that's done in the appropriate fashion. So it has to be to the highest standard possible. And that's what people have come to expect, especially in the mining industry.

You know, as I said earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that mining plays such a huge role in this province. Now we would hate to see it go down the same line as, say, forestry. When this government has let an industry so solid as forestry be under such attacks, such attack, that we would not want to see that same sort of scenario play out, that their sloppiness or speed to get things done that in fact we've taken two steps backward. This is not what we would like to see.

Now I understand that there was feedback. It was requested from the industry representatives. But unfortunately we don't have a sense that there were other stakeholders who were, who might have been asked. And I'm thinking of investors. I'm thinking of local communities. I'm thinking of the northerners, particularly when it comes to exploration.

You know, as I said earlier, we had my colleague from Regina Northeast do extensive consultations in the North when it came to labour standards. And many people would say, well why would you do that? They would be happy.

And of course, we found out, no, it's important to engage everyone. And I think of many of the mining companies have gone that way, where they really truly do believe in local consultation. So I think all partners need to be part of the feedback loop. But we haven't seen that. We haven't seen that. And of course as I said earlier, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've seen signs from this government that would lead us not to believe that's the case.

In fact, there's a whole question of trust and whether we should be trusting these folks when they say it's done. We look at what happened with SCN. Clearly consultations were not done, were not done, even some courtesy calls to the board to say, this is what we're thinking of in two and half years. And then the board is cut. SCN is cut. So if this is their style of consultations, we have some real problems about that. We truly have some real problems with that.

We also have an example, the chiropractors, where you have basically a contract negotiated, totally, completely negotiated and ready to be signed. In fact, they're even preparing a press conference on the contract, and then at the last minute, it's

pulled. So what kind of consultation track record does that speak of, when you have a government like this that does that kind of thing?

And as I said earlier, it's so important, so absolutely important that people have confidence in the mining sector in Saskatchewan where you have a GDP of some 60 billion-plus dollars. And you have clearly the mining sector delivering a third of that, if not more, from petroleum, potash and so on.

To say we'll worry about the details later, people want to know the details right now. They've got to know right now or else confidence is really hurt. And so we have a question about that. And we need to see that this government is moving that way, you know, when we saw their enterprise initiative. And half the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've not seen a lot out of that that really is different than before.

On one hand, especially in oil and that, they're keeping the royalty rates that we put into place. But yet they're saying they're doing a whole makeover of how they do business in the ministry — formerly known as department; I'm not sure if it's just a name change — and more meetings.

But you know, industry wants more than that. They want to see some action. They want to see what really . . . They want to see the rubber hit the road. And if this is that, then clearly we're most in favour of that, but we have some big questions.

I do have to add the caveat, because if there are unintended consequences, unintended consequences of northerners losing jobs, that's huge, or in the South where we see such a huge role of oil and natural gas. We want to make sure that the right thing is being done and that this is going to be the right thing. And so that's why I think it's important that the consultation process is done completely, not just with one group — not just with one group because clearly you're missing a big part of the picture.

And I think they would be the first ones to say, you know, we heard that with the chiropractors. Because clearly they were talking to the doctors, but when the patients came in and explained the unintended consequences of cutting a basic service like that, we're going to be paying for that. We've seen that with SCN where the unintended consequences . . . You're saving a couple of million dollars but the unintended consequences is that you're really hobbling several tens of millions of dollars of work in this province. So could that be happening here? That's the question we'll have, and we'll have that further on.

And I know that many of my colleagues will want to speak on this, but I do want to again say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I was surprised to hear how much of the publicly traded mining companies go through Canadian stock exchanges. And it's because of the good regulations we've had and we will continue to have in Canada and in Saskatchewan. It's some 60 per cent of publicly traded mines have their stocks traded through the Toronto or Vancouver stock exchange. And it's because of the good work that we do to make sure things are on the up and up that we're not having legislation that really you can drive a Mack truck through. We don't want to see that.

And so that's why, when we ask about what kind of regulations,

when you have a section that's allowing more and more regulations to be made by the cabinet, that's when you start to have some problems because then you pick winners and losers. That's not a good thing. And we've seen that in the forestry industry here; I'm thinking about Big River. Clearly we don't want to see that kind of thing happen because we don't . . . Our province has a great reputation for a place to do business, especially mining. And I think of the Saskatchewan Mining Association. We've always had a good working relationship with them.

So we have a good reputation. It's been built on for many, many decades, and it will continue to be that way. But we have some real worries if that's going to be at risk, at risk. And we have communities right across this province who completely embrace mining activities in their communities because they've got a good working relationship with the companies that do business in their communities. We don't want to see that put at risk. We don't want to see that put at risk because of being a little too quick here, being a little too quick.

We do embrace change, though. We think that's a good thing if it's done well and appropriately for the right reasons and making sure when the technology's launched that it's ready to do the work, that the horses are there. If the horses aren't there to get the Internet going, we've got a problem. You know, so we've got to make sure that online registry is fully capable to do the work that people are expecting. And I think even when you read the language, the minister recognizes that because they talk about when they're going to be closed down for maintenance and that type of thing, recognizing that there will be times when you have to do that type of thing.

But I think in many ways we'll have some very good discussions further down the road, but I think that in many ways — I know that my colleagues will have some more specific questions about this — but I think that when we look ahead at the future of Saskatchewan, clearly mining and minerals play a big, big role in that. And whether it's rare earth minerals in the North which, so excited to see, because really when you talk about battery technology — huge, huge — and whether it's powering hybrid cars, and I've got to tell you they are a wonderful, wonderful thing, or whether they're saving the energy that's produced off wind turbines, that's a very positive thing.

And so we have an opportunity to play a real leadership role and I know that when you're exploring, whether it's in the southern part of the province or the northern part of the province, the records have to be accurate. They have to be accurate because people are investing a lot of money in these small exploration companies. You know, it's the start of some big things. And of course many of them start out and they're hoping that the work they do will deliver the goods and really turn into some big opportunities.

But we know that's not always the case. It's like so many investments that you have to put out a lot of things out there and to see what comes back. But you want to make sure when you do that the government's doing their part too. If the government's not doing their part in terms of making sure that all the records are fair and accurate and kept up well, then there's confidence and there's an integrity that they can count

on. But as I said, we have questions because of the trust issue — trust is a key part of integrity and this . . . we have some questions about that.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this Bill is an important one and it's important to always reflect on how we can do business better. Clearly that's something that we stand for. How can we do it better? How can we make things happen in a way that we can truly count on?

But I know in a few minutes I'll be taking my seat and we'll have questions. But I know that many others will join in and want to get a few comments on the record. Because, as I said, when you have minerals accounting for a good third of our GDP . . . and they're big numbers. They're big numbers — 23 billion, \$20 billion — clearly significant, makes a lot of difference to a province like Saskatchewan. And sometimes we don't think about that because we think that we do other things. But no, mining is a big part of our province. And so you have 20 billion out of 60 billion. It can have a huge, huge impact.

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll be taking my seat. And I do think though this deserves a lot of attention and I know others will want to speak to it. So in terms of Bill No. 125, *An Act to amend The Crown Minerals Act*, I move adjournment at this point. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 125, *The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 105

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 105** — *The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2009* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to be able to participate in this debate today. Interestingly enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the SaskEnergy annual report for 2009 comes down today and it's in the context of that that I'll be making some of my remarks.

But to start with, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is a fairly straightforward piece of legislation, but it says volumes in terms of what it's proposing. The main clause in this Bill is subsection 42(1), changing \$1.3 billion and substituting with \$1.7 billion. Now that of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, refers to the debt limit for SaskEnergy. And any time we see the members opposite get into raising debt limits on things, you know . . . They do a good enough job on raising the debt of this province. So any time we see them moving to change legislation so they can do even more raising of the debt, it makes us mightily suspicious on this side of the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So moving from \$1.3 billion as the total debt limit for SaskEnergy to \$1.7 billion,

that's the import of this Bill.

[15:45]

Now we had the annual report tabled today for 2009, Mr. Speaker. The overall financial health of SaskEnergy seems to be doing fairly well. But there were a number of things that took place over the past year and that seemed to be getting ready to be accelerated in their tendency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that give us pause for how that impacts the bottom line for SaskEnergy and then in turn how that impacts the ratepayers of this province, the people that have to pay the utility costs with SaskEnergy, to make sure that they can heat their house through their natural gas bill.

So we saw a company come forward today with a fairly positive financial statement, but one of the interesting things about that financial statement, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was the impact of the sale over the last year of Heritage Gas. Now Heritage Gas was an investment in Nova Scotia which SaskEnergy owned a 50 per cent stake in that investment. It was returning a nice bit of revenue to the province of Saskatchewan.

And again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one of the things about the natural gas sector, if that's your business, it's a tremendously volatile sector. And even within the past year between 2008 to 2009 we saw a swing of something like \$54 million in terms of the changes in fair value accounting that had to be made to reflect the cost of the commodity of natural gas. And you know, a \$54 million swing in one year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is a lot of, it's a lot of change in the balance sheet, but it's signal to how volatile the natural gas sector is and how SaskEnergy has to operate within an environment that is very volatile.

Now what we find alarming about the sale of Heritage Gas and the proclaimed intent of the members opposite, we find it, we find it alarming from a number of perspectives, Mr. Speaker. For one, from straight sort of business sense, it makes sense to diversify your holdings. If you've got all your eggs in one basket, you shouldn't be surprised if someone comes along to crush your basket full of eggs. And if you've got everything focused in the province of Saskatchewan — you may claim that it's about being Sask-first, Mr. Deputy Speaker — but what it does is places the people of Saskatchewan, the ratepayers of Saskatchewan in a tremendously vulnerable situation.

You know, they understand the process of hedging when it comes to buying, you know, natural gas when it's cheap and storing it and bringing that on as conditions allow. You know, if they can understand it in that context, Mr. Speaker, surely they'd understand the concept of hedging as it pertains to outside investments. But it appears that escapes the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

So Heritage Gas was put on the chopping block after they'd proclaimed the change in policy. And you can't help but wonder, Mr. Deputy Speaker, when you're the seller of an asset and you proclaim that you want to get that asset off your books, you want to put it up on the chopping block, you know, does that lend itself to getting the best possible price for that asset, Mr. Deputy Speaker? You know, I think your first-year business students would argue that no, in fact it does not. If you're proclaiming a zeal, a desperation to get rid of an asset,

you know, are you going to be getting the best price for that asset?

So, Mr. Speaker, they got the \$8 million return on the investment with Heritage Gas. They applied, you know, proceeds from the sale against debt. It helped to change the debt position of the corporation for the 2009 report.

I'll get into the question of ongoing revenue momentarily, Mr. Speaker. But you can't help but wonder that, if you've got a big for-sale sign being planted and a everything-must-go mentality being trumpeted from the top of that government, then guess what? People are going to buy it. And who's got the advantage in that circumstance? Is it the people of Saskatchewan getting the best value for that asset? Or is it the potential buyers who look to see that, well, you know, these guys have got a fire sale going on so why don't we snap up the assets while the getting's good?

So that's, I think, the approach that's been taken with regards to Heritage Gas. We'll see what happens with the other assets that they've moved onto the chopping block, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But again it's the kind of practice that, if you turned in a paper with that on it for your first-year business class, your prof would say, well telegraphing it that much out is probably not going to get you value for your asset, let alone the whole sort of implications for the province or anything like that.

So from a straight business practice perspective, this year's annual report had some alarming news in it concerning Heritage Gas and the way that that practice that has been adopted by the members opposite as it comes to the stewardship of Crown assets is going to play out for this province.

In terms of the way that an ongoing revenue stream has been, you know, cashed in for a one-time gain, again there's some good-looking things in the balance sheet for SaskEnergy this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but a lot of, you know . . . No small part of that had to do with the benefit realized from the sale of this one-time . . . the gain from this sale of an asset.

And the way that plays out over time of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that, you know, money that was available this year for reducing debt and to make the debt/equity ratio of the company look better, it's not going to be there in any way, shape, or form next year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So again it narrows the holdings of the corporation in a way that's very much . . . that has a lot of potential for danger down the line. And of course if the debt to equity ratio gets poor in a corporation, if they don't hit their targets, what happens then, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Well we've got legislation in the House right now that says, well one of the insurance policies against what happens there if they need to crank extra money out in terms of a dividend or to make the debt to equity ratio look better, one of the safety valves they've got now is to go to borrow more money.

And if they don't want to borrow more money, what else can they do if they're not going to have external investments returning profit to the province? Well there's an increased number of hookups. Well you know, that's good, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but that's one revenue stream — in what used to be a

number of revenue streams — that went to the health of the corporation and the way that that translated into low natural gas prices for consumers in Saskatchewan.

Now that you've narrowed it and made it more, you know, reliant or hostage to a particular set of revenue streams, you know, what happens if they need to raise money to pay a dividend into Crown Investments Corporation or if they need to make sure that the debt to equity ratios look good? Well of course then, Mr. Deputy Speaker, what they'll do is turn increasingly to the ratepayers of this province. And if they haven't got external revenue streams I guess that means that, you know, what happens with the internal revenue streams? That means that they're all the more important to the financial health of the company, and that means that that's it for the ballgame, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the options that the management at SaskEnergy has to avail themselves of.

So in terms of, you know, putting the ratepayer or the utility payers of SaskEnergy at greater risk, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we see that in the actions of this government. Again it may look good for this year's balance sheet where the dividend was paid out at an 80 per cent ratio, and they had, you know, one-time revenues to avail themselves of in terms of sale of assets. But next year of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's 100 per cent that's been set for a dividend for SaskEnergy — 100 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And one of the tendencies that we've seen in other Crowns is the way that setting out dividends that need to be paid by the individual Crowns into CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan], into the General Revenue Fund, to backstop the fact that the members opposite couldn't budget a bake sale, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the way we see that impacting the bottom line of a corporation like SaskEnergy is in the fact that they're going to need to borrow more money.

They're forcing the borrowing off the general revenue balance sheet so they can say, well yes it's, you know, 622 million on a consolidated basis, sure. But they'll try to maintain this fiction that they've got a balanced budget after they've dipped into the rainy day fund and it's, you know, nothing to see here when it comes to the \$622 million projected on this here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, let alone the billion dollars of last year's deficit.

So what do you want to do if you want to make your balance sheets look better out of the General Revenue Fund? Well you force a lot of that borrowing activity off into the Crowns. And again we see a dividend policy that would seem to indicate that they're going to make sure that any borrowing that the Crowns undertake will be there to underwrite the dividends paid into CIC. We see that in terms of new capital expansion. You know, there's some possibility that I'm sure some of that will be cash flow through existing profits in-year, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But if they aren't able to do that of course, Mr. Deputy Speaker, well they'll have to borrow it. And they'll have to borrow it and that will add to the bottom line of what people in Saskatchewan owe.

So the argument that gets made is that this is self-liquidating debt. It's self-liquidating debt, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there is in fact a reasonable dividend policy and there isn't sort of this tendency to use the Crowns as a cash machine or a piggy bank

or as your ATM [automated teller machine] of choice. When, you know, your one account runs out, you go off to the Crown account. And, you know, again the notion that it would be self-liquidating debt if it was entirely related to the bottom line of the Crown and the operations of the Crown and the ability to service that debt and on, that would be one thing. But of course it's not.

In the Sask Party world, where they want to get ever more into the day-to-day management of the Crowns and you know interfere to a greater and greater extent and to use the Crowns to backstop the fact that the General Revenue Fund is in an historic mess, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They're going to use the Crowns to underwrite that behaviour. So they're doing that already, Mr. Deputy Speaker, they're selling off assets and using that to prop up the balance sheet for one year.

But of course, you know, one year is one thing, but the year after that and the year after that, what's going to happen to the debt to equity ratio? What's going to happen to the ability of the Crown to service . . . or the ability of SaskEnergy to service these activities within its own revenues? Well of course they're going to have to borrow. And you know what gives us pause for thought on that front, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The fact that we're here entertaining a one-line Bill that moves the borrowing limit for SaskEnergy from \$1.3 billion to \$1.7 billion.

So again they haven't reached this \$1.3 billion limit. You know, there's some question as to whether or not this increase is actually needed, given the current financials with the company, but here we are debating it anyway, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And again within the context of SaskEnergy in and of itself, you wonder about the need for this. But the need for it of course makes all kinds of sense when you think about it in the context of the way that those members opposite run the finances overall. And when you take it into account like that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it becomes pretty plain in terms of what's going on here. They want to use the Crowns as a piggy bank. They want to use it as a cash machine to underwrite their inability to run the budget on the general revenue side.

So last year we had the great potash debacle where the member from Kindersley wanted to . . . He was telling his colleagues, well it's going to be \$3 billion. And you know he was bragging around like the big shot. And of course it wasn't 3 billion. They booked it at 1.9, but of course at the end of the year they had to pay back the royalties that were prepaid. So that was last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This year we think this budget is soft like butter on the expenditure side. And in terms of the health care workers' deals coming up, in terms of the doctors' deals coming up, in terms of the teachers' deals coming up, those alone will put this, you know, projected 622, projected consolidated deficit over 1 billion. We think that that's the way it's going to play out, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And then when that happens, what are they going to do next year to underwrite the way that they've tap danced their way through this year's budget? Well don't be surprised, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if they don't accelerate the process of cranking out ever larger dividends from the Crowns, and don't be surprised

that we've been here in the legislature debating things like raising the debt limit of Crowns like SaskEnergy so that they can avail themselves of those proceeds.

[16:00]

And again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't think I'm a paranoid person. I don't think I'm speaking unduly here. This is the record of the books of this province over the past two years. This is what has happened in this province.

And when you look at what's happened before in the history of this province, I guess we ought not be terribly surprised, Mr. Deputy Speaker, because in the lead-up to 1991, there had been such a mess made of the different Crowns. You know, when they weren't busy trying to sell them off outright, Mr. Deputy Speaker — not piece by piece like the members currently are trying — there was such a mess in the Crowns and they had been loaded up to such an extent in terms of debt, that of course once the books got straightened out in the wake of the Gass Commission and, you know, the people coming in to take a forensic look at the books, well of course it took no small effort to get the Crowns back on a financial track that made sense for the people of the province, that actually bore some resemblance to the notion of good stewardship.

And again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's two short years with the members opposite at the helm. And we know that it took, you know, nearly a decade for them to wreak all kinds of damage on the Crowns and the finances of this province generally. But two years already, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we've seen the second-worst deficit in the history of this province — \$1 billion in the past year's budget and, you know, Lord only knows what's coming this year.

And so when we look at them increasing things like the debt limit for SaskEnergy, you know, if you look at the books of SaskEnergy in and of themselves, you can say to that management team, you can say that those front-line workers, good job, well done. In terms of the job that's been set out for you by the people of this province, you're doing the best you can, and it's pretty darn good by other comparatives.

But when you compare it to the situation across the books and across the finances of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's where the worry starts to creep in. When you compare it to the ideological track that it's been pushed onto by the members opposite in terms of what constitutes good business practice and not, then you start to get worried, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And when you see them bring forward an increase to the debt limit when, you know, by the year's books there would not seem to be a huge requirement for that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, then you get a whole lot worried.

So we in the opposition benches, we look at the activity of this government and how they're approaching the finances of this province. You know, only the Sask Party would bring forward, of course they bring forward a Bill to raise the debt limit of SaskEnergy in this time of growth. Of course they didn't tell you about their growth agenda being the growth of the province's debt and deficit, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So at this point I see some other members would like to

participate in debate on other items of legislation before the Assembly, so I will now move to adjourn debate on this Bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 105, *The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2009*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 106

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 106 — *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure this afternoon to join into the discussion on Bill No. 106, *An Act to repeal The Labour Market Commission Act and respecting certain matters associated with that repeal*.

Mr. Speaker, here in the Assembly when we look at legislation, there are obviously different types of pieces of proposed legislation that we examine. There are those that are of great significance, Mr. Speaker, where a new Bill is brought in to create a new corporation or to develop or institute a program that will have great significance on people. Sometimes, Mr. Speaker, the Bill is more a housekeeping nature where it's modernizing the legislation or ensuring that the legislation matches with what the reality is actually like on the ground.

And there are other situations, Mr. Speaker, where the government, due to a policy decision that it has taken, has decided to ask to repeal a piece of legislation in order to have the laws of the province better reflect the policy decisions the government has taken on a particular issue. And, Mr. Speaker, that is indeed the case here when we look at Bill No. 106, *An Act to repeal The Labour Market Commission Act and respecting certain matters associated with that repeal*.

I thought, Mr. Speaker, before we got into some of my ideas and comments that I have about this approach of repealing *The Labour Market Commission Act*, I thought it'd be helpful to provide members of the Assembly and those watching at home a bit of background information with respect to what in fact the Labour Market Commission did and what its role was here in Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, prior to the change of the last government and the Sask Party's election as government, the Labour Market Commission was brought in. And based on what was printed on its website at that time, it says:

The Saskatchewan Labour Market Commission (SaskLMC) is a new corporation created under provincial legislation in 2007. The SaskLMC was formed on the basis that labour market planning and coordination is best

achieved through a partnership between labour, business, education and training institutes, government and other stakeholders. [It goes on.] The SaskLMC will have an industry focus on providing advice on Saskatchewan's key strategic labour market issues.

So it was the idea, Mr. Speaker, that when we in the province here were looking at what was needed for or what is needed for labour market needs — looking at the demand, looking at the issues that the province faces, looking at the availability of labour and what work, what initiatives can be pursued in order to ensure that we have an adequate supply to meet the demand and the needs here in the province.

It was the idea that through working together by having the various members of the province of the various sectors involved, from business and labour organizations, from educational training institutions, with government input as well, that it was the idea that through co-operation, through a discussion, through finding out what are the concerns that are shared, what are some of the plans and visions that can be shared, what is the best way forward — the basic idea that through working together, through having the important and the necessary individuals around the table all providing input, all discussing the issues, all giving suggestions and ideas — through that approach, Mr. Speaker, we were best positioned as a province to have a system in place, a system in place to meet the labour market needs that we have here in Saskatchewan.

And I think that's, I mean that type of thinking, that type of co-operative approach, I think that's often when Saskatchewan is at its best, when people from various backgrounds, various places in the province are working together, finding common solutions to issues that are faced by various groups. And to me that makes good sense.

I can think of anyone in the community. This is often, this fundamental approach is what happens at the local level. If there's an issue in a neighbourhood in any one of our constituencies, people mobilize from a variety of backgrounds to address that issue. So whether it has to do with safer streets or whether it has to do about the proposed development of a new swimming pool in the area or the loss of a swimming pool — I know that's one concern in my home constituency that a number of people at the local level have come together — and so it's people from various backgrounds bringing their different perspectives, bringing their different views and their different types of expertise to the table to discuss the issue, to talk about solutions, to show examples of where co-operation can occur, as opposed to strictly an adversarial system.

It's an approach of identifying where there are common concerns where progress can be achieved through working together. And I think for most people in the province, and I'm sure most members in the Assembly, that makes good and decent sense. And we've seen that work in our own constituencies, in our own areas of interest. So the idea of groups that often . . . not often, at times are up against one another, the idea of coming together and working in a co-operative manner.

And from some of the discussions I've had, Mr. Speaker, with individuals from different groups, from business and from

labour when discussing the Labour Market Commission, with some of the conversations I had, the feedback I received on it was generally positive where individuals, on the Labour Market Commission, felt like it was a worthwhile pursuit. And it was one of the areas where the co-operation between different sectors was bearing fruit and one of the areas where there was a good record and progress was being made.

So I think that's important to note, Mr. Speaker, that in the lead-up to the 2007 election through the Labour Market Commission there was a good amount of work being done, and work that was bearing fruit, work that was productive and bringing results. That's a very important point to note. I think for members in the Assembly and viewers at home, we can think of the economic progress and the economic strength that our province experienced in the lead-up to the 2000 election, the years prior as well as the years just after.

So we've seen a lot of the good work. I think that a lot of the good work that groups like the Labour Market Commission have done by coming together, identifying problems, discussing ideas, and pursuing a common plan, it was bringing results. That's what individuals involved with the Labour Market Commission have said. And we can look at the strength of the Saskatchewan economy ramping up before the 2011 election for a couple of years, and then immediately following there was great strength.

And sadly, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the record of members opposite in their role in the economic strength of the province, at least on the provincial front when looking at the books here in the province, we've seen a situation where we've gone from a huge surplus leading up to the '07 election and immediately after to a situation now where the Sask Party's been running consecutive deficit budgets. And we're now running a deficit of over \$1 billion.

And that leads us to many of the problems the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre was speaking of. When we look at many of the short-sighted cuts or short-sighted decisions that have been made in the area of the Crown sector, we've seen how the approach that the Sask Party has taken with the finances — the poor leadership and their, truly their inability to deal with the province's finances in a responsible and prudent manner — we've seen the results of that. And we've seen that through the equity stripping in the Crowns, taking on of amounts, levels of debt which some would argue are not sustainable and not a good foundation for the Crowns. We've also seen a great amount of financial trickery in the accounting practices, changing these practices midstream in a term, hiding things in the Crowns.

And this all ties into the larger factor, Mr. Speaker, of trust. The larger factor that people in Saskatchewan, I don't think — when it comes to the issue of financial management, when it comes to the issue of developing a plan that has everyone involved, a plan that we saw through the Labour Market Commission — I don't think people in the province trust them on this issue of having a plan in place that takes in all the considerations for the various sectors.

And then when that is coupled with the horrible financial management that we've seen from members opposite in

predicting revenue projections to do with resources, when that is coupled once again with the financial trickery that we've seen from members opposite when it comes to hiding debt, when it comes to changing the way that debt is reported to the public, when it comes to the issue of clearly stating what are the financial implications of wage settlements with various public sector groups — I think when you put all these things together, Mr. Speaker, there's certainly a growing level of mistrust that the Saskatchewan people have with the Sask Party government on the issue of responsibly managing the finances and taking care of the matters of the province.

So we saw some early indications, Mr. Speaker, on how the Sask Party government can't be trusted on the issue of the labour market, and that was earlier legislation that was introduced in the House. We saw Bill 46 and this fundamentally changed the structure of the Labour Market Commission and the representation that was on it. And we saw very early steps in this government's approach to the issue — one that was not encouraging growth, encouraging the strength of the Labour Market Commission, but one that was weakening it, one that was positioning it for the later approach that we've seen the Sask Party take on this issue.

And I know it's concerning for many people here in the province, especially the groups, Mr. Speaker, that were involved with the Labour Market Commission before, the individuals, the groups that were represented on that commission who generally felt like that the commission was doing some good work, that progress was being made. And it was one of the examples within the government structure and apparatus where you could point to some good achievements and co-operation occurring by groups that traditionally have gone head-to-head on different issues. So it's refreshing, Mr. Speaker, when you see that level of co-operation occurring by different groups and some plans coming forward and progress being made.

It's troubling when the Sask Party government, given their inability to manage the provincial finances, given their inability to be transparent with the numbers, given their preference for financial trickery when it comes to clearly stating what the numbers are to do with the finances, to do with the economy — clearly when we see their inability to project revenue or to have revenue projections that were believable, accurate, projections that were not based on fantasyland budget calculations — when you put that all together, it worries Saskatchewan people because they're going from a system that had brought good benefits to Saskatchewan, a system that had allowed the economy to flourish and to do so well, to going to a different system, Mr. Speaker, that I would suggest is one that does not serve the interests of Saskatchewan people to the same level and as well as what the previous system has allowed.

[16:15]

And, Mr. Speaker, one of the good things about the Labour Market Commission was the level of consultation that it provided — consultation with the various sectors in the province, consultation with groups that, as I said before, often disagreed on different issues. But it provided a venue, provided a mechanism that groups with differing opinions on a variety of issues could come together and could come up with solutions.

And that's the type of consultation that should occur under government. That's the type of consultation that occurs when you have a government that can be trusted on the issue of listening to people. That's the type of consultation that occurs when you have a government that is seeking the outcome, the best outcome for all people in the province, for all groups of the province as opposed to a select few. And that's the type of consultation, Mr. Speaker, that I think Saskatchewan people want and the Saskatchewan people want and demand when it comes to the labour market.

And we see so many examples from recent months, Mr. Speaker, where, as opposed to taking the type of approach to consultation that we saw in the Labour Market Commission, we've seen an approach to consultation that has been short-sighted, an approach to consultation that has been very selective in who it talks to, a process of consultation that occurs after a decision has been made. We've seen a very, very flawed process of consultation, and in some instances, Mr. Speaker, we have seen a complete absence of consultation in any way, shape, and form.

There are many examples to this, Mr. Speaker. One of the most salient examples that we've seen in recent weeks is the axing of SCN, the absence of consultation, Mr. Speaker, that occurred with the board in charge of SCN, the independent board.

And there was a piece in the Saskatchewan newspapers this weekend. The board Chair, who described herself as sympathetic towards the philosophy of the Sask Party, but completely raked — in my opinion — the article and many of the quotes from the individual being discussed in the article raked the members opposite over the coals on their complete absence of consultation, an absence of consultation, Mr. Speaker, that occurred over a number of ministers.

So it's a pattern of poor consultation. It's a pattern of not listening to people. It's a pattern of simply doing what they want based on a short-sighted decision, a short-sighted goal and not taking the entire picture, the entire view of an issue into consideration. And that's a worry.

We also saw, in the same way that we've seen . . . Or another contrast to the good type of consultation that occurred through the Labour Market Commission is the consultation that we've seen on the issue of Dutch elm disease, Mr. Speaker, a cutting of the program. A small program relative to the entire Saskatchewan provincial budget — a small program but one that is very near and dear to the hearts of Saskatchewan people, especially people that live in some of our cities and towns and RMs [rural municipality] that have elm trees, have trees that they love.

Mr. Speaker, there's a great beauty in the prairie landscape. But it's also nice, Mr. Speaker, to have pockets of trees along the parts of the province where there aren't as many trees. They provide shelter in windstorms, like we experienced not too long ago. They provide shade in the hot summers that we have and they break the wind in the cold winters. So to have these very valuable trees, trees that have been growing for decades and decades and decades, to have a short-sighted cut, to have a cut, Mr. Speaker, that occurs without proper consultation, that is a concern to many, many Saskatchewan people.

We also saw, Mr. Speaker, poor consultation — that contrasts so starkly with the type of good consultation that we saw through the Labour Market Commission — on many of the labour Bills that have passed through the Assembly. We saw, whether it's Bills 5, 6, Bill 80 . . . 43 I believe is the trespassing Bill. On many of those Bills, Mr. Speaker, that so directly affect many of the working men and women in the province, we saw no consultation.

We saw a bulldozer approach where legislation is introduced and then afterwards there's a bit of discussion about what consultation could look like. But it's clear, Mr. Speaker, based on the actions of government, there's absolutely no interest in consulting with many of the people that are so directly affected by that legislation. And I know that is a great, great concern.

Mr. Speaker, we also see another example of failed and poor and weak consultation. An example that is very different than what we saw in the Labour Market Commission and that's on the issue of kidney transplant and the transplant program here in Saskatchewan. How we've seen in recent days, Mr. Speaker, through the Legislative Assembly here in question period, we have a Health minister admitting that many of the major points of the transplant program, he's just recently learned. Well it's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, there's a waiting list with nearly 100 people needing kidney transplants, desperately needing kidney transplants.

And if the members opposite would take the time to consult with the people on that waiting list, the 100 people on that waiting list, I think they would get a different answer and an answer that would better inform their decisions.

We've seen how consultation works with the Labour Market Commission. We've seen how it can work well, how groups that have different views can come together, come forward with some good recommendations and pursue those recommendations. But from the Sask Party government, over and over and over again, we see an approach of failed consultation.

Another example I can think of, Mr. Speaker, is . . . And you'll note the examples that I'm giving are across a variety of responsibilities for ministers. I've touched on the Environment. I've touched on Culture and Tourism. I've touched on Labour and I've touched on Health. Well another area, Mr. Speaker, I would like to show where there's been completely a failed approach to consultation is in the area of reducing the number of educational assistants here in the province.

Once again, a complete absence of consultation with the people that are affected, whether that's the actual educational assistants themselves, or whether that's the many, many families that rely on those EAs [educational assistant] to help with the education of their children or to simply provide a better learning environment for all the children in the classroom. It's not an issue simply about children and parents who might be directly working with an EA. It's the whole classroom. And it's the type of, it's about the type of education we want to pursue in the province.

Well sadly, from the Education minister, Mr. Speaker, we saw a type of consultation that was completely after the fact that the

news of this change was going to be made. Well you know once . . . It didn't take long for the minister to backtrack, to backpedal in a major way, recognizing that there was some major concern about the short-sighted decision.

But why, Mr. Speaker, why force the Saskatchewan families, the Saskatchewan individuals working as EAs, to go through that phase of uncertainty, of worry, of concern? Why not have a process of consultation that sits down with them beforehand, that is clear, that is fully transparent, that listens to all of the perspectives present, all of the perspectives on this issue? Why not have a consultation process that allows for . . . to hear from all those people, as opposed to leaking or randomly letting out the information and creating a bunch of worry throughout the entire sector? It's a backwards approach to consultation and it's one that worries many, many Saskatchewan people.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've seen horrible examples of consultation from the Minister of Culture and Tourism, from the Minister of the Environment, from the Minister of Labour, from the Minister of Health, from the Minister of Education. Well another area, Mr. Speaker, of horrible consultation and we've seen this in the area of sharing revenue, a percentage of the PST with municipalities. And so for the Minister of Municipal Affairs . . . And clearly Finance has a role in this as well because the Minister of Finance is the ultimate bean-counter, and also the Premier wears a lot of the responsibility on this one. He wears a lot of the responsibility on all the issues I mentioned because he's in charge of setting the overall tone and approach to consultation.

But on the area of breaking the promise of providing a percentage of the PST to municipalities, members opposite once again failed to consult. I don't understand, Mr. Speaker. You'd think ministers opposite would start to learn from the missteps of their colleagues within cabinet. But time and time again, across all of the ministries, we see this same approach of failed consultation.

So on the issue of breaking the promise of providing a percentage of the PST to municipalities, we saw the Premier announce this through the media. And members in municipalities — mayors, councillors — were completely caught off guard and were completely offended. In fact, many members of that local level of government were asking for an apology, asking for the Premier, for ministers on the other side to show some contrition and to recognize they made a horrible error in the approach to consultation that they pursued and to take a different approach.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen . . . And I'm providing these examples, Mr. Speaker, of failed consultation because I think it provides such a good contrast to the good consultation that was occurring through the Labour Market Commission. So we've seen failed consultation with SCN, failed consultation — and that's the Minister of Parks and Tourism and Culture, across a number of ministers, the present minister as well as the previous minister.

We've seen failed consultation by the Minister of the Environment on Dutch elm disease. And I'll be giving another example shortly. We've seen failed consultation, Mr. Speaker, by the Minister of Labour in consulting with labour groups, in

consulting with the men and women in the province. We've seen failed consultation by the Minister of Health in consulting with patients on the waiting lists for kidney transplants. We've seen failed consultation by the Minister of Education on the issue of reducing the number of educational assistants here in the province.

We've seen failed consultation, Mr. Speaker, by members opposite on the breaking of the promise of providing a percentage of the PST to municipalities. And that promise is broken by the Premier, the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs, as well as the Finance minister because all of them could have stepped up to the plate and consulted in a true and honest, transparent way.

The other area, Mr. Speaker, the forestry sector, we've seen failed consultation with the people of Big River, the people in Big River who had an option of some renewed activity in the forestry sector in their area. But we did not see the Minister Responsible of Energy and Resources properly consulting with the people of Big River, listening to the concerns they have, responding to the concerns they have, and looking at some of the very real and viable options on the table. We have not seen that. So another example, Mr. Speaker, of a minister failing to consult.

And I'm sure members in the Assembly now are starting to see a pattern emerge where, across the ministries, across the sectors, across the various types of Saskatchewan people that are being affected, we have seen a failed, failed approach to consultation.

The last example I'll give, Mr. Speaker, in looking at failed consultation — and this provides a contrast to the good consultation that occurred through the Labour Market Commission — that, Mr. Speaker, is through the decision by the Minister of the Environment to once again not properly consult with the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] in the province about cuts to an environmental program that was being operated in co-operation.

And so, Mr. Speaker, another example, and we saw in my opinion a strongly worded letter from a vice-chief from the FSIN commenting on the approach that Sask Party government has taken to this issue of consulting and working with some of the most important groups here in the province, I mean it's . . . Certainly the actions of the Ministry of Environment are closely tied to the inaction of the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations. The Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations who told the member from Cumberland, the member from Cumberland, that he doesn't visit the communities of the North. Forgetting that the member actually lives in the constituency, has travelled widely throughout the constituency as a member involved with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, as involved on school boards, Mr. Speaker, and then as an elected representative travelling widely throughout the North — not only in his own constituency but also in the constituency of Athabasca. We saw the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations suggest, with a straight face, that the member opposite is not travelling, has not been to the communities that he is speaking of.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would suggest that if you took an unlabelled map, only the communities were identified of the

two northern constituencies in the province — this isn't a challenge in a pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey sort of way — but I would expect the member opposite, the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, would have a hard time identifying many of those communities on the unlabelled map. So to suggest, Mr. Speaker, that the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, to suggest that of the member from Cumberland, to me demonstrates the lack of credibility the member opposite has when it comes to doing proper and true consultation with the people in the northern constituencies, when it comes to doing proper consultation with Aboriginal people, whether that be First Nations or Métis communities.

So what I've attempted to do, Mr. Speaker, is outline the approach the Sask Party government has taken on the issue of consultation across the ministries, across the ministries. Whether it's cultural issues like the SCN by the Minister of Parks and Tourism and Culture, whether it's the issues of the environment to do with Dutch elm disease, environmental programs offered in co-operation with the FSIN, whether it is labour legislation like Bills 5, 6, 43, or Bill 80, a complete absence of consultation with individuals — the men and women working in the province. When we've seen by the Minister of Education, the complete absence of consultation on the issue of reducing the number of EAs in the province and how that will negatively affect many Saskatchewan children.

The issue of breaking the promise on the PST, Mr. Speaker, because the Minister of Finance was so short on cash, because the Minister of Energy and Resources' projections were so wildly off, so amazingly off in a horrible way, Mr. Speaker, we have seen the breaking of that promise. Whether it's a complete absence of consultation with the people of Big River in restarting activity in the forestry sector in their area, once again, failed consultation.

[16:30]

And, Mr. Speaker, the general issue of duty to consult by the Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations with the people directly affected by his ministry, instead of having a proper consultation with the people throughout the North in a variety of communities, he makes outrageous claims, unbelievable claims about the member from Cumberland not knowing the communities in his constituency.

So when you have those types of responses, when you see this pattern of an absence of consultation, an absence of listening to Saskatchewan people, and when we see this pattern, Mr. Speaker, of acting first, asking questions later; acting first, listening to people later; acting first and then pretending, feigning some type of consultation with individuals completely after the fact, to me, Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder we see their decision to kill the Labour Market Commission when shown how they are so regularly and they so happily chose not to consult with the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, so with this proposed Bill, Bill No. 106, an Act to repeal the Labour Market Commission, if they're repealing it, Mr. Speaker, they need to replace it with something, one would think. And so the approach that they have taken in this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, was introduced by the Minister of Enterprise Saskatchewan, if that's

the right title, the member from Silver Springs.

And the piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, suggests that the work that was traditionally done through the Labour Market Commission, the work that had brought results, the work that was appreciated by members on both sides of the fences, the organization that was doing a lot of good work and bringing results to and for Saskatchewan people, it's the minister's suggestion that this work would be replaced by the many boards of Enterprise Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Enterprise Saskatchewan and the entire apparatus that is Enterprise Saskatchewan, for all the talk that the members opposite give about their four-by-four plan to reduce the civil service, to lay off many people, to not fill vacancies, for all their talk about wanting smaller, leaner government time and time again, Mr. Speaker, we see the complete opposite. And based on many discussions I have had with people involved in Enterprise Saskatchewan, we've seen the construction of a large apparatus of bureaucracy, but we have not seen many results.

We've seen, I know in my office, Mr. Speaker, the Minister Responsible for Enterprise Saskatchewan has sent out many brochures touting the achievements of Enterprise Saskatchewan. But so far as I could tell, Mr. Speaker, these brochures that are provided, they have a very fetching photo of the minister with a football on Taylor field or some other football field in Saskatchewan — they have a glossy photo of the minister pretending that he's in the play, in the action — but when you listen to the people involved with Enterprise Saskatchewan, when you see the action that government has taken based on Enterprise Saskatchewan's recommendations, I think the output, the product of Enterprise Saskatchewan can seriously be called into question.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is no criticism in any way whatsoever to the people involved in Enterprise Saskatchewan by participating, providing their expertise, and speaking from their perspective. Many people that sit on these enterprise committees and these subcommittees and these sub-sub-subcommittees and these sub-sub-sub-subcommittees and this huge apparatus that had been made, many of them are great people who have done a tremendous amount of work in Saskatchewan in their various fields, whether that is in business or whether that's in the educational sector or whatever the topic may be. I'm not discrediting, Mr. Speaker, the work that those specific individuals are doing.

But my problem, Mr. Speaker, is that the apparatus and the approach that has been put in place by this government I don't think really allows these individuals who are well-intentioned, who have expertise, who are doing good work, I don't think it sets them up for success in the way that true consultation, true listening to people occurs.

And what we've seen time and time again, Mr. Speaker, on a variety of Enterprise Saskatchewan issues, we've seen recommendations being made by Enterprise Saskatchewan on these committees and we've seen no action on these recommendations. So the rhetoric, the political spin was from the Sask Party government when they came into government. They said, you can trust us because we're taking the politics out

of decision making. You can trust us, Mr. Speaker, because we're setting up this apparatus. We're setting up this thing called Enterprise Saskatchewan and these non-partisan individuals coming together and talking about a variety of issues, they will take the politics out of decision making.

Well, Mr. Speaker, those specific individuals, those specific individuals might take the politics out of the decision-making process. They might — and I have every reason to assume they are doing this — providing the best expertise, the best advice that they have based on their life experience and their knowledge. That is reasonable. That is a good thing to do.

But remember the changes that occurred with this Enterprise Saskatchewan. One time, if I recall correctly, the talk was, oh the minister's not going to be involved in Enterprise Saskatchewan. Well sure enough, one minister ends up being placed on Enterprise Saskatchewan. Not only one minister according to my recollection, Mr. Speaker, a second minister was put on Enterprise Saskatchewan.

So this whole process, this whole façade of nonpartisan decision making, Mr. Speaker, there's politicians at the table, there's politicians calling the shot. So time and time again we see examples where they're saying one thing, they're saying trust us, please just trust us on this issue because we're setting up Enterprise Saskatchewan; this is our silver bullet that will make the world a better place, to make Saskatchewan continue to prosper and do well. But, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing time and time again the advice given by the government, given to the government on issues is . . . either there's politicians at the table giving the advice or the decisions are ignored by politicians.

So some of the examples that are given, there's a recommendation about school closures, that school closures not occur. Well, Mr. Speaker, despite the Sask Party government saying, oh you can trust us on the issue of rural school closures and other school closures in the province; you can trust us on this one. Well, Mr. Speaker, we've seen the opposite. We've seen actions that don't demonstrate that they're listening to Enterprise Saskatchewan on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, on another issue that recommendations . . . Information being sought on flat tax, information being sought on tax harmonization, well, Mr. Speaker, instead of listening to the recommendations on tax harmonization, on the HST [harmonized sales tax], we have the Minister of Finance in a very public, in a very well covered event suggesting to individuals that the HST should be considered, that it is part of the solution. And that, Mr. Speaker, that was before suggesting the user fees in the health care system are also part of the solution for fixing health care.

The member from . . . the Government House Leader asked me what the suggestions by the Minister of Finance that user fees in the health care system and that the HST, bringing that into Saskatchewan is a good thing, what that has to do about these Bills. Well, Mr. Speaker, it ties directly, it ties centrally to the issue of trust. If you have members opposite, if you have the senior cabinet ministers in that government opening the door to user fees in health care even though they said that wasn't part of the discussion, if you have senior members of the government, the Minister of Finance suggesting that the HST is a good thing

to do, if this is what they're suggesting . . .

The Speaker: — Why is the Deputy House Leader on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Point of order, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Member may state his point of order.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — The member opposite . . . Mr. Speaker, we've been listening, listening patiently to the member opposite and waiting and waiting and waiting for that member to get to remarks with respect to *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*, which is the Act that's under discussion right now. And I would encourage the member to actually make his comments with respect to that Act.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite is contending that the speech has no reflection upon the Bill in front of us, Mr. Speaker. I think if you carefully review the wording that there have been many references back to the Bill throughout his speech, and he's using comparisons of activities of the government in comparison to the lack of consultation on this Bill as well. Now, Mr. Speaker, I would ask that you review the record and bring back your decision based on whether or not there's been references back to the Bill throughout his speech. Thank you.

The Speaker: — Order. I've heard the member's point of order and the response by the Opposition House Leader. And I will make this comment that over the period of time, debate in the Assembly on numerous occasions has allowed for a broader debate. But at the same time, there's still the requirement to address the issue at hand. And so I'd ask the member from Saskatoon Massey Place to deal with Bill No. 106, the Labour Market Commission board.

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps since . . . I'm happy the members opposite are listening to this speech. Simply because they do not like the content, Mr. Speaker, simply because the content has struck a nerve, it does not make the comments inappropriate.

To recap, Mr. Speaker, the consultation, the type of consultation that occurred through the Labour Market Commission was a solid type of consultation. It was the type of consultation, Mr. Speaker, that listened to many groups. It was the type of consultation that brought people together from various backgrounds. People holding very different, differing views come together, talk about the issues at hand, talk about possible solutions to develop a plan, and then to implement a plan, Mr. Speaker. Through the Labour Market Commission, that was the type of consultation that was occurring.

My concern, Mr. Speaker, from members opposite, time and time again, Mr. Speaker, we have seen failed consultation. We've seen this pattern of failed consultation that all supports, Mr. Speaker, my belief that the type, the approach that the members opposite are taking to the labour market, the approach that they're taking through repealing Bill 106, because of the horrible track record we've seen in the areas of culture, in the areas of the environment, in the areas of municipal affairs, in

the areas of finance, in the areas of health, Mr. Speaker, based on the horrible track record we've seen by members opposite from a variety of ministers on a variety of fields, why is it any surprise, Mr. Speaker, that the minister responsible for this piece of legislation, 106, the Minister Responsible for Enterprise Saskatchewan, why should we expect him to get it right?

Why should we expect him to get it right, Mr. Speaker, when par for the course, when the expectation by the Premier to every minister is one of failed consultation? When the bar is set so low for consultation by all ministers in cabinet, why should we expect the minister to get it right on Bill No. 106? When the track record of every minister, Mr. Speaker, suggests that consultation has been absent, consultation has been inadequate, consultation has occurred after a fact, after an issue has been decided, after an issue has been shared with the public, to me, Mr. Speaker, when we see that track record across ministries . . .

In one ministry, Mr. Speaker, on the issue of SCN, we saw it not across ministries but we saw it across ministers. Not even multiple ministers could get it right, Mr. Speaker. So when the bar is set so low on the issue of consultation, when the rhetoric that we hear from members opposite is simply, trust me on this, I think we've set up a system, the Premier would suggest, through Enterprise Saskatchewan that listens to Saskatchewan people — well, Mr. Speaker, why should people in Saskatchewan believe that statement when the track record, when the evidence suggests across ministries, including the Minister of Enterprise who is responsible for Bill No. 106, why should we think that that claim could hold water? In my opinion, evidence would suggest the opposite.

So not only is there the great concern about the failed and inadequate and late consultation that so regularly occurs like clockwork with members opposite, but we also see a failure for them to actually say what they're going to do. And we've seen that with Enterprise Saskatchewan. This is another reason why, Mr. Speaker, I don't think members opposite can be trusted in their approach to the Labour Market Commission and their approach to Bill 106 and their approach to Enterprise Saskatchewan because the evidence that we've seen in the province is very different from what they've actually said.

They said they were taking politics out of the decision-making process. Well lo and behold, Mr. Speaker, two ministers end up on Enterprise Saskatchewan. They said they were going to listen to these sector committees, on these sub-sector committees, and these sub- sub- sub-sector committees, Mr. Speaker, but time and time again we see members opposite ignoring the recommendations that come from Enterprise Saskatchewan.

Another example that can be given is, a recommendation was given by Enterprise Saskatchewan to expand the grad retention program to master's and Ph.D. graduates. Recommendation is given, and what do we see, Mr. Speaker? Nothing. For time and time again, day after day in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, members on this side present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to expand the grad retention program to provide benefits to master's and Ph.D. graduates, but time and time again, Mr. Speaker, that petition, a petition of the

Saskatchewan people, a petition of the Saskatchewan students, falls on deaf ears.

[16:45]

So when members opposite say, well just trust me on this; we're setting up a system that allows good consultation, well I think time and time again across ministries we've seen failed consultation, we've seen inadequate consultation, we've seen flawed consultation, we've seen late consultation. When members opposite say, well just trust us; we're setting up a system, Mr. Speaker, that will ensure that we're taking the politics out of the decision-making process, well, Mr. Speaker, once again their actions don't match what they're saying.

We can't take them at their word when they say, just trust us on the Labour Market Commission; just trust us on Enterprise Saskatchewan; just trust us on our approach to employment here in the province. Because we see time and time again them saying one thing and then doing another. There's no consistency in the words that they put forward, the rhetoric they put forward, and their actions.

The example of the grad retention program, a very clear example where a recommendation is given, where individuals — grad students in the province, employers in the province, institutions, people involved in post-secondary education — recognize that master's and Ph.D. graduates are a central part of the economy, that if we want to do well in the years to come it only makes sense that we should be considering what role master's and Ph.D. graduates have in the labour market.

But instead, Mr. Speaker, and this is . . . And instead of listening to Enterprise Saskatchewan, the organization that is supposed to be replacing the Labour Market Commission, instead of listening to the advice — again by individuals that are talented, that are intelligent, that have a wealth of knowledge and experience, individuals that are providing good input, providing in many instances good advice to the minister — we see the Sask Party government choose to ignore that advice.

So again it's an approach of failed consultation. It's an approach where they say one thing and do another with respect to how they set up the institution that replaces the Labour Market Commission. And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker, as for a number of months, years now, that Enterprise Saskatchewan has existed, there was all the hype and the spin at the beginning about how this is a new way of doing business and so on, but we see, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government choosing to ignore those individuals.

And I think anecdotally what I've heard from some people involved with these different committees and sub-sector committees and sub- sub- sub-sector committees and this huge apparatus that the Sask Party government has created, is that many of the individuals are losing interest in the process. Many of the individuals who are in good faith providing their time, providing their expertise, individuals that are involved in Enterprise Saskatchewan in the various subcommittees are starting to scratch their heads and say, why exactly do I want to be involved if the advice that I give, if the advice that I was asked to give, the advice that I think is best on a particular issue

is simply being ignored by members opposite? If I'm here simply as a token representative of an organization, if I'm here to simply allow the Sask Party government to put up the guise of consultation and the facade of listening to people and doing what is best for the people of Saskatchewan, then there's probably better ways I could spend my time.

And I think that's what I've heard from some individuals in the process, and I think, increasingly as the track record of poor consultation, the track record of ignoring recommendations becomes more and more evident to everyone involved, it would not surprise me if more individuals began to share that opinion that the Sask Party government on this issue of saying that they'll listen to Enterprise Saskatchewan, saying that it is the new, great, amazing thing in the province, that it will allow everything to happen so well and smoothly, I think more and more people are just not simply trusting that kind of talk on this issue. They're not trusting that kind of talk and rhetoric because the actions of government members have been so different than what . . . The actions have been so different than the talk and the rhetoric on a variety of issues.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that members opposite so closely listened to my speech even if they didn't like it, Mr. Speaker. Just because they don't like it doesn't mean that it's not talking to the points that are of concern to Saskatchewan people. And if the advice and some of the comments that I raised, Mr. Speaker, ruffled some of their feathers and perhaps — given the point of order that was raised by the Deputy House Leader — if it has ruffled their feathers, Mr. Speaker, instead of simply popping up on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, that is simply a result of not having the patience to hear an idea developed and to hear all the evidence on their shortcomings and their failings in this area; instead of popping up at the nearest opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to suggest that the topics are not connected, when clearly they are so closely tied to the issue at hand, in the piece of legislation 106 because it talks about the issue of consultation and it talks about the issue of trust, I would encourage members opposite to do a bit of introspection.

I would encourage members opposite to look back on the promises that they made to Saskatchewan people, look back on the pledges they made about Labour Market Commission and about Enterprise Saskatchewan, about being a trustworthy government, about being a government that acts in the best interest of Saskatchewan people, about being a government that listens to Saskatchewan people.

And instead of, Mr. Speaker, simply lashing back through a point of order, when clearly the points are all related, pause for a second — pause for a second, I would ask them — and look at the areas, look at the rhetoric that has been spouted for so many months, for so many years now on this issue. And then look at the actions and look where they don't match up, look where what they have said all along is not coming to pass. Look where in the past there was an organization that was working well, that had input, that was a type of consultation and involved a variety of people and a variety of issues, and then look at what is being recommended to replace it. Look at what is being suggested will fill that gap. And, Mr. Speaker, we'll see an organization that increasingly is ignored by the minister, ignored by members of the cabinet.

And instead they've reverted back to their basic MO [modus operandi], which is simply to act according to whatever is convenient for the day, act whatever is convenient according to that second, and simply, Mr. Speaker, ignore the voices of concern, the voices of criticism. It's a very short-sighted approach. And it's the type of consultation, Mr. Speaker, that we have seen so regularly by members opposite.

I gave the examples of all the ministries where failed consultation is the norm. It's the expectation. You know, when the Premier, next time he revises his mandate letters that are given to ministers, he should almost state that . . . Well I think he needs to revise some of the expectations around consultation because based on the evidence we've seen, based on the actions that we've seen, it's almost as though a direction has come from the Premier that there should be no consultation, the decisions should be made in isolation, the decisions should be made by only a few as opposed to listening to the many.

So in wrapping up, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to this issue of consultation, when it comes to having a plan for the labour market, when it comes to having any type of plan in government, when it comes to acting responsibly, I don't think the Sask Party government can be trusted on that issue of listening to Saskatchewan people and acting in their best interests because evidence has suggested otherwise.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased to have been given the opportunity to speak to Bill 106. I know many of my colleagues share many of the same concerns on the issue of poor consultation and how this affects the various pieces of legislation that are put forward by ministers. So I know a good number of my colleagues will want to speak to Bill No. 106, *An Act to repeal The Labour Market Commission Act and respecting certain matters associated with that repeal*. I know they'll want to talk about the repeal, and they'll certainly want to talk about what is the minister's and the Sask Party government's prescription to fill that gap and hole. So at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 106. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 106, *The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 107

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 107 — *The Weed Control Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Northeast.

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, once again it is truly a pleasure and an honour and a privilege for me to have the opportunity of figuring into this debate on behalf of the fine people of Regina Northeast. Mr. Speaker, this is an

interesting Bill at, I suppose, at the best of times. It's an Act, Bill 107, *An Act respecting Prohibited, Noxious and Nuisance Weeds and to make a consequential amendment to The Municipal Board Act*.

Mr. Speaker, I think this is an ongoing issue in rural Saskatchewan wherever you travel. I know that, talking to farmers and having been in the industry myself for 20-some years and still keeping in touch with what goes on in that industry, I can say that farmers across this great province of ours all strive to clean their land and make sure that the land is free of weeds as much as possible. And in more modern times certainly the chemical has helped them. In the older days when my grandfather and my father were farming, I think that they, you know, the good land husbandry, good control of the weeds was done through proper cultivation and management of the land. In today's world, where we've moved more to a continuous cropping mode, there's become a greater dependency upon chemical to control those same weeds.

And I think for those of us who've been in the industry and have had some experience at this fully realize that the need to control those weeds is probably paramount because once they get away from you, it's like anything else — once it gets away from you, it's very hard to pull it back. It takes a lot more time, takes a lot more concentration, and a lot more effort, and of course a lot more money to be able to control those kind of weeds. So I think it's fair to say that farmers are very much aware of the issue, and wherever you travel it's probably one of the topics of conversation when you talk about land management and farming and agricultural husbandry.

It's also been an issue I suppose that's caused often friction between neighbours. In some cases, what one will see as a bad weed and certainly not part of his farming operation may not be seen so negatively by a neighbour, and therefore it will create some problems. And I think that's been the experience of the past we've seen, where the control of weeds has become an issue between neighbours, and perhaps even in some cases created some hard feelings. And I hope that, Mr. Speaker, that's something that would not be first and foremost in the agriculture industry, but rather the desire to clean the land, the desire to ensure that we have a clean province and free of weeds that fall within the category of this Bill.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's safe to say that if you travel throughout Saskatchewan today and talk to farmers, you'll find there's a greater awareness and a greater desire by farmers to ensure that their own land and the land that they farm, whether it be the land they own or whether it be land perhaps that they rent, but to ensure that that land is kept clean and as free from weeds as absolutely possible and that they do so with a great deal of pride. And they do so with the ability to be able to talk to their friends and neighbours and look at their fields and say look, there's a field that I've had a particular problem with this weed over the number of years, but I've been concentrating my efforts and concentrating my strategy on dealing with this particular field, and now I'm seeing the results. I'm seeing that this weed is certainly not as prominent as it once was.

And to some degree there's been assistance with the advent of chemicals and the science that goes into these chemicals and the time and efforts put into it by the chemical companies to

develop chemicals that are more specifically designed to control certain weeds and do so quite effectively. And we see that.

And I can say for myself . . . And I wish I would have had the opportunity to approach this individual before I had the opportunity to rise here today and get his permission to use his name. Because one of my neighbours on the farm there, a gentleman I've known for many years, in fact we went to high school together, is I think a great farmer. He does a wonderful, wonderful job of looking after his land. He does a very good job of managing that land to maximize its potential, maximize its yields. But he does so in a way that ensures that that land is clean and free of weeds.

And he's very fussy and is very — and I give him credit for it — he's very careful about ensuring that there's no outbreak of weed that's difficult to control or perhaps a weed that's going to cause some problems into the future. He does a very good job of managing that land, managing the crop that he rotates throughout his farm. He's into a continuous cropping rotation, and we need . . . Mr. Speaker, I'll move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Northeast has moved adjournment of debate on Bill 107, *The Weed Control Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the House do now adjourn for committees at 7 o'clock.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that this Assembly do adjourn in order to allow for the proceedings of committee work at 7 o'clock. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

Corrigendum

On page 4849 of *Hansard*, No. 45A, Thursday, April 15, 2010, right column, the seventh paragraph, references to “Alena Young” should read “Aleana Young.”

We apologize for this error.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Wall	4879
McCall	4879
Morgan	4879
Quennell.....	4879
Ottenbreit	4879
Broten	4880
Chartier	4880

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Harper	4880
Higgins	4880
Junor	4880
Forbes	4881
Vermette	4881
Broten	4881
Furber	4881
Morin	4881
Iwanchuk	4881
Quennell.....	4882
Wotherspoon	4882
Chartier	4882

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

World Hemophilia Day	
Schriemer	4882
Local Students Win Battle of the Books	
McCall	4882
Innovative Emergency Room Unveiled	
Ross	4883
Organ Donor Awareness Month	
Junor	4883
Constituents Part of Huskies' Victories	
Elhard	4883
Exercising Judgment	
Morin	4884
New Television Series Coming to Saskatchewan	
Stewart.....	4884

QUESTION PERIOD

Status of Member	
Yates.....	4884
Wall.....	4884
Support for Film and Television Industry	
Chartier	4886
Duncan	4886
911 Response	
Belanger.....	4887
Huyghebaert.....	4887
Health Care Issues	
Junor	4888
McMorris.....	4888

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

Weekes	4889
--------------	------

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 104 — <i>The Summary Offences Procedure Amendment Act, 2009 (No. 2)</i>	
Wotherspoon	4889
Harrison (referral to committee).....	4892
Bill No. 114 — <i>The Small Claims Amendment Act, 2009</i>	
<i>Loi de 2009 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur les petites créances</i>	
Trew	4892
Harrison (referral to committee).....	4896

Bill No. 125 — <i>The Crown Minerals Amendment Act, 2009</i>	
Forbes	4896
Bill No. 105 — <i>The SaskEnergy Amendment Act, 2009</i>	
McCall	4899
Bill No. 106 — <i>The Labour Market Commission Repeal Act</i>	
Brotten	4902
Harrison (point of order)	4908
Yates (point of order)	4908
The Speaker (point of order)	4908
Bill No. 107 — <i>The Weed Control Act</i>	
Harper	4910
MOTIONS	
Substitution on Committees	
D'Autremont	4892
Corrigendum	4912

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