



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Don Toth  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Dwain Lingenfelter

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
D'Autremont, Dan	SP	Cannington
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
Gantfoer, Rod	SP	Melfort
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. 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
Lingenfelter, Dwain	NDP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Morin, Sandra	NDP	Regina Walsh Acres
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottobreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Quennell, Frank	NDP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Schriemer, Joceline	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Taylor, Len	NDP	The Battlefords
Tell, 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
Wyant, Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest
Yates, Kevin	NDP	Regina Dewdney

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Assembly I would like to introduce, and there are many introductions obviously that will be made today, but I'd like to introduce Pastor Femi Ogunrinde of the Lighthouse to All Nations Church and a distinguished group of University of Regina students, international students from Nigeria that join us today, Mr. Speaker, in your gallery. These are among the about 4,000 international students that we have studying in the province of Saskatchewan. And we certainly wish all of them very well, and we're absolutely delighted to have these students join us in your gallery and in the Saskatchewan Assembly today.

Mr. Speaker. I would ask and invite all members to join me in welcoming these international students from Nigeria studying at the University of Regina to the Saskatchewan Assembly.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming the international students from Nigeria to the legislature today. As they observe the parliamentary process and learn about, a bit more about Saskatchewan, the province that they're studying while they're here in Saskatchewan. So I wish them all the best in their studies and thank them for visiting us today.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to make an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today Tourism Regina held its very first Tourism Advocacy Day here at the legislature. Now tourism translates into dollars and employment for Saskatchewan — \$1.6 billion annually to our economy and over 62,000 jobs, Mr. Speaker — all of which strengthen our economy and keep Saskatchewan moving forward.

Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly and to the people of Saskatchewan, I'd like to introduce some of the good people from Tourism Saskatchewan

who are here, others accompanying them. They are seated in your gallery.

Ms. Lynda Haverstock, president and CEO [chief executive officer] is here; Ms. Candace Phelps, vice president. And as well, Tourism Saskatchewan is governed by 15-member board of directors, a number of whom are able to join us today. And they include Carey Baker is the Chair of the board from Unity; Mr. Leon Brin from Regina; Mark Caswell of Maple Creek; Susan Schigol from Meath Park; Randy Goulden from Yorkton; Jasmine DeBlois of Willow Bunch; Joe Chad of Regina; and Brenda Sherring from Regina, but formerly of Yorkton, I'm told, and proud of it.

Tourism Saskatchewan is also supported by president's task teams and advisory councils, and some of these good people were able to join us as well. Welcome to Ray Ahenakew, to Bill Shurniak, to Jim Hopson, Ruth Smillie, Marty Klyne, John Treleaven, Shann Gowan, Jim Hodges, Janet Olsen, Craig Blackmur, Morris McLachlan, Kerry Sapp, Marla Preston, Bryan Tudor, Claire Bélanger-Parker, Denise Stroeder, Roger Vogelsang, Hal Stupnikoff, and Kay Koot.

We also have several Tourism Saskatchewan staff members here with us as well, including Jonathon Potts, Tracy Breher, Kim Dumelie, Ian McGilp, Carol Lumb, Bonnie Baird, Diane Cohoon, Lynne Kennedy, and Mark England. Mr. Speaker, these people help folks from outside of Saskatchewan realize what a great place our province is and why they ought to be here as visitors. I'd like to thank them and ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming Tourism Saskatchewan to their Legislative Assembly today. The opposition also had the opportunity to meet as part of Tourism Saskatchewan's first annual, I trust annual, lobby day, and we were very pleased to hear some of the successes and some of the challenges that Tourism Saskatchewan faces.

I'd like to say hello to Dr. Lynda Haverstock, who is the president and CEO of Tourism Saskatchewan; Carey Baker, who is the Chair of the board; and all the staff, the directors, and task teams that are here today. Thank you so much for coming and sharing your knowledge with us, and I know that that will help build better public policy for the people of Saskatchewan. So thanks for everything. And with that I'd like us all to welcome Tourism Saskatchewan to their Legislative Assembly.

While I'm still on my feet, I would like to also introduce one of my constituency assistants and a good friend, Chris Gallaway. That would be the west gallery. I'd like everyone to welcome Chris to his Legislative Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats, the Minister of Agriculture.

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr.

Speaker, to you and through you, I'd like to introduce a couple of guests here today, George and Esther Haas. They're from Langenburg, Saskatchewan, just recently retired from farming. Very interested in the political world here in Saskatchewan, been very good supporters of mine. I'd ask everyone to welcome them to their legislature.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm still on my feet, I'd like to also introduce Doug Steele who is the reeve of the RM [rural municipality] of Gull Lake and also a SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] director, and has been very good to work with on the agriculture front. And I'd ask all members to also welcome Doug to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Trew:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I feel like I won the lottery, bouncing up and down because I'm so excited to have the opportunity to join the minister opposite as he was welcoming the people from Nigeria.

The member from Saskatoon Eastview and I had the good fortune four years ago to spend some time in that beautiful nation, Nigeria. We were in Abuja for a conference. But we also got up to Zaria — I think I'm pronouncing that correctly, Zaria — where we witnessed a durbar, which was one of the most fascinating things I have ever witnessed in my entire life. Mr. Speaker, we also had the good fortune of sharing a meal with then President Obasanjo, and what a delight that was. He was a most interesting individual who gave a great speech. And we really felt welcomed to Nigeria.

So it's really nice that after our visit to Nigeria, so many Nigerians would come back and pay a return visit. I welcome you to Saskatchewan. I hope that everything you're here for — your studies and everything else — turns out really, really well. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Let's welcome the Nigerians.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Humboldt, the Minister of Education.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour for me today to stand on my feet to welcome to you and through you to all members of the Assembly on behalf of the member from Melfort, a very, very great school group from LeRoy, Saskatchewan. LeRoy used to be my hometown, so I know many of the students and have known them for many years. And without singling out one student, I've held her many times as a baby.

So we have nine students, nine grade 11 and 12 students from LeRoy, Saskatchewan. They're accompanied by their teachers, Audrey Severson and Danielle Bilodeau, as well as three chaperones, Ann Block, Bev Schloendorf, and someone that has been my very, very close friend and we don't have enough time for one another that I wish that we had, and that is Shelly Bernauer. So it is so great to see all of you at your Assembly.

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

**Ms. Atkinson:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Joining in our gallery today are two constituents from Saskatoon Nutana. I want to welcome to the Assembly, Jim Hodges, who is part of the tourism group. Jim owns Roadside Attractions in Saskatoon, and he is responsible for bringing many cultural events to the city of Saskatoon, particularly the Teachers Credit Union Place — the old Centennial Auditorium — as well as the Broadway Theatre. So welcome, Jim, to the Assembly.

The other person I want to introduce is joining my colleague from Riversdale. I want to introduce Chris Gallaway. Chris originally hails from Estevan. His grandmother, Marguerite Gallaway, is well known to many members of the Assembly as she has spent a lot of time involved in the arts and culture in the province of Saskatchewan.

Chris not only works for the member from Riversdale sometimes, but he also is Saskatoon Nutana's constituency president. He serves on our provincial executive. And we think it's hugely important to recruit young people into our party, and Chris is doing a fantastic job as president of our constituency association and representing young people on the provincial executive of the New Democratic Party. So welcome, Chris, to the Assembly.

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

**Mr. Elhard:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to the assembled guests today, I'd like to introduce constituent and friend, Doug Steele, the reeve of the RM of Gull Lake. I know he was introduced previously, but we rarely get the constituents from Cypress Hills here, so I want to make sure that I get my greetings on the record.

Mr. Steele is very involved locally not just as the reeve, in a variety of other endeavours, and serves as the SARM representative on a number of provincial organizations. And we want to recognize the service of Mr. Steele to his constituents and to the province through his many endeavours. And so welcome to Mr. Steele.

And, Mr. Speaker, while on my feet I also want to recognize Mark Caswell, who was introduced as part of the Tourism Saskatchewan group earlier today. Now Mark serves as the administrator for the town of Maple Creek. And his entire life was consumed by the flood event that happened in Maple Creek, and he gave tremendous service to the people of the community, to the Government of Saskatchewan in terms of communicating the needs of the people back to us. And I just want to acknowledge Mark's effort on behalf of the constituents in the community of Maple Creek. And I'm sure that a day being in the legislature as part of the Tourism Saskatchewan endeavour is almost like a holiday for him. So Mark, enjoy your day. And welcome to your legislature, both gentlemen.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — It's with great honour, Mr. Speaker, through you, to you and through you to introduce a class of grade 7 students from Stanley Mission, from the high school with their chaperone. And also their teacher, Isabelle Hardlotte, has brought down 12 students, grade 7 students. I just want to say tansi and welcome to your chaperones, your work with the

teacher accompanying them. And it is an honour to have you here to see a process and to understand. You've travelled a long way. From way up north to come to Regina is not always easy, but I commend your efforts to educate our young people how important this legislature is, how important the job and the role that we, as your representatives, serve you.

You are honoured. We are pleased to have you here, and I just want to say to you, enjoy. Learn. Ask questions while you're here. Your dreams, they're there for you. Inspire yourself. We all are honoured that you're here. We're pleased that you're here. You are ambassadors to the North. Thank you for coming. I'd just like to say welcome to your legislative. Tēniki.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the risk of missing some, I would like to join with others who have introduced the group from Tourism Saskatchewan, Dr. Haverstock, the board, and members of this specific task force and thank them for their work on behalf of the government.

I'd also like to welcome an old friend, Pastor Femi, and his group of students who have joined us from Nigeria.

[13:45]

But I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, if I can, to introduce to you and, through you, to all members of the Assembly someone who's very active in my hometown, a constituent of mine, a former president of the chamber of commerce, and also someone who helps out when we need some help in the constituency office serving the needs of the people in Swift Current constituency, Shauna Fjaagesund. She comes to us from Thunder Creek, but we don't hold that against her, and she's doing a great job in Swift Current. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join those that have welcomed Pastor Femi to his Legislative Assembly. Lighthouse to All Nations of course is located in the great riding of Regina Elphinstone-Centre. And I know, as you know, Mr. Speaker, that Pastor Femi can really bring the word. He delivered a tremendous eulogy once upon a time for the departed Gerri Carroll, the founder of Souls Harbour. So it's really good to see Pastor Femi here.

And I'd also like to extend through him greetings to Sope, his daughter, who served very ably in this Legislative Assembly as a Page for a number of years. So if all members could join me in welcoming Pastor Femi again to his legislature, but I'd also extend greetings to his daughter Sope. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Furber:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's infrequent the opportunity that I get to introduce somebody who is from Prince Albert, let alone somebody that lived across the street from me for 15 years. So I'd like to, if I could, introduce, at

great risk, Sue Schigol who's part of the delegation here with Tourism Saskatchewan.

Sue has, in her previous career, succeeded ably in what was previously a man's profession, so she knows something of toughness. Her husband is a great hunter and used to walk up the stairs at our house with his hunting garb still on, full of blood, and my mom used to scream. He was good with a rifle, but I would argue that Sue could've chased the deer down and wrestled it to the ground herself without the help of her husband. So they are now entrepreneurs and work in the outfitting industry, and she's a great ambassador for that industry and works very hard on their behalf. So I'd just like everybody to welcome her to the legislature today.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again to present petitions on behalf of the people of Wawota and area who are very opposed to the closure of the beds in Wawota Deer View Lodge. Many of them have family members who have been placed outside the community, and they're waiting to come, those people are waiting to come home to be with family and friends. They think it's unfair and dangerous to separate members of the family and to make them drive, family members drive so far to see their loved ones in their last days. The petition reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to stop the closure of these beds.

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

This is another 225 signatures from the people of Wapella, Kelso, Pilot Butte, Wawota, Moosomin, Rocanville, Maryfield, Alameda, Weyburn, Kennedy, Whitewood, Langbank, Esterhazy, Fleming, Welwyn, and Regina. I so present.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of eliminating poverty in Saskatchewan. And we know that freedom from poverty is an enshrined human right by the United Nations and that all citizens are entitled to social and economic security. And we know that Saskatchewan's income gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow, and now one in five children in Saskatchewan live in deepening poverty. I'd like to read the prayer:

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan act as quickly as possible to develop an effective and sustainable poverty elimination strategy for the benefit of all Saskatchewan citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Lumsden, Saskatoon, Langham, Regina, and we have some

from P.A. [Prince Albert], Dalmeny, and Imperial. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition in support of fairness for Saskatchewan students. A new Throne Speech yet no fix to the problems with the graduate retention program. 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 individuals who signed this petition are from the city of Saskatoon. 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 with respect to potash in Saskatchewan because Saskatchewan has a thousand-year supply of the world's highest quality potash — 53 per cent of world supply — but the people of Saskatchewan are the owners of this very strategic resource and deserve to receive the maximum benefit from its development, mining, processing, and sale. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Saskatchewan Party government to publicly demand the following terms and conditions on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan of any foreign owners bidding to take over PCS: to ensure Saskatchewan people receive the maximum net benefit, a golden share and preferred shares so that the public participates in both the corporation's future decision making and its profitability, public guarantees on a strengthened head office presence, support for Canpotex, long-term targets for potash production and employment, Saskatchewan representation on the board of directors, public agreements to ensure no loss of royalties, public commitments to meet world-class standards of corporate social responsibility, and an independent potash review commission with the power to monitor and enforce each and all of these terms and conditions.

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

Mr. Speaker, the petition today is signed by the good folks from Saskatoon and Colonsay. I so present.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present petitions as I have each day in this Assembly for over the past year, to present petitions on behalf of concerned citizens as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances.

They allude to the two consecutive deficit budgets, and they note the billions of dollars of debt growth ongoing underneath this government, actually projected by this government's own budget documents to grow by 55 per cent or \$4.2 billion by 2014. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

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.

The petitions signed here today are signed by residents of Regina. I so submit.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Canadian Patient Safety Week

**Ms. Schriemer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask that all members of this House join me in recognizing November 1st to the 5th as Canadian Patient Safety Week in our nation. The Canadian Patient Safety Institute undertakes many initiatives to ensure the safety of patients throughout Canada. Patient Safety Week is one of their most successful efforts. This program's goal is to increase awareness of patient safety issues and aims to share information about best practices in patient safety with health care providers, patients, and their families.

The theme of this year's Canadian Patient Safety Week is Ask. Listen. Talk. which seeks to promote the importance of communication between and among patients, clients, consumers, and providers and applies to all health care settings. This initiative rests upon the following mantra: "Don't just think it, say it. Good healthcare starts with good communication. Don't hesitate to talk openly."

The purpose of this week is to strive to ensure every Canadian in need of health care can be confident that the care they receive is the safest in the world. Our government remains committed to a publicly funded and administered health care system in Saskatchewan.

Canadian Patient Safety Week is part of our promise to deliver the best health care available to the people of Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame Inductees

**Mr. Taylor:** — Mr. Speaker, this summer the history and heritage of baseball was again celebrated in the town of Battleford as friends and fans joined together for the 26th annual Saskatchewan Baseball Hall of Fame induction dinner.

Individual inductees included the late Ned Andreoni of Moose Jaw, the late Ab Bidart of North Battleford, Keith Czemerer of Hudson Bay, the late Norman French of Delisle, Peter Fylyma of Saskatoon, the late Bennie Griggs of Saskatoon, Hugh Huck of Regina, Robert McLane of Liberty, Jay-Dell Mah of Lloydminster, Gary Nordal of Bulyea, Doug Schultz of Watrous, Dennis Williams of Central Butte, and the late Roberto Zayas of Moose Jaw.

The Fulda Flyers were inducted in the team category, and the Millard family of Canwood were inducted in the family category. And Wayne Hoffman of North Battleford was presented with the Dave Shury Cup in recognition of his extraordinary efforts in support of the museum in recent years.

The highlight of the night for many, however, was the honorary induction of Jane Shury, the current president and CEO of the Hall of Fame and museum and wife of the Hall of Fame founder, the late Dave Shury. Jane of course is loved by everyone, and everyone knows how hard she works to keep the astonishing Hall of Fame and museum afloat. I call on all members to join me in congratulating the inductees and the association's board of directors for continuing to support Saskatchewan's wonderful baseball heritage.

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

#### **Moose Jaw's Halloween Food Drive**

**Mr. Michelson:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Sunday on Halloween evening, the good people of Moose Jaw opened their hearts and their pantries for the Better Together food drive in support of the Moose Jaw Food Bank. The food drive collected more than 9,000 pounds of food over last year's record. And yesterday, after all the sorting was complete, 41 pallets of food was delivered to the local food bank.

Mr. Speaker, this event is proving to be more and more successful year after year. Terri Smith, manager of the Moose Jaw and District Food Bank, was thoroughly impressed and enthused by the enthusiasm and the charitable spirit of the Moose Jaw citizens.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the people of Moose Jaw just keep on giving and this year's record-setting 52,000 pounds of food marks quite a significant increase in the total amount donated to ensure our fellow citizens do not go hungry. I'd like to recognize the Hillcrest Apostolic Church for their organization of the event and the hundreds of volunteers who helped make this year's food drive the best yet.

As food banks throughout the province operate their own food drives, I encourage the people of Saskatchewan to donate to this worthy cause. Thank you to the organizers, the volunteers, and the citizens of Moose Jaw for another successful food drive.

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

#### **Royal Canadian Mounted Police Heritage Centre**

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the

RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] Heritage Centre here in Regina is a national treasure. Yesterday we heard the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley send out birthday wishes for the 125th anniversary of RCMP Depot Division here. This is where our country's Mounties are born, and the opposition gladly joins in this celebration. In fact the member from Regina Rosemont had a chance to take in every one of these celebratory events.

But we were alarmed to hear that the federal Conservative government, of whom 13 members hail from our province, cannot get it together enough to ensure this iconic institution has what it needs to properly share the story of the RCMP with visitors from around the world.

This cultural flagship proudly tells the story of the RCMP, but it also has a huge economic impact on this province, estimated at \$54 million in Regina alone. It should not be forced to go around with a begging cup and operate on a skeleton staff with less than adequate resources to attract, engage, and educate visitors.

This Sask Party government and this Premier need to do more than hand out platitudes and blow out birthday candles. The Sask Party government needs to step it up in securing support from their federal Conservative buddies and in doing their part to ensure the RCMP Heritage Centre is on strong financial footing. This is important to the RCMP, Mr. Speaker, to our country, to our province, and to this city, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Yorkton. Pardon me, Saskatoon Northwest. Order. Pardon me, Saskatoon Northwest.

#### **Islamic History Month**

**Mr. Wyant:** — On October 25th, 2007, parliament officially declared October as Islamic History Month in Canada. This was to recognize the important contributions of Canadian Muslims to our country's society and focus on the cultural diversity of Canadian Muslim society. It's important that all Canadians are aware of the importance of learning about one another to foster greater social cohesion.

This last weekend, Islamic Association of Saskatchewan hosted a banquet commemorating this month. The focal point for this year's banquet was the environment. This event was originated and sponsored by the Canadian Islamic Congress. The CIC [Canadian Islamic Congress] is Canada's largest national non-profit and wholly independent Islamic association. It is an exclusive Canadian non-government organization with no affiliation to any group, body, ideology, or government. CIC is an independent voice of Canadian Muslim, Sunni and Shia men and women, youth and seniors.

[14:00]

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to also recognize the Islamic Association of Saskatchewan. Since 1970, the IAS [Islamic Association of Saskatchewan] has been the biggest Muslim organization in Saskatchewan, serving over 5,000 Muslims in Saskatoon. The IAS offers religious education and social services to its

members, as well as information about Islam and Muslims to all people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize all members of Saskatchewan's various Islamic societies. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Leadership

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as most of this House is probably aware, late yesterday the *National Post* and *The Globe and Mail* reported that Investment Canada had given tentative approval, signalling the go-ahead to BHP and their hostile takeover of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan.

It is a pivotal time in our province's history. We need leadership we can trust and count on, and unfortunately we are not getting it from this Saskatchewan Party government. Mr. Speaker, to use a football analogy, it's third and goal. The longest and most important yard is on the line for our province.

The people of Saskatchewan have put their trust in the Premier, and time and time again he has failed to deliver. On the big issues, he certainly talks a big game and pays plenty of lip service. However when it comes to delivering, he comes up short.

The Premier's performance in regards to potash has been weak. Ottawa knows it, and obviously foreign investors have noticed it as well. Leadership is about showing up in clutch situations. It's about how you perform when it matters most. Instead the Premier has continually overpromised and underdelivered.

Brad Wall has proven that he is incapable of managing complex files . . .

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I just ask the member to remember they are to refer to members by their constituency or title.

**Ms. Higgins:** — I apologize, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has proven that he is incapable of managing complex files. He doesn't know how to negotiate with large corporations or the federal government, and the people of Saskatchewan are paying the price, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Silver Springs.

### Gold Medal Plates Olympic Fundraiser

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, where in Saskatchewan would you find wild boar belly, Yukon Gold potato gnocchi, foie gras, crème brûlée, braised pig cheek, and Prairie Sensation apple perogies? In Saskatoon, of course, at Saskatchewan's first ever Gold Medal Plates cooking competition, a fundraiser to support Canadian athletes.

Members from Saskatoon Southeast, Saskatoon Northwest, Indian Head-Milestone, and I were most pleased to join 500 people who attended this record-breaking fundraising event. As event Chair Zeba Ahmad said, the city and province love to put on a show and show the country what we can do, as she announced the nearly \$400,000 that was raised to support Canada's Olympic athletes, surpassing the \$300,000 mark set in Vancouver.

Cameco CEO Jerry Grandey served as the event Co-Chair. Catriona Le May Doan was the MC [master of ceremonies]. Fourteen Olympic athletes were in attendance. Musicians Jim Cuddy, Barney Bentall, and Colin James entertained the crowd, as did comedian Ron James. Mr. Speaker, I even saw one member of the press gallery there supporting her favourite chef, Malcolm Craig.

In the end, Weczeria Food & Wine's Dan Walker from Saskatoon took home the Gold Medal Plate and is off to Kelowna, British Columbia in February for the national competition. As Zeba Ahmad concluded, so many people from Saskatoon and Saskatchewan went to the Olympics. We had a great pavilion there and we are still carrying on that momentum.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join with me in congratulating the Saskatchewan Gold Medal Plates team.

### QUESTION PERIOD

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

#### Proposed Sale of Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, it now appears that the efforts of the Premier to lobby the Prime Minister against the hostile takeover by BHP of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, that that lobbying effort has failed.

My question to the Premier is this: does the Premier now admit that his lack of determination in getting a meeting with the Prime Minister and the lack of lobbying with the 13 Conservative MPs [Member of Parliament] here in Saskatchewan has led very directly to a failed effort to stop the takeover of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, on October 12th the members of the opposition, led by the member that just spoke in this Assembly, gave up on Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. They outlined a plan where they were negotiating the terms of surrender to this takeover, Mr. Speaker. At that time I said that no should still be considered as an option.

We worked through all of the information, did all of the due diligence, did the analysis, and said no, Mr. Speaker. And then we built an alliance in support with other premiers across this country, with business leaders across this country, Mr. Speaker, with business interests across this country. We built that case in favour of Saskatchewan and in favour of Canada.

We don't have an answer yet from the federal government. That member is prepared to give up again. Not this side of the



House, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to stand for Saskatchewan. We encourage the member to join with us.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, this is yet another example of the Premier's promise to overdeliver and now he is underdelivering and failing. And worse than that, I have never seen a Premier, Danny Williams for sure, blame the opposition for his lack of success, ever. That's a new . . . Blaming the opposition for the lack of leadership in defending Saskatchewan potash is a new height of being ridiculous.

Here's a Premier who has failed to deliver on \$800 million on resource revenue, failed on isotope reactor, failed the farmers who were flooded out this summer, and now has failed on potash. Can the Premier admit today that that lack of leadership and weakness is very different than a Danny Williams or a Premier of Ontario who fought for the auto industry? And will he admit today that it's his weakness, not his caucus, not the MPs, but the Leader of the Sask Party, our Premier, who has failed the province when it comes to protecting our potash?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, given media reports, the Leader of the Opposition has given up on Saskatchewan's case for no, in this instance. At this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, in fact today we communicated again with the federal government. And we let them know that in other instances of free market economies, where officials have actually recommended that a takeover be approved, that the government, the . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I'd ask members to allow the Premier to respond to the question.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, there is examples where officials in other free market companies have recommended yes to a takeover, where the political representatives have actually overturned that recommendation and said no.

In 2008 in New Zealand, ironically, the Canada Pension Plan wanted to invest 40 per cent in the Auckland International Airport in New Zealand. Officials said yes. The elected officials in that country said no, it was not in their strategic interest.

Mr. Speaker, rather than playing politics, that member would be wise to join with this side of the House and join with the people of this province and say, it's not too late for the federal government to do the right thing. But they're happier, Mr. Speaker, to play politics. And you know what, Mr. Speaker? I think the people of the province of Saskatchewan know what side of the House serves their interest. It's certainly not that side, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, let me make one thing clear with the Premier. I haven't given up on the economy of Saskatchewan or potash, but I, along with tens of

thousands of people, have given up on the Premier of this province for failing to deliver. That's who we've given up on.

The fact of the matter is, the fact of the matter is he, the Premier, has lost the battle with the Prime Minister. And all his special relationships with the Prime Minister, and all of the let's give peace a chance are out the window as he fails to protect the potash in this province.

My question to the Premier is this: given the fact that Tony Clement will likely tonight or early tomorrow morning make the announcement that the sale of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan will go through to BHP, can the Premier tell us now what his plan is to protect the taxpayers and the people of this province through legislation? When will he introduce it? When will the royalties change to make us whole on the losses we will take as a result of this? And on what day will we see that brought into the House? Because November 18th is a drop-dead date, and we need to have an answer.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, that plan will be unveiled to the people of Saskatchewan just as soon as we have the final decision from the federal government. They have not yet made their decision, Mr. Speaker. It's the second time that the member opposite has given up on Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that's not going to be the case on this side of the House — not today and not ever, notwithstanding what we hear from the federal government, Mr. Speaker. One important point might be made to the federal government which is this: should they decide to say yes with conditions to this deal, that if they are . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The member from Athabasca will come to order and allow the Premier to respond to the question from the Leader of the Opposition.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Should the federal government decide to say yes with conditions to this deal, I think it would be important for us obviously to have a contingency plan with respect to tax instruments for the province to protect the revenues of the province of Saskatchewan.

But even before we do that, Mr. Speaker, I think we need to send a signal to the federal government. If they intend on approving this deal with conditions, Mr. Speaker, then if they want to make this deal, then they can indemnify the province of Saskatchewan against the costs. Mr. Speaker, if they approve this, this will be Ottawa's deal, not Saskatchewan's deal. And the people of Saskatchewan are not to be on the hook for it, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Furber:** — To quote an ex-NDP Finance minister, Mr. Speaker, roll over and tickle my tummy, Stephen Harper. It's absolutely abhorrent. It's a joke. Mr. Speaker, time and time

again, this Premier has promised big things for Saskatchewan people and failed to deliver — clean coal, carbon capture, a nuclear reactor, a nuclear isotope reactor, a domed stadium, and a fair deal for non-renewable resources. Now we have to add to that a better deal for potash. It's another case where he has overpromised and underdelivered. So I have a simple question, Mr. Speaker. Why can't he get anything done?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the position of the . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The position of the Government of Saskatchewan is well known all across Canada, and commentators are weighing in on this. *The Globe and Mail* has indicated that, and I quote:

Brad Wall's fight to stop the takeover of Potash Corp of Saskatchewan will not be in vain. The Saskatchewan Premier has shown that this country can drive a much harder bargain with foreign acquirers than the federal government has dared to [try] in the past.

And I would add to that, Mr. Speaker, that when the NDP [New Democratic Party] had the file, when the Leader of the Opposition had this file . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The member from Regina Rosemont, allow the minister to finish his response.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — The NDP had this file, when the Leader of the Opposition had this file, what did he do for the people of Saskatchewan? He came over to the opposition, he lobbied each and every one of them to agree with his position, which was to give up the golden share — the very thing he asked for back today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from P.A. Northcote.

**Mr. Furber:** — Mr. Speaker, unfortunately for the people of Saskatchewan in reference to that answer, the medium is the message. Mr. Speaker, the Premier can talk tough all he wants, but his history in politics and business don't match his rhetoric. In Toronto he tried talking tough like a rancher by saying, you don't sell off the home quarter. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's his name on the 1989 document that was a press release from the government selling off the home quarter. PCS was privatized then for a fraction of its true value. And we know his history of private sector failure perfectly predicted what we see today — another failure on a big file for Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Speaker, will the Premier admit that whether he's dealing with Stephen Harper, PCS, or BHP, he simply lacks the fortitude, the basic competence, and courage it takes to get deals

done for Saskatchewan people?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

[14:15]

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, when you ask the people of Canada and Saskatchewan that very question, a recent Angus Reid survey indicates that four out of five people in Canada agree with the Premier of Saskatchewan's position.

In addition to that, Mr. Speaker, I find it very interesting that just a few short days ago that member and the Leader of the Opposition and all of their colleagues stood alongside this Premier and said that that was the position of Saskatchewan. But now it should be no surprise to the people of Saskatchewan that when it comes down to the crunch, the position of Saskatchewan is something that the Leader of the Opposition would fall out of bed as quickly as possible.

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

**Mr. Furber:** — Well speaking of falling out of bed, Mr. Speaker, people in Saskatchewan today are wondering if the Premier has gotten out of the left side of the bed or the right side of the bed this morning, or the side of public policy for Saskatchewan people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, for the fourth or fifth time, this Premier has made the error of trusting Stephen Harper and his MPs to stand up for Saskatchewan's interests, so he issues a statement expressing his "profound betrayal." And this by a man and a caucus who failed to deliver on clean coal, carbon capture, agricultural disaster relief, and who broke a solemn promise of \$800 million a year in resource royalty revenues.

Mr. Speaker, after this latest in a long string of betrayals, will the Premier finally agree that the only arguments that Stephen Harper understands are those done based on electoral math? And will he campaign against Conservative candidates in the next federal election?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and mines.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to what people are saying about this deal and the interests of Saskatchewan or the interests of Canada with respect to this. A recent report from Calgary, a business tycoon in . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I recognize the Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, Richard Haskayne, a veteran Canadian member of boardrooms all across this country and a member of many, many senior management teams in many different companies, has said that this is going to be a very important issue. In fact, he's gone on to say that it will be as divisive as the national energy program.

I would just say that, Mr. Speaker, that clearly the position of Saskatchewan has been put forward by the Premier. It's understood all across Canada. It is accepted by the people of Canada, and certainly Saskatchewan has the right position. And I would just ask members of the opposition, just as they did a few short days ago, to join with the province of Saskatchewan and not give up on Saskatchewan and fight this to the end.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier said that the province had legal options at its disposal to challenge the takeover of PCS if the federal government approved the deal. But when pressed by reporters, he was unwilling to discuss the specifics of what he had in mind. To the Premier: is legal action a serious option for the government, or is he just blowing smoke?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to assure the member opposite that the Ministry of Justice is actively engaged in looking at all options that are available to the province. Those options include taxation, legislation, and litigation. And, Mr. Speaker, we are not letting go of any of those options. And we are actively engaged in looking at how those options might play out, so that we can ensure that resources are protected for the benefit of all people in this province, Mr. Speaker. That is the position that this government will take.

This government will take every step to protect the people of this province. We are actively working on it. We've engaged with experts in other provinces. And we are actively working to ensure that those steps will be taken in a prompt and correct manner.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, a decision by the federal government to allow the takeover of PCS would have serious implications for future provincial government services and revenues — the money we need to fund hospitals, schools, and roads. Now one legal option available to the province would be to resume the lawsuit filed by the previous NDP government to get Saskatchewan a fair deal on our non-renewable resource revenues, a deal which would net this province, as we all know, \$800 million a year.

Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: given the utter failure of his policy of appeasement in getting the federal government to take this province seriously, is he now prepared to reactive this law suit?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, the Attorney General has said that every single option will be pursued, Mr. Speaker. And we'll conduct ourselves like the have province that Saskatchewan is when we make our case through any manner that's available to us, Mr. Speaker.

I'll tell you what we won't do. What we won't do is take any lessons from the Leader of the Opposition who, when in 1994, in 1994 . . .

[Interjections]

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, let's be very, very clear. It was the position on the 12th of October put forward by that member that they give up on no being an answer to this deal. That was his position, Mr. Speaker. And we'll take no counsel from him with respect to the deal, especially on the PotashCorp, because it was that member, when in cabinet on this side of the House, that agreed to the dilution of the golden share that existed after PotashCorp was privatized. Not Grant Devine, not the Conservatives, not the Liberals, but that member when he was the deputy premier gutted the golden share this province had, and in large measure is responsible for too much of the latitude that company has had to date.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Premier told reporters, and I quote, "If it's not a bargaining position, there needs to be follow-through." We couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker.

But let's look at the Premier's follow-through on his last commitment to legal action against Ottawa respecting our natural resources. In 2005 the Premier said the fight to win a fair deal for Saskatchewan in non-renewable resources was "the most important issue facing Saskatchewan," just as he says today about potash. But in July of 2008, he'd dropped the law suit shortly after admitting that the Prime Minister had asked him to do so. And knowing our Prime Minister, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure he asked very nicely.

On resources, is it credible for the Premier to be Harper's poodle one day and the people's pit dog the next? I say no, Mr. Speaker.

To the Premier: given his history, why should anyone, including the Prime Minister, take his threats of legal action seriously?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we are a government that have had relationships with the federal government over the years. We have been open, clear, and candid with the public about what the intention is and what the expectations of our government is in dealing with the federal government. Mr. Speaker, with regard to this particular transaction, the particular takeover by BHP Billiton, the hostile . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. I'd ask the opposition members to allow the minister to respond to the question from the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we will take every step to

ensure that every legal option that is open to this government will be actively and aggressively pursued to ensure that we protect the interests of the citizens of Saskatchewan and the citizens of Canada. This is a takeover that is not in the interests of Saskatchewan, nor is it in the interests of the province of Saskatchewan. We will ensure that we take every option that is available to us. I've indicated what some of those are, and we have people that are actively and aggressively pursuing those options now, Mr. Speaker.

We will continue to do this, and we will not be taking advice from the member opposite. Nor will we take advice from anybody on that side of the House because they don't have a consistent position of any kind. They wait to see which way the wind is blowing, then they stand up and take a position at that point in time, and it changes the next day, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, through his short tenure this Premier has already squandered billions of dollars of resource revenues and has launched us back into debt and deficit, all at a time of historic highs in revenues. Now the Premier has failed to make the case to protect our potash resource, a sell out of our prosperity and our control. The Premier has managed our finances, mismanaged our finances, when he was blessed with record revenues. Now he is digging a fiscal hole into our future. It is said that we stand to lose between 2 and \$6 billion through this deal.

My question is this: what is the Premier's plan to recoup these revenues?

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, since the deal became known, I believe in about August the 23rd, there has been much work done. Much work done, not only from the Premier's office, but also from the Ministry of Finance in time to ensure that there is complete understanding of whether or not there will be jobs lost, whether or not there will be revenue lost, whether or not we can ensure that contracts can be kept, Mr. Speaker. All of that analysis has been under way.

We're very, very concerned from the point of Finance to ensure that the growth of this province, the growth that we've expected, that people have expected, Mr. Speaker . . . Mr. Speaker, it's not something that is strange to the people of Saskatchewan now. They understand that Saskatchewan is a have province, that Saskatchewan will remain a have province. And we're going to continue to do that, Mr. Speaker, in spite of, in spite of the position of the members opposite who've given up on Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, this Premier, this failure couldn't even connect the dots when the world economy collapsed just a little over a year ago, failing to understand the impact on Saskatchewan, our potash companies, our economy, and our finances — a contraction in our economy of 6.3 per

cent last year, Mr. Finance Minister — not to mention the subsequent impact on Saskatchewan families and communities. Now he has failed to deliver and is squandering our prosperity.

My question is this: what changes to royalty structure or taxation will the Premier implement to get a fair return for the potash of Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, let's talk about the record of Saskatchewan and this government over the last two years. Mr. Speaker, over the last two years, the population in this province is up 30,000, Mr. Speaker. The fastest growth in nearly eight decades, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the best job creation record in Canada in 2009, at a time when the member opposite says that we were falling apart because of the recession. Mr. Speaker, building permits up. Largest income tax cuts in Saskatchewan's history, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, oh, also, also, the largest property tax cut . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. The minister will finalize his response.

**An Hon. Member:** — Can he shout any louder?

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, the member opposite wishes to . . . so that I would speak softly, Mr. Speaker. Well you know, Mr. Speaker, the member from Nutana better understand that if she wants to hear me in a quiet voice, she's going to have to remain quiet herself.

**The Speaker:** — The member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, we are at a critical hour at this very moment as a decision that will affect a generation ahead of us is being made. We have a Minister of Finance who will not even focus on the question for which he's asked, and he turns on the spin cycle. Turns on the spin cycle and turns up the volume, Mr. Speaker. This Premier has mismanaged our finances and squandered the prosperity of Saskatchewan since his election.

On the very file of potash he never even understood his own royalty and taxation regime, tax write-offs and the impact on our finances as but one example. The result? A massive financial hit including cuts, deficits, and debt loading.

The Premier who doesn't even understand his own province's revenues now pretends to be a protector of our resource. Well it appears he has shamefully failed Saskatchewan people yet again.

My question is this: what price are the people of Saskatchewan going to pay for your failures?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — I want to thank the Deputy Premier . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. I ask members to allow the Premier to respond to the question.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, you can hardly blame the Deputy Premier for not wanting to get up and correct that mess from that member just opposite, Mr. Speaker.

People all around this province know a couple of things about the new Saskatchewan. Since the day we got rid of those members opposite from government, Mr. Speaker, attitudes have changed in this province. Rural Saskatchewan has gotten some attention from the government. The agriculture sector's been supported. Job creation records have been hit. Debt's been reduced by 40 per cent. Record tax reduction. We're leading the country in economic growth, Mr. Speaker. Now we're defending the interests of our province . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Well it's . . . Order. Order. Order. Order. It's obvious the member from Regina Rosemont . . . Order. You asked a question. Allow the Premier to respond. Order. The Premier can finalize his answer.

[14:30]

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, that's just a few brief highlights of the new Saskatchewan, a place that has changed markedly since those folks were in office. A have province that is a leader in the country. A province that is listened to on natural . . .

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the official time has elapsed, but the Premier has a right to respond to the question presented by the member from the opposition. The members of the opposition have the obligation to allow the public to hear the response. I recognize the Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, a province that is leading the nation with respect to a discussion, a long-needed discussion in debate about the future of the natural resources of this resource-rich country, Mr. Speaker, unlike ever before, we're punching above our weight. We're leading the country, and the only people that don't like it is that group over there, Mr. Speaker.

## SPECIAL ORDER

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Gantefoer, seconded by Mr. Wyant, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Broten.]

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

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night I was just getting started, Mr. Speaker. I'd been able to speak about some of the pieces of the Throne Speech that I thought were particularly important to my constituents and the people of

Saskatchewan. Right around 10 o'clock, Mr. Speaker, I got started on the potash situation, Mr. Speaker. I think that the members opposite might find some of this interesting.

We started with in the 1970s, Mr. Speaker, that government decided that the NDP were going to run the potash mines in Saskatchewan. They passed legislation, Mr. Speaker, where they actively took the mines away from private companies, Mr. Speaker, that were producing the potash. This went on, Mr. Speaker. The NDP ran these mines. They ran them into the ground.

And what we saw, Mr. Speaker, coming out of the '70s was a potash industry which was in terrible shape, largely because these captains of industry, Mr. Speaker, were in charge. And that, Mr. Speaker, is something that I think they've shown over and over again. The now Leader of the Opposition was a large part of running those potash companies into the ground, and that . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. I recognize the member from Lloydminster.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Coming out of that terrible situation where the NDP were running the potash industry in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, we came through the '80s, there was a certain movement to find if the private sector should be involved in the potash industry, Mr. Speaker. One of the most successful privatizations in Saskatchewan was the privatization of Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. It's gone from a situation where it was a terribly run company under these members to where now it's one of the biggest mining companies in the world, extremely successful. It's currently under acquisition bid by an Australian firm, Mr. Speaker, which was some discussion about today.

But in the '90s, Mr. Speaker, these members won the election in '91. They became government. And the Government of Saskatchewan still owned a large portion of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan stock. At that time, Mr. Speaker, the then deputy premier, who is now the Leader of the Opposition, decided they wanted to sell what was left. That was the decision they made. I think if they thought they wanted to run the Potash Corporation again, Mr. Speaker, they knew that they weren't any good at it. They tried it, they failed . . .

[Interjections]

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. The member from Lloydminster.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1994 after they'd sold off the last pieces of the Potash Corporation when they knew that they weren't going to be able to run the potash industry any more, they introduced on April 27th, 1994 *An Act to repeal The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Reorganization Act*. And the Act contains . . . It was put forward by the Hon. Mr. Penner and in his comments when he introduced this Bill . . . I think the member opposite should listen to this, Mr. Speaker. I think he'd find it interesting.

In his opening comments introducing this Bill, this is what he said, and I quote from *Hansard* on April 27th. He said, "This legislation is very simple." It's simple enough, Mr. Speaker, that if that member opposite listens, he'll understand it. He said, "This legislation is very simple. Section 2 repeals The Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Reorganization Act including restrictions on share ownership."

Mr. Speaker, the NDP in 1994 removed the legislation that had requirements on share ownership. Now they've had a conversion. Now they think, holy cow, we've got to get in front of this. Mr. Speaker, they were in front of this. They want it back again. I don't know what they were thinking.

Section 3 provides a clear definition of what constitutes PCS's head office. It stipulates that this head office with these functions and jobs will remain in . . . [Saskatoon], a clear . . . [description] of what a head office of PCS is to consist of . . .

And it goes on, Mr. Speaker. What it essentially does, it allows PCS to move many of their head office jobs south of the border. It allows foreign ownership of large portions of the company.

And now they've had a conversion. In fact their plan, Mr. Speaker, throughout this, is that the Government of Saskatchewan should buy a large portion of Potash Corporation and start producing potash again. We've come full circle, Mr. Speaker. I think the credibility they have on this issue is remarkable.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, they thought that the plan should be that they send their leader to Ottawa to stand beside the Premier. Well, Mr. Speaker, if there's anybody that should not go to Ottawa it is a representative of that opposition and most certainly the Leader of the Opposition, who was deputy premier when they watered down the golden share, when they removed the ownership restrictions, Mr. Speaker, and who was involved in the previous ownership where they ran the potash industry into the ground. So I find it a little thick to accept their assertion that that's a good idea.

Mr. Speaker, I did see some parallels in this situation to another situation where Saskatchewan lost another head office. It was actually . . . It was in 1997. Again back in the '60s, '70s, an NDP government decided that they were going to be oil barons. Yes, they thought that they wanted to wear the big cowboy hats and drive Cadillacs. So they jacked up the royalty rates, they jacked up the royalty rates, they made a bunch of laws and said, you know, if you're not profitable, you can't shut your oil wells down. If you do shut them down, we're going to take them.

And that's what the NDP did, Mr. Speaker. They took a bunch of oil wells; they put them in a group; they called it Saskoil. They were oil barons. They thought they'd walk with the stetsons, go to the Petroleum Club in Calgary, and hang out with the boys. Well they got to Calgary, Mr. Speaker, and they realized that the boys didn't want to hang out with them. In fact, it was probably those guys in Calgary who owned the oil companies in the first place and said, you know, get back to Saskatchewan and give us back our oil wells.

But, Mr. Speaker, this went on for a while. They realized they

weren't any better at oil than they were at potash . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No. They were terrible at it.

So again, the Conservatives came into power in '82 and they had to straighten out the NDP mess. They reorganized it again, several things. They privatized Saskoil and again that was a very successful privatization. They privatized it. They sold off stuff. But the Government of Saskatchewan still owned a large portion of that company, Mr. Speaker. Until 1997, in fact, the NDP government sold off a huge portion of Saskoil. And not only did they sell off a huge portion of Saskoil. They changed the legislation. They changed the legislation to allow the head office to move, to allow ownership to be diluted. And you know, the parallels are striking.

But this is where it gets problematic. With the potash situation, the now Leader of the Opposition was deputy premier and was largely pulling the strings of that.

In the case of Saskoil, Mr. Speaker, the now Leader of the Opposition was minister of CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan]. He was the guy that championed the legislation. He was the guy that decided to sell this asset. And I would like to make everyone aware of on July 22nd, 1997, the then leader of the opposition, minister of CIC, went in front of the Crown and Central Agencies Committee to discuss a major transaction. It was the sale of Saskoil, then called Wascana, to Nexen, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if that rings a bell for anyone.

But, Mr. Speaker, he gets in front of the Crowns committee, he introduces his officials, and then he excuses himself. He says, I'm afraid I have a conflict. The cabinet is getting together. I'll introduce our staff and then I'll excuse myself. Let me just read verbatim from *Hansard*, Mr. Speaker:

Having said that, I also have to apologize for the fact that we're sort of doublebooked today with the cabinet meeting which starts in a few moments, and I will have to leave and then return at 1:30 for the issues that we have on this afternoon. But I'll leave our operation here of CIC in very capable hands . . .

Mr. Speaker, he leaves the meeting. They discuss the issues of selling off Saskoil to Nexen. They have a break, and guess who shows back up to discuss the rest of the issues of the day as soon as that's out of the way?

Now, Mr. Speaker, I guess maybe I'll fill in what's not in here. Shortly after, Mr. Speaker, after the sale took place, the then minister of CIC, deputy premier, he decided that it was time to look for greener pastures. He was going to apply for some jobs across Canada. He . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — He hit the old dusty trail.

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Yes, he hit the old dusty trail, Mr. Speaker. He had heard there was opportunity in Calgary, and I guess he floated a few resumés around. And you'll never guess who thought that he'd be a great employee. It was Nexen, Mr. Speaker. Nexen hired the Leader of the Opposition to come on as a junior executive. And one of his first tasks, Mr. Speaker, was to come back to Saskatchewan . . . And maybe I will read

one other portion. This is a portion that the Leader of the Opposition wasn't in the room to give this answer, but he left his official to give this answer.

In questioning, and I believe this is questioning from Mr. Gantfoer, Mr. Gantfoer asked a question about the head office. The Leader of the Opposition's staff member said that blah blah blah, that Nexen was willing to keep in the spirit of the Act, "... keeping the head office and all functions associated with the head office in Regina." I jump ahead a little further. "In fact we've had commitments that they may be increasing staffing rather than decreasing [staffing]."

Mr. Speaker, what great news for the members of that Crowns committee to hear that more jobs were coming to Saskatchewan because this masterful deal put together by the NDP to sell off Saskoil to Nexen. As it turns out, shortly after he got employed in Calgary by the company that bought it, he came back to Saskatchewan to lobby his colleagues, I understand, to allow them to close the head office in Saskatchewan because it didn't make sense and they needed it in Calgary.

It may have made sense, Mr. Speaker, but looking through this example and looking at the similarities to the potash example, Mr. Speaker, it leaves me with a lot of questions as to the credibility of that side of the House in regards to this potash situation. I have questions. I think the people of Saskatchewan have questions and I think if he's asking to go to Ottawa as part of a coalition to put forward Saskatchewan's message, I say no. I say that I don't want the guy that sold those shares of potash to now be saying, you know, I was wrong; I'm coming back on what we had committed to and changing the rules. So I think that we have made the right choice sending the best representative in Canada, the best representative in Saskatchewan, to represent our interests and we are well served by that, Mr. Speaker.

I think I'm going to end my comments there, Mr. Speaker. I had opportunity to speak last night, but I know that many members on opposite side of the House will do a dutiful job of also shining some light on this very important issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

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

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am happy today to add some comments to the Throne Speech. Before I do that I would like to thank the people of Eastview for continuing to allow me to serve them. This is going into the 13th year, four elections. I'm very happy and very proud to continue to be the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] from Saskatoon Eastview.

I also want to thank my family, my husband Don and my children and my mother who's 85 who continues to campaign with me. And all my family for the support they give me that allows me to do this job and to live in Regina away from my family for a good part of the year.

I also want to thank, in my office, April Anderson who runs the

office so well, does a great deal of service for people, and they do appreciate all of her efforts. I want to thank the executive of Eastview who help me also in continuing to support me as an MLA and to continue to help the fact that as an NDP MLA, I'm going to be elected again.

I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, the Throne Speech, when I looked at the faces of the members opposite and the people in the crowd, didn't touch anybody. I didn't see any smiles. I didn't see any nodding. I didn't see any enthusiasm. I never heard any spontaneous applause. I think the Throne Speech, to be kind, underwhelmed most people. I think that it basically rehashed things that we've heard before. It was an opportunity for the Premier to put forward a vision. And I think he failed miserably as he has failed with many of the things we have recounted today in question period and member statements. I think the failures are quite evident. And I think people saw the Throne Speech for what it was, pretty much an empty document and a waste of an afternoon.

The road that the Premier talks about is interesting because his analogy of a road and a new road. I think most people who see the Throne Speech and see the Premier's actions and the actions of the government, the choices they're making and the directions they're going, would say that it's not really a new road, that Grant Devine's been on that road, and a lot of the signposts along the way are Grant Devine's. And this government continues to mark those and celebrate those as their own. I think one of the interesting ones, I'll talk about a little bit later, is privatization, and I think it's something that the Premier has taken to his own peril.

I think the people of the province . . . And I'm mostly going to talk around health care because the people of the province, I think, realize that they're being manipulated when they're being told that the public system cannot manage, so we have to turn to the private system. I don't think anybody believes that. We're getting phone calls and saying well please explain that to me. Saskatoon in the spring — in May actually — increased their surgeries. They did that because there was more money. That tells me that there's capacity in the system, in the public system. More money produces more surgeries. You don't have to put that money in a private clinic. It is clearly manipulating the public to believe something that's not true.

And I think it's also interesting that people believe that there's not enough diagnostic equipment. And I hear from many, many people who work in the system, who are close to those machines on a daily basis, that they are not fully used. They're not fully used 24-7. So the claim that there are not enough machines in the public system to do the job and we absolutely have to put a private one in somewhere is again not true.

And I think the public needs to know, and I think they are getting to know, that this isn't true and what they're being told isn't the whole story. And I think that they're confused, but they're also disappointed. I think there's a movement afoot, and it isn't just in Saskatchewan, to undermine the public system so people will turn and say we need to have the private system. And that is so clear in this, the surgery centre operation that the minister and the government undertook this year. To tell the public that they needed to reduce wait times by turning over the surgeries to private clinics is just clearly misleading the public.

And when the wait times have gone down for many, many, many of the surgeries with just different organization within the public system and money applied in the right places, then it does say the argument for private is totally bogus.

And I think it was interesting when we had the kerfuffle about a Roughrider having an MRI [magnetic resonance imaging], and everybody noticed that with money you could have one in off-hours. Well what it said to me was there was capacity in the system. Obviously off-hours the machine is sitting dark. So why doesn't the public system use the machine more often, more hours, and unstop the backlog in the public system? It's about money.

And when we talk about money, it's interesting. And I know my colleague from Dewdney last night talked about how the government's claim that the debt is going down is also not true. I think people are going to wonder and of course people are wondering, where is the money coming from for all the promises? When you look at a deficit of \$1 billion last year and we're waiting to see the mid-year financials . . . I'm not sure if we'll see them when the House is in session because that would sort of be a black mark on the government, so I'm sure that they'll wait until after we are not sitting in this House so we don't have the type of scrutiny that we would have if we were here. So it'll be interesting to see the timing of those mid-year financials. But I'm assuming, given the way the finances have gone so far to this point, that we will see another deficit.

And yet in Throne Speech, there were grandiose promises of helicopters for medevac, things like, yes, we are going to fund the long-term care facilities. The money was promised in '09 for 13 long-term care facilities. I visited 10 of those, by the way, this summer. And there's certainly no, no dispute that those facilities need renovation. There is an infrastructure deficit in this province, but it is because of a financial deficit left to this province by Devine and colleagues of those members opposite. And we're going still in that, we're going in that direction again.

Again my analogy, to paraphrase, the Premier's going down this road. Like I said, the sign posts along the road are all from Grant Devine. Deficit, debt, privatization — those aren't new to the people of Saskatchewan. We've been there, done that, and have the debt to prove it. We don't have the T-shirts, but we could.

And I think when our government left, we left over \$2 billion in the bank. We left the money, and the money has been squandered. The money's gone and we're in deficit and the Crowns are being stripped. And I have people calling me all the time, telling me that this program or that program or this service or that service has been just quietly sold off. So the fear that the Crowns are being undermined is out there; people know it. Unfortunately it's happening sort of under the radar.

It's interesting also when I look at the programs that are being stripped away from the health system because each health district, or health region as they're now called, was underfunded as well. And this year, they needed 7 per cent of an increase in their budget to maintain the health services that they were delivering last year. They got 3.5, so half of what they needed. And this simply will not deliver the services that the people in

those health regions need.

So each health region has been instructed to find efficiencies. Well they started to look for efficiencies and started closing labs and closing ambulances and closing long-term care beds and cutting housekeeping and cutting dietary and cutting maintenance and not hiring staff and looking at sick cops to police sick time and overtime to find these efficiencies. But because of the underfunding and the choices that the government made to underfund the system, these things are directly affecting people.

And if you're looking at putting in an ambulance, a helicopter ambulance, when you haven't got an ambulance on the road . . . The Neilburg ambulance, \$75,000 to keep that ambulance running. STARS [shock trauma air rescue service], 17 million to run a year. You have to have the ground ambulance, the basic service, in place. So I understand putting the STARS in the Throne Speech. It's popular. People like the idea of a helicopter coming in and saving them. But if you haven't got the basics, you aren't going to do anything. It's not going to fix anything. It's not going to fix your problem.

And I do think, having been on the road for most of the summer into 55-plus communities, I understand that the rural vote is slipping and that there's had to be something, something dramatic to appeal to rural voters because, in my travels with my colleague from Saskatoon Fairview, we visited 55 communities and many more facilities because some communities we visited two, three, and four facilities in that community. So we have a really good sense of what's happening in Saskatchewan, in small town and rural Saskatchewan.

And people told us that they feel abandoned. They feel like they're on their own. They feel like they're paying twice for health care. Those are direct quotes from people in communities. And these aren't disgruntled workers; these are town administrators, mayors, and business people in communities. So the feeling in rural Saskatchewan is not that positive for the Sask Party. And I think anybody over there who takes that for granted does so at their own peril.

The things that we saw in our travels, of course we heard all about the closures and the cuts. And I do have . . . Yesterday I talked about Wawota. That is a symptom of what's wrong. The district or the region was given a budget that was below what it needed to deliver its services for the communities that they serve, and they started making choices. There is a whole bunch of other issues in that region, dealing with the personnel, and that has, I think, been dealt with. But the five beds in Wawota in the Deer View Lodge in Wawota that closed, I think it is symbol of what's happening around Saskatchewan because it isn't the only place where people rallied in communities to protest the cuts.

When the government made choices, the Sask Party government made choices to underfund the health system and gave, the minister said, gave the instruction to the regions to try not to let any front-line services be affected, well that's just nonsense. You simply can't find \$25 million of efficiencies in Saskatoon without making some serious cuts in programs. Even smaller districts can't find \$3 million in efficiencies. They have



to start cutting services.

And the communities are saying that is enough. This is our line in the sand. No, you're not taking the ambulance out of Neilburg. No, you're not taking the lab services out of Nokomis. And communities in Kamsack and in Neilburg and in Wawota had hundreds of people come to public meetings that I attended and spoke at in some.

And we started off on our tour — and I know the minister said he was tracking me and he will be interested to note — that we started off on our tour, we picked the communities. My colleague from Fairview and I, we picked the communities that we thought we'd try to get a flavour of each region. By the end of the tour, the communities were picking us. They were calling and saying, come here. Come and talk to us. This is an issue here. We want you to come and hear what's happening here. Not only the communities were calling us, but I'd be interviewed by a media person in some town, and they'd say you should go to X town because they have this issue happening. So it was definitely a summer of interesting contacts and interesting observations.

I do have another observation, and that was said to me and my colleague from Fairview over and over and over again, and we were in all the health regions except two, the two northern ones as yet. And everywhere we went, people said to me, I cannot get my MLA to return a phone call. I cannot get my MLA to meet with me — everywhere we went. So it wasn't just a little pocket of dissent or unhappiness. It was a theme.

When I had to present my themes to my colleagues, that was one of them. People were not being heard. They were not being heard. Their MLAs would not come and meet with them. So very few MLAs were mentioned by name that were helpful. And I think that that's another issue that the Sask Party has to deal with.

It's interesting in Wawota. This is today's news or yesterday's news, I guess, that closing the beds in Wawota . . . My point will be that when you make a decision in isolation of the rippling effect of that decision, you don't do anybody a service. And the closure of the beds in Wawota has now resulted in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region opening new beds at Broadview because there is a spill over from Sun Country which is where Wawota is.

So closing the beds in Wawota has now made Regina open up beds in Broadview. And of course the people in Wawota are going, what? Why would you do that? Why would you close them in Wawota so that you could open them in another town to deal with people that should be kept in our community?

We heard stories in Wawota that would make you cry. People whose family member was taken to another town, say 100 kilometres away, that only the wife could feed, and so the husband didn't eat. He refused to eat. So he's in Estevan hospital now, dying. Those stories are what's happening when you do things like that. It's not fair to people. And people are understanding that when you talk about three beds, it doesn't sound like a lot. But it makes such a huge impact on peoples' lives that I think it is a story that demonstrates what happens when you make cuts to the health system.

[15:00]

We are going to have rural round table. I promised everybody where I went that this would not be an exercise in futility, that they would come and talk to me and it would just go nowhere. I also didn't come out to defend anything that had happened before. I came to talk about tomorrow. And I wanted to talk about what does rural Saskatchewan need to be healthy and what do communities in rural Saskatchewan need to grow because, interestingly enough, we saw communities that were having cuts — cuts were being made in lab or maintenance or whatever services — those cuts were being made and a new hotel was going up. And people were talking about new people moving to the community. Well those people were already considering putting signs up on their houses for sale because the clinic was closed. There were no doctors any more. So people aren't going to move to communities nor stay in communities where there aren't health services.

And that whole issue of recruiting doctors was a huge theme of the tour. We had many, many, many communities talk to us about . . . They may be happy right now with the two or three doctors they have, and that's adequate. But they know they're just one resignation away from being in the same position as many other communities that had to shut their emergencies or shut their hospitals or discontinue all their health services. So they know out there in rural Saskatchewan.

And people said to us, rural Saskatchewan is paying twice for health care because they have to find their own doctor and they have to put the incentives together. Some communities actually have formalized holding companies, and they levy a health tax on their constituents. And this is how the doctor shortage and the doctor recruitment is done. People are starting to buy the doctors themselves because there's no help from government.

And this physician recruitment agency, no one heard about it. And when the new CEO was hired, I didn't hear the word "rural" come out of his mouth once. So I don't think anybody in rural Saskatchewan anticipates any help from there. I still heard that the minister or the department officials, someone had said when asked, that rural Saskatchewan or communities will still be asked to put together their own incentives, and basically they're still on their own. And that's another thing that I did hear. We're on our own in rural Saskatchewan.

So there are communities who are building clinics. The community will own it, will build it, will finance it. And they will bring the doctors in, promise them certain things, guaranteed fee for service. If the fee for service, that number isn't achieved, then the community will top it up. Pay for the equipment. Pay for the house. Pay for the car. Yearly incentives to stay. And all this is done with municipal tax money, so that people are not getting rinks fixed, highways and community roads being done. This is all taking away from the community use of the tax base. That's why they're saying rural Saskatchewan's paying twice for health care. And this is because this government isn't showing any leadership; it isn't.

And the minister goes on and on and on about recruiting nurses. That is one piece of the health care system. One piece. When we travelled, we found places where there were not enough LPNs [licensed practical nurse]. There were not enough special

care aides. And my dad is in Sherbrooke, and who cares for him on a daily basis are special care aides. And the long-term care facilities we visited, special care aides do the hands-on care. If you don't have enough special care aides, my dad doesn't get out of bed. My dad doesn't get fed. My dad doesn't get dressed or bathed. You need special care aides.

It's great to say you hit your target of 800 nurses or exceeded your target, but you can't live on that glory for very long when the rest of the system is suffering. And if you're trying to get sick time and workers' compensation and overtime decrease and you're still working staff overtime . . . I'm not talking about nurses. You might have fixed that. I didn't hear that either, by the way. Nurses are still feeling it.

And I'm hearing new graduates are not getting jobs. I'm hearing there's jobs being created in the system to make the minister's target. Like this is not fixing the system. It's good window dressing and it's good PR [public relations], but it hasn't fixed the system where I visited.

And I didn't just visit one community. When you visit 55, you pretty much know you've hit the right theme if you're going to talk about themes because you have all the conversation, all the people, all the contacts we've made. I mean we talked to a thousand people, thousands of people, and those people were workers. And in every place we went, we talked to everybody. We looked at everything, but we also talked and we listened to what they had to say. And for the most part, the theme of those talks were that they were undervalued and underappreciated and in fact in some areas, disrespected, openly disrespected.

And it's pretty hard to . . . We of course were out during the summer when the contract was still not signed and the bitter atmosphere that Bill 5 and 6 that the government put in to go to war with labour. When the Premier said he was going to war with labour, well we saw the fruits of that statement. We saw what Bill 5 and 6 has done to the health care system and to the health care workers. It's a long way back to repair that damage.

Collective bargaining has been set back decades. There's no trust. There's no fairness. That process has been damaged, just significantly damaged. The contract that was signed, was signed without a great deal of enthusiasm and is not going to fix how angry people are there about how disrespected they are.

There's actually bullying and intimidation happening in the workplace. When some area where management can say to the staff, if you don't like your job, Tim Hortons is hiring. Well as much as I enjoy a well-prepared cup of coffee, nicely poured, and I like Timbits every so often, I again think of my dad in Sherbrooke. He needs workers who are committed to long-term care and committed to geriatrics. I think it's absolutely appalling that a manager would say that to the staff. And that was in Swift Current. And the Premier . . . That is the Premier's riding, and that's how management is talking to their staff in Swift Current.

That goes a long way to tell me that when the Premier started his war with labour and made it quite clear to everyone that that's what his mission was, that management, health districts, they've adopted that. And you can now see it coming through in how management deals with the health care workers.

And when the member stood up yesterday and talked about his health care worker appreciation week, well small consolation. A member's statement. When this whole province has . . . There's 80,000 people out there that belong to the labour movement, 25,000 health care workers who feel disrespected. And this goes to exactly how the care is being delivered.

And you might have fixed the nurses. You might have, and I don't even say that that's a fix because I'm now hearing students who can't get jobs. And there's nurses we talk to in facilities that still are underworked or overworked, sorry. And I think that to rest on your laurels with achieving your target of 800 is not going to fix the system, is not going to help the system, is not going to move the system forward.

So when we talk about the Throne Speech, I mean the promises that were made in there are just rehashing, and I think people understand that. That's why I didn't see any enthusiasm. I think it pretty much died in the water. I haven't heard any media coverage of it. It just is a non-event.

But some of the things that happen, you know, while we just take for granted that our world is going on, things are happening in programs that are really disturbing. There was a program in Regina that was swimming for arthritis. The people that were in the pool swimming to help limber them up and deal with their symptoms of arthritis, somebody marched in from the Regina Health District and told them to get out of the pool; the program was cancelled.

So when I think about closing the beds in Wawota, when I think about closing the lab in Nokomis where the doctor said, if you close the lab, if you cut down lab services, I cannot function as a doctor . . . We simply have to give more thought to what our decisions are, and I think the decisions of the government to underfund the health system will have catastrophic effects. You can't do it. The system is needed. There's programs that are needed.

We don't even have a mental health strategy. Been promised. I don't see it in the Throne Speech. There's a huge need for mental health services in this province and it continues to be ignored. Yet we think we can talk about STARS. I don't understand the choices. The choices do not . . . I mean it sounds good. It looks good on TV when a helicopter lands in a field. But when you have a person in your family who's suffering from a mental illness and can't get in to see a psychiatrist or a psychologist or have an in-patient bed, that helicopter isn't going to do you any good.

So I think we also have to talk about — back to my points — about privatizing. I think that's a bogus argument that the public . . . I will be saying, and the member opposite last night was saying when I was on tour that I was scaring people silly. Well I was scaring them with the truth. And if the truth scares them, well those are the scary people that are doing that to them.

And what I basically told people out in rural Saskatchewan in the communities that I visited that had the long-term care facilities promised to them in '09 — the 13 communities and I saw 10 of them, as I said — I told them that there is a new deal. There is a new funding arrangement in Saskatoon and you should have a look at it.

And they said, what? We never heard of that. We don't know about any new deal. We think we have to raise our 35 per cent. We think we're going to have to put on a health levy. We think we're going to have to have sales. We think we're going to have to have community fundraisers. We think each community's surroundings is going to have to contribute X number of dollars to this facility. And only when we get our 35 per cent can these plans that are sitting here on the desk or up on the wall able to move forward.

And I said, oh no. No, no, no, you don't have to do that any more. There's a new funding arrangement in town. The minister said so. The Minister of Health said, here's a new arrangement. You don't have to pay anything. Amicus didn't have to. And the government guarantees the loan. The taxpayers of Saskatchewan are on the hook. Our finances are exposed and liable if that company goes out of business.

Besides which, there is a more than normal levy per patient. So patients in long-term care at Sherbrooke or anyplace else in Saskatchewan don't get the same amount of funding from the government as this new facility will, called Good Samaritan in Saskatoon. So why don't you, in Rosetown and Kerrobert and Biggar and Meadow Lake and Tisdale and Kelvington, why don't you ask for the same deal? And they said oh well, send us the information.

So if that's what's scaring them silly, I think it should be scaring the Sask Party silly that people out in rural Saskatchewan are actually getting real information, and they're not liking it. They're not liking what they're hearing. And one town mayor said he will shut the town down and bring it to Regina if the decision in that community isn't reversed. That's a pretty strong statement, and much as I like to see delegations come to Regina to make the government move on issues of importance, I think that's pretty bad politics and it's pretty bad policy, when you have angered communities so much that they'll do that.

And I know there's a bunch of comments across the way, talking about 52 hospitals closed in the '90s. I have tracked all those places, all those towns. There are only two — two — that don't have health centre and special care homes. So when we're talking about closing facilities, that is scare tactics. That is misinformation. That is misleading. And at some point during this session or in the spring I am going to list them all and what they're doing, just so people will know, and those bogus arguments from people who haven't a clue what they're talking about will die. And not too soon for anybody, because those sorts of things, what I'm seeing out in rural Saskatchewan, people were not interested.

In 55 communities I visited, and I haven't even counted how many actual facilities — like I said, sometimes four, three, or two in a community — twice, twice I had someone say to me, well you shut our hospital. Twice. So that's not a big issue, in case anybody's interested in learning that. That is not a big issue out in rural Saskatchewan. And I was in all your communities. So if you think those people are interested in going back 16 years and talking about what the NDP did or didn't do, you're wrong. So the minister should get some new material because that's not resonating out there.

Those two communities . . . And when I said to those people — in case the minister from Weyburn, the member from Weyburn is interested — when I said to those people, I didn't come out here to defend anything, I came to listen to what you think is good for the future, they said, oh good. They said, oh good. And no, I'm not going to name those communities because I don't think he needs to know that. But I think most people know that I am not making it up when I said I visited 55 of them and many more of the facilities. So if they think I'm making this up, well go live in your la-la land then.

But I think basically what we have seen when we were out and about, bed closures — long-term care and acute care. We saw service reductions: labs, ambulance, therapies, counsellors, social workers, EMTs [emergency medical technician]. We saw staff reductions in many, many facilities.

We saw recruitment issues with doctors and nurse practitioners. One community couldn't get a nurse practitioner funded. And people have also said, in Wawota too and in another community that was talking about the nurse practitioner, Foam Lake, said that, we can pay for this. Like we have the money. We could raise the money around the table right now while we're having coffee. But why should we? Why should we? We already pay taxes. Why should we pay twice?

And then people said, well why should we also, why should we put up with somebody that says you have to do it yourself? Why are we doing that? Why are we doing everything ourselves? Why are the communities getting together? And as one of the Sask Party members said at one time in a public meeting, that you have to get into a bidding war with your neighbours. And they are. Because one community we visited bought two doctors from another community who lost them. They had more money because they've got oil rigs pumping around, around them. They can afford that.

[15:15]

What about communities who can't afford it, who don't have rich resources around them? They can't enter into the bidding war. They don't get a doctor; is that the answer? That's what they're thinking because there's no help for them and they know it. It's not coming. And nobody out there is holding their breath. They know that this party, this Sask Party has abandoned them. And they know it.

And I know they can laugh over there and giggle, but go out on a tour. I didn't see any of them. I didn't cross paths with a single person out there. And I heard from everybody I met that they can't get to their MLA. They won't answer the phone call and they will not meet. So if you're out there, nobody knows it.

And the member from Cannington, well he had some wonderful press during the summer. You can choose between highways or health care — that was his big pronouncement. Yes, people really liked that in Wawota. They wanted me to move there. They wanted me to move to Wawota. By goodness' sakes, these people are desperate for actual true representation. They're not getting it from there.

And actually that makes me . . . There's a comment here in the paper that really you should hear . . . [inaudible interjection] . . .

You are going to hear. This is from Sun Country and this is the save our communities people who met with the health board from Sun Country. And he said, this is Dave Easton, he said that:

“Our local MLAs have given us extremely negligible support. Where do we go from here? We’re still trying out how to pick ourselves up and where we go from here,” said Easton.

That’s no support. That’s just one area. I heard many, many of them, that you are not returning your phone calls in your offices, you’re not taking meetings. So I don’t think people out there are confused about who’s representing their interests. And it isn’t the members opposite. It isn’t the Premier. It isn’t the Sask Party. The choices that are being made are affecting rural Saskatchewan in really, really negative ways, and we’re also losing the ability to move forward.

One of my colleagues was speaking today about if we lose our potash resources, if we lose our royalty, if we lose the royalty structure, if we lose money in the future, how do we fund these programs? It’s all connected. These decisions aren’t made in isolation. If you are wrong in your budget, if you’ve misspent the money, if you’re stripping the Crowns, services are going to be affected.

And you might not notice the program for arthritis and people can’t swim for arthritis anymore. You might not notice that a ranch is being closed for addictions, people who have addictions. You might not notice that. But you are going to notice that your ambulance isn’t there. You are going to notice that your doctor’s not there. You are going to notice that your nurse practitioner’s not there. You are going to notice that your meals are being reheated in the microwave. You are going to notice when you get MRSA [methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*] or VRE [vancomycin resistant enterococci], when you get these superbug infections because you have no housekeeping. You are going to notice that. And you are going to notice when no money’s coming to build your long-term care facilities.

We were asking people, because they had plans laid out on their tables and, you know, push-pinned up on their walls, and they were very proud of these plans because they’ve worked on them for a while. And they were very excited because they were promised the money to have them built. So they haven’t got the money. It’s taken away in the budget.

And I said, well have you any indication of when these projects will go forward? Yes, we do; in the fall of 2011. Like November of 2011, one of them said. I said, well isn’t that interesting? What else is happening in the fall of 2011? So I think light bulbs went on. And of course if you think people are scared silly, no. They’re actually learning what’s going on. And they like to know. And if you think people are going to be kept in the dark, they’re not.

They came out . . . honestly when I went out, I wasn’t sure about the reception I would get. Truly I wasn’t. But when I went out there and people came in droves, not only the people, the staff, but the mayors would come, the RM administrators, the pharmacists from the community, the chamber of

commerce. They were not afraid to come. And yes, we did get candidates, many candidates that we actually found. We did. We did. People came forward, and we did find candidates. That wasn’t the goal of the tour, but they came forward. I mean they came out of the woodwork.

And it was interesting that the response — regardless of what I knew that riding was, that was represented by the Sask Party and had been forever — people still wanted to talk to me. And I think that they were sincere in their concerns, and they knew that I was sincere in coming out to listen. And I promised a round table and it will happen. And then we’re going to see what we, as a party, present to rural Saskatchewan as a new way for rural health care.

And I think that when we talk about all the choices that have been made by this government and particularly underfunding health districts, people are seeing it in . . . You’re seeing it in groups of people that are swimming for arthritis. Those people aren’t going to be happy. They aren’t going to be happy with you. People that can’t get into the addictions ranch, they’re not going to be happy. The people that took me out there, they know who did it. They know who’s not helping them. And there’s lots and lots and lots of those people. They’re not on the front page of the *Leader-Post*. They’re not in *The Globe and Mail*, but they’re out there in Saskatchewan, and they’re going to vote.

And so if the Premier thinks he can threaten everybody by calling an election tomorrow, go ahead. Go ahead. It’s an empty threat anyway, much as everything that he has said. In the answers to the questions today, the Premier got very frustrated. And he thought he should threaten us with an election so we could find out. Well he’s the one who did fixed election dates. So he’d be breaking his own law, which says quite a bit about his commitment to anything he’s actually said. And it does go to the fact that anything that he has promised, we haven’t seen.

Small promises about this and that are small compared to no reactors, no medical imaging, no medical reactor, no carbon capture — nothing. Nothing. Children’s hospital, that’s a whole other story that you know nothing about. We started in the ’80s talking about the children’s hospital of Saskatchewan. And get me started. And the reason it didn’t move forward, for those of you who weren’t around in ’91 when the province was almost bankrupt because of Devine, because there was no money. There was no money in the ’90s.

It took a decade to get this province out of debt. And I know nobody really wants to talk about that any more, but we’re living with the effect of that. When we talk about an infrastructure deficit we had . . . I know that’s the Minister of Health’s favourite line, 16 years of blah, blah, blah. But when we go back and talk about what was this province left with in the ’90s? It’s crippling debt, and we were almost bankrupt as a province. So you can’t be building highways and hospitals and schools when you’re bankrupt. There were some tough decisions that had to be made.

I wasn’t there for it, but I saw what my colleagues had to deal with and what they did and what strength and wisdom they had for the things that they did. Now we’re seeing absolutely willy-nilly decisions, weak-kneed support for the province.

Anything that's . . . You know if there's a parade, this Premier who likes to jump in front of it. He can't see a parade go by that he doesn't want to jump in front of it. And I'm waiting to see the Captain Canada tights and the flag draped around him in some parade.

Because this is not . . . You can't lead by polling, and that's what we're seeing. You know, put your finger up; which way are the people going today? That's where I'll go with them, or that's where I think I'll follow. But this isn't how people see the province. And I think it's interesting that there's still that era of arrogance and entitlement.

I talked to somebody who said, they honestly thought — and I'm assuming this person didn't vote for us — he honestly thought that this government would have a learning curve and it would be steep. And he thought that there would be, though, a time when they learned. He said, they have not learned. They have not learned. He gave them a chance, but they have not learned. And that's a pretty damning comment, that people who are willing to give an opportunity to a party and politicians and MLAs to learn the business of government and to deliver that government for the people of Saskatchewan haven't learned how to do it.

So I think the Premier could yes, go ahead. Call an election, see what happens. But I think empty threats, empty promises, frivolous actions — those are the things that this Premier has now been labelled with. And he can get red and he can get pouty because, if you watch him — it's too bad the camera doesn't stay on him after he gives his answers — flings himself around in his seat, turns his back on the Assembly, gets all red and pouty.

That's really mature. That's really mature. And I like to see it when there's people in the gallery because they notice, and they remark on it. So if we talk about the behaviour of the members here, and sometimes, Mr. Speaker, I agree, you know, it doesn't get too good. But when the Premier of the province pouts in his seat or disrespects the Assembly by turning his back, that's something the people do notice.

So I think that when we talk about the Throne Speech as being the Premier's vision for the province, I'm not surprised that there was really underwhelming support and interest in it. I even saw some of the colleagues that are across the way, the government itself, yawning; not smiling. They were not interested. They were not into it at all. So I think that the Throne Speech itself is certainly nothing that inspires me, and I think the people that I've talked to around the province aren't going to be supporting the things that are in the Throne Speech. They certainly have lost their support for the government.

And it was interesting to reach out into rural Saskatchewan where I haven't been for awhile. When I was associate minister of Health and minister of Learning, I visited schools and hospitals and health facilities all around this province. But this was a different view, a different view from an opposition point of view. And it was a different view and it was a different message. And it was interesting how people are thinking. They're not supporting this government. They're not being fooled, and they're certainly not excited about the direction that they see this government taking us. They understand.

And often when I was SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] president, we talked about . . . I represented 8,000 nurses. If members had the right information, they made the right decisions. So that's what I hope, the people of Saskatchewan get the right information. Because if the information is being manipulated, then people will make the wrong decisions. And I think it's really, really . . . It behooves all of us as MLAs to be honest and to be forthright with the people so that the people can make the right decisions.

I don't know who is playing music in the Assembly but it's interesting. Maybe it's that wind-down, I'm supposed to quit because the music has started, the band is playing? So it's the conductor playing the music at the Academy Awards that it's time for me to stop. I was just getting on a roll, and I was having quite a good time.

But, Mr. Speaker, I know there's other members who want to speak and I'm quite anxious to hear their comments. Many of my colleagues have lots of interesting things to say and interesting views and interesting points to bring up from the Throne Speech. And I then would like to say, in closing my remarks, I will be supporting the amendment and not supporting the main motion.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Silver Springs, the Minister Responsible for First Nations and Métis Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed a pleasure to enter into this debate on the Speech from the Throne and to represent the people of Saskatoon Silver Springs in this constituency.

I want to begin, like most members do with thanking their families for the opportunity to serve in the legislature. You need a supportive family, and I certainly have that in my wife Trish, who has her own career as a professional broadcaster but also takes part in many, many activities. She's busy right now working towards the cancer fundraiser that's happening this weekend in Saskatoon called Choc'laCure, where they work with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency and see what types of new material they need or new machines they need, and they fundraise specifically for that one area.

And that's what she is doing, and as well as running our kids around to different activities and being a great mother that she is. My son, Carter, a very exciting weekend. Carter participated in the city finals of peewee football. Mr. Speaker, it doesn't get more exciting than that, 11 and 12-year-olds running around, playing football. City final, 0-0 at the end. Into overtime, double overtime, and his Peewee Falcons lost to the Steelers in Saskatoon. But a great league, the Kinsmen Football League. And he did very, very well.

My daughter, not to be out-done. Paige swims with the Goldfins in Saskatoon and had a meet this weekend at the beautiful Shaw Centre in Saskatoon. And I understand she made a couple of personal bests, so I congratulate her as well.

In thanking my family I have to thank my mom who wasn't able to make it to the legislature for the Speech from the Throne. She likes to be here, but she wasn't able to make it this

year. But I always want to thank her for her support and, yes, I think it is the first time . . . [inaudible] . . . She always says that she spends her days watching the legislature in the afternoon and watching the Chicago Blackhawks at night, and she's often asked what's more exciting. I think we can all answer that question. But nevertheless she continues to tune in and to try to understand what members opposite are asking of the government.

I also want to thank my CA, constituency assistant. I've had a very, very loyal constituency assistant for many years, Beth Epp, who has moved on to a new challenge, to a new career in the private sector and doing very well in Saskatoon. And I want to welcome a new CA, Travis Low, who comes to my constituency office from the financial sector, and himself a real contributor to his community. He recently organized a fundraiser — he's in his 20s, a very young man — but he recently organized a fundraiser for Parkinson's that had 500 people attend. He asked the member from Melfort to be the guest speaker. The member from Melfort did a terrific job for Parkinson's and talking about it.

[15:30]

I want to thank people from my ministerial office as well: Marlin, Jacquie, Jared, Kim, Annie, Marlene, people that continue to work each and every day to make sure that we have the research and the information that we need to do our job and that I need to do my job here in the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I want to welcome my good friend, the member for Saskatoon Northwest. He will add a real presence to this Assembly. He did very, very well in the election. I had a chance, an opportunity to meet some of his constituents, to do some door knocking. And I knew that he would increase the plurality in that constituency, increase the popular vote. And he did that for many reasons, Mr. Speaker, most of all because of his own personal career, his work that he has done in the city of Saskatoon as a school board member.

I had an opportunity to interact with him when we were trying to get schools in Saskatoon under that NDP government. Also the member had a stellar career as a city councillor in Saskatoon. And to him, I appreciate his friendship. I look forward to him being a colleague in the legislature, and I know that he will have a very rewarding career. And he will be here a long, long time, members say. And I agree with that, and I know that he will enjoy this career.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about this new road that was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. It's a new road that gives us direction and commitment for the government to the people of Saskatchewan. It's a new road indeed that people want to travel in our province. They want a road that makes for a better life for each and every person. And, Mr. Speaker, it gets away from that pursuit of mediocrity that we had under the NDP for 16 long years in Saskatchewan.

On this new road, Mr. Speaker, our government is taking action to ensure that important resources such as potash are managed in the best interests of the people of Saskatchewan. Now I'm sure I speak on behalf of all members in the Assembly that we are very, very proud of the Premier and the job that he has done.

Not only has . . .

[Applause]

You bet. Not only has he shown leadership and statesmanship, Mr. Speaker, for our province, but I would argue for our country as well. And that is echoed by some of his own colleagues.

Let's look at what Premier Ed Stelmach had to say in Alberta. He said, "The potash resource belongs to the people of Saskatchewan and it's of very strategic importance, not only to Saskatchewan but to the New West Partnership and really to all of Canada." Premier Stelmach said, "Working with Premier Wall, I am confident in him. There's certainly many aspects to deal with regarding this matter, but I really do support his position."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we see that echoed not only by Premier Stelmach, but by Premier Selinger as well in Manitoba, Premier Charest in Quebec.

And, Mr. Speaker, we can look to the newspapers, the national newspapers in this country on this very day, where they say the country owes a debt of gratitude to the work . . . No matter what the decision is out of Ottawa, the country owes a debt of gratitude to the Premier of Saskatchewan for the work that he has done. It's today. Members opposite may not have had a chance to read the *National Post* or *The Globe and Mail* today, but they can see that that is indeed what the national papers are saying about our Premier and about our leader.

It's an honour and privilege to represent my constituents here in the legislature. Saskatchewan we know is growing, and nowhere is that seen more so than in the constituency of Saskatoon Silver Springs. The constituency will be almost double its size from 2003 to 2011 in the next election. The increase is tremendous.

And I see it as I go and I meet those new constituents. They're people that come from Alberta. They come from Manitoba. They come from Ontario. They come from England, from Germany. They come to Saskatchewan to start a new life, to take part in this very growing and thriving economy, Mr. Speaker. But what they have in common, and I know from talking to them and going on their doorsteps, what they all have in common is that they're certainly not NDP.

They often ask me to go through Saskatchewan political history and explain to them what exactly the NDP was all about and to explain why we stood still in Saskatchewan for many, many years when members opposite were in government. Thankfully that won't happen again for a very, very long time.

Mr. Speaker, I had a chance to give many speeches this summer across the province and to talk to many people, and one number that came up time and time again — 1,045,622 people, an increase of some 50,000 people from January 1, 2007. People are anxious to get on this new road in Saskatchewan. They're anxious to work with this government. They're planning for growth in the province, not like planning for decline that happened under the NDP.

When you have a growing constituency, you need infrastructure. You need schools. You need highways. You need health care. Let's talk about schools in my constituency. And I will give the opposition credit that the growth started when it was under them. It was modest growth, but nevertheless in areas such as Saskatoon Silver Springs there was some growth.

But what was the answer from the NDP opposite when a new school was needed in Arbor Creek in the heart of my constituency? The answer: a resounding no, we can't do it. We can't provide those schools for people that are moving to our province and moving into constituencies like Saskatoon Silver Springs, Mr. Speaker. Arbor Creek, the NDP said no.

Our government, our commitment for the future is to plan for growth. We have a very thriving and growing area in my constituency called Willowgrove. Willowgrove, the city of Saskatoon thought that it would fill up, it would take about 10 years to fill up that neighbourhood. Well it's well ahead of schedule. Many hundreds of children are growing up there.

What was needed? Two schools were needed in the Willowgrove area of Saskatoon. What did the Sask Party government have to say? What did the Deputy Premier say when he was minister of Education? He said, you betcha. The people of Saskatchewan need schools. They need education. They need to send a sign to people that are moving to our province and to this constituency that Saskatchewan is a place to bring your family, to raise your family, to start your careers.

Mr. Speaker, some 1,000 new homes in my constituency, 2010 — May 1st, 2010 over 2009. Now we're seeing a new neighbourhood coming forward, the Evergreen neighbourhood. And every so often I get that burning political question in my constituency when I go to the doors. That burning political question is, when are we getting a Tim Hortons in Saskatoon Silver Springs? Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say even, under the Saskatchewan Party government, even the number of Tim Hortons are thriving, and we just had the announcement of the opening of the new Tim Hortons in our area not too long ago.

Mr. Speaker, it is indeed something of a privilege to talk about the interesting times that we live in and the services that we'll be able to provide for people in the province. And when I do go door to door, they talk about health care. They talk about health care concerns. And I know my seatmate from Indian Head-Milestone addressed many of those questions that the members opposite bring forward.

They're also very, very excited about the future in Saskatchewan and some of the health care initiatives that are undertaken. And I know my constituents, along with everyone here in the province, are very excited about the commitment to a new children's hospital in Saskatchewan. Well the member opposite, when she was talking about it, she gave again today reasons why for 16 years they couldn't make a contribution, they couldn't build. They promised a children's hospital in Saskatchewan, but what happened in the day that they left office? Only Saskatchewan and Prince Edward Island were the two provinces that didn't have a children's hospital.

Well what happened here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, in the

last couple of years? Two hundred million dollars was given to the Saskatoon Health Region for the construction of the first ever children's hospital of Saskatchewan. The children are our future, and I've heard from many of my constituents that indeed this is one of the most memorable and significant contributions that our government can make and has made, Mr. Speaker.

It has taken the work of many volunteers for several years to make this dream a reality. I look to the Children's Health Foundation, formerly the Children's Health and Hospital Foundation, and the good work that they have done. And I know people from my constituency . . . The Chair of the board is Grant Kook, a resident of Saskatoon Silver Springs. Deb Wiegers lives in the constituency and has served on the board, and my good friend Brynn Boback-Lane as well. We're all very, very proud to see that that children's hospital is a reality.

Mr. Speaker, many other areas of health care, and we lead with innovation. We lead with best practices. And we look at what's happening now and, as announced in the Throne Speech, the shock trauma air rescue service, STARS, helicopter emergency medical services that will be available to the entire province and make a very positive response in the emergency response times that are necessary.

Now I don't know. I heard the member opposite from Saskatoon Eastview. I wasn't sure if she was in favour of it or not, and maybe other members can expound upon it. But I think that's something that we can be very, very proud of. And yes, we talked about this. The member from Melfort talked about it many years ago and the opportunity just wasn't there to proceed. But the opportunity now is here to proceed with that and again that will enhance the lives and the well-being of Saskatchewan residents. And I know with my duties as Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs and talking to people in the North that they are quite excited about it as well.

Keeping on the theme of health care, Mr. Speaker, the new road, our government's commitment to \$5 million to fund clinical trials for the MS liberation procedure is something that we can all be proud of.

I don't know about other members in the Chamber here, but it's not very often that you get people walking up to you on the street and saying thank you. And indeed that's what happened and I'm sure it happened to members opposite and members on this side of the House when people thought about the leadership that the Premier demonstrated by announcing the clinical trials that'll happen here in Saskatchewan. Those people, unsolicited, came up and said thank you for being part of a government, part of a government led by the Premier, that will take this procedure and bring it to Saskatchewan. And not only talk about it, but fund those clinical procedures and enhance the lives of people in Saskatchewan. That's something, Mr. Speaker, that I indeed am very, very proud of and I know other members share that pride as well.

Our government has surpassed the campaign promise for 800 new nurses in Saskatchewan. We continue to recruit and retain more nurses and physicians in rural and urban Saskatchewan, and I think that's something that we can take great pride in. Not only did we have the foresight to put goals in place, but we announced that we would do everything possible to meet those

goals, to exceed those goals, and that is indeed what has happened, led by our Minister of Health.

Third party delivery of outpatient surgical services now available in the Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatoon Surgicentre. I know in talking to residents of the Saskatoon Silver Springs constituency and, whether they be seniors or others, they said, cut the political philosophy. You know, we don't need to debate the philosophy of health care. Let's just talk about outcomes. How can we enhance the quality of life of those people that built this province? How can we do it?

Well one way we can do it is by reducing their waiting times. Not only are we talking about it, Mr. Speaker, it's done. It's a promise made and it'll be a promise kept. We'll reduce surgical wait times to a maximum of three months by 2014, and I think that's something that all members of this House can take pride in, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I use this opportunity very often to talk about business and the thriving economy we have in Saskatchewan, and today I'm only just going to touch on it to say, why do we work so hard to ensure that we have an economy that is thriving, that is leading the country in many aspects, whether you look at jobs or gross domestic product or whatever indicator you look at? We work so hard at that so we can provide for the increase in quality of life for people in Saskatchewan. And that's indeed what we are doing.

I want to touch on my new responsibilities as minister in charge of First Nations and Métis Relations and Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs. First Nations and Métis people, we have incredible leaders in those areas in Saskatchewan and it indeed has been a pleasure to work with them, to talk about the challenges going forward, to talk about their goals and their aspirations. And, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the leaders of First Nations and Métis community, what they want for their people are the same things that we want for all people of Saskatchewan. They want them to have jobs. They want to make sure that they have a great education.

That is indeed what we are doing. And we have a commitment to pre-kindergarten programs for vulnerable three- and four-year-olds across our province. Already 75 such programs exist; 3,680 children have been added and taken part in programs like this.

We also want to make sure that when something does happen, when we do have a disaster, that we are there to support Saskatchewan residents. And very soon after I became Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, I had the opportunity to go out and meet with the people of Kawacatoose to talk to them and to hear what, you know, how they are dealing with the tornado, the devastating effects of it. And I can tell you that they're very, very tough people on that First Nation, people that were very willing to pick up the pieces, but they're also very appreciative of what their government was doing.

And I arrived at that First Nation a couple of days after the tornado, and what did they tell me? They told me that the member from Wood River, my colleague, the Minister of Corrections and Public Safety, had already been there. Many of his staff had already been there. The ministry had been working

and already putting the pieces back together and that started a relationship I think of sound partnership between the government and First Nations across Saskatchewan.

[15:45]

And we had many discussions to show that that's why we work so hard to build an economy, so we do have the wherewithal to address the needs of communities. And whether it was Maple Creek or whether it was Yorkton or whether it was North Battleford or Kawacatoose, this government did a job that I think all of us can be very, very proud of.

Mr. Speaker, we enhanced the provincial disaster program. We ensured that, whatever the events that we're challenged with, that we have a government that responds not only very quickly but in a way that is equitable and a way that shows leadership across the country.

Another area I had an opportunity to participate in, and the first time for me in my responsibilities as Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, was the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] assembly that took place last week at the Dakota Dunes Casino. Chiefs from all over the province, some 74 were there, and I had an opportunity to talk about our government's commitment to Aboriginal educational outcomes, how a growing economy is the best way to enhance the life for all people in our province.

And, Mr. Speaker, they certainly agreed. I heard concerns from chiefs around the province who want the same thing for their children as we do — an education, a good job, a prosperous future — and we agreed that together we will make that vision come true.

This is a momentous year for First Nations and Métis people especially in Saskatchewan. 2010 is the Year of the Métis, and celebrations have been happening all over the province. One of the highlights of my summer was going out to Batoche to the Back to Batoche celebrations. And I was joined there by John Duncan who is the new federal Minister of INAC [Indian and Northern Affairs Canada], and Michael Ignatieff was there as the Opposition Leader. And many Saskatchewan members of parliament from the government were there as well, and the member from Cumberland was also in attendance. And we are now working on, as the Deputy Speaker will know, we're looking at installing a Métis symbol in this legislature to signify the 125th anniversary of the North-West Resistance.

As a government, we have released our consultation policy framework which honours our duty to consult with treaty and Aboriginal rights. We are also looking at launching our exploratory phase that will bring together Métis people, First Nations, and industry to work on issues that are not addressed by the consultation policy framework.

It has been a year of growth and opportunity in northern Saskatchewan. The new northern enterprise regions are up and running, and we know that that they will continue to do so as we embark upon this new road. First Nations and Métis and northern residents will continue to add and to prosper in this province. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to have this responsibility and to work with individuals across the province,



that add so much to our communities and to our province as a whole.

Also I have the opportunity to work with the Gaming Corporation. Gaming Corporation is a community and industry leader in the province. They are committed to providing quality entertainment for the people of Saskatchewan in a responsible manner. They are champions of corporate social responsibility.

In 2009 Sask Gaming donated over \$670,000, Mr. Speaker, to community groups, non-profit organizations, including more than \$130,000 in sponsorships for Aboriginal groups and Aboriginal people. Last year Sask Gaming transferred \$25.4 million to the General Revenue Fund, and the money was used for commitments like the Community Initiatives Fund, the First Nations Trust, and the Métis Development Fund. And, Mr. Speaker, in 2009 Sask Gaming introduced a responsible gaming program which outlines players' responsibilities, staff training, guest access to information, and our commitment to ensure that guests participate in self-exclusion decisions. Sask Gaming contributed to the more than \$5.5 million being spent on problem gaming prevention here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Sask Gaming is also proud of another fact. They are the Crown that has the highest percentage of Aboriginal employees in the government. Some 42 per cent of employees at Gaming Corporation are of Aboriginal descent. And they continue to work very well and to use their experience oftentimes in Gaming Corporation as a launching pad for other careers in our province. And I just think that that's a job that is done very well by Gaming.

Gaming has introduced an ethics training program, a confidential reporting hotline, and a website, that we are committed to providing a safe, secure place for employees and guests to continue to work.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government has the fortitude to make decisions. We're getting things done. On this new road, Mr. Speaker, we are paying less in property taxes in Saskatchewan. We have the largest education property tax decrease ever in Saskatchewan's history. Mr. Speaker, in the Throne Speech, we announced that we will be implementing the final phase of our education tax reduction plan for a further \$58 million in reductions. Municipalities will finally have a stable source of government funding with the announcement in the Throne Speech, and yet another promise fulfilled by this Saskatchewan Party government.

Mr. Speaker, I know colleagues of mine take great pride when they come into the city of Saskatoon. And the mayor cannot give a speech without thanking the government for the work that we have done to provide money for infrastructure, to provide money for bridges, to provide money to ensure that we have the infrastructure necessary for a growing city such as Saskatoon is. Very pleased to hear the news yesterday in Saskatoon that Mr. K. Nasser is stepping up and will be the lead proponent of the River Landing facility in Saskatoon. And we all, I know, wish that group very, very well and Mr. Nasser and his group of local investors in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, with \$1.7 billion to highways and upgrades over the past number of years, our roads have surpassed our

government's commitment to dedicate 100 per cent of fuel tax revenues to highway repairs. Our highways will ensure that we do have a smooth road forward as we embark upon this new road, Mr. Speaker.

We can have the assurance as well that it'll be done in a fiscally responsible manner, Mr. Speaker, as our government has reduced the debt, the GRF [General Revenue Fund] debt, in the province by some \$2.7 billion. A government that keeps its utility costs among the lowest in Canada. We can tell Saskatchewan people that we have a remarkable period of growth and prosperity in the last several years. But we will continue to have, as our focus, the increase in their standard of living.

So Mr. Speaker, with that, I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to address the Speech from the Throne. And I can tell you; I'm very excited about the new road that it talks about. I know that there is no turning back on that old road of mediocrity that the NDP had us on for 16 years, Mr. Speaker.

We have a province that is led by a Premier who is leading this province and also leading this country in many respects. I am proud to be led by the Premier. His vision for Saskatchewan is moving us forward on this new road. Mr. Speaker, I am very, very pleased to vote in favour of the Throne Speech today, and I thank you for this opportunity.

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

**Mr. Stewart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to say very clearly that it is a great honour for me to speak in response to the 2010 Speech from the Throne on behalf of the people of Thunder Creek — people who are productive, hardworking and committed to our country and our province; people who work on farms and ranches and businesses and some who are various agencies of government and non-profit organizations throughout the length and breadth of one of the largest constituencies in the South; people who are honest and hardworking and no-nonsense.

And their approach to their work, the issues we grapple with as a government and life in general, Mr. Speaker, they don't have much patience for a lot of what happens in this place. They just don't see some of it as very productive. And I know that they only support me in the way that they have because they recognize that I am one of them. What I say in this place is far less important to them than what I do when I'm not here. I respect that, Mr. Speaker. And I'm always proud to represent those great people and call many of them my friends.

I want also to take a minute to recognize the sacrifices that have been made by my family so that I could give a few years of my time to be a small part of this government that is making Saskatchewan a much better place to live, work, and to raise a family than it has ever been, Mr. Speaker. There have been occasions over the years that I've not been available when my family would've liked me to be. But they have always remained supportive of what I am trying to do here because they understand what I am trying to accomplish for this province that I care so deeply about.

Our farm suffered profoundly in the early years that I was elected because I could no longer find the time to properly manage it, let alone do much of the work and do justice to my MLA responsibilities. Still, Linda, Alison, and Lee stand behind me and continue to sacrifice, and I thank them from the bottom of my heart. The good news is, Mr. Speaker, that my son Lee is recently married and back on the farm as a partner, and the farm is growing again. But this life certainly takes a toll on families and businesses, and we ought never forget that.

I'd like to take a minute to welcome our new colleague from Saskatoon Northwest. I know that he will be a great MLA and a great member of this government. And he's a pleasure to deal with. He's a modest, quiet individual with a great track record of success in everything he's done. He'll be a tremendous asset to the province of Saskatchewan.

This Speech from the Throne talks, Mr. Speaker, about the old road that Saskatchewan was on under the members opposite in those dark and dismal days when they formed the government of this province. We saw our roads and highways fall into disrepair in a manner that was unprecedented in the history of this or any other province. Mr. Speaker, a billion dollar infrastructure deficit is the legacy of the NDP.

On the new road, Mr. Speaker, we actually see new roads and many thousand kilometres of roads that have been rebuilt or repaired. And that work goes on under our government and will need to go on for many years to make up for the neglect of the previous NDP government.

On the old road, the NDP closed 52 rural hospitals, chased doctors and nurses to other jurisdictions, closed the Plains Health Centre in Regina, starved health care to the extent that Saskatchewan had the longest surgical wait-lists in the country. On the new road, our government has added 130 nurse training seats with 170 more on the way. We have recruited 830 additional nurses that are now working throughout the province. Our government has established the Physician Recruitment Agency to help bring additional doctors into the province. Also, Mr. Speaker, our government is taking steps to substantially increase the number of physician training seats and residency seats so that Saskatchewan young people can be trained in medicine right here at home.

As well, Mr. Speaker, our government is providing a leadership role in funding clinical trials for those of our citizens who are afflicted with MS [multiple sclerosis], a move that was courageous of our Premier to be out in front of every other jurisdiction on this file. The initiative has since gathered support from across the nation as an idea whose time has surely come.

On the new road, Mr. Speaker, our government will provide a significant expansion of emergency medical services in co-operation with STARS, or shock trauma air rescue service of Alberta. This is a helicopter-based, EMS [emergency medical services] system with most of the assets on board the helicopters that are available in emergency rooms. This service will surely save countless lives in our province as it has in Alberta.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, surgical wait times are being shortened,

and our government has set ambitious targets for further reductions.

On the old road, Mr. Speaker, Olympians and Paralympians received no help from the former NDP government, as they claimed to not have money for such frivolity. But at the same time, that former NDP government managed to find the money to invest hundreds of millions of taxpayers' dollars into businesses, losing in excess of \$320 million of that money. On the new road, our government will support high-performance athletes to the tune of \$6,000 a year in addition to any other programs that may exist, either federal or provincial.

On the new road, Saskatchewan is a leader in the New West, an association of our three most western provinces which together are telling the impressive story of Western Canada to the world. On the old road, fraught with potholes and left turns, the former NDP government was jealous of our western neighbours and frankly, Mr. Speaker, didn't have much of a story to tell themselves.

[16:00]

My constituency is one of if not the most agricultural constituencies in the province, Mr. Speaker. This has been an exceptionally difficult year for our agriculture producers with cool weather and rainfall all spring, summer, and fall that far surpassed all previous records in the province. Our producers fought the good fight and made the best of it that they could. I'm very proud to see a renewed commitment in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, to irrigation infrastructure by our government, spending that will generate more economic spinoff in the medium and long term than any other kind of infrastructure spending that I can think of.

The new road is the high road, Mr. Speaker. In July we worked with the federal government to make \$360 million available to farmers with flooded cropland. The excess moisture program, the EMP, provided \$30 per eligible acre for cropland unseeded as of June 20th and cropland flooded out as of July 31st. The program also included coverage for forages seeded in both 2009 and 2010 that failed to establish due to flooding in 2010; land that was intended to be seeded to forage in 2010 but could not be seeded because of excess moisture. The excess moisture program was cost shared federally and provincially. The provincial share is the largest one-time provincial response to an agriculture disaster in our Saskatchewan history.

In his July 9th commentary on several Saskatchewan radio stations, Kevin Hursh said, and I quote:

Rarely do governments act so quickly and decisively . . . The extra assistance is significant, particularly when added to the Unseeded Acreage Payments and Establishment Benefits available through crop insurance.

The crop insurance benefits he was referring to have already provided an additional quarter billion dollars to Saskatchewan producers over and above the EMP program.

The NDP fail to recognize the significance of this support. That is likely because they provided little help to producers in their 16 years in government. In 2005 and 2007 under similar

circumstances, at least in part of the province, Mr. Speaker, the NDP provided no support. In 2006 they offered \$10 per acre, which resulted in only \$15 million in support. So it is understandable that they would fail to understand the support we have provided to our agricultural producers.

Kevin Hursh also said in his commentary, and I quote again, Mr. Speaker:

There will always be some who says the assistance should have been greater. That's the stance [he says] taken by NDP Leader Dwain Lingenfelter, but past NDP governments were reluctant to cost share even the existing farm safety nets and their response to disasters was to beat up on Ottawa for not fixing the problem.

This is a government that is truly working to address the needs of producers, not paying lip service and playing politics like the members opposite. In addition to this support, farm and ranch families continue to benefit from the largest education tax reduction in our province's history, as do all families, urban or rural.

The NDP don't like it when we talk about education tax on farm land, Mr. Speaker, because it's one thing they failed to address when they were on this side of the House. They promised to fix it often enough, starting back as early as the mid-1940s when a young premier named Tommy Douglas promised to address the inequities of the property tax system as soon as finances allowed. Well, Mr. Speaker, every NDP premier since made a similar promise.

But no action was ever taken until our Saskatchewan Party government was elected in 2007. It wasn't even on the radar of members opposite, Mr. Speaker. They even stopped making empty promises before the 2007 campaign about the issue. They'd given up. We are going a different direction on the new road. We addressed education tax by implementing phase 1 of our plan in the 2009 budget, and we'll implement phase 2 in the near future.

On the old road, Mr. Speaker, aside from education tax there were a number of other things the NDP did not do to help farm and ranch families. They did not improve crop insurance. They did not address disasters including drought, or they did not adequately compensate producers for damage to crops and livestock caused by wildlife. They did not commit to fully funding their share of agriculture programs, often. They did not want to administer farm programs provincially. They did not help producers address gopher problems. They did not fix roads and highways. We have done all these things, Mr. Speaker.

So what did the NDP do, would be the logical question. The NDP did close 31 rural Ag offices which includes 22 extension offices in 2004. They told people to call a toll-free line. They told farmers in rural Saskatchewan that the Internet had the answers they needed, where they hadn't bothered to take any measures to provide high-speed Internet, by the way.

They closed the doors and threw away the keys. They cut the GRIP [gross revenue insurance program] program as one of their first orders of business when they formed government in 1991, Mr. Speaker, after contracts had already been signed by

producers. They were quick to promise they would replace it with something better, but yet again that was just an empty promise that was never fulfilled.

The NDP did increase crop insurance premiums and decreased coverage. The NDP cut spot-loss hail, not once, but twice in their history. They now like to talk about how great spot-loss hail is, but it was their own government that axed it twice previously. They claimed their budget cuts were responsible, yet they still found money to invest in private business. The NDP lost significant taxpayers' dollars in private investments — \$320 million, Mr. Speaker, and still counting. But they couldn't afford to address education tax, fix roads, fully fund agriculture programs.

On this side of the House, we continue to address the needs of farmers, ranchers, and rural Saskatchewan. We do not just sit back and lay the blame on the federal government the way the members opposite do. This is a new road in the new West where Saskatchewan is a leader. In addition to the \$360 million in the emergency moisture program, we have implemented many agricultural initiatives since forming government. And I congratulate our Minister of Agriculture as well as our government as a whole for these measures.

We implemented a farm and ranch water infrastructure program. This program provides funding to help farmers, ranchers, and RMs develop long-term water supply such as dugouts, wells, and pipelines. This program was originally targeted to the Southwest to help address a drought — something the NDP refused to acknowledge even existed. It is now a province-wide, four-year \$53 million program.

Last year we provided \$71 million to over 18,000 cattle and hog producers through the cattle and hog support program. We did this without assistance from the federal government.

We have substantially improved the crop insurance program. We now provide 100 per cent compensation for wildlife damage. We have also improved the program to include coverage for swath, corn, and bale grazing damaged by wildlife. In addition, livestock producers who have animals killed or injured by predators are now eligible for compensation. We introduced a gopher control rebate program which compensates producers for up to 50 per cent of the cost of gopher control products.

We are now administering the AgriStability program provincially in crop insurance. This after years of producer dissatisfaction with wait times and processing complications, which the NDP ignored. We have expanded our extension services including opening three new offices. We offer further programming through the growth of the Growing Forward framework to assist producers including voluntary livestock traceability rebate, farm business development initiative, and environmental farm program. Our government is fully funding agricultural programs. This was a promise made and another promise kept.

As I said, Mr. Speaker, we are investing 30 million over the next 10 years to rehabilitate and restore irrigation infrastructure. This includes \$1 million this year for work on the M1 canal at Lake Diefenbaker. The NDP would not re-invest in this

infrastructure, similar to highways, hospitals, and schools.

This Throne Speech lays out the direction of our government and is a direction that will continue to work for farmers and ranchers and rural Saskatchewan.

Recently we were informed by PotashCorp that they were to be the subject of a hostile takeover by BHP Billiton of Australia. This company is well known for predatory pricing and refuses to market their products through Canpotex. Our government subsequently contracted the Conference Board of Canada and a major law firm specializing in hostile takeovers to advise us.

A review was subsequently conducted to determine how such a takeover would affect Saskatchewan. The review focused on three key areas: (1), strategic interests of the province and the nation; (2), jobs; and (3), implications for provincial royalties and taxes. After this careful review, Mr. Speaker, it was determined that the Billiton bid does not meet any of the three criteria.

The Conference Board of Canada determined that the Billiton takeover places at serious risk 750 permanent jobs and over 8,000 person-years of construction work, also up to \$200 million per year revenue reduction to the province as Billiton writes off interest costs for the acquisition, and a possible \$570 million in lost revenue to the province annually as Billiton run their new asset flat out and take world price in a flooded market. As the Conference Board suggests, this takeover would reduce the world price of potash by up to 60 per cent.

The NDP position on this matter is a two-headed, job-killing monster that combines the NDP's failed nationalization policy of the 1970s with dramatically ramping up royalties to further decimate the industry. The Leader of the Opposition led the NDP charge in the 1990s to give away the so-called golden share that would have given the province some say in the affairs of PotashCorp. And he was so successful at that that he led the charge to do the same with Wascana Energy, earning himself a vice-presidency with Nexen after they promptly took over Wascana.

Last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, the NDP voted with the government to adopt our potash plan as the unified position of the province. Now, not knowing what else to do, they say we have no plan for potash. Clearly they thought we did last Thursday, Mr. Speaker, and they supported our plan then. We would certainly have a better chance of convincing the federal government of the wisdom of our potash position if the NDP would stop playing politics with this crucial resource and support our plan consistently.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker, I will be taking the new road, the high road. And I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne, and I will not support the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to respond to the Speech from the Throne. And immediately preceding me was the member from Thunder Creek who said

that after his speech he would be taking the high road. And I know we all look forward to seeing him do that, Mr. Speaker, and maybe in his next speech, Mr. Speaker.

The Throne Speech. This year's Throne Speech along with last year's Throne Speech from the Sask Party government started to establish a pattern, Mr. Speaker: one part revisionist history, and we're hearing some of that revisionist history in speeches from members of the government; one part smoke and mirrors on deficit and debt; and one part one really bad idea.

And last year, the really bad idea was restricting access to clean needles to those people most susceptible to HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] and Hepatitis C. I know that there are people who think those people actually deserve to die. I know this because I have read letters to the editor of my hometown newspaper. And the government's proposal in last year's Throne Speech to restrict access to clean needles to those people most susceptible to HIV and Hepatitis C, whatever the government's intent, seemed to pander to the most mean-spirited among us.

And this year's really bad idea is to restrict the right to vote of those least engaged citizens in our society, those without the connections to our society and to our economy that many of us take for granted. At best, Mr. Speaker, at best this demonstrates a lack of appreciation for the central importance of citizenship in a democratic society. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that's too high-blown rhetoric on my part.

[16:15]

In defence of this proposal, the Attorney General said yesterday and I quote:

There will be an obligation on people to establish their identity. So they would be well-advised to have their affairs in order so that they are able to establish their identity and comply with the regulations.

Mr. Speaker, does that sound like a speech made by the leader of a democratic society? People would be well-advised to have their affairs in order so they can establish their identity and comply with the regulations. Does that sound like the democratic spirit, Mr. Speaker? I don't think it does. I think it has a whiff of the authoritarian about it, Mr. Speaker, just at least a whiff of the authoritarian about it. And that seems to represent the government's attitude towards citizenship and citizenship as the core identity of residents of a democratic society.

At worst, at worst this proposal, if it proceeds into law, will limit the franchise of those least engaged in our society, disenfranchise those who are already less connected to civil society and to the economy than we would desire that they be.

The government primarily . . . This government, this Sask Party government, primarily sees residents of the province of Saskatchewan as taxpayers or not, as customers and clients of government, as consumers more than citizens, Mr. Speaker. And that is the language of this government. And I think the Minister of Justice, the Attorney General yesterday gave it all away when he compared the right to vote with the ability to

open a bank account. Mr. Speaker, that was his analogy.

The fact is that we are citizens whether we have a bank account or not. And if we are citizens, we have the right to vote. And we are citizens whether or not we own a house. And we are citizens whether or not we travel and possess a passport. And we are citizens whether or not we drive and have a driver's licence. And because we are citizens, we have the right to vote — not because we have the identity papers necessary to comply with the regulations and to open a bank account, Mr. Speaker.

And those of us who do have photo ID [identification] in our wallets or in our homes are familiar with the scrutiny that accompanies the use of that ID because of what that ID represents, Mr. Speaker. If you have a driver's licence, the driver's licence represents the privilege to drive and the responsibilities to drive. And we know the scrutiny that would be applied to our driver's licence by an officer of the law and the scrutiny that would be applied by, quite properly, by Saskatchewan Government Insurance about whether one should . . . and the courts, about whether one should continue to have that privilege or not, Mr. Speaker. And if you have a passport and you travel with your passport, you know what scrutiny other countries will apply to the users of a passport who are asking to be guests in that other country.

And when, I think, last summer I travelled to South Dakota for the Midwest Legislative Conference . . . And it was an interesting conference. There were a lot of members of this legislature there — so many members from the government that I wondered who was doing the work of government at the time. And then I shook my head. I mean that was silly of me. I got over that quite quickly. But when I drove up to the border, I was asked one question. I was asked one question by the customs officer for the United States: had I ever been arrested? He didn't ask me if I'd ever been convicted. He didn't ask me if I had a criminal record. Well actually I could answer that question differently than some ministers of the Crown can answer that question, Mr. Speaker, so I'm not sure how much abuse I want to take from members opposite because I could say no.

But he didn't ask me if I had a criminal record. He didn't ask me that question because I think Americans believe we hand out pardons in this country like cotton candy, and I think some members of this Assembly have figured that out as well, that that might indeed be the case. And I wonder if the former MLA from Saskatoon Northwest could have got to Rapid City, South Dakota as easily as I did, Mr. Speaker, because of the question that was asked.

But that scrutiny makes sense, Mr. Speaker, because driving is a privilege that bears responsibilities, and travelling to another country is asking to be a guest of that country. And you're going to have that kind of scrutiny, Mr. Speaker, and in these days increasingly more so. But voting is not a privilege; it is a right. And a society of another country requires a passport; voting in this country, in this province, should not, Mr. Speaker.

Now the government is justifying this proposal of photo identification for voters, arguing in part that it's very similar to what the federal Conservative government has decided to do. And we believe here, like on potash, they will eventually buckle under to anything the federal Conservatives want to do, as it did

on equalization, Mr. Speaker. But in the last federal election there were people who, realizing that there are a number of lower income people in Saskatoon who would be disenfranchised because they didn't have the sufficient identification papers as the Attorney General required here in provincial elections, sufficient identity papers to comply with the regulations of the federal government and would lose their vote, even though they were citizens of this country, even though they were born in this country, even though in many of their cases their ancestors for thousands of years had been born here, before there was a country, Mr. Speaker, they would lose their right to vote.

And I know of at least one individual who was harassed. And he had a small business, and he was in position to be harassed not because he was trying to get people to vote who weren't entitled to vote, but because he was trying to assist people to vote for the first time who needed identification papers. And he was a member of the middle class, used to the system, was helping them do that, Mr. Speaker — and courageously so, as it turns out.

If this proposal becomes law, Mr. Speaker, it would facilitate and assist the people who had harassed someone for trying to assist his fellow citizens in exercising their right to vote, Mr. Speaker. It would raise barriers to those citizens. It would raise . . . And people who attempt to assist them with those barriers could come to attention, Mr. Speaker. And it's not like this hasn't happened. It happened in the last federal campaign. We know it happened, Mr. Speaker. And I'm not saying this legislation is designed to facilitate or assist people who would try to impede citizens from voting and exercising their franchise, but it very well could have that result, Mr. Speaker.

Now the Attorney General, after saying people would be well-advised to have their affairs in order and comply with the regulations, says that while we don't need to be concerned about what the Bill that they're going to bring forward says about photo identification because in regulations — in regulations — they'll have alternatives. Well, Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen the Bill yet, but put it in the Bill.

The Attorney General's, the Attorney General's assurance that he made yesterday, and I quote, that an alternative would be "enshrined in regulation" is not very reassuring at all. I know that the Attorney General, in opposition, wasn't very fond of regulation, Mr. Speaker. He wanted it in the Bill. And now he's raising regulation to the level of a constitution, Mr. Speaker. It's going to be enshrined in regulation. Well regulation, Mr. Speaker, as we know, is cabinet-made law and what cabinet can give, cabinet can take away.

This, Mr. Speaker, is a contemptible proposal and is defended by contemptible means. Both the Premier and the Attorney General state that they are aware, at least of rumours, that people have voted in different constituencies than which they live. But neither the Premier or the Attorney General back up those allegations, and back off when asked to do so.

The electoral office of Saskatchewan is unaware of this information that the Premier and the Attorney General seemed so concerned about. But even if such information was correct, even if there were cases of people voting in constituencies in

which they did not reside, enforce the law, Mr. Speaker. Enforce the law and prosecute the breach. Do not disenfranchise the innocent.

Now this proposal highlights another issue, Mr. Speaker, which I do not mean to suggest is nearly as important, as nearly as important as the legislation that's being proposed that would disenfranchise Saskatchewan citizens. It highlights the attitude of the majority Saskatchewan government towards the democratic traditions and conventions of this Assembly and this province.

Because we understand, Mr. Speaker, the reason that the Sask Party caucus has not been able to find a Chief Electoral Officer that they can support is because they cannot find somebody qualified for the job who supports photo ID, Mr. Speaker. And that's why we have an Acting Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Speaker, because that caucus, or at least that's part of the reason. That caucus wants, that government wants photo ID, and they don't want a Chief Electoral Officer who doesn't support that. And they can't find anybody qualified in the country who does support it, Mr. Speaker.

And that takes us back to the decision of this majority government to veto, to veto the non-partisan selection of the Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Speaker. It is all of one piece. And it has been years, it has been many, many years since election legislation was brought into this Assembly by any government without the concurrence, the advance concurrence of the opposition.

And that Attorney General, Mr. Speaker, said he would not do that this time. But he has. That's exactly what this legislation will be. It will be the first legislation brought in to change election rules in the province of Saskatchewan without the concurrence of the opposition, which the Attorney General promised he wasn't going to do. It was a precedent, a tradition, and a convention he was going to honour. And not only is he breaching it, he breached it in the Throne Speech.

Mr. Speaker, this is the high road that the members of that government brag about. This is the high road that they brag about: using their majority to play around with non-partisan officers of this legislature; using their majority to ram through changes to election rules; using their majority to disenfranchise the poorest and most vulnerable citizens of the province of Saskatchewan.

I will not be supporting the Speech from the Throne.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Regina Wascana Plains.

**Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to say to start off my response to the Speech from the Throne, it has been indeed an honour to serve the residents and members of my constituency of Regina Wascana Plains.

A huge thank you, of course, goes to my constituency assistant, Marie. And a thank you to our president, Sean Quinlan, and of course the constituency executive.

I know those in my constituency are anticipating some things,

and especially having to do with the initiative designed to cut red tape for Saskatchewan-based businesses. I know that in speaking with constituents, they're waiting to see the details of that particular initiative and are excited about it happening.

I want to speak also about, just take a few moments and speak about the growth that I have seen in my constituency over the last number of years. And a couple of months ago, we did notice that there were approximately 1,500 new postal code addresses in my constituency. And I do think that that speaks to the overall growth of this province — unprecedented growth of our province — and of course, the beautiful areas of east, southeast Regina, Pilot Butte, White City, Emerald Park.

I'd like to focus my attention in particular on what our government is doing and will be doing. I don't want to focus on what the NDP have done or what the NDP have not done because we'll be here until 10 o'clock tonight, with me speaking, of course.

[16:30]

I want to start initially with, of course, the issues surrounding our health care: fully funding the province's new children's hospital, amounting to \$200 million; exceeding, Mr. Speaker, exceeding a target of hiring 800 new nurses for the province.

And I know the members opposite were speaking about, there's not only just nurses in our health care system, and of course there are more than nurses in our health care system. However nurses are a pivotal and very important part of health care service delivery in this province and throughout North America. And us addressing this issue, and we know that there were issues surrounding the lack of nurses in our province — we couldn't keep them in the province; we couldn't get new nurses trained — has been an issue. And we certainly are on a great pathway to ensuring that we have an adequate number of nurses to service our health care delivery. Student nursing training seats — 130 added. And of course 170 more training seats on the way.

Working to reduce surgery wait times to no more than three months. In Saskatoon, patients wanting more than a year for hip and knee procedures has dropped by 71 per cent.

Expanding and enhancing emergency medical services through the helicopter bay shock trauma air rescue society, which another name for it is of course STARS, that we all know it by. Creation of a new health ombudsman.

Five million for MS liberation clinical trials, a first for Canada, Mr. Speaker. We believe that this is a leap worth taking for the potential benefit of those who suffer with this insidious disease.

A dedicated addiction agency and creation of an additional 100 long-term addiction recovery spaces. Establishment — and we know our Minister of Health has spoken to this extensively — of the physician recruitment agency. Innovative funding models to address a shortage of long-care beds through partnerships with reputable third party agencies.

Moving through to social services: 161 affordable housing units built or rejuvenated since October of '09; 175 housing units for

persons with intellectual disabilities had been completed or started since October '09. Awaiting recommendations of course from the independent panel tasked with reviewing the Saskatchewan child welfare system.

A new program called Head Start on a Home which will see the construction of 1,000 new, affordable homes over the next five years. Investment in public safety, telecommunications network that will ensure communities can maintain communications during emergencies.

Our promise of 120 new police officers is now 75 per cent complete. And I recall, Mr. Speaker, back in the 1990s, then premier Romanow made a promise to a group, a convention here in Regina that — and it was a group of police officers across Canada — where he made that promise to hire 200 new police officers. Mr. Speaker, that was in 1990, and again we did not see the promised number of police officers at that time. Our government made the promise and we are keeping that promise, Mr. Speaker.

A fight against organized crime and gangs will be expanded to our adult corrections centres. We recognize the issues, and again these are not easy problems to fix and to address. And the best ones to address it are, of course, the police with their related training. New whistle-blowers legislation will be introduced in the Saskatchewan public service through establishment of a new public disclosure commissioner. Complaints involving provincial court judges will be streamlined to provide increased transparency and accountability. Human rights legislation will increase the efficiency and fairness of the complaints process.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to touch very briefly on agriculture. The majority of my constituency is an urban constituency. However, people that live in my constituency, as in most places in Saskatchewan, have a rural base at some point in time in their lives. And they know what a cow looks like. Over 300 million to restore and repair irrigation infrastructure in the Lake Diefenbaker area. And of course historic education property tax reduction.

First Nations and Métis Relations. A commitment to improve educational outcomes for First Nations and Métis students. And I know that FSIN Chief Guy Lonechild believes, and justly so, that education is a key to the future for Aboriginal and Métis people in this province and throughout Canada. It is also the key for all people throughout Saskatchewan and throughout Canada.

A commitment to pre-kindergarten programs for vulnerable three- and four-year-olds across our province. Already 75 programs serving 3,680 children have been added.

First Nations and Métis partners are part of a new and innovative approach to development of our northern forest under a new forestry management agreement.

A new program for high-performance athletes. And I know in my time as minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport, this was something that came to the forefront repeatedly over my term in there, that they needed, they need support, financial support. Athletes, you know, athletes who have the potential to

... [inaudible interjection] ... Yes, that's very funny. He referred to my member, one of my colleagues, as having, as needing this particular funding to the tune of \$6,000 a year.

And we all know that high-performance athletes, high-performance athletes — and I know Greg, my colleague, is probably looking forward to this injection — that we know that athletes, especially high-performance athletes, are virtually living at the poverty line and trying to pursue excellence in their area. And I'm sure \$6000 a year will definitely help them pursue their goals.

We worked to begin identifying locations for new provincial parks and begin public consultations. This of course, Mr. Speaker, is in addition to the 1000 electrified campsites already promised.

The allocation of an additional 9.4 million to the EnerGuide budget, despite a federal decision to suspend the ecoENERGY program. An investment of 20 million over five years and a new technology commercialization fund. An enhancement of support for Saskatchewan graduate students, especially in fields of new technologies and communications.

Potash belongs to the people of Saskatchewan. We introduced a resolution calling on the federal government to reject this hostile takeover of a great Saskatchewan company. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to act in the best interests of Saskatchewan people, with this issue and all other issues.

I want to speak just briefly if I could on the Global Transportation Hub. Of course it's located in the city of Regina, even though the benefits will be felt by the entire province as well, obviously, as the city of Regina. The Global Transportation Hub will be a transportation and logistics hub. It will include CP [Canadian Pacific] Rail's new intermodal facility. Clustered around this hub will be a variety of distribution and warehousing operations such as Loblaws. This in turn will attract a variety of related service providers like trucking companies.

The GTH [Global Transportation Hub] will increase Saskatchewan's intermodal capacity, improve the supply chain access and efficiency, and of course advance economic development and business opportunities in the province as part of a globally integrated marketplace. Phase 1 of the western distribution centre will be completed and operational later this year or early in 2011. Phase 2 is planned to be completed and operational in 2012. The CP intermodal facility is expected to be fully operational in 2012, probably the latter part of 2012.

The GTH will benefit the economy with new jobs and new investments. It will have an initial impact on job creation with 3 to 400 new jobs in the winter of 2011 alone. It has the potential to attract upwards of 1,500 new jobs through its completion. The GTH also has a strategic impact on our economy, with about two-thirds of Saskatchewan's economic activity derived from exports. Regina is well-positioned to facilitate the flow of imports from Asia and the Pacific Rim bound for North American consumer markets. At the same time, Regina also has an advantageous location to facilitate these flow of exports.

The west Regina bypass, work is progressing on the

construction of the two-lane roadway from Highway No. 1 to 25th Avenue, and upgrade Pinkie Road from 25th Avenue to Dewdney Avenue, and of course Dewdney Avenue to the GTH access road. This provides the interim access to the Global Transportation Hub while the remainder of the new bypass is constructed. The cost for this stage is estimated at 22 million. When fully developed, the bypass will consist of a four-lane divided expressway from Highway 11 to Highway No. 1. Of course the Lewvan and Highway No. 1 estimated 34 million, and it will be completed, estimated completion date late fall of 2011.

I want to just briefly address before I conclude, the issue of presenting photo identification or having photo identification when you are exercising your right to vote. And just today I returned an item to a department store here in Regina. Lo and behold, before I could return this item I had to present photo identification to the clerk before she would refund my money.

Saskatchewan is part of a global network, part of the rest of the world, rest of North America, rest of Canada. And we have to be and must be careful about who we're dealing with, who we're giving things to, and we must ensure the identity of that particular person. As a former police officer, of course identification was pivotal to performing duties. And it is just . . . People are starting to expect that you're going to have to present photo identification, whatever form that is, to prove who you are. And I think that being a part of the world, being part of North America and the world, we are coming to expect certain things.

And I certainly believe that a person should be required to identify themselves in whatever means is prescribed under regulation, so that the person receiving and looking at the identification is certain of the identity of the person who's purporting to be whoever they are. I think it's just a natural course, and it's something that's occurring in the world and in Saskatchewan. Hello, get on board. So I will . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Hello, get on board.

Anyway, in conclusion I will not be supporting the amendment. I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Social Services, the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to stand here today and represent the people of Kelvington-Wadena and reply to the Throne Speech. This has been my opportunity for a number of years to . . . I think this is 16 Throne Speeches I have had an opportunity to be part of, and I'm honoured.

There is a number of people that I should be thanking today, but most importantly I will start with the people that I love dearly: my family, my children. I have been fortunate, Mr. Speaker. I think I have the most children of anybody in this Assembly. I have five children and seven grandchildren. Most of them are still in the province, and they are proud of the work that I'm doing. And I have to tell you I'm very proud of the work they're doing in their various areas.

I have a son that is an accountant. I have a daughter that's a

nurse. I have another son that's a lawyer, one that's a kinesiologist, and one that's a computer engineer. And they are all doing their part and knowing they're being part of Saskatchewan. And being part of what we do know as a workforce and making peoples' lives better by doing your job, getting up in the morning and going to work and taking on the responsibilities given to you, makes everybody's life better.

[16:45]

Mr. Speaker, my seven grandchildren are an important part of my life. My oldest granddaughter just got her driver's licence this weekend and just turned 16, so I know that I have other things to think about in the near future. And I just came back from visiting my youngest one in Toronto.

When I realize how lucky we are in this province, and they know as well that to call Saskatchewan home or to be able to say that Saskatchewan was your home is an important part of who they are. Whether they're living in Calgary or Edmonton or Toronto, there is a Rider pride and a pride of being part of the Saskatchewan nation that they've taken with them.

Mr. Speaker, I've been elected since June of 1995, and I have had one of my constituency assistants, Linda, has been with me since the day I was elected. She does my work in the office when I can't be there. She keeps in contact with me many times during the day and gives me the opportunity to know what's going on back in the constituency. I don't think we realize how fortunate we are to have somebody who can listen and work with us and to make sure the message gets back to the people who actually put me here. And I value her. In the last couple of years I've had a new assistant. Rhonda has started to work with me. She is absolutely a delight as well and I consider myself very fortunate.

Most of the members here know that I was given a different responsibility in June of this year. I'm now Minister Responsible for Social Services and Public Service Commission, as well as the Status of Women. And I now have a new chief of staff and I'd like to thank Kelly and Sherry and Shelley and Theo and Amanda and Kim in my office — an incredible group of people.

I have said very often in public and I want to state to them right now: nobody works for me; they work with me. Together we have a team of people that want to make a difference. I'm proud of the work that we do and their advice at all times, and I'm thinking that it's a rare . . . when we come to work in the morning and know that the day is going to get better because of the people that we have around us.

I have the people from my constituency. We never want to take them for granted, and I thank them for their hard work and for everything that they do for me. It's one of the best experiences anybody could ever have was being elected. It's an honour for me every time I stand in the House and someone says, and the Speaker will say, I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena. I never take that for granted because I know that I'm the voice of 19,000 people out there — the people that expect me to bring what they are thinking and saying and doing into the legislature.



I think that before I go into the Throne Speech, I'd like to first of all welcome the new member. I know many of my colleagues and members opposite have welcomed him into the legislature and I know that we're going to rely on him, his advice and his wisdom in areas that some of us haven't worked in. But I know that I'm honoured to have a new constituent here and I know that his wife and family . . . I believe he's a new grandpa as well. He's going to understand what the role of being an MLA and how it adds dignity to our life.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a very, very busy year in Kelvington-Wadena. We've had a number of 100th anniversary celebrations — the RM of Lakeview and the RM of Foam Lake. We have a number of churches in the area and some of these celebrations I was able to participate in and I'm always delighted to be able to talk to the people. And the meals that are served are always unbelievable and I consider myself a very fortunate person.

Mr. Speaker, when I was first elected, it was kind of a rarity to sign congratulations to people who have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversaries. But now they're rather commonplace.

However this year I had the opportunity to attend a 74th wedding anniversary. On October the 17th, Peter and Lena Holowaty of Foam Lake celebrated their 74th anniversary. And their daughter attests that their longevity is owed to their taking care of each other, to their families, and the community. And I'd like to congratulate Peter and Lena. I have to correct myself. I didn't get a chance to attend this. I wanted to. It was one of the . . . The people that told me about it told me it was absolutely a great event.

I was also proud to attend the 35th anniversary of Mallard Diversified Industries on Saturday night. It truly is a diversified business that's grown from making plastic flowers to a manufacturing industry, a recycling program, a shoe repair department, and a first class catering department.

And this past weekend I attended the retirement roast of Bonnie Wallin who is the CEO of Mallard Diversified Industries. Mr. Speaker, Bonnie is a good friend of mine. She also has worked on my campaign. And she's been the manager of a group home and the industry that's made a big difference to the lives of people in Wadena. It was probably one of the best events I've attended in a long time, Mr. Speaker, because we had, the people with various abilities came on stage and talked to Bonnie about how she'd made a difference in their life.

Bonnie's one of the people to talk to us in government about some of the needs that we as government have when it comes to a responsibility for people with disabilities. She's one of the people that encouraged us to develop programs like the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program, programs where we actually look at . . . see people with their abilities in varying degrees and see how they can work, fit into our community and how they can make a difference.

Mallard actually has a catering service and they put on many functions and supply wedding receptions and anniversary receptions. And we are all very proud of the work they're doing.

Bonnie has been an inspiration to all of us. And when I think that somebody who is supposedly seen on the right side of the political scale, and yet her heart and soul has been to work with people with disabilities all her life and has made such a profound difference to their lives, it maybe is something that isn't recognized as can be done.

In fact, the members opposite like to believe that they are the ones that see the needs. But I know that people like Bonnie — who actually works with those people and know that we as government have some responsibility — has made a huge difference in their life.

Mr. Speaker, despite the record flooding and the wild weather this summer, the people of Kelvington-Wadena have reacted with their typical helpfulness and perseverance and hard work. Our farmers who are dealing with a tremendous amount of water this year, Mr. Speaker — I think the RM of Invermay had 43 inches of rain and last week we had about 8 inches of snow on top of it — there are still people who are having a difficult time getting what hay bales they had out of the field.

But they asked for help from the provincial government and our government did not shy away from the challenge. We actually participated with the federal government in the excess moisture program and we provided \$30 per eligible acre to Saskatchewan producers who had land that was too wet to seed because of flooding. But that isn't the only program that we've helped our farmers with and my farmers in Kelvington-Wadena constituency are well aware of it. We've invested \$71 million in the cattle and hog support program. We paid \$40 for a cow to nearly 18,000 producers, and we tried to get the feds to follow to add their \$30 per cow. We have a \$53 million province-wide farm and ranch water program. We have an infrastructure program that pays up to 50 per cent rebate to dig dugouts and wells.

Mr. Speaker, on top of what we've dealt with, the education tax that has been talked about for so long in this province, the education portion of property tax was a burden to everybody, but a particular burden to our farmers. And this year we will reduce the mill rate from 7.08 per cent to 3.91 per cent and our farmers are well aware of the difference that's making in their lives.

Mr. Speaker, we also have the coyote control program. We reduced the population of coyotes by 71,000. We have the gopher control rebate which provides a 50 per cent rebate on the cost of gopher control products. We have the livestock loan guarantee program, the principal deferment on breeder loans. We have a \$60 million short-term cattle loan. It was announced in December of '07. Producers have the option to defer their principal payments to 2008-2009.

We also had the wildlife damage compensation program changes. Now compensation for 100 per cent of livestock deaths caused by predators. For injured animals, producers will be compensated up to 80 per cent of the market value for injured livestock regarding veterinary services. There's also compensation now provided for wildlife damages to crop and feed, for swath, bale, and corn grazing.

We also removed the \$5,200 limit for wildlife damage to stack

feed in a yard site. Mr. Speaker, to many people that might not sound like a big issue but to the people that are actually farming and having to deal with issues with feed in the field, it made a huge difference to their life. Mr. Speaker, we also spent \$5 million on Saskatchewan voluntary livestock feasibility program. There's rebates of up to 70 per cent on electronic ear tags. We've moved AgriStability to Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, this government has not forgotten rural Saskatchewan, and it did not forget Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Speaker, within my constituency our government has invested money as well. And I have a number of my constituents say, I'm so pleased that now that government is there, they have not neglected rural Saskatchewan. They know that Kelvington-Wadena has had needs for the last 16 years, and they are appreciating the money that we put into this constituency. We've improved schools in Foam Lake, Kelvington, and Wadena.

We've built a brand new high school in Porcupine Plain. We've invested in theatre in Foam Lake and their daycare programs. Kelvington received funds to upgrade the swimming pool. Rose Valley has a new water treatment plant and a new well. And Lintlaw was able to complete their regional waste management landfill. Porcupine Plain received funding to upgrade their sewer system. And we've actually had some highways built in our constituency, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased. We have more to go, but the work is under way, and I'm very pleased about it.

Mr. Speaker, one of the issues that I'm also responsible for and I'm so honoured that the Premier has asked me to look after the autism and FAS [fetal alcohol syndrome] file. I think many of the members opposite know that the FAS file is near and dear to me. It's something that I have had an interest in for many years.

FASD [fetal alcohol spectrum disorder] is a lifelong disability caused by prenatal alcohol consumption. It's a permanent, irreversible brain damage, and it is caused by maternal drinking. And in theory it is 100 per cent preventable. It affects approximately nine in every 1,000 babies born. In a province of approximately 1 million people, that means we have 9,000 individuals that are affected with FAS.

Our government has recognized that there is a need for a client-focused, FAS-specific strategy, and we are to address prevention and intervention. And we are dealing with it. The comprehensive service supports individuals with ASD [autism spectrum disorder] and FASD, and FASD prevention is being developed. And we're going to have options with a comprehensive integrated service framework to meet needs, universal and target FAS prevention strategies, and we're actively engaging the regional and human service providers and the community-based organizations and other interested stakeholders in the province.

Mr. Speaker, now back to the debate that we have at hand. I'm pleased to speak today because this Throne Speech sets out a positive agenda for the future of our province. Saskatchewan people made it very clear on November the 7th, November 2007 to go a different direction. The people in this province let the members opposite know and our government know that they were tired of the old road, tired of NDP politics, and tired of a government that was afraid to set goals. They were tired of a

government that wanted to be measured more by their words than their deeds.

And now for the last three years, Mr. Speaker, we've been on a new road. We're travelling a new path. Our government has set clear goals and asked the public to keep us accountable for them. Our government is open and it's transparent. Our government endorses economic growth and welcomes challenges and opportunities that presents growth.

And if you don't mind, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take a few minutes to outline some of the changes in philosophy in the ministries that I am responsible for.

In Social Services, Mr. Speaker, we are beginning to roll back the system with systematic challenges . . . roll back the challenges that have been in place and were never addressed by the previous government. Under the NDP, for example, Mr. Speaker, it was easier to track a library book than to track a child in our system. Under the NDP, the Provincial Auditor and the Children's Advocate repeatedly warned the lack of effective tracking for children in care put them at risk. And nothing was done under the NDP. Our government responded by investing \$15 million for an automated tracking system. Under the NDP, the pressure . . .

**The Speaker:** — Being now 5 p.m., this Assembly will recess until 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed until 19:00.]

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