



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

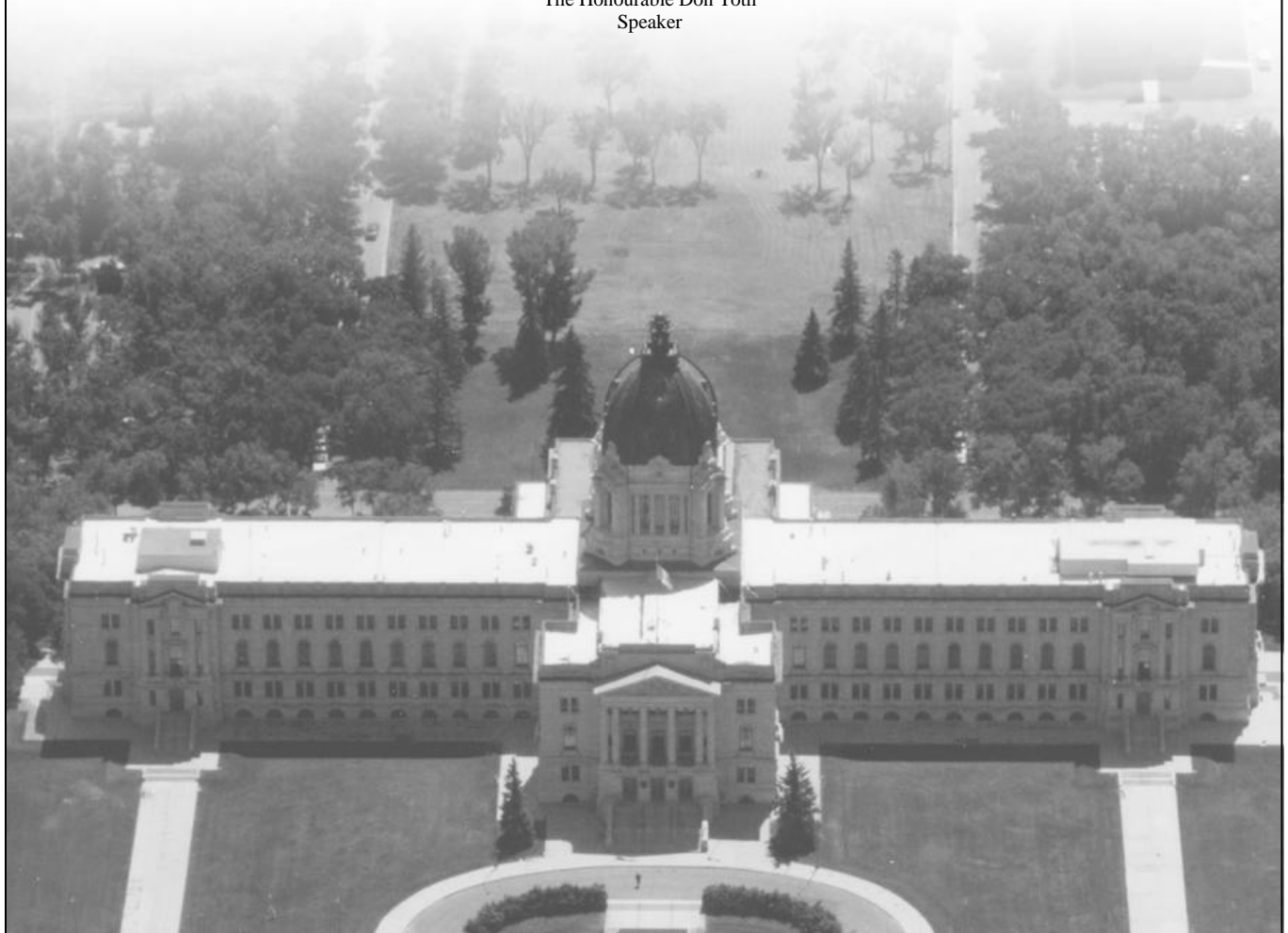
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Don Toth
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Chisholm, Michael	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
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: — If members would just allow me this afternoon to begin by introducing some guests who have joined us in the Speaker's gallery. We have with us this afternoon Mr. Bob Pringle who has been joined by his wife, Tanya, and daughter, Rachel, who are here for the announcement that will be made a little later in the proceedings. And I'd invite Mr. Pringle and his wife and daughter to please stand and be recognized.

We also have with us Mr. Kevin Fenwick who's the Provincial Ombudsman and has been acting as the Children's Advocate for the time being. And we welcome Mr. Fenwick.

And joining us as well from the Children's Advocate's office and from the Ombudsman's office we have a number of employees who are working in those two offices. And I'd invite them as well to stand and be recognized.

I recognize the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Labour.

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 representatives of the government's scholarship, bursary, and loan committee. They're over in the west gallery. I'd like to acknowledge and thank them for their tireless efforts.

I'll begin with student leaders who are participating on this important committee. Jeanette Murphy, the SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] student association president for Kelsey and Woodland campuses. And it was great to see you earlier, Jeanette. With her is Tara Pejski, vice-president for SIAST for the Kelsey Campus. Great to see you again. Shanda Rogoschewsky for the SIAST student association at Palliser Campus; and Lorisa Earnshaw, the SIAST student association president for Wascana. I was able to spend a little bit of time with these specific student leaders, and we appreciate how engaged you are at this present time.

Joining them from the universities, and certainly with equally impressive leadership, Kaytlyn Barber, vice-president, external affairs from the University of Regina student union, and Blair Shumlich, vice-president, external affairs from the USSU [University of Saskatchewan Students' Union] from the University of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, today with these student leaders, they are joined by a number of other representatives, both from the ministry and various institutions. Tammy Bloor Cavers is here, the executive director of student financial assistance within the ministry. Wendy Row is here, assistant registrar and manager, awards and financial aid from the University of Saskatchewan.

Wendy, it's great to see you again.

And welcome, Sandra Kush, donor and alumni relations coordinator, the SIAST Wascana Campus; Heather Dorcas, the student services coordinator from the Southeast Regional College; Russell Fayant, from the Gabriel Dumont Institute of Native Studies and Applied Research; Kirk Wosminity, the director of strategic initiatives from within the ministry; Karla Worsley, acting senior policy analyst, again within the ministry.

Mr. Speaker, to you and to all members of the Assembly, please join me in welcoming all of these individuals to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these individuals, whether they be student leaders or working in the administration on one of the institutions here in Saskatchewan or in the ministry. I'd like to thank them for the good work that they're doing on promoting students, student interests, and we look forward to the discussions coming out of the process that they're engaged in and hope that it provides a real benefit to Saskatchewan students, Mr. Speaker. So I join with the minister in welcoming these individuals to the Assembly. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Enterprise and Trade.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — I thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to introduce to you and through you to other members of the Assembly a gentleman that the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation and I met with this morning here with the realtors, Mr. Herb Cox who is also our Saskatchewan Party candidate in The Battlefords and the next MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for The Battlefords. So welcome, Herb.

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too would join the Minister of Enterprise and Trade in welcoming The Battlefords' Herb Cox.

I also want to take the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to welcome all the realtors who are in the Chamber today, and who have spent the last two days meeting with members of the Legislative Assembly on both sides of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The realtors here had a very simple message for all of us, Mr. Speaker, and that was that affordable housing is important in the province of Saskatchewan. They've told us about seniors and young people looking for work in our communities, about students who need affordable housing, Mr. Speaker. And whether that's rental properties or whether that's buying a home, Mr. Speaker, this is a critical issue.

I want to on behalf of the official opposition thank the realtors of Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Real Estate Association for their efforts on behalf of Saskatchewan people this year and in

the past. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to take the opportunity to challenge the government to get the debate started, to acknowledge that indeed affordable housing is a challenge and a priority. And as a result of that, Mr. Speaker, I welcome the Saskatchewan Realtors association membership here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs.

Hon. Mr. Hickie: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And along with the member from The Battlefords, I too want to also introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature today the group of realtors that are in your gallery. But more importantly, Mr. Speaker, to name just a few of them, they're led by their president, Gary Busch of Saskatoon; Al Didur, Chair of their government relations area; and Bill Madder, executive vice-president.

This group includes members from all parts of the province, an organization with the finger on the pulse of Saskatchewan, and whose policy proposals we are always happy to receive. They have a meeting today and yesterday with MLAs in the building on behalf of their organization.

Yesterday I had the opportunity to meet with four Prince Albert realtors, and we discussed the needs of our city and how to continue to make this province thrive. Their contributions to Prince Albert and continued efforts to enhance our city will augment the growth and prosperity of Saskatchewan.

I invite all members to welcome them to the Legislative Assembly this afternoon and welcome their contribution to public policy in Saskatchewan. And as Minister Responsible for Municipal Affairs, I look forward to working with you. Thank you.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I wanted to welcome on behalf of the official opposition a large delegation of citizens that have come to this Assembly representing a number of people who are concerned about the reduction of educational assistants in the province of Saskatchewan. These folks have travelled to the Assembly from across the province to make their voice heard.

Today we have in the gallery educational assistants, parents, organizations that are concerned about special-needs young people in the province of Saskatchewan and students, Mr. Speaker. And I want to particularly welcome a young man — 23 years old, I think — Shawn Rosenfeldt who is here. He is now a heavy-duty mechanic in the province of Saskatchewan, and he pays taxes in the province of Saskatchewan. This is a young man that had the benefit of an educational assistant in order that he could qualify to go into heavy-duty mechanics at SIAST.

This is a courageous group of people. They are here because they're advocating on behalf of children and youth in this province. And I want to welcome them very much to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery is a friend and a constituent and a civic leader from the city of Swift Current. He is a practising lawyer in Swift Current and currently on city council. I'd like all members to join with me in welcoming Ryan Plewis to his Legislative Assembly today.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with other members in welcoming Mr. Pringle to the Assembly today. And congratulations, Bob.

To the realtors and to the EAs [educational assistant], a special welcome to all of you.

My main intent though is to introduce Jeanette Wicinski-Dunn, who is with us here today. Jeanette is the president of the chamber of commerce in Big River. She is also a past councillor for the town. She is as well involved in doctor recruitment in the area and a number of other areas including the forestry strategy for that part of the province, and I might add, most importantly, running for candidate for the New Democratic Party in Sask Rivers. Welcome, Jeanette.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I, too, would like to welcome Jeanette. Jeanette and I have been on a lot of meetings together in Big River, trying to develop the community. And it's nice to see you here. Thank you.

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I would like to introduce a couple of prominent labour leaders in the east gallery. We have with us today President Larry Hubich of the Saskatchewan Federation of Labour and Tom Graham, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. I ask all members to welcome these two labour leaders to the Assembly today.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's also my pleasure to introduce to you, through you, and to all members of the legislature a woman who is sitting in the east gallery. Her name is Jen Britton. She is the spokesperson for the Save our Saskatchewan coalition.

She's been doing a phenomenal job travelling across the province. She's invited to meetings from all different sectors and all sorts of interested groups who want to learn more about why the Saskatchewan Party is attacking the Crown corporations in Saskatchewan. And I want to commend her for the good work that she's doing. So welcome to the legislature, Jen. And I'd like to ask all members of the legislature to join me in welcoming her. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the members opposite, and on behalf of the government welcome Mr. Hubich and Mr. Graham to the Assembly today. We always value their input. We certainly appreciate the hard work that they do on behalf of their membership and are pleased that they're here today and look forward to working with them in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you I'd like to welcome the group that's here to lobby on behalf of our students and our schools. And being that my son was also a young man who needed assistance and got that assistance in our education system, we are very proud of the hard work that . . . Tutors worked with him to make sure that he got an education and did the best he could.

I would just like to welcome you here and say I support you 100 per cent in your endeavours. I wish you all the best. And on behalf of I guess all the kids in our province, we need to make sure that everyone has a fair, level playing field and an opportunity at education. I commend what you are doing. And welcome to your legislature.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Harper: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of citizens of Saskatchewan who are concerned over the steady deterioration and safety of our highways. Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to construct passing lanes on Highway No. 10 between Fort Qu'Appelle and junction of No. 1 in order to improve the safety of the Saskatchewan's motoring public.

And in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

Mr. Speaker, this petition was signed by the good folks from Fort Qu'Appelle and Dysart, Saskatchewan. I so submit.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present petitions on behalf of the people that support the Saskatchewan Seniors Association that has approximately 180 senior centres throughout the province, the vast majority of those in rural Saskatchewan. And these centres provide such a needed recreation and social activity spot and do a lot to contribute to the enhanced quality of life for many of the seniors who use them.

[13:45]

Without these senior centres, many of those seniors would end up in special care homes or long-term care facilities or in hospital. And many of them are facing high costs of utilities and are on the brink of closure. So the undersigned . . . The petition reads as follows:

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan: to cause the Government of Saskatchewan to provide the much-needed funding to assist seniors' recreation centres to remain open and active within their communities.

This is more than 50 signatures from the communities of Denare Beach, Edam, St. Walburg, Frenchman Butte, Mervin, Spruce Lake, and Paradise Hill. I so present.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a petition that I want to lay on the Table that is signed by a number of people from our province. And the prayer reads as follows:

Cause the government to provide funding for the required number of educational assistants to provide special needs students with the support they need and maintain a positive learning environment for all Saskatchewan students.

I so present on behalf of citizens from Major, Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and, I believe, Fort Qu'Appelle, Mr. Speaker. I so present.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition regarding the need for hospice and palliative care here in Saskatchewan.

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that all Saskatchewan people deserve quality end-of-life and bereavement care; that hospice and palliative care is known to help enhance the quality of life for those facing advancing illness, death, and bereavement; that a publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care system, including residential hospices, would increase end-of-life care options for Saskatchewan people.

We in the prayer that reads as follows respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to enhance and increase publicly funded and administered hospice and palliative care, including in-home hospice services and residential hospices, in order to ensure that all Saskatchewan people have access to high quality end-of-life care.

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

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm here to present another petition on behalf of the residents of Furdale.

The government ministry has directed SaskWater to cut off supplies of water for domestic use to Furdale customers. The same government ministry has directed that customers may no longer treat non-potable water using methods approved by Sask Health. The Furdale residents, in dealing in good faith with SaskWater for over 30 years, have paid large amounts for the domestic systems and in-home treatment equipment, as well as for livestock irrigation lines. And the alternative water supply referred to by the government ministry is a private operator offering treated, non-pressurized water at great cost, with no guarantee of quality, quantity, or availability of water. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

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

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Mr. Speaker, the true cost of human suffering or loss of human life cannot be measured in dollars and cents. And yet this government allows the fines levied against companies for violations of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* to be treated as tax-deductible expenses. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to amend the law so companies will not be allowed to get a tax deduction for fines levied against them under *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* and regulations, and to remove the existing cap on fines levied against such companies.

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

And the petitions are signed by residents of Hudson Bay, Anaheim, Creighton, and Denare Beach. I so present.

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

Mr. Taylor: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased today to present a petition in support of affordable rents and housing for The Battlefords, Mr. Speaker. The signatures on the petition

represent residents of some Battlefords area apartments that have recently been given note of rent increases of more than 40 per cent. They note the vacancy rate for rental accommodation is very low and that the number of units is becoming very small. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that the honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to call upon the Government of Saskatchewan to develop an affordable housing program that will result in a greater number of quality and affordable rental units to be made available to a greater number of people throughout The Battlefords and that will implement a process of rent review or rent control to better protect tenants in a non-competitive housing market.

Mr. Speaker, the signatures are from residents of The Battlefords and area. Thank you very much.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again today to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the unprecedented mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude to the two consecutive deficit budgets. They reference the billions of dollars of debt growth that's accruing underneath this government — \$4.2 billion in just over the next four years, Mr. Speaker — and they understand what kind of risk this provides to the future of Saskatchewan. The prayer reads as follows:

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

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

These petitions are signed by good folks and concerned citizens from Regina and Saskatoon. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Tribute to Howard Anderson

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the George Gordon First Nations community said goodbye to one of its most prominent members. Howard St. Clair Anderson passed away last Friday night and was laid to rest yesterday in his home community.

I met Mr. Anderson a number of years ago, and our most recent meeting was this past Remembrance Day when we were both present at the Gordon's Band office for the unveiling of a special veterans' cairn. One of the things about Howard Anderson is he was always welcoming and made you feel very

comfortable. And I think those of us that knew him over the years will always remember his hearty laugh.

Mr. Anderson was many things, Mr. Speaker. He was a grandfather, a father, a great-grandfather, a businessman, a sports enthusiast. But what he will be most remembered for, Mr. Speaker, is his tireless efforts on behalf of First Nations veterans. He worked tirelessly on their behalf to correct some of the inequities that they received as not being recognized for their service to our country, and as grand chief of the Veterans Association, he was able to obtain some redress, Mr. Speaker. One of the things he'll also be remembered for is his tireless efforts for the construction of the veterans' teepee at the First Nations University, Mr. Speaker.

The time we're allotted does not allow one to pay true tribute to a man so great. So, Mr. Speaker, Howard Anderson was a person who made a great difference in his community and our province.

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

Recovering Our Connection at City Park Collegiate

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. City Park Collegiate is located in my constituency of Saskatoon Meewasin. It offers alternative versions of compulsory courses from grades 8 to 12 as well as courses in fine arts, technology, horticulture, and food services. Its students come from all areas of Saskatoon and from all socio-economic levels and backgrounds.

City Park Collegiate places strong emphasis on programming that is culturally responsive. Community school coordinator Janie Funk and other City Park staff organize an annual round dance and other events for students and the community that includes hand drumming, bannock making, and other aspects of First Nations and Métis culture.

This past week, City Park offered Recovering Our Connection in which traditional knowledge keepers led sessions on our connection with each other and with our world. Patti Yuzicappi from the Whitecap Dakota First Nation discussed the traditional roles of Aboriginal women and parenting and about healthy living. Tommy Christian from the Fort Peck Sioux and Assiniboine Tribe in Montana talked about the traditional and modern roles of Aboriginal men and the spiritual beliefs that underpin Aboriginal life and customs. Bob Badger from the Kawacatoose First Nation spoke about his life as an artist grounded in his culture. Cort Dogniez, a Métis educator from Saskatoon, led a workshop on Métis history on the prairies.

Mr. Speaker, City Park Collegiate continues to develop and offer innovative programs that honour the cultural diversity in our province.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating City Park Collegiate staff and the Saskatoon Public School Board in these endeavours.

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

Saskatchewan Addictions Awareness Week

Ms. Tell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. November 14th to the 20th is Saskatchewan Addictions Awareness Week. Saskatchewan Addictions Awareness Week or SAAW aims to raise awareness of alcohol, drugs, gambling, and potential addiction concerns. Mr. Speaker, the theme of this year's awareness week is Your Community has the Connections to Help.

During SAAW, community partners have planned activities that promote healthy lifestyle choices; educate people about substance abuse, misuse, and signs of addiction; and let people know where to go for help. The Ministry of Health funds a full range of alcohol and drug treatment services. There are over 300 treatment beds and outpatient services in over 50 centres across the province.

In Regina, a new 45-bed brief detox facility opened early this spring. And this October, Mr. Speaker, we officially broke ground on a 15-bed youth addictions treatment centre in Prince Albert, a facility that will greatly increase access for our youth to the treatment programs.

Mr. Speaker, in October the What Else Got Wasted prevention campaign aimed at youth won an Achievement in Communication Excellence Award. This campaign graphically showed the pitfalls of alcohol abuse, and I would like to congratulate all who worked on this effective campaign.

Mr. Speaker, my fellow MLAs and I would like to recognize the tremendous work of those in the addictions field and the SAAW task force for their ongoing efforts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Celebrating Saskatchewan Writers and Publishers

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, today and yesterday are great days for Saskatchewan literature and publishing. I'm proud to rise today to recognize the achievements of Dianne Warren of Regina and Allan Casey of Saskatoon, two outstanding citizens who have won the Governor General's fiction and non-fiction literary prizes, respectively. The 2010 GG [Governor General's Literary Awards] winners were announced in Montreal yesterday, and the awards will be presented at Rideau Hall on November 25th.

Dianne Warren's book, *Cool Water*, is the story of Juliet, Saskatchewan, a small town of approximately 1,000 people. In the space of a single day, it tells the overlapping and intertwined stories of several people who live in or near the town, giving the reader an intimate portrait of a farming town and its people stumbling towards change and the future.

Saskatoon's Allan Casey, his book is called *Lakeland: Journeys into the Soul of Canada* and explores Canada's connection with its freshwater system. It is described as part geographical study and part memoir, and he looks at the recent surge in development around our lakes and wildernesses.

Also, Regina's Sandra Birdsell was a finalist for her book, *Waiting for Joe*. Coteau Books got an award for publishing the teen novel *Fishtailing* by Wendy Phillips. And today, right as we are here, Glen Sorestad, our first poet laureate from Saskatchewan, is receiving the Order of Canada at Rideau Hall. So let's celebrate all these great writers and publishers. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Rosthern-Shellbrook.

Diabetes Awareness Month

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge November as Diabetes Awareness Month and to encourage all members as well as all residents of Saskatchewan to note the seriousness of this condition that is the leading cause of death in Canada by this disease.

In our province more than 70,000 people, or 1 in 14, are affected directly by diabetes, and this number continues to increase. Furthermore, 20 people are diagnosed with this disease every hour, every day. If not managed properly, diabetes is a condition that poses serious life-threatening complications including heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, and blindness.

Members of this Assembly will have the opportunity to show their commitment today to healthy living and diabetes awareness by participating in a blood glucose testing session today, 2010, at 11:30 at the Saskatchewan gallery, facilitated by the Canadian Diabetes Association.

Since its creation in 1953, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Diabetes Association has provided leadership in raising the profile of diabetes and improving the lives of those living with that disease. I know; I'm one of them.

The association provides essential information to those at risk and continues to accelerate the search for a cure through the funding of world-class research. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Assembly to join me in thanking the Canadian Diabetes Association for all the work they do in Saskatchewan and in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cumberland.

La Ronge Elder Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I mentioned the importance of elders to the Aboriginal community in the past. And I've mentioned my gratitude for support, guidance, wisdom, and prayers from Elder Catherine Charles of Lac La Ronge Indian Band has provided to me personally.

Mr. Speaker, although I share a personal relationship with her, an elder is a resource of the community. In that way, Catherine has guided many people, young and old. An elder is not just a senior citizen, but someone who has gained respect from their community for the good work they have done during their lifetime.

On Monday, October the 18th, Mr. Speaker, Elder Catherine Charles received the Women of the Dawn Lifetime Achievement Award at the First Nations Awards ceremony at Dakota Dunes complex near Saskatoon. The Lifetime Achievement Award, Mr. Speaker, focuses on the individuals who have displayed and demonstrated achievements in many areas.

Those who have received this award have worked towards the enrichment of their communities, have a long story of accomplishments, and have played a leading role in the development of First Nations communities.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of the Assembly to please join me in congratulating Elder Catherine Charles on her achievement and life's work. Tēniki, Catherine.

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

Report Impaired Drivers Program

Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In March of this year, the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority and SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] joined with the Saskatoon Police Service to launch the Report Impaired Drivers program, the acronym of R-I-D, in Saskatoon.

The RID program encourages people to pull over and call 911 if they see a driver they think is impaired. Mr. Speaker, it appears that Saskatoon residents heard this message loud and clear. From the program's launch in March through to the end of October, Saskatoon police received almost 1,800 calls reporting a suspected impaired driver. Thanks to these calls from the public, I'm very pleased to share with you that the Saskatoon police have now caught and charged 100 impaired drivers.

Mr. Speaker, because of the RID program's success in Saskatoon, the program expanded to Regina in September. And between the 8th of September and October 31st, there were over 300 calls made to 911 reporting a suspected impaired driver. As a result, Regina police intercepted 12 drivers who were subsequently charged with impaired driving offences. And in addition to these charges, police sent warning letters to more than 700 vehicle owners advising them that their vehicle was reported as possibly being operated by an impaired driver.

This sends a strong message that there are many eyes on the lookout for impaired drivers in Regina and Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. And I'd like to thank the citizens of those two cities respectively who have called to report a suspected impaired driver. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier. It deals with the deteriorating finances of the province of Saskatchewan. The people of the province know that when this government took power, there was \$2.3 billion in surplus. We're now running deficits two years in a row. And this

mismanagement is now having a harmful effect on the education system in the province.

Yesterday in *The StarPhoenix*, it was reported that the Saskatoon Public School Board would not be getting the \$2 million they need for increased enrolment costs. In fact Kevin Waugh, who's a trustee of the school board, says, and I quote: "This is the second consecutive year we're short. We see a pattern forming here with this government."

To the Premier: why is it that the families and students in Saskatoon and other areas of the province have to suffer for the mismanagement of his government?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is truly a delight to stand today and address this particular issue when education is so important to our province. Since we formed government, Mr. Speaker, the school divisions have received a 13 per cent increase, which is quite significant in only three budgets.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatoon school division received at the beginning of this year, or at our budget year, \$185 million, and the discrepancy is over a \$1 million lift to the LINC [local implementation and negotiation committee] agreement. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, I've talked to the board Chair and told him that the \$1 million . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I think guests would like to also hear the answer. I'd like the opposition to allow the minister to finish her response.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I've talked to the board Chair, Mr. Morrison, and I have informed him that the \$1 million LINC agreement lift will be addressed along with other LINC agreements. All of the school boards were given a budget earlier this year. It had a 2 per cent increase over last year, and the other school boards understand that and are working within that.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the sad thing is the school boards across the province, but most of all the public school board in Saskatoon, don't have much choice if the Premier and the government refuse to give them money for the increase in enrolment, which is what this money is for. They don't have much choice but to live with it. But what sense does it make that the families in Saskatoon and other parts of the province have to have inferior education as a result of the lack of funding for increased enrolment?

The minister says, and I quote, in a letter that she sent on November 4, 2010 to the Chair of the board, Mr. Ray Morrison, and I quote the minister as saying:

In conversations between the ministry and the school division prior to the budget submission, your school division was instructed not to include grants other than those approved on budget day. However, additional grant revenues were submitted.

How is it possible that, as enrolment goes up, the minister's solution is to direct the board not to ask for more money? How is that possible that families suffer as a result of the mismanagement of this government?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's unfortunate that member doesn't understand. This is a practice that's been long going. Any increases in enrolment in a year is addressed in the following year's budget. However there was a LINC agreement increase request, Mr. Speaker, that I have assured them will be coming forward as soon as we have all of the LINC agreement increases that have occurred with all of the different school divisions.

I want to repeat, Mr. Speaker, that we have increased school division budgets over the last three years by 13 per cent, which is very significant. The Saskatoon Public School Division budget that they had is over \$185 million, Mr. Speaker.

What we're not going to do is what those members opposite did, which was ignore the issues of property tax for education. They did nothing to change the system, Mr. Speaker. They said the status quo was not on, but they did absolutely nothing about it.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, question to the minister. The fact is that when the changes were made to the policy around funding, there was a promise made that a new formula would be in place. That has not happened. We're now in our third year. This is not the first year that the board has been shortchanged in Saskatoon.

Last year it was 1.5 million; this year it's 1.9 — for a total of \$3.4 million for education for students and the increase in enrolment. Now the minister makes light of the fact and says, well 3.4 million, that doesn't matter. Well to the families in Saskatoon, it makes a huge difference on the quality of education.

The minister will want to explain how, at a time when the government has \$2 million for a big, flashy ad campaign to attract more people to Saskatoon, we don't have the money to finance education, that we're short 2 million, almost exactly the same amount, in the Saskatoon school board. How is that possible that in the priorities you have, you choose an ad campaign over the children in Saskatoon?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I would love to tell the member opposite one more time, since we've been government we've increased funding to school divisions by 13 per cent. That is quite significant.

Mr. Speaker, for early learning and child care, we have increased that by 33 per cent, Mr. Speaker. For provincial libraries, we've increased that by 23 per cent, Mr. Speaker. We have had the largest education property tax reduction in the history of our province. It is something the people of this

province have asked for. It is something those very families he's talking about asked for, Mr. Speaker. It's something that when they were in government they promised time and time again and . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. The minister may complete her answer.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, the reduction in property tax and to move the responsibility for education funding to the province was asked for for decades within this province. When they were in government, they promised over and over again they would look at it. They did absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker. They did not want to do anything about it.

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

Educational Assistants

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I do note the increased spending by 32 per cent across government services, but only 13 per cent for school boards. Now, Mr. Speaker, educational assistants provide support to students with special needs, including learning disabilities and behavioural problems. EAs are an essential part of the team that provides support to students with different needs.

Mr. Speaker, students, parents, grandparents, and educational assistants are here today from across the province and they're looking for an answer to a very simple question. To the government: what is their government's policy with respect to reducing the numbers of educational assistants to our province's special needs students?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Very direct and very simple answer — there is not a direction from this government on employment numbers. That is the responsibility of the school divisions. It has always been and it remains so.

However, Mr. Speaker, we all have to keep the needs of the children first, and that is what is extremely important to this government as it is to the school divisions. Education assistants play a very important role in that.

However parents more and more are asking for additional supports for their children. Our government recognizes this, as does the school divisions, so we are moving towards a new model that recognizes the need of the person, child, rather than just a diagnosis.

As well, the school divisions have moved towards a personal program plan. Mr. Speaker, that includes the parent and all of the caregivers in that child's life to help plan what is the best supports for that child. They agree upon that plan, and that is the funding that the school division asks for.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the minister claims that this isn't her policy. But this is a time of rising enrolments. This is a time of increased numbers of students who require intensive supports, and the number of EAs in our province is falling.

Between 2007 and 2008, the last year of the former NDP [New Democratic Party] government, and 2009-10, the last year for which we have numbers, the number of educational assistants in the province of Saskatchewan has fallen by 200 positions. That's according to the minister's own numbers.

So to the minister: if it's not a policy of the Sask Party government, then how do you account for the fact that the number of EAs in the province is falling at a time when we need them more than ever?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At one time, unfortunately, special needs children were kept at home, and they were often hidden. And that was not acceptable within our province. And over time we have evolved where we have more and more inclusion of special needs children. That movement is also under way within our school divisions. We have more inclusion in the schools than ever before. So I want . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I think there are guests here who would like to hear the response to the member's question. I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to once again recognize the good work that the EAs do within the school division. However the parents are asking for other support along with the EAs, Mr. Speaker, and the school divisions are trying very hard to meet the requests of those parents.

If you look at what happened over the last year, Mr. Speaker, there was a reduction of EAs, of 80 EAs across our entire province. However there was an increase of 286 other specialists — be it occupational therapists, speech pathologists, special education teachers — that were brought into the school divisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

[14:15]

Ms. Atkinson: — Mr. Speaker, just for the minister's information, we've had a policy of inclusion in Saskatchewan classrooms for decades.

Now, Mr. Speaker, many students and parents credit the support they receive from their EA for helping them succeed in school and get the best possible start in life. Shawn Rosenfeldt is one such person. Shawn needed help with his math in order to prepare him for his entrance exam at SIAST. His EA, Monica, gave up her breaks and her lunches to help him. Shawn pays taxes and is a productive citizen today because of the support he received from an educational assistant.

Tina Friesen has a learning disability. Tina was so inspired by the support she received from her EA that she went to SIAST and has now qualified for her EA certificate.

To the minister: why is her government pushing school divisions to cut a support that has made a difference for people like Tina and people like Shawn and so many others?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Mr. Speaker, I'm going to repeat one more time, our government's not pushing for this. And I can tell that member that another successful, very young adult in this province that is paying taxes. Her name is Lindsay Harpauer. And Lindsay Harpauer had an EA. She has special needs. She had an EA, and I can't say enough about the EA that was there for her.

We are very, very, very supportive of inclusion of the parents and the decision. The parents are asking for more than just an EA in some circumstances — not in all — and the school boards are trying to address the requests of those parents.

I've talked to a number of associations. I have talked with the Teachers' Federation since the school year began. I have talked to the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents. I've talked to some of the school boards. And I have asked if they received more concerns this school year than before and they have told me no, Mr. Speaker.

My office received a lot of phone calls and correspondence throughout the summer. But since the school year started, there has been no correspondence on this issue.

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

Ms. Atkinson: — Well, Mr. Speaker, Prairie Spirit cut over 40 EAs this spring for this following year. But anyway, so the minister claims this isn't her policy. But last year's funding guide for school divisions made it clear that funding is tied to reducing EAs.

Dawn and Jeff Eilers are parents with two children. Their son has been diagnosed with autism, but only gets one hour support a day. Their daughter has a learning disability. She's in grade 3 but has to attend grade 1 classes if she wants the support of an EA.

Mr. Speaker, I think the Eilers represent hundreds of parents across the province who want the answer to a very simple question: why are their children being denied the support of people like Tina Friesen and Monica, the kind of support that allowed Tina and Shawn and so many others, including the minister's daughter, to succeed in life?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the funding is tied to the personal program plans, which is done basically in a circle of care. It includes the teacher. It includes the parents. It includes the EA that has been involved with the child. It includes other specialists that work with that child.

There is a joint decision made, and that is the funding request from that decision that came forward.

Mr. Speaker, I met with the Saskatchewan Association of Community Living to see if there was any concerns or any increase of concerns that they had been receiving. Their answer was no, but they would continue to watch it closely, as will we, Mr. Speaker.

The Down Syndrome Society had this to say, Mr. Speaker, and I quote:

A few of our members have commented that they are seeing positive results with recent increases in specialized professional staff to our children's school teams. Involvement of more professional staff has seen a shift towards stronger shared accountability among all team members.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supply of Physicians

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Health careers website shows 121 physician vacancies in the province. That's a 40 per cent increase in doctor vacancies in the province since 2007. We now know that 300 resident physicians have been without a contract for over two years. We know that the Saskatchewan Medical Association that represents Saskatchewan doctors has been without a contract since April of 2009.

Mr. Speaker, how can the minister say with a straight face that he is working to fix the doctor shortage in rural Saskatchewan when he is refusing to negotiate a meaningful, fair contract with 300 resident physicians and the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association]?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that negotiations are under way between the SMA, PAIRS [Professional Association of Internes and Residents of Saskatchewan], as well as with the Ministry of Health. Those negotiations will take their time. I think they're getting very close to a final agreement. I sure hope they are, as do the physicians, as do the patients in our province, Mr. Speaker.

But what I will say is that we acknowledge that there is a physician shortage in this province, as we did acknowledge that there is a nurse shortage in this province. There is one reason why they are on the opposition side and we're on the government side, is because we've listened to nurses and we listen to physicians. And we've listened to patients and have realized that and are taking steps to correct it. That opposition never once listened to those professionals, and that's why they're on that side and will be on that side for a very long time.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon

Eastview.

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to the SMA, contract negotiations are going nowhere, despite what the minister seems to think, and there is no hint of an agreement in the near future. That's according to the SMA. I don't know who he's talking to.

Mr. Speaker, it's hypocritical for the minister to talk about a physician recruitment agency when he won't negotiate with the doctors that are here in Saskatchewan. The president of the SMA is fearful that doctors are going to leave Saskatchewan if contract negotiations continue to be stalled.

Mr. Speaker, what is the minister saying to communities like Central Butte, Spiritwood, Yorkton, Moose Jaw, Big River, Wakaw, Kamsack, Coronach, and Lestock, to name a few, who are losing services because they don't have enough doctors?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as negotiations continue . . . And they are negotiating. I would not consider the progress of the negotiations stalled whatsoever. I think there is good progress being made. And it always seems that when we get close to the final agreement, we'll hear the concerns from especially the unions, whether it was SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] at that time, whether it's the provider unions, of the concerns. And shortly after, we seem to find an agreement. So hopefully that is the way this contract negotiations go.

But what I will say, Mr. Speaker, is for years under that government, they had 60 training seats for the College of Medicine and 60 training seats for the residency positions — far short. In fact it was the smallest college of medicine in Canada. And in fact under the NDP at one point, the College of Medicine was so close to losing its accreditation under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, we wouldn't have even had a College of Medicine had they kept in power, I'm sure.

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A nice try at diversion. But, Mr. Speaker, people in rural Saskatchewan are sometimes travelling hours to see a doctor because that minister can't solve the doctor crisis, and he's refusing to negotiate with the doctors that we do have.

The president of the SMA said November 12th that this was a frustrating contradiction where the government seems to understand the importance of doctors in keeping a strong health system, but "However, this government seems more reluctant to recognize the need to give physicians reasons to stay and reasons to come to our province."

Mr. Speaker, the minister is off-loading doctor recruitments onto municipalities and failing to negotiate the doctors' contracts. Why is he ignoring rural families? And is it that he has no money or that he just doesn't care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we have a very, very strong physician recruitment strategy. First of all, it is training more of our own citizens here in Saskatchewan through the College of Medicine. Second, it's attracting College of Medicine students into Saskatchewan to fill the residency positions, because we have more residency positions than we have seats in the College of Medicine.

We are also changing the assessment process, Mr. Speaker. In the future we'll no longer just accept physicians from seven countries. We'll be accepting them from around the world — something that that former government never did.

Mr. Speaker, we've got a physician recruitment agency that is working with communities, that's working with health regions, that's working with the College of Medicine, to make sure that we have the proper complement. We've had some spots where there have been shortages, Mr. Speaker. Those are filled. Be it in Nipawin, an increase of . . . how many per cent? Fifty-four per cent, Mr. Speaker, 54 per cent.

We have communities of Leader, Leader that has increased the number of physicians, Mr. Speaker. We're seeing communities across the province filling those vacancies. There are still spots; we'll be addressing those in the near future.

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

Arrangements Regarding Long-Term Care Facilities

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, all across Saskatchewan, communities have worked diligently to raise their 35 per cent share for new health facilities, new long-term care. Bake sales, dinners, fundraisers — lots of hard work, Mr. Speaker, from lots of good people.

But the Sask Party has signed a \$27 million loan guarantee with an organization whose lawyer, Rod Donlevy, is the brother to the Premier's chief of staff. Michael Stensrud donated 16,000 to the Sask Party and 1,000 in the last election to the Minister of Justice, and now has the untendered contract to build the facility. Now we hear rumours that the electrical company owned by the Minister of Justice's brother has the electrical contract.

Mr. Speaker, people across this province want to know, and they deserve to know, how much do they have to donate to the Sask Party to get \$27 million loan guarantees, untendered building contracts, or electrical contracts? Is it \$16,000? What's the magic number, Mr. Minister?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I'll tell one magic number. Under the NDP, zero long-term care beds increase under 16 years. In the first three years of this government, there'll be an increase of over 100 long-term care beds under the Sask Party government. Those are pretty magical numbers for seniors that are waiting in acute care settings.

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, those are pretty magical numbers to seniors that are sitting in acute care centres, acute care facilities in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's around \$1,500 a day to keep a person in an acute care centre. Once we get these beds in place in Saskatoon, that cost drops way down to about 170, \$180 a day.

It makes perfect sense, Mr. Speaker. This is a good deal for Saskatchewan, but even better, it's a good deal for seniors in this province.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, if this government and that minister doesn't like the nature of these questions on this project . . . From day one, full stop, period, should have been tendered, Mr. Speaker. Not doing so, not doing so, Mr. Speaker, concerns the public, and it makes them suspect to corruption, suspect to abuse, and suspect to waste, Mr. Speaker. Tendered projects are the way to go.

The minister says that this is just a private deal — nothing to do with him and nothing to do with his government. But it just isn't so, Mr. Speaker. The government has put taxpayers on the hook to pay off the mortgage even if Amicus walks away from the deal. Amicus has risked nothing in this deal. It's Saskatchewan taxpayers who are on the hook, Mr. Speaker.

It simply isn't credible that no one in this government would have calculated how much this loan guarantee would have cost Saskatchewan taxpayers or is costing Saskatchewan taxpayers. They deserve a straight answer once and for all.

To the minister: how much will this \$27 million loan guarantee, with its untendered building and electrical contracts with Sask Party insiders, cost Saskatchewan taxpayers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we've entered into an agreement with the Catholic Health Ministry to supply 100 long-term care beds in the Saskatoon area, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. I'd ask the member who placed the question to allow the minister to respond. Order. Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we have asked the Catholic Health Ministry . . . We have entered into agreement. The Catholic Health Ministry has gone forward and are building the facility. It's their responsibility to choose the contractor, whatever contractor. It's their responsibility, not our responsibility, Mr. Speaker.

But, Mr. Speaker, if you want to talk about tendering and issues like that, let's go back to what I talked about yesterday, Mr.

Speaker. How many tenders went out on SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. Order. I believe the opposition members have the right to allow the minister to at least respond so that the public can hear the response. Order. The member from Cumberland will allow the Minister of Health to complete his answer.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, if you want to talk about tendering contracts, we will talk about the tender, the tender of SPUDCO. Mr. Speaker, we'll talk about the tender of SPUDCO . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, the whole issue around SPUDCO where that government lost \$37 million, \$37 million in 1996 dollars would have put an Amicus in every major city in this province, Mr. Speaker. I said it yesterday, and I'll say it again: our side, Mr. Speaker, our government is working on supplying senior care, Mr. Speaker. That side is far more interested in potatoes.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. I'd ask members to come to order so the House can proceed.

[14:30]

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 156 — *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, 2010*

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 156, *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources has moved first reading of Bill No. 156, *The Freehold Oil and Gas Production Tax Act, 2010* be now read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time?

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

Bill No. 157 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*

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

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — I move that Bill No. 157, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Act*, amendment 2010, be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Energy and Resources has moved first reading of Bill No. 157, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

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

The Speaker: — When shall the Bill be considered a second time? I recognize the . . . [inaudible].

Hon. Mr. Boyd: — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Private Bills.

Standing Committee on Private Bills

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I'm instructed by the Standing Committee on Private Bills to present its eighth report. Mr. Speaker, I move:

That the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in.

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. I'd ask members to come to order. It's been moved by the Chair of the Private . . . Order. It has been moved by the Chair of the Private Bills:

That the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. The motion is carried and pursuant to rule 98 . . . Order. The motion is carried. And pursuant to rule 98, the private Bill 905, *The Sisters of the Presentation Act, 2010* is deemed to be read the first time and is ordered for second reading on the next private members' day.

TABLING OF DOCUMENTS

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I hereby inform the Assembly that the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly has received from the Acting Chief Electoral Officer a certificate of the election and return for Gord Wyant, a member of the constituency of Saskatoon Northwest. I hereby table the return.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I seek leave for a motion for an address to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked leave for a motion to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Leave is granted. I recognize the Minister of Justice.

MOTIONS

Appointment of Children's Advocate

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That an honourable address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

Recommending to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that Mr. Bob Pringle be appointed the Children's Advocate pursuant to section 12.1 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*.

The Speaker: — The motion presented by the Minister of Justice is:

That an honourable Address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor:

Recommending to the Lieutenant Governor in Council that Mr. Bob Pringle be appointed the Children's Advocate pursuant to section 12.1 of *The Ombudsman and Children's Advocate Act*.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. D'Autremont: — Mr. Speaker, I move:

That this Assembly recess until 3:45 p.m., pursuant to rule no. 9, to allow members of the Legislative Assembly to attend the Speaker's tea to mark the appointment of the

Assembly's next Children's Advocate.

I so move.

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

That this Assembly recess until 3:45 p.m., pursuant to rule 9, to allow members of the Legislative Assembly to attend the Speaker's tea to mark the appointment of the Assembly's next Children's Advocate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried. This Assembly will recess to allow members the opportunity to join Mr. Pringle, his wife and daughter and possibly their son, and other guests from the Ombudsman's office in the library for tea. And I would invite members to do so.

[The Assembly recessed for a period of time.]

[15:45]

The Speaker: — The House will resume sitting.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Whip.

Mr. Allchurch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 100 through 102.

The Speaker: — Answers are tabled to questions 100 through 102.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 144

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 144** — *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm extremely pleased this afternoon to stand and speak on this very important piece of legislation. Mr. Speaker, this particular piece of legislation raises a number of concerns, from the point of view it's being driven by a legal case, a challenge to the government whether or not the current system in fact reflects a situation that's legal, Mr. Speaker, and whether or not people should have to pay the fees that are attached to the Act or in fact

that those fees attached, Mr. Speaker, shouldn't be paid by certain parties.

Mr. Speaker, without some additional information that we hope to obtain over the next two or three weeks from the minister, hopefully sooner than that, it is difficult to determine whether or not, first, this will fix the problem and whether or not the fix is fair. However this piece of legislation is tied to a piece of legislation that was passed a year ago, and this piece needs to be amended before that piece can be enacted, Mr. Speaker.

So from necessity, the government needs to ensure that this piece of legislation is in order prior to being able to enact a very important piece of legislation. We clearly understand that. We're hoping therefore that the information that we require we get at the earliest opportunity so that we can review that information and see that, in fact, that the changes being made are in the interest of the people of the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and that the various angles or various potentials of that piece of legislation have been reviewed appropriately and there's been consideration of the impact on both business and individuals as a result of the changes being made.

Now, Mr. Speaker, once we have that information and we have had a chance to review that, it would be most appropriate for us to ask a number of questions in committee. But today we're still looking for some additional information and contacting a number of stakeholders in the community to see whether or not that they are supportive of the changes being put forward. So at this time, Mr. Speaker, I would move we adjourn debate on this piece of legislation.

The Speaker: — The member for Regina Dewdney has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 144, *The Litter Control Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 147

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Draude that **Bill No. 147** — *The Public Interest Disclosure Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to rise and participate in the debate on this piece of legislation. It's with some interest noting the reference to it in the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. I think what we have here is a government that is looking to not necessarily act upon the measures contained in their platform, but to provide the appearance of action on the measures contained in their platform in the 2007 election.

And this particular measure here would seem to be a case in point. For we see, Mr. Speaker, it's taken a few different runs at this previously, but have now only just come forward with

legislation. And of course, Mr. Speaker, in terms of which Crowns, which portions of executive government, certain measures there will only be revealed when the regulations come to light.

So in terms of what this Bill will actually do, certainly it's got a very nice title, Mr. Speaker, and certainly will, I'm sure, result in the members opposite checking one off the list and proclaiming themselves to be promise keepers. But again this is a government that seems to be more preoccupied with the appearance of keeping a promise than actually keeping a promise, and appearance over action.

While I look at the press release that accompanied the legislation, look at the legislation itself, look at the speech that the Minister of the Public Service gave in this Chamber when it was introduced . . . We're certainly interested in the actual teeth for the legislation because of course teeth is what gives the legislation bite. And if the legislation doesn't have bite, then again it's part of this pattern of papering over unkept promises, leftovers from the platform from that government.

Again it proclaims protection for the public service. This is a government that we've seen conduct witch hunts and certainly treat whistle-blowers in their midst as people to be driven out of the public service. Again the actions indicate something entirely opposite to the proclaimed intents of the legislation and certainly the fine words contained in the press release and in the minister's speech. So again, Mr. Speaker, there's a cognitive dissidence in that regard. There's a gap between reality and rhetoric. And again we see this as part and parcel of the way that this government does business.

Just today, Mr. Speaker, we had a discussion in this Chamber about the Amicus deal, and Saskatoon and the lack of tendering there, the lack of public disclosure. Again this is a Bill that is itself entitled *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*. When it comes to practising public disclosure as it relates to the Amicus deal — \$27 million of taxpayers' money and counting, Mr. Speaker; those taxpayer dollars, all 27 million of them — and you know, who knows what else, because again we're not getting a straight answer out of this government on them.

Where was the disclosure that is inherent in an open and fair tendering process? In that case, Mr. Speaker, it was absent. So again between the reality and the rhetoric that we see. The rhetoric being preached by that government opposite and the reality that they practise, they're two very different things. So for a government that claimed it would be the most open and accountable government in the history of this province, we find at least 27 million reasons why that is not the case, Mr. Speaker.

And so when it comes to measures like this that are being proposed by the government, we're very interested to see how things that have been shipped out to regulations, how that actually takes effect, and then how it's actually resourced, Mr. Speaker. Because we know also that one of the practises of this government has been to proclaim the importance of the different officers of this legislature but then to systematically underfund them. Or in the case of the Chief Electoral Officer, to play egregious games with the very appointment process by which that officer has been appointed in the past — a process that was fair, above-board, open and transparent, and which was

very much rooted in a process that was about fair play. Instead we see things being trumped by members out of that caucus, and what used to be a bipartisan process become a partisan process in the worst sense of the word, Mr. Speaker.

So again, you go through the list of the things that they say are about the public interest, but it's very much about the Sask Party interest in terms of how they've conducted their affairs around the Amicus deal, with \$27 million at least involved of public money that's gone out through a sole-source deal with some very interested, Sask Party-connected people all over that deal.

When you see how they've approached the existing legislative officers and how the actual resourcing and the paying attention to the recommendations that flow from the Office of the Ombudsman or the Children's Advocate or the debacle that was and is the Electoral Officer and how that has been conducted by this government, again it's hard to read with a straight face something that's entitled *The Public Interest Disclosure Act* when this government has practised something that is a million miles away from that, Mr. Speaker.

So again, we await the regulations. We await the actual resourcing of this measure. But when it comes to siding up the reality with the rhetoric, we'll be watching with great interest. But you'll forgive us if we're more than just a bit skeptical in terms of the record of this government and the way that it doesn't jive with the actual actions of this government.

As well, one other thing. And again, in terms of the way that they've approached, say for example *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the way that that intersected with the freedom of information requests that have been submitted in the Amicus deal where page after page after page came back blanked out, Mr. Speaker, where again this is something that deals with a very large expenditure of public money, but that doesn't . . . It isn't being conducted in the light of day. It isn't being conducted in an open, transparent manner. We find that these things are referenced in terms of the rhetoric on the part of this government around this piece of legislation. We find that worrisome.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what can be defined in legislation and what may be crammed in through regulation, again there's a practice on the part of this government that we find to be cause for concern for the people of Saskatchewan and certainly for the official opposition. And we'll certainly hold them to account for that.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much more to add at this time in this debate on this legislation, but suffice it to say we certainly will be watching very closely. We will be vigilant, and we will be holding that government to account for that yawning chasm that exists between their rhetoric on the one hand and the reality that they perpetrate on the people of Saskatchewan on the other. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I would adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 147, *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 149

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 149 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Broten: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure this afternoon to join in on the discussion on an important piece of legislation, Bill 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*.

Mr. Speaker, often our discussions in this Assembly have to do with revenue coming into the province and economic activity in our province. Sometimes our discussion focuses exclusively or narrows in on strict economic issues. And even, Mr. Speaker, when we're talking about more social issues here in the Chamber, it's always tied to the economic considerations of our province because we know that in order to run the social programs that we value here in the province and the programs that need to be expanded and improved upon, much of our ability to do that is determined by the financial means we have as a province. And it's important that we as a provincial legislature pursue a path that ensures that we are on sound financial footing. And that occurs through sound financial policy and then also, of course, the management of the resources that we have at our disposal.

And so while we talk about financial matters in a general sense often in question period, when we look at specific pieces of legislation like Bill 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*, it allows us to look at specific instances where actions may be required or actions may be requested by a certain group in order to improve or enhance the economic opportunities for a particular organization here in the province.

[16:00]

And this particular piece of legislation addresses the sector of mining in the province. And any person in this Assembly and any person on the street — especially after the discussions we've been having as a province on the issue of potash over the last few weeks here in Saskatchewan — any person on the street or in this Assembly would clearly recognize that mining is a very, very important part of Saskatchewan's economy. It employs many people. The royalties that the province receives through mining is very important to our provincial coffers. And so it's widely recognized that mining is an important aspect to our provincial economy and our provincial society in the way that programs are provided through the benefits of the mining sector.

Mr. Speaker, in my short time as an MLA I've had the pleasure of visiting a few different mining operations, whether it'd be potash, uranium, here in the province. In my past I've also visited coal mines in British Columbia. I'm by no means an

expert on the area of mining, but it is always a pleasure and of great interest when one has the opportunity to visit a mining site, learn a bit about the operation at that spot and some of the challenges, and hear first-hand about some of the changes or concerns that employers, companies as well as labourers, workers on those sites would have.

So this piece of legislation, as the minister describes in his second reading speech, seeks to address the area of mineral processing. And it seeks to do this by — as the minister suggests in his remarks — by providing an incentive for an operation to pursue more mining of materials within our provincial borders.

So the legislation that is put forward doesn't specifically talk about a potential project or a site, though, given the specific nature of the legislation, it's possible that it is directly linked to the potential of an operation occurring in a particular place in the province, an operation perhaps that's under way. But we certainly look forward to more details on that, on the aspect and on those specifics.

So we know that mining is very important to the province. That's been the track record of NDP governments for many years, Mr. Speaker, where when in government we pursued a path of increasing the level of mining activity in the province in a variety of different types of mining operations. We think that's important because, as I stated, we know that mining operations provide great revenue to the province and employ a great number of people, provide good-quality jobs.

So in principle, when there are steps that the government can take that are appropriate to encourage economic activity while not giving away our resources . . . Because it was clear in the debate that has occurred in the province over the past number of weeks if there's one thing Saskatchewan people agree on, it's that we as a province need to extract the greatest amount of revenue from our resources.

And that comes down to the royalty structures, the taxation structures that we have in place when dealing with the natural resources that are in our province. Because everyone recognizes Saskatchewan has been blessed with a great amount of minerals and valuable quantities in the ground, and it's important that we develop those resources.

So in principle our approach, Mr. Speaker, as a party, has been to encourage mining development. And once positive steps can be taken to encourage mining activity, that is a good thing. But that being said, Mr. Speaker, whenever changes are made in the area of mining, it's important to ask very important questions. Because it's important to understand who the players are that are involved in a specific operation, who is requesting the change, how will this change affect operations that may be under way already in the province, operations that may not be experiencing the present benefit of a proposed change.

And, Mr. Speaker, it's also very important to carefully analyze what any sort of tax incentive or tax break for a mining operation . . . It's important to examine how that may affect the provincial coffers. Will there be in fact increased economic activity that will offset lost revenue from the tax break? So that's an important consideration.

It's important to look at the number of jobs that need to be created in an operation. And I see in this legislation, it is specific in saying that 75 full-time employees would have to be employed at an operation in order to benefit from this tax break. That's an important aspect. And it also states that a minimum amount of capital needs to be invested.

So it's important to have the clear guidelines. And I know when we've had the recent discussion in weeks about potash, that's been something that we as an opposition have been very concerned about. What are the government's specific requirements for an operation in the province? In this case, in the debate that we've had — Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — what are the requirements? How will those be enforced? Will the expectations be put in writing? And how will they be enforced and evaluated as to whether or not the company is abiding by the regulations that have been put in place?

So in the same situation with the piece of legislation that we look at here, Bill 149, it's important to also have a discussion about how the specific requirements of capital investments and number of employees, how that will be monitored, how that will be enforced. I think that's a very important thing for Saskatchewan people to know and for us as legislators to know as we debate this piece of legislation.

This piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, affects the tax structure. And in the minister's remarks he talked about a number of tax changes that the government has pursued here in the province since they have come into power. And this, Mr. Speaker, caused me a little bit of worry because, when we look at even the content of today's question period on the issue of taxation, we see that the government has pursued an approach that would suggest they did not clearly think of the ramifications and the implications of many of the tax changes that have occurred under their watch. And I'm speaking, Mr. Speaker, to the issue of property tax and the ability of local school boards to set the mill rate and collect tax.

When the Sask Party government took that responsibility or that ability of school boards to impose a tax in order to provide the educational services that are needed in the area, it was with the promise, Mr. Speaker, of adequate funding to provide the resources. Adequate funding for the LINC agreements that occurred prior to the change which are legal, binding obligations that school boards have, as well as a pledge, Mr. Speaker. As I've had the chance to talk with some school boards throughout the province, there was a pledge made that adequate resources will be provided to provide the quality education that our school divisions want to and are accustomed to providing to Saskatchewan students.

So when we saw in the newspaper today, Mr. Speaker, that the Saskatoon public school division has a shortfall of about \$1.9 million, as I recall — I think that's the correct amount that was stated in the paper — when we see the board taking a very vocal, a very public stance about the shortfall from government of two years running and their inability to provide the quality education that they want to provide and are accustomed to provide, I know that's concerning for many, many Saskatchewan families, many Saskatoonian parents whose children are in the public school system.

Because if there's one thing in addition to the value that we ought to extract, the highest amount of value from our resources, that if there's one other thing that all Saskatchewan people agree on, it is that our children deserve the very best educational system possible, that our children are indeed our future and need to have all the resources available to them. And whether that's appropriate class sizes, whether that's an adequate number of educational assistants in the classroom, these are all very important aspects to our educational system.

So when we look at the approach the Sask Party has taken to tax policy, the government, in this piece of legislation that they're putting forward, I assume is just asking us to trust. Trust them that they have thought through the implications and have a clear plan of how they'll make up for lost revenue and still provide services that Saskatchewan people need.

Based on the experience of property tax changes and the provision of resources to school boards, I'm not so sure, Mr. Speaker, that the government has made all of its decisions around tax policy in a well-thought-out manner. I think some of it may have been done for political expediency. Some of it may have been done because a few individuals thought it was a good idea. But without a clear plan as to how the province is going to adapt to the different tax structure, how the province is going to carry on in providing and enhancing the services that Saskatchewan people want and deserve without a clear indication that the government has thought through its approach carefully, it causes me to have some reservations on Bill 149. Because we've seen their track record when it comes to thinking through tax policy decisions.

So, Mr. Speaker, while the minister presenting this Bill may want us to take him at his word that everything is thought out well, that there is a plan in place, that the loss in resources or revenue will be offset in some other way, while he may want us to just trust him at his word, based on the track record that we've seen in other tax changes, I know many Saskatchewan people have concerns.

And among those concerned may be the public school board in Saskatoon who, in a very public manner in the newspaper, said that they are being short-changed funding even though they have binding agreements to do with the LINC and they have increased enrolment to do with new students in the Saskatoon school division.

So it's important when making changes to tax policy, it's important that this Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan are assured that the changes are well thought out, that there is a plan in place, and that when government says they're going to provide the resources for a particular area, a particular service for Saskatchewan people, that they do in fact do that. I think that's a concern for many, many people here in the province.

So we know that mining is very important to the province. We know that tax changes are very important because they have a ripple effect throughout the provincial government with respect to the services that we provide.

The other tidbit that was of interest to me when reading the minister's remarks on Bill 149, the minister said that — this is on page 6035 of November 15th — he said, "The legislation is

a result of the work done by officials at Enterprise Saskatchewan who have been consulting widely with the business community . . .” And it goes on.

This brings me to another topic, Mr. Speaker, and that is how Enterprise Saskatchewan actually works. Because it’s not clear to me, Mr. Speaker, how the government treats Enterprise Saskatchewan. It would seem that for some recommendations — recommendations that are convenient for the government to enact — they’re happy to make changes, and they will listen to Enterprise Saskatchewan and implement the changes.

In other areas of tax policy, Mr. Speaker, even though Enterprise Saskatchewan may present a recommendation, the recommendation has been ignored. And in this instance, Mr. Speaker, I’m talking about the graduate tax exemption program of the Sask Party with Enterprise Saskatchewan providing the recommendation that the government ought to extend the program to master’s and Ph.D. graduates. With that recommendation being clear, it’s puzzling to me, Mr. Speaker, why the government would listen to the one recommendation of Enterprise Saskatchewan with respect to Bill 149 and changes to the refining industry, but they would ignore another area, Mr. Speaker, the grad tax exemption program that leaves many, many Ph.D. and master’s graduates out in the cold without benefits to the program.

So to me, that’s a bit of a head-scratcher. And I’ve talked to people about Enterprise Saskatchewan. They too are puzzled as to how this works. It’s interesting because when Enterprise Saskatchewan legislation was brought in and it was formed, all the talk that the members opposite had was about how they were removing the political aspects of the decision-making process — removing those aspects — and getting the best information that they could get.

And, Mr. Speaker, I highly respect many of the individuals that provided their time, many of them on a near-to-volunteer basis on Enterprise Saskatchewan. I highly respect these individuals for the expertise that they bring and the advice that they give to government. But it’s puzzling when advice is given and it’s cherry-picked, and that’s what it seems to me. So the government may say they are trying to take the politics out of the decision-making process.

And if you recall, it was some time ago when the legislation was brought in and we discussed this here in the Assembly. There was talk that there wouldn’t be minister involvement on Enterprise Saskatchewan. Well then it turns out there actually is minister sitting on it, and there’s additional Sask Party MLAs sitting on Enterprise Saskatchewan. This imaginary divide that the members opposite suggested to us existed . . . Well they didn’t suggest it was imaginary. My view is that it was imaginary and is imaginary.

[16:15]

Mr. Speaker, it causes one to question how Enterprise Saskatchewan works, what recommendations are worthy of government taking notice, and what recommendations from Enterprise Saskatchewan are kicked to the curb, even though the individuals who are recommending them have provided many, many hours of service on a next-to-volunteer basis, just

providing expertise and knowledge based on their experience.

So I think in 149 it teaches us a number of lessons, in 149. It teaches us that the Sask Party record when it comes to clearly thinking out tax policy, it tells us that their record has been less than stellar. And that’s evidenced by the fiasco we see in the Saskatoon Public School Division right now where the board is \$1.9 million short, as I believe *The StarPhoenix* stated. And we have board members in the public school division making very open remarks about how they were promised certain things by the Sask Party government, and the funding has not been there to meet the needs of students.

So when we look at tax policy, in my opinion the record of the Sask Party government is one of not thinking through their decisions and it’s one of making decisions based on political expediency as opposed to sitting down and rationally looking at a problem.

Now in some situations when tax policy changes, it wouldn’t only be about politics. There could be a great, a solid basis for the changes that are requested and the changes that are made, and that’s good. But it’s still incumbent upon the government to think through what the implications are. And so if revenue is lost through tax changes, it’s important for government to take that into account. And based on the shortfall we’ve seen with the school divisions, I’m not convinced that that is the approach the Sask Party government takes when pursuing tax policy changes.

The other lesson, Mr. Speaker, I think we learn from Bill 149, is that the decision-making process around Enterprise Saskatchewan is still a very puzzling one. And it’s one, Mr. Speaker, that is designed to give the appearance, provide a facade of government hands-off decision making. But at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, we know that the decisions being made are political, based on the involvement of Sask Party MLAs and ministers involved with Enterprise Saskatchewan, and based on the evidence that members opposite are quite happy to cherry-pick recommendations that suit their needs and ignore ones that do not.

And I think, Mr. Speaker, that’s not a proper way to treat the many, many, many people now — with all these many sector committees cascading down and subcommittees and so on — I don’t think that’s a respectful way to treat those individuals that willingly provide of their time to provide advice based on their life experience and their training.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, those are some of my concerns around Bill 149.

Mining is certainly very important, and it’s important that we encourage the development of the mining industry in the province, whether that’s the initial extraction or whether that’s the subsequent refining that takes place. It’s important that we pursue that plan. But when making those decisions, it’s important that we see all the cards on the table. It’s important that we have a clear explanation from government as to how the lost revenue through a tax break will be made up, and it’s important for us to understand as a province how these decisions are being made when Enterprise Saskatchewan is being used as the basis for making this specific change to help a

specific location, perhaps.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I thank members for their time this afternoon, and I will adjourn debate on Bill 149. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Massey Place has moved adjournment of debate on Bill 149, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 150

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 150 — *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure to be able to rise and speak to Bill No. 150, *An Act to amend The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill has a number of provisions, three of them that have been most clearly pointed out. The first is to clarify how spousal survivor benefits are to be calculated in the case of a person who may have been married more than once and who may have both current and former spouses who could claim to be qualified to receive some type of survivor benefit.

Mr. Speaker, the opposition clearly wants to have a better understanding of the potential impact of this provision, particularly on vulnerable people, Mr. Speaker. However on the face of it, it appears that there may be merit in what the government is proposing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the minister's remarks from November 15th when he was doing the second reading on the Bill, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to quote what the minister said. He said, and he was talking about the three main provisions of this Bill. And this is, sorry, the Minister of . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Finance, right. So the Minister of Finance said:

One, the first amendment to section 28.3 will enable the proper calculation of the surviving spouse's pension after the member has retired. Two, the second amendment to section 48.1 is a housekeeping change that will make the Act comply with the *Income Tax Act* of Canada. Three, the third amendment to section 69 will eliminate the need to include personal information in the pension plan annual reports.

And then when one reads . . . As I was saying anyways, so second provision, Mr. Speaker, is simply to comply with the *Income Tax Act* of Canada. And again there is a few details that we still want to review with that, Mr. Speaker.

But when one looks at the third provision, this is where the Bill is of concern to me, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure to many of my colleagues. And I'd like to read the section that is of concern. So it talks about repealing section 50 of the current Act and replacing it with this:

“Annual report not to disclose personal information

The report transmitted by a board to the president of the Executive Council must not show the names of individuals who retired or died during the period to which the report applies, the amounts of superannuation or other allowances or benefits granted in individual cases or any other personal information respecting any of those individuals”.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this may not seem like anything to be too concerned about to some individuals, but given the track record of the Sask Party government and its desire to be shady and hide things from the public, it's of great concern to me, Mr. Speaker, as well as many of my colleagues. So we can see that there's again a pattern of hiding important information from public view, especially information that is supposed to be reported, Mr. Speaker.

So again when one looks at the comments made by the minister on November 15th on second reading, he says, “The requirement for such reporting serves no practical purpose,” Mr. Speaker. He goes on to say, “It is not consistent with the spirit and intent of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. This amendment will remove the requirement to disclose personal information in the annual reports.”

Mr. Speaker, what's really interesting about this is that we see this new-found belief and understanding in protecting the privacy and the information of individuals in this province under the Act, Mr. Speaker, when only recently we saw the Sask Party government introduce a piece of legislation that would have given up the private information of anyone who's used the hospital services in Saskatchewan to be used for fundraising purposes, Mr. Speaker. So on one hand we're willing to give up, the Sask Party government is willing to give up that information to be used for fundraising purposes, Mr. Speaker, whether or not the person would want that information given out, because there is no way for that person to be able to sign away from that with their knowledge that that's even going to happen. So it was, the onus was upon the person who had that hospital stay to make it known that they wouldn't want that information given out without even knowing in advance that that would be a possibility of the end result to begin with.

So we have a Sask Party government who will put forward legislation to have that happen in one session of the year, which was just this spring session that passed, and then we see them all of a sudden saying, oh my goodness, we want to protect your private information.

So I'm not sure if this is a new-found understanding that the Sask Party government has or if it's just another way for them to hide the fact that they don't want to disclose the information that would be disclosed currently under this Act, Mr. Speaker. Because the government, Mr. Speaker, knows full well that any amounts over \$50,000 paid to individuals or organizations in

one year have to be disclosed.

Now why is that, Mr. Speaker? Why does this information have to be disclosed? It has to be disclosed, Mr. Speaker, because it's using public money. It's using public money, Mr. Speaker. And when we're using public money, Mr. Speaker, when the government is using public money, the public has the right to know how their money is being used, Mr. Speaker.

That disclosure is taking place for a reason. It's taking place because the public has the right to know what the government is doing with their money, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, that amounts to accountability, which is something, Mr. Speaker, this Sask Party government seems to be failing the Saskatchewan people on many fronts on, Mr. Speaker, on many fronts.

So the salaries of everyone who works for a minister of the Crown or for Executive Council and who makes more than \$50,000 a year are publicly disclosed each year in public accounts. And the same holds true for all other employees in the public service. Now why is it, Mr. Speaker, that the Sask Party government thinks that former employees can be held to a different standard? They still have not yet explained that, Mr. Speaker, and that's why there are many questions that still remain with respect to Bill 150, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, as I said, there is still much to be answered. There's still many questions that the opposition has, not the least of which when one looks at their, you know, platform document from the 2007 election with the, you know, smiling picture of the Premier on the front, and one turns to page no. 40 . . . And I really enjoy this document, Mr. Speaker. I've used it often when I've spoken to various Bills that they've brought forward. And, Mr. Speaker, I'm sure I'm going to be able to use it a lot more with future Bills that are brought forward, Mr. Speaker. Because I think the Sask Party government fails to read their promises to the Saskatchewan people that they made in 2007 in their election document, when they bring forward the legislation that they do to the House, the Chamber of the legislature, and to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

So when one looks at page 40, titled "More accountable government," that sounds pretty good. Sounds pretty good. And you know, Saskatchewan people were wanting to believe what they put forward in 2007, and they placed their trust in those men and women sitting across the way, Mr. Speaker. They placed their trust in those men and women that they would hold true to their promises, Mr. Speaker.

But what are they getting? Let's take a look. So it's entitled "More accountable government." And I'd like to quote:

Saskatchewan people expect their government to be open, honest, and accountable. A Saskatchewan Party government will provide Saskatchewan people with more transparency and accountability than any previous government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that sounds great. Unfortunately what's happening right now is exactly, exactly the opposite, Mr. Speaker. They are taking a lesson from the Harper Tories and doing exactly the opposite of what they promised. The Harper

Tories promised to be more open, honest, and accountable. And we're getting exactly the opposite. The Sask Party government promised the same, and they're giving us exactly the opposite, Mr. Speaker.

Time and time again, we see nothing but shady dealings and questionable, questionable dealings, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Sask Party government, and this yet is another piece of legislation that does so. Whether it's signing out contract services to their friends, that haven't been tendered, whether it's signing a \$27 million loan guarantee with their friends and handing over untendered contracts, Mr. Speaker, to Sask Party donors, it is unbelievable how unaccountable, how dishonest, and lack of open and transparency, this Sask party government is presenting to the people of Saskatchewan.

And now, Mr. Speaker, what are they trying to do? They're trying to pretend that there's something else yet again. But you know what, Mr. Speaker? We're used to this. We're used to the Sask Party government being the great pretenders. They pretend to be, you know, free market capitalists. But oh wait a minute, when a company does come to Saskatchewan and wants to make a bid on something that they have promised to people outside of the borders of Saskatchewan, they decide to do the backward shuffle because they've done some polling. They realize that Saskatchewan people don't want their reserves sold off willy-nilly to control outside of the province, outside of the country.

[16:30]

And then they start doing the Captain Canada routine, Mr. Speaker, and saying, you know, here we are. We're going to defend Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan people and make sure that those reserves are . . . those resource revenues, I should say, are properly preserved for future generations — which, Mr. Speaker, let me just remind the Sask Party government, has been the standpoint and the viewpoint of the NDP for ever and ever, Mr. Speaker. We have always felt, we have always felt that resource revenues are for the good and for the purpose of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker. We have always felt that those resource revenues should be to the betterment of the province, for the betterment of the people of Saskatchewan.

And that's why, Mr. Speaker, we have also in the past, we had filed a complaint. And not just a complaint though, Mr. Speaker, a court case with the federal Tories as to their unfulfilled promise of equalization, Mr. Speaker, because we do feel so strongly about resource revenues being for the betterment of Saskatchewan people.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that was to the tune of \$800 million a year — \$800 million a year. Now let's look at what \$800 million a year could do, given that the Sask Party has blown the finances as badly as they have, given that the Sask Party is now running a deficit, Mr. Speaker. Let's look at what that \$800 million per year could do for the Sask Party government to try and balance their books even, let alone what it would do for the people of Saskatchewan in terms of seeing some wonderful things that could be done in this province, for instance, health care, education and the superannuates of the province, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure the superannuates would be very happy to see that \$800 million come to the province of Saskatchewan and see

some improvements made to their situation, Mr. Speaker.

So it's interesting that although the NDP filed that court challenge, that the Sask Party government decided to drop the court challenge. Why? Because unfortunately our Premier made a backroom deal with the Harper Tories and Stephen Harper himself, Mr. Speaker. And here we stand today: no extra money, no extra promises or handshakes with respect to other monies that are coming into the province as the Premier said would happen if, you know, they give a peace a chance. Well giving peace a chance hasn't gotten us very much money, Mr. Speaker, hasn't gotten us very much money at all.

As a matter of fact, some of the monies that have been promised to the province, Mr. Speaker, may not be seen because of the tight timelines that are now surrounding those monies that have been promised to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So we can see how the insincerity of some of their comments is shaking out now, Mr. Speaker.

Now when one looks at the fact that they are now looking at wanting to protect the privacy of the individuals supposedly with this new provision, despite the fact that this new provision is an obligation that they have to fill because these are people who are, have earnings of over \$50,000 a year, Mr. Speaker, let's look at something else that the Sask Party tried bringing forward not too long ago.

Now not too long ago, they wanted to bring forward Bill 9. Now Bill 9 would've raised the bar for non-disclosure of government spending from \$50,000 to \$350,000. That's seven times the amount, Mr. Speaker, that they wanted to spend, that the Sask Party government wanted to spend without being accountable to Saskatchewan people for their spending decisions. Seven times the amount.

Now it's funny, they love to talk about the fact that the NDP was in government for 16 years. And you know, Mr. Speaker, I like talking about the fact that the NDP was in government for 16 years. For 16 years, the NDP government — despite the fact that they inherited a \$15 billion deficit and debt in 1991 when they were elected, despite that fact, Mr. Speaker — they were able to work within that \$50,000 non-disclosure for government purposes. They were able to work within that \$50,000 limit, Mr. Speaker. That's what the NDP was able to do.

All of a sudden, the Sask Party government gets elected in 2007 with a \$2.3 billion surplus handed to them, and what do they need? They need to go from a \$50,000 non-disclosure to a \$350,000 non-disclosure. Now why is that, Mr. Speaker? Why don't they want to be accountable to the people of Saskatchewan? What are they hiding? What are they always hiding, Mr. Speaker?

It's no different than all the questions that are being asked currently by our deputy leader, by our leader and by our opposition critic and by other critics that want full disclosure about some of the situations that are currently taking place in Saskatchewan. And you know what we're getting, Mr. Speaker? We're not getting answers, we're getting responses.

So that's why the opposition happens to be more than a little frustrated with this, Mr. Speaker. That's why the opposition

happens to be raising the bar in terms of the noise level sometimes in this House, Mr. Speaker, because the opposition is getting frustrated. We're not getting answers. We're not able to do our jobs on behalf of Saskatchewan people in ensuring that there is public disclosure and ensuring that there's accountability and ensuring that there's transparency. They are handcuffing the opposition critics from doing their jobs. And they are thereby not being open and honest with the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, because we can't do the job on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And that is frustrating. And if it seems like I'm raising my voice, it's because I personally am frustrated, Mr. Speaker. I'm personally frustrated.

Unfortunately I wasn't able to make any comments on the Throne Speech because I was ill with the flu. And I'm still suffering some of those after-effects, Mr. Speaker. But I want to make this clear, Mr. Speaker. I want to make it clear. I would have voted against that Throne Speech for one primary reason. It happens to do with my opposition critic portfolio. But there was no mention of anything substantive when it comes to the environment. There was absolutely nothing about climate change. This government has decided that Saskatchewan, it does not need to be protected with respect to the environment. And that's why I felt . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. Order. I'd ask the member to be mindful of the responses and direct . . . at least reflecting the legislation that we're currently under debate, Bill 150. Thank you.

Ms. Morin: — Well, Mr. Speaker, there are a good amount of superannuates who worked in Environment and would have reason to be interested in that as well.

So when we get back to Bill 150 and the non-disclosure of the information with respect to superannuates, I found something very interesting in *The Globe and Mail* on November 16th, Mr. Speaker, which was interesting because that is the very day, the very day that the . . . I'm sorry, the day after the minister made his second reading remarks. And you know what I found in *The Globe and Mail*? It was this lovely cartoon. And it's a cartoon of Prime Minister Stephen Harper holding a sign that says, open for business. And it has a lovely picture of Tony Clement beside him on a box that says, foreign investment rules. Playing a shell game, Mr. Speaker, playing a shell game.

And do you know why I found that so interesting with respect to Bill 150? I found it interesting with respect to Bill 150 because that's what it feels like. It feels like Bill 150, with not wanting to disclose what's happening with the superannuates, is exactly that — another shell game, Mr. Speaker. This government loves to do shell games. They, like I said, they are hand-in-glove with the Harper Tories in terms of not being open and accountable, not being transparent, not wanting to disclose the full details of their shady dealings and anything else to the people of Saskatchewan or the country of Canada.

And, Mr. Speaker, they are becoming experts at the shell game. The shell game is something that they are absolutely trying to

perfect, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, let's look at another shell game, another shell game being the \$27 million loan guarantee with an organization whose lawyer, Rod Donlevy, is none other than the brother to the Premier's chief of staff, Mr. Speaker. So we see the shell game that's happening with 150, Bill 150, of not wanting to disclose what's happening with the superannuates.

And you can compare it with so many other shell games. Like for instance, this shell game with this \$27 million loan guarantee that we can't seem to get any answers on as an opposition, Mr. Speaker. I find it very interesting. So again let's look at another shell game. Let's look at the fact that the untendered contract to build a facility was given to Michael Stensrud, who donated \$16,000 to the Sask Party and \$1,000 in the last election to the Minister of Justice. So once again we ask questions about this particular untendered contract, Mr. Speaker, which is worth millions and millions of dollars.

And then we see a Bill in front of us today, Mr. Speaker, Bill 150, where yet again the government doesn't want to disclose the details of something that they're obligated to with anyone getting over \$50,000 a year because it's public money, Mr. Speaker. They again don't want to disclose what's happening with public money.

And just today, Mr. Speaker, just today we hear from the opposition critic of Finance that there's rumours that the electrical company that's receiving another untendered contract with respect to this Amicus deal is owned by the Minister of Justice's brother. And so now we see again that another company, Bridge City Electric, is going to get this untendered contract. Yet again another connection to the Sask Party. And yet again, no transparency, no openness and accountability when it comes to a deal that's worth \$27 million, Mr. Speaker. And because it's a \$27 million loan guarantee, guess who's on the hook, Mr. Speaker? The taxpayers of . . .

The Speaker: — Order. Order. As I look at Bill 150, there's a number of comments have been made by the member that really are quite broad. And while we've allowed some freedom of expanding, I would ask the member, as Speakers have in the past, to speak directly to Bill 150, *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Act*.

Ms. Morin: — So, Mr. Speaker, when we look at Bill 150 and we look at the comments of the minister in second reading with respect to Bill 150, he talks about "The requirement for such reporting serves no practical purpose. It is not consistent with the spirit and intent of *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*," Mr. Speaker.

Well as I've just pointed out numerous times, it's interesting that the Minister of Finance and the Sask Party are now concerned about disclosure of information when this happens to be a brand new revelation in their modus operandi so far, Mr. Speaker. So let's take a look . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . It does. It seems very devious and questionable at best, Mr. Speaker. So, Mr. Speaker, we see a continued lack of accountability.

Now the reason, Mr. Speaker, that this provision exists in this Bill of the superannuates to begin with is because there is a

requirement for reporting mechanisms with respect to public money, Mr. Speaker. Public money is exactly that. It's something that the public always has a right to know how their money is being used and how their money is being spent. Now, Mr. Speaker, we know that the government is obligated to report any amounts that are over \$50,000 paid to individuals and organizations in one year. Those have to be publicly disclosed.

So, Mr. Speaker, what's interestingly absent from the minister's comments on second reading of this Bill is the fact that the minister does not give any reasons, Mr. Speaker, no reasons whatsoever except for his new-found interest in protecting the privacy of individuals which, Mr. Speaker, I have to say is very suspect. I know that I'm not sure I quite believe that, and I know that most of my colleagues have the same problem in terms of believing that as well. And, Mr. Speaker, I'd be surprised if the general public didn't have concerns with the government yet again not wanting to disclose what's happening with public monies, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, we see many, many examples of how the Sask Party wants to simply play the shell game, not be open and accountable, not want to tender large contracts, not want to disclose to the people of Saskatchewan that they are on the hook for \$27 million at this point, Mr. Speaker. And what's interesting about that, Mr. Speaker, is that when one looks at the finances of Saskatchewan, that that won't even show up, Mr. Speaker. Why? Because it's going to be shown as a liability of the Amicus deal that's taken place and by the organization that's setting up this particular deal, Mr. Speaker. So it won't even show under the government finances as a potential \$27 million debt or as a potential \$27 million liability even, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

So that's of great concern to the opposition. It's of greater concern to Saskatchewan taxpayers, given that we are seeing the surplus of \$2.3 billion that they were left with having been completely spent. We're now seeing the province of Saskatchewan going into a deficit position, which we're all too familiar with, Mr. Speaker. We were . . . been there for a long time. We did our very best to work our way out of that, Mr. Speaker . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, been there, done that, and still have the debt to show for it, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker. The debt that that Sask Party, a.k.a. [also known as] former Progressive Conservative government of Saskatchewan, that the Devine Tories carried, is still here, Mr. Speaker.

So when one looks at the fact that the minister refers to his new-found interest in *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* as being the reason for wanting to change the reporting mechanism in this Bill, Mr. Speaker, one has to be more than suspect about what the government is wanting to do. Because anything that puts taxpayers' dollars at risk, Mr. Speaker, is of concern to taxpayers of Saskatchewan. And any time large amounts of taxpayers' money is being spent, Mr. Speaker, is something that the people of Saskatchewan want to be informed about.

So why, Mr. Speaker, this provision is in here and why the minister didn't make that clear in his second reading remarks,

despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, that's the time that the speaker is supposed to give to presenting the Bill in its entirety, Mr. Speaker; that's the time that the minister is supposed to give to the opposition and the people of Saskatchewan in explaining the full purpose of the Bill, Mr. Speaker. And instead of us having to stand and ask all these questions, Mr. Speaker, wouldn't it have simply been a lot easier if the minister would have been forthright in what his decision was in not wanting to disclose the public monies that are being paid out under the superannuates Act, Mr. Speaker? It would have been so much easier.

And unfortunately because the minister didn't disclose that, we are now led to believe that there's something suspect here, Mr. Speaker. Because unfortunately in their pattern since they've been elected in 2007, everything that they've done that hasn't been fully disclosed has been suspect, Mr. Speaker. And many times those suspicions have been validated, Mr. Speaker, just like with the Amicus deal. Those suspicions are now validated, Mr. Speaker. And there's more and more information coming forward all the time, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are many other colleagues that want to speak to this Bill, obviously, because as I said, there is still many questions that need to be answered. There is still a lot of concern, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the carryings-on of the government, with respect to many of the other deals that are being asked about right now, Mr. Speaker.

And because the government is not being forthcoming in any answers to any questions about anything, Mr. Speaker, whether it's the environmental concerns that I have about the proposed dome that the Premier wants to build in this province, Mr. Speaker, whether it's the questions about Amicus, whether it's the questions about why does the government not want to provide a reporting mechanism with respect to the superannuates that are receiving over \$50,000 of taxpayer money, Mr. Speaker, it's a constant question of lack of accountability, lack of transparency . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Exactly.

It seems to be a pervasive theme with the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, despite the fact, Mr. Speaker, that they promised the Saskatchewan electorate in 2007 in their very own election platform document, they promised the people of Saskatchewan a more accountable government — their words, Mr. Speaker, not mine. They promised a more accountable government, and we're seeing exactly the opposite, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, if the Sask Party government truly believes the words that it printed in the document, "A Saskatchewan Party government will provide Saskatchewan people with more transparency and accountability than any previous government," Mr. Speaker, we have yet to see that happen. We are seeing quite the opposite.

We're seeing a reporting mechanism of over \$50,000 that is supposed to be reported that they now want to remove in this Bill, Mr. Speaker. They want to be less transparent, less accountable to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and without providing any explanation — any valid, credible explanation — as to why that should happen.

We're seeing that in many other situations, Mr. Speaker, whether it's Amicus, whether it's the environmental concerns around the dome in terms of who is going to pay the environmental cleanup on the dome site, Mr. Speaker. All these questions have yet to be answered, and none of it has yet taken place. We've heard a lot of lip service to accountability and we've heard a lot of lip service to transparency, Mr. Speaker, but once again, in Bill 150 we are seeing quite the opposite to what the Sask Party government is paying lip service to.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the provision of wanting to be in compliance with the Act, the federal Act I should say, the *Income Tax Act* of Canada, Mr. Speaker, we don't see any big concerns at the time. But because of the fact that we don't see any big concerns at the time with this particular provision, that says to me we'd better study it, and we'd better study it closely, and we'd better study it under a microscope.

Because when things are glaringly obvious to us in terms of questions, we still don't get any answers. When things aren't glaringly obvious, I have more concern about the fact that we may miss something, Mr. Speaker. So we are going to, as opposition, do our due diligence and ensure that everything has been properly addressed with respect to the changes that they are now seeking to be in compliance with the federal *Income Tax Act*.

And needless to say, Mr. Speaker, I have already spoken to the first provision, which is the amendments to section 28.3, to what the minister refers to — enabling the proper calculation of the surviving spouses after the member has retired. We want to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that there aren't any mistakes done there either, Mr. Speaker. Because quite often also with the Sask Party government, we see Bills brought forward in haste sometimes, Mr. Speaker.

I mean for instance, let's talk about for instance, you know, their climate change Bill that they brought forward in haste, Mr. Speaker, because they were getting too much pressure from the opposition. They were getting too much pressure from the people of Saskatchewan as to the fact that they were doing nothing with respect to that file, Mr. Speaker. There was absolute inaction with respect to the government dealing with climate change in the province of Saskatchewan.

So they hastily brought forward a Bill, Mr. Speaker, which died on the order table within, I think — what was it? — the week that it was brought forward. Because it was brought forward at the end of the session to make it look like that, you know, they were doing something, gosh, golly, and they're in talks with their federal cousins and, you know, there is this agreement to talk about an agreement and all sorts of things, Mr. Speaker. But again nothing came to fruition on that particular front.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we hear that they're going to make some changes to provisions with respect to how pension calculations are going to be made, Mr. Speaker, with respect to survivor benefits, we want to ensure that those calculations are made in the best interests of the survivor beneficiaries, I should say, and done so especially for those who may be placed in a vulnerable situation, Mr. Speaker.

We want to ensure that there aren't going to be any mistakes,

Mr. Speaker. So the opposition is going to ensure that it does its due diligence with respect to reviewing that provision very, very carefully, Mr. Speaker. So that means, unlike what the Sask Party government tends to do with its Bills, Mr. Speaker, that means going out and speaking to our constituents all across the province, Mr. Speaker.

Luckily enough, we have representation from the North. We have representation from the South, from the larger centres, from the smaller urban centres, Mr. Speaker. We're very fortunate to have representation, a good cross-section of representation that allows us to speak to constituents all over the province with different circumstances, with different types of employment situations, Mr. Speaker, because those do differ depending on where you live in the province, Mr. Speaker, and ensure that those situations are all being appropriately addressed.

And who knows, Mr. Speaker? From our discussions, we may see that there is still something that is lacking or there's something that's been overlooked. And we may want to bring forward an amendment, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that those things that are overlooked and are lacking can be properly addressed in what the Sask Party government is proposing to change under Bill 150.

And, Mr. Speaker, you know, we've already heard from the superannuates on numerous occasions with respect to some of the changes that they would like to see take place. And I have to admit, Mr. Speaker, that in the discussions that I've had with them, I haven't heard much about a couple of the provisions that are being raised in this Bill, Mr. Speaker. I've certainly heard some about the section 28.3 with respect to surviving beneficiaries in terms of some of the concerns that the superannuates have raised. But there are many other issues that the superannuates have raised as well, Mr. Speaker.

And what I find interesting is that, despite the fact that this Sask Party government likes to tout the record revenue that they were able to enjoy as a government when they were elected in 2007 through the good, hard work of the Saskatchewan people and the policies of the NDP that got this province out of the quagmire of debt that it was in and inherited . . . So Mr. Speaker, it's very nice to see that the Sask Party government was able to inherit a province that was showing record revenues. The Sask Party government was able to inherit a situation where there was \$2.3 billion left to them, Mr. Speaker. In terms of what I would've hoped they would have done was put in a real . . . And I don't like calling it the rainy day fund, Mr. Speaker, because unfortunately when you put money in a rainy day fund, they spend it even when it's not raining, Mr. Speaker.

So, Mr. Speaker, you know, I'm really hoping that the government is going to be very relevant in its calculations of the survivor of spouse benefits, and that the superannuates also have their other concerns heard, Mr. Speaker. Because, you know, the Sask Party government made a lot of promises to the superannuates, a lot of promises. And the superannuates were letting us know that, that the Sask Party's . . . You know, the Sask Party opposition is promising us this, that, and the other thing. And, Mr. Speaker, interestingly enough, it was concerns that were outside of what — except with the exception of 28.3

— are currently entailed in Bill 150.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're going to ensure that all the changes that are contained in Bill 150 are being made appropriately, are addressing what they should address, Mr. Speaker. And that we are careful that, because this Sask Party government seems to continue this pattern of secrecy and lack of accountability and transparency which, quite frankly, defines this government, Mr. Speaker, and we're going to ensure that they are held accountable. And with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to adjourn debate and allow my other colleagues to take their place and make their comments known as well.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Walsh Acres has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 150, *The Superannuation (Supplementary Provisions) Amendment Act, 2010*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 153

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 153 — *The Provincial Court Amendment Act, 2010*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy to weigh in on the debate around Bill No. 153, *The Provincial Court Amendment Act*.

So first I want to start by outlining what this Bill is designed to do, or so this is what the government has told us it's meant to do. This Act, Bill No. 153, is going to repeal section 8.1 of the Act that established the civil division of the provincial courts. So this part will allow Provincial Court judges from other provinces to be appointed as temporary judges in Saskatchewan when required to deal with a file where all Saskatchewan Provincial Court judges are in a conflict or appear to be in a conflict position. So that there are occasions where judges do find themselves in a conflict of interest with one or more . . .

The Speaker: — Being now 5 p.m. this Assembly will adjourn until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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