



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

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The Honourable Don Toth  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

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

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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In the interests of time, obviously we want to be a bit cautious about introducing all of the guests that have joined us in the legislature today. So may I just say, on behalf of the government side, how much we want to welcome all the guests who have come, not only I'm sure for the budget, but perhaps to see question period as well.

Mr. Speaker, it's an important day in the life of a province, and given the road conditions, we're just very encouraged by the sizeable group that's joined us here today. And so through you and to all members of the Assembly, we introduce our guests and we welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Lingenfelter:** — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the Premier in welcoming all our friends, neighbours, families from around the province. And in light of the Premier's comment about the highways, we'll look forward to a lot of money in the budget for highways. But having said that, I do want to introduce and welcome all the people to their legislature.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition on behalf of Saskatchewan residents that speaks to the issue of rising rents and very low vacancy rates in many communities across the province. And it recognizes also that a majority of Canadians now live in provinces with rent control guidelines, including Manitoba, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island, and that the argument that the private market would deliver sufficient affordable housing in the absence of rent control has proven to be false. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to consider enacting some form of rent control with a view to protecting Saskatchewan renters from unreasonable increases in rent.

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present on behalf of residents in Moose Jaw and Regina.

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

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

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

And this petition is signed by citizens right across the province. I do so present. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of Northern Trappers Association Co-operative. The fur industry has so much potential for our northern trappers. It is a way to educate and empower our northern youth and to connect them with their culture. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to recognize that the Northern Trappers Association maintains the traditional values of hunting and trapping and also brings in millions of dollars to the provincial economy every year from the proceeds of fur harvesting combined with the economic spinoff to the tourism sector and to the local economy; and in so doing, to cause this government to stop turning their back on not only northern trappers, but all people who live and work in northern Saskatchewan; and in so doing, to cause the provincial government to immediately reinstate the funding to the Saskatchewan Northern Trappers Association.

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

It is signed by the good people of Air Ronge, La Ronge, Stanley Mission. 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 on behalf of my constituents who live in the neighbourhood of Hampton Village:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that Hampton Village is a rapidly growing community in Saskatoon with many young families; that Hampton Village residents pay a significant amount of taxes to the provincial government, including education property taxes; that children in Hampton Village deserve

to be able to attend school in their own community instead of travelling to neighbouring communities to attend schools that are typically already reaching capacity.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan cause the provincial government to devote the necessary resources for the construction of an elementary school in Hampton Village so that children in this rapidly growing neighbourhood in Saskatoon can attend school in their own community.

Mr. Speaker, the individuals who signed this petition live in Hampton Village. I so present.

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

**Ms. Morin:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition regarding restoring funding equity to Regina Catholic schools. Mr. Speaker, currently Regina Catholic school students receive \$275 less per pupil than Regina public schools, amounting to a funding inequity of \$2.7 million in total for Regina. That funding inequity places program delivery and staffing levels at risk. The Government of Saskatchewan has denied Catholic school boards in the province representation on the government-appointed committee mandated to develop a long-term funding formula for Saskatchewan school boards. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to address the funding inequity between Regina Catholic schools and Regina public schools that provides \$275 less per pupil funding for Regina Catholic school students, totalling \$2.7 million, and make known that the continuation for another school year of funding inequity places program delivery and staffing levels at risk in Regina Catholic schools; and in so doing, immediately restore funding equity to ensure that every student in Saskatchewan, whether enrolled in a Catholic or a public school, receives equitable resources to ensure every student in Saskatchewan has access to a quality education.

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

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

**Mr. Iwanchuk:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition calling for community-based organization worker wage equity:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: workers in community-based organizations in Saskatchewan have traditionally been underpaid, and they continue to earn poverty-level wages; CBO workers care for and provide valuable services to some of the most vulnerable members of our society; the low wages of CBO workers results in high staff turnover, and the subsequent lack of caregiver continuity has a negative impact on the

quality of care clients receive.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan to implement, act as quickly as possible, a multi-year funding plan to ensure that CBO workers achieve wage equity with employees who perform work of equal value in government ministries, agencies, and offices.

And the petition is signed by people from Willowbrook, Melville, Yorkton, Preeceville, Weldon, Wilkie, and Regina. I so present.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise again today to present a petition signed by citizens of Saskatchewan concerned that the introduction of Bill 160 and its passage, if that indeed takes place, will have a detrimental effect on human rights law in the province. And the prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan withdraw Bill 160 from consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan and hold extensive public consultations informed by a public policy paper before any amendments to the Human Rights Code, the law that supersedes all others in our province, are even considered.

Today the petition is signed by residents of Regina, Weyburn, and Pilot Butte, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud once again to rise and present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to the mismanagement of our finances by the Sask Party. They allude specifically to the two consecutive deficit budgets, the two years of debt growth, all at a time, Mr. Speaker, of revenue highs, unprecedented revenue highs in this province, and in fact adding \$400 million in this past year to our public books, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Carievale, Carlyle, Alida, Lampman, and White Bear Lake . . . Alida. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Qu'Appelle Valley.

### Top Employer

**Hon. Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is truly an honour and a pleasure to rise in the House today to recognize a Saskatchewan business success story. Magna Electric was recently named one of Saskatchewan's top employers for 2011 by Mediacorp Canada. To be considered a top Saskatchewan employer, companies are evaluated by the editors of Canada's Top 100 Employers, using the same eight criteria as the national competition.

Magna Electric has been serving the industry and institutional sectors for nearly 30 years. They started out small, experienced steady growth, and are looking forward to a promising future here in Saskatchewan and beyond our provincial borders.

Mr. Speaker, Magna has earned the reputation among its peers as one of Saskatchewan's best electrical engineering companies. They provide core engineering and technical services, electrical testing, high-voltage and relay testing, with an in-house electrical contractor division. Magna Electric acknowledges their strength to their people and focuses on relationships with their clients, vendors, and staff to create an inclusive, respectful environment for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I would like this Assembly to join with me in congratulating Kerry Heid, Magna Electric, along with other Saskatchewan businesses that were recognized as Saskatchewan's top employers for 2011. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Government Spending

**Ms. Higgins:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today this government and their budget will attempt to draw our focus towards their 2007 election promises. This is all well and good, Mr. Speaker, if not for the fact that they have conveniently forgotten one of their most fundamental promises. In 2007 this government promised to keep government spending to 3 per cent per year, and somewhere along the line these Tories stopped being Tories. But don't take just the opposition's word on this. Some conservatives would agree.

Mr. Speaker, the Prairie director of the Taxpayers Federation, Colin Craig, claims the government needs to shift its focus from spending to debt reduction. And in a CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] interview he said, and I quote, "If the government isn't going to pay off debt during the good times, how will it pay off during the bad times?"

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government continues to use an outdated accounting system that fails to comply with public sector accounting standards, the only province in Canada to do so. Mr. Speaker, this government's focus on spending has meant an increase of 32 per cent over the last three years, well above the 3 per cent per year promise — clearly a promise that was broken.

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

### Elite Barley Top Producer

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Elite Barley program recently named its top 10 producers of malt barley in Canada, and Biggar's Jeff Wheaton was one of the crème de la crème. The Elite Barley Canadian malting barley grower recognition program named Wheaton one of the 10 farmers selected by industry as top producers for the year. The goal of the program is to promote grower best-management practices for malting barley and showcase the value that malt and malt barley bring to Western Canadian agriculture and the Canadian economy.

When Wheaton started farming in 1994, he started producing malting barley. He has grown it ever since, building a reputation for consistency, trustworthiness, and as a reliable supplier of choice of quality malt barley. Barley makes up around 17 per cent of crop acres. Wheaton likes the crop reliability. He likes the incentives it has provided over the years, the fact it is a lower cost crop to produce that is generally good for the soil compared to some alternatives. He has found other crops perform well in barley stubble.

Wheaton straight-cuts barley, believing swathing is unpractical and risky because untimely rain can have such a dramatic effect on quality. He strongly believes in not taking barley off at higher than 13.5 per cent moisture and waits for acceptable moisture levels to help ensure his barley will last in storage. Wheaton was nominated for the honour by Biggar's Prairie Malt Ltd. Congratulations, Jeff.

[13:45]

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

### The Spaceship Enterprise Club

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to the spaceship enterprise club. No, Mr. Speaker, it's not a club for fans of a certain TV show featuring a starship named *Enterprise* whose fans like to attend conventions wearing Vulcan ears. It's a club for those who want to go where no ordinary man or woman can afford to go, where paying \$1,000 guarantees you a piece of the Sask Party government.

That was the Premier's prime directive in his Enterprise Club invitation, Mr. Speaker: pay up; we'll beam you up; and then we'll listen up. I don't know who they're mind-melding with when they came up with that scheme, Mr. Speaker, but it sounds to me that their brains were set on stunned.

No worries though, Mr. Speaker. Members in the Enterprise Club will still have a few privileges to cling on to, like advance notice of party events where \$1,000 will still buy you a seat at the leader's dinner next to some of the most shining stars in the Sask Party universe. At a time, Mr. Speaker, when Saskatchewan families are struggling, it's too bad that this government finds it logical to focus on making sure Enterprise Club members are the only ones to live long and prosper.

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

### Regina Citizen of the Year

**Ms. Tell:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House to congratulate Renu Kapoor for being CTV's Regina Citizen of the Year for 2010. Her history of volunteer service has been extraordinary. In the past 15 years she's been involved in dozens of fundraising projects that have raised over \$1 million for charity. It is because of tireless volunteers like Renu that so many of our local organizations and events are so successful.

Renu is a registered social worker and certified addictions counsellor. She has worked in the field of mental health and addictions for over 35 years. Her volunteerism extends to the fundraising of local, provincial, national, and international projects. She has played a leading role in funding the treatment of osteoporosis. In 2002, she received the National Builder Award from Osteoporosis Canada. In 2010, she was a board member and fundraising Chair for the Regina Public Library. She is also named the honorary ambassador for Mosaic. In 2011, she will chair the Year of India in Canada for the celebration, a year-long event.

Renu Kapoor has been recognized previously with her YWCA [Young Women's Christian Association] Volunteer of the Year Award in 1995, and in 2007 she received the YWCA Women of Distinction Lifetime Achievement Award. I would like all members to join in congratulating Renu Kapoor for her extraordinary achievements in volunteerism. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Respect Our Democracy

**Ms. Junor:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. People are concerned about the Sask Party's mishandling of democracy. Keeping a grip on \$3 million from the PC [Progressive Conservative] trust fund, they weakened the Progressive Conservatives in the 2007 election and want to do so again in 2011. Mr. Speaker, the province's top judges turned down their attempts to have the Premier's and his deputies' names dropped from the PC Party's lawsuit.

Then there's the fumbled issue of the Acting Chief Electoral Officer, Mr. Speaker, whose appointment was approved by a bipartisan committee of the legislature. Like many agreements made with the Sask Party, this too was torn up. The public learned that the hiring was vetoed by the Sask Party caucus for reasons the Premier still won't disclose.

Now the government is trying to stop voters from casting their ballots on election day. The Minister of Justice is forcing through rules requiring voters to show photo ID [identification]. Rather than treating voting as a right of Saskatchewan citizens, he treats it as a privilege to be handed out by his government.

Finally the Minister of Advanced Education has shed light on the infamous Sask Party Enterprise Club. A \$1,000 fee opens the door to VIP [very important person] access to the Premier

and his ministers. Mr. Speaker, it's no wonder the people of Saskatchewan are saying, respect our democracy.

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

### New Program for Safer Streets

**Mr. Michelson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to announce that a new program was introduced in Moose Jaw yesterday that will add an element of safety to the streets of our city. The program is the expansion of the report impaired drivers program. It was originally implemented in Saskatoon in March and has expanded to Regina and now to Moose Jaw.

The report impaired drivers program or RID is in partnership led by SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, and the Moose Jaw Police Service. RID also has the support of Mothers Against Drunk Driving along with Students Against Drinking and Driving, with representatives there from Vanier and Riverview collegiates.

RID encourages the public to call 911 if they see a driver they suspect is impaired. Since its introduction, RID calls have led to over 150 impaired driving charges.

Mr. Speaker, drinking and driving is the number one cause of fatal crashes in Saskatchewan. This program empowers the people to help law enforcement find impaired drivers so they can be removed from our streets. It also serves as a warning that there is now a whole city on the lookout for anyone driving under the influence. With initiatives such as the report impaired drivers program, we are one step closer to getting rid of drinking drivers and making our streets safer. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### College Governance Issues

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, an important principle of parliamentary democracy is the concept of ministerial responsibility. To the Minister of Advanced Education: what does ministerial responsibility mean to him?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the case in hand, Mr. Speaker, what we've seen is a grassroots idea that began while the members opposite were still in government, Mr. Speaker. A proposal was submitted last June. Mr. Speaker, what we did is we employed Meyers Norris Penny to go through on an independent basis and make sure that the proposal actually met some key criteria. The proposal was ultimately rejected, Mr. Speaker. We reported that last week.

In addition to Meyers Norris Penny reporting that the colleges were not ready to actually see this amalgamation, Mr. Speaker,

they alerted us, the government and me specifically, Mr. Speaker, that they had a number of questions. We've been working with Justice, Mr. Speaker. We've been working with a number of other entities. We've said we'll continue to work with the auditor, with Meyers Norris Penny, and with Justice to ensure that every taxpayer dollar is accounted for, Mr. Speaker. Thank you very much.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, after the minister's remarks yesterday about soul-searching, I would have expected a more thoughtful response with respect to ministerial responsibility. Ministerial responsibility is about being transparent and accountable, and that's what Saskatchewan people want from their government. Yet today as the Minister of Finance delivers his budget, a cloud continues to hang over this government.

The Minister of Advanced Education directed a merger of the public Carlton Trail Regional College and the private St. Peter's College. When serious ethical concerns were emailed to the minister and when the opposition raised significant concerns with him last May, he ignored them. Only after an independent report reiterated those earlier concerns did the minister finally take action. Seven people have now lost their jobs over this mess, Mr. Speaker, yet the man who was most responsible is still running the Ministry of Advanced Education.

To the minister: how can he defend throwing everyone else under the bus when he is ultimately responsible as minister and when he is the one who ignored the very serious concerns?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think the context is vitally important to understand. In fact the *Canadian University Guide*, 2011 edition, has said this: "There has never been a better time to consider Saskatchewan as the place to attain a great post-secondary education," Mr. Speaker. That's just been stated, Mr. Speaker.

We know, Mr. Speaker, because of our vital investments across the post-secondary sector, to date more than \$2 billion. And obviously the members opposite will be staying tuned to see what comes next, Mr. Speaker. We can talk about investments in student housing of more than 3,000 per cent increase from when the members opposite were in power, Mr. Speaker — more than 3,000 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, on the case that the member opposite references, a grassroots group got together even before the last provincial election. They submitted a proposal. The proposal was vetted by Meyers Norris Penny, Mr. Speaker. What we did is then accept that proposal. The recommendation was not to move forward. We accepted that. I went to Humboldt. I delivered that last week, Mr. Speaker. We continue to be serving the best interests of the students in this province.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the day discussions about a merger started to go horribly wrong was the day that the minister started putting his fingerprints on it, and that was a very long time ago.

At least two separate emails were sent to the minister last May, which should have raised significant red flags. For context about the minister's merger mess, on May 11th, 12th, 13th, and 17th, I questioned the minister extensively on this issue in committee hearings and in question period. Had he listened to those questions instead of dismissing them, we wouldn't be in this mess today. It's the height of arrogance, Mr. Speaker, to simply dismiss everyone's concerns and plow straight ahead. And we're getting this from a government, Mr. Speaker, after only three years.

Again to the minister, he's the one who gave the direction. He's the one who ignored the very serious concerns along the way. So why is it acceptable for him to blame everyone else and not take responsibility for his own inaction?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have here a document, Mr. Speaker — and the members opposite have seen this — and that is:

In 2007, between April and October, under the guidance of [the respective college boards] . . . senior management teams meet approximately 20 times [it's reported] with respect to pursuing partnership/merger discussions . . .

Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, those discussions began while the members opposite were actually in power.

What we did is made sure that there was a formal proposal that was submitted. That proposal was submitted last June, Mr. Speaker. Then we made sure that it was vetted, Mr. Speaker, through Meyers Norris Penny, making sure that the highest corporate standards were in place, Mr. Speaker. The recommendations were that, no, the merger should not go forward. We acted appropriately. We said no; the merger's not going to go forward.

In the process of actually pursuing that, Mr. Speaker, there were a number of questions. Those questions are being addressed by the auditor, by Justice, by Meyers Norris Penny, with the full co-operation of the ministry.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, that is the minister who appointed Sask Party members to the regional college board. That is the minister who approved the joint CEO [chief executive officer]. That is the minister who gave instructions for the merger to go ahead. Mr. Speaker, the decisions and the responsibility rest with that minister. That is very clear.

His attempt now to shirk responsibility, in his attempt, he has tarnished the reputations of every single Carlton Trail board member. There's no question that there were serious

governance problems with the board at Carlton Trail, but the internal documents show that at least two of the board members, Aaron Behiel and Maureen Doetzel, tried to address some of those problems. They were overruled by other board members, the board Chair, Marlene Latreille, and another board member and former Sask Party candidate for nomination, Islay Ehlert.

To the minister: after ignoring concerns and failing to do his job, how is it fair for him to shirk ministerial responsibility while tarnishing the reputations of every single board member, even those who actually tried to do the right thing?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, the proposal was submitted last June. We used Meyers Norris Penny to make sure there was an independent third party, Mr. Speaker. As far as doing our job, Mr. Speaker, the press release, March 17th, “Minister says Humboldt area colleges not ready for merger.” We did our job, Mr. Speaker. We saw that the proposal was undertaken. We ensured that there was an independent process, Mr. Speaker. We then rejected that.

There were a number of questions that came forward, Mr. Speaker. At the time, we went to Justice. Justice said unfortunately there’s not enough here to act on. You need to go back in the field and actually see if these allegations and questions actually stand any test of evidence. We’ve been working with Justice. We’re working now with the auditor, and certainly, Mr. Speaker, we continue to work with Meyers Norris Penny.

Mr. Speaker, we allowed this grassroots initiative that initiated under those individuals opposite to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that there was a grassroots opportunity. The proposal was submitted. Ultimately it was rejected based on the recommendations of Meyers Norris Penny, an independent entity, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, this minister will blame everyone at any chance that he has, but he refuses to look in the mirror.

Mr. Speaker, a whistle-blower sent a memo to the board, raising serious financial irregularities. On May 8th one of the board members, Maureen Doetzel, replied saying, “I feel this must be addressed ASAP.” Another board member, Aaron Behiel, replied, “I couldn’t agree more. I think we need answers before we can proceed further.” But the board Chair, Marlene Latreille disagreed because the whistle-blower hadn’t followed proper “chain of command.” Another board member, Islay Ehlert said, “This is totally insubordination.”

That’s four board members, Mr. Speaker, but two very different approaches. It’s clear how it’s convenient for the minister to tarnish all their reputations equally, but is it fair and does it amount to ministerial responsibility?

[14:00]

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, the auditor recently undertook a review of a number of post-secondary institutions, Carlton Trail among them. The auditor reported to this Assembly and to the people of the province in November.

I quote, Mr. Speaker, “The ministry and the above listed agencies including Carlton Trail had adequate rules and procedures to safeguard public resources.” He also said, “The ministry and the above listed agencies complied with the authorities governing their activities relating to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing.” And finally, Mr. Speaker, he said, “The financial statements of the above listed agencies are reliable.”

Mr. Speaker, we’ve made a decision, that is, the merger not to go forward. In the midst of undertaking that independent process, questions were raised, Mr. Speaker. We’re now working with Justice. We’re now working with the auditor. We’re working with Meyers Norris Penny to ensure that every taxpayer dollar is accounted for, Mr. Speaker. That work continues so that the students can succeed, can stay, and study in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the problems and the concerns weren’t just raised in the Meyers Norris Penny report. They were raised back in May, Mr. Speaker. They were raised by emails to the minister’s office, and they were raised in this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and they were raised in committee, and the minister chose to ignore them.

Mr. Speaker, on budget day the government unveils how it will spend taxpayers’ dollars, but Saskatchewan people expect more from their government than just pomp and circumstance. They expect their government to be responsible with taxpayers’ dollars year round and to provide adequate oversight of public spending.

But the Sask Party government failed on that front in the minister’s attempt to merge these two colleges. To the minister: how much has this failed merger cost the taxpayers of Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, as I’ve said, the proposal was submitted, Mr. Speaker. We then went to Meyers Norris Penny. They undertook this independent study, Mr. Speaker. We know that’s in the range of \$70,000, Mr. Speaker. That work actually helped us to raise a number of questions, certainly, Mr. Speaker. It also helped to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that we were able to make an informed decision, the decision, Mr. Speaker, not to allow that merger to go forward. That was important. The questions that are outstanding, Mr. Speaker, we are working diligently and with partners — with the auditor, with Meyers Norris Penny, and certainly with the Ministry of



Justice, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the key here is to ensure that every taxpayer dollar is accounted for. That effort is under way, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that students can study in Saskatchewan, succeed in Saskatchewan, and stay in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's our commitment.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, we have heard the minister's talking points. In fact I'm sure members in the gallery here would be able to recite them off by heart almost by now. What we haven't heard, Mr. Speaker, is this minister stand up and take responsibility for his inaction and his involvement with this throughout the whole process. Mr. Speaker, while the minister likes to suggest he is rolling up his sleeves and getting to the bottom of this mess, the reality is he's been too busy blaming everyone else.

So let me help the minister with what this has cost Saskatchewan taxpayers so far. The taxpayers paid the CEO salary, benefits, and expenses even though he was mostly working for the private college. \$273,000 was funnelled to the private college for furnishings and equipment. An extra \$60,000 was added to St. Peter's operating grant. \$75,000 for market research was fully paid by the public college, and \$100,000 has been spent investigating this mess so far. And that's before we know about the financial irregularities, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: he's responsible for the Advanced Education spending in this province. He's the one who should have put a stop to this last spring. When will he take responsibility for the significant cost to taxpayers that has resulted from his inaction?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, from across the province, in the process of putting together that proposal, there were a number of opportunities for stakeholders to weigh in and support it. There are a number of entities that actually came forward.

From Doepker Industries, I quote, "We are writing this letter on behalf of Doepker Industries to show our support for the proposed merger." From the village of Muenster, Mr. Speaker: we believe the proposed merger makes sense. Mr. Speaker, the city of Humboldt: community economic and social growth requires strong partners. The merger of SPC [St. Peter's College] and CTRC [Carlton Trail Regional College] fulfills these roles. Mr. Speaker, from the town of Davidson: the CTRC and St. Peter's have taken a great initiative. Mr. Speaker, the list goes on.

That's why we went forward, Mr. Speaker, with the proposal. We vetted it through Meyers Norris Penny, Mr. Speaker. The conclusion was and recommendations that we then adhered to . . . and that was the institutions are not ready. In the midst of undertaking that specific proposal and the review, Mr. Speaker, what we said is, they're not ready. But we'll make sure

taxpayers' dollars are accounted for.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, a discussion about the future of the colleges is just fine. What is not fine, Mr. Speaker, is a minister turning his eye to when problems are identified and not providing the proper ministerial oversight. That is the problem in this case, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, it's not just the upstanding members of the board who are upset. I can tell the minister and also the member from Humboldt, Mr. Speaker, that I'm hearing from many people in that area who are very upset with how the government has bungled this file. They want answers.

An important part of getting those answers is through a review by the Provincial Auditor. Without direction from the legislature, the auditor cannot look into this until his next regular review in the fall. Earlier this week, I put forward a motion to speed that up and allow the Provincial Auditor to immediately investigate this mess. The Sask Party government said no. But yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the minister in a scrum said to the media, "I'm not opposed at all to speeding up the process."

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: with hundreds of people watching in the gallery today, will the government finally agree to ask the Provincial Auditor to immediately begin an investigation of the very serious financial irregularities that are alleged in this case?

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

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Mr. Speaker, I'll repeat that the auditor just submitted a report, Mr. Speaker, to the members of the Assembly and to the people of the province. And, Mr. Speaker, that audit included Carlton Trail Regional College, Mr. Speaker.

The conclusion says this: "the Ministry and the above-listed agencies had adequate rules and procedures to safeguard public resources . . ." He also says, "the Ministry and the above-listed agencies complied with the authorities governing their activities relating to financial reporting, safeguarding public resources, revenue raising, spending, borrowing, and investing . . . And finally, Mr. Speaker: "the financial statements of the above-listed agencies are reliable," Mr. Speaker.

The auditor continues to do his work, Mr. Speaker, and the pace that he does that, Mr. Speaker . . . we'll certainly co-operate in any way that we can to ensure that we're facilitating that work.

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

#### Party Memberships and Fundraisers

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, any way except to give him the power and the resources to actually do it, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Glen Kobussen, former CEO of Carlton Trail College and St. Peter's College, paid \$1,000 to the Sask Party

for membership in the Enterprise Club which was reimbursed back to him by St. Peter's College. The membership entitled members to meetings with the Premier, cabinet ministers, and other government decision makers. The Sask Party return for 2009 discloses no such donation.

To the Minister of Justice: how many, if any, Enterprise Club memberships are disclosed, and will the government ensure that the full list is given to the Acting Chief Electoral Officer for review?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, the NDP [New Democratic Party] is trying to draw a line that does not exist between party donations and government policy. That's simply not the way it works in our party at all. And I hope that's not the way it works in the NDP. So we went back and checked a little bit on a few things with the NDP in the past.

You will remember, Mr. Speaker, to great fanfare, they used to hold the Premier's bus tour around Saskatchewan. Every summer they would hold these bus tours. And if you look, if you look in a recent edition, an edition back then I should say, of *The Commonwealth*, NDP paper for party members, you'll see an ad in there that says, "To secure a seat on this bus tour, a fundraiser for the Premier's constituency of Saskatoon Riversdale [will be held]." So the very thing that they are suggesting is exactly the practice that the NDP portrayed.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, the question's about disclosure. Mr. Speaker, St. Peter's College reimbursed Mr. Kobussen for the \$1,000 he paid to be a member of the Enterprise Club. At that point, the \$1,000 became public money. Further, the donation was not disclosed as required by law. Given this, will the Minister of Justice agree to an open and transparent review by the Acting Chief Electoral Officer of all Enterprise Club memberships?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — On that page of *The Commonwealth*, just two inches away, is a picture of the member himself. So he ought to know what the practice of the NDP was back then.

In addition to that, right beside them, right beside that ad is a good old NDP law firm of Olive Waller Zinkhan & Waller. But what was the practice of that party? You look at their donation list over the years, and what did they benefit from as a result of those donations? Tom Waller donated to the NDP in years 2004 through 2007. And of course what did he get as a result of that from the NDP? He got to be the forestry secretariat up in Prince Albert. Then he was paid, him and his law firm were paid \$417,000 for 13 months of work on that file.

So when it comes to raising funds for parties, the NDP has a real good track record.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — As was the case yesterday, the minister, speaking for the Minister of Justice I suppose, can provide all that information on donations because it was disclosed as required by law, unlike the case of Mr. Kobussen which was not disclosed. Now under election financing laws, Mr. Kobussen appeared eligible in 2009 when his donation should have been disclosed for a \$558 tax credit on the \$1,000 paid with public money to the Saskatchewan Party.

To the Minister of Justice: is this one of the matters that has been referred to him by the Minister of Advanced Education for investigation?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, upon further review of the NDP's practices of the past, you don't have to look very far. Just go right to their caucus office over the years. You don't have to go very far at all.

Dale Schmeichel donated money to the NDP over the years, and of course what did he get as a result of that? He was made the CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] vice-president. Kathie Maher-Wolbaum, a former chief of staff to the premier of Saskatchewan donated money all of that time. And of course what did she get as a result of that? She was a vice-president for government relations for CIC as well.

So I don't think the people of Saskatchewan need to take any lessons from the members opposite when it comes to fundraising and the kind of tactics that they employed over the years.

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, yesterday when asked to table the agenda for the Enterprise Club meetings, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Sask Party expert on party financing, Mr. Speaker, said there were no agendas. But Enterprise Club members were invited to bring their own agendas. Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from a letter sent to Enterprise Club members:

The Enterprise Club is an excellent venue to present your views and comments to the Saskatchewan Party MLAs and our Premier, Mr. Wall. Mr. Wall, along with other cabinet ministers and MLAs, meet with Enterprise Club members several times throughout the year. Joining the Enterprise Club ensures that your comments and ideas will be heard.

To the minister: since the 2007 election, what were the dates of Enterprise Club meetings? What cabinet ministers attended and what Enterprise Club members attended?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, our party discloses all of the donations, as always has, always will. And we make no . . . We certainly will continue to do that in the future.

If you look at the list of NDP appointees over the years, there's a rich tradition, there's a very, very rich tradition: give to the NDP and get a patronage position. Wilson Olive, partner in the long-time NDP law firm, was appointed Saskatchewan Crop Insurance director. And of course he was on the SaskFilm's board of directors as well. And not only that, his most recent thing that he was involved in, he was the Leader of the Opposition's campaign manager for his leadership. And all through that time frame, he's donated money to the NDP.

So I would say to the members opposite, before you start pointing your finger over here, you'd better take a good look at what you guys did.

[14:15]

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

**Mr. Quennell:** — Mr. Speaker, in a letter sent out to Enterprise Club members, Enterprise Club is described as "an excellent venue to present your views and comments to Saskatchewan Party MLAs and our Premier."

Yesterday the government said the list of Enterprise Club members is private. But if the donations are supposed to be public, how can the status the donations purchase be private? I understand that members of a secret society have private memberships, Mr. Speaker, but they don't receive tax receipts, and the donations are not supposed to be publicly disclosed.

To the minister: will he tell the people of Saskatchewan who the members of the Enterprise Club are and why they are entitled to special access to government decision makers?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's true that for those individuals who support the Saskatchewan Party, they get some treatment. They get lower taxes. They get the roads fixed. They get better health care, Mr. Speaker. And if you vote and if you support the NDP, from this government you get lower taxes and better highways and better health care. And if you support the Liberals, Mr. Speaker, you'll get lower taxes and better highways and better health care, Mr. Speaker. Even if you're on the secret NDP fundraising bus, you'll get lower taxes, better highways, improved health care.

And in just a few moments, the Minister of Finance will take to his feet. He'll table the best budget in the Dominion of Canada that will provide everyone lower taxes, better highways, and improved health care, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Order. Order. Order. Order. The member from Prince Albert Northcote will allow the proceedings to proceed.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Weekes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 878 through 897.

**The Speaker:** — Questions 878 through 897 are tabled.

#### TABLING OF ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to submit the estimates and supplementary estimates accompanied by a message from His Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

**The Speaker:** — I would ask the members and our guests to rise for the reading of the message from His Honour:

The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums for the required service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2012, and supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2011, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly. [Signed] the Honourable Gordon L. Barnhart, Lieutenant Governor, province of Saskatchewan.

Please be seated. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

#### MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, colleagues, guests, and visitors, it is an honour to stand before you today and deliver the 2011-12 budget, my first as Finance minister.

Before I begin, I would like to introduce my very special guests: my brother Dave and his wife, Marlene, from Big River, Saskatchewan; my son Bryce and his wife, Olivia; my granddaughters Scarlett and Willow; and my wife of soon to be 39 years, Gail.

Mr. Speaker, Gail and I have two children and now two grandchildren. They serve as a reminder to me every day why I'm here and why I do this job. I'm sure members on both sides of the House would say the same thing. We all want to make life better for all Saskatchewan families. I would ask all members to join me in welcoming my family and all the special guests who have joined us here today. Welcome to your Legislative Assembly and welcome to your budget.

Mr. Speaker, this budget will be quite unlike most others you will see across Canada this year. While other provinces are recording deficits, Saskatchewan will post a surplus. While others struggle to maintain programs, we will improve our public services. While other jurisdictions will see their debt loads increase, we will reduce our debt. And this budget will continue to strengthen our economy and make life more affordable by reducing taxes.

Saskatchewan is blessed with so many advantages: our abundant natural resources, our pristine environment, our sense of community, our unique prairie lifestyle, and our greatest advantage of all, our people. Saskatchewan people. Proud and hopeful, resilient, patient and kind, those whose families have lived in this great province for generations and those who have just moved to Saskatchewan — together they make Saskatchewan better. Together they have created the Saskatchewan advantage.

I wonder how the first premier of Saskatchewan, Walter Scott, would feel if he were sitting here today, seeing how far Saskatchewan has come since he sat in this Assembly 100 years ago. Premier Scott once said, “This province has at yet less than a half a million souls and there is plenty of room for at least 10 million.”

Well we’re not quite there yet, but everywhere you look in Saskatchewan today there are signs of growth. Our towns and cities are growing quickly. New businesses are starting up and people are moving back home from across Canada. We’re seeing a new, confident attitude across the province. It’s exciting to be part of it.

We have always known this is a great place to live, but we haven’t always been able to talk about Saskatchewan being a leader in Canada. Today we can. This year we are projected to lead the nation in economic growth.

More people now live in Saskatchewan than ever before. Our population has been growing faster than any other province in Canada. Saskatoon and Regina are the fastest and third fastest growing cities in the country. There is every reason to believe that this trend will continue. Housing starts are up. Wages are up. We have one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.

This is the story people are now hearing about Saskatchewan — people like Bob Stoyand, who moved here from Alberta to open a new business in Canora. Bob and his wife, Tracy, have family connections in the area and love Saskatchewan’s lakes. With our economy doing so well and the price of housing so high in Alberta, Saskatchewan looked like a good opportunity to Bob. He got a job in Yorkton, and when he became established, Bob started a business on his acreage repairing boats. Earlier this year he built his own shop in Canora and business is thriving. Bob works on boats in the summer and quads and snowmobiles in the winter. Right now the shop is full, and the future looks bright for Bob and Tracy and their two children.

That’s just one story, but it’s a story that is being repeated in every corner of our province. More people are choosing to stay in Saskatchewan and more people are moving to Saskatchewan to start their careers, raise their families, and pursue their dreams. And every time someone makes that choice, they make Saskatchewan better.

This combination of our growing economy and our tremendous quality of life create the Saskatchewan advantage. That’s what this budget is about. It’s about building on our strengths and maintaining the momentum we have achieved. To do this, our government will do three things. We will lower taxes. We will improve government services. And we will reduce the debt.

Our government is committed to making life more affordable for Saskatchewan people. The best way we can do that is by leaving Saskatchewan people with more of their hard-earned tax dollars in their possession.

From day one, this government has been committed to lower taxes. Our very first act in government was a tax cut eliminating the PST [provincial sales tax] on used cars. In the fall of 2008, we delivered the largest income tax cut in Saskatchewan history — raising the basic and spousal exemption, raising the exemption for dependent children, and removing 92,000 Saskatchewan residents from the provincial income tax roll. In the 2009 budget, we delivered the largest education property tax cut in Saskatchewan history, lowering property taxes for Saskatchewan homeowners, businesses, and farmers.

We are proud of our record, but there is more to be done. Today we are increasing the basic and spousal personal tax exemptions by another \$1,000 effective January 1st, 2011. And also today we are increasing the exemption for dependent children by \$500, also effective January 1st, 2011.

When you combine, Mr. Speaker, when you combine these increases with the low-income tax credit introduced by our government in 2008, a family of four in Saskatchewan will not pay tax on their first \$45,550 of combined income. That’s the highest income threshold in Canada. In other words, that family can now earn more tax-free income in Saskatchewan than anyplace else in Canada. More to be done.

This tax reduction, together with the previous reductions introduced by our government, means that a family of four with \$50,000 income will save \$2,447 in income taxes this year. It also means another 22,000 people coming off the income tax roll. In four years, in four years, Mr. Speaker, we have eliminated provincial income tax for approximately 114,000 Saskatchewan residents. This is real progress on reducing taxes.

The income tax reduction measures undertaken since 2007 will save Saskatchewan taxpayers \$420 million this year. Lower taxes to make life more affordable and more tax-free income for families than anyplace else in Saskatchewan, that’s the Saskatchewan advantage. Anywhere in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

A strong and vibrant business environment is an important part of the Saskatchewan advantage, and right now our business community is saying they see a bright future ahead for the province. A recent survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business found that 79 per cent of small businesses in Saskatchewan have confidence in the provincial economy and the government’s economic policies. This is the highest rating for any Western province.

Eighty-nine per cent of small-business owners would recommend starting a business in Saskatchewan, and 84 per cent of small-business owners see a bright future for young people in this province. This is a complete reversal from the situation in 2003 when 83 per cent of small-business people did not see a bright future for young people in Saskatchewan. All of this has been achieved by listening to and responding to the people who create the jobs in our province. We are proud of our record, but there is more to be done.

[14:30]

We have heard the message that reducing taxes on small businesses is the best form of incentive and that small-business owners will reinvest tax savings back into their businesses and their employees. We agree. Today we are announcing that the small-business income tax rate will be reduced by more than half from 4.5 per cent to 2 per cent, effective July 1st, 2011. This tax reduction will give Saskatchewan small businesses the third lowest tax rate in the country and the lowest in the new West. We believe this makes Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to start a new business or expand your existing business. Lower taxes for Saskatchewan businesses, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Of course the process of examining our tax structure and looking for improvements does not stand still. We have received a number of submissions from Saskatchewan business leaders. We value these recommendations and advice they have provided on tax competitiveness in Saskatchewan.

Our government has a record of delivering affordable, sustainable tax reduction within a balanced budget. And this will continue should the people of Saskatchewan provide us with the opportunity of delivering future budgets.

Now let me turn to one of my favourite topics — education property tax. Funding education through a property tax has been one of this province's most difficult issues for a long time. For too long too much of the share of funding education fell on Saskatchewan property owners. That is why we pledged to reduce the burden of education property tax for all ratepayers when we took office.

We made a great deal of progress on that promise with our 2009-10 budget. That year the province increased its share of the cost of education from 52 to 61 per cent. As a result, the province increased its payments to school divisions by \$241 million and delivered the largest education property tax cut in Saskatchewan's history. At the time we said that was phase 1 of education property tax reform, with a further reduction to follow. Today we are keeping that promise.

Let me give you an example of how this will benefit Saskatchewan farm families. Terry Zavislak and his son Chad farm seven quarters of land north of Canora. In 2003 their taxable assessment on this land was \$183,700, and their school division mill rate was 20. Today the mill rate on agricultural land will fall to 3.91 mills. Therefore in 2011, if the Zavislaks own the same seven quarters of land with the same taxable assessment, they will pay an education property tax of \$718. That's a savings of \$2,956. Overall Saskatchewan farmers will see an average 80 per cent reduction in their property tax.

Mr. Speaker, the residential tax will decrease from 10.08 to 9.51 mills in phase 2. That's a total reduction of about 21 per cent compared to 2008. The middle tier of the business tax will decrease from 15.75 mills to 14.75 mills, resulting in a \$5.6 million tax reduction on commercial assessments. Overall this is a massive reduction in the education portion of property tax — the largest in Saskatchewan history.

As a result of this year's changes, the province will provide an

additional \$55.6 million for the education budget each and every year. This will bring the province's share of the cost of education to about 65 per cent, a far cry from just a few short years ago when it was approximately 40 per cent. A fairer balance for education funding and lower property taxes, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that sound financial management is the DNA [deoxyribonucleic acid] of Saskatchewan people and it's what they expect of their government. Debt reduction has always been a priority for our government. The very first piece of legislation this government ever introduced, Bill 1, was *The Growth and Financial Security Act*. This required that half of any government surplus would go to reducing the debt. On top of that, when we had additional resources in 2008, we paid down \$2.6 billion in government debt.

We are proud of our record, but there is more to be done. Mr. Speaker, earlier I said tax reductions and government spending decisions must be affordable and sustainable. All over the world today, we are seeing the consequences of governments living beyond their means, governments struggling to control their huge deficits and growing debt. Today I am pleased to say that the Saskatchewan budget is balanced — in fact we have a surplus — and the provincial debt is going down. Today we are paying down the debt by another \$325 million. This will bring government debt down to \$3.81 billion, its lowest level since 1988 and a reduction of over \$3 billion since our government took office.

Mr. Speaker, debt reduction is not just a lofty accounting principle. It means lower interest costs and more money to pay for important government services in Saskatchewan. This budget will also leave a balance of \$710 million in the Growth and Financial Security Fund. This will protect our province against any sudden shocks in world commodity markets and ensure that our government is able to respond quickly and effectively to any unforeseen circumstances like the flooding that hit our province last year. The people of Saskatchewan can be confident that we have the resources to meet our commitments. Balanced budgets, debt reduction, and sound fiscal management — that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Of course all of this is possible because of a strong and growing economy. Oil prices are high and we are projecting another great year for exploration. It's important that we maintain the momentum that we have achieved. The Ministry of Energy and Resources will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of services in the oil patch by spending \$13.8 million to modernize our information systems. It costs companies tens of thousands of dollars a day when rigs are idle. That's why we will spend 1.4 million to reduce approval and licensing time.

We also expect to see great things in the potash industry this year. In spite of the recent challenges, potash remains a source of good fortune and future growth for Saskatchewan. Even in the down year of 2009, our potash producers continued to show confidence in their industry and our province by moving forward with their multi-billion dollar expansion plans. In fact, with the expected increase in private and public investment in 2011, total capital investment in Saskatchewan has nearly doubled since 2005 and is the highest growth among provinces.

Our existing potash companies are expanding, and we welcome new entrants into the Saskatchewan potash industry. Together potash producers will spend almost \$12 billion under current capital expansions. They will create thousands of new jobs. These expansions are due to a growing worldwide demand for potash and a stable tax and royalty structure that encourages new expansion and job creation.

And it's working. You can see it community after community throughout our province: the new houses and businesses in Esterhazy; the expansion of business and recreational facilities in Rocanville; the growth in engineering firms and manufacturing plants in Saskatoon. In Humboldt, Colonsay, Allan, Lanigan, and Jansen, these communities are growing and thriving because of a vibrant and expanding potash industry, because of the partnership that has been built between these communities, the potash industry, and the provincial government. Our government will oppose any attempt to jeopardize that growth. A competitive royalty regime, a thriving resource sector, and a growing economy — that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

International trade is a key part of the Saskatchewan advantage. Saskatchewan has what the world needs. We export about \$24 billion worth of goods around the world each year. About 70 per cent of our economy is based on exports. We are proud of this record, but there's more to be done. In the past year, the Premier led trade missions to the two largest markets in the world, China and India. Both are increasing their trade with Saskatchewan as their populations become more affluent. Our government will continue to support the excellent work of the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, STEP, with \$2.9 million in base funding this year, and will support funding requests for future trade missions.

The recent trade mission to India and Bangladesh and the New West Partnership's ongoing engagement with the world are an example of how we are expanding trade in every corner of the world. That's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Our government has always said we do not see growth simply for the sake of growth. We see growth because of the quality of life it provides for all Saskatchewan people. The strength of a diversified economy helps to fund important government services and helps cushion the blow when other sectors experience difficulty.

As we know, agriculture had a challenging time last year. Our government acted to address this challenge by working with the federal government to make \$360 million available through the excess moisture program to help producers affected by flooding. Most producers are optimistic for a better year in 2011. While this is encouraging, we will be there for farmers when they need help. This budget allocates \$320.8 million to fully fund the province's 40 per cent share of farm income stabilization costs through the AgriStability, AgriInvest, and crop insurance programs.

An increase of 13 per cent or \$37 million from the 2010-11 budget will help record crop insurance funding. Producers will be able to receive greater coverage on their unseeded acreage if it is too wet to seed. Coverage has been increased from \$50 to \$70 an acre, a significant improvement. Our government has

taken important steps to support the farm sector in rural Saskatchewan. In addition to those previously mentioned, we have provided a half a million dollars to prevent and control flood damage caused by beavers.

We have also provided \$23 million to help communities manage, prepare, and prevent damage from spring flooding. And we have made historic improvements to municipal revenue sharing, benefiting both urban and rural residents. A strong farm sector and a vibrant rural economy, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

A growing economy helps us fund important government services, improving the quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. Since taking office, our government has made important commitments to health care, setting and achieving the goal of hiring 800 new nurses, setting a bold new goal of reducing surgical wait times to three months by 2014, funding a new provincial children's hospital in Saskatoon. We are proud of our record but there's more to be done.

[14:45]

This budget increases funding to regional health authorities by \$250 million. This will allow us to revitalize the kidney transplant program, recruiting more specialists and resuming donor transplants in Saskatchewan. It will also allow us to expand the colorectal screening program to the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region this year. The pilot program in the Five Hills Health Region has resulted in earlier detection of cancer and we look forward to continued success of this program.

This budget will provide increased funding of \$12.6 million to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. This means that the agency can offer more chemotherapy treatments, more mammograms, and a doubling of the number of bone marrow transplants done in Saskatchewan, compared to last year. This will reduce the number of patients sent out of province.

Our government will provide funding to support MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] scans for an additional 5,000 patients and CT [computerized tomography] scans for an additional 13,000 patients. We will continue to move forward toward our goal of reducing surgical wait times through the Saskatchewan surgical initiative. We will continue with education, recruitment, and retention efforts for health providers, including an additional \$1.5 million for the clinical and medical training units at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] and the Regina General Hospital. We will provide \$10.9 million to address increased volume in diagnostic imaging services, cardiac care, and chronic kidney disease. We will provide \$2.5 million to maintain a provincial HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] strategy.

Mr. Speaker, this budget also includes \$5 million to introduce the STARS [shock trauma air rescue service] program to Saskatchewan, a helicopter-based emergency trauma response system to supplement our existing air and ground ambulance services. A health care system that puts patients first, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Our government will spend \$1.43 billion on pre-K to 12

[pre-kindergarten to grade 12] education this year, a 9.1 per cent increase from last year. This will allow us to make investments and improvements across the system. Last month we approved a significant investment of \$60 million for 120 school renovation projects in 65 Saskatchewan communities. In fact since coming to office, our government has invested over \$400 million in 600 new school or school renovation projects throughout the province.

We are proud of our record, but there is more to be done. This budget earmarks \$6.1 million for planning of nine major school projects across the province. In order to ensure that children have the best start in life, we are spending \$2.6 million to develop an additional 40 pre-kindergarten programs. This will provide new spaces for up to 640 youngsters in our high-needs areas.

Mr. Speaker, this budget will also devote \$2.1 million to develop 500 new child care spaces, bringing the total to 12,700 spaces. This is an increase of more than 30 per cent since we took office. Investing in children and education, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

It's just as important to continue that advantage once our children finish high school. We will ensure tuition remains affordable by providing \$24.6 million to help our post-secondary institutions limit tuition increases to an average of 3 per cent.

This budget also fulfills our promise to provide \$3 million to establish a Saskatchewan advantage scholarship program. This budget includes \$6 million in funding to continue expansion of nursing and physicians training programs.

We know that it's important to ensure First Nations people receive the skills training and post-secondary education they need to succeed. This budget provides a total of \$48.6 million for direct support for Aboriginal education institutions including adult basic education and the provincial training allowance, a \$7 million increase to improve the education and employment outcomes for Aboriginal people.

Across government you will find that this budget provides \$167 million for First Nations and Métis people. This amounts to an increase of more than \$13 million. This includes money for Aboriginal retention coordinators to help ensure Aboriginal students stay in school. It also includes funding for addictions programs through the Health ministry. This budget provides funding for the Family Finders program through Social Services. Through the Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations, we are supporting the northern action plan which is intended to address the serious problems of suicide and drug use among northern Saskatchewan youth. Of course there is much more to do, but we believe we are making progress.

We are changing how we think about challenges facing vulnerable children. Government's responses to these challenges involve different ministries, and often in the past they have not been well coordinated. It's time to try a different approach. Working together, we can do better. In response to the recent child welfare review report, we are launching a children and youth agenda to bring a more coordinated approach to problems in child welfare. By targeting resources,

we can prevent problems at an earlier stage and improve the well-being of children in care.

We will improve our front-line capacity in the child welfare system and provide better support for foster parents. We will devote \$34 million to focus on this effort. From Social Services, 15.3 million will be provided for better support for children in care. It will strengthen the relationships with First Nations through additional funding to First Nations child and family service agencies. It will increase the number of child protection workers in the system, and it will provide better family supports.

Through the Ministry of Justice, it will improve personal safety for women in abusive environments and provide better court services for family issues.

Through the Health ministry, we will step up prevention efforts for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. We will increase funding to provide better rehabilitation therapies for those with autism. This response to funding programs such as FASD [fetal alcohol spectrum disorder] and autism is an important step in dealing with these very difficult issues.

We are taking action to provide more affordable housing. In addition to Head Start on a Home, we will partner with municipalities on two programs. The first is a program to provide property tax abatements on designated new home construction. We have allocated 200,000 this year with \$1 million available for this program over the next five years. The second is an incentive to support the development of new rental housing. It will provide a grant of up to \$5,000 per unit, with a goal of having 350 new units built each year.

Additional revenue at the end of 2010-11 also allowed the investment of \$33.9 million for renovation and construction of new housing. In March we provided \$1.5 million to Habitat for Humanity to help build 30 new homes. We are working closely with the University of Saskatchewan on a major expansion of student housing on campus to reduce the stress on the local housing supply. And through the Ministry of Social Services, our government will continue to move forward on our four-year, \$76.9 million commitment to provide group homes and eliminate the wait-list for adults with intellectual disabilities. Providing opportunities for affordable and low-income housing, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

To ensure Saskatchewan is ready for growth, in our first three years in government we have invested an unprecedented \$3.5 billion in building and repairing provincial infrastructure. We are proud of our record but there is more to be done.

This budget devotes more than \$400 million to provincial highways budget for repaving and capital projects, maintenance, and repair of roads and bridges. Over our term of government we will have spent \$2.2 billion on highways, well exceeding our promise to spend 1.8 billion over four years.

These critical investments in the infrastructure are essential to maintaining economic growth. In total this year, we will deliver a capital spending budget of nearly \$600 million. This brings the total infrastructure spend over four years to more than \$4 billion. Infrastructure that meets the needs of a growing

province, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Our government is also committed to safer communities. That's why we promised 120 additional police officers. And this budget will complete that commitment with the addition of 30 new police officers to complete our commitment of 120 over four years. Our budget for police services will go up by 8.5 per cent.

This budget also keeps our promise to our municipal partners — Saskatchewan cities, towns, villages, RMs [rural municipality], and northern communities. As the Premier announced at the recent SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention, this budget will see us complete our commitment to provide municipalities with funding based on the value of one full point of the provincial sales tax. This amounts to \$216.8 million, an increase of 49.4 million over last year or nearly 30 per cent.

Revenue sharing with municipalities has gone up by \$19 million, 70 per cent since we took office, by far the largest increase in Saskatchewan history. More importantly, the new funding formula provides stability and predictability to our municipal partners. Growing, vibrant communities, that's the Saskatchewan advantage.

We believe that government must always be looking for ways to become more efficient. Every dollar we spend is a dollar that a Saskatchewan taxpayer worked hard to earn. That's why we have embarked on a process of public service renewal, including LEAN that will improve the level of service we provide and boost the efficiency of our public service. That means eliminating unnecessary steps in our processes, making it easier for government employees to get their jobs done. The government remains committed to its target of reducing the size of the civil service by 15 per cent over four years, and we are confident we will reach that goal.

Our government is committed to furthering the innovation agenda. This budget delivers almost \$100 million in direct support to innovation and research development across government agencies and ministries. For example, this budget will provide \$2.6 million to the Canadian Light Source — an increase of 1.6 million over last year — part of the four-year, \$11.8 million commitment we made in 2010-11.

This budget will devote \$18.2 million to support agricultural research and development — an increase of 1.25 million over 2010-11 — as a result of this province's four-year, \$5 million commitment to the agriculture biotechnology sector.

[15:00]

We are increasing our support for the Saskatchewan Research Council by 1.5 million for research and development projects in a wide variety of areas including agriculture, biotechnology, energy, forestry, manufacturing, and mining.

On the energy side, we are devoting \$2.3 million to the Petroleum Technology Research Centre. We are also maintaining our commitment to the development of alternative fuels. This budget provides funding for the ethanol grant program, and it adds \$2.6 million in new funding for a

renewable biodiesel grant program. This will provide biodiesel producers with 13 cents for every litre they produce and will result in production of as much as 40 million litres of renewable biodiesel every year. Not only will this provide a new market for our canola oil, it will mean we have a cleaner burning fuel that will help us reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

We believe innovation will be the next engine of the economy. That's why our government has established Innovation Saskatchewan with a mandate to drive innovation in areas of strategic importance to our province. This year our government is providing Innovation Saskatchewan with \$3.5 million for research into areas with promising commercial potential in clean energy, nuclear science and medicine, and agriculture biotechnology. Over the next seven years, our government will invest \$40 million to establish Saskatchewan as an international leader in nuclear medicine, science, engineering, and safety. The result may well be life-saving technologies and cutting-edge health care facilities. That's innovation driven by a knowledge-based economy. That's the Saskatchewan advantage.

Mr. Speaker, this is a budget Saskatchewan people can be proud of. It is a budget that builds on the Saskatchewan advantage and benefits all Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, you have heard some people say that this is the new Saskatchewan, that next-year country has become this-year country. Some may wonder what does that mean, this-year country?

Here's what it means. This year a family from halfway around the world will hear about a place called Saskatchewan for the first time. Before you know it, they will be living and working and building a new life in this new place. They will discover a land whose winters are colder and whose people are warmer than they could have ever imagined. They will learn that football is not played with a round ball. They will become part of the community. Their kids will make new friends at a new school. They will become hockey players and figure skaters and Rider fans and Canadians, and they will make Saskatchewan better.

This year, a young woman with an intellectual disability will finally get a place to call her own. She has a job and she wants to be independent, but she has waited a long, long time for the dignity of her own place. This year, her wait will be over. She will get that place and that independence, and she will make Saskatchewan better.

This year, a man in his late 50s will go to get screened for colorectal cancer. Because of early detection, he will get the treatment he needs from caring and highly trained doctors and nurses. That early detection and that treatment will make the difference, the difference between spending one more Christmas with his family or spending 20 more. He will get better, and he will make Saskatchewan better.

And this year, a couple whose children have all grown up will be sitting at home one evening. The phone will ring and the husband will answer. It will be his daughter who lives in Calgary and she'll say, dad, we're coming home. He'll say, that's nice; how long can you stay this time? And she'll say, you don't understand, dad. I got a new job and we're moving



back to Saskatchewan. Her dad will try not to act too excited because that's not his way. But he might choke up a little bit when he tells his wife that this year, instead of seeing their grandkids just a couple of weekends, they'll get to see them every weekend, Mr. Speaker, and that will make Saskatchewan better. That's what this year country means. It means, our time is now. That's the Saskatchewan advantage. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member from Martensville:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

I so present.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Finance, seconded by the member from Martensville:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my honour to respond briefly to the budget put forward here today and to do so with great respect to the people of the province that we represent.

This budget highlights a prosperous time for government. And the resource boom certainly has provided prosperity to this government by way of record high revenues into a few corporations, and that's important. But that prosperity unfortunately fails to be extended to and be felt by Saskatchewan people, Saskatchewan families. The question is, a boom for whom, Mr. Speaker? The government says it's doing well, that it has more money than ever before. But the government's good fortune is not to be confused with the situation of Saskatchewan people and families who are increasing financial strain and burden, families whose consumer debt load is increasing at twice the rate the rest of Canada and is doing so primarily because of day-to-day living expenses.

The fact is that families and people across this province are feeling strained by these cost of living increases — utilities, gas, and food — increases that are compounded by the complete lack of accessible and affordable housing for homeowners and renters, of affordable and accessible child care, affordable post-secondary, and quality senior care, Mr. Speaker, basic ingredients to a good life and the basics that Saskatchewan families deserve to share.

The intercity comparisons in this budget highlight this concern. Lost is the once proud position in the national rankings of cost of living and quality of life advantages. We're now just ranked fifth in Canada on this front for low-income earners. We recognize that for many families rents have increased, in many cases, over \$5,000 a year, and that the previous reality of an individual studying, working hard, playing by the rules, and purchasing a proud place to call home is sadly becoming less and less a reality for many young people.

And in response to these major increases to cost of living on Saskatchewan people, the government says they're reducing taxes. The reality of today's touted income tax announcement is a savings of less than \$10 a month for an individual, \$25 for a family of four, entirely outstripped by cost of living increases, representing a mere fraction of these actual costs. Quite simply, this budget fails the priorities of Saskatchewan people.

And while the middle class, working people across Saskatchewan are increasingly burdened financially to keep pace with quality of life and to achieve their hopes and dreams, the fact is that many people in our province have been forced into the margins of society, displayed through a major increase to the number of people collecting social assistance, a huge increase and thousands of families on wait-lists for affordable housing, a 20 per cent increase in food bank usage in just one year, and the Aboriginal employment that has gone backwards under the Sask Party, representing a squandered opportunity.

In 2009, a full one in seven Aboriginals lost their jobs, something that U of S economics professor Eric Howe directly attributes to Sask Party policies and said, I quote, "Decreasing Aboriginal employment spells economic disaster provincially." So the boom may be on for the Sask Party government and a few corporations, but Saskatchewan people aren't feeling the positive side of that boom.

The budget not only fails to deliver on the priorities of people. It also fails to provide fiscal responsibility or good management of our finances. It's fair to say that Saskatchewan people have lost trust in the budgetary spin this government puts forward, and for good reason. It has a history of being wildly off on projections in budgets, and being out of line with economic realities.

We have a government that reports from an outdated, improper set of accounting rules. By public sector accounting standards followed by every other province, every territory, and the federal government, this budget is a summary deficit. The fact that Saskatchewan has failed to move forward and comply with accounting standards and is out of line with the rest of Canada is not only unfortunate, but also permits deception and reduces transparency.

The direct result is that . . . And I hear members heckling opposite, Mr. Speaker, and what I would reference them to do is to open up the page of Estimates to see that this government grants an exception to transfers from the growth and fiscal stabilization fund as well as pension liabilities, and otherwise they comply with public sector accounting standards. Non-compliance with public sector accounting standards and the only province in Canada to be out of line, Mr. Speaker.

The direct result is that this increases total public debt this year alone by \$548 million, and an increase of more than \$1.3 billion of total debt from 2009. This represents an increase of debt in times of plenty — a time when debt should be paid down, not expanded.

This has become the story of the Sask Party: unprecedented revenues exceeding previous budgets by as much as 2, 3, or \$4 billion on an annual basis; massive windfalls. But despite this historic opportunity, our position as a province has not been

advanced and our priorities not met. And it's no wonder, Mr. Speaker, because this is a government that is lacking a vision it can share with the people and families of Saskatchewan. That lack of vision resulted in losing the historic opportunity provided by these unprecedented revenues.

Beyond an initial debt payment in 2008, when the government was able to cash in budget surpluses resulting from NDP management, this government . . .

[Interjections]

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — The money that was left in the books. This government has loaded debt for consecutive years. No debt reduction, three years of debt growth, Mr. Speaker — that lack of vision resulted in losing the historic opportunity provided by these unprecedented revenues to guarantee security and funds for the future. In fact, despite its record revenues, the Sask Party has drained our rainy day fund by more than \$2 billion and raided our Crown corporations for more than \$1.7 billion. This mismanagement is neither sustainable in the short term nor planning and preparing for the future.

It is our belief as New Democrats that from one-time, non-renewable resource revenue windfalls, we are served best by setting some aside, by building a fund to ensure our province's bright future. It is good policy. It's the right thing to do.

By contrast, when it comes to planning for the long term, we have a government that won't agree to an independent review of our potash royalties to ensure the maximum benefit from these strategic resources in the years ahead for the benefit of Saskatchewan people, to address the priorities of today and to be planning for our future.

Mr. Speaker, this is a budget that fails on many fronts. It fails to address the priorities of Saskatchewan people and it fails to provide the financial responsibility that is deserved by the people of our fine province. And it fails to share an imaginative vision of our future with the people of our province, not only failing the needs of today but also failing to plan for our future.

While I have many other things to say in this budget debate tomorrow, a more detailed analysis and critique, it has been my honour to join debate here today. Mr. Speaker, at this point in time, I move that this debate be now adjourned.

[15:15]

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

### Resumption of Budget Debate

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — I move:

That debate on the motion that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government be resumed on Thursday, March 24th, 2011.

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

That debate on the motion that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government be resumed on Thursday, March 24th, 2011.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the House do now adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — Before I place the question, I just want to say a thank you to all of our guests who have joined us today for your co-operation in how you have respected the rules of the Legislative Assembly. And thank you to the members. I would also like to let members and our guests know that there is tea available, I believe in rooms 318 and 255. And certainly feel free to . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — 218.

**The Speaker:** — 218? 218. We don't want you running upstairs. The Government House Leader has moved adjournment of the Assembly. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Agreed. Carried. This Assembly stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:16.]

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