



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SIXTH LEGISLATURE

of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Allchurch, Denis	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Atkinson, Pat	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Hon. Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Brotten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
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Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
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Furber, Darcy	NDP	Prince Albert Northcote
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Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harper, Ron	NDP	Regina Northeast
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Higgins, Deb	NDP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
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Junor, Judy	NDP	Saskatoon Eastview
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Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
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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
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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
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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 Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to introduce His Excellency, Dr. Georg Witschel, ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Canada, who is with us today in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. He's accompanied by Ms. Barbara Hoggard-Lulay, honorary consul in Saskatchewan.

Dr. Witschel was appointed ambassador to Canada in 2009 and he is now making his first visit in that capacity to the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, His Excellency met this morning with the Lieutenant Governor, the mayor of Regina, myself, the Minister Responsible for Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration, and the Minister of Enterprise. Dr. Witschel was also hosted by the Provincial Secretary and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly for a luncheon.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the long-standing relationship our province has with Germany through the Partnership of Parliaments, a non-governmental, non-profit organization whose goals are to provide new contacts, promote transatlantic dialogue, and to improve political, economical, and cultural relations amongst its members who include representatives from Germany, Austria, the United States, and of course Canada.

Last fall German parliamentarians visited Saskatchewan for a study tour and this year, Mr. Speaker, members of the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly will be visiting Germany. It is unmistakable, Mr. Speaker, that the relationship continues to benefit both the people of Saskatchewan and the people of Germany. And we look forward to exploring future trade and investment opportunities.

I would ask all members to join me in welcoming His Excellency to this Assembly and to our province. We want to wish you an enjoyable stay here and to say thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, I want to join with the Deputy Premier in welcoming His Excellency from the Republic of Germany, Ambassador Witschel to the Legislative Assembly, and also our honorary consul, Barbara Hoggard-Lulay, who is with us again. I just want to say a big welcome to both of you and especially to the ambassador. As the Deputy Premier says, with all the relationships we have between the two countries, and of course between Saskatchewan and the Republic of Germany, there's a huge amount of trade and development that has happened and much more to be done in the future.

I also understand that the ambassador, it's his first visit to our province, but not his last as I think he intends to come back for the national day in October. And we look forward to seeing you again at that point in time. But thank you for coming by the office, saying hello, and a great visit. And thank you, Barbara, for being here. And I know all members will want to join with me in welcoming the ambassador and His Excellency here to the Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister Responsible for Government Services, the member for . . .

Hon. Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I take great pride in being able to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the members of the Assembly a group of 30 grade 10 students from Winston Knoll Collegiate in the constituency of Regina Qu'Appelle Valley. They are here with their teacher, Michelle McKillop.

Winston Knoll is a wonderful school with great students and staff. I hope they enjoy observing question period and that they will be enlightened by the lively debate and the proceedings. I would like everyone to please join me in welcoming them today.

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

Ms. Morin: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a great pleasure for me to join in the greetings to the ambassador for Germany today.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in German.]

So I would ask all my colleagues to join with me in again welcoming the ambassador from Germany to Canada to the legislature today. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Highways, the member from Rosetown-Elrose.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, I'd like to welcome in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, a good friend of mine and also a colleague and a mentor in municipal work, Jim Angus from Harris. Jim is the administrator at the RM [rural municipality] of Harris, and he's in town this week for some Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency meetings. I hope he enjoys the Assembly today, and I'd ask all members to please give him a warm welcome to his Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today again to present a petition from people who are supporting maintaining quality health care services:

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Saskatchewan humbly showeth that the Government of

Saskatchewan ought to recognize the need for timely access to comprehensive and quality health care services for all communities within the province, including Wakaw and surrounding areas, and that the disruption of emergency services and in-patient services at Wakaw Hospital will not serve the needs of the residents in this community and surrounding areas; and

That the cuts in access to timely and accurate diagnostic and laboratory tests within the community of Wakaw and surrounding area will not serve the needs of the residents.

They also want the Government of Saskatchewan to realize that the utilization and value of the full range of professional skills offered by health care providers is promoted through the address of critical retention and recruitment issues and by ensuring safe staffing levels; and

That such promotion can only be achieved through the commitment of adequate public funding to publicly administer publicly accessible health care.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to commit to maintain quality health care services through the commitment of necessary funding to address critical retention and recruitment issues.

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

The signatures to this petition, Mr. Speaker, are from Wakaw, Bellevue, Saskatoon, Osler, Rosthern, Duck Lake, Carlton, and Alvena. I so present.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for protection for tenants from unreasonable rent increases.

In the past four years, too many Saskatchewan tenants have faced surging rent increases that are simply making living in Saskatchewan unaffordable. And that since 2007, far too many tenants have suffered monthly rent increases of hundreds of dollars of average rent increases of over 35 per cent in Saskatoon and Regina, meaning tenants in many cases are paying well over \$3,000 more each year. And we know that the majority of Canadians now live in provinces with rent control guidelines including Manitoba, BC [British Columbia], Ontario, Quebec, and Prince Edward Island. I would like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the government to immediately enact rent control legislation that protects Saskatchewan tenants from unreasonable increases in rent.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing the petition come from Regina, Maple Creek, Swift Current, LeRoy, North Battleford, Candle Lake, Gerald, Yorkton, Sturgis, Esterhazy, Kamsack,

and Estevan.

I do so present. Thank you.

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. And the petition is about the need for a new school for their children:

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, 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 are constituents of Saskatoon Massey Place. I so present.

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

Mr. Furber: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of a potash royalty review because the residents of Saskatchewan are the owners of a 1,000-year supply of this strategic resource and the owners, we believe, of this 1,000-year resource deserve to get the maximum possible benefit for the resource, and that the government has refused to review the current potash royalty system. Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the government to begin a comprehensive, transparent, and public review of Saskatchewan's potash royalty system with a view to maximizing the return from the strategic resource for its owners, the people of Saskatchewan, who wish to use these additional potash royalty revenues for needed investments in health care, child care, education, affordable housing, infrastructure, and other social programs as well as public initiatives such as debt repayment.

Mr. Speaker, today's petition is signed by good folks from Meadow Lake, Turtleford, and the city of Prince Albert. I so present.

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

Ms. Morin: — Mr. Speaker, I rise again to present a petition to restore funding equity to Regina Catholic schools. Regina Catholic schools receive \$275 less per pupil than Regina public schools, amounting to a funding inequity of \$2.7 million in total. 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 residents of Regina. I so present.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise once again to present a petition signed by residents of Saskatchewan concerned about the detrimental effect that Bill 160 will have on human rights law in the province if enacted. 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 Saskatoon, Osler, and Asquith, Saskatchewan. I so present.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I rise once again to 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 to a record that includes the running of deficits and increasing of debt at times of record revenues within this province. They reference the record that includes an increase of \$1.3 billion of debt over the last three years and this year alone, increasing our debt by \$548 million, of course recognizing that this has consequences now but also

well into the future, 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 Rouleau and Regina. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Year of India in Canada

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, celebrations have been planned all across Canada for the year 2011 to celebrate the Year of India in Canada. This past weekend I had the privilege of meeting with and touring the Legislative Building with some of the leading personalities in this celebration, one being Tanusree Shankar and her dance company.

Tanusree Shankar is one of the top dancers and choreographers in India, based in Calcutta, where she was born. Her husband, the late Ananda Shankar, was the world famous music composer and worked to fuse the musical traditions of that great land. And the music and dance in the family is a tradition, Mr. Speaker, because her husband was himself the son of dancers, Pandit Shankar and Amala Shankar, and also the nephew of the master sitar player, Ravi Shankar from India. Tanusree now leads the dance company and one of the leading performers of contemporary dance in India. She has evolved her own modern style, uniting the graceful traditions of Indian dance along with western ballet.

Tanusree and her company of over 20 dancers also had the opportunity, Mr. Speaker, of touring the Legislative Assembly and also enjoyed some impromptu philosophical and political discussions here on the floor of the Chamber. Mr. Speaker, it was a pleasure to show them around the city as well and this beautiful building, and I would like to ask all members to join with me in honouring the Year of India in Canada.

[13:45]

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

Emergency Telecommunicators Week

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to acknowledge and pay tribute to the hard-working people who dedicate their time to public safety. Each day hundreds of Saskatchewan people rely on the expertise and dedication of public safety telecommunicators, more commonly known as 911 call takers.

These individuals save countless lives by answering emergency calls. Their expertise in high-pressure situations allow rapid emergency response and compassion in times of great distress. The skills of these men and women could literally mean the difference between life and death to someone in a crisis or a dangerous situation.

National Telecommunicators Week is taking place this week across Canada. Saskatchewan is doing its part to support these individuals by proclaiming April 11th to 17th, 2011 as Emergency Telecommunicators Week in our province. By officially recognizing public safety telecommunication professionals, it is our hope to increase public awareness and promote education regarding important public safety issues.

Mr. Speaker, this year marks the ninth year the province has celebrated Emergency Telecommunicators Week and the contributions of Saskatchewan's 911 operators and other emergency dispatchers from police, fire, and other emergency medical services who handle calls. I ask all members to join with me in thanking the men and women who have dedicated their lives to helping others through Saskatchewan 911. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Little Penguins Child Care Centre Opens

Mr. Taylor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Quality child care in any community but, more importantly in a growing community, is essential to the well-being of the child, the child's family, and the community as a whole.

That's why I rise today to acknowledge, thank, and congratulate the parents association at in North Battleford who have worked hard over the past two years to develop and implement their plans for a brand new francophone child care centre within the Fransaskois school. The child care centre, which will be home to 25 children aged 18 months through three years and known as Les petits pingouins, or Little Penguins in English, was opened officially this year. Parents group spokesman Roxanne Reynoldson said she is so happy that her two-year-old son will now have child care in the same facility in which he will one day attend elementary school.

Mr. Speaker, the parents group and the francophone school board have developed a working partnership with the province to make this happen. They understand that every \$1 spent on children below the age of five saves hundreds of dollars later in life. Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me today in helping École Père Mercure, the francophone parents in The Battlefords, and the Little Penguins celebrate the opening of these new child care spaces.

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

Volleyball Team Wins Bronze Medal

Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to stand in this Assembly and congratulate a group of young men from the constituency of Thunder Creek. I would like to recognize the Briercrest College Clippers men's volleyball team, who captured the 2011 Canadian Colleges Athletic

Association men's — that's the CCAA, Mr. Speaker — men's volleyball bronze medal at the Canadian nationals March 11th to 13th. Prior to this the team won the Alberta Colleges Athletic Conference, the ACAA title. This was a first for any Briercrest team since joining the ACAA. Mr. Speaker, it's also the first time that any school from outside of Alberta has ever won an ACAA title.

These athletes are exemplary ambassadors of Briercrest College and Seminary and the province of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by adding that the Briercrest College and Seminary located at Caronport is a great asset to Thunder Creek constituency and to the province. This latest accomplishment is just another example of this organization's commitment to excellence.

On behalf of the government, I commend the Clippers men's volleyball team on a great season and wish them luck in repeating as ACAA champions next season, and further success in the CCAA. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Regina Anti-Poverty Benefit Concert

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, March 13th, a benefit concert was held for Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry at Rosemont United Church. My wife, Stephanie, and I were pleased to join with friends at the concert and thoroughly enjoyed our evening. The concert was exceptional. I want to thank the lead organizer, Ms. Wilma Bell Wessel, and also Reverend Christa Eidsness and the congregation of Rosemont United for their support of this event and for striving for social justice in our community.

The church was packed. Attendees were treated to a fine display of musical talents and the good work of Mr. Lee Cowie serving as MC [master of ceremonies]. I want to recognize two incredibly talented choirs that performed, the Rosemont United Choir and also the Regina Ladies Choir. The concert included exceptional tenor, cellist, soprano, and also impressive piano. We were treated to a very special duet by Ms. Wilma Bell Wessel and Ms. Lisa Welder. The concert was held as a benefit for the Regina Anti-Poverty Ministry, an advocate for social and economic justice. As but one example is their call for rent control and a comprehensive housing plan to address the needs of Saskatchewan families and people. Peter Gilmer and Bonnie Morton spoke passionately about the purpose of the ministry.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in thanking all that made this concert a great success for their meaningful contribution to our community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Martensville.

Restaurant Wins President's Award

Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was an honour for me four years ago to recognize the achievements of a local Martensville business. The A&W in Martensville was awarded the Gold Standard Award for Excellence in late 2006. They

won the Gold Standard Award again in 2010. They were one of the top three A&Ws in all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to rise again today to announce that earlier this year, Brian and Bernice Buffin, the owners and the operators of the A&W in Martensville, were awarded the President's Award. They are now the number one A&W in all of Canada. Mr. Speaker, this is a remarkable achievement. The restaurant that receives the President's Award goes through rigorous scrutiny, including a thorough examination of operating practices as well as customer and employee interviews. As Brian said, everything has to be perfect.

Brian and Bernice are well known and well respected in their community. I believe Brian and Bernice are shining examples of the hard-working spirit of the people of Saskatchewan. I want to thank them for investing in our province, for creating jobs, and for their commitment to our community. And, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Brian and Bernice for their amazing achievement.

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

Helping Friends

Mr. Furber: — Mr. Speaker, we know the Premier is always ready to spring into action to help out his Conservative friends in Ottawa. After taking a neutral stand on the federal election, he turned a backflip in the rotunda to attack the Liberal platform while skipping over the Conservatives' long record of ignoring Saskatchewan. Sacrificing consistency to help out Harper's do-nothing 13 MPs [Member of Parliament] was a bit of a risk, Mr. Speaker, but the Premier's always eager to appear helpful to the federal Conservatives. And he asks nothing in return, at least nothing for the people in Saskatchewan that he represents.

Why all the work to impress his Ottawa cousins, Mr. Speaker? Could the rumours be true? Despite this helpful appearance, is the Premier secretly hoping that Stephen Harper takes a tumble in this election so he can make the jump to federal politics and become Canada's new top Tory?

Well, Mr. Speaker, he better look before he leaps. A federal Conservative candidate in BC recently had to jump off the campaign bus following revelations of his troubled financial past, including only one bankruptcy. According to media reports, Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Party demanded his resignation once his history became public.

Time to cancel the French lessons, Mr. Speaker, and no more hopping flights to Toronto to the Albany Club to give speeches or fundraisers at John LaBatt Hall. Out of the race before he jumped in. He'll have to settle for anecdotes of life in Ottawa from the member from Meadow Lake. It seems, Mr. Speaker, even the federal Conservatives don't set the bar low enough for this Premier to clear.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition.

Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology Contract Negotiations

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, today with us in the Speaker's gallery, we have a number of teachers and professional workers from SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] who have come here out of frustration because after two years of negotiations they still don't have a contract. And like many other families, renters in this province, people who work in health care who are frustrated with the lack of protection from this government and the lack of wage increases that they deserve, they've now been offered less than 2 per cent per year to settle.

My question to the minister is this: at a time when there is so much wealth in this province, wealth that we can pay CEOs of health boards 20 per cent on top of 300,000 a year, the CEO of the Potash Corporation has an open end to receive rewards from the bounty of our potash, how is it that working people, these people from SIAST, the health care workers, are restricted to less than 2 per cent per year? How is that fair, and how is that reasonable to the teachers of our children?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, thanks very much for the opportunity to provide an update regarding post-secondary education in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, as we can see from the commitments and investments that our government has made, more than \$2.8 billion in the time that we've been in office, Mr. Speaker, these have included, Mr. Speaker, significant investments in SIAST. These have included capital investments, and they've also included a 10 per cent increase overall since 2007 and an 18.5 per cent increase since 2007.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue to support SIAST. Mr. Speaker, we will continue to support SIAST. Mr. Speaker, we will just simply refer the members opposite to allow the bargaining process to continue to work itself out. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the members of SIAST, the teachers and professionals who are here today I think would question that minister's words about how well off they are and how great the increases have been over the last three years, when for the last two years they've been negotiating a contract. It seems a little hard to believe.

And even at that, with the less than 2 per cent that is being offered, they're also told that, by the way, embedded in the contract is a clawback that will take back about 1 per cent of the less than 2 per cent increase because they're going to have to be paying for their own parking from now on if they accept this contract. How is it fair to these workers, the teachers in this province at SIAST, that they would get not the 2 per cent or less than 2 per cent, but in fact less than 1 per cent after the clawbacks? How does that fit with what the minister has just said?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again since coming into office, we've invested more than \$2.8 billion into post-secondary education, Mr. Speaker. That's meant to ensure that our students can succeed not simply in their studies, Mr. Speaker, but in their careers, Mr. Speaker. And certainly we know how important, we know how important SIAST is, Mr. Speaker, to our province, especially at this time.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite, he makes reference to the ongoing negotiations. I will just simply say, Mr. Speaker, it's up to the respective parties to actually continue with this process. We hope that we'll conclude shortly, Mr. Speaker.

What I can do, Mr. Speaker, is draw to the attention of the member opposite, as far as the NDP's [New Democratic Party] commitment to SIAST, Mr. Speaker, I'll speak directly to the students. And that is while the members opposite were in power, tuition went up by 263 per cent, Mr. Speaker. The members opposite turned their back on the students, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to support SIAST and the students, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Lingenfelter: — Mr. Speaker, the minister forgets to mention that this is the government that ended the freeze for tuition that was put in place by the previous government.

Mr. Speaker, it's not only the teachers and the professional staff at SIAST who will suffer as a result of the lack of negotiations going on. It's our understanding that the staff, the teachers have also been threatened with lockout if they don't accept the offer of less than 2 per cent a year. That is sad and shameful record for this government that they would threaten to lock out the teachers that would jeopardize the graduation and the completion of the school year for many of the students at SIAST.

Can the minister make the commitment that he will not take the draconian approach of locking out the teachers and the staff at SIAST to force an embarrassing contract on the workers, the teachers of SIAST in their negotiations that are ongoing?

[14:00]

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, as I've said, since coming into office more than \$2.8 billion has been invested in the post-secondary system, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that includes significant capital investments across SIAST, Mr. Speaker. We've also seen, Mr. Speaker, an 18.5 per cent increase in operating funding for SIAST, Mr. Speaker.

Regarding the direct question, I will just simply refer to the member opposite to say let the two sides continue this process, Mr. Speaker, of bargaining. Mr. Speaker, we're certainly not going to bargain here on the floor of the legislature, Mr.

Speaker. We know that our commitment relates to students; we know, Mr. Speaker, relates to our institutions, faculty members, and staff, Mr. Speaker. And I would just simply invite the members opposite to allow these negotiations to continue.

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

Gynecologic Oncologists

Ms. Junor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For three years, the minister has ignored the pleas of women with ovarian cancer to address the problematic working conditions of Saskatchewan gyne-oncologists. Many of those women are with us today in the gallery.

Several gyne-oncologists have left their practices, and women with ovarian cancer were left struggling to find a specialist. Mr. Speaker, the minister's failure to address the issue of working conditions has put the lives of women with ovarian cancer at risk. To the minister: when is he going to stop turning his back on this issue and provide the funding and leadership needed to improve the working conditions in order to recruit and retain gyne specialists?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, you know, any time we start talking about cancer treatment in this province, I don't think there's probably a person within this House that hasn't been affected either directly or indirectly by the terrible disease cancer, Mr. Speaker, in whatever type of area it came, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have been working hard with the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency since we became government to make sure that we have the proper complement of oncologists. I'm pleased to announce that a new gynecological oncologist has started on December 2010, Mr. Speaker, filling the void that was there. Mr. Speaker, for the first time, the Cancer Agency is reporting a full complement of oncologists, Mr. Speaker, in the southern region and maybe one vacancy in Saskatoon. So with that, Mr. Speaker, we're seeing wait times come down for all treatment of cancer.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite asked what we have done over the last three years. In the last three years of our government, funding to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has gone up 55 per cent, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's \$43 million more coming from this government to deal with cancer issues across the province such as staffing, Mr. Speaker. We've made progress. More to do, Mr. Speaker, but we're on the right track.

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, as usual the minister can't focus on the actual issue. Mr. Speaker, gyne cancer care in Saskatchewan is reaching a critical low for women with ovarian cancer and their families. Women with ovarian cancer are concerned about the lack of quality controls for women with suspected gyne cancers, with women being misdiagnosed, and

women receiving surgery from obstetrician gynecologists rather than gyne-oncologists.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: will he commit today to designing and implementing a gyne cancer program to provide direction, ensure quality of care, and provide quality control for women with ovarian cancer?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my first answer, we have a full complement of gynecological oncologists in our province, Mr. Speaker. With the recent hiring in December of 2010, we have three full-time and one part-time gynecological oncologists working through the Cancer Agency, Mr. Speaker.

To her second question, we are working with a gynecological oncology program advisory committee that's looking at the delivery of cancer care, Mr. Speaker, this specific type of cancer care in the province. Recommendations come from that advisory committee. We listen to those recommendations and implement those recommendations.

Nothing could be further from the truth to say that nothing has been done over the three years of our government, Mr. Speaker. I am and our government is very proud of our record in this area.

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

Ms. Junor: — Mr. Speaker, I think what's frustrating for the women who are here in the gallery is that, while the bureaucracy grinds along, their friends and their family are dying.

Mr. Speaker, by setting up specialized gyne-oncology units in Regina and Saskatoon, the minister can take a step towards ensuring the recruitment and retention of gyne-oncologists and improving the care for women with ovarian cancer. Gyne-oncology units provide specialists with the support staff and equipment needed to provide higher quality controls and give women with ovarian cancer a better chance of beating the disease.

These were the issues that saw the gyne-oncologists leave Regina, and the minister took until December to get back some specialists in this area. So he hasn't done a very good job, didn't address the issues that made them leave, now took so long to recruit them. And the issues are still there, so will these ones stay too or will they leave also?

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: will he finally, after three years, listen to the needs of ovarian cancer patients and do the right thing and set up gyne-oncology units in Regina and Saskatoon?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I want to say to the general public that under the leadership of Scott Livingstone, the CEO [chief executive officer] and the new board Chair Dr. Stewart McMillan, the Cancer Agency has made great strides,

Mr. Speaker. A news release that came out on March 14th talks about lean initiatives, improved access to cancer care, average wait times improved by 92 per cent, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, this government is certainly committed to the delivery of cancer care in whichever it may be, whether it's gyne-oncology, Mr. Speaker, whether it's gynecological cancer delivery, Mr. Speaker, our government is committed to it. That's why we have a working group, Mr. Speaker, made up of many interested groups that advise the government for improvements.

Mr. Speaker, we've gone a long ways. We've increased the number of funding, increased the funding, Mr. Speaker, in three years. I'm not saying there isn't more work to do but, Mr. Speaker, we have gone a long, long ways from where it was when we started in 2007.

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

College Merger

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Advanced Education admitted last night in committee that he learned of the criminal history of the now-fired joint CEO of Carlton Trail Regional College and St. Peter's College last May. To the minister: when alerted to the convictions of Glen Kobussen for defrauding the Fire Fighters burn fund, why did he do absolutely nothing?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, it's important to keep in context the state of Saskatchewan's post-secondary education. And I'll just quote from the *Canadian University Guide*, Mr. Speaker: "There has never been a better time to consider Saskatchewan as the place to attain a great post-secondary education," Mr. Speaker.

In the case that the member opposite references, Mr. Speaker, we received a proposal, Mr. Speaker. That proposal arrived last June. We then undertook an independent analysis through Meyers Norris Penny regarding a proposed merger, Mr. Speaker. The recommendation was that that merger not move forward, Mr. Speaker, not move forward. And, Mr. Speaker, there were a number, there were a number of questions and concerns that were raised.

As part of our follow-up, we are ensuring that those questions are being addressed by Meyers Norris Penny, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, what we know, what we know, Mr. Speaker, is we are committed to ensuring that we will track every one of the public dollars, Mr. Speaker. And we'll ensure that if there is anyone to be held to account, that will also happen, Mr. Speaker. That's in the benefit and in the interest of our students, Mr. Speaker, and in the benefit and interest of the entire system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, we've heard those speaking points now for about three weeks. The minister is not answering the question.

Mr. Speaker, it would be good for Saskatchewan people to know that we learned some lessons from past incidents in which individuals with histories of fraud convictions misappropriated public funds. And as a result of those incidents, the NDP government put fraud prevention measures in place including criminal record checks and a restriction on those with histories of fraud from dealing with public money.

But the problem here is that the minister did not heed those lessons, and he did not follow those processes. He failed to ensure that a proper background check was done. And when he found about the history of fraud, he simply ignored it. To the minister: why did he deviate from appropriate procedure, and why did he put millions of taxpayers' dollars under the control of an individual with a history of fraud?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, thanks very much for the opportunity to respond. Mr. Speaker, regarding the individual in question, Mr. Speaker, I'd point out to the members opposite that while they were in power the individual was actually selected to be the president of the St. Peter's College in both 2004 and 2005.

Mr. Speaker, what I will also say is, Mr. Speaker, regarding the policy that they put in place in 2006, Mr. Speaker, this policy did not apply, did not apply to the post-secondary sector. In fact it focused exclusively on the executive of government. Mr. Speaker, to this end I am working with my deputy minister, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that if and as we can expand this to the post-secondary sector, we will, Mr. Speaker. We're doing that work right now. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, members can check *Hansard* from committee last night. When asked about when he was alerted to the convictions of Mr. Kobussen, the minister said it was last May. And he said he did absolutely nothing once he found out that information.

The reality is, the minister dropped the ball on this by failing to ensure proper background checks and then ignoring the disturbing information when it came to his attention. Now almost a year later we have accusations about misuse or misappropriated public money, and we have a whole lot of organizations trying to get to the bottom of this mess, including the Ministry of Justice, Meyers Norris Penny, KPMG, and an individual from Deloitte & Touche who is being paid over \$50,000 per month.

But we also learned last night that the minister's own office is acting as a private investigation firm. In recent weeks, the minister's political staff have been actively investigating the suspicious fire at St. Peter's and looking into whether or not the fired CEO actually has a pardon. To the minister: what kind of

sense does it make for his political staff to be playing such an active role in the investigation when his fingerprints are all over this mess?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, obviously there are a number of lessons learned and things that I could have done better and certainly the ministry could have done better. We were working with long-established guidelines, Mr. Speaker.

As far as the references, Mr. Speaker, as far as the references to what the member opposite is accusing my staff, Mr. Speaker, we've ensured that any information that has come forward, we have forwarded to the appropriate authorities in Justice, Mr. Speaker. We will continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

I want to reiterate, Mr. Speaker, we made the right decision through an independent process under which there were a number of questions and concerns that were revealed, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to date that's what we're dealing with: a series of questions, concerns, and accusations. We're going to get to the bottom of this, Mr. Speaker. We are going to ensure that we track these public dollars, Mr. Speaker, and that there's a full accounting to the people of this province, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the minister's speaking notes would have the people of Saskatchewan believe that he is part of the solution. That is not the case, Mr. Speaker. That minister is at the root of the problem.

Mr. Speaker, nothing about this minister's approach to this situation has been appropriate. He failed to look into Glen Kobussen's background. He put millions of taxpayers' dollars under Kobussen's control. When he found out about Kobussen's history of defrauding the burn fund, he ignored it so he could plow ahead with his merger.

And now we have learned that despite having at least four other organizations looking into this mess, including one individual that is being paid \$50,000, over \$50,000 per month, the minister's own political staff are acting like private investigators. So here we have a minister who put millions of public dollars at risk, failed to undertake any due diligence, and now he's interfering with independent investigations.

To the minister: before he causes more problems, will he step aside as minister until this situation is fully and properly dealt with?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we came into office, we knew that there was much work to be done within the post-secondary sector, Mr. Speaker. More than \$2.8 billion, Mr. Speaker, investing in students today and into the future, Mr. Speaker. We've ensured, Mr. Speaker,

that we've been attentive to the grassroots, responsive as we could be, and at the same time responsible to taxpayers, Mr. Speaker. We continue to work on that, Mr. Speaker.

Regarding the case that the member opposite is referencing, Mr. Speaker, we received a proposal last June, Mr. Speaker. We ensured that there was an independent process. That independent process, that independent process, Mr. Speaker, came forward with a recommendation not to proceed with the proposed proposal, Mr. Speaker. There were a number of questions. Those questions are being investigated, Mr. Speaker. We will ensure that, if and as appropriate, those dollars are going to be responsibly addressed and accounted for, Mr. Speaker. We know how important this is for students and for taxpayers, and we're going to continue to do this work, Mr. Speaker.

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

Reporting Political Donations

Mr. Quennell: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Justice. Yesterday when questioned about the failure to disclose the 2009, \$1,000 contribution to the Saskatchewan Party made by Glen Kobussen but paid for by St. Peter's College, the minister said that he was in possession of an interpretation bulletin from the Chief Electoral Officer saying that the political parties, and the Saskatchewan Party in particular, can deduct fundraising activities and expenses from contributions before disclosing them and disclose them for a different fiscal year than the year they were contributed. To the minister, he also said that he would provide all the information that he had. To the minister: will he fulfill that undertaking today and table the interpretation bulletin he claims he has from the Chief Electoral Officer.

[14:15]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the simple situation and the simple answer is that there is a guide prepared by the Chief Electoral Officer. There's no secrecy to that. It's online. It's available from the Chief Electoral Officer. If the members opposite would like it, I'll certainly see to it that they get a copy of it.

What it says, Mr. Speaker, is that . . .

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Very simply what it says is that where tickets are purchased and there's a portion of the ticket price that's a donation and a portion that goes towards the lunch, you can only give a tax receipt for the eligible portion of that donation. You can't determine the eligible portion until the meals have been set or the events have taken place, Mr. Speaker. That's been the long-standing practice of the Saskatchewan Party, that they will file based in the subsequent year after the events have taken place so they can properly do it

so that they do not give a tax receipt for some . . . in excess of what a donor is entitled to do, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Well, Mr. Speaker, again it's say anything time. We've had a case where the Minister of Health claimed to have consultations with the Privacy Commissioner. It turned out those were consultations with the previous NDP government.

We now have a case, Mr. Speaker, where the Minister of Justice says he has an interpretation bulletin. And when he's asked to table it, Mr. Speaker, what he does is he gets up and says, well there's this guide and we interpret the guide to mean such and such, Mr. Speaker. Does the minister in fact have a document from the Chief Electoral Officer saying that, in the case of not ticket sales, Mr. Speaker, but contributions and donations, that a party is allowed to deduct fundraising expenses from those and disclose them in a different year than the year for which they were contributed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the simple answer is this: you cannot give . . .

[Interjections]

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

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — You cannot give, Mr. Speaker, a tax receipt until you determine what portion of the donation goes towards the meal cost, what portion is the donation cost. It is a simple thing. It is dealt with in the guide that's provided by them. The members opposite have the guide. If they want another copy of it, if their photocopier's not working, I'd be glad to provide them with another copy of it. There is nothing untoward, nothing unusual. You cannot possibly, Mr. Speaker, give a tax receipt for a portion of a donation . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Order. Order. The member for Saskatoon Meewasin had the privilege of presenting the question without interference. I'd ask the same privilege be allowed the Minister of Justice. Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the members opposite seems to think that there was something untoward with this. There is nothing untoward with this. You cannot give a tax receipt for a donation that is improper. You must give a tax receipt for a portion that is a donation. The simple reality, Mr. Speaker, is you must resolve how the portion is applied to the meal and what portion is applied to the donation. And the party has done that and will continue to do that.

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

Mr. Quennell: — Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill once said that Americans will always do the right thing after they've

exhausted every other alternative. The members opposite have finally done the right thing on special access after they exhaust every other alternative. It is now time for them to do the right thing on disclosure, Mr. Speaker.

The minister has made it quite clear that they have exhausted every other alternative. Now will the minister admit, will the minister admit that yesterday he said he was in possession of an interpretation bulletin specifically covering this circumstance — not of a ticket sale, Mr. Speaker, but of a donation, of a contribution from which the Saskatchewan Party has been deducting fundraising activity expenses and then disclosing in a different fiscal year than for which it was contributed, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the simple answer is this, Mr. Speaker: if a donation is made in 2009 as a simple donation, it will be receipted and a tax receipt issued for 2009. If it is for a membership or tickets . . .

[Interjections]

The Speaker: — Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — If it is money that is receipted in 2009 for an event that takes place in 2010 where you have to allocate between a ticket portion and a donation portion, then it will be receipted and the funds will be processed in the subsequent year. There is no other way to do that where the funds are going to be dealt with.

Mr. Speaker, all of the funds are accounted for. The returns are filed and, Mr. Speaker, I would urge the members to have a look at them, review them, and move on.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for leave to move a motion.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has asked for leave to move a motion. Can the minister explain the motion?

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the nature of the motion is to recommend an appointment to the Public and Private Rights Board pursuant to section 6 of *The Expropriation Procedure Act*.

The Speaker: — The minister has asked for leave to move a motion in regarding to a change of a member on a board if I understood correctly. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

MOTIONS

Appointment to the Public and Private Rights Board

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This address

will recommend that John Glen Gardner of Regina be appointed as the member of the Public and Private Rights Board pursuant to section 6 of *The Expropriation Procedure Act*. The appointment would be effective April 15th, 2011 for a term of five years. Mr. Gardner will be replacing the existing board member, Mr. Ken Acton.

Mr. Acton has been a member of the Public and Private Rights Board since July 1, 1990, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank him on behalf of this Assembly for his leadership in this role. Mr. Acton was the recipient of a Centennial Medal in acknowledgement of his leadership in mediation and collaborative problem solving. His work with expropriating parties to encourage them to adopt a more collaborative approach has decreased the number of complaints received by the board. Mr. Acton has now moved on to a different senior role in the Ministry of Justice, and it is appropriate that a new person be appointed to this position.

Glen Gardner graduated from the College of Law at the University of Saskatchewan in 1980 and has worked with the dispute resolution office since 1988. He has served as acting director of that office starting in 2008 with a departure from that position of Mr. Acton. And since January 1, 2010, he has assumed the role of director of the dispute resolution office. As part of his duties as director of the dispute resolution office, he is teaching a class at the College of Law, University of Saskatchewan in support of the training to new lawyers. In recognition of this work, he was appointed visiting scholar to the University of Saskatchewan, College of Law in 2010.

Mr. Gardner managed his own farm operation until 1998. Mr. Gardner has done mediation work in a number of areas including commercial, lender/debtor, and family conflicts. He has also done facilitation work with merging and developing organizations. He has recently been involved in a number of new initiatives in the labour relations area, such as using collaborative problem solving in collective bargaining and union management joint initiatives and the use of mediation in workplace disputes.

Glen Gardner is clearly a leader in Saskatchewan in modern dispute resolution methodologies. Mr. Speaker, having the director of the dispute resolution office also perform this role has proven to be very useful. The primary function of the dispute resolution office is to provide mediation, facilitation, and other collaborative problem solving processes to assist parties in resolving disputes.

The Public and Private Rights Board provides a dispute resolution process in relation to *The Expropriation Procedure Act*. The Public and Private Rights Board has the authority to review matters relating to the expropriation of land or the intention to acquire land by expropriating authorities in an effort to help the parties reach mutually acceptable solutions. Landowners may request the board to review either or both of the following: firstly the root situation or the design of a public improvement, and then secondly the amount of compensation offered for the expropriated land.

Mr. Speaker, given the similar roles of the board and the dispute resolution office, the appointment of Glen Gardner as the member of the board is entirely appropriate.

Mr. Speaker, I therefore move, by leave of the Assembly:

That a humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor recommending that John Glen Gardner be appointed as a member of the Public and Private Rights Board effective April 15th, 2011, for a term of five years pursuant to section 6 of *The Expropriation Procedure Act*.

The Speaker: — The Minister of Justice has moved:

That a humble address be presented to His Honour the Lieutenant Governor recommending that John Glen Gardner be appointed as a member of the Public and Private Rights Board effective April 15th, 2011, for a term of five years pursuant to section 6 of *The Expropriation Procedure Act*.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 169

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 169** — *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure this afternoon to make some comments about Bill No. 169, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this amendment Act effectively moves a part of the department that has been standing on its own for a number of years into the supervision of the Financial Services Commission. And I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that we take a bit of a look at what this particular part of the Ministry of Justice is before we pass this Bill.

In many governments, in Canada and the United States, there are specific ministers or secretaries in charge of consumer protection. And, Mr. Speaker, what this particular Bill does is further suppress or put down or eliminate the profile of consumer protection for the individuals of our community.

And I think all of us should be watching this pretty closely because, as we know when we are working in our constituency offices, often the issues that arise are issues of the poor or

weak, weaker consumer dealing with a larger organization that has somehow caused them difficulty. Now that can involve things like purchases of appliances or dealing with salespeople in various situations where there isn't necessarily a balance between the individuals who are involved. And so, Mr. Speaker, we need to be careful when we're looking at this to make sure that we're not doing something here which will in any way diminish that.

Now one of the national ministerial groups, groups of ministers that would get together, was the ministers of consumer affairs. And I know that this group didn't always have a high profile, but they were working on some very important issues. And they continued to work on those issues, whether it was full disclosure of the cost of buying things where interest rates were hidden in prices or where there wasn't full disclosure of what the terms of some long-term membership in a health club or other organization, or what some of the terms that might be in a purchase agreement, which was actually a lease, or some hybrid of a purchase agreement in a lease.

So, Mr. Speaker, these issues that are being dealt with here are important, and we need to understand what it is that we're doing. And so, Mr. Speaker, if we go right to the legislation itself, I think it's worth going through and looking at which particular pieces of legislation are being transferred from an independent department within the Ministry of Justice into the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission. Later, Mr. Speaker, I'll talk a bit about some of that organizational structure, but at this point, I want to outline what things are being moved. And I think we can get a strong clue about that if we look at section 2 which . . . Or I guess it's section 3 of the amended legislation which effectively amends section 2 by adding sub (a.1), which is a definition of consumer protection legislation.

[14:30]

So the first item in that list is *The Auctioneers Act*. Now anybody who's grown up in Saskatchewan knows that there are lots of very careful rules around auctions, whether it's household goods or farm machinery or farm land. And all of those rules are important because people have rights when they're making bids and also when they're selling items using auctioneers. So this is an area of the law that's going to be now defined as consumer protection legislation to be administered by the Financial Services Commission.

And I think what we should also remind ourselves is that the Financial Services Commission now has the job of administering a number of things: credit unions, mortgage brokers, pension plan administration, investing and dealing with pension funds, selling and providing insurance, advising with respect to securities, lending money, dealing with and purchasing mortgages on property on land, security interests in personal property and accounts receivable, buying and selling accounts receivable, and any other similar activity designated in the regulations. So, Mr. Speaker, those are all very important and big jobs. In fact any one of them could, I think, consume the whole operation of a financial services commission.

And then you go and look and see what the existing pieces of legislation that are dealt with by this Financial Services

Commission. They're *The Co-operatives Act*, *The Credit Union Act, 1985*, *The Credit Union Act, 1998*, *The Mortgage Brokerages and Mortgage Administrators Act*, *The New Generation Co-operatives Act*, *The Pension Benefits Act*, *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act*, *The Securities Act*, *The Trust and Loan Corporations Act*, and other related Acts as far as financial services are concerned.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we're moving all of these other pieces of legislation, which are very important to individuals in our community, into an area which has been traditionally dealing with the credit unions, the insurance companies, the mortgage brokers, and all of these rather large institutions. And if you notice, Mr. Speaker, often the consumer issues relate to complaints about these other groups. So now we're going to have them all in the same place. And I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, whether this makes sense.

But let's go through some of the other areas here and find out or at least come to some conclusions about whether we should be doing this. So the first one I mentioned was *The Auctioneer's Act*. Everybody understands that one.

The next one, Mr. Speaker, is *The Cemeteries Act*. And so people will wonder, well why would *The Cemeteries Act* be here? Well, Mr. Speaker, many times people will buy a plot in a cemetery and hopefully won't use it for 60 or 70 years. And so the issue becomes, is that consumer who's purchased a lot protected over the long term? Also there are issues around purchasing of cemetery plots on time. And those are the kinds of things that are dealt with by the consumer protection section of this new Financial Services Commission that would be in place after this legislation has been passed.

Third area, Mr. Speaker, is *The Charitable Fund-raising Businesses Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, this is an area where there are continual issues about educating people to make sure they're following the rules correctly, but also in dealing with both the scrupulous and careful businesses that are involved with fundraising but also those that do take advantage of both organizations, charitable organizations, and of individuals. So, Mr. Speaker, this would be under this new legislation.

The next area is *The Collection Agents Act*. And this is an Act which has in it licensing provisions for collection agents, but it also deals with these skip tracers and others that we often see programs on television about, who often live right on the edge of the rules. And so, Mr. Speaker, we'll have the same group that are managing our credit unions and insurance companies also running around looking for skip tracers and others who might be causing troubles. I'm not sure if that's the right spot for them or not.

The next one is *The Consumer and Commercial Affairs Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of provisions in this kind of legislation which relate to appropriate business activity and protection of consumers. And so it fits right into the heart of some of the work that's to be done here, also *The Consumer Protection Act*, which has further protections for consumers.

Another Act that's here is *The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act*. So, Mr. Speaker, we will have the same group of people that are working with the credit unions and mortgage brokers, and

wanting to maintain good, solid relationships with those senior executives and boards of those institutions, who are also there to administer this Act, *The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act*, and protect individuals and small companies around the actual cost of credit. And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that this is another area where there may be some real challenges in having both the consumers and the credit unions and banks and mortgage brokers that are involved understanding this dual role of this new commission.

The next piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, is *The Credit Reporting Act*. And as we all know, *The Credit Reporting Act* relates to the rules around how much information can a financial institution or business obtain about you to effectively decide whether or not you're a credit risk or not. And these types of legislation have been passed to protect individuals, to protect people who don't have a lot of power in our society. And so these Acts will be administered by the same people who are working and making the rules for the lenders. That seems a little bit of an interesting challenge here, Mr. Speaker.

Another piece of legislation that's being dealt with here is *The Direct Sellers Act*. And *The Direct Sellers Act* is the Act that sets the rules for the people who come around to your house and sell appliances or sell encyclopedias or other things. There are some very clear rules about cooling-off periods and things like that, but we also know that many times those sales contracts are in turn wrapped up and sold to larger financial institutions. So we will have the person who's protecting the individuals who might get caught in one of these kind of situations, also the ones who would be writing the rules for some of the other bankers.

Another area here, Mr. Speaker, is *The Film and Video Classification Act*, and we know that this is a long-standing challenge, to appropriately identify those types of, forms of entertainment that need to have specific warnings on them for consumers. So this will be in this same task.

Another area is *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*. Now, Mr. Speaker, a number of years ago when I was the minister of Justice, we looked very carefully at this whole area of funerals and cremation services to update the legislation to make sure that it was both positive for the profession, the funeral directors, and the people involved with that, but also that it made everything clear to individuals who are having to make some major financial decisions often at a time of grief. And, Mr. Speaker, this type of legislation is legislation that can be somewhat challenging to get it appropriate so that it does provide protections for individuals.

Another piece of legislation that's defined as consumer protection legislation under this new Act is *The Motor Dealers Act*, and this sets out the rules that apply to motor dealers and how they treat individuals, and to make sure that the rules are there to protect the purchasers of motor vehicles. And, Mr. Speaker, as we know, given the price of many motor vehicles today, there's a large banking element in purchasing of vehicles and so once again you'll have the person or the group that is regulating the financial institutions that are lending the money, also the one that's set up to protect the person who may need some help in dealing with the motor dealer. So there are some, on the face of them, difficulties that arise with this particular

piece of legislation.

Another Act that's included in this as consumer protection legislation is *The Sale of Goods Act*. And once again *The Sale of Goods Act* sets out those rules that protect a consumer if there's some problem with the item that's been purchased, and then the remedies that are available for that person. And so there again it's a protection of the individual.

And then the other one that's specifically listed here is *The Ticket Sales Act*. And we know that has to deal with the broader issue of scalping of tickets and some of the rules as it relates to that. So one of the, so the question we have here is we have a whole number of specific pieces of legislation that have been passed to protect primarily individuals who are in an unequal power relationship with a larger vendor or service provider. And all of those pieces of legislation are now going to be transferred unto the responsibility of the regulator of the large financial institutions, the large insurance companies, large mortgage brokers. And so there are some fundamental questions about how this is going to be done.

And once again I'll return to the fact that in many jurisdictions this type of a role is held in a completely different department or ministry than all of the regulation of financial institutions. And so we need to ask that fundamental question: who is going to be making sure that the little person is being protected? Because if we look at most of these pieces of legislation, they have been brought forward in this legislature because a person has suffered damage or has been treated poorly, and the goal was to somehow balance the playing field and make sure there was protection for the consumer. So, Mr. Speaker, we have this type of legislation which involves the transfer of these services to the Financial Services Commission.

[14:45]

So, Mr. Speaker, when one looks at the existing legislation and looks at the definition of financial services regulator, what you'll see is that the financial services regulator under that legislation has taken over the role of a number of traditional roles throughout the system that we've developed in Saskatchewan. So the financial services regulator is the registrar of credit unions. The financial services regulator is the superintendent of insurance. The financial services regulator is the superintendent of pensions. The financial services regulator is the Saskatchewan superintendent of financial institutions. And so what will be added in this particular legislation is that this person will now be the superintendent of a whole number of different areas.

And so when you look at section 2, the amendment, the second part (a.2), it talks about the consumer protection regulator. And so the consumer protection regulator, in juxtaposition to the financial services regulator, will mean these things:

- (i) the registrar designated pursuant to *The Auctioneers Act*;
- (ii) the registrar appointed pursuant to *The Cemeteries Act, 1999*;
- (iii) the registrar of charities appointed pursuant to *The*

Charitable Fund-raising Businesses Act;

(iv) the registrar designated pursuant to *The Collection Agents Act*;

(v) the director appointed pursuant to *The Consumer Protection Act*;

(vi) the registrar appointed pursuant to *The Credit Reporting Act*;

(vii) the registrar appointed pursuant to *The Direct Sellers Act*;

(viii) [consumer protection regulator means] the Saskatchewan Film Classification Board.

So in other words, this consumer protection regulator becomes the Saskatchewan Film Classification Board.

(ix) [the consumer protection regulator means] the appeal committee appointed pursuant to *The Film and Video Classification Act*;

(x) [consumer protection regulator means] the Superintendent of Funeral and Cremation Services;

(xi) [the consumer protection regulator means] the registrar designated pursuant to the motor . . . [vehicles] Act.

And number xii goes to say any other person or commission who:

(A) is given responsibilities or powers pursuant to consumer protection legislation; and

(B) is designated in the regulations".

So we don't know what that particularly entails but, Mr. Speaker, I have a suggestion. If we're going to start doing these things, this is exactly the place where we should have, consumer protection regulator means the person who sets up or takes care of rent control, the person who is the rent controller. And so therefore you would have somebody with specific powers that relate to all of these different issues who would protect consumers on one of the largest expenditures in their lives, which is the amount of rent that they pay. Because if you're going to go and look at all of these things and put them in this particular legislation, it seems like this would be a perfectly appropriate place to start talking about rent regulation as a way of protecting individuals. So there are some opportunities here to take some further steps that may assist.

Now when one looks at this legislation, there's another aspect to it as well. It's not entirely clear how the legislation will be administered other than it seems to be clear that there is some ability to delegate some of the roles of the person who is head of the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission, the chairperson. It's possible that that person can delegate to vice-chairpeople or members some of these particular powers. So we assume that that may happen but ultimately it will be the chairperson of the Saskatchewan Financial Services

Commission that has all of these different roles.

Now it's not entirely clear, although in the speech from the minister yesterday he did talk about the budget and how there was going to be some realignment of some of the costs as it relates to this. And I think his specific words yesterday were that:

... the programming and staff of the consumer protection branch ... will be transferred to the SFSC. The fee revenues and related expenditures of the consumer protection branch will be handled through the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Fund. Reference to this transition is made at page 109 of the budget Estimates document.

So, Mr. Speaker, in the section at the back of the budget Estimates, there are a substantial number of reorganizations. Many of them, like this one, relate to transferring employees to self-financed groups based on fees. And when I have looked at the pieces of legislation that we've had this year as we move forward — and this one fits into it again and as we've been told, this is a budget piece of legislation — it appears that the Finance minister together with the Minister of Justice are attempting to meet this arbitrary goal that they set of 15 per cent reduction in the number of employees that are in the ministry. So it will be very interesting for us to see how these jobs are reported and whether they will continue to be reported in the ministry or if in fact they will somehow be reported as being funded out of this Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission.

And what makes me especially curious about this, Mr. Speaker, is that they've had to make special provision in this legislation to deal with the funeral services and cremation area to make sure that the monies that go in that area are not in any way hooked together with some of the other money. At least that's how I understand what's being said here.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have once again a move to reorganize work in a way that doesn't truly reflect what is the government service involved. And we've seen it in the environment legislation which is *The Natural Resources Amendment Act* which we have before the legislature now, where they're attempting to give the money ... or use the monies available in the wildlife fund to actually pay for salaries as opposed to the capital projects that have traditionally been done there.

What we need to understand, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to this legislation, is whether what is being done is once again being done to somehow make it difficult to follow where various jobs have gone so that, as it relates to particular ministries, the jobs are reduced and therefore have been able to meet some of the artificial goals that have been set by the Ministry of Finance. So, Mr. Speaker, we'll be watching that particularly.

And once again, when these things are done, it causes uncertainty for the employees, but more importantly, everything we're talking about in this legislation relates to protection of the little guy, protection of the little person who is trying to deal with an imbalance of power. And, Mr. Speaker, we don't want to have these roles removed from the role of government by some means that satisfies some budgetary perspectives and

leaves people out in the cold.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of legislation sets out in its changes another area which raises some concerns, and it's this same area about how funds are used. And traditionally the funds for consumer protection have all come directly from the General Revenue Fund and have been provided as part of the overall budget of the government. When we look at this particular legislation — and I guess it would be the section no. 10 — what we see is that section 23.5 is repealed and the following is substituted. And I think that what we need to understand is that changes are being made in how these funds are used and for what purposes they can be used.

And, Mr. Speaker, we know that the auditors will be watching this carefully, but often they don't get a chance to review what happens until a couple years down the road. So we are concerned that there's advance notice that we will be watching how this area is administered, how the funds are being used.

And we want to make sure that there are sufficient funds available to provide all of the services that are required for the protection of consumers. Mr. Speaker, when one takes steps to lump together protection of consumers with the regulation of large institutions, it raises many questions about the ultimate motive of the government in doing this. And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that all of us should be careful as this goes forward. I know that many of my colleagues will want to look at this legislation and also attempt to decipher what the government's intentions are as it relates to the specific areas where consumers are being protected. And once again, Mr. Speaker, I think that we would all be pleased if the government would introduce rent control legislation, which is consumer protection legislation of the best kind, into this particular area if they're not willing to do it in some of the other areas that they have in their responsibility, as it would show that they are listening to what concerns people have in the community.

So, Mr. Speaker, I will leave it to some of my colleagues to make further comments on this legislation. At this point I will move to adjourn the debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 169. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 167

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 167 — *The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Trew: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to enter some thoughts on Bill 167, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Act* that was

introduced by the Sask Party government earlier this year.

Mr. Speaker, I want to simply begin by simply stating that the Grain Car Corporation of Saskatchewan was set up in the 1970s with a purchase of 1,000 grain cars, a rolling stock of 1,000 hopper bottom grain cars. We've all seen them if we're paying any attention as we drive down the highways and the roads of Saskatchewan because they've got the grain sheaf, the Saskatchewan emblem painted proudly on these grain cars. And some of them have been subsequently repainted with an updated logo, and that looks pretty attractive.

But in the mid '70s, there was a transportation crisis, a crisis. I'll call it that because the problem was that the railways had boxcars that were increasingly inefficient. And by that I mean you had to deliver them to the siding where the grain elevators were, and then the grain elevator staff had to go through a process that was called coopering the cars. And what it simply meant was you had to nail the doors shut either with wood, in the case of many of the boxcars, or there was a cardboard with metal bands strapped through it, and there was a process where you'd have to nail that. And then you'd nail a one-by-six on the top and hang a ladder and crawl out.

[15:00]

I'm not trying to give the complete description, but it was hard work. And it was a job that, on a couple of occasions or a few occasions, I had the pleasure of doing. My recollection is I got paid \$1 a car the first time I did it, and I think it was double that the second time I did it. So it didn't exactly enhance my retirement plan, but it helped for Friday night and Saturday night.

Mr. Speaker, the boxcars, once they got coopered and then there was a dirty, dusty process of loading them from the grain elevator. And it involved getting a spout in and tying it up, fastening it tight. And then of course the grain elevator agent would have to stick always his head — I don't know of any women grain elevator agents, maybe there were some, but I'm not aware of them — but they always had to stick their head in and see how full it was, and then spin it around and do the other end of the boxcar. It was a dirty, dusty job, and on some days it was incredibly hot as well.

Then when the boxcar loading was done . . . The wheels of the boxcars didn't have a bearing. They had a different system that required that it always be in oil, but they didn't run as freely as the bearings on the new undercarriages of railcars. So it took more locomotive power to move the boxcars. It certainly took a lot more power to jack a full boxcar away from the elevator so that you could move the next car into place to load it. And this was almost always done one car at a time.

And so you can appreciate the difficulty that elevator operators had in loading boxcars. You can appreciate with the harder rolling stock, the undercarriage of the boxcars, how that required more locomotive power, particularly through the mountains, if the grain was going west to the port of Vancouver. It just caused grief.

And so in the '70s, there was a move afoot to update that rolling stock and move into hopper-bottom cars, and that was

certainly for easier loading from the grain elevators in Saskatchewan and across the Prairies. But it also had an added advantage at the terminal that they were incredibly, relatively easy to unload as opposed to the old machines that used to pick up a boxcar and they'd open the door and then it would tilt it both ways. And I think it had to go a couple of times each to make sure that the boxcars were completely empty.

With the new hopper cars from the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation and from the Alberta grain car corporation and from the Canadian Wheat Board, with the inclusion of those cars into the railroad running stock, the turnaround at the ports was hugely faster, hugely faster. So that's the way the Grain Car Corp was initially set up, was to try and help move Saskatchewan farm product, primarily wheat and grains, oil seeds to port, to terminals, so that it could be done at a lower cost — the transportation, that is — and a faster transportation.

I know in those days the Port of Vancouver was constantly congested, Mr. Speaker, constantly congested. Well at the time I was working for a company then known as Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and we used to get weekly reports of how long it took for what they called the turnaround of the grain cars, how long the turnaround took. And it just kept getting longer and longer and longer, and you'd just despaired because I knew from my farm background and I knew from the company I worked for that farmers needed the grain cars to get to terminals, to get unloaded, and get back to the grain elevators on the Prairies so that they could be loaded up again and just keep that cycle.

If my memory serves me right, the cycle went from something like 8 spins a year to . . . it got up to nearly 16 spins a year. That is, a car would get loaded and unloaded an awful lot more often in the later years as the efficiencies were realized and they did some things with spotting of cars. And there were just various improvements over the years.

But that's the beginning of the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. And it was an exciting corporation in the 1970s when it was set up. And everybody was convinced that it was part of the solution, that indeed farmers desperately wanted to see their product moved to port so that it could be shipped overseas so that they could get their money for the produce that they were selling.

Now once it became fairly apparent that Saskatchewan was not in any . . . there was a lesser need, I think would be the way I would describe it, for Saskatchewan to purchase additional cars — you know, an additional 500 or 1,000 or, you know, significant number of grain cars in the rolling stock — once that determination was made, then for the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation the question became, well how do we manage? How is it that we should manage this fleet of 1,000 grain cars? So the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corp was set up. And ultimately it is today a Treasury Board Crown corporation that has one person in charge of it. And there's some, I believe, some clerical support staff because the job of the Grain Car Corporation of Saskatchewan is simply to make sure that the appropriate lease payments are collected by the Grain Car Corporation from the railways. Every time they use a car, there's a certain amount of rent, lease money that is due to the province.

The Grain Car Corporation also is responsible for the maintenance of that rolling stock to make sure that when the undercarriage needs to be replaced, as has been the case in recent years, that they entered into contracts and in fact were able to replace that rolling stock in a timely fashion. By timely I mean before the bearings seized up, before the rail cars started causing derailments, before it became problematic.

They also, as part of the rejuvenation, was a repainting of many of the railcars. And that was done, interestingly enough, just west of Regina at a plant called GE [General Electric] Rail. And I know a little bit about that operation as well, Mr. Speaker, because my son-in-law worked there for just about two years, certainly well over a year. And I can tell you that it was dirty, dirty work grinding the old paint off and the old rust off and taking the undercarriage off of these cars.

But there was a steady workforce there, and the guys worked really hard and in not the greatest of conditions. But they worked really hard to see that the fleet was effectively maintained. And maintained it was, Mr. Speaker, with the exception of . . . There have been a few of the thousand grain cars that have been removed from service. After wrecks they weren't, after derailments they simply weren't, it wasn't cost-effective to repair them. They weren't salvageable to be put back on the rail tracks and utilized for their original purpose. So those would have been disposed of one way or another, and they're no longer running on the railway tracks.

But we have a very relatively easy operation right now to run the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. You see that the cars, the railcars are paid for as is appropriate, as is covered under the Act. You see that the maintenance is done as is appropriate, and there's no rocket science to this. It's not a case of a grain car needing an oil change every 5000 kilometres or anything nearly as absurd as that. They have very, very limited ongoing maintenance needs, and so it's pretty easy to schedule. And they maintain the record of when a car was painted or when the undercarriage was replaced or when it came into service, and frankly they all came into service in the 1970s. But that's where we're at right now.

And then we get to this Bill 167, the Act to amend *The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Act*, Mr. Speaker. And I've got to tell you, I'm really nervous about this Act. And I've got to tell you why I'm nervous.

I was one of three members on this side of the House that served in the Roy Romanow government when we took over from the Grant Devine Conservative government in 1991. And I remember all too well how difficult those times were. I remember there not being money, and there was reasons for there not being money, Mr. Speaker. And the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation was part of the reason that we had no money — a small part relative to many other things but a part nonetheless. When I say a small part, it was a \$36 million problem, \$36 million the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation cost us in 1991 because we had to write off a bad loan deal.

By way of history on the Grain Car Corporation and how we got to that \$36 million problem, I want to say that in 1991 we got elected and it was the most difficult time of my life to that point, because we didn't have money. Literally we weren't sure

we could meet payroll. We literally did not know if we could meet payroll, and somehow or other managed to keep doing that. And I could tell you some of how that happened, but the fact is it did happen.

And I can recall many times when we were cautioned not to simply speak of how bad things were in Saskatchewan because it would create a crisis of confidence. And we needed confidence. We needed people to know that we were going to work our way through that problem, and that in fact Saskatchewan would see good times again. And the rest of it is history.

1991, Roy Romanow brought in a Donald Gass to do the Gass Commission, and he made a whole series of recommendations, Mr. Speaker, around finances and around how we should be more open and transparent than the previous government had been. And we respected that Gass Commission report. Part of the Gass Commission was a recommendation that a Financial Management Review Commission be set up. And I have in my hands a Financial Management Review Commission, a progress report dated November 10th, 1992. But I want to read just some excerpts of it by way of explaining the Grain Car Corporation and why I have some real concerns with Bill 167, the Act to amend *The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Act*.

[15:15]

To the Financial Management Review Commission of November, the progress report November 10th, 1992, in its introduction it says:

On November 19th, 1991 The Financial Management Review Commission was established. Prompted by the public's desire to know the true financial position of the Province, the Commission opened the books, and on February 18th, 1992 issued its report.

Then, Mr. Speaker, it is . . . I should just be clear. It is a, this progress report of November 10th, 1992 is certainly available through the Legislative Library. It was a publicly released report. It's a 23-page report, and I do not propose to read the 23 pages at all. I'm just trying to keep it germane by way of enough background so that we understand *The Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Act* and the concerns that I have with it. But I have to do a little bit of explanation out of this report.

On page 4, it talked about — in this progress report — it talked about the Crown Investment Corporation's financial condition. And I want to quote two paragraphs with just three bullets in it. It's less than half a page, page 4, of that report:

At the end of 1991 CIC's financial condition was extremely weak. It had an accumulated deficit of \$584 million, \$875 million in non-recoverable investments and over \$3 billion in debt. CIC had no prospect of earning a profit. For the Crown sector policy to be meaningfully administered, the Government had to restore CIC's financial health. There were three components to CIC's restructuring that occurred this spring:

[Bulletin 1.1:] CIC's accumulated deficit of \$584 million was eliminated;

[Bullet 2:] \$875 million of CIC's debt to the Consolidated Fund was converted to equity; and

[Three] the Consolidated Fund will subsidize CIC's 1992 operations with a \$39 million appropriation.

With respect to the role of Crown corporations, the Commission's report states, "*public disclosure is the most important element in ensuring that governments remain accountable to their publics.*" Through its actions to restructure CIC and restore its financial integrity, this Government is demonstrating its fundamental agreement with this position.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I've just outlined a lot of debt.

Now I get to the Grain Car Corporation because this is part of the CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] report. And the Grain Car Corporation . . . Earlier in my speech, I said there was a \$36 million problem in 1991-92 that we had to address, at a time when \$36 million would have been welcome for any other purpose than simply writing off that debt. And recommendation on page . . . Pardon me. I see it's appendix 3, but I want to get the page number. On page 3, recommendation 2-4, and this is even shorter than the previous quote:

The Commission recommends that transactions involving loans, which can only be repaid through future budgetary appropriations by the Government, should be treated as expenditures rather than assets (i.e. loans receivable), in the Government's financial statements.

ACTIONS TAKEN

The Government will implement this change for 1992-93.

[Bullet 2] Loans that fell in this category at March 31, 1992 were written off against the accumulated deficit and included the following:

[Bullet 1] \$713 million [Mr. Speaker, \$713 million], Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation \$182 million, Saskatchewan Water Corporation \$36 million, Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation [\$36 million].

Well, Mr. Speaker, I pointed out I was one of three on our side that were part of that Romanow government, 1991, that had to cut the frills and pay the bills. I was one of three that's still standing in this legislature, that helped in my small way. I credit then Premier Romanow, a great and wise individual, and others. I credit a team effort. And many times in this legislature, I've stood up and I've credited Saskatchewan people who just dug in, knew that we had a problem, knew that we could work our way through it, and they did.

But what we had in 1991-92, Mr. Speaker, was a Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation that had been leveraged, and there were loans that turned out to be unrepayable. You could not charge enough lease or rent on the 1,000 Grain Car Corp. cars to pay for the loans. It's like having a rental house and a house that should rent for — just for nice round figures, this is going to be

a palace — we'll say \$1,000 a month. And then you borrow a half a million dollars against the house and think that the rent is going to somehow pay for the taxes and the upkeep and the interest charges on the house.

And that's what they did, Mr. Speaker. That's what we inherited was a situation where the Grain Car Corporation had an unsustainable debt — as had Property Management Corporation, as had the General Revenue Fund, as had Crown Investments Corporation — more than \$3 billion in debt, a prospect according to the Donald Gass, a prospect of earning money that year, zero, not possible, not possible without fantastically jacking up power and gas rates for Saskatchewan people.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is why I have some concerns about Bill 167, the Act to amend the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. I don't want to see, when the NDP get into power again in Saskatchewan — and we will — I don't want to see us, I don't want to see us inherit debt from the Sask Party that we had to clean up previously. I just will do everything in my power, Mr. Speaker, to see that it does not happen.

I'm trying to provide a bit of background. There are darn few of us that lived through it, and I don't want to start involving individual MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] other than to say, Mr. Speaker, that three of us on this side did live through it. Three of us on this side did live through it. The hon. member for Saskatoon Nutana, myself, and the Leader of the Opposition was there in cabinet in 1991. He certainly saw this firsthand. He certainly saw the mess.

And to have a Grain Car Corporation that is just a turnkey operation . . . I don't mean to denigrate it. It's a nice little operation. They've got close to 1,000 railcars. In my memory, it's four that are written off, but that would be the minimum that are written off because of derailments and the cars were not salvageable. I suspect, I mean if anything, the number is greater than that, but it's a very tiny per cent all these years later of the thousand Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation cars that have been derailed and written off because they couldn't be put back on the tracks.

Mr. Speaker, it's a relatively good operation. It provides a service for, I argue, Saskatchewan producers — grain, oil seed — Saskatchewan commodity producers. It provides a service, and it helps get Saskatchewan product that needs to hit export markets to the ports, in the case of grains and oil seeds, to the terminals. That's what the Grain Car Corporation is good at.

And with a very small support staff — one person in charge and a bit of financial support, I'll describe it that way — they just have to make sure that the lease rent is collected and paid, and that's a fairly straightforward operation because they're dealing with so few payors if I can describe it that way.

It's not like they're dealing with every individual farmer and saying oh you know you used that car to haul your canola or your wheat or your barley or your — you know, whatever — your beans. They don't say we used your car, so you owe us \$10.28 or whatever the lease payment is. They don't do that. The lease payments are paid in lump sums by the railways as they use the cars, not as the cars are sitting but as they're used.

Mr. Speaker, it's a simple operation. It's an operation that more than pays the salary of the people that are charged with operating it. But it's not an operation that lends itself to us again leveraging these cars.

I mean, how many times do we want Saskatchewan taxpayers to buy these 1,000 grain cars? We'll have the Sask Party — by this legislation, Bill 167 — with the ability to enter into agreement with individuals to help them buy our cars, the cars that Saskatchewan taxpayers already own. And then we can enter into agreements with individuals so that we can help them buy the cars that we've already bought, we Saskatchewan taxpayers have already bought. Imagine that. Taxpayers get to buy the grain cars. Then we get to help somebody else buy the grain cars with our money. And at the end of the day, they have the grain cars, and we've paid for the cars twice. What kind of an operation is that?

And worse yet, when New Democrats again form government at some point in the future . . . I'm not predicting when. That's not the purpose of this speech. Campaigns will take place. Voters will have their opportunities. But how is it that when that happens, Mr. Speaker, that we get tagged with again a situation of mounting debt?

We've already got . . . The member for Rosemont has, I think, everyday this session — if there's been an exception I don't recall it — every single day presenting petitions about the growing indebtedness of the Crowns. And that's where the debt is growing. The General Revenue Fund debt is going down. The Crown fund, the Crown corporations' debt going up at a faster rate, Mr. Speaker, than the GRF [General Revenue Fund] debt is going down.

And this is a Treasury Board Crown. The Grain Car Corporation is a Treasury Board Crown. I see the pattern re-emerging. I see it re-emerging, and I'm not liking what I'm seeing. I don't think that my constituents in Regina Coronation Park want to have to buy grain cars a second time, a third time. I mean how many times do we have to write off Tory bad debt? How many times, Mr. Speaker?

[15:30]

And the only thing I can think to say at this particular moment is Bill 167 . . . you read the Bill as proposed. You read the explanatory notes as proposed. You read the old Bill. This is allowing for the borrowing of money against it, and it's allowing to provide means to transfer, sell, or otherwise dispose of rolling stock, plant, and equipment. It allows many of the same things that it allowed before, but there is an important change in that it now allows for the financing and funding of the sale of assets to individuals that was not there in the previous Act, Mr. Speaker.

And further, if we pass Bill 167, what it does is gives some additional ability for a handful of — very few — government MLAs that sit on Treasury Board to say this is what we're going to do and then it's done, does not come back here until well after the fact, well after the fact. We can raise it in question period, or the Sask Party can raise it in question period if they were in opposition, after the fact. But it should not be, we shouldn't be contemplating this, Mr. Speaker.

What we have is 1,000 grain cars. If the government wants to sell 1,000 of the Sask Grain Car Corporation cars to whomever, they should have the courage to stand in the legislature and say we want to sell them, you know, and make their reason, make it their argument for how it is better for Saskatchewan farmers, better for Saskatchewan taxpayers, better for the Saskatchewan treasury, better for . . . Or they can stand here and say, we're going to do it. Why? Because we can. That's acceptable too. Then they're at least facing the scrutiny of the opposition and the public have an opportunity to at least be meaningfully apprised in a meaningful time of the events that are happening, Mr. Speaker.

But what we have here is a Bill that will allow a very few government MLAs . . . No opposition MLAs sit on Treasury Board, Mr. Speaker, not one of us, not one of us. And that's by design. That's the way government works. Treasury Board has a specific function. And I'm arguing that specific function is not to unilaterally dictate the policy on when we can own or not own railcars, when we can help individuals buy the railcars that we already own, when we can finance at whatever terms Treasury Board direct, at whatever terms this can be done.

So who are the friends that are going to wind up owning the grain cars? You know, I say facetiously, I'd like to be on that list. I'd like to own 1,000 grain cars that just turn a nice, tidy little return every year — and if you'll finance the sale of it to me, all the better. It seems to me my risk is the sum of zero. And at the end of the day, I'll just keep cashing the cheques that come my way. And at the end of a longer term, I'll own the cars outright, and then I'll probably sell them back to the government. You know, and I mean it's just . . . I get frustrated at the number of times that the taxpayers are expected to buy things and then to finance the sale of it and then to buy it back when it gets into trouble, all for the greater good.

Government has an obligation to say we don't want the grain cars. We think it's inappropriate that government is in the grain car business. And if that's how they feel, then say so. You know, we can have a philosophical debate. We can have a debate around the practicalities of it, Mr. Speaker. But I think it's incumbent on the government to have the courage to say what it is they want to do with Saskatchewan's Grain Car Corporation in an upfront manner, not in an underhanded way that Bill 167 allows.

It is wrong on every count that this Grain Car Corporation can be set up — set up by a government that should know better, set up for failure, set up to repeat the lesson they should have learned when they were in government last time, Mr. Speaker.

When the Premier was a senior aid to Grant Devine, he should have learned something. He said, I'm sure I heard him say, that he'd learned something. I'm sure I heard him say in the media that he'd learned something of his time in that government when he was a chief of staff, Mr. Speaker. I'm positive that he said I learned some lessons of that time. I learned some lesson of that time. Well all he learned was to be a little sneakier in this instance, Mr. Speaker, with Bill 167.

The things that this does, the \$36 million we had to write off at a time in Saskatchewan's history when . . . there was no time in our history that we could less afford to have to write off \$36

million than in 1991. And that's what we did with the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. We wrote off \$36 million, wrote it off as a bad loan, bad deal by Grant Devine, bad deal, bad deal. And who got left picking up the pieces? The people of the province, the taxpayers of Saskatchewan. And you know, Mr. Speaker, it took not one term and not two terms, but we were well into our third term by the time we had a little bit of breathing room. And I say with the benefit of hindsight, we loosened the purse strings too late.

Actually the Romanow government was like Saskatchewan farmers of 25 years ago. We were a product of the depression like the farmers of 25 years ago were a product of the Depression of the 1930s. The Romanow government in many ways was a product of the '82 to '91 Conservative, Grant Devine Conservative government and the legacy that was left for us to clean up. And so we did not ever want to go there again.

That's why I've spent the time I have dealing with Bill 167, the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation. In a time of revenue that exceeds \$10 billion this year . . . the provincial treasury is getting more than \$10 billion in revenue, and here I am stuck on \$36 million. It seems minute, Mr. Speaker. Thirty-six million dollars seems minute, but I absolutely guarantee that \$36 million would do an awful lot more than a million and a half that the government put into housing, into public housing. Thirty-six million dollars would build an awful lot of houses. Thirty-six million dollars can be used many, many, many ways and all of them better ways than simply paying off bad Tory debt.

Every one of the \$36 million you could, you know, you could throw it out of a car window and it'd be better than simply writing off bad Tory debt. Thirty-six million dollars that we had to write off in 1991-92, Mr. Speaker, and I desperately do not want it to happen again.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate your patience with me. I know it may even seem that I've tried to find new ways to say the same thing. And actually — actually, I am guilty of it. But I am guilty of trying to find new ways to express it because I care so deeply. I care so deeply that we not repeat the historical mistakes that have been made in the past. Any, any operation that does not learn from its history is doomed to repeat those very mistakes.

And I'm trying in my own way, as best I can to say, please don't repeat those mistakes. Please don't refinance the Saskatchewan rail car corporation. Please don't help by financing the purchase of the grain cars to an individual or what have you, that this legislation allows. Don't have taxpayers finance the sale of their own asset and at the same time run up the debt. Don't do that. Don't do that. We own the rail cars. We're collecting the lease payments. It's a nice little operation; it's helping out farmers. It is not hurting. In fact, I could argue it's helping the Saskatchewan treasury in a very small way, but a good way. It's helping in a very small but good way. And it's not costing us \$36 million.

If this legislation goes through, we run the risk of again, at some point again having a huge debt. So, Mr. Speaker, actually on this one, I'm going to urge that the government, you don't

have to withdraw the Bill, but you do control . . . You just don't have to call it up again. You control the agenda. Just don't bring it forward. Let it die on the order paper, and you won't get any complaints from this side. Just let this die and . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You know, Mr. Speaker, I can tell from the heckling, I think my entry fell on deaf ears, and I'm feeling bad about that. But I've said my piece, and thank goodness for our democracy that allows for that.

Thank goodness we have an opportunity to be opposed to bad legislation. Thank goodness we have the opportunity to speak up on behalf of our constituents and the people of Saskatchewan, pointing out the pitfalls of this and potential pitfalls of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I know that I have colleagues that have other things to say on the Saskatchewan Grain Car Corporation Bill 167, so at this time I move to adjourn debate on Bill 167.

The Speaker: — The member from Regina Coronation Park has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 167. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Agreed. Carried.

Bill No. 168

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 168 — *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to weigh in on debate here today specific to Bill No. 168, an Act to amend *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*.

I have just gone through this Bill and done a little bit of research on it and certainly gone back and recognize the statements that were made by the minister, Mr. Speaker. And the purpose of this Bill is simply to clean up a mistake of the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker. It is a housekeeping Bill at that, to clean up for the mistake that was made to not have this done in fact many years prior.

What's interesting, Mr. Speaker, is that this stems from contract negotiations and contract settlement from a few years ago, Mr. Speaker, in October of 2007, and that we see the legislation here before us here today to clean up the mistake. In fact this should have been in by way of legislation at that point of time, in the first term of this government. Now that was overlooked, and that's not the point I'm trying to make. Certainly this cleans up an error of this government, but what's interesting is that we now have this Bill before us to clean up a mistake of legislation that was never provided for three and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker, by this government. And in fact the contract for which this responds to is actually expired at this point in time, Mr. Speaker. So certainly slow to respond and to get this in place,

but sadly, Mr. Speaker, the circumstance is that the contract for which this is a direct response from is actually expired.

And that relates to the teachers' contract, Mr. Speaker, and teachers have been without contract for the better part of this past year, Mr. Speaker. Bargaining not in great . . . The Sask Party government not bargaining in good faith with teachers, Mr. Speaker, and have delayed those negotiations. So it's sad that we are here today speaking about a Bill that cleans up legislation that should have been put in place three and a half years ago instead of having the discussion about a fair contract that should be provided to the fine educators of this province. And this really speaks to the slow response and inaction of this government and the failures of this government as it relates to education, a Sask Party government that has put education on the back burner, Mr. Speaker, evidenced here today in fixing legislation that should have been done three and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker.

[15:45]

Sadly what we're not speaking about here today is a remedy and a response as it relates to adequate and sustainable funding that ensures educational excellence in the province of Saskatchewan because that promise has been broken by the Sask party. And in fact they've now punted the entire funding model and those resources that enable our professionals and enable our education sector and empower our communities and our students, Mr. Speaker, until after the next election — a massive, fumbled process by this government and something that has consequences for education both now and well into the future.

So instead of talking about what the new funding model is and watching and being a proud day to institute that model and enable and empower educators and students across this province, we're speaking about doing housekeeping from an era that should have been taken care of three and half years ago on a contract that's expired now, Mr. Speaker, almost a year.

And it's a sad circumstance that this . . . of the disparities between settlements, Mr. Speaker, as it relates to contracts. Because this is about a contract, Mr. Speaker, and the disparities that one sector can receive a settlement that far exceeds what other sectors are receiving. And we see that here in the treatment of educators this past year, Mr. Speaker.

We see it with health care professionals across this province as well, where individuals and professionals that are vital to the well-being of our province are in fact being offered less than the cost of inflation, Mr. Speaker, can't keep up with the quality of life and expenses that they're incurring, where other sectors get massive increases, Mr. Speaker, in comparison to what teachers have been offered or what health care workers have been offered, Mr. Speaker.

So it's a sad day that we are discussing and a disappointing day that we're talking about legislation that relates to an error from a contract that was negotiated more than three years ago, more than four years ago, Mr. Speaker, settled in October 2007 instead of addressing the needs of today, that being the need for adequate and sustainable funding in our education sector, Mr. Speaker — that's a broken promise of this government — or

the contract that our teachers are deserving, Mr. Speaker, a fair contract that provides for them the quality of life and the respect and dignity that their profession should be treated with, Mr. Speaker. Teachers are vital to the well-being of this province as is education, and teachers are vital to education and the role it plays within this province, Mr. Speaker.

And as we look at other aspects here, it's disappointing that we don't have, don't have this discussion around educational assistants and the support systems required for our diverse needs within our school systems to make sure that we provide an enriching education for all learners, Mr. Speaker, regardless of their abilities, Mr. Speaker, and their backgrounds and the circumstances they come into the school system with, Mr. Speaker.

What we've seen under this government is not only the broken promise as it relates to funding education adequately and not bargaining in good faith with teachers, Mr. Speaker. We've seen both of those things. We've also seen a massive reduction of the number of individuals that serve as educational assistants in this province, Mr. Speaker, EAs [educational assistants]. And by a direct mandate that was provided from this Education minister, Mr. Speaker, under the Sask Party, we've seen that string play out and seen many, many supports that are vital to classrooms, that are vital to students, that are vital to parents, that are vital to communities, Mr. Speaker, being removed from those classrooms.

So it's clear to say, Mr. Speaker, that education's been placed on the back burner by this government, and that doesn't serve Saskatchewan well. And it's clear to say that when we are at the end of a term of this government and they're cleaning up a mistake that was missed three and a half years ago, Mr. Speaker, instead of addressing the priorities of today by way of that adequate and sustainable funding model, by way of ensuring the needs of students are supported in our classrooms, Mr. Speaker, or supporting our teachers, our educators with a fair contract that they so deserve, Mr. Speaker, it's disappointing to recognize that we're spending time today talking about a Bill that's of a housekeeping nature, cleaning up mistakes from the early period of this government.

It's rather astounding that it's taken the entire term for them to come to the realization that this mistake has occurred, but like I say, it's representative of a government that hasn't had education as a . . . not even a top priority, hasn't had it as a priority, Mr. Speaker. And certainly I know many of the members on both sides of the Assembly will have chatted with parents and with teachers that have heard about and that have recognized the consequences of that, Mr. Speaker. We see through this Bill a little bit of the cleanup of those mistakes. We certainly have some more questions that we'll have in committee, Mr. Speaker, and want to do a thorough consultation with the entire education sector.

But again I just share that I'm disappointed that I'm up here today to be talking about a cleaning up of legislation from an error of three years ago, about a contract that's expired, instead of talking about what we're doing to empower and enable the education sector by way of adequate and sustainable funding — a promise broken by this government, Mr. Speaker — that we're not talking about how we're providing all students, Mr.

Speaker, and all classrooms and all parents and all students with the supports they need, when we see a massive reduction of educational assistance and supports, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm disappointed we're not talking about a fair and adequate contract that respects the role of teachers within our province and the important role they play, not only in the needs of today in the lives of those children, but the important role they play from an economic and social perspective to ensure the bright future that Saskatchewan people expect, Mr. Speaker, and to ensure the bright future that Saskatchewan students should be able to count on.

So at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, I don't have further comments with respect to this Bill that cleans up a mistake from three years ago. I will have questions certainly for committee, or we will, I should say. As the opposition New Democrats, we'll continue our consultations on this Bill, Mr. Speaker. And at this point in time I would simply like to adjourn debate on Bill No. 168, *An Act to amend The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 168, *The Teachers Superannuation and Disability Benefits Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 155** — *The Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It is my pleasure to wade into the debate and discussion about Bill 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act*.

When introducing this Bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the minister talked a little bit about the natural resources or the natural environment here in Saskatchewan, our beautiful and pristine lakes, rivers, our native prairies that . . . And we couldn't agree more here on this side of the House that our natural environment is unsurpassed in Canada and perhaps in the world. We have very unique and ranging diversity in our ecosystems here in the province. And I know for myself, I've had the privilege of travelling throughout North America, the United States and Mexico and in Europe and across Canada, and you know, I still say my favourite place is Saskatchewan. I have yet to see . . . I've seen some wonderful and amazing places, but there is no place like Saskatchewan.

Myself, I've got a fondness for northern Saskatchewan. I grew up camping in northern Saskatchewan, travelling. I have a particular love, myself, Mr. Deputy Speaker, for the boreal

forest. I can talk a little bit . . . My own experience canoeing on the William River which flows into Lake Athabasca, that actually if I had to pick any moment in my life travelling throughout Saskatchewan or the world, that this particular experience on the William River, canoeing the William River with a group of about eight others into Lake Athabasca, I've never had an experience like that in my life. And I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that I never will. There's nothing quite like seeing the boreal forest on one side of the river and sand dunes on the other stretching as far as the eye can see. It really is quite amazing.

The environment, our natural environment — and the minister had said this as well — it's key to sustaining our economic growth and, I'd say, enhancing our citizens' prosperity. We think about the natural environment and tourism opportunities, cultural opportunities, our natural heritage. Heritage just isn't about the built environment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's about our languages, our culture, but it's about our natural heritage.

We in fact have two heritage rivers. Well we have one heritage river here in Saskatchewan and . . . The Clearwater River has been designated as a heritage river, and we've got the Churchill River which is nominated as a heritage river. So the environment is absolutely critical to, I think, our culture of life. Maintaining and sustaining a healthy environment is absolutely critical to our quality of life and our way of life here, Mr. Speaker.

One key piece of Bill 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act*, is around . . . It's very much about housekeeping, but there is one piece of this Act which is around the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. The Fish and Wildlife Development Fund, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was established in the mid-1970s when hunters, anglers, and trappers asked the government to put a duty, basically, on hunting and fishing licences. And this money would be used, this revenue would be used to purchase, improve wildlife habitat. So currently right now, there's about 30 per cent of the revenue generated from the sale of hunting, angling, and trapping licences directed into the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. So this amounts to approximately \$3.5 million annually.

I just want to quote actually something that the Minister of Environment said in his remarks:

The Fish and Wildlife Development Fund provides the money necessary to secure habitat to support a diversity of fish and wildlife species. To date the fund has acquired, through purchase or donation, approximately 212,000 acres of land for wildlife habitat purposes, with many acres under joint title with various partners. Aside from the obvious benefits to hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts, it is important to note that much of this land continues to be made available to local communities for haying and grazing.

I think it's a bit ironic, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this time a year ago we were also talking about protected land, that was about 3 million acres that fell under the protection of the wildlife protection Act and through *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* was removed from protection. So it's interesting how the minister touts the importance of the wildlife, the Fish

and Wildlife Development Fund and the role it's played in protecting hundreds of thousands of acres of land, and this is a government who less than a year ago was taking protected land out of that umbrella of protection. So I think that that's a bit ironic, Mr. Speaker.

So just to tell you a little bit about what this Act is going to do with respect to the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. So amendments to section 20 in the Act will broaden the scope of activities that are covered under the fund to include restoration of fish or game populations or habitat necessary for fish or game species. So the amendments to the section also include the addition of two new subsections to allow the fund and the advisory council to contract services that are deemed necessary for the management of the fund. These services would include contracting expertise from groups such as Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, or Ducks Unlimited Canada for management of land within the fund.

I think though, Mr. Speaker, I have to apologize. I'm getting a little bit ahead of myself. Right now I have to say that the Ministry of Environment directs the use of the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund. Right now this is currently what takes place. So the Ministry of Environment directs the use of the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund funding under the advisement of the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund steering committee. And the steering committee is made up of representatives from Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation, Saskatchewan Bowhunters Association, the Saskatchewan fly fishers association, Nature Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Trappers Association, and the Saskatchewan Outfitters Association — all organizations that have done some really great work, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And what happens with these amendments? They're moving from, what is going on is they're moving from a committee, a steering committee and evolving into an advisory, the development of the Fish and Wildlife Development Advisory Council. So what these amendments are doing is turning the previous steering committee into a more entrenched body of the Wildlife Development Advisory Council, which is just fine, Mr. Speaker.

[16:00]

As I said, the organizations that have sat on the steering committee have done stellar work. In fact last year when *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act* was before us, when the government had claimed that they'd consulted with respect to that Act, many of these organizations came forward and said, this isn't the case, that there wasn't real and meaningful consultation. These organizations have done great work and are committed to the biodiversity of this province in protecting our environment, Mr. Speaker.

But what is going to happen now is it's a more . . . this council has a more defined role, shall we say. And I'd like to just outline what the duties of the council are, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So wildlife . . . the natural amendment Act, Bill No. 155, section 20.2 outlines that:

(1) The council shall advise the minister on:

- (a) the allocations and expenditures of the fund, [the acquisition of expenditures of the fund];
- (b) the acquisition of lands pursuant to clause 20(6)(a);
- (c) the administration of lands acquired pursuant to clause 20(6)(a);
- (d) the disposition of lands acquired pursuant to clause 20(6)(a);
- (e) proposed changes to this Act or the regulations with respect to the fund;
- (f) the annual budget and the financial statement of the fund; and
- (g) any other matter determined by the minister.

So the council, this new council has a more entrenched role. And I think a concern that the opposition has is not with the organizations that would be participating on this council, but one concern that we'd just like to flag is the minister had mentioned it's about \$3.5 million that comes, is allotted into this fund annually. And so the scope of this previous steering committee being moved into a council has been broadened. It's not just about the acquisition of land any more, but possibly about projects. And so when you are entrenching a body, it's important to make sure that that body has the necessary funds to be able to do its work well.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I trust that if this fund will need more than the 3.5 million, or approximately 30 per cent that's currently allocated to it, that if the demand is there for, and the need and the demand is there for increased funding, that the government will step up to the plate and ensure that this council has what it needs to protect the biodiversity of our province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I just want to point out again that it is a bit rich coming from a government that a year ago was in fact taking land out of protection. Sensitive lands now are able to be up for sale without having to come before the Legislative Assembly. They can be sold at the minister's behest basically. So that is a concern. But so it's funny, a bit, as I said, ironic that the minister touts the importance of the Fish and Wildlife Development Fund this year, but this time last year, this government was taking protected lands out of protection.

And again I had flagged for you, flagged for you one of our concerns is making sure that the development fund continues to have the money it needs not just to secure and put under protection land but to ensure that if they're embarking upon any projects, that they have what they need to be able to do the necessary work.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that I have many colleagues who would also like to wade into the debate on Bill 155, *The Natural Resources Amendment Act*. And with that, I would like to adjourn debate. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 155, *The*

Natural Resources Amendment Act, 2010. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 164

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 164 — *The Police Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Iwanchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This time I would like to rise and make a few comments on Bill No. 164, *An Act to amend The Police Act, 1990*.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, overall what we find before us here, the minister put forward in his remarks generally amendments here proposed to make some procedural changes, improve fairness, efficiency, transparency, Mr. Deputy Speaker, among the Saskatchewan municipal police service, police boards, and again outlining some of the role of independent observers to internal investigations of the police.

Further there were discussions here about what we would term whistle-blower protection, of officers raising concerns about police chiefs, and some training for police municipal boards, police commissioners, mandatory training. And then there would be also some amendments to provide municipalities with flexibility in choosing their own police provider. This again was a very . . . This is one of the things I will be returning to, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But one of the concerns that or one of the points that jumped out at me as I read through the changes in the Act, wondering who had requested this and why we were moving on this area. There didn't seem to be any notes in the explanatory notes in terms of why we were doing this, who was consulted. But I will get back to that in a bit.

The other things that, just as a general thing in *The Police Act*, was the things that were in it were that the government would, the ministry would pick up some of the costs to the tune of between 55,000 to 85,000 of costs of investigations and other mediation services that would be provided.

Overall, Mr. Deputy Speaker, some things that we see on the face of it that are changes that are simply where there is transparency or providing more fairness. The problem of course comes in as we have had many experiences with the other side in terms of the consultation process is not being followed, to in terms of they not exactly have . . . the Sask Party government there does not exactly have the market cornered on the issue of transparency or consultation. Many different examples of how they have failed to do that in the past.

But again here there was an indication that the police chiefs, there was consultations with the Saskatchewan association of police chiefs, the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers, the Police Commission, municipal boards of police commissions, and Ministry of Justice, and the Attorney

General, that this was talked about. And also that a lot of the investigations would be shared between the Attorney General's office, Minister of Justice, and the minister in charge of, responsible for Corrections and Public Safety. So a lot of the reports would be going back through both these departments or ministries.

Again as I mentioned, the many changes, in terms of a couple changes I wanted to look at and to . . . One was the section 55(1); 55(1) was an added section which talks about:

“. . . an allegation of misconduct by a chief is made to the board by a member, any disclosure of information for the purposes of that allegation does not constitute an offence for which the member may be disciplined pursuant to this Act or the regulations, unless [Mr. Deputy Speaker] it is determined that the allegation is:

(a) trivial, frivolous or vexatious; or

(b) unfounded and made in bad faith”.

Again on the face of it, an addition such as this offering protection to members of the police service when they find that they have to bring things forward . . . interesting enough that it comes under this minister who not exactly a frontier breaker in the area of legislation around whistle-blowers, in fact has, to his credit, probably a sad tale of getting himself into the magazine *The Parliamentarian* being censured for going after, in fact, going after somebody in the corrections department for speaking up. But we will see how section 55(1), in terms of the members being able to bring forward concerns about police chiefs, works.

So this is again one of those times when things are being said, talking about this transparency where they speak of being not only transparent but making things fair and equitable. You would see why, Mr. Deputy Speaker, why we might have some doubts as to their sincerity regarding the changes being made here.

But as I mentioned before, Mr. Deputy Speaker, over all, the changes that were where they were simply saying where the police complaints commission . . . And the role that they play where they're outlining what the police complaints commission will do any time that this process can be made fair, transparent, equal, so there's a sense of justice being done. Things like that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we can most certainly look at favourably from this side of the House and say that these are amendments that we could potentially agree with.

Again going through a number of the changes outlining times within which investigations would be done, in which appointments of investigators by the Attorney General could be done — these are all important things that are in this Act. The entire area of mediation, the recognition that perhaps some issues are best to be mediated and then providing coverage, providing money for this work to move forward is again something that I think that we could look forward to in this.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, again just to return to the financial implications, to outline, to foresee, to look ahead and say that there are some financial implications on this and that we should

be taking that and not putting that cost to municipalities, as they have done in other times, downloading onto rural municipalities or the cities, which is sort of what this government has come to do. Even in times of when we have resources and we have money in the coffers, we find that what is happening is that they're downloading — again, and for what is very surprising for the rural municipalities — and almost downloading where they were having to assess extra levies for services, be they in health care or whether they're services where some of the urban centres are starting up their own rental programs, having to do that before the government moves.

And a lot of times this has been, Mr. Deputy Speaker, three and a half years before this . . . People have been waiting for services out in . . . whether it be rural communities or the cities, and now the government has moved. But in this case where they are providing some financial assistance — be it only 55,000, \$85,000 to provide an orderly process — I think that's important recognition of things that would make the police and the functioning of the police service better. And I would return to some of the details of how that's being done, and as I mentioned previously, whether that be in the mediation services or whether that be hiring the investigators or, again as I said, mediation.

Now the issue regarding . . . which is in fact the first, one of the first things that are in Bill 164, the changes, and that is simply the subsection 23(1) is repealed and the following is substituted in here and that is, if I could, Mr. Deputy Speaker, read that into the record:

“(1) Subject to the approval of Lieutenant Governor in Council, a municipality having a population greater than the minimum size prescribed in the regulations [and that is 20,000 in the regulations, Mr. Deputy Speaker] may enter into an agreement with the Government of Canada to employ and pay for a sufficient number of members to the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to provide policing services within the municipality.”

Now I wondered, when I read that, what in fact was up, why they were attempting to . . . because we are talking in terms of municipalities in that range. We're talking about Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, and some of these places in terms of having service and RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] because they have their local police service.

[16:15]

So what brought this on? There was no discussion about what consultations, why this was needed. Are the cities considering to move to the RCMP? Or perhaps in there is there a huge stick here to beat to the police services, those that have associations in times of bargaining, to say that, you know, maybe we could move to the RCMP and have a contract with the RCMP as opposed to that. I don't know. I would hope that that isn't the case, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I wonder if in fact that is not being used as a bit of a threat since there is nothing here to indicate, even to the police services in Saskatoon, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that they would no longer be needed. I don't know what else to . . . Why the need for this change? What would be the need to say to the police

service in Saskatoon, we no longer will be in need of the police service? We will be looking at the contracting with the RCMP because we've now been allowed to do that in legislation.

And what would the process be? What would the process be to do that and the ramifications? And if we look at that through a lens of how serious the implications of that would be, to even contemplate that, when we look at the number of people that we would be impacting . . . Would you run a dual service? Would you? What would you do? Run a dual service of RCMP and local police? Or simply that you would lay off people because you would say, well we will contract with the RCMP, and that's what we will do under the circumstances.

I know that back in the mid-'90s the police service in Saskatoon were into some difficult negotiations. There was talk at that time of a strike, and fortunately they were able to reach a collective agreement with the city. But I'm not certain what this might mean to the police throughout there. I can only imagine. There's the couple members in the government side who have backgrounds as police officers. More than two, I would say three. And what input they had on this and what the thinking was to put in this Bill the right that the RCMP should take over . . . I mean, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it seems quite clear in the changes, and again here there's been nothing from the minister to say otherwise. It says:

“Subject to the approval of Lieutenant Governor in Council, a municipality having a population greater than the minimum size prescribed in the regulations may enter into an agreement with the Government of Canada to employ and pay for a sufficient number of members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to provide policing services within the municipality.”

Now I wonder what the police associations in places like Prince Albert, places like Saskatoon, places like Regina had to say about that. Maybe the members on the government side who are from there had input on this, and maybe they have some insight, and maybe we should hear from them on what it was that they . . . the thinking was here to do that. What was that that said that we should make this change? What brought this about?

Again here we have again the largest . . . I think it was raised the other day that perhaps it was in Surrey where it has the largest place where the population of 450 to 500,000 people have a contract with the RCMP. Perhaps there was some discussion with the folks in Surrey as to why that was better. And are we looking at that in the province? Are we looking at that and saying this is the way we want to go?

I'm not sure that those police officers in, as I was talking about, the negotiations in the mid-'90s and how they were going at that time would have appreciated had they been told that we could get the RCMP coming in. Again it's a very sensitive kind of area, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to say that one force is better than the other. We have a hugely proud tradition of the police force across this province, and they do important work. They're providing an important service to us all in the province. And to now say to them that we now have legislation that the cities here could look at employing the RCMP . . .

Now I don't know, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Maybe the

government has some insight into this that they haven't shared with us. Perhaps they have their reasons for doing that. There is nothing here in the notes before me, other than the Bill, to say that this was necessary.

They do talk about . . . The minister spoke about meeting with all these different groups, though we will be checking on this because we have to check on them. A number of ministers over there have said time and again that they have consulted, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I don't want to get into the whole list; it's a long list. I think there's more important things to talk about than the work that the members across do or don't do. And there's many examples of the times that there were no consultations on issues that were brought before into the House. And that's unfortunate, but those are the kinds of concerns then when we have something without the explanation where they bring in a change, an amendment, and they say, we will be looking at bringing in the RCMP.

Now there's nothing wrong with the RCMP, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I mean, the RCMP have a proud history not only in this province but across this great nation of ours of providing the policing services that we require. And in through this Act, which is a very . . . What the amendments were to deal with were where things have gone off the rails, where there has been a need for termination, where there has been need for some discipline, that this brings forward the procedures in here and outlined procedures that are transparent and that move the issues forward on the policing in our province and across Canada. And the minister has brought forward ways of dealing with . . . [inaudible] . . . mediation, covering costs, removing some of that burden off the municipality, and saying we're willing to take that on to deal with these issues. These are important things.

But that wasn't enough in this piece, in this amendment, they had to have an add-on, and that add-on is of some consequence. It is not simply something that was talked about in the others to make it transparent, to have investigations, to make the process more efficient. This in fact is a fairly, I dare say, maybe perhaps even dramatic is the right word, the right thing to say, change in the way that things will operate in this province.

How will we look at this? What will we do? Well again as I come back and I ask, they said they spoke to the police services, the associations, I would hope the members of the services. And I would want to see if there was an actual brief or a presentation or a meeting or some notes from this that said to the minister that this was fine.

No, the minister did talk about, in his opening remarks, he did talk about that this was as a result of compromise, I believe he said. This was a result of meeting with these groups and that this is how they came to this.

These amendments to *The Police Act* serve to strengthen the support this government provides to police services. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again here, just to see what the minister was saying in the spring of 2007, he goes on to say they at that time invited members of the police community to consult on amendments to *The Police Act*. In consultations, it looked like he said they were very . . . over a period of time here, over three years, concluding last spring. And again they listed all the

people that they had talked to.

Now there was a consultation and these were either supported, he said, by the stakeholders or considered a reasonable compromise. Now again here, these, what somebody considered a reasonable compromise . . . Were there some issues here that were raised to the minister that . . . At the point in time, I'm not certain who considered that. Is he saying that these people, if we were to go back to them and say that, did you consider this a reasonable compromise, would they say, yes we thought that that was a compromise?

It was a very wide-ranging statement in his opening remarks on this issue. It's an important issue that we should all be concerned about because it's an issue around policing, policing in this province. And then again it's just one statement, nothing more.

There's the section that starts out but all . . . After going through and outlining areas about making points about that it would be faster and ensuring cost isn't a factor in constraining police services. So that again, making the point that the money would be there, that this was all designed to make the process flow in terms of the disciplinary actions that these changes were contemplating, and that this would all flow, a disciplinary process. This would move efficiently and we would not have problems.

And after going through that, spending a great deal of time and balancing public openness, transparency, the public right to know which the member, the government, Sask Party government, seems to be struggling with. Those members seem to be struggling with openness, having contracts made, made open. They want to know under these circumstances what it is that is going on. And I think if that in fact does occur as a result of this, then that is, those are the kinds of things that you will find on this side that we will be agreeing to. We proposed more that we will be putting forward Bills on transparency because we see that day after day in terms of questioning of members opposite, whether it be at the Carlton Trail fiasco, the Enterprise memberships. If you could imagine that, some of the answers today in question period, Mr. Deputy Speaker, around that issue's simply, I would say, shameful that those are the kinds of things that we can't get any answers to.

But again on the transparency and on this Bill, we see there are attempts being made and put in writing. And again there was a very . . . the point that there would be mandatory training for municipal boards and police commissioners to take mandatory training, to have an insight to understand the balance that's required, to understand the openness that's required. And I dare say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that sometimes when it's required that there would be some concern over privacy, and those kind of things would be addressed.

So this is in those kind of things is what we see and laid out well perhaps, well thought out. But then probably after, on the about the fourth paragraph there, one sentence, one sentence on "The amendments will also provide municipalities with [the] flexibility in choosing their own police service provider." Now there was just one sentence which probably is one of the more major issues in these amendments and that takes one sentence in the minister's remarks. No other explanation. No other points

being made in terms of that this is somewhere Saskatchewan wants to go; this is somewhere where some of the municipalities with their own police services want to go. Was this something that the minister had just got up one morning and thought of that he should do? What was the thinking around this? No other further explanation.

Perhaps just like in the proposed amendments. I mean they talk about what the proposed amendments would do, why they would have them, that they would be largely procedural, that they improve fairness, efficiency, transparency among the Saskatchewan municipal police services, and then what they apply to. But nowhere here does it say under where . . . It just says “The amendments will also provide municipalities with flexibility in choosing their own police service provider.” Nothing about that, as the minister said, on the other changes, whether they would be, this is more efficient, there was some difficulties here.

[16:30]

It sends all the wrong messages to the police service that we have. And it would be interesting I guess to see what the councils were saying, that they needed better police service, or where the service was good. This was to be used in certain instances. There’s nothing here to explain what the change is about, and yet the minister spent all the rest of this time talking about all the other things that are in this Bill and why the amendments were necessary for this.

The minister went on and talked about the appointment an investigation observer, the cost that went into a very detailed thing of discipline and oversight costs related to these processes absorbed by the Corrections and Public Safety. Even estimated, even estimated, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the costs — and so there had to have been some thought put to this — the costs of this being that this would be approximately 55 to \$85,000, that this would be 55 to \$85,000. So the minister would have looked at the cost implications relating to the disciplinary hearings and thought like we should probably pay for this. We should pay for this and deal with these things so that people would feel that this was not something else that was put on the municipalities that they would have to deal with.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by reading through the minister’s remarks I think you can see that there was thought put into this. But it is interesting again that in the one part, and I would say a new direction in the Bill, where there is a new direction, we have no explanation of what it is that is going on. And again here it’s just one sentence: “The amendments will also provide municipalities with flexibility in choosing their own police service provider.”

And that’s all we have, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I stand here before you trying to in some way to think through what it is that was intended. Was there some difficulties? Had the municipalities raised this? What was the driving force?

Again because in the rest of the Bill the changes that were made. And they talked about in:

(2) Subsections 38(4) to (6) are repealed and the following substituted [in the beginning of the Bill]:

“(4) A person who receives a public complaint from a member of the public . . .

(a) record the complaint in the form prescribed in the regulations;

(b) transmit the complaint to the PCC . . .

and again then, the procedures for providing the complainant with what the complaints that were made and so forth, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And on the second section, again in terms of creating this sort of transparency or efficiency or having something, a disciplinary process that flows through, it’s quite clear what the police complaints commission should be doing when they go into details of what the police complaints commission should do once they receive a complaint, the procedures that’ll be followed, looking at those things, some thoughts, and perhaps some suggestion from these stakeholders in terms of how they make this process more efficient, more transparent.

Have the public . . . The public needs to have the confidence, the public needs to . . . It’s more than perception. As we say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, perception is everything. Justice must not only be seen to be done but it must be done, and so this says all the right things about transparency, about a procedure that it would be efficient, that everybody would have some faith in.

At the end of the day, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it allows for a satisfactory settlement for people who find themselves in this situation, for police services in this province who have to, who we have to have confidence in, who we have to support, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and move forward.

Now again as well where in particularly section 39 was amended, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there were talks about the police complaints commission establish and maintain records of public complaints received, inform and advise and assist complainants, advise and assist chiefs and boards, the hearing officer, the commission with respect to handling the public complaints. Monitor the handling of public complaints and ensure the public complaints are handled in a manner consistent with the public interest, inspecting annually or at those times directed by the minister records, operations, system administration for the handling of public complaints.

Again, everything here designed to give the public that feeling of confidence that we’re passing through, that the complaints are being dealt with effectively, that the complaints are being dealt with in a manner that we all can understand, that we all can feel good about.

Again, mediation. The very, very . . . The changes here, the mediation that they would be paid for. Mediation services would be paid for regarding a member of the police service. “The board responsible for that police service shall pay [and then] subject to clause (b) . . .” which then says the minister shall pay the mediator and the remuneration determined by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the points here are interesting and fall under the general comments made by the minister in this

case. So, Mr. Speaker, these and the comments by the minister make complete sense. What in fact, what doesn't and what causes the concern is again when we get to the point of amendments, we'll also provide municipalities with the flexibility in choosing their own police service provider. We wonder why the minister did not make other comments on this, make other comments so as to make it clear what the thinking was here.

We can only assume some of the thinking and, Mr. Deputy Speaker, sometimes that is not the best, Mr. Speaker, not the best thing to do because we would like to, as here when there are complaints being processed, that they're being processed based on facts, that they're being processed based on factual things that come before the investigators that are hired, facts that come before the mediation, mediators that are hired in the mediation process. These are all very important issues. And those are the kinds of things that I would say that the police complaints commission, when they deal with that, they deal with it, and their actions, their actions give credibility to the entire process, to the entire disciplinary process.

Again as we move through this, that section 55 was amended and the following subsection is added, subsection 55(1). Now this was again, Mr. Speaker, a very interesting section, and in particular because of the minister that put it forward. As I spoke previously, this was the same minister that made it into *The Parliamentarian*, made it into *The Parliamentarian* for his handling of a release of a dangerous offender and then the following actions that he took in trying to deal with this issue. And it was somewhat, well perhaps we would say, hopefully a learning experience for that minister.

But again now we see where we have a section here which would be, I suppose, somewhat of a whistle-blower section. And if I could, Mr. Speaker, this is talking about:

If [there's] an allegation of misconduct by a chief [and I would think that that's a police chief] is made to the board by a member, any disclosure of information for the purposes of that allegation does not constitute an offence for which the member may be disciplined pursuant to this Act or the regulations, unless it is determined the allegation is:

trivial, frivolous or vexatious; or

unfounded and made in bad faith.

So this again, not only was there some confidence that people would have in the entire process, but they would have confidence in the police services across this province to bring forward complaints.

And perhaps this is, it is oftentimes when you see legislation like this, and you wonder what is going on in the office of the ministry of the Advanced Education minister, when you see so clearly when the reports are made that these members across the way do not listen, do not listen to people, the public bringing forward complaints. They simply dismiss these complaints as being unimportant. And yet every once in a while we have a section like this section which talks about — basically a whistle-blower kind of section — which talks that

people are protected. There's a recognition that you would be protected if you brought forward something that was legitimate because you would . . . that it would be important for members to be able to bring forward issues and that there would be confidence that nothing . . . that there would be no repercussions, no repercussions for people.

Unfortunately the minister that's bringing this forward does not exactly have a stellar record on that issue. But hopefully that when we make laws and we pass laws, that these laws will even withstand ministers like that who perhaps . . . It makes you wonder whether in fact it was something that the minister put forward, or maybe it was somebody else that said that this was time to put this in because, coming from where it is, it's hard to believe that now that . . . Or perhaps it's like going to school, and you write 1,000 times on the board, I will not chew gum in class, or something. Perhaps this is one way of alerting that minister to say that this is an important issue and put it forward and defend this issue because it's important for all of us. It's important for the people of Saskatchewan. It's important for the police services in this province. And that is what we should be looking at, and that is what we should be doing.

So every once in a while, Mr. Speaker, we get this kind of legislation. We get this kind of amended clause where again it is a reasonable kind of a clause. And we could agree with it even though, even though as I said, it's coming from a minister who does not have exactly a stellar record on proposing things that are fair, that are equal, or that people should be protected when they raise concerns because, as we know, that that member went after and asked for an address when somebody raised a concern and asked for a name.

Mr. Speaker, following on that again, and I've mentioned previously issues of mediation, issues that we need to clearly again . . . or one of the points in the amendments that we could support is that another important part in this is that prior to a complaint and completion of investigation, that there might be times when this issue could be sent to mediation, and where mediation can be conducted respecting the allegation of misconduct by a chief, the minister shall pay again for a mediator in these kind of things. So overall, Mr. Speaker, again another section that we can see having great merit in the way it is laid out.

So overall, Mr. Speaker, the issue here is important for people of the province, important as we move forward in this process, important to the people of this province to be able to have faith in their police service system in the province of Saskatchewan here.

Mr. Speaker, section 60 here is repealed and the following is substituted, regarding where what the chief can do in terms of a police member who has been suspended or has rendered himself or herself unsuitable for police service by being found guilty of a Criminal Code or an Act of parliament or any Act, and then list out a number of ways for what police, individual officers may be terminated.

[16:45]

One of the things that, perhaps the question that I wish the minister had spent some time on in answering, and that is an

issue in the section 60 (2)(6) where there is some talk of:

If a collective bargaining agreement provides a procedure for terminating the services of a member for reasons other than those provided in this . . . [agreement], that procedure shall be used for terminating the services of member for the reasons provided in the collective bargaining agreement.

This to me was a question that we needed to deal with. And I was again wondering why, when we spoke of allowing the municipalities the flexibility to choose their own police service, what exactly we were up to here when we mention talking about collective bargaining.

Mr. Speaker, I at this time know that there are more of my colleagues that wish to speak on this Bill and other Bills. And with that, I would be adjourning debate.

The Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Fairview has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 164. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? Carried.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Mr. D'Autremont: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move the House do now adjourn so members can attend the SLIP [Saskatchewan Legislative Internship Program] event tonight.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. This Assembly is adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:47.]

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