



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

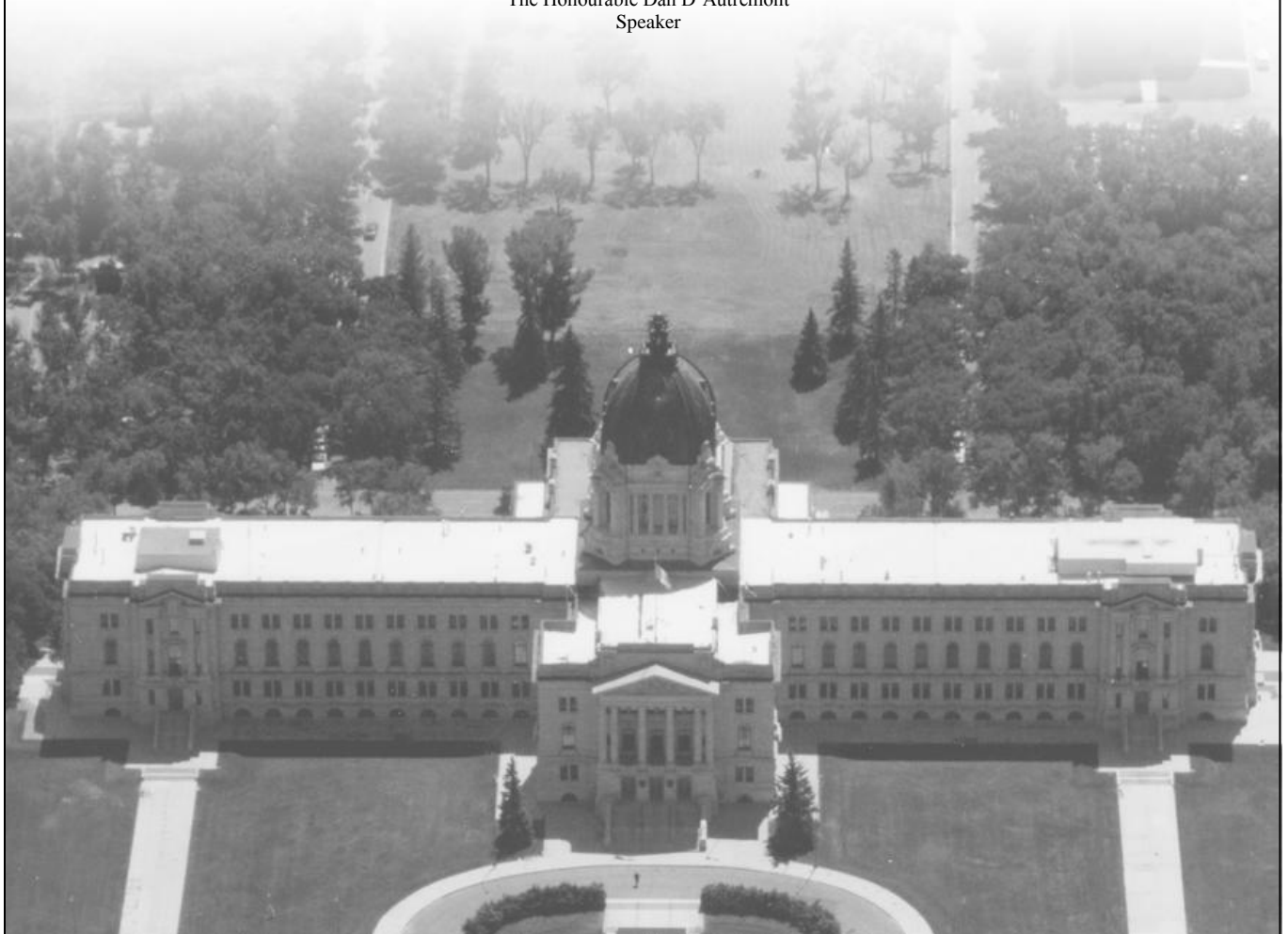
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Dan D'Autremont  
Speaker



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Dan D’Autremont  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — John Nilson

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
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
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Hon. Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Hon. Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, Hon. D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Hon. Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Hon. Laura	SP	Regina Qu’Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Douglas Park.

**Mr. Marchuk:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce 16 members of the University of Regina cheer team that are here in the House today. The U of R [University of Regina] cheer team recently won gold in the collegiate coed division at the Sea to Sky International Cheerleading and Dance Competition in Vancouver, yet another significant achievement for this program and for the University of Regina and of course for Saskatchewan.

I'd also like to congratulate Kristen Slinn and Jenna Jelinski on their selection to Team Canada's cheerleading squad. This is the first time that students from the University of Regina have been selected to the national cheerleading team. Kristen and Jenna will be heading to the national training centre in Mississauga, Ontario to begin their training for participation in the ICU [International Cheer Union] World Championships which will be held later this month. Kristen and Jenna, where are you? Congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate the entire cheerleading team, accompanied by their coach, Tom Rath, and athletic coordinator, John Papandreos, on their accomplishments, and I ask the members of the Assembly to join.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I would like to also participate in this introduction on behalf of myself and all members of the opposition in the legislature, but I think especially you, Mr. Speaker, as well, given that we both, Mr. Speaker and I both had children playing volleyball at the University of Regina. And we were pleased a number of times to have the cheerleading squad participate around some of the volleyball events.

But I want to specially congratulate you as a team on your gold medal in Vancouver, and congratulations to Jenna Jelinski and Kristen Slinn for your special role as ambassadors of Saskatchewan as you participate on the national team. I also want to congratulate Thomas Rath. I had many cases against his father in court, and I'm happy to hear that he's on the basketball and volleyball court with his cheerleaders rather than in the courts with his father. And most especially I want to say welcome to John Papandreos who is the athletic coordinator. He's somebody that I've, I guess, known his whole life. And his mother worked with me at MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman. His father was a very able painter who worked on our house for many . . . a long time, and John and his family have been important people in our family over the years. So it's a real pleasure to welcome the whole team and bring these special

greetings, and especially to you, John.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — With leave to make an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of this House, I would like to introduce Reagan Seidler who has been . . . He spent, I guess, since January with me. He is one of the interns in the Saskatchewan legislative internship program. And we wrap up here together, I think, at the end of the week before he moves on to join the Sask Party and the governing caucus. But I'd just like to say a few things about Reagan.

Reagan is from Regina and he studied at Campbell Collegiate in the International Baccalaureate program. Some of his . . . I'd have to add too that his CV [curriculum vitae] is more full than many people twice his age. He's really quite a remarkable young man. In 2008 he won the provincials in debating and then had the opportunity to represent Saskatchewan at the CanWest national public speaking tournament. In that year he was also awarded the top Crown Prosecutor Award at the Court of Queen's Bench mock trials. He was the leader of the opposition that same year at the model legislature. He was recognized by the Saskatchewan Elocution and Debate Association as the youth volunteer of that year.

He also has an extensive background in music, Mr. Speaker. While attending Campbell, he was the VP [vice-president] of the award-winning chamber choir. He was a tenor section leader in the beginner concert choir and a member of the school's jazz choir, the Classics. He began teaching piano and voice professionally in high school at the Long & McQuade Academy of Music. And then he came to Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker, and attended the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], and he continued to teach piano . . . or teach as a volunteer for the Heart of the City program. He is a U of S student at St. Thomas More right now, completing a Bachelor of Arts with a major in econ and minor in political studies. And among his academic honours, it includes the Roy E. Lloyd Scholarship in economics, the Knights of Columbus Leadership Award. He has been on the dean's list and twice published in student liberal arts journal *In Media Res*.

He's also been involved in student politics, Mr. Speaker. He recently finished a term as the president of the St. Thomas More Students' Union where he enacted widespread change including a constitutional division of powers and the development of the student union's first strategic plan.

For me, my experience with Reagan has been, as my intern he's . . . I was new to having an intern. There has been never an

opportunity in my life where I've had a chance to have a mentee or an intern and so I wasn't quite sure how this was all going to work. So my goal was to help him understand Saskatoon Riversdale and some of the challenges our community faces — and many communities in Saskatchewan — but also to see some of the strengths that many community organizations and individuals have.

And so Reagan's put up with me and we've talked about everything and everything, and he's tackled every task, whether it's been helping make bannock and soup at St. Mary School or attending meetings, or actually last week we had an opportunity to do a ride-along with the Saskatoon Fire and Protective Services.

Reagan sees absolutely everything as a learning opportunity, and the good thing for Reagan, he's very able to change gears quickly. So I might have had him on one task one minute and the next moment we're on to something else, and that's the nature of the job. And he was very willing and eager to go with the flow, Mr. Speaker.

And the one thing I have to confess: I'm not really a linear thinker. I tend to be a bit all over the map. But Reagan was always eager and willing to put up with me being all over the place and eventually getting to the place where we needed to be. So I will really miss Reagan and I know the Sask Party member who will have the opportunity to work with Reagan will fully enjoy their time, his time with Reagan in the next few months. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to welcome Mr. Reagan Seidler to his Legislative Assembly.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater protection for late-night retail workers by passing Jimmy's law. And we know that in the early morning hours of June 20th, 2011, Jimmy Ray Wiebe was shot two times and died from his injuries. He was working at a gas station in Yorkton, alone and unprotected from intruders.

We know that there are positive stats that show convenience store and gas station robberies are down by a third since 1999, largely due to increased safety practices including two people working together on late-night shifts. And other provinces such as British Columbia have brought in several safety precautions, including working behind protective barriers like locked doors and protective glass.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately enact Bill 601, Jimmy's law, to ensure greater safety for retail workers who work late-night hours.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from the city of Saskatoon. I do so present. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm also pleased to stand up and present a petition today. Mr. Speaker, the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the provincial government to recognize that the people of Saskatchewan deserve the very best in protection services as it relates to forest fire policy; and in so doing cause the provincial government to immediately implement a full review of the Saskatchewan wildfire management policy, as it has been years since this program was last assessed.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that presented this petition are from La Ronge and Regina. I so present.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to present a petition to this legislature about stopping the increase of the number of politicians in Saskatchewan and making sure that young people are included when constituency boundaries are created. So the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to not increase the number of politicians in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly and to continue including those individuals under the age of 18 in the determination of constituency boundaries.

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

And this is signed by people from Saskatoon. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to education in our province. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to make education a top priority by establishing a long-term vision and plan, with resources, that is responsive to the opportunities and challenges in providing the best quality education and that reflects Saskatchewan's demographic and population changes; that is based on proven educational best practices, that is developed through consultation with the education sector, and that recognizes the importance of educational excellence to the social and economic well-being of our province and students for today and for our future.

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

These petitions today are signed by good folks of Weyburn, Kiseby, and Regina. I so submit.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition on behalf of seniors in the province who are calling on the Sask Party government to support the Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan, wish to bring to your attention the following: that many Saskatchewan seniors live on fixed incomes and are victims of physical, emotional, and financial abuse; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to social and economic security and a right to live free from poverty; that Saskatchewan seniors have a right to protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights which would provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government Services.

#### 2012 Paragon Awards

**Hon. Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On April 5th I had the honour of attending the 13th annual Regina & District Chamber of Commerce Paragon Awards. It was a fantastic evening to celebrate greatness and achievement in our business community.

This year the 2012 Business of the Year was awarded to a business located in the constituency of Regina Qu'Appelle Valley. The 2012 Business of the Year is Brandt Industries. Now we should not be surprised by Brandt's achievement at the Paragon Awards. It was only last December that Brandt achieved a milestone of \$1 billion in annual revenue. This is an accomplishment rarely achieved by Canadian companies.

Brandt Industries is among an elite group of platinum members of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies program. Brandt Industries has continued to grow and move forward in global economic hard times. Brandt is one of Canada's largest privately owned companies under the leadership of Mr. Gavin Semple. They have become a global industry leader. Companies like these will assist our government in keeping the Saskatchewan advantage.

I would ask all members to join with me to congratulate all the Paragon Award winners.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Hampton Village Easter Extravaganza

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, on Saturday my daughter and I had the pleasure of attending the Hampton Village Easter Extravaganza, which was organized by the Hampton Village Community Association in my constituency. It was great to see hundreds of community members out at the event, enjoying the pancake breakfast, the Easter egg hunt, and a whole range of children's activities. I want to congratulate the community association on organizing such a successful event and thank them for all the work they do to bring community members together and to advocate for their community.

As all members of this Assembly will know, I have been continually pushing for a school to be built in this rapidly growing community so that the children of Hampton Village can go to school in their own community rather than going to already packed schools in other neighbourhoods. Judging from the number of babies and young children at Saturday's event, the need for a school in this community is continuing to grow substantially. All that is needed to proceed with a school is for the Sask Party government to commit the necessary resources. So once again I'm calling on the government to do just that. And hopefully the Easter Extravaganza can soon be held at the Hampton Village school instead of the Dundonald School. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

#### New Moose Jaw Hospital

**Mr. Lawrence:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Friday I, along with the member for Moose Jaw North and the Minister of Health, had the privilege of attending the official unveiling of the location of the new Moose Jaw hospital.

The new \$100 million facility will be located along the Trans-Canada Highway in Moose Jaw's north end, next to the Western Development Museum. The announcement of the location for the new hospital moves the project one step, one more step towards a new state-of-the-art facility to serve the health needs of Moose Jaw and the surrounding area.

This new facility will have 74 beds and 58 flexible spaces for procedures. It will use lean methodology and a cellular design which allows for a very flexible use of space. The design and project management approach of the new hospital is aimed at providing a patient-first facility with the space being easily converted to accommodate patients' complex needs and minimize the need to move patients from place to place.

Mr. Speaker, our health system is undergoing a profound transformation, involving all of our health partners. Along with the strong support of our government, the leaders in Saskatchewan's health system are making improvements in how health services are delivered to better serve patients.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in congratulating the city of Moose Jaw and the Five Hills Health Region for their tremendous work on making the new Moose

Jaw hospital a reality. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Ehrlo Outdoor Hockey League**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, although this winter's weather was far from traditional, I'm pleased to announce that the great Canadian tradition of outdoor hockey was very much alive in our city this past season. The Outdoor Hockey League, also known as the OHL, is a very successful program run by Ehrlo Sport Venture. This program removes barriers to hockey for children by providing it at no cost and at local rinks. I've had the pleasure of being a coach and I've witnessed first-hand the value of accessible sport to children.

This year over 250 children participated in the OHL, and not only in Regina as the program has grown to include Saskatoon and Prince Albert as well. In Regina Rosemont, I want to acknowledge the devoted volunteer coaches who stepped up this year, specifically Josiah Jordan, head coach, as well as Shannon Cattell, Hailey McCrystal, Stephen Kenney, Mark Piccair, and Mike Kalika.

It was a fantastic season, concluding with a wrap-up tournament where fun was had by all. I want to thank the league director, Laura Logan, Ehrlo Sport Venture, and its donors — RBC [Royal Bank of Canada] and KidSport. Together we look forward to next year when the league celebrates its 20th season supporting children and youth in our province. I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me to recognize and to thank all that make the Outdoor Hockey League such a meaningful program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Yorkton.

#### **TheatreFest in Yorkton**

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saturday night I had the pleasure of attending, along with my wife, the 78th annual TheatreFest celebration hosted this year in Yorkton by the Yorkton Paper Bag Players. Seventy-eight years, Mr. Speaker, that's an amazing achievement. It's an example of commitment, determination, and the Saskatchewan spirit.

Yorkton is incredibly rich in culture, making it and the Sacred Heart High School theatre the perfect stage for this year's events. It was great to see the passion that the organizers, volunteers, theatre groups, and audiences have for community-based theatre. Mr. Speaker, community-based theatre brings culture into our lives and exposure to the arts. This contributes to making Saskatchewan a better place to live.

Cultural events bring revenue into our communities, and the economic spinoffs support local businesses, organizations, and community projects. Participation in cultural activities inspires community involvement and pride. It shapes our identity and the way others see Saskatchewan. Our government is committed to fostering artistic excellence, creative expression, and access to arts for all people in Saskatchewan. I would like members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating all the groups and individuals who not only won, but were nominated for awards at Saturday's TheatreFest 2012. It's an incredible

achievement and shows the commitment, determination, and talent of community theatre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Recognition of Police Services in Regina**

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today and recognize the great service provided by the members of our Regina Police Service. I had recently had the privilege of joining a city of Regina police officer on a ride-long. We left the city police station at 4 p.m. on Friday, March 30th, and our shift concluded at 4 a.m. the following morning. Accompanying the officers gave me the opportunity to not only experience what it is like to carry out the task of a police officer, but this first-hand experience showed me the types of struggles and difficult scenarios our police and city citizens face every day.

Mr. Speaker, we responded to several calls that showed me the dangerous side of their duties, from a possible gun sighting to a large party where several fights broke out and local residents called in with concerns. I was in awe with the professionalism and calmness under fire that our local officers showed when handling these calls.

Mr. Speaker, the near fatal stabbing late Sunday night of a Toronto city police officer demonstrates the risk that officers undertake every time they put on their uniforms and badges and help to serve the public. I would encourage all members of this Assembly to join me in applauding the great work of our police forces nationwide and especially here at home, and thank the officer who provided me with a very insightful ride-along experience. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Remembering Archbishop Michael Bzdel**

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as we commenced our Easter break last week, the sad news arrived of the passing of Archbishop Michael Bzdel, Ukrainian Catholic Archbishop Emeritus of Winnipeg and Metropolitan for Ukrainian Catholics in Canada.

Father Michael was born in Wishart, Saskatchewan and was the 11th child of 14 children of the late Theodore and Eudokia Bzdel. Following his primary schooling in Wishart, he attended St. Vladimir's College in Roblin for his secondary education. Following further studies, he was ordained to the priesthood on July 7th, 1954, at St. Mary's Church, Yorkton, by Bishop Andrew Roborecky. His pastoral ministry would include the parishes of Yorkton, Ituna, Roblin, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, and finally back to Yorkton in the mid-1980s.

On March 9th, 1993, Father Michael was ordained as Archbishop of Winnipeg and Metropolitan of Ukrainian Catholics in Canada, a position he held until his retirement in January 2006. As Metropolitan, he was a member of the Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, served on various CCCB committees and participated in the ninth Ordinary Papal Synod of Bishops in Rome.

On behalf of my wife, Gail, my colleagues in the Government of Saskatchewan, and my colleagues here in the Chamber, I extend our sincere condolences to his family, friends, and the Ukrainian Catholic Church of Canada on the passing of this remarkable man of God. At this time of Pascha, may the promise of the risen Christ be a comfort to all who grieve. Memory eternal.

[The hon. member spoke a phrase in Ukrainian.]

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Electoral Representation

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his caucus have had time now after they've returned from Easter break, and during this time they had a chance to listen to their constituents talk about spending millions of dollars to add three more politicians to this legislature. Our caucus heard from people who thought the government shouldn't be forcing seniors to spend more money on health care just so the Premier could add more politicians.

Can the Premier tell us if he or any of the government MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] heard from anyone, other than themselves, who said it is better to spend millions on more politicians rather than on seniors and families?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The goal of the redistribution exercise, and it's mandated in our legislation, is to ensure that we have as close to equal number of constituents and voters in our constituencies as possible. We've had a variety of numbers that we have had over the past four . . . number of people that we've had in the legislature. In the 1975 and '78 elections, we had 61 MLAs. In 1982 it was 64. In '86 it was 66. So it has gone up and it has gone down.

We think this is a fair, reasonable, and proportionate approach to this. There are now at the present time some significant variations between the constituencies in our province. We are going to go through the process to try and equalize this. We have a boundaries commission process that is in the early stages, and we look forward to that process to ensure that we are able to rebalance and equalize and do what is necessary to give the voters an ultimately very democratic process, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I saw the Premier shaking his head no, that he hadn't heard from anybody, even though the minister didn't answer my question.

So even though we were away from this building, the issue was still being talked about in the media. One member of the press gallery called the plan to add three more MLAs the "stupidest" decision the Sask Party government has made. In fact the only voice in the paper last week supporting the idea of adding three

MLAs was that of the member from Cypress Hills who wrote a letter titled "More MLAs Needed." That's not what Saskatchewan people are saying. Why is this Premier pushing forward on spending millions for more MLAs if there's no support for it outside of his own office?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, we take strong exception to the issue of the additional cost. There's an additional cost of \$225,000 per MLA. However, Mr. Speaker, this is a government that has taken great steps to reduce costs already on the cost of government. We have reduced the cost of communications by \$5 million per year, over three and a half million dollars per year on cabinet minister travel. Mr. Speaker, that's a far cry from the amount of money that was spent by the members opposite when they were in government.

Mr. Speaker, this is a government that takes costs and expenditures very seriously. We want to ensure that we will deliver to the voters of this province good value for the money that is spent on MLAs. We want our MLAs to be accessible to the members of their constituency and so that they do not have to travel excessive distances. We know that in the far North we make a statutory exception so that the two members from the far North do not have to have members that travel too far. We will continue to follow that practice, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — The Premier has even admitted that instead of hearing that people want more politicians, his own supporters have said that they are against it. Even one of his own ministers, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, said last week in committee "We never campaigned on more MLAs. We never talked about that."

Will the Premier admit that this is an unnecessary expense that no one wants and immediately revoke the plan to add more politicians?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, at the time of the last election, the constituency of Cumberland had 8,726 eligible voters. The constituency of Athabasca had 6,511, in spite of the fact that the member from Athabasca wanted one day to increase the number and was very supportive of that. My own constituency of Saskatoon Southeast had at the last election 16,343 voters.

I want to be able to look those people in the eye at the time of the next election and say to them, I wanted to ensure that I took every step to see that your vote counted just as much for somebody in the North, somebody else elsewhere in the province, and to do what is right to ensure that we have a democratic and fair process. Saskatoon Centre in the city of Saskatoon — and I see the member over there nodding — had just over 7,000 voters. His voters are not worth twice as much as the voters of Saskatoon Southeast, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Minimum Wage Rate

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Minister of Justice said the following, and I quote, “The cost of everything has gone up. Housing, fuel, everything else has gone up in the last little while.”

Well, Mr. Speaker, people receiving the minimum wage also have to deal with those cost-of-living increases, but for them the minimum wage is not going up at all. To the Minister of Justice: can he have a talk with the Minister of Labour about the importance of cost-of-living increases for minimum wage workers?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for the question. And when the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Labour do have a conversation, I can assure you it's a very intellectual, fulfilling conversation and usually not a great deal of argument.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to tell the member opposite that we have, over the term of our government in the last term, increased minimum wage several times. It has gone up far more on a percentage basis during the time of government of the Saskatchewan Party than it did under the NDP [New Democratic Party]. A year ago we increased the minimum wage to \$9.50 an hour and, Mr. Speaker, the Minimum Wage Board continues to sit and may well be making a recommendation again in the future. It has, during the term of our government, gone up well in excess of the cost of living, and we will ensure to take every step to ensure that the minimum wage earners, or lower income earners, take every step . . . We have removed over 100,000 people from the tax roles by virtue of changing the tax laws in our province, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Well I'm glad the ministers do have these conversations, but they seem to miss the key point, the cost-of-living increases. And that's what the report a year ago, a year ago, suggested. Its number one recommendation was that minimum wage rate be tied to the consumer price index. At the time the minister said the government was interested in indexing the minimum wage to the CPI [consumer price index] and would consider the board's recommendation. It's been now over a year and this government still has not followed through on the report. Why is this minister refusing to implement the key recommendation of the report and tie minimum wage to the inflation rate?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, in January of 2012 the average weekly earnings were \$907.44, the highest earnings on record. They're up 2.7 per cent from a year ago. Mr. Speaker,

we have the second lowest number of employment insurance claimants on a per capita basis at 1.2 per cent. We have done an incredible amount, Mr. Speaker, for low-income Saskatchewan residents. We have taken 114,000 people off of the tax rolls. We have increased minimum wage by a significant amount, Mr. Speaker. We will continue with that process. We will continue with the recommendations.

At the present time, Mr. Speaker, the minimum wage in our province is going up faster than the average cost of living. And, Mr. Speaker, we will continue to work with the Minimum Wage Board, and we will continue to ensure that the low-income workers in our province are well cared for.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, this is the record of the Saskatchewan Party government. It has got the third lowest minimum wage of anywhere in Canada.

Now we know indexing the minimum wage would not skyrocket our rate. In fact if Saskatchewan did increase the wage by 2.8 per cent, the current CPI, it would still be lower than most provinces, at nine seventy-seven. Indexing allows people making minimum wage to at least keep up with the rising costs of food and transportation. Will this minister now pledge this session to either introduce new legislation or change the regulations to annually index the minimum wage to CPI?

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, there's nine people left over there of a government that had 16 years to index minimum wage and did not do it, did not look at it, did not talk about it. Mr. Speaker, under this government, minimum wage has gone up over 20 per cent during the first four years of our government. And this government is looking at it again because we want to ensure that low-income people in our province get the respect and the dignity that they are entitled to.

We've doubled the low-income tax credit. We've removed 114,000 people. We've increased funding for housing programs for 45 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we've increased shelter rates. We've increased the number of affordable housing units. We've taken a great deal of steps to ensure that working people at the lower end of the income scale are well-treated and get adequately compensated for the work and the contributions that they make to our economy, Mr. Speaker — a lot better than the members over there did.

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

### Plans for Highways Ministry

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Sixteen years in power, 14 of those years cleaning up a mess, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, last year on May 3rd, 2011 in the highways committee, questions were specifically asked about phasing out of engineering services within Highways. When asked about phasing out engineering staffing within the ministry, the



minister responded with a simple no. We now know that is not the case, Mr. Speaker.

To the minister: why was your answer contrary to reports in the news last week regarding the further privatization of Saskatchewan's Highways Department and its work?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the core services in the Ministry of Highways, the people you saw pothole filling last summer, you'll see pothole filling this coming summer. The people that you saw just this past winter plowing snow will be plowing snow next year.

Mr. Speaker, as far as engineering services, for many years construction has been done, the engineering part of construction has been contracted out, including by the members opposite, Mr. Speaker. The big difference, Mr. Speaker, between this government and the members opposite when they were in government, Mr. Speaker, is that now we're actually doing road construction.

Mr. Speaker, under the members opposite, people were used to slowing down for potholes. There's still a lot of work to do, Mr. Speaker, but under this government people are also getting used to slowing down for construction signs, orange zones, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, since taking office this government has increasingly contracted out highways engineering work, a move that will result in eventual closure of labs here in the city and also in Saskatoon. These two labs employed a total of 35 full-time design engineers in 2007. In 2012 that number is expected to be down to 15, Mr. Speaker. Departmental representatives have said publicly that highways lab closures are not a possibility, Mr. Speaker; instead, they are a certainty.

Again, will the minister be straight with the people of Saskatchewan? Does the government plan to close the Regina and Saskatoon highway labs and continue the privatization agenda that affects Saskatchewan highways?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, in many cases the lab work that's done by engineers during construction has been done also by consultants who have lab trailers on sites. Mr. Speaker, we're going to make sure that we're not duplicating work. In many of those instances, if the consultants are already doing lab work, we won't continue. In any case, whether it's lab employees or consulting engineers, Mr. Speaker, when any positions that haven't been refilled, it's all been by attrition. Mr. Speaker, we have compassion for our employees. As much as possible, we'll continue to do it that way.

Mr. Speaker, the big difference again between the members opposite and this government is the amount of money that

we've actually spent on road construction. Mr. Speaker, when we campaigned in 2007 and we said we'd spend \$1.8 billion on highway work, those members opposite, including the member opposite asking the question, laughed at that. We far exceeded that commitment, Mr. Speaker. Highways are a priority and they'll continue to be a priority.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister says one thing but the government actions are another. He needs to focus on the question. Mr. Speaker, a history lesson reminds us, cuts made by the previous Conservative government in 1983 terminated 157 workers from Highways. The following year another 237 more were fired. When the Saskatchewan Party government took office in 2007, provincial in-house design, construction and lab services involved 238 full-time equivalent jobs, Mr. Speaker. The plan for 2012 is to have 112 FTEs [full-time equivalent] in these same areas, which is a reduction of 120 jobs within the Department of Highways.

Will the minister set aside his ideology and instead of spending the same or more money privatizing highway jobs, will he use common sense to maintain the existing highways labour force and represent the people of Saskatchewan fairly?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, this government is using common sense by making highways a priority for this government, something that those members opposite never did. Mr. Speaker, I was with the Premier during the campaign last fall in Yorkton when we committed to spending \$2.2 billion on highways over the next four years. Mr. Speaker, I think that shows our commitment and how important highways are to this province.

Mr. Speaker, I noticed the member opposite is reading from the story that would be from the *Leader Post* last week, front page story about this issue. But what he's neglected to read, Mr. Speaker, is that it also said this whole issue of using consulting engineers more started in 1997 under the Roy Romanow NDP government, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister loves to point towards the government spending on the highways, but more money does not necessarily mean improved safety or quality of our highways.

Mr. Speaker, the people of this province will eventually be forced, we believe, to pay more through their taxes for roads which will be less safer, and of course more difficult to ensure quality control when you don't have staff to ensure that. The costs and other impacts of outsourcing this work to external contractors are escalating, Mr. Speaker.

Has the minister done a thorough investigation to determine whether his quest, their quest for privatization is worth the extra costs the government will be paying for this privatization? If the minister has not done an investigation, is he prepared to do that

today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this government's always looking for efficiencies. In Highways we're always looking for more efficient ways to do things. Mr. Speaker, as far as the engineering side of it, using consultants has shown to be an efficient use. We're using them as needed. Mr. Speaker, that's part of an overall growing engineering sector in this province. APEGS [Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Saskatchewan], the Association of Professional Engineers, says that their membership has skyrocketed during the last few years.

Mr. Speaker, highways is a priority. We're always looking for ways to be efficient. And, Mr. Speaker, unlike the members opposite, highways will continue to be a priority for this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that the people of Saskatchewan know that this government has really drastically cut a lot of Highways positions. And I go back to the earlier statement of having 238 full-time equivalent jobs in this particular department. And, Mr. Speaker, for 2012 there's going to be a reduction of 120 jobs.

No question, Mr. Speaker, that we're asking the question, based on the value for dollars, will the minister commit today to ask in doing a provincial audit to ensure that his quest for privatization is going to be a lot more money, a lot more cost to the people of Saskatchewan and that's why he's prepared not to do it. Again I ask the minister today: will you do a value for money audit versus your privatization agenda versus the great work that's being done by the Highways workers throughout the province of Saskatchewan? Will the minister commit to that?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, there's a number of things wrong with the member's opposite line of questioning. First of all, his comments about consulting engineers: is he suggesting that private consulting engineers somehow are not safe, that they don't somehow do an appropriate job? That's what he's alluding to, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as far as value for money, Mr. Speaker, every day in Highways we look for more efficient ways of doing things. Mr. Speaker, unlike when the members opposite were in power, there is a vibrant, growing engineering sector in this province, Mr. Speaker. We're supporting that. We're going to continue to use them as appropriate. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, where it's appropriate, there will be engineers in the ministry for oversight.

Mr. Speaker, we will continue our good work on highways. We've come a long way. We've got a lot of work left to do. But, Mr. Speaker, people of this province are not going to go back to those days. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Community Pastures

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, the effects of the federal budget cuts are hitting Saskatchewan's agriculture sector hard. There could be up to 300 job losses in Saskatchewan as a result of the dismantling of the community pastures. This program, according to a 2006 study, provides a benefit of \$37 million to the public.

It's now been three weeks since the federal budget. My question to the minister: can he tell Saskatchewan producers how many jobs will be lost in the agriculture sector, what the local economic impacts will be, and what other programs will be affected?

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

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Well, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank the member for a question. Mr. Speaker, as the member knows and as the federal budget put out, that there will be a number of community pastures — I believe 60 community pastures that were under federal jurisdiction — that will be passed over to the province. What I can commit to today, that in my conversations with the federal minister this morning, is that this will be done. This year there will be no effect to the community pastures across the province. Next year there will be five community pastures that will be closed down and transitioned to the province, and in 2014 another five, and then over the five-year period, the entire project will happen. This is also, by the way, Mr. Speaker, happening in the province of Manitoba.

What we have committed to with the federal minister is to work with the patrons right across the province of Saskatchewan and ranchers and farmers right across the province to make this transition as smooth as possible and find ways that producers can actually either have ownership or leases through this land and still continue to utilize it.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand from officials at the Department of Agriculture that already over 400 employees in the program have received notices that their positions are affected. So that's quite a large number of employees that are already being impacted by this decision.

As the minister indicated, there are more than 60 federal community pastures. And as a result of the termination of this program, the pastures will be turned back to the province. This will almost double the number of community pastures currently operated by the province. The minister said publicly he's unsure of whether the province would continue to operate the pastures or sell some of them. And he does know that once they revert, it will nearly double his ministry's workload. His own director has told the media that he is in panic mode.

Many cattle producers use community pastures because they don't have enough pasture of their own. The pastures are a

critical part of their economic success. Around 3,100 producers use the pastures, and they graze over 220,000 head of livestock and they use over 300 bulls in the pasture breeding program. To the minister: if the government sells some of these pastures to private individuals, what is the plan to ensure that all producers that were accessing community pasture lands will still have a place to pasture their cattle?

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that we have also spoken to the stock growers and the Saskatchewan cattle association and producers right across this province, but especially to the patrons that utilize the community pastures. Mr. Speaker, I don't think this is new to the patrons out there. I think they had a feeling for the last year or so that these pastures may be passed on to them from the federal government. I think the concern is that the land is still utilized for pastures by those patrons, and they will be the first to have the opportunity to keep those pastures and continue.

I think we have an opportunity right now with the livestock sector doing so well in the province of Saskatchewan, and for that matter right across Western Canada, that it's an opportune time for the producers to either purchase this land or lease this land. But I think for many of the producers out there, the thing is that they want to be involved in the process and have the opportunity to continue to utilize this land while at the same time increasing the number of cattle that we raise in this province.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It does give me some optimism that the minister's prepared to speak with producers because I think that's critical to this process.

The establishment of the community pasture program was to rehabilitate lands. They were damaged by farming practices and the severe drought of the 1930s. These pastures are some of the largest chunks of native prairie left in the world, containing some of our most sensitive habitat. We can all agree that ranchers are some of the most conscientious stewards of that land. However this government does not have a strong track record of protecting marginal lands. Indeed it was only two years ago the Sask Party government introduced legislation to remove 3.5 million acres of Crown lands from wildlife habitat protection.

My question to the minister: what assurances can he give that if the pastures are sold, these environmentally sensitive lands will be protected, the natural habitat will remain, and that the taxpayers' investment in these marginal lands will not be wasted?

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

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, if the member had been listening closely, my comment or my answer was that the

patrons will have first chance at this land. That is the same patrons that have been farming and leasing this land probably for the last 100 years and done a tremendous job of doing it.

But, Mr. Speaker, what I'll tell you what we will not do at the first cloud that comes in the sky as the pasture is coming from the federal government, as the Leader of the Opposition had made the comment here when the budget was out, that he would head to agriculture and municipal government across this province to find money to put into the film industry to replace the grant that was ongoing there.

Mr. Speaker, we value agriculture high. We know they were neglected for 16 years under the previous NDP government. And municipalities were in the same situation; the downloading went on for 16 years. That has ended under a Sask Party government, and that will remain one of our most important issues that we have in this province. And dealing with producers is another one where we look after the producers that have . . . our patrons of the provincial pastures and federal pastures.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### SECOND READINGS

#### **Bill No. 39 — *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act***

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to address our government's ongoing commitment to ensure timely and effective regulation of financial services and consumer protection for Saskatchewan people. After these remarks I will move second reading of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*.

Mr. Speaker, this Act is designed to provide the means to respond quickly and effectively to market demands facing regulation of financial services and consumer protection. It will do that by continuing the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission, SFSC, as a Crown corporation to be called the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan, FCAA. We have changed the name in order to give higher profile to the consumer affairs responsibility that is exercised by the commission.

This Act accomplishes the transition from the SFSC to the FCAA in the following ways: (1) it transfers employees from SFSC to the proposed new corporation, (2) it authorizes the payment of revenues that now are paid to the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Fund to the new corporation and the payment of the expenses of SFSC by the authority, (3) it confirms that the pension and other rights of the transferred employees will not in any way be diminished. It also gives the authority the corporate powers that it will need to manage its businesses in the best interests of Saskatchewan consumers of financial services and consumer goods and services. Finally, as

a transition measure, it continues the appointments of the current commission members and executive director into the new authority. This will ensure smooth transition to the new corporate status.

Mr. Speaker, a Treasury Board Crown corporation draws on the business expertise of a board of directors to assess the needs of the marketplace without compromising the government's need to manage the province's financial affairs. The Act will retain the powers and responsibilities of SFSC with the addition of new responsibilities for *The Real Estate Act* and *The Payday Loans Act*. In reality those are administered by the commission already, with the responsibility for payday loans being assigned to the commission by the regulations and *The Real Estate Act* being historically administered through an arrangement with the Ministry of Justice and Attorney General.

Mr. Speaker, to allow for the creation of the proposed corporation, this Bill amends a number of Acts beginning with the repeal of *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act* and consequential amendments to 14 other Acts that refer either to the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission or *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act* or both.

Mr. Speaker, the Act also addresses the transitional requirements necessary to ensure that all rights and liabilities of the Government of Saskatchewan are transferred to and continued under the authority. Mr. Speaker, it is intended that this new authority will be in place by October 1st of this year, thereby securing the necessary corporate governance and funding structure to ensure the continued delivery of exceptional regulation of financial services and consumer protection in an independent manner.

Mr. Speaker, I also wish to announce to the Assembly the receipt of Royal Recommendation for the following Bill. This was not received in time to appear on the order paper, therefore I beg to inform the Assembly that Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*, recommends it to the consideration of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of this Bill, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved Bill No. 39, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act* with Royal Recommendation. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Of course on behalf of the opposition I want to stand up and give the initial few comments on the Bill No. 39 which is primarily *An Act respecting the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan and making consequential amendments to other Acts*, of course, to try and achieve what they want to achieve in terms of redesigning this particular Bill and the authority attached to it.

What I think is really important, Mr. Speaker, as I listened to the minister's opening comments, there's very few details as to

the number of changes being proposed. As he mentioned at the outset, there's four other Acts that are being impacted and some of the Acts that are being impacted, some of the portions of that Act may be minimal or there may be other major ramifications or major challenges that would certainly create some confusion for the people of Saskatchewan.

So I think one of the things that we want to do as an opposition is that the Bill itself is fairly comprehensive in terms of the authority. And it goes down to list a number of authorities, of people that are involved, the executive director and of course the commission member appointees and so on and so forth.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think what's really important is that when you look at the consumer protection legislation Act that this certainly is, I want the people out there in northern Saskatchewan, and of course the people throughout the province, to know that these Acts certainly have a lot of ramifications and they have a lot of different issues that will present themselves to the people on an everyday basis. So it's important to pay attention to these Acts and to make sure that we are very thorough in terms of the assessing of the Act, that we reach out to different folks and groups and organizations that may have some impact of this particular Bill or may have some concerns, Mr. Speaker.

Now as the minister pointed out, the Act itself has a lot of ramification but more so on when you talk about consumer protection legislation. It involves *The Auctioneers Act*, it certainly talks about *The Payday Loans Act*, the charitable fundraising businesses association Act, *The Collection Agents Act*, *The Consumer and Commercial Affairs Act*, *The Consumer Protection Act*, *The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act*, *The Credit Reporting Act*, *The Direct Sellers Act*, *The Film and Video Classification Act*, *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*, *The Motor Dealers Act*, *The Sale of Goods Act*, and of course *The Ticket Sales Act*.

These are certainly a lot of some of the consumer Acts that are impacted by this particular Bill. And while we don't certainly want to let people out there participate in the process, we want to make sure, make sure that they have an opportunity to read what the Bill is actually saying and what impact that this has.

And any time we have the Saskatchewan Party looking at trying to protect consumers per se, there's not a lot of people out there in Saskatchewan that would automatically give them any kind of a passing grade in terms of trying to protect the average citizen and certainly the everyday people that this Act is trying to purport to protect.

So I think what's important, Mr. Speaker, is that you have to look at what exactly is being proposed by the minister, and certainly what is being proposed in this Bill. Now as you look at some of the challenges that I see at the outset, Mr. Speaker, is that there is not just one particular aspect of the Bill that's being changed. There's no, there's certainly the authority's being expanded. It talks about the responsibility of authority. It talks about the capacity to contract, it talks about the Crown agent, it talks about the chairperson and of course the meetings and the committee members and so on and so forth.

So the Bill itself is fairly, fairly thorough in terms of what it

wants to touch, what it wants to involve, and how it wants to amalgamate other Acts. And that's what in itself is certainly a challenge for any government to try and undertake in the short period of time that we have left in this session, and much less with the people of Saskatchewan to understand what exactly the Bill involves and what the changes entail.

So I think it's important that people out there that may have some concern on a wide variety of the impacts of the different Acts that this Bill involves, that they really want to make sure that they get involved with looking at this Bill and see how it may impact them or certainly involve them in some way, shape, or form.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as the minister explained, the Acts that are being, some of the changes that he's proposing in this particular Bill, Bill 39, the details are very sketchy, but the Bill itself is fairly lengthy. We're looking at a number of pages here that we have to certainly make time. There's 26 pages in all. But we've got to see what other Bills are being brought into this particular Act.

And the minister alluded again, as I mentioned at the outset, there's 14 other Acts that are impacted. We need to make sure that those 14 other Acts that are affected or impacted aren't changed in their intent as well as a result of this particular Bill. And that's the important part and role of the opposition, is to understand these Bills, first of all, take the time to read through them and to see how the impact will affect other Bills. And that's a challenge that we certainly have as the opposition and some of the things that we will undertake to do as best we can.

I would also raise the issue that there's a lot of different legal people out there that would be involved in some of the impact of this particular Bill, and I mentioned a few of them at the outset, Mr. Speaker, that whether it's the car dealers Act or *The Payday Loans Act*, this Bill affects all those particular aspects of consumer protection, I guess, and we want to make sure that they are there to meet the intent that they're supposed to meet.

[14:30]

Now, Mr. Speaker, the payday loans particular aspect, I think there's been a lot of changes as a result of some of the federal Acts that have been impacted on the country over the last several months. I know there's been a lot of different changes to the payday loans Bills and certainly how they administer their business. And certainly I think that is one of the areas that I think a lot of people pay a lot of attention to. And this particular Bill, does it complement that particular aspect of what is trying to be done federally or does it compete against it or is it contrary to it? These are things that we have to find out, and these are some of the things that we would ask the public of course to try their best to get involved with.

Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen the previous copy of *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*, the Act that would precede this one. And I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, at the outset, what changes would be in the original Act versus the one that the minister's proposed today. Was the original Act very clear in its intent and its design? Was there any meddling in terms of how the commission members may be appointed under this particular new Act from the previous Act? These are

some of the things that we have to assess and also to determine overall whether there's any dramatic or drastic changes from the original Act.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's something that I think from our perspective as an opposition caucus, we want to be very, very careful in how we go through these Bills and who we consult, and of course the invite to ask for consultation from a number of groups is always one of the standing offers that we make as an opposition because there are some of the Bills that have certainly some serious problems in certain sectors and may pose no problems in others, but we need to know those particular aspects from each of those groups.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think the Act, Bill No. 39, *An Act respecting the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan and making consequential amendments to other Acts*, I think this is a really important perspective. Certainly a really important point that we want to make that it has a wide-ranging impact. There's many a thing out there in Saskatchewanland that are impacted and covered by this particular Bill, and people don't know right now in terms of their impact on their daily lives. They don't know how this may impact them, and we need to make sure that we advise the public and certainly use the media as best we can to let them know what's wrong with some of these Bills, and we intend to that with this particular Bill.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said at the outset, it's important for the opposition to look at the Bill and to assess it and to give some very brief information as to what we perceive the Bill as doing. And as I said at the outset that they're involving everything from the consumer protection regulator, which it talks about all the different Acts that this impacts. It talks about an executive director. It talks about financial services. It talks about mortgages on real property. It talks about lending money. It talks about administering pension plans. It talks about dealing with the pension funds, insurance, and payday lender, and the list goes on and on, Mr. Speaker, about what this impacts.

And as I said at the outset, they talk about mortgage brokers, *The Pension Benefits Act*, *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act*. All of these particular Acts are impacted and affected in some way, shape, or form and, Mr. Speaker, there's not too many people that I know in the province of Saskatchewan that has not been involved nor impacted by some of the issues that are raised under which this Bill is going to have some influence or some impact, Mr. Speaker.

I want to point out that it's also important to know that some of the authority granted and continued under this Act, as the title would suggest, whether it's membership in terms of the persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, in terms of the commission members, or whether it's responsibility of the authority, the role as Crown agent, the capacity to contract the liability in tort, we need to find out all those particular issues as to how this particular Bill is going to function and what each of those titles would mean.

I think as well, Mr. Speaker, the organization of the authority, the board of directors, how are the board of directors selected? That's one thing that we want to pay very close attention to. And the chairperson, and certainly I think some of the minor points of the Bill certainly point out is that the meeting dates

and how the chairperson is selected. Those are some of the things I think in general would certainly go under the auspices of normal business practice.

However, Mr. Speaker, we need to find out the details of how the boards are appointed, not necessarily how many times the board meet and who the chairperson is and so on and so forth.

Mr. Speaker, under the division again, going under the direct information on the executive director and employees, certainly the Bill talks about the authority of the executive director. It talks about the . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Why is the member on his feet?

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, with leave to introduce guests.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Moosomin has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Toth:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, through you and to you, to all the members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce a young gentleman who has joined us this afternoon — looking forward to meeting with him in a few minutes with the Minister of Health — Mr. Lee Ekert.

Lee comes from my area of the province, in fact played hockey with one of my sons, and watching him play hockey, and then observed as he's moved forward in his post-secondary education. Lee is now recognized as an orthopedic surgeon and looking to establish himself in that field of medicine.

Just a couple of things I'd like to point out. Lee is a fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada, July 29th, 2010. He's a specialist certificate in orthopedic surgery, Royal College of Surgeons of Canada, June 30th, 2010; licenciante of Medical Council of Canada, December 14th, 2006; a Doctor of Medicine with distinction, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, May 26th, 2005.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on for quite a while just to explain to you the accomplishments and what Mr. Ekert has done in his short life, and I'm sure he's got a lot of goals that he's looking forward to achieving as well as looking forward to practising medicine. And I'm hoping we're able to do it here in the province of Saskatchewan. I believe that's a goal he has set in his mind as well.

So to you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and the members of this Legislative Assembly, I'd like to ask you to extend a warm welcome to Lee Ekert.

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

#### SECOND READINGS

##### **Bill No. 39 — *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*** (continued)

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I just want to continue on with some of the issues raised in this particular Bill. Now, Mr. Speaker, I think what's important is that if this is going to be a Crown that's going to be structured in such a way that it's going to be independent of the government, it's important to understand what exactly the parameters of this particular Bill, and certainly of the Crown, of what is being proposed. And this is why it's important to look at the headings and to point out to people that there's a lot of different implications to this Bill and that it's important that we take the time to try our best to understand and to also explain to people out there, certainly from the perspective of the first look at it, that this is what some of the Bill entails and try and share that information as best we can.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I understand that there's also a number of issues that we have to look at when we look at this particular Bill and what it proposes to do. It talks about responsibility of authority or financial services. It talks about powers of authority in reference to financial services and general matters.

It talks about panels, Mr. Speaker, and this is what's the most important thing. I'm assuming that these panels that this board will be commissioning, or this commission will be putting in place, is to ensure that there is proper process of hearing some of the concerns and complaints around consumer protection. And how often are these panels going to be active? They obviously . . . One would assume that they'd have special, specific powers within each panel and certainly a specialty knowledge of the issues that are coming forward. And how will those panels be structured? Is there a particular thought process in place now or is it up to the Crown corporation, as is what I would suggest would be what this government is after in this regard? Would they determine how these panels would be structured?

I think it's also important to talk about the authority respecting consumer protection. How wide-ranging is this particular Bill in terms of its power base, so to speak? Is there going to be any kind of description or explanation of what kind of powers that this particular commission or what kind of powers this Crown would have? And certainly I think that's some of the things that's really, really important.

And it talks about joint hearings and consultation. It speaks about rules respecting hearings. As long as the hearings are intended to be neutral and pure and as simple and forward and factual as possible, that's really important that there is no political process or certainly gerrymandering of the process in general before the Act is allowed to proceed. And these are some of the things that we have to really make sure, Mr. Speaker.

There's investigation; there's inquiries and reports. All this is identified in the Bill. There is decisions, and certainly quorum is part of that too, making sure you have the proper quorum. And there's also provisions set out as to when the authority may

act, and that's what's really important, Mr. Speaker.

There's tons and tons of complaints out there over a wide variety of goods and services. And this is what's important I think overall, is to make sure that we know and educate people as best we can as to what this Bill certainly entails. And when the authority is allowed to act and able to do some of this work, I think it's important that we understand that aspect as well.

There's also conflict of interest. If there's any kind of a process in there or there's somebody that is in a serious conflict-of-interest situation that they have to make sure that there's provisions in there as well, and we're going to look at that with a lot of interest. Non-compatibility . . . I think what's important is that we look at making sure people that are not complying with the rulings of this particular commission or this particular Crown, that there's ways and means that we're able to afford them the authority and certainly the strength and power to make their decisions compelling. So I think that's one of the points that we would want to raise as well.

This Crown, again that we perceive as being a Crown, that there's disclosure processes, there's immunity as well because obviously there's many legal ramifications that are part and parcel of what is being done here. So you know, is the immunity clauses, is there protection in there? Is that adequate enough not only for the commission members, for the province in general, but is it fair enough to ensure that there's impartial hearings and that the public and certainly the people that are on the opposite side of the complaint are able to provide or be able to venture forth in this hearing in an unimpeded way?

Mr. Speaker, obviously the Minister of Finance will be making payments or advancing funds to this particular Crown to deal with some of the issues and their costs. That certainly is also part and parcel of what the Bill entails. There's also the provision of temporary borrowing. Is that just meant for operations or is that meant for hiring legal advice? What's the budget attached to that? Like these are some of the things that we really have to pay a lot of attention to.

And they also talk about investments. You know, they may want to do some of the investing on their own. And it says here, "invest any part of its capital or operating moneys in any security or class of securities that is [certainly] authorized for the investment of moneys in the general revenue fund pursuant to *The Financial Administration Act, 1993*."

So I think it's important, Mr. Speaker, that if they're allowed to invest that they understand the rules very clearly and it's very concise and that this money doesn't become a savings fund; that there is real challenges that they have to meet and they need to use that money appropriately, which I'm assuming that they will. So if they do have the option to invest some of the monies forwarded to them or advanced to them, that they do it in a way that is safe, that is secure but more so does not compromise the original intent of the money, which is to deal with the operations of this Act.

They certainly talk about Treasury Board orders and directives, which I think everybody in the government understands what that particular aspect's about, but it's important that the public have the opportunity to explain that. It talks about the audit. It

talks about the fiscal year. It talks about an annual report. It talks about all the regulation in terms of the different Acts that would be impacted by this.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, I think it also talks about some of the transitional challenges that they have, whether it's the transfer of employees or some former funds that may be available out there under the previous Acts. It also talks about limitations of actions in terms of how this particular Crown may deal with that particular issue. Again this reference to former funds and former employees — that, we have to make sure that we pay close attention to.

And one of the parts that's also part of the Act is the transfer of assets and liabilities. And it would be nice to know what particular assets were in existence under the previous Act but more so, Mr. Speaker, under the liabilities of the former Act that this one would certainly get rid of. What were some of the challenges in the previous Act? There's obviously assets there. There's liabilities there. Is there any kind of funds? What kind of money are we looking at? And kind of the list goes on in terms of making sure that we pay attention to those details.

There's also the transitional issues. I'm talking about not just the members and the directors and the executive director and the staff and the funds and the liabilities of the old Act. How is that going to transfer as seamless as possible into this new Act, and is there any kind of recourse if there's some challenges in trying to do that? These are some of the things I think are really, really, really important for people to pay attention to, and this Bill certainly identifies some of those issues.

[14:45]

Mr. Speaker, they talk about some of the consequential amendments that are required in other Acts and they've identified some of the Acts. *The Credit Union Act*, they may speak about that or they may speak about that in particular, and *The Mortgage Brokerages and Mortgage Administrators Act*, that's also impacted and affected here as well. And that's why it's important for people out there to make sure they pay attention to this particular Bill. There's *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act* that's also impacted, *The Personal Property Security Act* as I mentioned at the outset, and the travel and loans corporation Act.

These are some of the things that I think is really important for people to pay attention because it has a lot of wide-ranging issues. And if this Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan, as what is being proposed here as a Crown, that to do much of the work that the previous Acts have done and really begin to cost some serious dollars and have panels and hearings and so on and so forth, it's not just an easy task to undertake some of these things, that there's a lot of work attached to it and there's a lot of implications to other Acts as I mentioned at the outset.

So I think it's important that we have to pay close attention to that Bill. It's very interesting. It's very interesting when we look at the Consumer Affairs Authority that's vested in this particular Bill, as to where this government would go. And that's what's compelling to us as the opposition because we want to make sure we pay close attention to that.

What is paramount, I think overall, is to make sure that the consumers of Saskatchewan know that the Act is there for their protection and that they can certainly utilize it as one of the tools that they would employ if perhaps they bought a bad product or a poor service. And obviously there is all those complaints would be out there forever. But what you've got to make sure is that if this Act is intended to deal with those particular matters and bringing all these other consequential amendments, then it's important, it's important that we understand how that Bill works, you know, and get a good understanding of how that Bill works, and to share that with the public and make sure that our assessment is bang on in terms of what the intent is, and then that way we can get some good feedback from the people of Saskatchewan to make sure that this particular Bill No. 39 certainly lives up to its mandate and fulfills its billing as the minister spoke.

And, Mr. Speaker, it was a bit surprising that the brevity in which the minister explained the Act because there's so many different components to it. And you know, it's important that people understand this has a wide-ranging impact, and we need to get the details and greater details. And obviously through the process we have in the Assembly, we will have time to look at this Bill and we will have time to give different groups and organizations a chance to look at the previous Bill and this new Bill and to see what changes may occur.

And we have grown pretty used to the fact that, in this particular Assembly, the opposition is always wary of the government's intent to do something silly and try and hide some particular component of theirs in some of the Acts that they're forwarding during this session. And that's why it's important that we pay close attention to this particular Act and all the other Acts.

So I think overall, I've explained very quickly what the Bill is all about. There's no question that it is, from our perspective, it is the creation of a Crown, and the Crown of course would be the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan. This would be an authority on behalf of the consumer affairs. And it's such a huge arena of challenge and need, Mr. Speaker, that we've got to make sure that what is being designed here is not being designed poorly, which we suspect it is, but something that is being designed fairly and certainly representative of what the people of Saskatchewan want.

So, Mr. Speaker, on this particular Bill, Bill 39, we certainly want to take the time to read it, to understand it, to ask for advice from different groups and organizations out there. So on that note, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 39.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Athabasca has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 39, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

**Bill No. 40 — *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Consequential Amendment Act, 2012***

*Loi de 2012 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée  
The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of  
Saskatchewan Act*

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Consequential Amendment Act*. Mr. Speaker, this is a consequential Bill to Bill No. 39 which just received . . . I just introduced earlier.

Mr. Speaker, as I said when I made the motion for second reading of *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*, which is Bill No. 39, our goal is to provide the means to respond quickly and effectively to market demands facing regulation of financial services and consumer protection. This Bill is a companion piece to that Act. Bill No. 39 consequentially amends 14 other Acts that refer either to the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission or *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act* or both.

This one Bill, Bill No. 40, is bilingual and it amends *The Co-operatives Act, 1996*. *The Co-operatives Act, 1996* is a bilingual Act that assigns certain duties to the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission. As a result of this amendment, it will refer instead to the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I wish to announce to the Assembly the receipt of a royal recommendation for the following Bill. This was not received in time to appear in the order paper, therefore I beg to inform the Assembly that Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor, having been informed of the subject matter of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Consequential Amendment Act, 2012*, recommends it to the consideration of the Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move second reading of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Consequential Amendment Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — A recommendation has been noted. The Minister of Justice has moved second reading of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Consequential Amendment Act, 2012*. Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member from Athabasca.

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to take a lot of time here really talking about this particular Bill. As the minister alluded to at the outset, I think what's important is that he mentioned that this was the companion piece to the Bill that he previously read out, and that's certainly Bill 39, where we talk about the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this Bill No. 40 certainly is just an Act to make a consequential amendment resulting from the enactment of the previous Bill that I spoke about earlier. And so it really has a lot of impact on the previous Bill. Bill 39 and Bill 40 are



really joined at the hip; this is a companion piece. And certainly I think what's important is that people out there know that Bill 40 is part of a larger Bill which is Bill 39. And I want to maybe explain to people out there that may be listening what the importance of making sure that we look at these Bills that are being forwarded by the government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I look at Bill 40 and Bill 39 as they are, as the minister spoke about, that they are a companion piece and that they are going to be working hand in hand to make sure that they meet the original objective, which is making sure Bill 39 is being passed. Now, Mr. Speaker, this is really, really important for the people that are listening that as the government brings these Bills forward, what they want to present as their law or their Bills, and what's important is that in the Assembly they introduced the Bill as the minister has done and that the Bill has other amendments or other connections to other Acts.

The minister also has to make sure that these Bills are brought forward and that there's consequential amendments made to those Acts which are not minor in detail but certainly minor in the process. And what we've got to do as an opposition is to try and make sense of the Bill so we can explain to people out there listening in Saskatchewan how the process works. And certainly from my perspective, I'll do my very best to explain that because I think the people of Saskatchewan, if you have a more active community in terms of understanding how the Legislative Assembly works, I think overall that you'll get a more educated and thus a more participatory population over time.

So I think what I want to do is make sure that people out there know that Bill 40 and Bill 39 are connected. And what we want to do is we want to explain to people that as the minister has brought up this Bill on behalf of his government, we in the opposition have to take the time to, as I said at the outset, to really read the Bill and try and see what the Bill is all about.

And this Bill, as I mentioned, is an addition or an add-on to the previous Bill and that's why we call them consequential amendments Bill because it does have an effect on other Acts that the government has, because there's hundreds, if not thousands of Acts, over the years that each government, federally and provincially, may have.

So I think what's important is on Bill 40, Mr. Speaker, is that we attach it, as the minister said, as an attachment to Bill 39, that this is really a precursor Bill that has impact on Bill No. 40. And that's why it's important to tie the two together.

Now I wanted to point out to the people that listen to this . . . I know some people in Beauval have this legislature channel in their homes and, you know, they certainly have a lot of interest as to how this process works and how these Bills work. But as I said at the outset, that the government presents a Bill, and this Bill has different names and of course has different numbers. And the Bill that we're speaking about is Bill 40, which talks about consumer protection.

And of course consumer protection is always about making sure that people that buy goods or services, that if those goods or services are poor, that they have a recourse in which they could

go back and say, look, I've been ripped off or I've been gyped. As they often say, I need to find somebody to help me recover some of my money or goods that I may have paid in exchange for some services or other goods.

So I think what the Bill wants . . . What we're doing here today is trying to explain to people out there that there is a process for consumer protection. And this process of course is enacted in these two Bills — Bill 39 and Bill 40. And the Minister of Justice of course is forwarding this Bill on behalf of government that talks about consumer protection and certainly consumer affairs, and the authority of this Bill to really begin to address all the concerns that people might have out there when they do buy goods or when they do buy services.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to read out part of the Bill, Bill 39 that is connected to Bill 40. As you mentioned, this is an attachment to Bill 39, so both of the Bills are married at the hip, and they both impact the people the same way. So it's just for brevity's sake, as opposed to making the connection for people, we know that Bill 40 is an attachment to Bill 39. And what do these two Bills mean in its entirety? I hope to explain to the people out there that may be listening as to what is necessary.

Now what is known right now in terms of what the process is intended for with these two Bills, Bill 39 and Bill 40, now, Mr. Speaker, when the people out there in the province of Saskatchewan buy a good or buy services, and they feel that they're not have been fairly dealt with, then what the government has typically done over time is they've put these different Acts in place. And Bill 40 is certainly one of the Bills that were impacted. And they put in these different Acts, and they put in these different authorities and these different powers and all these different rules and regulations out there to make sure that if there is the case of a complaint, a consumer complaint, that there is a process in place and people understand how to utilize that process to begin to try and recover some of their goods or services that they may have lost when they deal with the other party. So I think it's important for people out there to know that there is such a word as consumer protection, that there is such a word as Consumer Affairs Authority, and that there is a process.

Now people out there, whether they're in northern Saskatchewan or southwestern Saskatchewan, they want to know, how does it look? Like is it a person? Is it a department? Is it a corporation? Like what exactly is the Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan? And that, I think, is really important for people out there to know what exactly is the Saskatchewan Consumer Affairs Authority and how it looks. I think it's important that we do all we can to explain as best we can to the people in terms of how this works.

So what happens, as we spoke about earlier, Mr. Speaker, is that what does this, the consumer, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*, what does it cover? What are some of the areas that this Bill impacts? Because somebody out there may have bought a car, or somebody may have bought a house that's not in great shape or they may have got some services that they weren't happy with. And as I said at the outset, what's important is that the consumer protection in general has legislation or has Acts that they have out there that really identifies which areas that the consumers are protected.

And this is what's really important.

[15:00]

And I want to point out that there's a number of areas that there is impact when it comes to consumer protection. And I've identified them earlier, but it's important for people to know the "consumer protection legislation" means:

- (i) *The Auctioneers Act*;
- (ii) *The Cemeteries Act, 1999*;
- (iii) *The Charitable Fund-raising Businesses Act*;
- (iv) *The Collection Agents Act*;
- (v) *The Consumer and Commercial Affairs Act*;
- (vi) *The Consumer Protection Act*;
- (vii) *The Cost of Credit Disclosure Act, 2002*;
- (viii) *The Credit Reporting Act*;
- (ix) *The Direct Sellers Act*;
- (x) *The Film and Video Classification Act*;
- (xi) *The Funeral and Cremation Services Act*;
- (xii) *The Motor Dealers Act*;
- (xiii) *The Sale of Goods Act*;
- (xiv) *The Ticket Sales Act*.

And they have two other additional Acts:

- (xv) any other Act or part of any other Act relating to consumer protection that is designated in the regulations; or
- (xvi) any regulations made pursuant to the Acts mentioned in subclauses . . . unless any part of those regulations is, by regulation, excluded from this definition.

So what is being said in that really roundabout, fancy way, Mr. Speaker, is that all the different Acts that I had mentioned at the outset, this particular legislation impacts those Acts. So you look at the ticket seller, motor dealers Act — this encompasses all those Acts. And what is very clear here as well is that if there's other Acts out there that aren't identified in this Bill that have some impact or effect on this Bill, then they arbitrarily include that by way of a note on the bottom of that particular section that talks about how they would include those other Acts as well.

Now what important to understand, Mr. Speaker, is what does consumer protection regulator means. It certainly means, like for example, there is a complainant, there's a complaint, and then there's a registrar that would look after how these issues are processed with, as I understand it. And consumer protection

regulator means the registrar designated pursuant to *The Auctioneers Act*, the registrar appointed pursuant to *The Cemeteries Act*, and the list goes down to the different Acts that I had mentioned, Mr. Speaker. And they would certainly be the regulator for their appropriate industries or the registrar. They would be appointed from the appropriate agencies to act on behalf of these associations or these Acts in the case that there is some argument.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that the consumer protection regulator also includes any other person who, or authority or body that:

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

(B) is designated in the regulations.

Now what is being said there, Mr. Speaker, in item (A) is that if an MLA is given responsibility on behalf of a client to act on their behalf, then this Act recognizes that person being given authority. That's what I'm assuming the Act is saying.

And that's fair enough because MLAs are asked to get involved in a number of cases. And they often do; he or she will be involved in a wide variety of cases, as you know. And what's important is that this Act identifies that that person is given the authority by the person that is arguing the case to act on their behalf. This Act recognizes them. And of course they . . . as a regulator. And of course there's a separate section that will be identified in the regulation who else may act as a regulator, Mr. Speaker, in this process. So that's what's important.

And of course the consumer affairs protection commission, if you want to use, we often use the word Crown, a Crown corporation. But this commission would have an executive director, which is important that, you know, obviously the executive director would have staff, and they would have certainly the authority and the means, financial and otherwise, to certainly do what they can to forward the intent of this Bill and to protect the interests of the consumer. So there would be an executive director that's involved, and that's something that's really important.

Now I think financial services, again it's important that we look at the definition of each of these categories of this Bill because if you know who's involved or you know what parties are involved and what is meant when they designed this Bill, it really gives you a good grasp of how this works and what a regulator is, what Acts that this impacts, that there have been executive director, the process. It gets confusing after a while, but as you explain more and more of the Bill, more and more people begin to realize how it works. And that's the important exercise. And the important point that I want to make in today's presentation on behalf of the opposition is that when these Bills come forward, we've got to pay attention to them and how it impacts our daily lives. And that's exactly what we're trying to do here, Mr. Speaker.

Now I want to point out again under the financial services, under the description of the information that the Bill impacts, when they speak about financial services in the Act, it:

. . . means doing any or all of the following things:

- (i) carrying on business as a credit union;
- (ii) carrying on business as a mortgage brokerage or mortgage administrator, or brokering mortgages on behalf of a mortgage brokerage;
- (iii) administering pension plans;
- (iv) investing and dealing with pension funds;
- (v) selling or providing insurance or related services;
- (vi) carrying on business as a payday lender;
- (vii) trading in or advising with respect to securities;
- (viii) lending money;
- (ix) dealing in or purchasing:
  - (A) mortgages on real property;
  - (B) security interests within the meaning of *The Personal Property Security Act* . . . ; or
  - (C) accounts receivable;
- (x) trading in real estate;
- (xi) acting as an investment fund manager;
- (xii) carrying out similar activity that is designated in the regulations.

Now all the Bill 40 is all attached to these definitions, Mr. Speaker. Even though it's a consequential amendment Act, it has the effect of the motherhood Bill so to speak. How does that affect that? And when you have the definitions of the main Act, the consequential amendment Act makes a lot more sense, Mr. Speaker. So under the Bill when they talk about that, when they talk about financial services, this is what they mean. And I have explained that as well.

They talk about executive director. They talk about consumer protection regulators — that's identified here as well — and financial services legislation which will be identified in the Bill somewhere along the line. It talks about *The Co-operatives Act*, *The Credit Union Act*, *The Credit Union Act, 1998*, *The Mortgage Brokerages and Mortgage Administrators Act*, *The New Generation Co-operatives Act*, *The Payday Loans Act*, *The Pension Benefits Act*, *The Real Estate Act*, *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act*, *The Securities Act*, and the trust and loan corporation.

And what's also important, Mr. Speaker, again the same provision that's applied earlier:

- (xii) any other Act or part of any other Act designated in the regulations that:
  - (A) require financial services; or

(B) regulates any persons . . . [with], or associations or groups of persons that, provide financial services; or [the final clause]

(xiii) any regulations made pursuant to the Acts mentioned in [the] subclauses . . . unless any [other] part of those regulations is, by regulation, excluded from this definition.

So those are the “financial services legislation” definition, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's something that is also part of this Bill. And you look at all the different players and how the Bill is impacted, you can see it become very confusing to the common person. But it really is important for people to understand that these are primarily definitions of how the Bill is going to be impacted and who is going to be impacted and how is the other Acts and how are the other Bills going to be impacted. And this is why it's important that we do the definitions.

The Bills will define clearly which group or organizations is meant when they use a certain phrase within the Act. And as I mentioned at the outset, that when it comes to “financial services regulator,” it includes credit unions. It includes the superintendent of insurance, the superintendent of pensions, and the directors appointed pursuant to *The Payday Loans Act*. And the list goes on in terms of who the different groups and organizations are involved.

Now, Mr. Speaker, under Bill 40, it talks an amendment to the main Bill, Bill 39, the financial and consumer affairs authority Act. We wanted to make sure that we understood what authority this commission would have, what authority that Bill No. 40 is working under right now because it's a consequential amendment to that Act. What kind of authority is it acting under now? And a lot of people out there in Saskatchewan may not know that, so I want to briefly go through that so they understand exactly what is meant when we talk about authority of the Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the authority, certainly as I mentioned at the outset, this is a commission that's going to be looking at consumer protection, consumer affairs in general. And the commission's authority is continued as the financial and consumer authority of Saskatchewan. This authority is a corporation. The authority is a Treasury Board Crown corporation within the meaning of *The Crown Corporations Act, 1993*. The head office of this authority or this commission is to be in Regina, and the authority is to have a common seal.

Those certainly are really minor points in terms of the authority of the commission, Mr. Speaker, but they're important that they be identified in the Act. And things like being located here in the city is really important, that they have their own seal, that they are considered a Treasury Board Crown corporation, which is an important note to make. And so therefore you have the authority continued and the authority identified, and you have some of the rules attached to the authority. And that's why it's important that we read them out.

And, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the membership:

4(1) The authority consists of:

- (a) those persons appointed by the Lieutenant Governor

in Council; and

(b) one person appointed by the minister.

Now we need to make sure, Mr. Speaker, that both of those appointees are done in the fair, consistent, and certainly transparent way because obviously you don't want to have someone that's going to ignore all the consumer affairs matters and not really begin a fair process. And that's what's important, that we raise that point at the outset.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that in this authority, the membership of the Consumer Affairs Authority:

Each member of the authority, other than the member appointed pursuant to clause (1)(b), holds office at pleasure for a term not to exceed three years . . . [or] until a successor is appointed.

So the people appointed to this Consumer Affairs Authority shall serve in this office for three years minimum or until a successor is appointed. The “. . . member of the authority may be reappointed for a second or subsequent term,” which simply means that they could be reappointed for another term, so they could be there for six years at the most.

And the other part of the membership of the authority is, “If a member of the authority dies or resigns, the person ceases to be a member of the authority on the date of death . . .” or on which the death or written resignation is received by the authority. And basically saying that somebody resigns, they shall be resigned effective as soon as they sign the date of their . . . or their resignation from the commission or if they pass away.

Mr. Speaker, I think what's also important is that:

If the office of a member of the authority appointed pursuant to clause (1)(a) becomes vacant, the Lieutenant Governor . . . [or the government] may:

(a) appoint another person for the remainder of the term of the person . . . [leaving] the office; or

(b) appoint another person for the term mentioned in subsection (2).

If the office of the member appointed pursuant to clause (1)(b) becomes vacant, the minister may appoint another person to fill the vacancy.

So really, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the membership of this Consumer Affairs Authority, that it's important that we know that the membership has got rules, and some of the rules are clearly identified out in the Act. And it's important for people to have some inkling as to how this new Treasury Board Crown corporation would work, and obviously it would be under a board of directors, and they have rules about their appointment.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the meat of the Bill itself, Bill 40 and Bill 30, in terms of the authority that they wish to put in place called the Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan, that really when they have the word authority, what is the responsibilities attached to that authority? And the Bill has basically pointed

out a few things, Mr. Speaker, and I want to share them. It's important to know that the authority of this Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan is responsible to the minister:

(a) in the exercise of the powers conferred on the authority and in the performance of the duties imposed on the authority for the purpose of administering and enforcing this Act, consumer protection legislation, financial services legislation and [or] any other Act that imposes or confers a duty, power or function on a consumer protection regulator or a financial services regulator; and

(b) in carrying out and providing the structure for the administration and enforcement of this Act, consumer protection legislation, financial services legislation and [or] any other Act that imposes or confers a duty, power or function on a consumer protection regulator or a financial services regulator.

And finally:

(2) The authority to undertake any other activities or functions assigned to it by the Lieutenant Governor [of Saskatchewan] in Council.

So, Mr. Speaker, what they're basically saying is that the authority of this commission is to make sure that they do the work. They obviously have to respond to the minister. They'd be under a particular minister. But their duties are kind of identified in a number of different Acts, and basically those Acts are part of the main Bill, Bill 39, in which all that is identified. So they do have a fair amount of authority. It's not something that is to be abused obviously, but it's something that they have to be fair and impartial to, Mr. Speaker. And that's kind of the motherhood statement about the Bill 39 and of course the Bill that we're speaking about today, the consequential Bill, Bill No. 40.

[15:15]

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is important to note some of the other potential authorities that this consumer affairs branch would have. It's a Crown agent:

The authority is an agent of the Crown, and all its powers may be exercised only as an agent of the Crown.

All property of the authority, all moneys acquired, administered, possessed or received from any [other] source and [or] all profits earned by the authority are the property of the Crown and are, for all purposes including taxation of whatever nature and description, deemed to be the property of the Crown.

And I think that's really important for people to understand that this is a self-enclosed entity, and these Bills basically spell out that they act as a Crown and they have the status of being a Crown agent. And that's something that needs to be certainly explained.

And also:

The authority has the capacity to contract and to sue and

be sued in its corporate name with respect to any right or obligation acquired or incurred by it on behalf of the Crown as if the right or obligation were acquired or incurred on its own behalf.

The authority, on behalf of the Crown, may contract in its corporate name without specific reference to the Crown.

So what I'm assuming from that particular clause, Mr. Speaker, is that this commissioner or this human . . . consumer rights authority does have the ability to contract out services. And when we talk about being sued or option of suing, that I'm assuming some of the contracting services that they would look at trying to employ from time to time . . . Because that happens pretty regularly in terms of government programs in general, is you may be subjected to lawsuits. And what this basically says is that you do have the capacity of the contract, and in this instance, I would suggest that it's in the legal context more so than any other context, Mr. Speaker. But there's other areas that they may be subjected to as well in terms of some contract services that are necessary. I'm assuming that those would be part of this explanation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, liability in tort, as we all know that there . . . Tort is a legal phrase and:

The authority may:

(a) sue with respect to any tort; and [or]

(b) be sued with respect to liabilities in tort to the extent which the Crown is subject pursuant to *The Proceedings against the Crown Act*.

So all that is basically saying, that they have legal parameters which they could sue. But they also understand that those legal parameters may allow them to be sued as well, and certainly as a Crown and a member of the government, that they have some overall protection under *The Proceedings against the Crown Act*, and that's basically how they'll be governed when they are under threat of a lawsuit.

Now, Mr. Speaker, how is this board going to be organized? Bill 40, how are we going to make sure that the Bill is organized fairly and responsibly? And there will be a board of directors for the authority is being established consisting of those persons appointed, as I pointed out earlier, by the Lieutenant Governor, and:

The board shall manage the affairs and the business of the authority [of this Crown].

The Lieutenant Governor in Council shall fix the remuneration for members of the board.

Meaning that the board will certainly be paid for some of the work that they do and some of the committee work that they are subjected to. And they're also allowed to be entitled to . . . for travel, incidental living expenses in the performance of their responsibility.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, I think what's important is that one of the items here, it says, "A vacancy in the office of a member

does not impair the powers of the remaining members of the board to act." And that's basically one of the things I think is really important is that as long as you've identified quorum, which I've seen later on in the Act, that if one member's missing from a meeting, they obviously can't stop the proceedings of the corporation or the commission in doing its duty because they're not there. So that basically is spelled out here, Mr. Speaker. And that's certainly something that's fine.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I point out, as at the outset, that as a board you have a chairman. You'd have a structure on the board. You'd have an executive. Obviously you'd have members at large. And this Act identifies a bit about the chairperson, of how the chairperson shall perform the duties. It is explained there and, of course, there's Acts and there's other different regulations that govern the conduct of this particular chairperson. And all this basically identifies all those issues.

And, Mr. Speaker, it also talks about when a chairperson may, or any other member of the authority may, act for authority. So that's important to note. That this is not something that you want to have, a board in place and give them unfettered control and access and action that they can undertake on their own. You got to make sure there's checks and balances, and we need to find out what those checks and balances are to make sure that there isn't any kind of particular abuse or conflict of interest.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that they also talk about meetings, and I think it's important that people point out that these meetings will be taken at the discretion of the chairperson, and that they must notify the board in the proper fashion. That's pretty clear.

So, Mr. Speaker, I've identified which organizations are impacted. We've identified the purpose of the Act. We've identified how this consequential Bill No. 39 is attached to Bill No. 40. We've spoken about the powers of the Act itself. We've spoken about how the board structure is put in place. We've spoken about the purposes of a chairperson. How a member of the commission may be terminated by ways of resignation or death, what happens if that case happens. We've covered all the bases of the preliminary stuff that's important part of this particular Act.

So we want to make sure that we continue on, on to the next aspect which, of course, is the staffing. Because you have the entity and you've got the legislation that talks about which groups are organized. You've got the intent of the entity and then you've got a committee that's in place or a board of directors that are in place and how they are appointed and the rules and regulations in relation to that aspect. Now we go on to the staff in terms of how many staff have you got, if there's specialty areas that the staff would be involved with. How are they supervised? How does this work? And that's kind of the second part of the Act that I think is important that we share this with Bill No. 39, the consequential amendment Act to the prior or the main bill which is Bill 40, talking about consumer protection affairs Act.

Now, Mr. Speaker, they're obviously going to hire an executive director. And it says . . . They're quite point-blank that an executive director for the authority must be appointed. So there's no question that they will have an executive director and

this executive director shall perform the responsibilities and may exercise the powers that:

(a) are imposed or assigned to the executive director by this Act, the regulations, any financial services legislation or any consumer protection legislation;

(b) [the second part that the executive director has authority on is] subject to subsection (6), are imposed on or assigned to the authority by this Act, the regulations, any financial services legislation or any consumer protection legislation that are delegated to the executive director by the authority; or

(c) are imposed on or assigned by the authority and that are assigned to the executive director by the regulations.

So what it's basically saying, Mr. Speaker, is that the executive director is going to be acting on behalf of the board. They have their job description fairly straightforward. They know what the authority is all about and the executive director represents the board in many dealings. And basically what that part of the Act is saying is that it is this executive director can act on behalf of the board, protected by the powers of the board. And the Act clearly identifies that as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it also points out that:

The executive director may delegate . . . any director or deputy director any responsibilities or power that is imposed on, or assigned to or delegated to the executive director.

So what that is saying is that the executive director may, time to time, appoint someone or approach somebody on the board and ask them to help them represent the commission. That's identified here as well, Mr. Speaker. And obviously, I think, if you have a good executive director, then I don't think you need to count on that clause too much in terms of having him go outside of the board or to the board when problems persist because obviously you've got a good executive director. That particular problem would be minimized and therefore this particular regulation may not be used or may not be necessary from time to time. But that's only on the premise that you have a good executive director.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it also talks a bit more about, the authority may delegate the executive director any of the following responsibilities if the authority is required to perform those responsibilities pursuant to this Act. So they can give them more, other responsibilities, Mr. Speaker, that complements the Act. And it talks about the investigations. It talks about responsibility to report to the Lieutenant Governor. It talks about hearing any appeals. So those are some of the Acts that the executive director may be granted once the board makes that decision and once that is deemed to be the right thing to do.

In terms of payment, superannuation, and benefits:

The authority shall pay the employees of the authority any remuneration determined pursuant to clause 13(3)(b).

And I'm assuming that the clause 13(3)(b), Mr. Speaker, he spoke about it earlier, and this basically says:

**13(3)(b)** determine the respective duties and powers, the conditions of employment and the remuneration of those directors, deputy directors and employees.

So that'll be determined under the salary and the executive director headings. And that, I think, Mr. Speaker, is very public. The Government of Saskatchewan posts the employees and their salaries, so it's not as if it is going to be something that is kept secret, that people out there would know what the executive director is going . . .

Mr. Speaker, they're also talking about the other added benefits of these employees which includes a group insurance plan or any other employee benefit program, which I think is important to note because this Consumer Affairs Authority, this commission, this Treasury Board Crown, it's important that we retain the employees and treat them fairly and consistent as we do with other employees. And this Act basically speaks about that, and we certainly hope that when they speak about that, that they practise what is certainly indicated on the Bill itself.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think what's important is you look at the responsibility of authority re financial services. It goes on to talk about the administration, coordination, development, promotion, implementation, and enforcement of policies related to financial services. And I think what's important here again is that all the different financial services Acts — whether it's *The Securities Act*, *The Credit Union Act*, *The New Generation Co-operatives Act* — all these Acts are clearly identified under the financial services legislation which are part and parcel of Bill 39 and certainly of the main Bill, Bill 40.

So I think that's something that's important for people out there to know that, as I mentioned at the outset, here are different Acts and different organizations that are involved. Here are some of the different players. Here's how the board of directors are selected. Here's what the executive director does. Here, what the powers of the executive director . . . and the list kind of goes on. So the Bill breaks it down, and a number of sources explains all the different sectors of the Bill that's impacted, whether it's staffing or board or different legislation that's out there. And we're almost completed that particular section, Mr. Speaker, but it certainly, it's important to continue that explanation.

The Bill itself, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*, Bill 40 and Bill 39 which are joined at the hip, you know, they speak about the authority on financial services general matters. And it's a fairly rigorous process, Mr. Speaker. They talk about the powers of the authority in reference to financial services in general matters. And the powers are fairly straightforward, but they're fairly important for people out there to know.

The authority may . . . And here's the power that's explained in the Bill:

(a) exercise any of the powers of a financial services regulator pursuant to any financial services legislation that are assigned to the authority by the regulations;

(b) exercise any powers given to the authority by this Act or the regulations;

(c) exercise the powers given to the authority by *The Securities Act, 1988*;

(d) exercise the powers given to the authority by *The Co-operatives Act, 1996*, *The Credit Union Act, 1998* and *The New Generation Co-operatives Act*;

(e) subject to subsection (2), make grants to any person, agency, organization, association, institution or body, on any terms and conditions that the authority . . . [approves] appropriate, for any purpose relating to its responsibilities for financial services; and [finally]

(f) do any other thing that it considers necessary, incidental or conducive to carry out its . . . [regulations].

So, Mr. Speaker, those are fairly wide-ranging in terms of how they're going to operate in terms of the powers as it relates to the financial bodies that are out there. They're fairly straightforward, but they're fairly rigorous, and I think they're fairly strong. And that's something that's important, that the Consumer Affairs Treasury Board Crown have that authority to act under the other financial Bills that are out there so that they know that there's some consistent messages and consistent themes in terms of basically sharing the message of the consumer protection Bill does have a lot of weight and clout to it.

[15:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, it talks about a number of other issues under the financial powers of authority, under the financial services. They can also grant money of up to \$50,000. The authority has assigned any powers of a financial services regulator. And they also talk about revenues from fees, taxes, rates, or other charges imposed and collected pursuant to this Act, consumer protection legislation or financial services legislation are to be paid to and are the property of the authority. So basically saying that if they have any income of any sort, it becomes the property of the authority. And that's fairly straightforward and par for the course in terms of business development, Mr. Speaker.

Now one of the things I think is really important and very interesting on Bill 39 and Bill 40, which again are talking about consumer protection, is the whole notion of the section under panels, 17(1). And I think it's important for people out there to know that the minister who'll be overseeing this particular Consumer Affairs Authority or this Treasury Board Crown:

. . . may, by order, establish a list of persons to serve on a panel appointed pursuant to this section.

(2) . . . the authority considers it advisable, the chairperson may appoint a panel to hear any matter that the authority is authorized or required to hear pursuant to this Act, the regulations or any other financial services legislation.

(3) If the authority appoints a panel, the authority:

(a) shall appoint at least one of its members to the panel;

and

(b) may appoint one or more persons from the list established pursuant to subsection (1) to the panel.

(4) The chairperson of the authority shall designate a member of the authority who is appointed to a panel to act as a chairperson for that panel, and while so acting that member shall perform all of the responsibilities and may exercise any of the powers of the chairperson of the authority with respect to that panel.

(5) A panel may not sit concurrently with the authority, but any number of panels may sit concurrently.

And of course:

(6) A majority of members of a panel constitute a quorum of the panel.

(7) A decision or action of a panel in relation to any matter for which the panel is appointed is the decision or action of the authority.

And finally:

(8) The chairperson of a panel is entitled to vote on all matters before the panel.

So I think what's important, Mr. Speaker, is that it identifies that this consumer protection Act or this Treasury Board Crown does have the option of appointing panels. And if they do appoint panels, here are some of the rules to hear particular cases or specific cases that may be complex in nature, and therefore they may seek other advice. And what they've done here under this particular section is identify that if we do set up a panel, here are some of the parameters under which the panels will be used. And that section was fairly straightforward, and it spoke about some of the rules of the quorum. The chairperson may vote and so on and so forth.

Now the other thing that's really important in this particular Act, Mr. Speaker, is the Securities Commission. As you know, the Securities Commission in general is considered to be a fairly high-profile financial institution. It's got great presence in Saskatchewan. It's got tons of people impacted or involved with what the Securities Commission does in general. And you know, in terms of a financial player, it's one of the most recognized institutions across Canada.

So what does this Bill have in relation to the financial, or in relation to the powers in terms of how they're going to respond to the Securities Commission? And it says the:

**References to Securities Commission or commission**

18(1) A reference in any Act, regulation, order, contract, legal process, proceeding or other document to the Saskatchewan Securities Commission or the commission is deemed to be a reference to the authority.

So basically from what I understand there is that they would be connected and impacted as a result of this Act, and so if there's any reference to the Securities Commission, that certainly they

would be subjected to how this Act and the commission works.

The second part, Mr. Speaker, is:

A reference in any Act, regulation, order, contract, legal process, proceeding or other document to a deputy within the meaning of *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act*, as that Act read before the coming into force of this Act, is deemed to be a reference to a director appointed pursuant to section 13.

So again, Mr. Speaker, it's important to know that any references made to the security commission or commissions, that there is a good connect and it is a good direct and there is a lot of weight and power that this commission would have when you deal with the Saskatchewan Securities Commission or the national securities commission or other security commissions throughout the land.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it certainly talks about the Securities Commission in general, and the part that's really important for people out there listening because we spoke about the powers of the board. We spoke about how the board is going to be appointed. We spoke about the different Acts that are impacted. We spoke about how the executive director's going to be selected. We spoke about the roles and responsibility of the executive director, how they're going to be paid, and the list kind of goes on as to how this commission is going to be set up or this Crown corporation.

Now the big thing is we've got the staff in place. We've got the legislation identified. We've got the executive director hired. We've got the board appointed. We understand how each of these organizations are, each of these sections are going to interact and make this commission or this Crown corporation, this Treasury Board concept work. We've now got to ask the question, okay, you've got the staff, the board, and all the intent in place, all the Acts covered. If all the Acts are covered, then what exactly does the consumer protection branch do? Because you've got everything in place now. What do they do? And that's the really important thing, and this is what I think is important for people to understand, what *The Consumer Protection Act* is all about.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out the responsibilities of the authority respecting consumer protection. "The authority is responsible for the following: co-ordinating consumer protection regulators," which means all the different organizations that represent the real estate or the brokerage firms or car salesmen, that they're going to coordinate all those regulators that are representing each of those different sectors, that their job is to coordinate these organizations and their representatives in a good fashion:

(b) providing for the administration, co-ordination, development, promotion, implementation and enforcement of programs and policies related to consumer protection.

So that's pretty straightforward, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the responsibilities of this authority, of this Act. And the other issue, the other matter that they'd be dealing with is:

(c) providing for the administration, co-ordination,

development, promotion, implementation and enforcement of programs and policies related to consumer protection legislation.

I understand that they have Acts that guide what they do. That's identified here.

(d) performing any responsibilities of a consumer protection regulator pursuant to any consumer protection legislation that are assigned to the authority by the regulations.

Again it's just a catch-all, Mr. Speaker. And:

(e) performing any other responsibilities respecting consumer protection that are assigned to the authority by the regulations.

And that's the important thing is that there's so many different regulations and so many different departments, Mr. Speaker. That catch-all, that last clause here, clause (e) is this meaning to say, look, we may have missed something under some other Act somewhere, so what we want to do under this particular aspect is include that in there, saying there is an Act out there that is impacted by this consumer legislation. We're going to put a provision in there saying if there's something out there that we have missed that does impact this Act, we're going to put a clause in there saying that if we missed it, it's still part and parcel of this particular Act. So that's important for people out there to know what the powers of *The Consumer Protection Act* and these Bills are all about.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it also talks a bit about the authority respecting consumer protection. We spoke about that earlier. But they do have consumer protection legislation that is assigned to the authority of this commission and that certainly has ... You know, there's a lot of different rules and regulations on how consumers are protected because that's some area that we really have to pay close attention. And over the years, consumer protection legislation in general has been really, really watched very carefully in terms of make sure that they're fair and balanced, and they make sure people out there are not being taken advantage of. So, Mr. Speaker, I think we want to make sure that people out there understand that this group, this commission, certainly has wide-ranging powers. And that's identified here as well, Mr. Speaker.

Now they have responsibilities, and the question you have to ask yourself now is if you have these powers, you can make grants to any agencies or association or organization. You can do some of these things. That's identified here as well. And some of these grants would be up to \$50,000. And I'm assuming that the grants of \$50,000, maybe they get some legal or some other advice on cases that may be coming forward to the commission. So they talk about that in the Bill as well and that's really important. And it's really important to note that while they have these authorities and they have this role, they also have to have the accompanying power.

And under section V, general powers and matters, it says quite clearly that:

The authority [Consumer Affairs Authority] may:



(a) authorize any person to obtain evidence outside Saskatchewan for the purposes of this Act, the regulations, any financial services legislation or any consumer protection . . . [Acts]; and

(b) for the purpose of obtaining evidence, make any order it considers proper for the return and use of the evidence so obtained.

So what they're saying is that if there's a fly-by-night operator came in from Manitoba or from Ontario, that this particular Act and this Treasury Board Crown can actually exercise its authority and its power of legislation beyond the Saskatchewan borders, not only pursuing these organizations or people that may have wronged the Saskatchewan citizen, but they can also order evidence returned to Saskatchewan. And therefore the powers are not just within the confines of our province but certainly can reach a long ways. And that's only fair and proper, Mr. Speaker.

And again they talk about a number of different perspectives of the Act itself. It talks about the evidence. It talks about joint hearings and consultations. And it also talks about the rules respecting hearings. Mr. Speaker, some people out there in Saskatchewanland may want to know how these hearings work because we've got staff; we've got a board; we've got this Act. Everything is moving forward. So if I have an argument, if I bought a vehicle that was in poor shape, how can I use this Consumer Affairs Authority to my advantage? And it says right here, basically in terms of how we have these hearings put in place, that the authority, the commission:

The authority [Consumer Affairs Authority] may make rules:

governing the management and conduct of its business and the conduct of the meetings, investigations, inquiries and any other proceedings of the authority and its panels;

They're also:

if authorized by the regulations and [to] subject to any terms and conditions prescribed in the regulations, governing the management and conduct of hearings . . . and

(c) respecting forms, applications and other documents required to be used and the procedures to be followed in the conduct of its affairs.

So what that's basically saying, Mr. Speaker, is that they do have these authorities, and it's defined in a wide-ranging kind of legal framework, if you will, of some of the other authorities. And all this is saying is that this Act is saying that they recognize that these powers should be there and are there for the authority in general.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it also talks about inquiries and reports, you know, and again the authority may do some inquiries. They may ask for reports. And this basically authorizes, this Act authorizes them to be able to do that, to be able to get the inquiries going and reports going. And they're also allowed to do investigations because obviously Consumer Affairs is not

going to simply assume one party is guilty because you get caught in all these different arguments and all these different situations and there's a lot of emotion to that.

So I think what's important when you look at the consumer affairs protection commission or committee, that there will be that particular dynamic in many of the hearings, and as fair and as open and as complete as can be, Mr. Speaker, what sometimes happens is you've got to be able to do things like a separate inquiry, ask for a specialized report, or do investigations. And that's what's really important, to make sure that your work is thorough. And those particular aspects, the Bills themselves are, this Bill basically spells all that out.

[15:45]

Now, Mr. Speaker, it also talks about receiving evidence, that "the powers of a commissioner pursuant to *The Public Inquiries Act*" — that's identified here as well — and they "may engage the services of any experts" that the commission may consider necessary. So that's some of the things I think is important, Mr. Speaker, that people know that when they have these hearings and these panels, that these are the rules governing these processes. So we have really what I would consider options that the securities or the consumer affairs authority would have at their disposal, and while they're not all spelled out neatly in this particular Bill, they certainly make reference to the larger Bills that are out there that would give them protection in certain areas of trying to undertake their duties.

They talk about decisions and quorums, making sure that the majority of the members of the authority are present and that they agree with the decision. That's important to point out. The Bill also makes reference to when the authority may act because obviously you have a lot of concerns and complaints out there. And I think it's important that that is also made reference in the Bill itself. It talks about conflict of interest, to be careful not to tread on those, on the very fine line at times, Mr. Speaker. And that's something that's really important.

And there's also a situation here, Mr. Speaker, that talks about non-compellability — which I'm assuming is they're not complying with if the commission makes a ruling or requires a person to come forward or a number of other things. Well this Bill talks about how the committee, this particular section talks about how the committee itself is able to have authority and powers to make sure that they can carry out their functions designed by this legislation.

It goes on to talk about disclosure, immunity. It talks about the financial matters and regulations, as I pointed out early. And it talks about, "The Minister of Finance may [be able to] advance moneys to the authority out of the general revenue fund for the purposes of the authority in the amounts, at the times, and on the terms and conditions the Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine." So it goes on to talk about a lot of the financial matters and regulations, Mr. Speaker.

I understand as well that this Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan, that they also have temporary borrowing powers, Mr. Speaker. And some people out there may not know this, but the Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan, being a Treasury Board, has the ability to do

some temporary borrowing — and I think that's important for people to know that they have to get the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, so obviously that goes through cabinet — by way of a bank overdraft or line of credit or any other manner that the authority may deem.

And as I mentioned, at the end of the day that I am assuming that in terms of temporary borrowing, that it may be for times of the year when, for example, when the legislative, when the session is on. There are times when, since many of the departments are not fully through the budgetary process, they allocate their money one-twelfth at a time, a month at a time. And in this instance, that might be the case where the Consumer Affairs Authority might need temporary borrowing at times like this. So I think that's spelled out there as well, Mr. Speaker.

I spoke earlier about investments, where they're allowed to invest money if they do have excess moneys available, and that action or that issue is addressed here in this Act as well. The only advice we have is that if you are allowed to have investments out there from the process or from the proceeds of your activity that you make sure that they're not first and foremost in the minds of the commission members because they obviously have to make sure that they're there to deal with the issue of consumer protection, not consumer investment. So I want to make sure that we distinguish the two, and to add a cautionary note there, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we emphasize that they're there for consumer protection. But nonetheless, the investments option is there and certainly I think it's important that people know that they have that ability as well.

They talk about fiscal year, the period commencing April 1 and ending March 31st. So it's not December to December, as some people would think, Mr. Speaker. It is clear that the fiscal year ends April 1st — or sorry, March 31st — and the new year starts April 1st.

It talks about the annual audit, which is fair enough. It talks about an annual report which I think is fair enough. So we'll see those annual reports and audits here in the Assembly. And that's something that we will also be paying very close attention to, to make sure that there is good benefit for the people of Saskatchewan not only in the activities but certainly in the function of this Consumer Affairs Authority.

Now, Mr. Speaker, after the annual report is presented, again I point out that there is regulations that are impacting this particular Act. Bill 39 and Bill 40, as I mentioned, are certainly, they're joined at the hip so to speak, with Bill 40 being the primary Bill in terms of . . . Or sorry, Bill 39 being the primary Bill because that is the Bill that's going to be having the most impact, and Bill 40 is the consequential amendment Bill Act. So that's simply something that's going to be part and parcel of the main Bill. But nonetheless, Mr. Speaker, it's very important that people out there know that these are issues that are important to all of us and that they take the time to read them and to understand them as I have for the last half hour or last hour.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would point out that in terms of actions — because there's been thousands of cases where Bill No. 39 or Bill 40, you know, may have been of some benefit to somebody 10, 15, 20 years ago — there's always limitations of actions,

and that's what's important. Under this particular Act it says, "No action or proceeding lies or shall be commenced against the Government of Saskatchewan, any member of the Executive Council, the authority or any officer, employee or agent of the Government of Saskatchewan or the authority because of the enactment of this Act." So I think one of the things that's really important is that, I'm understanding, a limitation of actions would apply, seeing that there should be no actions commenced against the Government of Saskatchewan as a result of the limitation of actions section. And that's pretty much straightforward again, Mr. Speaker.

And under the transitional, transfer of employees, obviously this being a new Act, they're going to look and see how this thing is working. And one of the most important thing here is under section (2) of that particular point within the Act. It says:

Notwithstanding any Act, law or provision of a contract, any transfer described in subsection (1):

- (a) does not constitute the abolition or termination of any position or job;
- (b) does not require any advance notice, including any notice that may be required pursuant to any Act, law or provision of a contract; and
- (c) does not constitute constructive dismissal of any . . . [Act] or a breach of contract.

And finally:

- (3) If *The Public Service Superannuation Act* applies to a person who is transferred pursuant to this section, that Act continues to apply, with any necessary modification, to the person while the person is employed by the authority.

And that's something that is really important to note, Mr. Speaker, is that as a result of the creation of this Act, that you don't have 15 staff employed in a different department or a different Act, and all of a sudden this new Act comes along, and they're abolishing all those positions and just taking one. I think it's important to know that we need to value our employees and that people that have given their lives to the service of government have to be recognized not only for their years of service but, if they have benefits and pensions that are being built up, that they ought to have those opportunities come with them to a new site or a new Act that is being proposed here. So I think that's important that that is certainly noted.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would also point out that they make reference to some of the arguments in terms of the transition under a former fund. So what they got to do is they now have to describe what a former fund is. So under the Act, it's clear that what they want to do is make sure that employees aren't losing any benefits from pensions or benefits from any funds that are out there. So what they've done is they've identified what the former funds are. And, Mr. Speaker:

- (a) "**former Act**" means *The Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Act*, as that Act existed before the coming into force of this Act;

(b) “**former fund**” means the Saskatchewan Financial Services Commission Fund . . .

And basically just pointing out that all the Acts that are out there prior to this new Act coming forward in terms of funds and transitions and description, that they will respect all those particular funds that are out there. And I think it’s important to know that’s part of the Bill as well.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it’s got a lot of information overall in terms of the staff itself, of how we think the staff should be treated under the Bill. The Bill is fairly certain and direct and straightforward in its fashion when it comes to the transfer of employees from one entity to another once this Bill comes into effect. So we’re just hoping and praying that that is a continuation of what the Bill is intended to do because we base our Bills and the interpretation of these Bills is based on what is written here.

So we hope that there isn’t any kind of suggestion or any kind of plan by the Saskatchewan Party to start using new Bills and new processes and new Acts to start terminating employees along the line. And that’s what’s one of the challenges that we have as an opposition is to make sure that as the Saskatchewan Party presents Bills to us and pretend to try and change things for the better, that they’re not using that as an opportunity to terminate employees or not fill other positions that are under previous Acts as their way of “modernizing Saskatchewan.”

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it’s important that people out there know that there’s always that particular chance that the Saskatchewan Party will do that. And our job as an opposition is to make sure we watch that. And the Bill itself says that they’re not going to do that, Mr. Speaker, but we’ve known from time to time that they have done this on a continual basis. And it’s something that we have to really pay attention to, and that’s why it’s interesting and paramount that we pay attention to these Bills as they come forward.

So different organizations that are out there that may have impacts on this Bill or may have heard of a rumour or may have a concern or may have gone through the Bill itself, it’s important that we reach out to you and encourage you to bring those issues forward because if you don’t come forward and advise us what some of the challenges are, then it’s important to note that it would be a great injustice not only to you but to the people of Saskatchewan if you don’t come forward. Because we want to make sure that what is being proposed and planned here, that we in the opposition expose its weaknesses, its shortcomings, and its problems, if there are problems out there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, a good example of that, the transfer of assets and liabilities. Well what exactly does that entail? And that’s what I said at the outset in Bill 39 or Bill 40. What assets are we talking about? What liabilities are we talking about? It talks about the statute of limitations on one hand, but it talks about assuming ongoing liabilities on the other hand. How do the two issues match up? So obviously there is some legal ramifications that we have to look at and understand and try and figure out. And that’s the important note, Mr. Speaker, is that that’s the conflicting messages and the misinformation we sometimes get and the lack of detail that we need here in our opposition.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think it’s important that we look at the assets, the whole notion of assets and liabilities. Is it equipment? Is it bank accounts? Obviously they consider staff not necessarily an asset but certainly a huge addition to the department. And since you don’t want to characterize them in non-human ways as becoming assets, they’re assets in their own way, but how do we describe, identify, and certainly describe assets in general?

Transition of members, directors, and executive director. I’m assuming the Act, the previous Act, is a new Act. It’s a new entity. It’s a new Crown corporation, or Treasury Board Crown. And so these guys, the people that are currently working now get transitioned over to a new entity created by this Act. We want to make sure that that transition is as seamless and professional and respectful as possible. That’s what’s really, really important. And that’s something that the Bill also identifies.

And it talks, the Bill talks about the consequential and coming into force provision. And as I mentioned at the outset, it has a lot of impact and effect on a number of different Bills that are out there, and this Bill attempts to identify that.

So I think it’s important for people out there to know is that when the government does a certain Bill, as what they’re doing here with this particular Bill, and they have consequential amendments, and what that means is that if you do a Bill on a certain matter, there may be other Acts within government that has some effect on that Bill. So what happens is the government has to try and figure out how to bring all those pieces together and figure out one main Bill that not only respects what other Bills are trying to do but coordinates it in a better fashion.

And that’s kind of what it’s trying to do here with the consequential amendment Act Bill to the Consumer Affairs Authority. And this is why it’s important that we take the time to see what the other effects of the other Bills are down the road. And are they lessening the impact of those Bills? Are they taking away staff? Are they granting different powers? Are they reducing authority? And that’s kind of what we had to make sure that we follow.

[16:00]

And it’s a fairly good rule, Mr. Speaker, when you have ministers that present these Bills and they want to put this new, bigger Bill in place of all the other Bills, that they’re forced to do all the consequential amendments to that Bill, so basically saying that if there’s an impact of this new Bill on other Acts, then they have to identify those Acts and bring them forward. I think it serves the public well. It certainly serves the opposition well because we’ve got to know if they’re going to do a particular Bill that reduces the effect of another Bill. And if they don’t do that and advise the House of that, then it’s kind of not the proper way, it’s not the proper way of doing things because quite frankly it’s important that the people of Saskatchewan, the opposition and impacted organizations and groups out there of any Bill know that there’s some changes coming, but you know, everything else that is impacting on this Bill is also included. So that’s something that people out there have to know.

So this Bill really goes on to identify which Acts are impacted. For example *The Securities Act* is certainly impacted by this Bill. *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*, that's impacted as well. Mr. Speaker, the Consumer Affairs Authority Act is also another Act with this same name, probably different intent, but they're also impacted.

There's also *The Labour-Sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Act* is also impacted. And that's one of the areas I think we need to pay some very close attention to to make sure that there's no changes in that because it's certainly, it's nice to be able to see some of the venture capital corporations operate in Saskatchewan without political interference.

And this Bill also impacts *The Mortgage Brokerages and Mortgage Administrators Act* that is also repealed, and there's a substitution that I think it's important that people know that they do these things, they have substitutions. *The New Generation Co-operatives Act* is amended and in a manner set forth as a result of this particular action. Again I go back to the whole pension benefits Act. This is also impacted by this Act. *The Personal Property Security Act*, it's also impacted a great amount. *The Saskatchewan Insurance Act* is impacted. And so that's an important point to note to the people of Saskatchewan that all these different Acts, *The Trust and Loan Corporations Act, 1997*, they're all impacted by what the minister has proposed today which is the creation of a Treasury Board Crown called the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan, and that's what this Bill does.

And I think that's one of the reasons why, from our perspective as an opposition, we go through these Bills as I have for the last hour, just explaining to the people out there who may be listening how these Bills operate. Because these Bills quite clearly are complex in nature, but as you take the time to understand them, they're simple to be able to understand what the intent is.

And the main trick in opposition is to make sure you go through them as thoroughly as you can, get as many different groups and organizations out there that may have some influence or may be impacted by this Bill, to get advice from them as well. To say, look, this Bill is coming forward. It has all these impacts. Are you guys somehow impacted that you want to share with us, either on a positive note or a negative note? And most times it's negative. Then we want to know about it so we're able to challenge the government on that Bill and see why they made such a horrendous mistake. So I think it's important that people out there know.

So, Mr. Speaker, as a result of this Bill, Bill 39, and most recently Bill 40, the consequential amendment Act, that we have spoken about the authority, in terms of how we're going to make sure we continue with the authority of Consumer Affairs, of how the organization of the authority is structured, of how the executive director and their employees are hired and selected, and the transition is supposed to be fair and open and seamless. And it talks about the financial services legislation in terms of how this impacts them. It talks about consumer protection. It talks about the general powers and matters and it talks about the financial matters and regulations. We spoke about the transitional and certainly the repealing of other Acts and other matters, and of course the last part was how other

Acts were impacted.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would point out again that there's so many different angles to this Bill, and explain it as best as we can to try and simplify it as best as we can so the people out there know exactly what the Bill is all about. And that's one of the things that I think is really, really important for people out there to pay attention to.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think on Bill 39, and certainly most recently Bill 40, there's a lot of questions we have yet to ask. Obviously my colleagues have been glued to their seats listening to my interpretation of this particular Act and to try and see where this Act is going and what this is, you know, all involves. And that's why it's important that as opposition we explain as best we can, we explain as best we can how the Bills are going to proceed from our perspective. We provide as much of the background information as we can through this particular channel of communication. And the most important channel of communication, I think though, is getting input from different people and different organizations as to how this Bill may affect them.

There's so many moving parts to any Bill, and consumer protection is such a tricky aspect of governance that we want to pay particular close attention to that admirable plan because it's important that we protect consumers from fly-by-night operators or those that wish to prey on our elders and so on and so forth. There are those organizations and people that are out there. So we want to make sure we do the consumer protection process as fairly and open and thoroughly as we can, Mr. Speaker.

I think the other thing that's important too is, as we embark on this journey of strengthening the consumer affairs protection Bill, that we ask for a number of different groups and organizations that could be of invaluable assistance. And one of the groups I think is important, Mr. Speaker, is the elderly. As you and I know that there's many times that elderly people get involved with many different aspects of life. And they do a lot of shopping online. They get telephone calls. They're subjected to many, many different kind of scams over their time. I know many elders in my community that are promised great things, but send us \$1,000. And they end up sending \$1,000 somewhere, and they never see that money nor do they see the product that they paid for.

So I think overall, I think people are wary of those particular, of that particular activity over time because there's more and more information. And any time you see that kind of activity, Mr. Speaker, my advice to the elders or those that may have some cognitive challenges is to contact the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] to double check that these people are really good business people and that they're well-respected and that they're recognized as being truthful and honest. And that's the very first step, Mr. Speaker.

So it's important that when we talk about consumer protection that we do our work as legislators to make sure that there's some good protection there for many people that we represent. And certainly one of the groups that I would caution people to always listen to and take care of is of course the elders, Mr. Speaker.

I would also suggest to many people that are out there that if they have concerns of their own under the consumer protection scenario that they look at this Bill. Because if you educate yourself as to the value of Bill 39 or Bill 40 and you know exactly what is being intended and how it was designed, how it was structured, it makes you a stronger advocate. It makes you a stronger person. So when you see this kind of activity occurring in your neighbourhood or with the apartment next door or your aunt or your uncle, then at least you have a great understanding of how *The Consumer Protection Act* works overall and how consumers are protected legally and what are some of the frameworks in which they're protected. Having that knowledge is very, very valuable.

And that's why I went through the process of doing a bit of education on what this Bill's all about because there are some wide-ranging implications overall. And our intent is to make sure, as an opposition, that we do our very best to let people know that this is what the Bill's about, this is how it's structured, and this is how you can become a great advocate if you follow the process fairly. And the best way to follow it fairly is to understand it really good.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think overall both those Bills, as I mentioned, are complementary to each other. And there's a lot of interest, I'm paying particular interest to the transition of employees. I just pray that there isn't any loss of jobs, as evidenced with this particular government over time. And certainly we've seen evidence that the federal government would do the same. And that's kind of one of the reasons why we're a bit wary at times when this government talks about transition of employees or talks about new Acts. We sometimes think that there's a plan in place to get rid of the employees, just bring in the Act, thereby doing great injustice to the Act itself if you don't have the appropriate resources and the people and the powers to do the job right. So, Mr. Speaker, I think that's one of the things that I want to make sure people understand out there.

I would close off on my comments on this particular Bill, Bill 39, and of course attached to Bill 40, by saying one thing that's really, really important — that consumer protection is all of our duty. It is every single person in this particular room duty to do this far and beyond the average person. But every person that's out there now, if they see an elder being abused in some way, shape, or form, a consumer being ripped off, it happens on a continual basis. By and large most of the businesses in Saskatchewan are very good, Mr. Speaker. They're reputable. They're respectful. They do great service for their customers, and the list goes on as to how some of these businesses ought to be recognized for their success.

But now and then, and many times too often I might add, where some group, an organization gets horrendously ripped off — if I can use that phrase — and they sometimes feel that they're alone in this process. Well now we have a Treasury Board Crown that we hope can be designed fairly, a Treasury Board Crown with the right powers that can act accordingly and to be able to protect some of those interests. And I pray that that was the intent of this particular Act, and we're paying very, very close attention to that, Mr. Speaker.

And again as I said a few minutes ago, there were thousands of examples. And most recently I've used the example of, which I

didn't think if there was ever a phrase for counterfeit drugs, Mr. Speaker. We're hearing now that there's some drugs out there that pretend to be a drug that many people need, in particular the older people. And then we find out later — or some cancer patient — and we find out later that those drugs are not . . . that they don't do any kind of job for the people that are paying good money for that.

And that's another example of how the consumer can be protected under this Bill. And it also is another example of how people need to watch out for each other because our job is to make sure we go after every business that practices unfair or certainly unscrupulous ways in how they can rip off people. We need to go after those organizations that do that. And, Mr. Speaker, we hope that this Bill is explained long enough and loud enough so people out there know how to utilize it. So I think it's important that that message is said on a continual basis.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to quickly wrap up how I interpreted the Bill overall. I found the Bill as fairly lengthy. I was somewhat disappointed in the brief explanation that the minister gave in terms of the intent of the Bill. It's a huge, it's a huge, huge Bill that has great implications if done properly. And the short explanation of the Bill did not do justice to the purpose, what I think all our purpose is, to make sure we will protect as many consumers as we can in all jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly what the message is, that we have as the official opposition is we don't want to take consumer protection lightly. We think it's an admirable objective, and we'll certainly do our part in the opposition to understand the Bill as much as we can. And there may be times where we will propose an alternative or we might propose an amendment or we may propose a better idea on how we could do it with some really good changes, better and stronger and quicker. And that's one of the things I think the value of the opposition is, is to take the time to understand it, Mr. Speaker, and certainly work to get a better product or a better Bill at the end of the day if that is required.

[16:15]

So all the folks out there that may have been paying attention to what this Bill may or may not do for them, I would say to them that every Bill that comes forward has descriptions of what's impacted in the Bill. Every Bill has its intent laid out. Every Bill that may have impact on other Acts or other Bills out there, that's to be identified within the Bill as well. And that's what this particular Bill has done. And this consequential amendment Act to the consumer protection Bill that was presented earlier today, that's just a minor amendment to another Act to make sure it's consistent with how we deal with Bills in the Legislative Chamber.

So, Mr. Speaker, I would again reiterate that we're very pleased to be able to take the time to go through the Bill today. We obviously will have a lot more questions. We will have a lot more input from a lot more people as time goes on.

Our job is to look at the Bill initially to see what it does, what the government plans to do with the Bill. And then the second

part of the process is to make sure we reach out to different groups and organizations that may be impacted by the Bill to see what their input is or how they would perceive the Bill as being advantageous or hurtful to their organization. And that'll certainly be undertaken by the official opposition.

And of course the other thing is to open it up to the general public, to the average person, to make sure that they too know that they have a role to play, that they can easily approach one of us as MLAs or phone the main NDP number. And we will certainly hear your advice on what you think this Bill or any other Bill may affect you adversely or even positively as we proceed to have these Bills become law.

Mr. Speaker, I would reiterate one key point that I think is really important is that, as this government brings Bills forward — and this is the role that we would have as opposition — as they bring Bills forward, that we have to make sure that there isn't any watering down or there isn't any other lesser ideals being achieved because of these new Bills. That's what's really important.

And that's why you've got to make reference to some of the older Bills. I think that's one part of the legislation, I think, is a bit weak in this Assembly. As we continue doing our work here is that it's nice to be able to have the Bill that's impacted, as we do with this Bill, to see all the other consequential Acts that are impacted by that. But it would be nice to make reference to the previous Bill. Like what part of the previous Bill does this Bill not incorporate?

And I think if we don't have that information readily available, I think it does a great disservice to the Bill that's being presented. And it also does a great disservice to the Assembly itself because it's important to have all the data, the right information in front of us. Because if you don't have all that data, then obviously it's going to create some problems for you in assessing the impact of the Bill that you're currently debating.

So I think the benefits have to be twofold. I think we've achieved one objective, that is to have any other Bill impacted to be identified within the new Bill being proposed. I think that is being done through the consequential amendment process. But more so on the secondary argument, which I don't see evidence of that happening, is that we must do a comparison, an analysis of the older Bill in terms of what may be lost in the presentation of a new Bill. I think that's important that we do that because we need to see and assess for our own selves, even from different perspectives and different parties, as to what is being lost in the transition.

Because a lot of times . . . A good example I would use is the analysis of a vehicle. You know, you could have a very nice vehicle that's good on gas, and it's, you know, it's a great, it's a sound vehicle, and the engine runs good. And then you see this nice, shiny Camaro, you know. And you get caught up by the bright lights and the new, shiny Camaro and the new Bill and say, well right on. That looks great. Maybe I should take that. And what you don't know, Mr. Speaker, is that that new, shiny vehicle may have a smaller motor or may be worse on gas.

And that's the problem I think happens when you look at the

assessment of the Bills in general is that sometimes these new Bills that are vaunted and spoke about at length. In terms of what the intent is, we sometimes forget to ask the question, is what did the previous Bill look like? Or what is being omitted from the previous Bill under this new, shiny Bill? So that's the thing I think I would make the reference in my argument that we ought to be able to see the changes, the proposed changes, clearly identified under a different section of how this may take away ability or strength from another Bill, an older Bill, without the public and the opposition knowing about it.

And, Mr. Speaker, I think if that option were to be looked at and included in the analysis of any new Bills that this government brings forward, I think it'd be a great tool for democracy but more so a great tool for the opposition to be able to look at what is being done by this government without having to dig deeper and dig longer to see what exactly is going on.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues will have a lot more to say about these Bills. I've explained the Bill in detail as I mentioned as best I can. There's a lot of different issues that will come forward over time. We want to make sure that we again make the offer to the public that's out there. If they have any particular advice or information that you'd like the opposition to be made aware of, then I think it's important that you bring them forward.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out that I would move that we adjourn the debate on Bill number . . . I believe it's Bill No. 40, *An Act to make a consequential amendment resulting from the enactment of The Financial and Consumers Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Act*. So therefore, Mr. Speaker, on this Bill No. 40, I move that we adjourn the debate.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of Bill No. 40, *The Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority of Saskatchewan Consequential Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I will call the question then. We have a motion on the floor for adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — All those opposed? Carried.

#### **Bill No. 37 — *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Hutchinson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to speak about *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*. This Act makes Tourism Saskatchewan a Treasury Board Crown which will provide greater direction over tourism functioning and overall tourism activities.

We decided to make this change after carefully reviewing key recommendations from a review of the tourism system. I'll tell you about some of the key recommendations and some of the results of the consultations, but first let me give you a little background.

A few years ago, our government hired independent consultants to do a tourism system review. The eight-month process included extensive consultations and input from a broad cross-section of the industry. The consultations for the review included key stakeholder interviews, meetings with specific organizations including Tourism Saskatchewan's management team, focus group sessions with industry, and written input from interested organizations.

The consultants wrote in the report that with the creation of our ministry, the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport in 2008, that it was, and I quote:

... timely to review the role of the Ministry, Tourism Saskatchewan's mandate and the relationships of the government and the regions with Tourism Saskatchewan, the five tourism regions and the City and Destination Marketing Organizations. Much has changed in and around the tourism sector in these last 10 years. The role and prominence of the internet in tourism marketing and visitor planning has grown. Saskatchewan's economic profile as well as the world economy continues to fluctuate. How, why and where people travel has evolved significantly.

And that's the end of the quote.

These were some of the reasons for the review. Even more has changed since that was written. In fact Tourism Saskatchewan has taken the first step in making some changes, implementing a quality assurance program and stopping funding for the five tourism regions.

At this time, I'd like to read the eight guiding principles for the review developed by the steering committee and recorded in volume 1 of the review:

- (1) The review needs to be visionary.
- (2) The growth of the tourism industry in terms of gross revenue should be the focus.
- (3) The relationships in the industry should emphasize collaboration.
- (4) Recommendations should emphasize a simplification of processes.
- (5) Recommendations should be informed by best practices.
- (6) Recommendations should be action-oriented and as specific as possible indicating responsibility for the action and timeframe.
- (7) There are no sacred cows.

And finally:

- (8) The review will be transparent.

Mr. Speaker, when I review these eight guiding principles and think about the recommendations and our government's subsequent actions, I am indeed proud to say we followed the spirit of these guiding principles.

Now let's get to what the consultants found. The consultations showed that generally there is satisfaction with the current model but that it could be better. And certainly we want it to be

better, Mr. Speaker. Making these changes to focus Tourism Saskatchewan's mandate and to better coordinate the provincial image will grow this industry and will support our government's growth agenda. The review consultation document asked if government was in or out and said specifically, if it was in tourism, it needed to fund its own assets such as its provincial parks, among other things. We're certainly doing that, Mr. Speaker, as you well know.

Mr. Speaker, government is in tourism. It's a \$1.7 billion industry for this province, and we are funding our own assets. Budget 2012-2013 fulfills the government's promise to invest an additional \$10 million over the next four years to improve provincial parks. This year an extra \$2.5 million will be spent on things like improving washroom and shower facilities, upgrading picnic areas and barbeques, and adding more electrified campsites. As you will remember, we have achieved almost 1,100 of those in the last four years.

The review also recommended a one point of entry, a single point of entry for tourism. By creating this tourism Treasury Board Crown, we are creating one point of entry for tourism, and that, of course, is the provincial government itself.

And the review highlighted that this province is an anomaly in Canada. Mr. Speaker, we're taking best practice from across the country. It's well worth noting that every other jurisdiction in Canada has the tourism functions in either an agency of the Crown or delivers it directly through a ministry. For example, you may have seen Newfoundland and Labrador's recent television campaign which won the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Marketing Campaign of the Year award. Mr. Speaker, Newfoundland and Labrador currently does this from inside the Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation in that province. You may also have seen the recent Alberta advertisements. They were done by a legislated agency of the Crown called Travel Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, we're acting on the recommendations in the tourism report, and I believe the industry will see tangible benefits as a result. In fact the industry has already seen tangible benefits consistent with the tourism review recommendations. The review had recommended a quality assurance program and a centrally coordinated, in-province marketing campaign. Tourism Saskatchewan has already acted on and implemented both of these items.

Our government is now continuing to review and implement recommendations from the tourism review. From here industry will see a greater focus on tourism as part of government's overall economic plan. This will ensure that the entire tourism industry benefits from our government's investment, not just the members of the association. It will allow a greater coordination of the provincial image, particularly at major events.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has already hosted and will be hosting a number of very significant events. Right now, for example, Tourism Saskatchewan and the provincial government each have their own presence at these events, and this just doesn't make sense to us. The change will allow for one coordinated provincial image, and this is particularly important, and particularly so right now.

I'm pleased to report that budget 2012-13 includes increased funding of \$2.5 million for our event hosting program in the tourism initiatives branch. The Government of Saskatchewan supports events to increase tourism revenue, create employment, increase volunteerism, increase opportunities for residents and non-residents alike, and to solidify our provincial identity, and, I might add, Mr. Speaker, build pride in our great province.

[16:30]

Events provide residents the chance to participate in new and unique activities. They provide exposure to different cultural, recreational, and sport activities and a forum to generate interest for those activities among a wider audience. Major events provide a return on investment and grow the economy. For example, the 2010 IIHF [International Ice Hockey Federation] World Junior Hockey Championships generated an estimated \$86.6 million in economic activity for the province, of which \$49.6 million was in Saskatoon, \$18.9 million was in Regina, with the remaining 18.1 million for the rest of the province. Mr. Speaker, the ROI [return on investment] on that event was approximately 30 to 1. That's significant. In fact it's extraordinary.

Since 2008 more than 70 events have received support, and we have some exciting events coming up that our ministry is supporting. And these include: the 2012 Canadian Country Music Awards in Saskatoon supported by a grant of \$375,000; the 2013 Juno Awards and Junos in Regina, \$1.5 million in support — I must also add that that's going to be in Moose Jaw as well; they're very proud of their participation and so are we — the 2013 Memorial Cup in Saskatoon, \$250,000 in a capital grant and \$3 million in a profit guarantee; and finally the 2014 North America Indigenous Games here in Regina, \$3.5 million in support.

Mr. Speaker, supporting events like these provide a significant return on our investment through stimulating the economy. They bring tourists, increased tax revenues, and yes, they create jobs. They help our government in keeping the Saskatchewan advantage. This is a program we are very proud of, and it makes sense to work with Tourism Saskatchewan on showcasing our very best self at these events.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, one of the recommendations in the review was one point, a single point of entry for tourism. There are many people experiencing Saskatchewan these days. There are in fact business leaders, meetings and conventions, dignitaries, investors, foreign students, and on and on. This change will allow coordination so that government can make the visitor experience great and more similar for all of these groups. Mr. Speaker, tourism is a big industry in Saskatchewan, and government is taking a greater leadership role, which will better position the industry for growth as requested by the review. The new Crown corporation will help us to achieve the goal of better aligning all of our provincial marketing efforts to attract more business and investment and be more consistent with our message and more effective in marketing our province both here at home and around the world.

Tourism Saskatchewan has done a solid job in taking tourism to this point, but Tourism Saskatchewan is an anomaly in Canada.

In the three other provinces that actually have an arm's-length agency, they are all agencies of the Crown. This Act makes Tourism Saskatchewan a Treasury Board Crown rather than an arm's-length agency and clarifies Tourism Saskatchewan's mandate by focusing it on marketing, visitor services, market research, and product development.

At the same time, as a Treasury Board Crown, Tourism Saskatchewan will retain much of the flexibility it currently has. It will retain, for example, the ability to respond to shifts in the marketplace and technology, the ability to access private sector support and partnership through partnered marketing promotions, the ability to market online, the long-term commitment to markets, the ability to enter multi-year agreements, the ability to carry funds over between fiscal years — very important — the ability to attract top quality marketing people, and finally the ability to foster industry engagement. These will all continue under a Treasury Board Crown model.

I want to assure industry members that as a continuation of the existing corporation, all of Tourism Saskatchewan's current agreements and contracts will carry forward under the new structure. Employees and employee contracts are also carried forward to the new organization. And Tourism Saskatchewan's budget allocation from the Government of Saskatchewan remains fully intact at \$12.81 million.

Many tourism operators are wondering what the structural change at Tourism Saskatchewan means for their tourism business, event, or attraction. The programs and services of Tourism Saskatchewan will continue uninterrupted. This includes targeted marketing initiatives like the travel guide advertisements and listings, trade shows, and of course the 2012 Saskatchewan campaign. The work Tourism Saskatchewan has been moving forward on quality assurance will also continue.

Mr. Speaker, before I conclude my remarks, I want to assure industry that there is one recommendation in the review that we will not be implementing, and that is a province-wide destination marketing fee, or DMF as it's known in the industry. We believe that the current system, where the private sector such as the Hotels Association implements these fees, is working very well. We have certainly said that we will not be changing that.

Mr. Speaker, once again I'd like to thank Tourism Saskatchewan for all of their good efforts, their hard work, and to let them know we are looking forward to working with them to continue to grow this wonderful industry. Again, tourism is a \$1.7 billion industry, and I might add it accounts for 60,000 jobs for Saskatchewan residents. It certainly makes sense that it be marketed alongside the rest of the provincial economy as a full and equal partner.

To conclude, Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to move second reading of *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport has moved second reading of Bill No. 37, *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.



**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's with great interest that I rise today to speak to this new Bill respecting Tourism Saskatchewan, Bill No. 37.

Just with a bit of a background, Mr. Speaker, I have been peripherally involved in the tourism industry for a number of years now, in particular through a cultural centre that's been established north of Big River, Saskatchewan at what we call Ness Creek. And Ness Creek is an actual creek that's located about 15, 20 kilometres northeast of Big River, and we have been doing cultural events there for over 20 years now.

I also am a part of a group that operates a campground in a recreational site in northern Saskatchewan called Nesslin Lake. And we are busy getting ready for this year's operation. We have people that are working very hard to get everything ready. And you know, running a business up there with a remote location has always proved to be very challenging.

So as a result of some of the work we've done with Tourism Saskatchewan, we were with the northwest tourism region for a number of years and have been heavily involved in the operations of that region until it was shut down recently. And my one business partner, Gord Olson, is the linchpin for our organization, and he has been heavily invested in the development of Tourism Saskatchewan since it was started in '98, and certainly was involved with TISASK [Tourism Industry Association of Saskatchewan] before then. But since Tourism Saskatchewan got established, he has been incredibly involved in that particular region, supportive of the work of the organization, and a key member of the Tourism Saskatchewan industry.

Some of the work we've done has been with the help of Tourism Saskatchewan, and one of the main programs that we've really benefited from was one that helped us establish CNEC, which is the Canada Nature Escapes Cooperative. And we've joined forces with six or seven other tourism operators in the North to provide what we call a DMO, or a destination marketing organization, and this has proved to be very, very helpful for us. It was totally with the support of Tourism Saskatchewan, who understands how small operators work and how working together co-operatively can help enhance our marketing opportunities.

So the main thrust of CNEC is to do marketing, and we've worked very closely with the marketing officials at Tourism Saskatchewan. They've been incredibly helpful and have certainly have provided funding for CNEC to do the work it does. And certainly I would recommend any of the members to go online and just google CNEC, Canadian Nature Escapes Cooperative, and you will see a lot of the results of the work that has been done, on and off, with the incredible support and assistance of Tourism Saskatchewan, particularly Mr. Jonathon Potts who's been at Tourism Saskatchewan for a long time. I met Jonathon several years ago when we first started developing our operation, and the support that we've been given has been substantial. And I think without them, we certainly wouldn't be where we are right now.

Another piece of work that we're working on is looking at the west side of the Prince Albert National Park, so there's been a lot of partnerships developed there. And the national park itself,

of course, is a federal jurisdiction, but with some of our business partners in the area, including Sturgeon River Ranch and Nesslin Lake campgrounds and Delaronde and the town of Big River, and certainly with the support of the government through some tourism funding support for the town, we've been able to create a buzz around the west side of the Prince Albert National Park.

And again it's a remote area. It's beautiful and it's pristine. And all those features are, in a strengths analysis, they are our strengths and weaknesses. So with the co-operation of other tourism operators in the area, we've been able to build a reputation for ourselves. And indeed this year, CNEC will be represented at Rendez-Vous Canada, which is the premier tourism marketing event in the country. And this is the first time that us, as small operators, have been able to afford to work together with other operators, through the support of Tourism Saskatchewan and encouragement of Tourism Saskatchewan, to actually be a presence and to attract international visitors to our beautiful but remote area of Saskatchewan.

There's been other programs that we've been able to access through Tourism Saskatchewan, particularly through the STEC or the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council. And we worked on a mentorship program, and we were mentored with Brad Muir who operates a sled dog — Sundog Excursions, I think it's called — he operates a sled dog excursion company near the national park, I think near Anglin Lake. And other members of CNEC have mentored our organization. So you can see that the member-driven aspect of Tourism Saskatchewan has been incredibly successful for our operation, and I would think that for many of the small operators and the ones that I have spoken to, it's something that is cherished and really appreciated. It's the collegiality among the members that has been the actual strength of Tourism Saskatchewan in addition to the strong leadership that the agency has had, particularly with their most recent executive director, Dr. Haverstock.

So she's been a visionary in many ways for the organization, and I think it's been a very good development in the tourism industry. It's really helped the small operators and helped the people that need the help the most, which is the people in remote areas or mom and pop operators that have a bed and breakfast or maybe a little cattle ranch or the organization at Herschel where they have the tours of the medicine rings in the area. So there's small anthropological tourism outfits. I know the T.rex Centre down in Eastend has benefited from the support of Tourism Saskatchewan.

So for all those reasons, Mr. Speaker, it's somewhat curious that this government has felt necessary to interfere in what appears to be a good thing. We just heard some of the reasons from the minister, which to me suggests that it isn't absolutely a requirement for this to be a Crown corporation; it is just something that this government wants. I don't think there's any real need for this to happen. The operations are going just fine. There's been no complaints from the industry.

And certainly according to news reports that we have had opportunity to read since the Bill was introduced, it's clear that there was no consultation at all with the industry. And that's one of the major concerns, I think, that's being expressed.

Certainly the executive director of Tourism Saskatchewan was blindsided. So that's a strange way to work closely with an industry is when you actually knock them over sideways with an announcement that will profoundly impact the way their operations are being conducted.

I guess another thing I'd like to talk about a little bit before I actually get into the Bill is the work of STEC, the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council. And I was really fortunate. All of us were invited last week to a banquet in Saskatoon of the graduates from the STEC program for the hospitality industry. And this is a 12-week program that is offered to people who are looking for a career in the service industry. These are young people, and they may not have any other opportunities for this kind of program. I went to the banquet. I was the only MLA there. It was a really amazing event; it was quite impressive. We had some very young people who had spent 12 weeks learning how to cook under the supervision of two master chefs and they also had service . . . The other group were taught service under again the supervision of experienced career industry professionals. So these young people would . . . They all came. It was a small group of us, and they would serve us. They poured the drinks, they set the table, they brought out all the meal, the entree, the salad, all of those things. And they were so proud of the work they did that it really came through in the service that we received.

But I think the people that were the most proud were the people from STEC. I sat at a table with four of the employees from STEC, and they talked with great pride about the advances that they've made through STEC in the service industry and in the hospitality industry. And just even some of the standards that they've established, and they've been partnering with all the other provinces and working on nationwide standards for service, for food service, for health and safety. All these students were taking all the food safety training, WHMIS [workplace hazardous materials information system] training, and all the other sort of certificates that they would need to be a contributing member of that particular profession. And indeed, Mr. Speaker, they treat it as a profession, and it's something that they're all very, very proud of.

[16:45]

So that was one of the events. And I think with STEC, there's a lot of questions right now. What is going to happen to the people at STEC? How are the programs going to be changed? What will the impact be now that the government has inserted itself into the processes that were working just fine and had no need of change? And certainly with no consultation, they are really worried about what's going to be their future as a program and individually as employees of STEC.

So they have a lot of contractors who provide all sorts of training in different areas. Those people are very concerned right now about the impact of this Bill. And certainly we have a lot of questions about that and are going to want to look into it very carefully before we can suggest that this Bill be moved forward to committee.

The other experience that I had recently was attending the gala here in Regina a few weeks ago for the annual awards, and that was a really informative evening as well. And I did . . . There

was I think the day after this Bill was introduced first reading, and there was some real concerns about what was happening, and particularly from the staff again. The one fellow that I talked to the most is incredibly concerned about the marketing work that he's been doing. And I think there's a good reason for that, and mainly because the marketing program that has been developed to date is one that is supported by the members.

So all the consultation in terms of how marketing is delivered, what Sask Tourism's role is in marketing is very, very focused on the individual operators. That's who they go to first, and that's who drives the marketing planning. And as I said, the Canadian Nature Escapes Cooperative, that's an example of a marketing plan that has worked very, very well and that the operators have benefited from.

If the focus now appears to be on major events, which is what the minister spoke about in his introductory remarks, it worries me that small operators are just going to be overlooked completely, that this government is not interested in anything unless it generates big dollars for single events. When you look at the dollars that these people are generating through their marketing efforts over the season, throughout the year, it's a much smaller level. So it's not so splashy or flashy as these major events are. And not to say that those events aren't important. And certainly the funding that's been provided in the past for those events has been greatly appreciated and used. And what's the problem? They've been run just fine.

So to insert another layer of bureaucracy into something that's working quite well is really beyond my understanding, Mr. Speaker, and I think there's a lot of people in Saskatchewan have questions about that as well.

The Bill itself, the way it's structured and it appears to be pointing towards, is the establishment of another Crown corporation. We heard earlier today about yet an additional Crown corporation, the Financial and Consumer Affairs Authority. So we have two Bills here today. We're talking about where we're going to actually have new Crowns. I don't know how many Crowns we're up to now, but it looks like they're being added to quite steadily through this legislative session.

At any rate, they are going to transform, the goal is to transform the authority into a Crown called Tourism Saskatchewan, which would be a Treasury Board Crown corporation. So it's caught within *The Crown Corporations Act*. There's going to be . . . The membership is going to be established pursuant to section 13 which I'll get to in a minute. And here's the purposes of the corporation, and it is "to market Saskatchewan as a tourism destination in domestic, national and international markets." Now, Mr. Speaker, this is something that Tourism Saskatchewan's been doing. So it's not clear to me where the difference is and why that would be seen as a change or something necessary for the government to intersperse a whole new bureaucratic layer to the work that these people have been doing.

The second purpose is "to assist Saskatchewan's tourism industry operators to market their products." As I said, that's already being done, and it's being done at the direction of the members which makes . . . The operators themselves are the

ones that are making those decisions. They have the skills. They have the expertise. With the help of Tourism Saskatchewan, they've been trained, and they certainly have the awareness of what their marketing needs are. So again, this purpose adds nothing to what's already there. And certainly the lack of consultation with the operators and Tourism Saskatchewan itself points us to a direction I think many people are uncomfortable with the direction that this government is taking.

The third purpose is "to develop and promote the quality of tourism products and services in Saskatchewan." Again there's no indication from anything the minister has said or anything that we see in the press or anything from Tourism Saskatchewan that this is a problem that they aren't already developing and promoting the quality of tourism products. So a bit of a mystery there as well, Mr. Speaker. We're not sure why this is seen as necessary, for government interference.

Fourth purpose, "to provide visitor information services." Once again, we have Sask Tourism who's already conducting that. They're already looking after it. They're already doing a fine job. It's member driven. It's operator driven. They know what they're doing. They have the expertise and the corporate knowledge that they need to ensure that the visitor information services truly represent what the operators, the backbone of the industry, the operators and the outfitters and the local recreation associations and all the parks, they all know what they need for marketing. So to add a bureaucratic layer of civil servants to tell them what they need is of great concern to the industry, and I think it certainly is of concern to the public.

And then of course the fifth purpose is the usual undertake any other activities clause that you would see in a Bill of this sort. So in terms of the purposes of the corporation as set out in this Bill, it appears to me that it's changing really absolutely nothing except adding government interference into what is already being done successfully, competently, and capably by the operators of this province and by Tourism Saskatchewan.

There are several powers that are set out in the Bill, and those powers are all found in section 6(1). There's things like they can sign contracts or buy land or charge fees or establish advisory committees, typical things I think you would see. And again this is something that the Saskatchewan Tourism is already doing. So other than . . . I'm not sure if they can purchase land, but you know, those are the typical things that the Saskatchewan Tourism has been doing. There's no change here.

They're deeming that it's an agent to the Crown in section 7.

Section 8, that the head office is to be in Saskatchewan, which makes sense. So that's not really an issue.

I guess the biggest issue is section 9 where the corporation is now responsible to the minister for the fulfillment of its purposes. And I think that's something that the public needs to be very concerned about here is that we see a government minister inserting his agenda, his corporate agenda for the success of the government rather than the agenda that should be front and foremost, which is the agenda of the actual tourism operators. Because the power of tourism is so alluring for advertising dollars and for capturing people's attention, I'm

afraid that this government is inserting itself into a business that has clearly established itself as one that's capable of doing what it needs to do, which is promote the industry. It's not to promote the government. And I think that's the biggest distinction that needs to be made here, Mr. Speaker. This isn't about promoting industry. This Bill is not about promoting the industry. It's about promoting the goals of this government. And those are two very different things.

The government's agenda is quite different than the agenda of the tourism industry. And I know the minister spoke about some of the events, that somehow the events are what's driving us. Well those events are happening, and certainly the government should support them. But there are capable people within the community, within the industry that can run those events. They don't need the government's help in running it or organizing it or directing it. They do need government support in financial support to make sure these events are able to be carried out. But as he said, the return on investment for these events is so great that it is a wise investment on the part of our government to support them financially.

But supporting them financially is nowhere near what this Bill purports to do. It goes far greater in depth than supporting them financially. It is taking control of the advertising agenda for tourism in Saskatchewan. And I think that may be the reason why they chose not to consult with the operators in the industry because I think the message from the industry would have been very, very different, Mr. Speaker, than what the government is intending to do here at this point.

The goal to have a government presence, I think I saw when the minister was introducing the Bill in the budget speech when we first heard about this. I think the Finance minister said something about that it's to promote government ministries rather than tourism. That doesn't make sense. I mean if the Crown corporation's sole purpose was to take advice from operators and have some sort of consultative process with operators and unfold the industry as the operators and all the industry people saw fit, that would make a lot more sense, Mr. Speaker.

But in this case, it isn't what they're doing. What they're doing here is actually taking over the agenda. And any time a government takes over an agenda for advertising of the activities of the province, we have to be worried about what that is going to be seen as. And in many cases, I think people will see this as somewhat of a propaganda machine, that this government is looking to promote its own agenda, its own platform. And it's overtaking what is really important to the tourism industry, and that's the agenda of the operators themselves, the smaller operators as well as the large ones and those are ones that are the backbone of the industry. Yes, the Junos are important but they're not here every year. The CCMA's [Canadian Country Music Association] are important, but they are not here every year. Even the Grey Cup is important, but it's simply not here every year.

The tourism industry in Saskatchewan is supported by those small organizations and some really well-established ones — the golf courses, the resorts, the campgrounds, the cultural events and festivals that give vibrancy to our summers and to our province so that people know who we are.

So, Mr. Speaker, I haven't had a chance to go through the whole Bill, but I think my main concerns are those that I've expressed, where we see a government interfering and interspersing its own agenda in the tourism advertising objectives of the industry. So at this point I think, Mr. Speaker, I would like to close my comments. I know a lot of my colleagues are going to have comments as well, so I want to give them time to address this. And I think at this point I would just like to move to adjourn.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 37, *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committees this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. This House now stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m. Tuesday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:58.]

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