



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

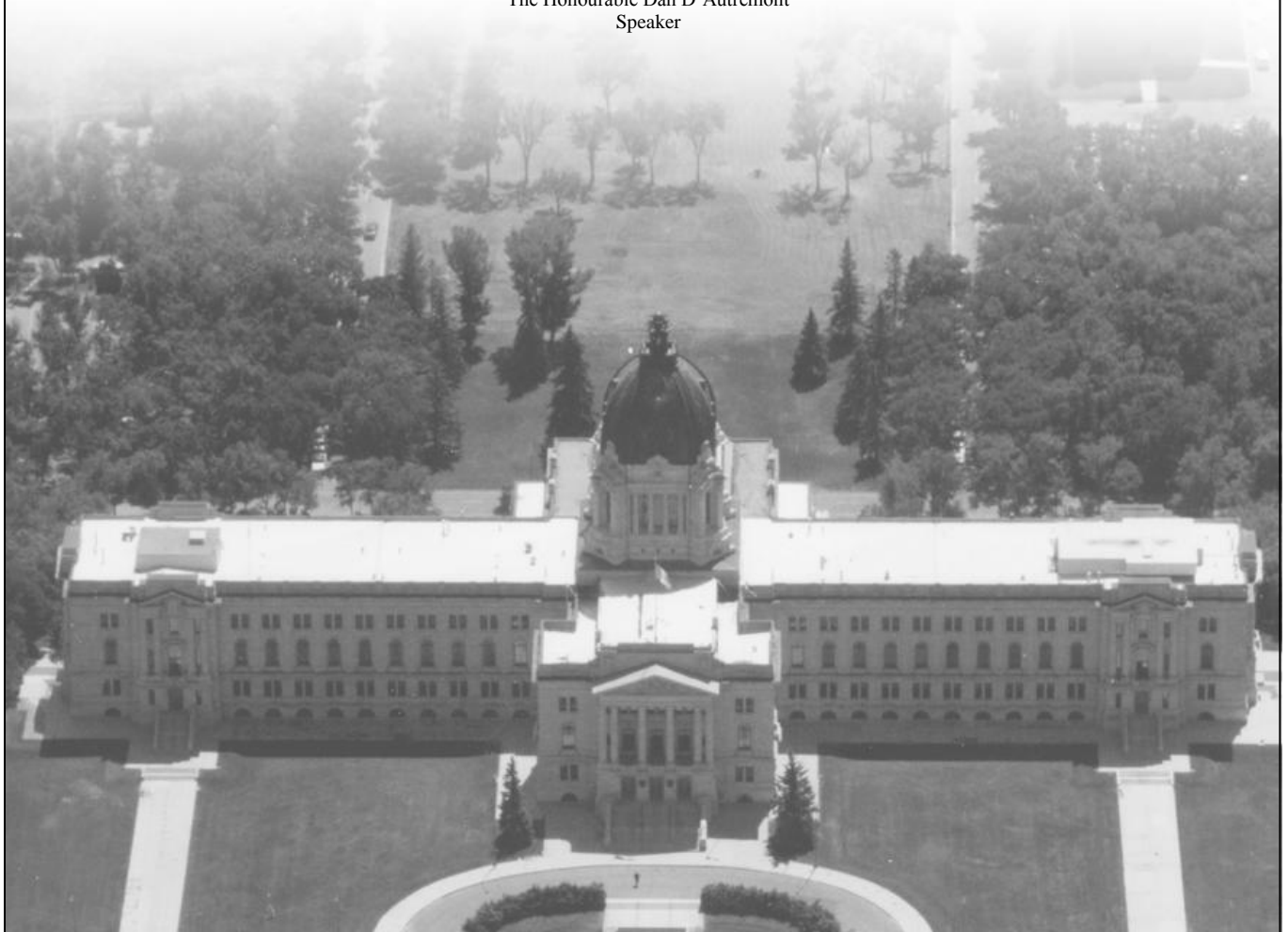
---

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

---

(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 Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Some decades ago the federal government and the provincial government put together two Crown corporations: the federal Crown Eldorado and the provincial Crown SMDC [Saskatchewan Mining Development Corporation]. And they created a new entity which was privatized and became Cameco, now the largest uranium mining company in the world and we're very proud to say — I think everybody in the province is proud to say — headquartered in Saskatoon.

Well today, Mr. Speaker, in your gallery we're joined by the CEO [chief executive officer], the president of Cameco, someone who's no stranger to this building or really any part of this province, a business leader that we're also very proud of. Tim Gitzel is here and we want to welcome him to his Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, the Minister of Energy and Resources will make a more formal introduction of some of those who are joining Tim in the gallery today, but I would like to say hello from this vantage point. And we'll be meeting a little bit later with the chairman of Vedanta who's joined us here as well. Anil Agarwal has joined us, and we want to welcome him as well to our capital city of Regina and the Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would want to welcome the special guests here this morning on behalf of the opposition. I want to have a special welcome for Mr. Tim Gitzel. He worked as a young lawyer with me and our people at MacPherson Leslie & Tyerman many, many years ago, and over the years I've followed his career as a fellow lawyer but also as a friend. And I very much want to say thank you, Tim, for all of the good work you've done here in Saskatchewan but around the world for our province. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I just want to join with the Premier in introducing the delegation that is in your gallery, the president and CEO of Vedanta, Anil Agarwal. We've had a very good meeting last evening with him, a few of the ministers and myself. They are conducting meetings in the building today with a number of companies. They're looking at making potentially a pretty significant investment in Saskatchewan. So we would certainly want to welcome you to our Legislative Assembly. Joined with them are part of the delegation and Steve Elbaum, the chairman and CEO of Alpine Group and Chair of Synenergy Cables.

I would also want to introduce someone that's quite a special friend and you'll see, and relative, that's important to me as well, Josh Soloway. Josh is the chairman and CEO of Soloway Group and is my son-in-law along with the Soloway Group that he operates. Bill Reinert is accompanying them here as well. I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to welcome them here. They are looking at making some pretty significant investments. They've come a long ways from upstate New York and from Connecticut and Delaware, as well as the United Kingdom to visit with us today and we've had some, as I said, some very good meetings. We look forward to their involvement in the Saskatchewan business scene. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too want to, on behalf of the opposition, welcome the member's relative and his business associates. So you're very welcome here in the legislature, and we know that you'll provide very good advice to the member on a number of issues.

But, Mr. Speaker, I'm also pleased to rise to introduce a group of students who are here in your gallery. We have 30 grade 10 social studies class students from Sheldon-Williams Collegiate here in Regina Lakeview and they're accompanied by their teachers, Jennie Davies and Karen Thull, and Corry Oatway who is an educational assistant. So I ask all members to welcome them here to the legislature.

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

**Hon. Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again today I have the opportunity to introduce to you and through you to the members a group from Melville again. The Melville Comprehensive School, 30 grade 10 students, Mr. Speaker. I'll have the opportunity to meet with them a little bit later. But I'd ask all members to help me welcome them to their legislature today.

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

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like . . . and to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a couple of people sitting in your gallery, and probably pretty familiar to most of the Assembly. First off, Kalee Kent who is my constituency assistant and has done an awful lot of work, involved in politics, and in doing an awful lot of work for this side of the House. And she's done fantastic work in getting my office organized and I think everybody can feel the pain that she's had to go through for that exercise.

And besides that, I'd also like to introduce Alyna. And Alyna has said many times that her favourite person is the Premier and she's very excited to be here. And Alyna, she's five years old. She's taking kindergarten at Holy Rosary. She likes soccer, gymnastics; she's learning to skate so that she can play hockey. And she also is great at decorating offices with artwork for anybody that would like that. So I would like to offer congratulations at that and thank you for coming, and welcome to your Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to request leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The member for Saskatoon Nutana has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to agree?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried. The member for Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. I have a number of individuals here in the Assembly today that I would like to introduce to the members, through you and to you. And first of all I would like to introduce Joe Schemenauer from Lake Lenore, Saskatchewan. Joe is here to meet with the Minister of the Environment later, on some issues related to drainage, serious drainage issues in the Lake Lenore area. These issues have been going on for many, many, many years, and they're here to seek some solutions to that issue.

The other people that I'd like to introduce is Peter and Barbara Onofreychuk and their children Emily, Mark, and William. So you guys give a wave. They're in the front row there, Mr. Speaker. They're from MacNutt, Saskatchewan. And again this is a group of individuals, farmers in eastern Saskatchewan that have been experiencing some very severe and difficult situations relating to illegal drainage that's affecting their farm.

I'd also like to introduce Lenard Schrenk and his wife, Leona, from Assiniboia. Lenard's been engaged in a long-term dispute with drainage and issues relating to approvals of drainage works since actually about 1986. And so they're here to speak also with the Minister of the Environment to express their concerns and look for some resolution.

And finally I have Mr. Frank Paul from Moosomin, Saskatchewan. And Frank is now retired from farming, and one of the reasons he's retired is that he has had, he had various difficulties again with illegal drainage and decided that he would just sell his farm because he wasn't getting any resolution. So they're all here today to meet with the minister and present some of their concerns. So welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the east gallery, I see two individuals who are currently serving in the University of Regina Students' Union with the term coming to a close towards or at the end of April, I believe. Mr. Kent Peterson and Ms. Paige Kezima are here today, two individuals that pay a lot of attention to what goes on in the Assembly, care a lot about issues here in the province, especially as they relate to students. So I'd like to thank these two individuals for the service they have provided and wish them all the best with whatever their next steps may be.

Thank you for coming today to the Assembly.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration.

**Hon. Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in offering our sincere thanks to both of these student leaders from the University of Regina. We know they've served very ably, not only the students but the broader campus community, and so on behalf of the government I join the member opposite in extending our appreciation for their service.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for greater protection for late-night retail workers by passing Jimmy's law. 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 positive statistics show that convenience store and gas station robberies are down by one-third since 1999 largely due to increased safety practices including two people working together on late-night shifts. 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.

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

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm presenting a petition that is basically setting out the point that we should stop increasing the number of politicians in Saskatchewan and, more importantly, we should count all of the people under age 18 when new provincial election boundaries are drafted. And the prayer is as follows:

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.

I so present.

**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. 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 concerned residents of Cut Knife, Yorkton, and Saskatoon. I so submit.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I stand today to present a petition signed by Saskatchewan residents calling on the Sask Party government to support and pass a 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 that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to enact a Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights which will provide Saskatchewan seniors with social and economic security and protection from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition on behalf of trappers of Saskatchewan. The current regulations being enforced are creating challenges that are a concern for our traditional trappers. The prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize that the experience gained through practical experience be valued; and in so doing to cause the government to review the current legislation and regulations with respect to trapping regulation and firearm use in consultation with traditional resource users.

As in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

It is signed by many good people of northern Saskatchewan. I so present.

[13:45]

## STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### University of Regina Runner Wins Vancouver Race

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I stand in the House today to commemorate the outstanding accomplishments of a local long-distance runner. Last Sunday, Kelly Wiebe, who hails from Swift Current and is now a 22-year-old University of Regina environmental engineer student, was running his second road race. He outsprinted the rest of the field over the final 100 metres to win the prestigious Vancouver Sun Run 10 K [kilometre] race. Kelly finished the race in an amazing 29 minutes, 12.3 seconds on a cool, breezy morning, the second consecutive Canadian to win the race after foreign runners, 10 of them Kenyan, had won 12 straight times beginning in 1999.

Kelly was a member of Canada's team at the cross-country worlds last year and led for a good portion of the race. Over the last couple of kilometres, there were a couple of lead changes as he battled with other top competitors from across the globe. Wiebe's only other road race competition was a local 10 K in Regina last May. Kelly said he's pointing to the 10 000 metres at track nationals this summer and wants to put together a good cross-country season in the fall for the U of R [University of Regina] Cougars.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I had the fortunate circumstance of being Kelly's teammate on the U of R track team for his first two years, and you could tell early on that Kelly had a great work ethic. And it was easy to see it in his training that he was going to go far. And I for one just wanted to look . . . I look forward to seeing him being in the Olympics for Canada some time soon. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Month

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, April is the Canadian Cancer Society's Daffodil Month, a month in which Canadians reflect upon the thousands of people who are living with cancer and remember those who have died. Daffodil Month is also a time in which the Cancer Society encourages Canadians to do something special for someone currently living with cancer and to contribute in some way to the fight against this disease.

Mr. Speaker, we know that cancer is the leading cause of death in Canada. About 487 Canadians are diagnosed with cancer every day, and an astounding one out of every four Canadians will die from this horrible disease. But there's much reason for hope and optimism. Incidence rates for most cancers are stabilizing or declining, and there are breakthroughs and new treatment approaches. This progress, Mr. Speaker, is a direct result of the dedication of volunteers and researchers.

I want to thank all those involved with the Canadian Cancer Society for the important work they do to help prevent cancer, to fund research, to empower, inform, and support Canadians living with cancer, and to advocate for better public policies to improve the health of Canadians. I want to wish all the best to every Canadian currently fighting cancer. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

#### **Saskatchewan Student Wins Scholarship to Lester B. Pearson College**

**Mr. Doke:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to congratulate the impressive accomplishments of a young constituent of Cut Knife-Turtleford, Cassandra Switzer. Cassandra was recently awarded the opportunity of a lifetime, receiving an International Baccalaureate scholarship to the Lester B. Pearson College in Victoria, British Columbia. In a normal year, this very prestigious scholarship-only school accepts approximately 100 students for their two-year program. This year, however, the college will only be accepting 80 students, Cassandra being the only applicant from Saskatchewan chosen for this upcoming year.

The Lester B. Pearson College is one of 13 United World Colleges located across the globe, with students coming from across Canada and around the world for its unique two-year, pre-university schooling. The schools look to attract students with different and exceptional traits in order to have a diverse student body, focusing on students who have demonstrated leadership in activities and community service as well as an interest in internationalism and promoting global understanding.

Cassandra was the hands-down pick from the short list of six applicants, looking to focus her studies in the medical field with hopes of one day working in medical research. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in congratulating Cassandra on receiving this prestigious honour and to wish her best luck in her future studies. Thank you.

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

#### **Film Festival Recognizes Environmentalists**

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to rise in the House today to highlight the Saskatchewan Eco Network's Environmental Film Festival which took place on Earth Day weekend at the Roxy Theatre in Saskatoon. At this event, Mr. Speaker, creative thinkers and activists were celebrated for keeping the spirit of environmental protection and education alive through the Seed the Change, Feed the Change themed festival. Over 20 documentary, narrative, animated, short, and experimental films, with an emphasis on Saskatchewan and Canadian content, were screened.

Mr. Speaker, one of the film festival highlights was the 10th annual Environmental Activist Awards presented by Rick Morrell, the new executive director of the Saskatchewan Eco Network. Every year recognition is given to one organization

and three individuals who have shown exceptional dedication and courage in their support of environmental issues. I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that this year's recipients are: the Brightwater Science and Environmental Centre of the Saskatoon Public School Board, Stephanie Sydiaha of the Coalition for a Clean Green Saskatchewan and Deanna Trowsdale-Mutafov of Nature Saskatchewan and Jan Shadick of Saskatoon Nature Society.

I ask all members to join with me in extending our congratulations to the award recipients, the Saskatchewan Eco Network, and the film festival committee for all their hard work and effort in organizing this outstanding festival. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

#### **Administrative Professionals Day**

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm proud to rise today and give much-deserved recognition to our great admin colleagues on Administrative Professionals Day. Our Saskatchewan businesses are lucky to have a strong core of excellent administrative professionals to provide the foundation work structures for our growing businesses and economy.

This year's theme for the 2012 Administrative Professionals Day is: Admins, the pulse of the office. This statement could not be truer. In my office we rely heavily on our admin staff for their organizational, IT [information technology], and management skills.

These professionals ensure that jobs get done on time and under budget while improving efficiencies along the way. Admin professionals are often the innovators of our business processes and the organizational engines of business in this complex economy.

Administrative Assistants Day has been celebrated since 1952 and is one of the largest workplace observances after employee birthdays and major holidays. It is a worldwide observance that includes community events, social gatherings, and individual corporate activities recognizing staff with gifts and thanks.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my constituency staff in Saskatchewan Rivers and also the many colleagues that I work with here in Regina. Your work is excellent and your help is always appreciated. I would ask all members to join me in applauding our fantastic professionals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Summit Plans for Housing Needs**

**Mr. Cox:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today in the House to talk about an important housing and development summit that is taking place right now in Regina on April 24th and 25th.

Presented by the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation in partnership with the Canadian Home Builders' Association, this

summit is focusing on the need to plan and to take action to meet the increased demand for the various types of housing in communities province-wide.

Collaboration across the housing sector is key if we are to solve our housing challenges and maintain our economic and population growth. The release of the housing strategy for Saskatchewan and the provincial action plan of 2011-2012 last August served as a road map as we work together to achieve a healthy housing environment.

Our actions in the first of the eight-year housing strategy validate the fact that we have a strong focus on partnerships, increasing the housing supply, and improving the way we do business.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the private sector has responded enthusiastically to our new initiatives. With their investments and our government's support for housing which has grown to \$344 million, we will provide more than 12,600 new homes being developed in Saskatchewan for Saskatchewan people. Our momentum is growing, and we will continue to build the Saskatchewan advantage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Ontario Budget

**Mr. Doherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, after passing another deficit budget, the Ontario government saw fit to congratulate themselves for reducing their deficit from a projected \$15.3 billion to \$15 billion.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate them as well. I congratulate the Ontario Liberal government on accomplishing such a feat, not with any reductions in spending, but with funds provided by federal transfers and raising taxes. Being the eternal optimist that he is, Mr. Speaker, the Ontario Finance minister expects budget surpluses to return in 2017.

Mr. Speaker, Ontario seems to have a spending problem, with their government attempting to be everything to everyone, all of this being supported by the NDP [New Democratic Party]. But none of this is surprising, Mr. Speaker, since budget deficits are essential to any form of NDP support. In fact that NDP promised, through their campaign platform, annual budget deficits of over \$5 billion here in Saskatchewan.

Fortunately our government has made fiscal responsibility a pillar. And the benefits of that fiscal discipline is paying off. Our government has had five consecutive balanced budgets; a AAA credit rating, a first in Saskatchewan history; increased spending in health care, education, social services, and highways for the Saskatchewan residents.

Mr. Speaker, the Ontario government is mortgaging their children's future with the support of the NDP. This is not the case in Saskatchewan where balanced budgets and a growing economy are the new norm, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

Nutana.

### Wetlands Policy and Drainage Management

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Recently the government reported that last year's flooding cost the taxpayers over \$360 million. Further to that, over 75 per cent of farm land water bodies have now been drained for production, much of it illegally. The Minister for the Environment has promised a new policy to address wetland conservation and drainage issues.

My question to the minister is this: what has he actually done to stop illegal drainage, reverse the over-drainage, and abate the resulting flooding?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Certainly, Mr. Speaker, this is a significant issue over the last . . . particularly in the last couple of years, although I know it didn't just begin over the last couple of years.

Mr. Speaker, especially in light of the last year that we had, we had a considerable backlog at the Watershed Authority in looking at drainage complaints. We are currently at about 50 per cent of the way complete looking at those complaints that came in last year. That's as a result of reallocating some Watershed Authority staff from different regions to the areas that were particularly hard hit as well as using the work of some outside consultants.

Mr. Speaker, I can share with the members and the public that I have, in conjunction with some, not only complaints from individual landowners but organizations like SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities], I've indicated to the Watershed Authority that I'm not satisfied with the current process that we inherited from the former government. And I look forward to options not just on drainage and drainage complaints, but on wetlands policy going forward.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister indicated, last fall SARM did pass a resolution calling on him to take action to enforce the Watershed Authority legislation when it comes to illegal drainage. The minister met with SARM and promised action. On December 13th, 2011, the minister promised here in the House a comprehensive wetland policy, saying, "We look forward to moving forward on the development of that . . . policy." Well, Mr. Speaker, the people in the gallery want to know where that policy is. But they also want more than that.

They want the Watershed Authority to grow up and be responsible for the law it's supposed to enforce. They want the Watershed Authority to stop making them be the victims and that the victims of flooding have to then be the enforcers. That's like asking a victim of crime to find and prosecute the criminal. Well, Mr. Speaker, policy development is fine and dandy, but what action has been taken on the SARM resolution to enforce the existing Sask Watershed Authority legislation?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, first of all to the specific question. Mr. Speaker, you can only enforce action when a complaint has been made and a complaint has been investigated and a determination has been made whether or not the project is legal or not, Mr. Speaker. So on that account, because of the high number of complaints that we did receive last year, we know we have a backlog. We have moved staff from different regions to address those backlogs, to do the investigation work, much of which, Mr. Speaker, can't occur in the winter months. You can't investigate whether or not a drainage project is legal or illegal when it's covered with snow. So, Mr. Speaker, that work continues into this spring. As I said, we're at about 50 per cent of the way.

As well as was indicated at the most recent SARM meeting, board meeting, by the president of the Watershed Authority, Mr. Speaker, I have asked the Watershed Authority to look at all tools including legislative changes, regulatory changes, issues around education, and issues around incentives including a wetland policy, which wasn't in place, that would market . . .

[14:00]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is more than following up on complaints filed by individuals, Mr. Speaker. This is about the authority itself.

The Watershed Authority has challenged in court a 2010 compliance order from the Department of Fisheries and Oceans against them in the Lake Lenore area. The Watershed Authority has pitted neighbours against neighbours in the MacNutt area. The Watershed Authority caused a Moosomin farmer to sell his farm in 2002 by refusing to take action against illegal drainage. The Watershed Authority has not followed a 2005 court order by the Court of Queen's Bench in the Assiniboia area. The Watershed Authority is not a fiefdom, Mr. Speaker. It is not above the law.

To the minister: when will he take action and make changes to the Watershed Authority bureaucracy to ensure the law of this land is not only being followed but being enforced by the agency that is responsible for it?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, well I certainly agree that the Watershed Authority is not a fiefdom, Mr. Speaker. It's responsible to this legislative body. It's responsible to me as the minister, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of the complaints that the member raises, without getting into the specifics of the individuals, in the case of Lake Lenore, a closed basin in this province, Mr. Speaker, we take the position that it is the responsibility of the Watershed Authority and not DFO [Department of Fisheries and Oceans] to regulate a closed basin that doesn't impact any other province, Mr. Speaker. And yes, we are challenging the federal order in court, and we look forward to, I would hope, be

successful in that case, Mr. Speaker.

In terms of pitting neighbours against neighbours, Mr. Speaker, we're dealing with legislation that was put in place by the NDP when they formed the Watershed Authority that has a formal and informal complaint process that does, yes, Mr. Speaker, force a neighbour to complain against a neighbour, Mr. Speaker. I don't think that that is working, and that is why I have asked the Watershed Authority to bring back some options to change that legislation.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and we look forward to those changes.

The inaction by this government results in significant cost to the taxpayers and the environment. And for many of the individuals in the gallery and the others they are representing, it has cost them tens of thousands of dollars to fight the Watershed Authority to do its job, all to no avail. The individuals here today had to take time from their spring seeding to come to meet with the minister after having been turned down by other cabinet ministers in that government. They are here today because the actions of the Watershed Authority have had very serious negative repercussions for them and their families, and they are fed up.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister ensure that the Watershed Authority be transformed into an agency that not only enforces the law it is responsible for but that it follows its own law? Will he give them cause to hope that their pleas will not fall on deaf ears?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, within the Government of Saskatchewan right now we are developing a new water management strategy for the province, Mr. Speaker, that will deal with issues of water quality, water quantity, allocation, and issues around drainage, Mr. Speaker. Very optimistic about that work, Mr. Speaker.

But in the meantime, we are working with the legislation that we inherited, the regulations that we inherited. Mr. Speaker, I would expect the Watershed Authority to deal with these issues as expeditiously as they can, Mr. Speaker. That's why we have assigned, moved staff from other areas of the province to deal with these complaints, Mr. Speaker.

And in the interim, until changes can be made, until we identify which options will be made, Mr. Speaker, the Watershed Authority will be sending out to every single landowner in this province an information package that deals with drainage: what is required of people in order to be permitted for that, and what are the consequences under the existing legislation if they don't follow that. And people can expect that, all landowners can expect that in their mail in the coming weeks.

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



### Quality of Health Care

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this month, the Canadian Institute of Health Information released a comprehensive data set comparing the performances of hospitals across the country. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, many Saskatchewan hospitals did not provide data to CIHI [Canadian Institute of Health Information]. But of those that did, there are some concerning statistics.

The minister has had a fair amount of time to review this information, Mr. Speaker, and to be properly briefed by his officials. My question to the minister: what has he learnt about the reasons for the shortcomings identified in this set of data?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am very aware of the CIHI report and some of the discrepancies that we're seeing in our facilities across the province, some that have done very well, some that are certainly more work to do.

But what we are doing and what we're doing through the Health Quality Council as well — if you wanted to visit the Health Quality Council where we have kind of status reports of all facilities — is being more transparent than we ever had been before. I can remember in the days, Mr. Speaker, former governments and former ministers would certainly hate to have any negative information out regarding the facilities. What we want to do is the ones that aren't operating as up to par . . . I shouldn't even say up to par, but up to the standard that we would like to see, Mr. Speaker, we make that public. We challenge them to improve their services, Mr. Speaker, and that's what they're doing.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's look at heart attacks here in the province. Compared to the national risk-adjusted average, the number of heart attack victims who are readmitted to hospital within 28 days is 116 per cent higher at the Cypress Regional Hospital, 136 per cent higher in Yorkton, 138 per cent higher in The Battlefords, 192 per cent higher in Humboldt, and 230 per cent higher in Wynyard. The number of heart attack victims who die in hospital within 30 days is 31 per cent higher in Prince Albert, 36 per cent higher in Weyburn, 113 per cent higher in Nipawin, and 353 per cent higher in Humboldt.

My question to the minister: since the release of this data, what has he learned about the reasons for the significant differences in the readmission and mortality rates for heart attack victims here in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a vast number of reasons why those numbers will vary from area to area, depending on the services that are provided in a smaller community, Mr. Speaker, the distance that individual is from that community. There are a number of variations and variables

that would cause those numbers to fluctuate.

But what I would say, Mr. Speaker, when you look at cardiac care in this province, we are a leader, Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan, in Regina, and in Saskatoon. Some of the best cardiologists are employed right here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, delivering excellent service.

There is still more work to do. We have a very vast province, Mr. Speaker, with the population spread out. Having said that though, we're continuing to work with the health regions to ensure that proper health care is delivered throughout the province, Mr. Speaker, mainly in our tertiary care centres. When it's a severe heart attack, they come to those centres, Mr. Speaker. But there is more work to do across the whole province.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the fact that the information, the data is risk adjusted takes into account differences in populations according to different parts of the province. There's also troubling statistics, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the issue of strokes.

Compared to the national risk-adjusted average, the number of stroke victims who are readmitted to hospital within 28 days is 72 per cent higher in Nipawin, 81 per cent higher in Melfort, 214 per cent higher in Lloydminster, and 410 per cent higher in Melville. The number of stroke victims who will die in hospital within 30 days is 63 per cent higher in Humboldt, 87 per cent higher in Kelvington, 92 per cent higher in Melville, 149 per cent higher in Estevan, and 194 per cent higher in Meadow Lake.

My question to the minister: does he have any insight to offer on the reasons behind the significant differences in readmission and mortality rates for stroke victims here in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, I would say again that there is work to be done, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you that this year's budget at 4.68 billion is a higher number, greatest number of spending on health care than this province has ever seen before, Mr. Speaker.

And I can tell you that for individuals that may suffer of a heart attack or a stroke in this province, they will be cared for far better in 2012 than they ever would have in the previous years, Mr. Speaker, because we worked hard to ensure that we have the proper complement of health care professionals, Mr. Speaker, whether it's 200 more physicians working in the province today than in 2007 when they were government or even, Mr. Speaker, over 900 more nurses working in the province today than compared to 2007 when they were in government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, having said that, there is still more work to do. But, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that the health care system in Saskatchewan is being looked at by individuals from across Canada as one of the leaders in the country today.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, when we look specifically at the issues of heart attacks, we look at the issue of strokes, especially for people living in rural and regional centres, it would show, Mr. Speaker, that there is a significant amount of work to do. And the minister's answer's simply looking back 16 years.

Mr. Speaker, the patients of Saskatchewan deserve more than that. They deserve answers to know what is going on. Mr. Speaker, the minister could have asked many questions to his officials about this. He could have asked why certain hospitals in Saskatchewan do not provide data to CIHI. That is one question he could have asked. He could have asked why we're falling behind, Mr. Speaker, for the care of stroke and heart attack victims. He could have asked why the overall readmission rate is so much higher and why, Mr. Speaker, there are most deaths for those the first five days after surgery.

Mr. Speaker, there are many . . . I realize the answers to these questions are complex, Mr. Speaker, but the minister ought to be able to give the Assembly, give this House a better understanding of some of the causes for the shortcomings, Mr. Speaker, and some of the options for improvement beyond simply saying we're leaders. There needs to be more detail than that.

My question to the minister: when can we expect a more detailed explanation of the path forward with respect to options for improvement, Mr. Speaker, and an explanation for the shortcomings of this province?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talked about going back 16 years. We don't have to go back 16 years. I went back five years and showed a huge difference between our government and the former NDP government. If he would like me to go back 16 years, I could go back to when they closed 52 hospitals including the Plains, Mr. Speaker. And then he stands in his place and wonders why the care isn't in rural Saskatchewan like it used to be, Mr. Speaker. It was a simple fact that they closed 52 hospitals plus the Plains hospital here in Regina, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are working with all the health care professionals to ensure that we deliver proper care. The Health Quality Council through its website does an analysis of our facilities, Mr. Speaker. We're making that public so that people can see, compare facility to facility, and so that facilities can compare themselves to their peers around the province, Mr. Speaker.

Great work has been done. There is more work to do certainly, Mr. Speaker. But I can tell you, we have come a long ways from the dark days of the NDP.

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

### Literacy Programming

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, ensuring everyone in our province has the literacy skills to get an education and a career should be an obvious goal of government. It should be a top priority. However, this government has failed to support a key provider of literacy in our province. The Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network relies on various programs to work to improve community and Aboriginal literacy. Due to cuts by this government, the network doesn't have the funding to help Aboriginal communities with literacy programs to do this meaningful work.

To the Minister of Education: why is Aboriginal literacy slipping through the cracks? Saskatchewan people deserve better than this.

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very, very glad to get up on this particular topic. What we have introduced under our government is very strong support for literacy camps. Most of those camps are held in northern Saskatchewan. We have been measuring the results of those camps through the northern libraries and the results are absolutely, amazingly positive. So we're putting core funding into that in this year's budget.

We are seeing that not only are the children don't lose their reading ability throughout the summer months, but that they're also getting families engaged. So we're looking forward to the announcement of when those students can travel to Saskatoon to pick out their books for this year's literacy camps. It's exciting. It's showing very, very positive results, and it again displays how this government is committed to literacy.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the question was about the Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network, who's received funds for many years from the SaskSmart Innovation Fund. This program is being terminated. Described in an alarming email on April 23rd from the organization's executive director, programs are facing cuts due to this government's, I quote, "budget cutbacks." Supporting Aboriginal literacy is essential to engage our potential workforce in the province, to make strides in Aboriginal employment, to make improvements and lives and communities.

Mr. Speaker, why is the minister cutting instead of providing certainty and commitment to the Aboriginal Literacy Network, its programs, and the important goals they work towards?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The one thing that we are discontinuing under the SaskSmart was RFPs [request for proposal] that went to communities for proposals. We found that the proposals were not necessarily giving results. We felt that something like the literacy camps that we were measuring, those results were by far stronger and definitely were showing that we were improving literacy skills, especially in our most vulnerable communities.

Mr. Speaker, in the past some of the RFPs that went out . . .

Maybe the NDP loved the program because they definitely had it under their government. And we're reviewing what is showing results and what's effective. And some of the proposals that came in that was accepted was that they were giving babysitting courses. There was some preliminary courses for seniors in computers. We felt that we could more effectively spend that money on indeed First Nations and First Nations young people and First Nations literacy.

[14:15]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — The minister's language disguises a cut that has caused uncertainty for an important organization and for the lives and communities for which they do work in, Mr. Speaker. They have millions of dollars more for more politicians, but when it comes to improving Aboriginal literacy in Saskatchewan, it's uncertainty and cutbacks. Apparently this government has indicated some funds will roll out at some point this year to replace the cut program, but no timeline has been made. Consultation has been non-existent and no assurances have been provided for the budget dollar this year or certainly next year. And as the organization states in its email, cuts are the result, Mr. Speaker.

Will the minister commit today to work with the Aboriginal Literacy Network to show some leadership, to provide some certainty, and to get these programs back on track?

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

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, we will be working. We have in the past. We will continue to work with the Aboriginal Literacy Network. That is not what's been cut, quite frankly. What has been cut is these contracts that is not core program. The contracts were one-year programs. There was no expectancy that the programs would be repeated year over year. That's not the purpose of that particular grant.

So we are looking at that grant to see if it was effective. The RFPs that were coming forward, they were not be any means isolated to First Nations or First Nations literacy programs. They were not necessarily showing great results. So we're putting our money where we are seeing great results, where we are targeting vulnerable communities, and that's in the literacy camps. And the positive feedback that we're getting from those communities is exceptional.

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

#### Relationship with Co-operatives Association

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the federal budget we heard of the unfortunate cutting of funding to the Co-operative Development Initiative. This is despite the fact that 2012 is the UN's [United Nations] International Year of Cooperatives. And now more than ever, the world over is recognizing the vital social and economic benefits co-operatives bring to our communities.

However, it's not just the federal government that's cutting support to the co-ops. The Sask Party government has millions

more, millions for more politicians, Mr. Speaker. And we saw that side of the House vote for more politicians multiple times. They also have \$35,000 of Enterprise Saskatchewan money to sponsor a conference in Quebec. But now they're cutting funding with the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association to help develop new, innovative co-ops in our province. To the minister: why is he cutting this funding with the co-operatives association?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. My staff recently met with the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association, had a very good discussion. What the member's referencing was not cut. There was a two-year contract in place, Mr. Speaker, with the SCA [Saskatchewan Co-operative Association]. That contract has run its course. SCA has applied for a renewal of funding under a new contract. Enterprise officials are currently reviewing that application and a decision will be forthcoming, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker, this funding with the SCA paid for a co-operative development officer to grow the province's innovative co-ops. We've seen throughout our province's history the vital and important role co-ops have played to bring services to all our communities. Co-ops and credit unions are completely synonymous with Saskatchewan. These cuts to co-ops sadly seem to be unique to Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. Despite the federal Conservative cuts, Manitoba and Ontario have committed funding to their co-operatives.

This government has thousands of dollars for a Quebec conference and millions for more politicians. To the minister: will he commit today to honour this funding and reinstate it with the Co-operative Association and keep this vital sector growing in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps the member didn't listen to the first answer. There's a two-year contract in place, Mr. Speaker, with the Saskatchewan Co-operative Association. That contract expired. We're working . . . We met recently with the SCA. They've made application for a new contract, Mr. Speaker. Enterprise is currently reviewing that application.

What I can say, Mr. Speaker, as well and report to the House, Saskatchewan has the only balanced budget in the entire country, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan has the highest population in the entire history of our province, Mr. Speaker, over 1.067 million people. We're projected by many private sector forecasters to continue leading Canada in economic growth this year and into the future. Mr. Speaker, the lowest unemployment rate in the entire country of 4.8 per cent. Mr. Speaker, the economy in this province is moving forward in great fashion with our balanced budget under the leadership of our Premier.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, this is an odd way to

celebrate the international year of the co-ops when he's totally not answering the question, will he support the co-ops here in the province? We know one third of the province's top 100 businesses are co-ops, and most of us can find a credit union or a co-op membership card in our wallet. That's an important part of who we are in this province. Growing our co-ops and developing new ones just make sense.

So is this minister telling us that the money that he's saving from the 65,000 he is now diverting to the 35,000 who paid for conferences in Quebec? Mr. Speaker, what I want to know: will the minister himself meet with the Co-operative Association, and will he reinstate that funding?

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think this is a prime example of the danger of having your questions written out before you walk into the House and being unable to adjust when you actually get an answer. Mr. Speaker, we've been very clear that there was a two-year contract which expired, Mr. Speaker. We're reviewing a request for the new application.

As I can report to the House, Mr. Speaker, in addition to that information is the great situation that our province finds itself in economically: leading Canada in economic growth, the lowest unemployment rate in the entire country, which is good for the co-ops as well, Mr. Speaker, the fact that we have a booming economy. Merchandise exports up 31 per cent in January, Mr. Speaker; 2011, the highest growth in retail sales and wholesale trade in the entire country. Our economy is moving forward in great fashion, Mr. Speaker. And we're going to continue moving forward because we have a government that understands the importance of low taxes and balanced budgets, unlike the members opposite.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 42

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 42 — *The Graduate Retention Program Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 42, *An Act to amend The Graduate Retention Program Act*. Right now I'll give a little bit of history of what this Bill actually is about, Mr. Speaker.

And so in 2008, the government had implemented a graduate retention program, which was actually replacing a previous program that the former administration, the NDP administration

had in place, a grad tax exemption program as well. So in 2008, the Sask Party decided to put their own brand on a graduate retention program.

And so what this program that they implemented does, Mr. Speaker, is it provides graduates with a refund of up to \$20,000 in tuition fees over seven years. And right now under this current system, the entire graduate retention program benefit is a refundable income tax credit. So this means the tuition rebate is refundable to the individual irrespective of any taxes payable.

So what this amendment before us here, Mr. Speaker, just four years later here, this amendment will, for graduates with sufficient income and Saskatchewan provincial tax payable, they will receive the graduate retention program benefit as a reduction in Saskatchewan provincial income tax owing. And so for those graduates who may not be earning sufficient income or claiming any other deductions in tax credits, the government will provide a new refundable tax credit equal to the unused portion of the non-refundable graduate retention program tax credit. So this refundable tax credit will be paid to graduates as an income tax refund.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, it's important to keep those who are attending our universities and post-secondary institutions here in Saskatchewan. I think that that's one of the goals of any government is those who are studying, who live here or who are studying here, our goal should be to try to keep them here.

I think one of the flaws with this program, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that it doesn't include master's and Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy] students. So this is a government who often talks about innovation and we hear about the knowledge economy. And I don't understand, Mr. Speaker, and the opposition does not understand why you would not want to include some of the best and the brightest, those doing master's, and Ph.D. students, those who are doing the research that can be applied across the board in all kinds of areas, Mr. Speaker, in public policy. This amendment, this Act would've been a perfect opportunity to include master's and Ph.D. students in this particular program, Mr. Speaker.

I think the one thing that we also need to talk about is the reality is that tuition is on the rise here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, which is a huge problem. Affordability of university is becoming increasingly difficult for students here in Saskatchewan.

I know I have a 14-year-old who will be in university hopefully here in the next, well in the next four years. And I know as a parent I'm very concerned about the cost of her education. Her dad and I have put money away and continue to put money away for her education, but are very worried about our ability to pay for her education and also the possibility of her being strapped with huge amounts of student loans, which it's not unusual to hear of young people who have 30, 40, 50, 60, \$70,000 in student debt, Mr. Speaker.

So I can't imagine being a young person graduating with their first degree, already accumulating that much debt. How do you ever get ahead, Mr. Speaker, when you have so much debt that you've accumulated in large part due to high tuition rates and the other reality of affordability here in Saskatchewan around

housing and some of the supports like child care?

So how do you as a young person go forward, ever dream about owning a home or putting roots down in a community when you are paying huge amounts in student debt, Mr. Speaker? So I think . . . And again for those who want to pursue further education so they can continue to contribute to the economy, and I'd argue doing a master's and a Ph.D. can be hugely beneficial to us as a society here, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the research that individuals do can be applied to all kinds of different areas here in Saskatchewan and elsewhere. So this again would have been a perfect opportunity. There's legislation before us, Mr. Speaker, and the government should have seen fit to include some of our best and brightest in this program as well, Mr. Speaker.

On the point around student affordability, we've seen this government actually off-load some financial responsibilities to universities, which causes tuition to go up which we have some fear that that off-loading will continue to happen and tuition will continue to rise at rates that students can't meet those tuition rates. And what ends up happening, Mr. Speaker, is actually high tuition rates keep students out of university because they don't want to take on that huge student debt load. So you have people who are working in sometimes lower wage jobs, working as servers in restaurants. Great to work in the service sector, but for most people it doesn't often put enough on the table to raise a family down the road. So the reality is we should be making sure that people who want and desire to go to post-secondary school have that opportunity. And rising tuition keeps people out of university, Mr. Speaker, because they can't imagine working full-time — because that's often what people have to do — working at least part-time and studying and doing well at their studies. So we're putting increasing pressure on our students to manage their lives, Mr. Speaker.

When it comes to some of the things that students need for support, housing is huge. We've seen rents rapidly increasing here in Saskatchewan in the last several years, and students have a very difficult time finding affordable accommodation, Mr. Speaker, and so that goes into the whole affordability piece. The government has committed to building some spots, but there's no guarantee that those will be in fact affordable spaces, Mr. Speaker. Or the government actually hasn't committed to doing them. They've put in place incentives that they say developers will create spaces, but the reality is those developers, there's no commitment that those spaces will be in fact affordable, Mr. Speaker.

[14:30]

On the child care side of things, often students do have children and family responsibilities, especially if you are more advanced or mature in age and you might already have a bachelor's degree and you are doing a master's or a Ph.D.

So child care actually is a really huge piece of the supports necessary to help keep people in school, Mr. Speaker. And we have, for example, this government has committed to 500 spaces this year, which is just a drop in the bucket for the numbers of spaces that we need here in Saskatchewan. Well I would argue we need a comprehensive child care policy. But when it comes to spaces, 500 spaces, I can think of one child

care centre alone in Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker — one centre, one child care centre — that has 173 children on the waiting list, 173 children, Mr. Speaker, which is two-fifths, just about two-fifths of the number of spaces that this government has committed to this year.

So when it comes to getting an education, the graduate retention program, of course every little bit helps. But you have to look at the big picture and look at what are those things that help students stay in school, but what are those things that actually get people into school in the first place. And one of them is affordable tuition. And the reality is tuition is becoming less and less affordable for students here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, which is a huge, huge problem.

I think one of the other issues we see is retention, or the rates at which Aboriginal students stay in university, for example. I can't recall the number offhand, Mr. Speaker, but I know we have a very high rate of dropout after the first year. Aboriginal students come to Saskatoon, I'm thinking the University of Saskatchewan in particular, and there's all kinds of things that are going on, Mr. Speaker. There's some cultural adjustments that need to happen.

But again it's about the supports that people need to be successful. And I would argue that housing and child care and tuition that you can afford are all things that help people stay in school. There are also cultural pieces and other supportive community pieces that need to be put in place. But those other supports need to be in place as well.

So again I'd like to just point out that the government had a perfect chance, a perfect opportunity while presenting Bill No. 42, *The Graduate Retention Program Amendment Act, 2012*. This was a perfect opportunity to include master's and Ph.D. students in it as well. So I am not quite sure why this government wouldn't want to put an emphasis on retaining all students, especially those who are going on to further research that can better help our province grow, and grow in a sustainable manner, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, I know that I will have colleagues who will be interested in speaking to Bill No. 42, *The Graduate Retention Program Amendment Act*, so with that I will leave that up to my colleagues to add further to the debate, and I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 42. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of Bill No. 42, *The Graduate Retention Program Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 43

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 43 — *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to rise today to participate in the debate on Bill No. 43, *The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2012*. Again these are consequential changes necessary in *The Income Tax Act* corresponding to a number of initiatives that were brought forward in the budget and that were campaigned on in the election in certain regards by the members opposite and as such are fair enough.

Certainly there are two initiatives on the housing front that we think are reasonable, plausible, beneficial initiatives. But again in terms of what the situation is with housing and how these initiatives will or will not hit the mark in terms of meeting the broader concerns around the housing crisis, that remains to be seen.

But that being said, Mr. Speaker, the first one is the first-time homebuyers tax credit, effective January 1st, 2012. It's a non-refundable income tax credit based on the first \$10,000 of a qualifying home purchase. And the tax expenditures associated with this, Mr. Speaker, is about \$6.6 million for new homeowners and also lines up alongside a federal tax credit; you know, a fine initiative, Mr. Speaker. Certainly I know new homebuyers will appreciate any sort of assistance or help that can be on offer, but in the teeth of a housing crisis and a situation where rental accommodation is at point six per cent in terms of the vacancy rate, in terms of a situation where we have emergency housing shelters full to overflowing, again, Mr. Speaker, this in and of itself being a fine initiative, but in terms of what the broader situation is and how this impacts that or brings about progress, we have our doubts about that.

The second initiative in this particular package as it relates to housing concerns multi-unit residential rental projects. And again we think this is, on the face of it, a fine initiative. But it's interesting, Mr. Speaker. Certain of these concerns around multi-unit residential rental were brought forward as part of the Pringle-Merriman task force on housing, and certainly there was an expectation of action at that time.

Of course, the members opposite took power in 2007, took a very different approach to housing issues. When the previous government had had record surpluses at mid-term in 2007, Mr. Speaker, February of 2007, I well recall the \$60 million that was put into the building of social and affordable housing. And when members opposite took power in November of 2007, that first budget 2008, again in the teeth of a less than positive housing situation for a lot of people, one of the first actions was to cut the budget for Sask Housing.

And again, when they finally woke up to the public outcry around the housing situation, to walk some of that anger backwards, Mr. Speaker, they appointed then Ted Merriman and Mr. Pringle to head up the Merriman-Pringle task force.

They went across the province, conducted their work, and the incentives around multi-unit residential rental projects, I believe, was touched on in their report. And that again, Mr. Speaker, was back in 2008. That measure largely sat on the shelf and was not acted upon. And then we saw consecutive budgets and consecutive terms of inaction by members opposite. And then of course, Mr. Speaker, to try and get back into the PR [public relations] game as related to housing, the

task force, having proved to be a bit of a dead letter, well it was seen fit that they should have a summit on housing, Mr. Speaker. And of course, they had the summit and, you know, that was its own round of hoopla.

And apparently it's now something of an annual affair, Mr. Speaker, because alongside the actions that they're finally taking as relates to increasing the housing, the availability of affordable housing stock, particularly as it relates to incenting new, multi-unit residential rental projects, today of course we hear news of the next round of summits on the part of this government when it comes to throwing summits into the fight against the housing crisis. So it's not a great record on the part of the members opposite, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to action on housing. And it's one that is sad the way that it plays out in terms of again overflowing emergency housing shelters, and that the kind of desperate choices that people are forced to make when it comes to keeping a roof over their heads in this exceedingly tight rental market.

So this particular measure, Mr. Speaker, is a good thing in and of itself, as is the case with the previous income tax measure as relates to new homebuyers. But again taken together and weighed alongside what is a pretty stark contrast with the inaction and the busywork that has gone on in terms of the task forcing and the summing and the committeeing that members have thrown into the fray instead of real action and real programs, we're not sure that that addresses the imbalance on that particular ledger, Mr. Speaker.

So we're interested to see how this works out. We're interested to see how the details play out. On the face of it this would seem to be a positive measure as regards incenting new, multi-unit residential rental projects. But again we await how it plays out on the ground and how it's administered by this government.

I guess moving on from the housing initiatives, Mr. Speaker, there's a change necessitated by pledges around the research and development tax credit wherein effective April 1st, 2012, the R & D [research and development] tax credit's being altered to provide a refundable tax credit only for the first \$3 million in eligible expenditures incurred by small business corporations. All other eligible expenditure is now being provided a non-refundable tax credit to be deducted against taxes otherwise payable and the tax credit rate remaining at 15 per cent. Again, Mr. Speaker, we think that's a fair measure in and of itself.

The idea of incenting economic activity through tax credits is one that is a measure that's deployed throughout the economy, Mr. Speaker. And again while we see this going forward as a positive thing on the one hand, we see the unrelenting campaign on the part of members opposite when it comes to the way that the film employment tax credit helped to support and enable the thriving of a film industry in this province. And the way that they're trying to now explain that it's no, not, it's not a tax credit; it's a grant. Well, Mr. Speaker, the arguments that are made for this kind of economic activity, this kind of fiscal lever being utilized certainly hold true. And we think that they hold true for the film employment tax credit and that's been the history of that particular measure. I guess what we are disappointed to see, Mr. Speaker, is the inconsistency.

I'm glad that you're finding my remarks soothing, Mr. Speaker, to the point of perhaps sending you into an altered state of consciousness. But again, Mr. Speaker, if only we could pull the sheets over our eyes when it comes to the inconsistencies being presented by this government as it relates to tax credits being deployed on the one hand for certain economic activity and then somehow those rules being suspended and we're asked to believe something entirely different when it comes to the film employment tax credit.

**An Hon. Member:** — Hey, Mr. Speaker, I don't think he should involve the Speaker in the debate.

**Mr. McCall:** — I'm interested to note the Finance minister, the member from Canora-Pelly apparently auditioning for a Speaker gig. I didn't realize the Speaker was planning on going anywhere but . . . Or perhaps it's the House Leader gig that he's looking for, Mr. Speaker. But I thought he'd be busy enough with the Finance ministry and certainly he was busy answering questions last night in the committee. Apparently we've touched a number of chords over there, Mr. Speaker.

There's a lot of interest in the speech and we're glad for that because perhaps what they could do is listen closely and then explain how it is that with the tax credits being on offer for innovation, Mr. Speaker, and research and development, how it's been put forward in that regard but then when it comes to the film employment tax credit — something that members opposite have been on record in supporting for many years, Mr. Speaker, and something that certainly was nowhere to be seen when it came to the words and the platforms of the members opposite in the last campaign — how it is that we came to this budget only to see the film employment tax credit be axed by members opposite without consulting the industry, without consulting partners, without talking to the people whose livelihoods are affected by this.

And people whose livelihoods have seen visits from members opposite when it came to, you know, hobnobbing around on the set of *Corner Gas* or declaring Corner Gas Day or many of the measures that the members opposite were quite happy to jump on the bandwagon for, Mr. Speaker. But when it came to talk to, when it came time to talk to the actual people that are out there in the industry and making a go of it in the film and television industry, well we didn't see them talk about this, Mr. Speaker. And in fact we saw a fairly significant amount of consultation that pointed in exactly the opposite direction.

[14:45]

So again, Mr. Speaker, there's an inconsistency here between the research and development tax credit that's being proposed and the rationale that is being embraced in a bear hug by members opposite, Mr. Speaker, and when it comes to the situation around the refundable tax or the R & D tax credit on the other, we don't see the consistency in that, Mr. Speaker. And I guess we wish we did see the consistency where if it's good enough to put forward in R & D tax credit on the one hand and use that as a valuable tool in the economy, Mr. Speaker, we'd like them to live up to their past rhetoric when it came to the value of the film industry in this province. We'd love to see them live up to their rhetoric in past as to the worthiness of the film employment tax credit. We'd love to see them have a

commitment to the film industry, Mr. Speaker, that extends beyond showing up to hobnob around the set of various film and television productions. We'd love to see them actually work in partnership and respect with the people that actually have made a success in this industry, who've provided opportunities for young, creative people in this province. We'd love to see them do something more than just drop a bomb on them on budget day, Mr. Speaker, and then engage in a stopgap measure where they extend the deadline for this, the application of this, which again in and of itself, Mr. Speaker, is signal to just sort of the thoughtlessness and the recklessness with which these members opposite have treated the lives of the people involved in the film and television industry.

So they need to pull their socks up there, Mr. Speaker. They need to get consistent when it comes to, if there's a rationale around tax credits for R & D, if there's a rationale for tax credits in any number of other sectors in the economy, Mr. Speaker, if there's a rationale that they've supported in past and supported up until this election, Mr. Speaker, and through this election only to do a one-eighty and whiplash the industry, Mr. Speaker, with this budget, we would like to see that. We should see that. The people of Saskatchewan should see that, Mr. Speaker.

I guess the next thing that is on offer in this particular bundle of income tax amendments concerns the changes to the graduate retention program. Again this is effective January 1st, 2012: the tuition rebate being replaced by a non-refundable tax credit deductible against taxes otherwise payable, the non-refundable tax credit being supplemented by a new refundable tax credit for individuals not having sufficient taxes payable to fully utilize the non-refundable tax credit. This enables the GRP [graduate retention program] to more closely reflect the fact that the majority of tax credits claimed are used to reduce income taxes otherwise payable. When taken together, these new tax credits will purportedly ensure that graduates continue to receive their whole GRP entitlement. Again, Mr. Speaker, we think, fair enough. We're glad to see that a response of changes are being made under *The Income Tax Act* to ensure that the stated intent of the program is being lived up to in action. So we're glad to see that, Mr. Speaker.

But as was referenced by my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale as regards the situation for the affordability of post-secondary education generally, there are any number of issues that regards the impact, the ability of students to get into post-secondary education and then to stay in post-secondary education, and affordability is certainly one of them. And what we've seen in this action, what we've seen in the actions of this government opposite, Mr. Speaker, is again a relatively positive step on the one hand with this particular tax measure, but on the other hand we see tuition going up yet again.

And certainly, Mr. Speaker, when the NDP was in power, in terms of the record investments, the nation-leading investments that were made in post-secondary education, there was a commitment on the part of that government that didn't translate into the kind of tuition gains that we would have liked to have seen, Mr. Speaker. But I do know that in terms of the expansion of infrastructure at my alma mater, the University of Regina, from 1993 to 2003, the physical footprint doubled of that institution, Mr. Speaker. And we saw the kind of translation

from investment to actual offerings for university students at the U of R being improved.

But again, Mr. Speaker, alongside that we saw moves on tuition that we had cause for concern about and that necessitated a tuition freeze and it necessitated other proposals being made. But it's unfortunate to see, Mr. Speaker, that the graduate retention program again itself for this government, having its genesis in adapting and changing a graduate retention program that was on offer in 2007, brought in in the budget of 2007, Mr. Speaker, that's certainly one thing that's worth pointing out in this debate.

It's also interesting to point out, Mr. Speaker, that this does nothing to address the importance of extending this program to graduate students, Mr. Speaker, the kind of knowledge and innovation and impact on a knowledge economy that is represented by graduate students, Mr. Speaker. That's an important consideration that we know that students have been calling for but that the post-secondary education sector is very much interested in as well, Mr. Speaker. And it would be again if we're going to incent research and development activity on the one hand and then not do our part to remain competitive in attracting and retaining graduate students in any number of sectors, Mr. Speaker, to the province, well it again doesn't seem consistent to us, Mr. Speaker. And we think that there's a better job to be done for the people of Saskatchewan.

The remaining income tax amendment in the package, Mr. Speaker, concerns the technical clarification requested by Canada Revenue Agency allowing Saskatchewan low-income tax credit be claimed by both parents for children in a shared custody arrangement matching the federal change made last year to the federal GST, the federal goods and services tax credit. Again, Mr. Speaker, that would seem to be fair enough and would seem to be a fine measure in its own right but more a matter of followership on the part of this government as opposed to leadership.

So to recap, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to *The Income Tax Amendment Act*, Bill No. 43, a number of fine measures contained therein, Mr. Speaker: two regarding housing, one regarding research and development, one regarding the graduate retention program, another regarding changes required for shared custody arrangements for low-income tax folks. Again fine measures, Mr. Speaker, but in terms of how they're put forward and how they address the respective concerns that they're put forward to impact, we think that on a number of fronts these measures, while fine, don't quite get the whole job done.

I know that other of my colleagues are very interested in participating in this debate, Mr. Speaker, so as such I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 43, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*, 2012.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate of Bill No. 43, *The Income Tax Amendment Act*, 2012. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## Bill No. 37

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hutchinson that **Bill No. 37 — *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to stand in my place today to offer my initial comments on Bill 37, *An Act respecting Tourism Saskatchewan*. And as most of the people that follow politics and certainly may watch the channel from time to time might know, that Bill 37 really is to take away Tourism Saskatchewan from the industry players and from being an arm's-length organization from government.

And what the proposal here today, Mr. Speaker, is to fire all those people and fire all those prominent players in the tourism industry and simply say, thanks, see you later; we're now going to set-up a Treasury Board Crown that'll now take care of tourism, and we'll coordinate everything out of government because government knows best when it comes to tourism strategy, not the players and certainly not the staff and not some of the important players within Tourism Saskatchewan.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's what this Bill No. 37 is. It's all about the plan by the Sask Party to simply get rid of Tourism Saskatchewan as a separate entity and as an independent agency that is able to do some of the work to coordinate and to help develop tourism strategies and opportunities for our province and thus create . . . What we think is important is to make sure that the rest of the country and the world know how great Saskatchewan is as a province, and a place that you might want to visit as tourists and the place you might want to call home as potential workers and so on and so forth.

So tourism plays an incredible role, Mr. Speaker. We're hearing the numbers of \$1.7 billion in terms of the impact on the economy. And we're certainly pleased to see that that kind of effort by the private sector players, by those involved with the tourism industry, has paid great dividends for the people of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, that's one of the things that's really important.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we obviously know that when this Bill was introduced, the minister made some comments indicating they've done a review of the Act. They've done an analysis of how Tourism Saskatchewan worked, and basically this was after all that work was done. The Saskatchewan Party, the Sask Party decided to put this Tourism Saskatchewan as a tourism Crown or a Treasury Board Crown. And clearly they wanted to get rid of this arm's-length organization and they've done so in one fell swoop, Mr. Speaker. They indicated that was their plan and that's exactly what they've done.

So, Mr. Speaker, what is going on here is the minister got up and alluded to the review of *The Tourism Saskatchewan Act*, and this was some of the comments he made. And I want to quote, Mr. Speaker. The minister at that time said, quote:

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, that was what the minister indicated as a result of the review that he was talking about as they look and work through the process of how we can develop a good, sound tourism strategy for the people of Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, two of the points that I would like to raise out of that particular statement that the minister made when he was introducing this Bill, Bill 37, is the fact that . . . The two points I would raise is that the item no. 7, that there are no sacred cows, and of course no. 8 that the review will be transparent — those two guiding principles, Mr. Speaker, it is clear as day now. When they said there'll be no sacred cows, the Tourism Saskatchewan board — and they're independent players; they're private sector players — certainly got that message.

They now know that they weren't sacred cows in any way, shape, or form, and they were cast under the bus and certainly thrown out of the door when it comes to their planning and their expertise and their opportunity to participate in this very vital industry. They were told, no thanks for all the work that you've done. And they were also told that, absolutely not, you're not going to have any role in the future. And you were considered — that's what the Saskatchewan Party is saying to the Tourism Saskatchewan players — that you were considered a sacred cow and we don't have sacred cows, so you are now dust. You are now gone. We don't need you any more. And that's one of the things that the minister alluded to, Mr. Speaker.

The other point that's also important is the transparency that the minister spoke about, Mr. Speaker. It's absolutely amazing that he was talking about transparency when he introduced this Bill, when there was no transparency in their plans to develop this Treasury Board Crown at the expense of the private sector Crown, Mr. Speaker, or the private sector organization. And what happened, Mr. Speaker, was that this group of committed men and women, industry players and very qualified staff, they were basically not advised in any way, shape, or form that this government, the Sask Party, had a plan to throw them under the bus, get rid of them, not appreciate some of the work they were doing, nor recognize the work that they accomplished.

[15:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, I listened over time to a number of

politicians that spoke about values in politics. And, Mr. Speaker, one such politician I remember saying the words that in order for you to be successful in politics that you must first of all acknowledge people. You must then, of course, share your vision as a politician, as a leader. And of course that you also, at the end of the day, provide hope if you do those two previous attributes when you meet and greet with people.

Now what happened, Mr. Speaker, is that the tourism sector itself, the players that were involved, the players that were involved with the Tourism Saskatchewan entity, they participated, Mr. Speaker. And they had great optimism. They had great energy. They had great vision. And obviously after a number of months of working through this process, Mr. Speaker, I can tell you that there was huge disappointment. There was extreme disappointment when they were told out of the blue that — guess what? — that Tourism Saskatchewan entity is now history. We thank you for your work. See you later. We are now taking over as the government.

And you know what, Mr. Speaker, what I believe the end result was? It's not about engaging the private sector to a point where they should be engaged, Mr. Speaker. That's really important work that needs to be done. I think it's all about trying to jump in front of the parades attached to all the tourism opportunity in our province. It's all about taking credit for some of the hard work being done by the private sector players out there, Mr. Speaker. And it's all about promotion, self-promotion by the Sask Party. And that's what this Bill is about, Mr. Speaker, because obviously it doesn't do anything else, Mr. Speaker, except give them control of the tourism functions and tourism opportunities at the expense of the private sector. And that, Mr. Speaker, is all about marketing, not marketing of the province but marketing of the Saskatchewan Party. Mr. Speaker, that's clearly, from our perspective, what this is all about.

So, Mr. Speaker, the review being transparent, well we can throw out one of those guiding principles. It was never transparent to begin with. About the only thing that I think that hits home here in terms of being . . . recognizing the fact there was no sacred cows. And I think the Tourism Saskatchewan board and the staff and all the people of all the committees that worked towards building this entity, they certainly got that message loud and clear from the Sask Party that they are no sacred cow. And they got rid of the Tourism Saskatchewan board and players as quickly as can be.

Now, Mr. Speaker, what I think is also important is that some of the points that the minister raised in this particular Bill, and I want to point at one particular section, and I quote: "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 three seventy-five, the 2013 Juno Awards, and I would also point out that they're very proud of their participation in the 2013 Memorial Cup in Saskatoon. So, Mr. Speaker, end my quote there.

Mr. Speaker, you can see that all these events that are coming forward that are going to be part of what we would celebrate as a province, the plan that I can see, Mr. Speaker, based on this particular minister in the Sask Party and their particular plan overall, is that they want to jump in front of all these parades

and simply say, look what the Sask Party's doing for this province. And, Mr. Speaker, that self-promotion is something that the people of Saskatchewan can see through. They know that's what the original plan is, and from our perspective as opposition, we think it is wrong in every way, shape, and form because people don't appreciate that.

When you turn around and say to the private sector players that want to develop a really, truly solid tourism opportunity and industry, you should engage them wholeheartedly. You should embrace their role and you should certainly learn and listen from them. What you shouldn't do is throw them under the bus and say, look, your industry's not important to the Sask Party. Your industry is simply going to be one of the pawns in our parades of self-promotion. That's exactly what this Bill is all about, Mr. Speaker.

And I would point out that the reason why we would allude to some of these facts, Mr. Speaker, is that what we've seen from the Saskatchewan Party, Sask Party government on a continual basis, it's all about self-promotion, Mr. Speaker, and it's all about agendas that are going to . . . such as *The Election Act* that are primarily intended to promote them and support them, Mr. Speaker.

So I want to go on to a few other points that I think is also important to raise that I think people would really want to hear about, Mr. Speaker. Again this is some of the minister's opening comments in reference to this Bill, and I quote, Mr. Speaker:

Once again I'd like to thank Tourism Saskatchewan for all 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.

Well, Mr. Speaker, if somebody fires me, I don't want to look forward to working with them as well. So I think from the tourism industry perspective, the Tourism Saskatchewan perspective, I would say that, no, you know, once we participated in this process with you and then you turn around and throw us under the bus for whatever reason. We still don't understand. We weren't advised of this previously. Now you're throwing us under the bus and now you want to say you continue looking forward to working with you. If I was the Tourism Saskatchewan member, I would tell this government, absolutely not; I'm not planning on working with you.

I think you've disappointed a lot of these organizations, a lot of these businesses, and a lot of these people, because obviously this is all about self-promotion for the Saskatchewan Party. Not self-promotion for the people of Saskatchewan, not self-promotion for these particular private sector players, not self-promotion for tourism. It's all about trying to control this process and to put their faces and pictures and names in front of every single parade that they can figure out that's going to happen in Saskatchewan over the next four or five years, Mr. Speaker.

Now what that clearly shows us as an opposition caucus is that these folks, the Sask Party, will do anything to anybody — and maybe even some of their own supporters — to make sure that they continue flying their flag and continue their shameful

self-promotion and strategy, which I think people of Saskatchewan are going to catch on to very quickly. And that's something that ought to be sung from the highest hill in the province of Saskatchewan because we know, in opposition, that this is happening. And now the people of Saskatchewan, through actions such as this Bill, are certainly getting the message.

So I would point out to all those Tourism Saskatchewan players that done a considerable amount of work, we think that some of the plans they had and some of the comments they made, and certainly the willingness that they displayed at the outset, at the start of this process, that they're prepared to come in, many times at their own expense, many times with their own time, that they wanted to make a difference. They really wanted to make a difference to this process.

And after a couple of months and things are going really well, in a couple of years things are starting to gel, this government pulls the mat out from underneath them and throws them under the bus and says, okay, we're going to do this now because things are going so well for Tourism Saskatchewan. They noticed things were going very well for Tourism Saskatchewan. They noticed how the industry was promoting itself and developing strategies and were becoming exciting. In fact, they noticed how well the job was being done in Tourism Saskatchewan that they decided, well, we better try and get some of that credit as opposed to simply giving these guys, you know, all the resources, some of the resources that they need to do this work. Well we need to get that credit. We need to get ourselves in front of those parades, in front of those events, to make ourselves look like we know what we're doing, to make ourselves look important so people will continue to elect us, Mr. Speaker.

That's all this is about, is about power and control. And using people, quality people like the people that were on Tourism Saskatchewan, just for their simple own political benefit, Mr. Speaker. And that's a crying shame. It is an absolute crying shame to see all these great people that done a huge amount of work within Tourism Saskatchewan to be thrown out like that and disregarded and discarded for a lot of their great ideas that they contribute to this process, for no other reason than a political agenda. And, Mr. Speaker, people are seeing right through that in droves, and they'll continue seeing through that, Mr. Speaker. No question in my mind.

So again I will ask the question in terms of the sacred cows point that the minister alluded to, in terms of the number of exciting events that are coming forward, the fact that the minister himself is talking about, you know, thanking these former members of Tourism Saskatchewan.

This Bill in every way, shape, or form is just a Bill that just doesn't need to be put forward. And the manner in which the minister patronizes the former board members and people that played an important role is also something that needs to be highlighted, Mr. Speaker. Because you don't do that to people. You simply don't treat people in that fashion. You sit down with them, give them the opportunity to strengthen their industry and therefore their businesses and therefore our province overall. And then after they work hard and they contribute and they commit and you've got them on board, you

then turn around and say, well because you've done your job so well, we're seeing that a lot of people are respecting some of the work you're doing and you're having success, well we now need to take over that success and over that spotlight and point it at the Sask Party politicians. That's what this is about, Mr. Speaker, and everybody on this side of the Assembly and the people of Saskatchewan, and I dare say the people that were on the committee before, also see that this is clearly an opportunity for the Saskatchewan Party to simply and primarily promote themselves.

And, Mr. Speaker, that shameless self-promotion is something that the people of Saskatchewan don't tolerate. They don't think it's a great idea at all. And why is that, that they're doing this, Mr. Speaker? What is so important for the Saskatchewan Party to do that to a group of dedicated men and women again? It's totally beyond us as an opposition.

Now, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the actual tourism opportunity . . . And this is what's really conflicting and confusing for us. Because we think, as an example, the film industry itself, the tax credit that was given to the film industry in general, that there was a great amount of promotion of our province through that film industry and the tax credit that they got. It was something that Bill 37 should have been clearly tied to and even SCN [Saskatchewan Communications Network], Mr. Speaker, our own communications network, that also promoted and supported Saskatchewan as a province to visit and a province to reckon with when it comes to trying to attract people to our communities and to our land. And they've done away with SCN and they've done away with the film employment tax credit and now they're doing away with Tourism Saskatchewan.

So you sit there and you see all this activity happening. And people in Saskatchewan are saying, what is going on? Are we here to promote and support our province? And are we here to promote and defend our interests? Are we here to promote and defend the private sector's interests when they're looking at different economic opportunities such as tourism? And one by one these groups are getting slapped back and knocked down and certainly being used by the Saskatchewan Party and, Mr. Speaker, I think the people of Saskatchewan have simply had enough. They've had enough of this kind of activity. And if this Sask Party thinks that within two to three years the people are going to forget about this, I would remind them that their memories will linger for a long, long time.

And a lot of Tourism Saskatchewan members will know that they were fired by this particular government. They will know that they were used by this particular government. And they will know at the end of the day that some of their very best efforts, some of their genuine, pure, best efforts were simply being used for political gain that they didn't want no part of. And now, Mr. Speaker, they were dragged into and they were used and utilized, and that's again an absolute shame in the manner, the way the Sask Party has treated these dedicated people, these dedicated men and women of the tourism industry.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I would point out again that we talked a bit about what the minister has spoke about. And I alluded to some of the board members on how I would feel if I was a board member to be treated in such a fashion. And I also spoke about

the minister himself in terms of why he would allow this process to proceed. Because generally ministers do have, should have control of the programs and the services they have within their appropriate ministries.

But, Mr. Speaker, why did the minister not defend the Tourism Saskatchewan entity? Why did they, why did he throw them under the bus? Why didn't he speak up for those members? Why didn't he defend the values all those members brought to this committee? And I still don't know the answer for that, Mr. Speaker. So I started thinking in terms of why would he do that. Why would he not work with a entity or in a group of people, a group of organized people, dedicated, successful people, to get advice how to build tourism? Why wouldn't he do that, Mr. Speaker? And again it leads us to point out to the people that were thrown under the bus, and to the rest of the people of Saskatchewan, that his plan all along was simply use them and get all the great information that they had and do his own self-promotion.

Because I would remind people that are listening to this particular broadcast in terms of the opportunity in tourism that this was the same minister, Mr. Speaker, that when he ran for office, for the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] office, he had a bunch of his staff members sit in a mall, I think it was a food court area, where they pretended that he was on the campaign trail. He walked in there — and from what I can gather; I didn't see the actual article — but this is the same minister that walked in the food court, and before he got there got all of his staff members to go sit in there. And as the camera was rolling, he walks in and everybody gets up and shakes his hand. Well, Mr. Speaker, if I'm your staff member and you walk into a mall, I'm going to go shake your hand too. That was all staged. That was all staged, Mr. Speaker. And that is a shameful act I think overall because that's poor acting, certainly from my perspective.

[15:15]

So if people out there don't believe self-promotion is the end objective of this particular Bill, I would suggest they not only look at the minister's action, Mr. Speaker, but the Sask Party actions as well. Because it's evident from many, many quarters that their plan is much greater in terms of the engagement of good, common sense, everyday people out there versus their political plan overall, Mr. Speaker.

So I think the minister setting up this photo op in a food court at a mall is something that people should never forget because I don't think that's a fair and proper thing to do. You don't pre-organize that thing, organize those events, because that's shameful an I don't think people would appreciate that at all.

And secondly is you don't use people to the extent that they used the Tourism Saskatchewan players and the people that participated in the process. You don't use them to build a successful entity and then turn around saying, we don't want you any more because your work's going so well; you guys are getting all the great credit and things are moving well, but we want to be able to put our people in front of those parades. We want to be able to put our minister's picture or our Premier's picture in front of those pamphlets and brochures. We want to be able to speak at some of these great events to the throngs of

people who might be gathered, say, for a really big hockey tournament. That's exactly what this is about, Mr. Speaker. And absolutely everybody and their dog in Saskatchewan knows that's what this Bill is about.

So why would we, from the opposition perspective, sit here and simply say to the Sask Party, go ahead and use people? We would sit . . . Absolutely not. We're here to defend those interests and to help those folks and organizations that genuinely had a belief that these guys were going to do something different. And, Mr. Speaker, they haven't done a thing different from what we see from the 1980s Conservatives.

So, Mr. Speaker, we've seen this act before. We've seen this show before. And now they're back. They're back in any way, shape, or form. They're going to try and fulfill their agenda, and how they do it is they go through motions of this sort that would certainly help them achieve their political plan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I go back to the point that I raised a bit earlier about the tourism industry. Because I can tell you there's so many different programs out there on television, whether it is, you know, the dog creek . . . What's the name of the show?

**An Hon. Member:** — *Corner Gas*.

**Mr. Belanger:** — *Corner Gas* that has incredible recognition right across the country. I think Brent Butt and company had done a great job. They've done a great job in terms of promoting Saskatchewan. *Little Mosque on the Prairie* is another great promotion of our province. *Wapos Bay* is another good example. It's, you know, it's an animation series.

Like these are programs, Mr. Speaker, that everybody in Saskatchewan's familiar with and I would suggest that the people of Canada are also familiar with. So from my perspective we say, well why would you turn around and actually withdraw funding from those organizations that do an incredible amount to market our province and thus develop a tourism strategy for Saskatchewan overall? Well not only did the Sask Party put the kibosh on this particular tax credit for the film industry; they then turn around and shut down SCN. And now they're taking over Tourism Saskatchewan.

So people are sitting back saying, what the heck is going on? Doesn't make any common sense, Mr. Speaker. Doesn't make any common sense for the average person out there as to why this particular government is doing some of these things. And I would say to them that obviously this goes right to the top. It goes right to the Premier. He has to account for the actions of his ministers, and if he's standing there, and if he's standing there, Mr. Speaker, allowing some of these activities to occur under his watch, then he's just as guilty as the minister who's promoting the creation of this Crown as opposed to engaging the private sector. You can't deny that, and you can't separate yourself from that whatsoever.

And I'd also point out I think what's really, really important. This is the same minister that set up a photo op for CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] to come along and see him shake hands with all these friendly people in a food court in a mall, and later they find out all these friendly people were indeed members of his family or some of his staff, Mr. Speaker.

And I think that is absolutely shameful for somebody to organize and to preplan a photo shoot just to make themselves look good in the public. And, Mr. Speaker, that stuff really catches up to you later on.

And I would again point out that this particular Bill is exactly what I would characterize as something that the Saskatchewan Party saw that was working really well. They've seen Tourism Saskatchewan move things forward. They've seen good engagement by the sector players. They've seen that the industry was building. They were getting events planned. People were building a solid plan overall in terms of what they wanted to develop in tourism. The people were getting excited. They really thought they had an opportunity.

And then, bang, this minister and this particular Sask Party government and the Premier pulled the rug out from underneath them and sold them down the river and saying, thank you very much but we don't need you any more, and threw them under the bus. We are now going to lead the parade on tourism because all the great work you're doing, all the events, we want to be able to put our picture and our politicians — and three more politicians we hope to do later on — but put them all in front of all the parades so we can wave at the crowds for the events that the Tourism Saskatchewan industry folks organized for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And it's not the first time we've seen this action, Mr. Speaker. I can remember when the current member for Canora-Pelly, who is now the Finance minister . . . Well many times you bring a book to your school and you open the book and usually, it's a book on math or English or whatever. Well now what the Minister of Finance did at the time when he was the minister of Education, well he got his picture put on many of these textbooks that the classes were getting and, you know, the young people were wondering, well why is the minister's picture on some of the textbooks for some of our schools?

Well that's exactly our point. It's all about self-promotion, Mr. Speaker. And we don't have any kind of credit for the good solid management. You don't have credit for building the economy. You don't have credit for building the, you know, breaking down the debt problem we had. We don't have the credit, the historical credit, for all those things, and there's two things you do. Number one is you do shameless and constant self-promotion. That's what they're doing now. And the second thing is you try and gerrymander the electoral processes as we witnessed to *The Election Act*, when you talk about adding more MLAs.

So this is what they're doing, Mr. Speaker. It's a natural reaction of right wingers. We understand that, but the shameful part of this, Mr. Speaker, in the process, they used a lot of good, quality people. And that's the unfortunate reality that many of the people within Tourism Saskatchewan are slowly beginning to realize, that they had been had. They had been used by this government and now that the work is done — and some of the work will be ongoing of course, but the vast amount of work has been done — these kind people that have come forward to give their perspective and to share their beliefs and to give some solid advice in the hopes of helping their industry, they were simply used and they're not happy about this at all.

And the worst thing, Mr. Speaker, is if they had been told, if they had been told. That's what adds insult to injury, Mr. Speaker. Had they been told that over the next two years, we're going to ask your advice to set up a Crown, a Treasury Board Crown corporation, and we'd ask you to join us and to really push hard to build this Treasury Board Crown.

At the end of the day know well, know very well that your work will be done within a two-year time frame. Had these groups of people been told that — these private sector players within the tourism industry, had they been told that; the staff, had they been told that — had they been totally upfront with them and honest with them, had they been told that at the end of this process you could very well be disbanded, and we'll build this Treasury Board Crown that can do all the work you need to make sure there's constant effort in trying to meet some of the issues that you're raising, then I think maybe some of the people within Tourism Saskatchewan may have accepted that. But, Mr. Speaker, they were not told this in any way, shape, or form. They were set up.

So it's one thing to use people, but it's another thing to set them up. And, Mr. Speaker, that's exactly what the Sask Party's done. And there's no question in my mind that it's a shameful act of self-promotion and that's a disrespectful act towards players, industry players that we should value a heck of a lot more than what we've seen evidenced under the Saskatchewan Party government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think that from our perspective, from the Sask Party opposition . . . from the current opposition benches, that we're going to continue defending those people that feel that they have been wronged. And bit by bit, whether it's the teachers, Mr. Speaker, or whether it's the chiropractors, whether it's the Aboriginal community, whether it's the farmers in the gallery today talking about drainage, whether it's about the teachers, and all the different . . . the labour movement, this government has been hurting and fighting and trying to go to war with. Bit by bit those organizations, those people, those entities are going to start waking up. And when they wake up, they're going to get angry with this particular government because they know they've been hoodwinked. And it's not a good thing to do, to hoodwink people, Mr. Speaker.

So I would suggest to you that as they continue building up the base of people that don't support them any more, Mr. Speaker, things will change in Saskatchewan. Things will change in Saskatchewan. And I would say to the people of the province, particularly the people that are impacted by this Bill, we understand. We understand how you've been used. We understand how you have dedicated yourself to your industry and to this process, and now we understand the frustration and the anger you feel. We understand all that. We also understand the fact that some of the work, some of the work that you have done will be of much value to the people of Saskatchewan and your industries over time. And that value will be realized because of your work.

But as you begin to realize how poorly you were treated by the Sask Party, and the anger that you start feeling overall, know this: that within the next three and a half years you'll have the opportunity to cast your own judgment as to how the Sask Party government is doing and how you've been treated by them.

We know many of them, many of the players that were appointed or maybe involved in the private sector may have been supportive of the Sask Party, but now they're beginning to realize that they're simply been used. They've been had. And that, Mr. Speaker, is the reaction of a party that doesn't know what they're doing. And we're seeing evidence of that on a continual basis after their second term, Mr. Speaker.

So I would say that to the players out there that got impacted by this, we certainly would like your support. We certainly want you to participate in the process in terms of fighting back, making sure that you know that your work was not in vain, and that it wasn't there to be used in the political sense, but there's opportunity to fight back. So we'd invite you to write your letters, get petitions going, and bring forward your concerns to this Assembly because we can certainly bring those points forward for you on a continual, consistent basis.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I think it's important that people know that when we sit here and we see what the Sask Party's doing, there are a great many concerns out there. There are great concerns out there on how they're managing things overall. And as much as we sit here today and listen to the right wingers rant about how they built this economy, of how things are going so great, and how there's unprecedented revenues, great population growth, and a good economy, Mr. Speaker, we are now seeing clear evidence that they have abandoned the environmental file. They have abandoned many communities. They have abandoned many organizations, at one time believed in them that don't, no longer believe in them.

And they were starting to see evidence of two things: (1) is how they have mismanaged a lot of things within their government; and (2) of how they utilized people to a point where it's shameful and very hurtful, especially to the people that are impacted.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's a natural reaction, and that's what I would point to people out there now. Perhaps it's the Sask Party's time. Right now it's their term. But that time and term will come to an end. There's no question about it in our mind.

And if you look at the history within the NDP, Mr. Speaker — I've made reference to this on many occasions — we had great leaders. We had people like Blakeney who understood a great amount of things a heck of a lot better than the current Premier. We had premiers like Romanow who had to rebuild this province and rebuild a number of other challenges that we had, whether it was . . . particularly financial challenges. And then we had Calvert that took the torch from Romanow to build the economy and change things around, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly what I want to recognize today. History will be our greatest judge, Mr. Speaker. And history will show that it wasn't in any way, shape, or form the Sask Party that built this great province. In no way, shape, or form did they build this province whatsoever, Mr. Speaker. They are primarily the benefactors of the work being done prior to their arrival. All the heavy lifting was done, Mr. Speaker, before this Premier and the Saskatchewan Party took over, Mr. Speaker. They are simply enjoying the fruits of labour of others, Mr. Speaker, and every Saskatchewan person recognizes that and knows that.

And secondly the boom in this province would have come regardless if the Sask Party were in power, and the boom will continue in spite of the Sask Party being in power, Mr. Speaker. And this Bill is evidence of how disjointed and how confused they are and above all, Mr. Speaker, just really how inept they are as a government, Mr. Speaker. That is what I think is really important for the people that really have to pay attention to how politics is going.

[15:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, we stand here today and look at this Bill. And the Official Opposition would like to apologize to all the members of Tourism Saskatchewan, the staff, and their employees and their directors because we know the manner in which you were treated is not fair and unbecoming of an entity that had done great work for your industry and thus the tourism industry overall. We appreciate those points. We thank you for your work, and to say that we're sorry the manner in which you were treated was so unbecoming of a government. And we say that because they simply lack vision, they simply lack intelligence in terms of respecting your role in developing this industry. And, Mr. Speaker, the manner in which you were treated was horrible. It was deplorable and it's not something that should not be tolerated in modern-day Saskatchewan, but it happened. And from the industry perspective again, we hope to work with you to build the industry stronger because it's an important part of our economic engine. It's an important aspect of that, so we understand your role and respect that very much.

So in closing, Mr. Speaker, I would offer the point that we don't support this Bill in any way, shape, or form for a variety of reasons that I've exposed. And I'm going to simply adjourn debate on Bill No. 37.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn 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 Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 41

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hickie that **Bill No. 41 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Municipal Affairs — Municipal Taxation) Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I rise today to enter into this debate, and I won't speak long because this is relatively straightforward. And we do have lots of questions and we'd like to get down to the substance of this in committee because we do have lots of questions.

We've asked questions in question period about this. We haven't got, you know, satisfactory answers because for many this Bill is a significant piece in terms of raising taxes. Now the minister will say it's not about raising taxes. But for many,

especially those who live on limited incomes, how much they pay on their taxes are very important each year. And if they can get a discount or some way get a bit of a savings, they sure appreciate it. And so when we take away the ability to do that, I think there's a lot of folks out there who are unhappy about that, and that's a relatively straightforward issue.

And I can go into a long debate, but at this point we know that we'd rather get to the questions about what really is behind this? Because really when we saw a government that has choices, and from that they talk about their priorities clearly, a government that has millions for three more MLAs, but decided no, that they'll cut the rebate on education property taxes. This is a serious, serious matter. And it's one that we'll have lots of questions about, and there is a time to move forward to that.

And also we know that this is a relatively cumbersome piece of work to do because I'm sure that the municipal offices that put out the tax notices will have to redo their computer programs. And all the work that comes along with doing this will take some work, and I'm hoping that the department has or the government has some way to support those folks who are doing it because it's unexpected and it was something that is not easy to do. Not easy to do.

When you think that there's some things in our province that are pretty constant, one of them is people have always looked forward to their discounts. It's always been an important part of how we do business here in Saskatchewan. We know that when we've talked to seniors or other folks, like I said, who look forward to being able to pay, save a little bit on their property taxes because they've been able to do the right thing and pay them as quickly as they can, where others who wait a bit, don't get any kind of a penalty. This is sort of an odd thing, an odd thing. And it's an odd thing in terms of a province that's, you know, apparently doing well, and yet this was something that they would decide to cut. So I know for many people, it's a very big disappointment to see this kind of ability to go. It is unfortunate that we're looking at this today. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would now move that Bill No. 41 move to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Municipal Affairs that Bill No. 41, the miscellaneous statutes, miscellaneous affairs, municipal taxation amendment Act, 2012, be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall this be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 41, *The Miscellaneous Statutes (Municipal Affairs — Municipal Taxation) Amendment Act, 2012* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**Bill No. 16**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert that **Bill No. 16 — *The Correctional Services Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Glad to rise to participate in the debate on Bill No. 16, *The Correctional Services Act, 2011*.

I'd say off the top, Mr. Speaker, it's again informed in large part, informed by *The Road Ahead* report, and the way that that's enumerated the government's action plan in response to . . . One thing, Mr. Speaker, that while I'm interested in hearing the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Northcote participating in the debate from his seat, Mr. Speaker, because he of course is very familiar with the terms under which this Bill was put forward. One of the main things that this particular piece of legislation responds to is *The Road Ahead: Towards a Safer Correctional System*. That in and of itself, Mr. Speaker, was in response to the report that was commissioned in August of 2008.

And I guess at this point, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to go on record as thanking William Peet, Bob Vogelsang, and Dan Wicks who were the external investigation team that were brought in to discuss the situation wherein there was a fairly significant escape from the Regina Correctional Centre and the government's handling of it at that time.

I guess, Mr. Speaker, if out of that crisis came the external investigation team's report and then in response to that *The Road Ahead* and the way that we see that continuing to evolve, Mr. Speaker. I guess if sometimes it takes a crisis to prompt a positive response or positive action, and I think that the case can be made that out of that crisis, out of that escape of six inmates from the Regina Provincial Correctional Centre in August of 2008, the fact that the investigation team came forward with a series of recommendations, 23 I believe, Mr. Speaker.

And again the way that the government eventually responded to that would be *The Road Ahead: Towards a Safer Correctional System*. We think that out of that crisis came something that would seem to be positive, Mr. Speaker.

And again I think there's some . . . It's a pretty tough job to do, working in corrections, Mr. Speaker. And both people that are out there on the range, people that are working in daily contact with inmates, people that are tasked with managing the system and making sure that it is living up to those sort of twin objectives of punishment, Mr. Speaker, and people if they've done the crime doing the time, but also seeing what can be done to correct or to rehabilitate, and of course from which our system, the corrections system, takes its common name.

So if out of that particular incident at the Regina Correctional

Centre, if something good can come out of that, we are hopeful that there are some measures that did come in the wake of that critical incident, and we're interested to see how this continues to play out.

Bill No. 16, the principles being offered up in it, it's interesting that that is now being enshrined in the actual legislation. But the protection of the public as being paramount, we certainly agree with that, Mr. Speaker. Offenders being required to comply with correctional facility rules and community supervision conditions, we certainly agree with that, Mr. Speaker. Offenders being entitled to fair treatment, again we agree with that. And staff members adhering to a code of professional conduct, again all things that we agree with. And the fact that these have been enshrined in the legislation now, we think is a positive step forward.

The way that other jurisdictions will look to, in terms of what is in fact best practice or what is common practice at least in terms of other jurisdictions, what lessons can be learned from our neighbours in Manitoba, Quebec, the Yukon, it's good to see that we're adopting some of the practices there, Mr. Speaker.

Again out of a situation that demonstrated very plainly the administrative shortcomings in the system, the problems that arise from overcrowding in the system, Mr. Speaker, and the kind of procedural challenges that existed, again they, I don't think, have been addressed to 100 per cent satisfaction by any stretch of the imagination. But I guess what we're looking for in the opposition benches, Mr. Speaker, is demonstration of progress on responding to the circumstance that prompted the external review. And in many ways, we see that being put forward in this legislation.

There are a number of things that are fairly technical in nature, Mr. Speaker, that I think will lend themselves to better scrutiny in the committee setting for this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. But one thing I do want to say off the top, or what I'd like to say before I take my place and allow this piece of legislation to be moved onto committee for that closer scrutiny, Mr. Speaker, is the fact that we do have a system that, despite changes made in response to *The Road Ahead* or flowing from *The Road Ahead* report, we still have a system that has far too much overcrowding in it.

And the way that remand frustrates a lot of the attempts of work towards rehabilitation, and the kind of challenges that a significant remand population . . . I think the latest figures, according to the minister in estimates, being upwards or just south of 40 per cent, Mr. Speaker; I think it was on the order of 38 per cent of the current population is in on remand. That's a big challenge for the system. And then when you put that alongside the fact of significant overcrowding and the fact that you've got the very sort of facilities that should be there to work towards rehabilitation or to correct behaviour — when you think about the gyms that are being used to domicile inmates, the shops that are being used to domicile inmates, and the classrooms that are being used to domicile inmates, Mr. Speaker — it's hard to believe that it doesn't have a negative effect on whatever sort of programming offerings are available in terms of trying to give people the tools to make a better life for themselves.



And again we had a good discussion about the Corrections estimates the other night, Mr. Speaker, and were able to clarify some things in terms of where the impact of Bill C-10 is coming, the federal Conservative crime Bill, Mr. Speaker. We still have significant questions about a system that overcrowding is such a huge negative feature of, the correctional system in the province being confronted with changes in legislation that — you know, pick your expert — is predicting will increase the population inside our correctional system, thereby further worsening the situation as exists around overcrowding.

[15:45]

We have a great many concerns about that, Mr. Speaker, and a great many concerns about the impact it has on the correctional aspect of the corrections system and just on the safety between inmates and guards, or inmates and corrections workers, between inmates themselves, and the way that time is served, Mr. Speaker — whether or not it's dead time or whether it's productive time — and what that does for community safety at large, Mr. Speaker, in terms of are we only worsening people to send them back out into the general society to get up to worse and worse activity, and the way that impacts community safety.

Again we've got a system with significant overcrowding. We've got changes coming to be implemented on the federal basis that we know any number of people with expertise and knowledge of the correctional system say will increase the prison populations, particularly in the provincial system. And how that works out, Mr. Speaker, we are very concerned to see. We're also very concerned to see that. We'll be interested to see how this is reckoned with by this provincial government that hasn't been able to come forward with any sort of plausible, reasonable response when we ask the questions about what is the planning that has been undertaken to ready the system that is already under significant stress, Mr. Speaker. But again I guess we'll see how that plays.

But as it relates to this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, it's something that we'll have closer conversation about it in committee. And in the conclusion of the minister's remarks on December 13th of 2011, in the second reading speech that introduced this Bill, where that minister said:

This is our ultimate goal: to reduce crime in neighbourhoods and communities across our province by providing corrections officials with a strong legal framework that speaks to contemporary needs in a very complex and very crucial system.

When they enumerate that as the goal of this legislation, we agree with that, the worth of that goal, Mr. Speaker. And we want to be able to have that closer conversation, that more detailed conversation to gain greater assurance as to the progress that this Bill might make towards that goal. So in that regard, Mr. Speaker, I would conclude my remarks and allow for this Bill to be moved to committee for closer consideration.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing that Bill No. 16, the correctional services amendment Act, 2011 be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the

Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 16, the correctional services amendment Act, 2011 be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 17

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 17 — *The Child Care Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 17, *An Act to amend The Child Care Act*. It's a relatively small Act. There's only two real parts to it.

One is to eliminate the . . . it sounds like the Family Services Board, reference to that, because essentially it has not been used since it was put in place and is redundant. And so therefore it makes some sense to remove that. And then the other part is about essentially the funding, the grants and subsidies that, some regulations concerning that.

So we'll have lots of questions in committee about that because clearly we've seen some work that needs to be done, particularly in the funding for child care subsidies for families who find it expensive, find that it's not a very relevant or current system that we have in place right now. There's lots of questions we would have about child care, and I know many of my colleagues have gone on and really, you know, put the record straight in terms of the concerns that we have around child care in this province. We think the government has overpromised and underdelivered; haven't really done the things that we think should be doing.

And we know, and I know myself, particularly in my own riding, at Princess Alex where we see a new child care facility, but some of the spaces we would have liked to have seen reserved for some of the local families, but it apparently can't be done. And it's unfortunate that's the case because I think that we need to be able to do more to support our local communities. And the government has dodged that, has not really answered that. In fact it was interesting when I wrote both the Minister of Social Services and of Education, they kind of blamed each other. And it was a real case of the government not knowing



which hand was looking after which part of the situation.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot to ask. We have a lot of questions. And so I want to make sure this gets to committee as soon as possible because I think that it's one that we need to hear some answers; we need to get the government on record over this. So with that then, I will move Bill No. 17, *An Act to amend The Child Care Act* be now moved to committee.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Education that Bill No. 17, *The Child Care Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred?

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 17, *The Child Care Amendment Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

### Bill No. 18

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 18 — *The Degree Authorization Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join in on the discussion on Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act*. I do have a few comments to make about this Bill, Mr. Speaker, with respect to some of the implications that it may have for the post-secondary sector here in the province as well as to get a little bit of feedback on some of the feedback I've received, some of the input I've received with respect to the reaction different individuals in the province have had about this degree.

The minister's second reading speech was provided to this Assembly on December 13th, 2011 and in it the Minister for Advanced Education identified a few different things that this piece of legislation will do. Well essentially, Mr. Speaker, what this piece of legislation is doing — I'll put in my own words — is expanding the number of institutions in the province who are able to issue degrees.

So it's taking, expanding options, as the minister says, for institutions in the province who are able to go through the required steps and a required procedure of accreditation and quality assurance and then have the possibility of offering degrees. As the minister stated in his remarks, this is in

response perhaps to a number of groups, but the minister specifically identified SIAST, Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology, as well as Briercrest College at Briercrest, as two institutions that are interested in going down this path. And it may be a larger number of groups, Mr. Speaker, who want to pursue this, having relevance perhaps for regional colleges or other private institutions that exist or want to exist here in the province.

The types of . . . There are implications, Mr. Speaker, from a policy perspective when considering the expansion of degree-granting to the number of . . . to other institutions.

The one issue, Mr. Speaker, raised in some of the feedback that I received has to do with the issue of duplication. And there's a strong feeling that for the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], U of R, the institutions currently provide university degrees, that when it comes to competition for programs that there not be the type of duplication that may hurt or may cancel out some of the initiatives or work against some of the initiatives that the institutions currently have under way with the types of programs they offer and the types of students that they wish to recruit.

There's also, Mr. Speaker, a lot of discussion in the post-secondary community around the issue of quality assurance. And I would say that the feedback that I have received on this Bill to date can be grouped into three different voices. The one, Mr. Speaker, is a group of colleges that would be very much in favour of this legislation and the opportunity to provide degrees.

And in that group, Mr. Speaker, I think there would be, well certainly Briercrest which has been vocal about this and with their desire to have the ability to grant degrees; SIAST may be of interest as well; Bethany Bible College as another example . . . or Bethany College now, I believe. So that's one group, a group that because of changes that have occurred in other provinces and how this has affected their ability to recruit students from out of province, as one example or one reason, or whether that's out of province or out of country, this is something that's been important to them. And I've heard that clearly from the groups identified.

There's another group, Mr. Speaker, that I would say would be the existing kids on the block — U of S, U of R — who have been very active of course for many years, have a strong reputation, and have a number of concerns about how this change could affect them. And I would say that the feedback I receive from them has been not necessarily against, but I would say would be measured and clear statements that there needs to be the correct processes in place in order to ensure that this won't negatively affect U of S, U of R, and won't affect the quality of the reputation of what it means to have a degree from Saskatchewan, from the province.

And then, Mr. Speaker, there's another group of feedback that I have heard from groups, whether that's faculty associations or individuals that are concerned about more private forms of delivery of education, who aren't as in favour of this and who are opposed to it and concerns that they have raised. I won't get into the detail of the different viewpoints right now, Mr. Speaker, because I do think it might be more constructive and

effective to have some of those discussions with the minister in committee when this legislation leaves second reading and goes to committee, before it comes back to third.

But there are some other . . . There are some things built into the legislation that I think is important to note at this time. The minister has identified that the protection of the word “university” and “varsity” would be in there. So there would not be confusion and there would not be cross-efforts with promotion between current activities, I assume, at the U of S, U of R, and what new players may want to be doing. So that’s a component that is built in.

And something that everyone has voiced in the feedback I’ve heard has to do with the quality assurance process. Individuals have stated that it needs to be very much so an arm’s-length process. It can’t have interference of a political nature and also, Mr. Speaker, that it needs to be of the highest standards. And it needs to ensure that if an institution is able to grant a degree, that it holds the sway and the power that it ought to have and that we want it to have.

There is a question though I think, which is an important one, Mr. Speaker, that has to do around the issue of funding and public dollars. Some people have voiced to me that this approach could open the door to more public dollars going to private institutions. And I can think back to instances over the last few years for example with the knowledge infrastructure program, where public dollars did go to private institutions. And many people have raised concerns with me that this could take us further down that path, which is a drain of resources on public institutions and in certain cases, as we’ve discussed at length in question period and in committee on different topics, presents a different set of challenges that can and should be addressed.

There are also concerns, Mr. Speaker, and some questions about the details around this that we’ll have in committee with respect to the physical presence requirement and how extensive and clear that component will be to ensure that if an institution wants to deliver degrees here in the province, that the physical presence is there. Again, more questions also around the quality insurance process in order to ensure that it is as rigorous and as rigorous and demanding as it needs to be. And also some questions, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the oversight of when an authorization holder requests an amendment to the authorization that it has, some questions about the oversight there as to whether or not it’s only the minister who signs off on that or whether it’s part of a larger discussion involving different people overseeing the decision.

[16:00]

So, Mr. Speaker, I understand, as with any change in legislation and change in approach, there are those that are opposed, those that are in favour, and people that are perhaps a bit lukewarm or being measured and clearly stating some concerns and issues that they have with the legislation. So I do look forward to having a more in-depth discussion about this with the minister in the committee process, and asking some of the questions that people are seeking answers to.

And at this time then I would conclude my remarks, and I

would be prepared to have this piece of legislation go to committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration that Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

**Clerk:** — Second reading of this Bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall the Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 18, *The Degree Authorization Act* be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

#### Bill No. 20

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Hickie that **Bill No. 20 — *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2011*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It’s a pleasure to enter into the debate on *An Act to amend The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, No. 20. And of course it’s a very important Act, and it really outlines how we do business in our communities here in Saskatchewan. And I think this is important to keep this as current as possible, and I think this is an important piece forward. It’s a tactical piece. It’s not one that . . . In many ways it shouldn’t be viewed as a partisan piece because it’s not an ideologically driven piece of legislation. This is about common sense, how we plan our communities.

And so it talks about some of the definitions, and I think this one will be very important how we talk about how the district plan replaces the previous district or official community plan. And I think this is an important discussion that we’ll have to have and figure out the logic behind that. I think that’s critical.

And then the other piece that I think we’re going to have lots of questions about is the intermunicipal development agreement, the IDA. It’s between two more municipal councils. This allows municipalities to enter into some sort of planning process and I think this is an important thing. And I think we’re going to have lots of questions about this because whenever we have information like this . . . and I think we have to have the technical people to inform us as we have.

We can rage on against this if we want, but really this is a

tactical piece where we have to have those planners come and explain how they're going to do their business. And I think we need to see more of this. And I know we've raised this, for example, when we've talked about the 10,000 new apartments that this government has talked about. In many ways they are really promoting the fact that we're going to see an upsurge in rental purpose-built apartment blocks. But my question is, how do we absorb those into our communities? That's where planning comes into place.

And so we think this is an important piece, and we're looking forward to having more conversations with the ministry folks as to what this really means so we can understand it. And then when we come back, about more questions and further legislation. That'll be fine. But this guides that discussion, and we need to understand that.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to see this go to committee because we do have lots of questions about that, and I'm sure we'll have a good discussion in committee about that. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Municipal Affairs that Bill No. 20, *The Planning and Development Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

**Clerk:** — Second reading of this Bill.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall the Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 20, *The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 23

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 23** — *The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and this is a critically important piece of legislation before us and, as you would know, that as a former critic of Labour, that we're just approaching the Day of Mourning on April 28th. And of course occupational health and safety is a huge issue in Saskatchewan as we've wrestled to become a province that shakes that reputation of being number 2 in terms of workplace injuries. And while we've come a long way, we have so much

more work to be done, and so this is a serious, serious piece of legislation.

So we have lots of questions about this piece of legislation. We understand that this has been arrived at by the committee, the minister's committee on occupational health and safety which is made up of equal number of members of employers and employees. And so when they come together and arrive at recommendations for the minister, it's pretty hard for the minister not to take those recommendations seriously. So we're glad to see this before us.

Again we will have questions about this. Again it's a very technical document, and it's not a partisan document because it's about making the workplace safer. And so we are willing to have this go to committee to have those discussions in the committee where we can ask questions, but we do have some concerns. We think that we need to make sure that not only can you have a good piece of legislation but that you have to have the protection by enforcement in the ministry to make sure that whatever is passed will be actually enforced in the workplace, that we have to see that happen.

We see now that Mission: Zero has reached a bit of a stall because actually the numbers have gone back up this year in terms of workplace injuries, and the stats aren't that encouraging for this year. We hope that it's just a bump in the road, but we need to doubly reinforce our efforts to make sure workplace injuries keep going down, that we lose that reputation of being either the first or second or third most dangerous province to work in Canada. We should not have that reputation. We should be working to lose that reputation, particularly as our economy grows. Our economy's booming. Workers are coming here and we need to make sure that, if there was ever a time, ever a time . . . But there's never a time where workplace injuries are allowed. But boy, during a boom, this is a time to set standards and say, listen, we mean it. We mean it that we will do something about it.

Areas that have high workplace injuries, such as health care, it's one that's going to continue to see a lot of challenges in because as our demographics age, we want to make sure those who are looking after people who are not well are not themselves becoming injured in the workplace. This is a bit of an ironic situation that if you work in a health facility, it's actually a dangerous place to be. That shouldn't happen. That shouldn't happen. I know we've taken big gains in that area but we need to do more. We need to do more.

And so, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we need to make sure that we can do the right thing and ensure that occupational health and safety is a priority in Saskatchewan, particularly for this government, and particularly for WCB, Workers' Compensation Board. You know, we have about 40,000 injury claims each year, and 13,000 of these result in lost time from work and 20 result in loss of life. And then there's others who pass away because of long-term cancers that are caused largely by asbestos, but others. And so we need to make sure that we do the right thing.

So this has a lot of details in it and we will be asking a lot of questions in this. And I know that we will be talking about, I think it's section 14, the area around dangerous . . . "Duty re

policy statement on violence and prevention plan,” you know, because I’ve been talking a lot about Jimmy’s law, and we’ve been seeing a situation in Saskatoon where a workplace on the corner of Avenue H and 20th has had two violent incidents in the last couple . . . actually three in the last two months. And we need to know what is happening around ensuring that those statements and violence prevention plans are actually in place, and what will happen if that isn’t the reality.

And so we have lots of questions about this Bill. And I know particularly that in this week when we’re thinking a lot about April 28th, the Day of Mourning for people who have lost their lives at their work, that we make sure that we do everything we possibly can to ensure that when people go to work in the morning they come home safe and sound at night.

And, Mr. Speaker, I’ve often talked, I know I’ve raised this in the House around shift workers. So many of our people in Saskatchewan are shift workers, and the same thing that when they go to work in the evening, when they come back early in the morning, that they do come back safe and sound. And we do all that we can to make sure that we have done the right thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, we have lots of questions on this, but I do have to say I have some confidence in the Bill because, as I said, it was developed by consensus between employers and employees. And so clearly when you have that kind of momentum behind a piece of legislation, the legislation should be sound and we should be listening to those stakeholders. And there would be no reason to stand in the way other than to understand it because if we understand it then we can support it and we can get behind it 100 per cent.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we’ll be looking forward to seeing it in committee and we’ll have lots of questions as we go through it. I think we’ll need a fair bit of time in committee to go through it so we understand it completely, and it’ll be very interesting to talk not only to the minister, but also to his staff to explain some of the more technical points on it and when things will come into place and what some of the penalties will be and how the enforcement will happen.

That’s a key piece because I said you can have a consensus, you can have the greatest legislation in the world, but if there’s nobody enforcing it, then we’ve got a problem. And I know that the auditor’s report, the auditor’s report will be . . . informed us in terms of some of the challenges in the ministry. And we hope we can hear how that will be corrected in terms of making sure these new regulations are brought up to speed.

Well so with that, Mr. Speaker, I will be very happy to see this go to committee. And I think that it’s important we take that next step with this piece of legislation.

**The Speaker:** — Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has moved second reading of Bill No. 24, the advocate for children and . . . Oh, excuse me. No. 23, *The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 23, *The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 24

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 24** — *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 24, *An Act respecting the Advocate for Children and Youth*.

Mr. Speaker, this is new legislation which gives independent authority to the Children’s Advocate as a structural matter as it relates to a legislative officer. And it has clearly the support of the Children’s Advocate and the Ombudsman’s office, where these two offices have been tied together under the same legislation. I think it also meets a few needs of the Children’s Advocate that are important. But clearly the most important reason for doing this is to make sure it’s absolutely clear which part of the legislation applies to the Children’s Advocate and which part applies to the Ombudsman.

[16:15]

Now as far as any changes in the actual legislation, there are a couple of things that are done. One of them is that it makes it clear that publicly funded health entities are included in the review area of the Children’s Advocate. So that includes regional health authorities, health care organizations and affiliates, and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. This hasn’t necessarily been a problem, but to have it very clear in the legislation I think makes it more straightforward if there are some issues that arise.

It also gives authority to conduct research and become involved in advocacy based on that research as it relates to the rights of children and youth. And that’s something that we in the opposition applaud because we know that the Children’s Advocate has a unique position in our community to be able to hear the stories of individuals who come forward to that office, but also to do research, talk to experts, and then come forward with opinions on different points of public policy.

The most recent example of that would be where the Children's Advocate has made a number of comments about Bill 36 which eliminates the counting of those under 18 when new constituency boundaries are created. And I think it's the appropriate role for the Children's Advocate to do that. Obviously that's possible now under present legislation, but this legislation actually makes those kinds of activities even more central to the role of the Children's Advocate.

Another aspect of the legislation is the explicit permission given to ministries and agencies to voluntarily share information with the advocate, Children's Advocate, to resolve problems that arise. And I think this is once again a policy decision that comes out of the practical nature of how most problems are resolved, and we applaud that as well.

I think the role of children and youth living in care or custody, in other words those who are under the care of the Minister of Social Services, have been given some extra, clearly extra rights to make sure that they can have privileged communication with the Children's Advocate without getting into any problem within their care situation.

We know that another area that was to be included in this legislation, but which is not here, relates to the Children's Advocate's ability to look at issues related to school boards. And this is something clearly that has not yet been resolved so it's not in the existing package of legislation, but we would hope that the discussions will continue so that the Children's Advocate will have a role in dealing with issues within our school systems as clearly the Children's Advocate has shown the value of its scrutiny as it relates to activities in the areas where they are now looking at issues.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there is one curious aspect to this legislation in light of the other legislation that the Minister of Justice has introduced into this House. And perhaps it relates to the nature of our budgeting process, and I'm not sure if the Minister of Finance has been looking at this or not. But the budgets for the Children's Advocate and for the Ombudsman and for the Provincial Auditor and for the independent officers of the legislature are, basically those budgets are part of the legislative budget. It's not part of the Ministry of Justice's budget. So the Minister of Justice has a slightly different role in presenting the positions to this legislature as it relates to the Children's Advocate.

And so on the side of the consumer affairs issues and financial services issues, the Minister of Justice has come forward with a consolidation Bill where they've pulled all kinds of areas of responsibility together into one agency and then have created a new authority to deal with all of those issues under one person. And effectively a whole number of what we would call advocates for consumer issues or financial issues have been consolidated into one office.

Now it's curious that that consolidation perspective is taken as it relates to an issue which is in the Justice minister's budget. So the deputy minister of Justice and others providing advice to the minister have said, well here's a way that we can reduce the costs of government by having less, a lesser budget; or we can do it by collecting the fees and then having a whole number of services paid for in a way that's slightly different.

On the legislative side when we're talking about legislative officers, we're expanding the numbers of offices, the numbers of budget lines, if I can put it that way, in the budget of the legislature in a way that's quite contrary to what we're doing on the consumer and financial services line. I make no further comment other than identifying it and pointing out that these are different ways of dealing with particular issues. And it may be that it relates to the fact that the Minister of Justice is responsible for a budget in Justice but not responsible for the budget of the legislature.

So, Mr. Speaker, we I don't think have a great deal of difficulty with this particular legislation, such as it is. It seems to accomplish most of the goals that were set out by the Children's Advocate and the Ombudsman as they've brought these things forward. And we will obviously have some questions about the actual mechanics of how this is all going to happen when we deal with the matter in committee. But I have no further comments right now.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is Bill No. 24, *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — All in favour of Bill No. 24?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Clerk:** — Second reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 24, *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Speaker:** — This Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 25

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 25** — *The Ombudsman Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Opposition House Leader . . . The Opposition Leader, sorry.

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't call you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise and make some comments about Bill No. 25, *An Act respecting the Ombudsman*. Clearly this is a bookend Bill, with Bill No. 24 relating to the Children's Advocate. The plan obviously from the government is to create special legislation for the Ombudsman which effectively moves the Children's Advocate's role out of the



legislation. And so my sense of that is that the Bill accomplishes what was intended. It's clearly been developed in consultation with the Ombudsman's office and the Children's Advocate's office. And so the Act does continue the roles that are there for the Ombudsman at the same time as it further enhances the abilities of the Ombudsman to do the job that we all want it to do.

Now as was clear with the Children's Advocate's legislation, it makes it clear here that the health area — which at some points has raised some questions about whether the Ombudsman has jurisdiction over health care services — it's now been clearly stated that the authority of the Ombudsman extends to publicly funded health entities which includes regional health authorities, health care organizations, affiliates, and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. This is good for these health-funded, publicly funded health entities, and it's also good for the Ombudsman.

It also makes sure that the rules are clear about how information can be shared with the Ombudsman and protects privacy of patients and employees within the system. And so that part and the way this has been drafted I think has accomplished a new description of what the Ombudsman's job is and has done it clearly with working together with the Ombudsman and officials within the Ministry of Health.

Now another aspect of the Ombudsman's role has always been the role of education of the public, and this is also clearly set out in the legislation. I think that that makes it straightforward that the role of the Ombudsman is to solve problems, but it's also to identify and then make sure that these solutions to the problem are publicly known. And so I think that the legislation accomplishes what's needed there.

Now the other issue which is interesting is that the Ombudsman, Ombudsman's office and the Ombudsman as the person named as the Ombudsman, clearly have very special skills that can be used not just within government but also may be used in some other places that are not government. And this legislation makes it possible for the Ombudsman to do their problem solving and fairness assessments in dealing with complaints with groups that are not part of government. Clearly they would do this for a fee or based on the amount of staff and resources that they have available, but just the ability to do those kinds of investigations and help solve other problems within the community, I think that's an important factor.

Communication with the Ombudsman is also absolutely crucial for the job that's done. I know that this legislation allows for privilege to attach to communication to the Ombudsman in very defined ways which will protect individuals who want to contact that office and also protect the staff working with the Ombudsman. So that's another important change that's here.

As with the Children's Advocate office, there's also the whole issue of how to resolve matters in an expeditious fashion by the voluntary sharing of information, as opposed to the Ombudsman requesting, very formally, to obtain information. And this legislation facilitates that voluntary sharing of information, which is another positive aspect of the legislation.

[16:30]

There's one area where some policy choices have been weighed and that relates to the health quality review committees which are part of all of our regional health authorities in the province. Those committees have long had a very careful protection of their reports, and this legislation makes it clear that those reports are protected for the protection of the health system, but it doesn't eliminate the possibility that some of these reports which are protected may be shared with the Ombudsman under the appropriate safeguards. And I think that's also a positive factor in dealing with the health authorities.

Now what happens with this legislation is that it obviously has brought into 2012 language this role of the Ombudsman. But I think we can all be assured that the role of the Ombudsman as an independent officer of the legislature has been protected, and it is further enhanced by the legislation.

I would once again though make the comment that it's interesting that the Minister of Justice would be consolidating a number of roles within the consumer protection and financial services area to streamline the operation at a time when, in this area which is under the purview of the legislature, we're expanding into a broader . . . and more officers like the Ombudsman or the Children's Advocate. So I think that my previous comments would apply to that.

I think that this legislation has had a lot of consultation around it, but I know there are questions that we will have once again as we understand how it's going to be implemented, including some of the practical aspects of the division into two separate offices between the Ombudsman and the Children's Advocate. But I have no further comments to make at this time. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General that Bill No. 25, *The Ombudsman Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Clerk:** — Second reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 25, *The Ombudsman Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Speaker:** — The Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

#### Bill No. 26

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 26** — *The*

*Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join in on the debate on Bill 26, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011*. And it's interesting and it's unfortunate that we have to repeal this Act. SCN, and I want to comment on SCN. And we've seen the outcry from the province when the government decided to, I guess cut, do whatever it did to eliminate SCN from the province, and the good things that SCN did in the province.

And I commend the group from SCN the way they lobbied. They got the community support. They reached out to the people and asked the people what they thought of this government's action. And I think that was very clear, loud. And unfortunately again, here we talk about governments get to pick winners and losers, and if you want to look at that, they made a decision. It was unfortunate because SCN did a lot of different things when it came to Saskatchewan's story, whether it was Aboriginal programming, whether it was in communities, it did a lot of different things to support our province.

And you know, to see the frustration with SCN, and it was our own, I guess, opportunity communications for Saskatchewan's people to tell our stories, whether they were at the farms, whether it was some of the older cities. They did a lot of different opportunities and it was amazing to watch, and the good credit that they took. And I think some of the work they did was recognized not only in Saskatchewan and Canada. So when you see an organization that did such a wonderful job, to see a government decide that it wanted to get rid of it, do away with it, sell it off, do whatever, and you see the money that the government lost — if you want to say that — the investment that was there, and we see the way later on it was sold. So there are so many questions.

And we've seen there was such a lobby group of individuals, men and women, families that came to the legislature protesting, and there was literally hundreds of them that came here. And unfortunately the government did not listen. But here we have a government that says, you know, we're going to be accountable, responsible. We're going to do what the people want. We're going to do what the citizens want. We're going to listen to them. We're going to be a humble government. And we've seen time and time again the Sask Party government, the way they've treated different organizations. SCN was no different. Whether it's some of the Aboriginal groups, whether you see the tourism industry — there are so many different areas where this government has cut. What do you see in the way they've put the added cost on seniors?

It all goes back to a government making and choosing. And if we look at some of the other Bills that this government has brought forward . . . And it's unfortunate that we're dealing with this Bill. And there's a number of different things it will do, the repeal Act. But SCN is the one for me that really speaks loud from the people, from the concern that citizens in our province had, made it very clear, whether it was petitions . . . There's been a lot of work done on behalf of SCN trying to make sure the government would, I guess, rethink it, reconsider, you know, put the decision that they made away. But

unfortunately the government went ahead with it very clearly even though they heard the concerns of many Saskatchewan people, of SCN — the staff, their families — and it's unfortunate that that had to happen.

Here we had a government that could have reached out and again consulted with the industry, but they did not do that, Mr. Speaker. Again we go back to seeing this government likes to make decisions based on, I guess, their own ideas, their philosophy, the way the right wing government operates without consulting, without asking. They want to cut programs. They want to cut funding to different groups.

You know, the amazing thing is they don't ask, is there a better way that we could spend this money to the Saskatchewan residents? Is there a better way we can take care of our seniors, our children, and education? Is there a better way to do it instead of cutting programs? Is there better ways we could work with the industry, organizations, families, seniors to come up with a better plan? And unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, they don't believe in that. They have their agenda and they move ahead on that.

And some of my colleagues have expressed it very well. They have pointed out . . . And the member from Athabasca has clearly. He tells it the way it is. He has a way of doing it, presenting what the people are saying and the frustration. He has a sense of humour with it. But I know in his heart, the man does care, truly does care. My colleague does care about what's going on with this province, and I know sometimes he gets very passionate because he cares, he cares about the people back home. And he expresses himself very well, you know, if you listen to some of his, the debates that he's been involved in and the way he presents, Mr. Speaker, on these Bills.

And I know he spoke to this Bill and he had an opportunity to express his frustration, his concern, and he did that very well. He made sure that the issues that community members were expressing — and it's not just SCN, but there were community members — about the government's handling of this Bill and the way they handled the whole SCN, the whole file without consulting, without working. And they always say, oh well we'll work with you. We'll work with you. But in the end, they move their agenda.

And just like we've seen with the tourist industry and you see the way Tourism Saskatchewan has been treated . . . And let's make it very clear. There is a group that worked hard in this province, not only in Saskatchewan, but making sure people heard what our beautiful province is about, the interesting things that we have, why people should come into our province. They had a marketing tool, an advertising tool, and they had partners in industry. And we've seen another organization the way the Sask Party government treats groups.

And if groups out there want to raise concern, and it's amazing how they get treated. And you hear some of the stories out there and it's interesting to watch. People are scared to come forward. Yet we pass legislation. And we bring, you know, a day of bullying, and we talk about anti-bullying in our province and no one should have to put up with it. And we see some of the concerns that people are faced with. They don't want to come forward.

But I know the people have to come forward, and the people have to start expressing to their government when you're not doing what's in the best interests of the individuals, the organizations. When a government thinks it can do better without consulting, when it can do a better job of taking care of things, that's something that I think Saskatchewan people truly are going to be very concerned about.

And again, SCN and this Bill. It's a sad day to see this Bill come forward. It will go off and do what it needs to do. The government has made that decision. This is just to clean up, if you want to say, what they want to do. He could've left this Bill sitting there, but they've chose to remove it for whatever reason. There could've been, you know, an opportunity for the government to reach out to SCN, but they chose not to.

So, Mr. Speaker, at this time I know all of my colleagues have spoke, some of them in great detail, to this Bill. I think I was the last member that hadn't spoke to it, so to share in and weigh in on the debate on this, and I know there's going to be a lot of work to do yet in committee. There's going to be some questions that people will have and we'll get the answers to it. And maybe we will, and I hope that happens.

But at this time, you know, it's a sad day to see this happen and the way SCN and the way other organizations are being treated by the Sask Party government, without being consulted, without trying to reach out and say, what's the best way to do it? What would work best for Saskatchewan people for the industry? This government does not reach out to the people that are out there that it affects, and makes decisions, and sometimes they are not good. And I'm shocked at some of the stuff they've done. But anyway at this point, Mr. Speaker, I know this will go to committee and my colleagues will finish answering the questions that need to be asked.

**The Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question on Bill No. 26? The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice and Attorney General that Bill No. 26, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Clerk:** — Second reading of this Bill.

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 26, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Speaker:** — This Bill now is referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

### Bill No. 27

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 27** — *The*

*Education Amendment Act, 2011/Loi de 2011 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to wade into the debate on the Bill, *The Act to amend The Education Act*.

What the gist of this Bill, Mr. Speaker, is, the government is mandating the start of the school year after the Labour Day long weekend, which in and of itself is a good thing. Particularly I know as a parent that it's always frustrating. Basically the summer holiday would end abruptly when your kids go back to school, for all intents and purposes. You register your kids for school. If it happens to fall before the Labour Day weekend, that sort of signified the end of the summer, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

And I know where this came out of. I was formerly the Tourism critic, and I actually was at the tourism meeting where they announced the results of the survey that they did. This Bill came out of the Premier's commitment during the election to change the school year, which was informed by a survey actually from Tourism Saskatchewan which had 335 respondents filling out the entire survey. So not a huge percentage; that was 16 per cent of the 2,113 businesses and communities. But so this was the tourism industry basically saying that there were some huge impacts on their businesses in terms of recruitment, the ability to retain staff, and also the loss of business because families were less likely to come on Labour Day.

So in and of itself, the change after Labour Day for me, I don't mind that idea. But the reality is when you're in government you need to consult, Mr. Speaker. Because I might think it's a good idea, but there could be 99.9 per cent of people who are involved impacted, other families. There are also other stakeholders — school boards, teachers, all kinds of people who are impacted. So I think what people were most upset about, Mr. Speaker, was that this was just thrown out during an election campaign and did not involve an ounce of consultation, Mr. Speaker, which is a huge problem.

I know from looking at a story from CBC news on October 27th, 2011 — the headline is, "School year pledge slammed by teachers, school boards." So I think their frustration was that they were not consulted. And you know what? Actually I was interested. When I was at the tourism event where this survey was announced the year previously, I was actually interested in a private member's Bill. I thought it was kind of a good idea. So you know what I did, Mr. Speaker? I actually talked to the school boards in Saskatoon and I talked to teachers, and I learned that there were mixed opinions on this.

School boards had said that they had actually polled their constituents, the families whom they represent. And they had told me that their information, it was split sort of 50-50, because the reality is people want . . . We want to start school after the Labour Day, but as families we want two weeks at Christmas and we want . . . We like the February break, too, generally



speaking, Mr. Speaker, a full week off. So the school boards, what they had told me two years ago was that it's not that this wasn't . . . They said their families found they were split on the decision.

So as I said, I might think it's a good idea. The Premier might think it's a good idea. But there's a whole host of people out there who may not think it's a good idea. And that's the whole point of consultation, is connecting with people who are impacted by legislation to find out and see if really it is a good idea that's meeting most people's needs, Mr. Speaker.

And I might add as well that this piece of legislation was informed by a Tourism Saskatchewan survey, as I mentioned. Well you know what? There was another Tourism Saskatchewan survey just done in the last month or so that this government is totally disregarding, which is with respect to the government pulling a body, Tourism Saskatchewan, back under their control, Mr. Speaker. So what often happens with this government, they're interested in taking one part of what someone says, and at one point it's a good idea. And then the same organization might say something and use the same process but suddenly it's not good enough, Mr. Speaker.

So again I just want to emphasize that I think the biggest problem with this Bill, which is often the case with this government, is the lack of consultation. When you create public policy it's very important that you're making sure that you are talking to people impacted by the policy. And in this case it's families — tourism industry which was the one piece that they had listened to — it was school boards; it was teachers. But this government completely failed to do consultation. So I think that this is where we take issue with this Bill, Mr. Speaker.

But with that I know that I have other colleagues who are interested in wading into the debate. So with that I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 27.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of Bill No. 27, *The Education Amendment Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 28

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 28** — *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to wade into the debate again on Bill No. 28, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Education Amendment Act, 2011*.

And I have very few remarks to make on this, Mr. Deputy Speaker, now who's taking the Chair. This Bill basically is just

housekeeping items pertaining to the previous Bill to which I spoke, Bill No. 27. This is simply housekeeping that goes along that is tied to Bill No. 27.

So all I would have to say here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is that the concerns with its companion Bill is that there was absolutely no consultation done, which is a huge problem when you're governing a province, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So with that I know that I have colleagues who will be speaking to both Bill 27 and Bill 28 again. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 28, *The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2011*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 33

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 33** — *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and make a few comments on Bill No. 33, *An Act to amend The Residential Tenancies Act, 2006*.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill I think maybe doesn't meet the mark that it set out for itself when the minister started to work on this legislation. I know it's being brought forward by the Minister of Justice, but clearly it's a Bill from the Premier and from cabinet to attempt to deal with a tight housing market and tenants who needed assistance.

And there are quite a number of ways that one could deal with issues around residential tenancies that would actually help the tenants to deal with the particular problem. And as the government well knows, the suggestion from the opposition was to look at the kinds of legislation that are available for 80 per cent of Canadians that relate to having clear rules between landlords and tenants around how rents are established. And so rather than look carefully at what's happening in other provinces as it relates to that regulation of rents and regulation of the rental relationship between landlords and tenants, the government brought forward this Bill.

And it's clear that the government wants to proceed with this Bill, but there's not very much to it. And I think it probably doesn't accomplish the grand design that the minister set out on March 5th where he said, "This Act was designed to assist tenants in a tight housing market." Well I think, with respect, we could've done a lot better in Saskatchewan if there had been broader discussion with both landlords and tenants in this particular area, and maybe even with some of the people on this

side of the House who . . . We know quite a bit about how some of these things should be dealt with.

So what does this Bill do? Well effectively it goes and starts talking about timing and notice of rent increases or periodic tenancies and it tries to set out some rules that will limit how often rents can be increased. The curious part of it is that there seem to be different rules if you're a member of an ethical landlords' association. And that one has been a bit of a puzzler for many people within the province because it's not entirely clear how that's going to necessarily assist in solving the problem for tenants who are having increased rents at a very rapid pace.

So in one sense, as opposition, we know that we can't stop this Bill. We've made some suggestions about how it could be done in a more effective fashion, but we're also quite curious to see how the government plans to implement what they have set out in this particular Act. And so I think we'll have a chance to ask a number of questions about that in committee, but my sense is that it may not be all that clearly developed yet and that we'll get further responses on this legislation that frankly don't make a lot of sense.

So, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much more to say about this, other than I think it's wrong-headed legislation. The government could've done so much better with better consultation and . . . But I will end my comments there. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 33, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2011* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Deputy Speaker:** — To which committee shall the Bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 33, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2011* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The Bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. 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 Deputy Speaker:** — The Government House Leader has moved that the House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:58.]



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS**

Wall .....	1261
Nilson .....	1261
Boyd .....	1261
Bjornerud .....	1261
Docherty .....	1261
Sproule .....	1262
Brotten .....	1262
Norris .....	1262

**PRESENTING PETITIONS**

Forbes .....	1262
Nilson .....	1262
Wotherspoon .....	1262
Brotten .....	1263
Vermette .....	1263

**STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS**

<b>University of Regina Runner Wins Vancouver Race</b>	
Steinley .....	1263
<b>Canadian Cancer Society Daffodil Month</b>	
Brotten .....	1263
<b>Saskatchewan Student Wins Scholarship to Lester B. Pearson College</b>	
Doke .....	1264
<b>Film Festival Recognizes Environmentalists</b>	
Forbes .....	1264
<b>Administrative Professionals Day</b>	
Wilson .....	1264
<b>Summit Plans for Housing Needs</b>	
Cox .....	1264
<b>Ontario Budget</b>	
Doherty .....	1265

**QUESTION PERIOD**

<b>Wetlands Policy and Drainage Management</b>	
Sproule .....	1265
Duncan .....	1265
<b>Quality of Health Care</b>	
Brotten .....	1267
McMorris .....	1267
<b>Literacy Programming</b>	
Wotherspoon .....	1268
Harpauer .....	1268
<b>Relationship with Co-operatives Association</b>	
Forbes .....	1269
Harrison .....	1269

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**ADJOURNED DEBATES**

**SECOND READINGS**

<b>Bill No. 42 — <i>The Graduate Retention Program Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Chartier .....	1270
<b>Bill No. 43 — <i>The Income Tax Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
McCall .....	1272
<b>Bill No. 37 — <i>The Tourism Saskatchewan Act</i></b>	
Belanger .....	1274
<b>Bill No. 41 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes (Municipal Affairs — Municipal Taxation) Amendment Act, 2012</i></b>	
Forbes .....	1280
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1280
<b>Bill No. 16 — <i>The Correctional Services Act, 2011</i></b>	
McCall .....	1281
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1282
<b>Bill No. 17 — <i>The Child Care Amendment Act, 2011</i></b>	
Forbes .....	1282
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1283

<b>Bill No. 18 — <i>The Degree Authorization Act</i></b>	
Brotten .....	1283
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1284
<b>Bill No. 20 — <i>The Planning and Development Amendment Act, 2011</i></b>	
Forbes .....	1284
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1285
<b>Bill No. 23 — <i>The Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act, 2011</i></b>	
Forbes .....	1285
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1286
<b>Bill No. 24 — <i>The Advocate for Children and Youth Act</i></b>	
Nilson .....	1286
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1287
<b>Bill No. 25 — <i>The Ombudsman Act, 2011</i></b>	
Nilson .....	1287
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1288
<b>Bill No. 26 — <i>The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2011</i></b>	
Vermette .....	1289
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1290
<b>Bill No. 27 — <i>The Education Amendment Act, 2011/Loi de 2011 modifiant la Loi de 1995 sur l'éducation</i></b>	
Chartier .....	1290
<b>Bill No. 28 — <i>The Education Consequential Amendments Act, 2011</i></b>	
Chartier .....	1291
<b>Bill No. 33 — <i>The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2011</i></b>	
Nilson .....	1291
Harrison (referral to committee) .....	1292

# GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

## CABINET MINISTERS

---

**Hon. Brad Wall**  
**Premier of Saskatchewan**  
**President of the Executive Council**  
**Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs**

**Hon. Bob Bjornerud**  
Minister of Agriculture  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Crop Insurance Corporation

**Hon. Bill Boyd**  
Minister of Energy and Resources  
Minister Responsible for SaskTel  
Minister Responsible for The Global  
Transportation Hub Authority

**Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff**  
Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations  
Minister Responsible for Northern Affairs  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Gaming Corporation

**Hon. June Draude**  
Minister of Social Services  
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women  
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

**Hon. Dustin Duncan**  
Minister of Environment  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Water Corporation  
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

**Hon. Donna Harpauer**  
Minister of Education

**Hon. Jeremy Harrison**  
Minister of Enterprise  
Minister Responsible for Trade

**Hon. Darryl Hickie**  
Minister of Municipal Affairs

**Hon. Bill Hutchinson**  
Minister of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport  
Minister Responsible for the Provincial  
Capital Commission

**Hon. D.F. (Yogi) Huyghebaert**  
Minister of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing

**Hon. Ken Krawetz**  
Deputy Premier  
Minister of Finance

**Hon. Tim McMillan**  
Minister Responsible for Crown  
Investments Corporation  
Minister Responsible for Information  
Technology Office  
Minister Responsible for Information  
Services Corporation  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Government Insurance  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Liquor and Gaming Authority

**Hon. Don McMorris**  
Minister of Health

**Hon. Don Morgan**  
Minister of Justice and Attorney General  
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety  
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan  
Workers' Compensation Board

**Hon. Rob Norris**  
Minister of Advanced Education,  
Employment and Immigration  
Minister Responsible for Innovation  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Power Corporation  
Minister Responsible for Uranium  
Development Partnership

**Hon. Jim Reiter**  
Minister of Highways and Infrastructure  
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan  
Transportation Company

**Hon. Laura Ross**  
Minister of Government Services