



FIRST SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

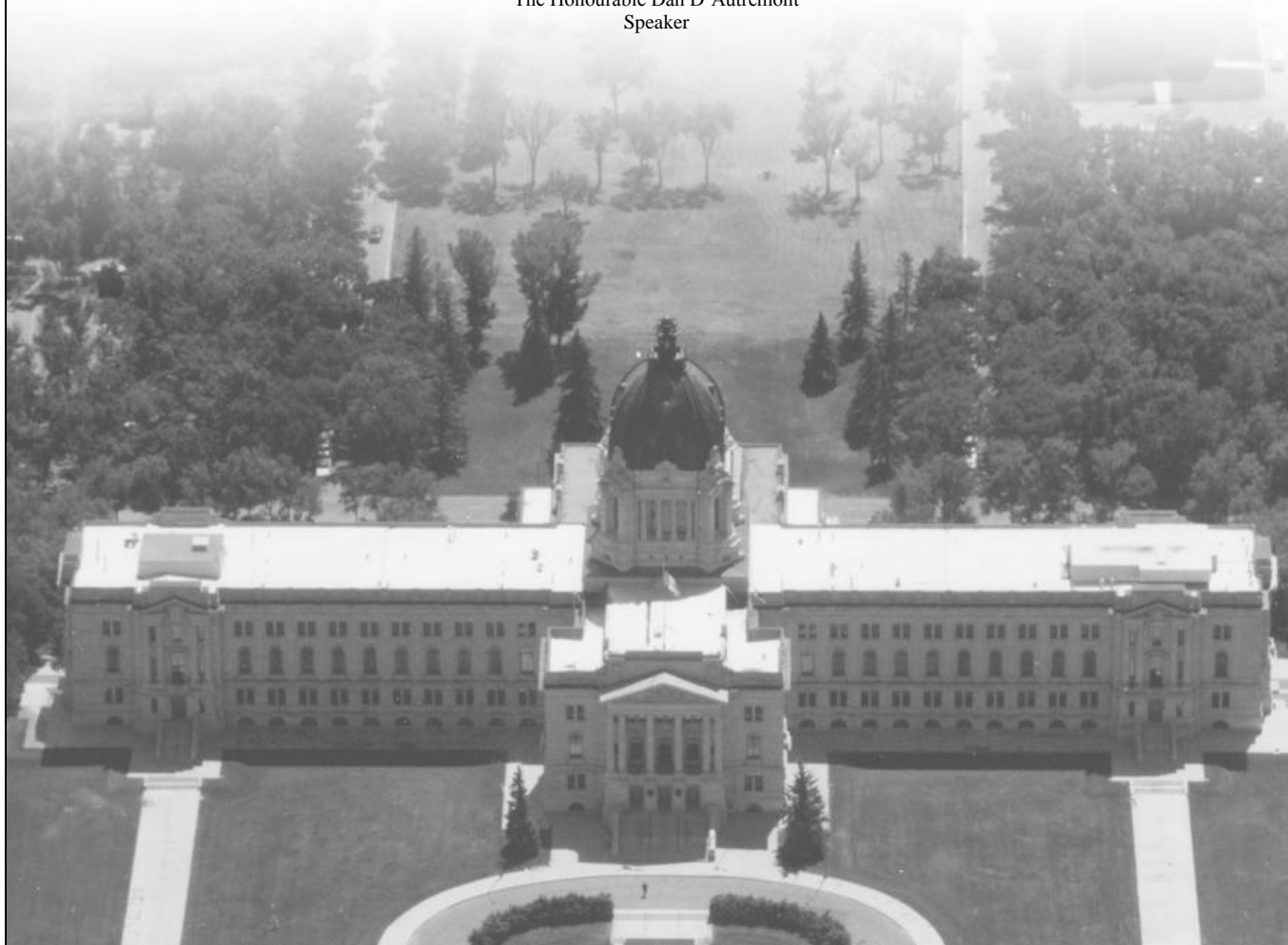
of the

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my honour on behalf of the minister, the member for Kelvington-Wadena, to introduce a school group this morning seated in the gallery opposite. These students, Mr. Speaker, are from Wadena Elementary. There are 30 grade 4 students. They are accompanied by their teachers, Ms. Lindsey Harvey, Ms. Tracey Scheschuk. And also chaperones that are along are Hilary Govan, Dean Elmy, Jackie Peterson, and Myrna Hart.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming the grade 4 elementary students from Wadena School and all of the teachers and chaperones to their legislature this morning.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce a group of 40 high achievers from A.E. Peacock Collegiate in Moose Jaw. They're seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. A.E. Peacock is synonymous with top performance, not only in scholastics but in high school activities of all kinds: drama, entertainment, and other extracurricular things, including their Junior Achievement which they won national honours last year.

This year five of their students are going to the Skills Canada national competition in Edmonton later this month. And one of those students, Jackson Campbell, is with us today. Jackson just gave a little wave. So he's going to be competing in the autobody repair. Along with them is their teacher, Ms. Carrie Kiefer. Ms. Kiefer brings her students here every year in emphasis on the importance of the political system and the political process in creating legislation. Also welcome the educational assistant, Barry Tysdal, along with the drivers, Roy Page and Greg Gorski. I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am presenting a petition today on the highway problem, and the prayer reads as follows:

Therefore, we in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan undertake to upgrade the section of Highway 165 between Beauval and the English River First Nations by adding proper lighting for pedestrian traffic, by adding space for pedestrians on the highways and the bridges, and by properly servicing the road with

the material needed for a busy, heavy haul road.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are primarily from Beauval, and I so present.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm presenting a petition today to the government asking them to stop increasing the number of politicians in Saskatchewan and also to include young people under the age of 18 when they draw the new boundaries under *The Constituency Boundaries Act*. And the prayer reads 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.

And the people who've signed this petition are from Saskatoon, Wakaw, Battleford, and Meota.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across Saskatchewan as it relates to education in this province, specifically concern over a government that's vacant of any vision for publicly funded education in this province and that's spending millions of dollars, if you can imagine, on more politicians at the same times that it's cutting in the classroom, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Moose Jaw. 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 on behalf of seniors who want the Sask Party government to support the Saskatchewan seniors' bill of rights:

We, the undersigned residents of the province of

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Spring Festival of New Plays

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise in the House today to highlight the 2012 Spring Festival of Plays being held right here in Regina this week. Organized by the Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre, the festival is celebrating 30 years of Saskatchewan plays, from April 30th to May 5th, at the University of Regina.

The festival features a number of public readings and full-day workshops showcasing the works of local playwrights. Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre is an unique playwright-driven organization that strives to foster the development of Saskatchewan plays and promote the playwrighting community of the province.

Through its activities, the SPC [Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre] has supported and developed an impressive list of some of Canada's foremost playwrights including Ken Mitchell, Rex Deveraux, Eugene Stickland, Connie Gault, Dianne Warren, Don Kerr, Mansel Robinson, and Dan Macdonald, to name a few.

As the only organization in Saskatchewan fully devoted to the development of new plays, it serves not only the playwrights of Saskatchewan but also the theatres of the province and Canada. Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work of the Saskatchewan Playwrights Centre and its contributions to the development of local artists in Saskatchewan, through events like the Festival of Plays. I ask my colleagues to join with me in thanking the playwrights, staff, and volunteers for making this wonderful event happen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Good News for Saskatoon

Mr. Parent: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, Saskatoon is one of the prairie region's most beautiful cities, as well as one of Saskatchewan's top economic engines.

Strong economic growth has translated into great employment numbers. In March 2012, there were 3,488 job posting in Saskatoon on saskjobs.ca, a year-over-year increase of 64 per cent. As well, population numbers have improved. Over the last five years, Saskatoon has seen population increase of 13 per cent, with the current estimated population of approximately 234,300.

Saskatoon is also ranked as one of Canada's top entrepreneurial cities, demonstrating — among other things — a strong entrepreneurial presence of positive business prospects and favourable free enterprise policy. Accordingly Saskatoon is seeing an increased presence of major business headquarters. Hitachi Canada recently announced the centralization of its Canadian operations, and BHP relocated the head office of its diamond and specialty products division to the bridge city.

Mr. Speaker, while Saskatoon is growing economically, the spirit and enthusiasm of its people continues to be the city's strongest asset. The Saskatoon Premier's Dinner was held last Thursday, and when you can get 1,400 people together for a dinner, you know things are going well. I would ask the members of this Assembly to join me in applauding the work of Saskatoon citizens and their continued dedication on improving their great city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Impressive Performance at a National Debating Tournament

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to share with my colleagues in the Assembly today some wonderful news. Two Regina students, Nasra Moumin and Areeb Salim, who attend Campbell Collegiate, have debated their way to becoming one of the top debate teams in the country. As a team, Mr. Speaker, Nasra and Areeb placed second at the 2012 Canadian Senior Debating Tournament held in Montreal last weekend. Nasra and Areeb, who have been friends since they were five, are an impressive team, Mr. Speaker. I had the pleasure of observing both students debate last year at the Junior National Championships as they wowed the audience and captured the title.

It is truly inspiring to see our youth so engaged, informed, and well versed on such complex issues and to be able to articulate incredibly compelling arguments. These are young leaders in our province today, and I am certain they will continue their positive leadership into the future. Both Nasra and Areeb are members of the Saskatchewan elocution and debate society, an organization which has contributed significantly to the lives of thousands of students, helping to shape them into confident citizens and critical thinkers that can successfully defend their positions in any forum.

Mr. Speaker, I ask this Assembly to join with me in congratulating Nasra and Areeb on their great success at the national level and to extend thanks to everyone involved at SEDA [Saskatchewan Elocution and Debate Association] as well as the teachers that support these enriching learning opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Corporate Income Tax Rebate on New Rental Housing

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to inform members that applications for the corporate income tax rebate on new rental housing is now available. Mr. Speaker, this new incentive effectively reduces provincial corporate income tax rate on the corporation's eligible rental income from 12 per cent to the 2 per cent small business tax rate. The tax rebate is earned each year for a period of up to 10 consecutive years after eligible residential units become available for rent and the corporation submits the appropriate documentation.

We expect, Mr. Speaker, that as many as 10,000 new rental units will qualify for the tax rebate. Funding for the new tax rebate is estimated at \$35 million for the first five years of the program. The rebate will be provided to eligible corporations whose sole purpose is the development of multi-unit rental housing in Saskatchewan. Projects can be located, Mr. Speaker, in urban and rural communities across the province. Eligible rental housing must be newly constructed, multi-unit rental housing units.

Mr. Speaker, we are keeping our promise, and we're proud that this measure will help more Saskatchewan people find safe, quality rental housing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

A Lifetime Dedication to Community Service

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to commend Mr. Lyle Johnson, a constituent of Moose Jaw Wakamow, for receiving two recent awards: the Moose Jaw Honours Award presented by Heritage Moose Jaw, along with receiving the Lifetime Achievement Award citation from the Cadet Instructors Cadre.

Lyle has spent a lifetime promoting local interests, events, and citizens of the friendly city in many different capacities, while at the same time currently holding the title of lieutenant colonel with the Canadian Cadet Organizations, an organization that he has been involved with for over 43 years.

He has been a remarkable leader in numerous community organizations, including the United Way, Moose Jaw Crime Stoppers, the Miss Canada Pageant, a motorcycle safety instructor, city of Moose Jaw rec board member, executive member of various organizations, and also assisted in many local theatre productions. Lyle has been a commitment to drama and musical theatre students during his 36 years of teaching at Peacock Collegiate, requiring the true passion that he exudes.

In November 2002, he was also presented with the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal by the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan after being twice nominated for his involvement with dedication to youth. Mr. Speaker, I believe all members would agree that Lyle Johnson's lifetime dedication to

community service is something all Saskatchewan residents can be proud of. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[10:15]

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

International Day of the Midwife

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Saturday May 5th is the International Day of the Midwife, and I would like to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate midwifery services in the province. Our government has just announced its intention to invest \$500,000 in additional resources over the next year to support expansion of midwifery services in the province. Our government will continue to work to recruit Canadian and internationally trained midwives to our province through our bursary programs and support for assessment programs such the multi-jurisdictional midwifery bridging program.

The midwifery model of care is an excellent example of patient-centred service. Under this model, midwives work as specialists in normal birth and provide women with another option for the management of their pregnancy, the delivery, and postpartum care of their children.

Saskatoon Health Region first began offering midwifery services in January '09. Since that time, Cypress and Regina Health Regions and All Nations Healing Hospital have also added this service. Right now there are 11 midwives practising in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, 580 babies have been delivered by midwives since '09. Two additional health regions have indicated an interest in developing midwifery services, and we look forward to continuing discussions with them to achieve that goal. Mr. Speaker, our government will continue working to support services that put the needs of patients first. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Special Olympics Bowling Tournament Awards

Mr. Merriman: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Saturday, April 28th I, along with my daughter Courtney, had the honour of attending the Special Olympics Bob Pedde Bowling Tournament awards banquet.

This is a very special tournament held every year in Saskatoon in memory of long-time volunteer, Mr. Bob Pedde. The competition also serves as a qualifier for the provincial special games to be held in Saskatoon in June 2013. There were over 200 athletes and coaches at the provincial 5- and 10-pin bowling finals representing eight regions in the province.

At the awards banquet, Courtney and I had the pleasure of presenting Saskatoon's Dwight Safroniuk the Canadian Tenpin Federation Hazel McLeary Leadership Award — the first male winner ever. Mr. Speaker, on receiving the award, Dwight said:

When I joined Special Olympics, I was happy because the coaches and other athletes there were loving people that don't really care about what kind of disability I have. They were friendly and encouraging, very understanding, supportive, and they became my family.

Even though not everyone won a medal, Mr. Speaker, we need to celebrate each and every Special Olympian for following their dreams, meeting their goals, and having a great time.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the athletes who participated in the championship. We are very proud of them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Review of Labour Legislation

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Premier, the Premier was very specific when he said on social media during the election campaign on October 31st, 2011, "Could have been clearer: no opting out of unions or dues." Yet now he has opened up this issue for discussion in his attack-style consultation paper.

The Premier's record with working people is not good. The United Nations and the Court of Queen's Bench have said that he's violating their human rights and violating the Charter of Rights and Freedoms with Bill 5. Why is the Premier breaking his election promise by saying that members should be able to opt out of paying the dues when he was so clear in October?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, notwithstanding the consultation process that's underway, the Minister of Justice was pretty clear that whatever comes from this process on the issue that the hon. member has raised, we understand the Lavigne case of 1992 in terms of individuals, individuals opting out of paying union dues, Mr. Speaker. That's quite a bit different than saying, and opening up for discussion, this notion that if you're in high school, and you're 16 years old, not as an individual but as a group, maybe you ought not to pay union dues. That's the question we're asking, and we'll see what the people of the province have to say.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, as the Premier's indicated, the Lavigne versus the Ontario Public Service Employees Union decision from the Supreme Court of Canada upheld that union members need to pay their dues in spite of any objections. The Rand formula was implemented as the result of a decision by Mr. Justice Ivan Rand of the Supreme Court of Canada saying that members can opt out of the union but can't opt out of the dues. Canadian courts have upheld the right of unions to collect union dues from workers. My question to the Premier: why is he asking Saskatchewan people to consider something which is against the law?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I wouldn't suggest that legislation in this province or any other province that excludes an entire group — perhaps the disabled, perhaps high school kids, that are working in a union shop — that excludes an entire group from paying union dues. I think it's a little bit, a little bit bold to say that that is against law or against precedent. The Lavigne case was about individuals opting out of union dues. The Minister of Justice and the Labour minister actually referenced the case yesterday and was clear and said the intention of the government, should this proceed after the consultation, isn't that individuals opt out of a particular union. That's effectively right-to-work. That's not what we're talking about.

We are asking the question of Saskatchewan people, do you think it's fair that a high school kid who's trying to earn a little bit of extra money pays union dues? There's no other deductions on that person's cheque, maybe a little bit for EI [employment insurance], depending on how they made, but no tax, no pension. But for these kids that might have a job like that, they'll come home and that paycheque stub will show that the union took their union dues. Mr. Speaker, we're asking, is that fair? Or should maybe the union do the right thing and say, kids get a break at the theatre. They get a break for admissions to all manner of things. Let's give them a break on union dues as well.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, in Canada we have a constitution and a Charter of Rights which protects all people. But we know that this Premier is already trying to exclude those under 18 in his new election law. Here we have another example of the Premier trying to change the rules in the constitution and the Charter of Rights and the decisions of our court to exclude people under 18.

Mr. Speaker, in a modern economy, we need fair and effective labour laws. The people of Saskatchewan throughout our history have worked hard and struggled to advance workers' rights. Meanwhile the government's introducing a whole series of attacks. An obvious example of one of these proposals could affect the 40-hour workweek and overtime. The 40-hour workweek is actually an ILO [International Labour Organization] convention.

My question to the Premier: has it come to this — longer workweeks, more overtime at straight-time pay? What's next? Taking back the weekend?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear. The Saskatchewan Party government is in favour of all weekends in the province of Saskatchewan, the long ones and the regular-length ones.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting, the member just referenced the electoral map issue that's been raised by members opposite. The NDP [New Democratic Party] say they're so concerned about the fact that we're going to draw an electoral map around people who are actually of the age of majority who can vote in an election, 18 years and over. If they really cared about kids 18

and under, they should participate in our consultation process. And they should, they should put forward the notion that kids shouldn't have to pay union dues, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in estimates, the Premier said, "... the best indicator of future behaviour is past behaviour." Well the perfect example of that is the Premier's attack on working people. His previous legislation was tossed out by the courts for violating international human rights and the Canadian Constitution. Based on past behaviour, why would Saskatchewan people think his sweeping review of labour legislation is anything more than an attack on working people and the rights and protections they have earned over the last hundred years?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, what is wrong with asking the question in a consultation process on a needed labour review? And that's what we're at at this point, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Justice, the Labour minister, didn't announce government policy yesterday. He announced questions that we're going to ask of stakeholders and to the people for them to weigh in on potential labour changes and updates.

What would be wrong, Mr. Speaker, with someone putting forward the notion that maybe the disabled or kids who are in high school ought not to pay union dues? What's wrong with having that discussion? It's not about individuals opting out. It's about an entire group. The member raised ... If you listen to the members opposite, specifically that member's question, they paint this province as if it's some terrible place in violation of international human rights.

Mr. Speaker, the best thing we can do for labour in this province is make sure this economy's growing and leading the nation, make sure that there are jobs for people. And you know, they say that this province is violating human rights. You wouldn't be able to tell it from the thousands of people from all over the world that are finding hope and opportunity in Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, why should anyone believe the Premier today? On October 31st he said, "Could have been clearer: no opting out of unions or dues." Was he saying what he meant then? Or is he saying it now? Or when will he tell us exactly what he's up to? But there's no question that what he said last fall was clear. He said it himself. It could have been clearer. So my question to the Premier is, why should we trust him when he says things about working people and about labour issues?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — The member asks a fair question. It's the same question he started with and perhaps my answer wasn't clear. The tweet in question was referencing individuals opting out of unions. Specifically yesterday, specifically I'm told the Labour minister referenced the case that the honourable

member presented in the second question, the Lavigne case from the early '90s that what was pretty clear in the Supreme Court about allowing that to happen. Mr. Speaker, it's less clear, certainly less clear, and there may be an opportunity for groups like the disabled, like kids, to be exempted from paying union dues. Not to individually opt out, but to be exempted. Why? Because that might be the fair thing to do, Mr. Speaker.

We know that the union would represent those people, absolutely. And the union will do its work on behalf of all members whether they're under 18 or not. But I think it would be reasonable for unions actually to get on board with this and say, you know, we think it's a good idea. We think kids should keep more money. And maybe there are other groups as well. But we'll listen to all the stakeholders, including the NDP, in terms of what we should do going forward. In the meantime, Mr. Speaker, the good news is that this province is doing the best thing it could possibly do by working families, and that's creating jobs at a record pace, Mr. Speaker.

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

Supply of Nurses

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last December I asked a lot of questions in this House, Mr. Speaker, about the shortage of operating room nurses in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. At that time, the regional medical association held an extraordinary meeting in order to deal with the shortage of O.R. [operating room] time, but the minister was too busy deciding whether there was or wasn't a conflict of interest with respect to his profit-driven surgical centre approach in order to fix this issue, Mr. Speaker, of a shortage of O.R. nurses in the health region. Mr. Speaker, we know the situation has not improved one bit.

My question to the minister: can you report to this House how often operating rooms in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region are closed because of a shortage of nurses?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I can report to you that the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region has faced some challenges regarding the operating room nurse complement. They've had some nurses that are off because of pregnancy, Mr. Speaker. They've had some nurses that are off because of injury. Having said that, Mr. Speaker, the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region are taking steps. They've got a number of nurses taking the operating room course that will certainly be coming on stream very, very soon, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we have the proper complement of nurses in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region to continue to drive down wait times. Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, let's look where we started four and a half years ago. Four and a half years ago, under the NDP government, we had the longest wait-list in Canada, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as of today, Mr. Speaker, there are the fewest amount of people on waiting lists, Mr. Speaker, since those waiting lists were established back in 2004.

There is more work to do, Mr. Speaker, but we're on the right track. We're reducing wait times. There is work to do in Regina Qu'Appelle. They're facing those challenges, absolutely, Mr. Speaker, but we're on the right track. We would never want to go back to the NDP and the longest wait-list in Canada.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Despite the bluster, here's what we know about the situation in operating rooms in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. Ideally there are 18 operating rooms running every day. We know because of a lack of O.R. nurses, Mr. Speaker, that that number has been down to 13 operating rooms. We know that officials in the health region have said that "It's a growing problem for the past year." And, Mr. Speaker, we know that the lack of O.R. time affects surgeries with respect to delays and putting them off.

My question to the minister: will he admit that these four points are indeed true? Or will he disagree with officials in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region?

[10:30]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, I've already identified that the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region has identified some issues around the operating room nurse complement. As a result, they're not able to run at full capacity right now. But we feel that they should soon be up and running with full capacity once the extra nurses are trained, Mr. Speaker. In fact I was talking to the CEO [chief executive officer] Dwight Nelson just the other day about this very issue. They're on top of it, and they're taking steps to rectify it, Mr. Speaker.

But I will also say, you know, the wait times have certainly gone down in the province. What has gone up in the province is the number of nurses working in this province, Mr. Speaker. In 2007-2008, Mr. Speaker, we had a baseline set of nurses, around 9,000. I'm glad to report, Mr. Speaker, that today over 10,000 nurses are working in this province, some 950 more nurses working in Saskatchewan than under the NDP. There are certain areas we need to continue to attract and recruit, Mr. Speaker, but it's a far cry from where we were under the NDP.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, what we know is that there are operating rooms within the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region that are sitting idle because of a shortage of O.R. nurses. Mr. Speaker, we know this is affecting surgeries and the ability of physicians to provide surgeries to the patients of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we also know that there are nurses employed in for-profit surgical clinics here in the province.

Mr. Speaker, the minister was rather aloof in December, as he is now, Mr. Speaker, with respect to the role that the nurses employed in the private surgical centres play in draining resources from the existing operating rooms within the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. My question to the minister: is he

concerned with what has been described as a growing problem over the past year, and does he think, Mr. Speaker, that perhaps the existence of nurses working in the for-profit clinics is having an effect on the ability to have operating room nurses in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said, the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region is addressing the issue in their area, in this one specific area. I am pleased to say, Mr. Speaker, that our government has added \$2 million to training programs. That's increasing the number of operating room nursing training seats by 18, Mr. Speaker, fast-tracking the program. It takes less than 26 weeks, or 23 weeks to finish the program.

We're taking steps to address that not only provincially but also on a regional level, Mr. Speaker. But I will say, it's very interesting and obviously the NDP have not changed their tact or their philosophy, Mr. Speaker. We're seeing private clinics in both Saskatoon and Regina that are driving down wait times, Mr. Speaker. Their ideology would far rather have people wait years on wait-lists, which is exactly what happened under the NDP, than ever look for other resources that can help out. The private clinics are not draining resources from the public system, Mr. Speaker. It's right in the contract, Mr. Speaker, to say that they cannot recruit directly from our public facilities. So his assertion is absolutely wrong.

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

Medical Training Programs

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We know that there are issues with the number of nurses, with respiratory therapists, in the province. We also know, Mr. Speaker, that here in Saskatchewan we have the lowest number of occupational therapists on a per capita basis in the country. And we also know there is an urgent need for speech-language pathologists in our province.

Back on December 17th, 2008, the Dean of Medicine said, Mr. Speaker, that he expected to have a training program at the University of Saskatchewan up and running for speech-language pathologists and occupational therapists by 2012 — this year, Mr. Speaker. But we know that is not the case. In fact a draft discussion of a document paper that is circulated by the College of Medicine, Mr. Speaker, does not even list speech-language pathology and occupational therapy as planned programs under the College of Medicine.

My question to the minister: Is the Sask Party government committed to train occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists in Saskatchewan, or have they indicated to the College of Medicine that this is no longer a priority?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, we've worked very hard in the past four and a half years to make sure that we have the proper complement of all health care professionals. Those

health care professionals that we do not have training programs for in the province, we buy seats from other jurisdictions across Canada such as Alberta to fill some of those roles. We're looking at an occupational therapy program for Saskatchewan, absolutely. But on some of the professions, there isn't the base or demand in Saskatchewan to start our own programs, so we buy seats from other jurisdictions, Mr. Speaker.

But I find it absolutely amazing that we spent three hours in this House yesterday afternoon and through Premier's estimates and there wasn't one question on health care, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition, who was a former Health minister, obviously didn't feel it warranted not even one question during Premier's estimates, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely we have more work to do. But, Mr. Speaker, according to the NDP and Premier's estimates, we're on the right track.

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

Mr. Broten: — It's a very interesting position the minister put forward because he said for some programs there's not the demand or the need for training our own health professionals so we pay for spots out of province. That is true, Mr. Speaker, in some situations, but that's a very different story than what the Minister of Advanced Education and other members of the front bench have said over the past years. For some reason, Mr. Speaker, the Dean of the College of Medicine thought that it was possible and likely to have a program up and running by 2012. In fact, given in estimates in previous years with the Minister of Advanced Education, he has said that he thought it may in fact be up and running by 2012, which is this year.

We know OTs [occupational therapist] provide such important care to people that have acquired brain injuries, people that suffer from strokes. We know that speech-language pathologists are so important, especially when we see the huge reduction in the number of educational assistants in the province, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the minister: why has he failed so miserably on this issue? The dean thought there would be a program running by 2012. The minister said there could be a program by 2012, yet there's no indication. What's the deal?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the member opposite knows very well that we continue to purchase 15 seats a year at the University of Alberta. The deal, as he just asked, Mr. Speaker, is quite simply this: Mr. Speaker, where would that be housed? Where would such a program be housed? Oh, that would be housed in the Academic Health Sciences building that was announced by the members opposite in 2003, but construction didn't start until after the 2007 election when we rolled up our sleeves and said, let's get down to work, Mr. Speaker.

We've been very clear, Mr. Speaker, with the College of Medicine and with the health sciences at the University of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, let's take first things first. Let's answer that question: first you need the building before you can

have the program.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, you would think there would be some clear timelines from members opposite with respect to when this program would be up and operating. Mr. Speaker, we know that in fact, as the minister has said in the past, for the program to be functional the College of Medicine needs to be off probation. What we have seen under this minister's watch is notice of probation being given to the College of Medicine under this Minister of Advanced Ed.

We have also seen the minister, Mr. Speaker, instead of being busy talking about when there would be a training program for OTs and SLPs [speech-language pathologist], he's been very busy, Mr. Speaker, maxing out the debt at the University of Saskatchewan, offloading \$100 million to the U of S [University of Saskatchewan]. He's been very busy, Mr. Speaker, not providing operating funding to the Health Sciences building in the years ahead, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the minister: when will he be clear on the training program for occupational therapists and speech-language pathologists in Saskatchewan? When will this program be up and running?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, I'll just make reference to April 4th of this year, where vice president of the University of Saskatchewan, vice president, research, Richard Florizone, has said, "There's no question about the province's commitment to medical health education and research," Mr. Speaker.

What this does is complement Peter MacKinnon's letter that goes back to August 17th that, Mr. Speaker, speaks specifically to the track record of the members opposite regarding the Academic Health Sciences building and associated programs that can be facilitated through that building.

Mr. Speaker, here it is, a quote from Peter MacKinnon:

A decade ago, our College of Medicine faced existential issues regarding resources, faculty, and facilities.

Mr. Speaker, it continues:

Today those challenges have been rectified as confirmed by the college's accreditation site visit this spring. The Government of Saskatchewan [this government, Mr. Speaker] has done its part. With the largest and most numerous accreditation issues resolved, there remain a number of matters for the university to work on, and you have my assurance that we will deal with these in a timely manner.

Mr. Speaker, this is the kind of track record that this government has.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member of Saskatoon Massey

Place.

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people do not want millions of dollars more spent on more politicians. Saskatchewan people do not want millions of more dollars spent on posh offices, Mr. Speaker. What Saskatchewan people want are programs like occupational therapy and speech-language pathology being provided here in Saskatchewan.

But, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Advanced Ed has not taken this to heart. Instead what we have seen from him in recent weeks, Mr. Speaker, is the off-loading of almost \$100 million of debt onto the University of Saskatchewan. Instead, Mr. Speaker, what we've seen is the minister shortchanging the University of Saskatchewan in its operating grant. Instead, Mr. Speaker, what we have seen is an absence of funds for ongoing operating at the Health Sciences building.

Mr. Speaker, this minister is making the financial situation at the University of Saskatchewan tighter and tighter, and that is having an effect, it would appear, on the ability to roll out programs as promised, as expected by the dean. My question to the minister: will he admit that his actions, financially, to the University of Saskatchewan are having a negative effect?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I can't wait to hear from the dean because I think the member opposite has just appropriated his voice, and I think probably there'll be some implications to that.

But what I will say, Mr. Speaker, in about five budgets, Mr. Speaker, \$1.5 billion to the University of Saskatchewan. In this budget alone, more than \$304 million. Mr. Speaker, that includes making investments in key areas, Mr. Speaker, where the members opposite turn their back.

When we came into power, Mr. Speaker, for example, the Western College of Veterinary Medicine was tarped. They walked away from that project, Mr. Speaker, incomplete. We said, let's get that done. Mr. Speaker, they hadn't turned a stone of attention to the Academic Health Sciences building, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, both wings are being constructed. We see real progress on that campus, Mr. Speaker. And those are just a couple of examples.

In addition to focusing on the University of Saskatchewan, we've put real dollars in the hands of students for the graduate retention program, to the Saskatchewan advantage scholarship that's forthcoming, for the innovation and opportunity scholarship. More to do, Mr. Speaker, but record investments for our students and the people of this province.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Advanced Ed has talked about a few things in this exchange, but he has not addressed the primary question, the primary issue with these questions, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to a training program

for speech-language pathology and occupational therapy here in Saskatchewan at the University of Saskatchewan, the question is what is this government's commitment to that program? When will it come into place? When can Saskatchewan students expect to be able to enrol in a speech-language pathology and occupational therapy program here in Saskatchewan? When?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, we know how important occupational therapists are to the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. That's why we continue to invest, as the members opposite did at the University of Alberta, Mr. Speaker.

What the member opposite misses, Mr. Speaker, is that you actually need a physical space, Mr. Speaker, to hold such a program. It's too bad that the members opposite couldn't have started the construction in 2003 when they made the announcements. It's too bad in 2005 they couldn't have started the construction, Mr. Speaker.

We rolled up our sleeves. We've started the construction. People across the province can see that under way today. That's one of the critical conditions as we explore options for occupational therapists, Mr. Speaker. We're getting the building done so we can consider the program.

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

Mr. Moe: — I ask for leave to make an introduction.

The Speaker: — The member for Rosthern-Shellbrook has requested leave to do an introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you and to all members of this Assembly, I would like to introduce to you, Mr. David Knight. David is a constituent of the Rosthern-Shellbrook constituency and he's also general manager of Sakaw Askiy Management Inc., which is based out of Prince Albert. I would like to ask all members to join with me in welcoming Mr. David Knight to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — At this time, I would also like to do an introduction. We have seated in the Speaker's gallery in the front row, the Provincial Ombudsman, Mr. Kevin Fenwick, along with two staff from his office, Aaron Orban and Greg Sykes. I would ask the Assembly to welcome them here today.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask for leave to make a motion regarding the appointment of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner.

[10:45]

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has asked for leave to do a motion regarding the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Appointment of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That pursuant to sections 27(3), (4), and (6) of *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the Ombudsman, Kevin Fenwick, Q.C., be appointed to the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner.

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

That pursuant to subsections 27(3), (4), and (6) of *The Public Interest Disclosure Act*, the Ombudsman, Kevin Fenwick, Q.C., be appointed the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Does the Assembly agree to adoption of the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Priorities

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure today to join in on the discussion or to begin the discussion on the motion that we will be debating here in the 75-minute debate.

Mr. Speaker, the motion that we're bringing forward today is related to issues that are at the heart of what Saskatchewan people care about. It is related to issues about the priorities of Saskatchewan people, Mr. Speaker, and it's related to some of the concerning aspects we've seen come out of the positions and the decisions made by members opposite with respect to some of their policy and budgetary decisions.

Mr. Speaker, specifically this issue has to do about . . . Mr.

Speaker, it appears some members opposite are already eager to enter into this debate, and I understand their interest in doing so, Mr. Speaker, because when it comes to public dollars being spent on more politicians, I know this is something that Saskatchewan people have some real concerns about. And it's something that Saskatchewan people, in my experiences with them, Mr. Speaker, have not advocated for. It's not something that Saskatchewan people came to me and said what we really need in this province are more politicians; what we really need in this province, Mr. Speaker, is to spend more money on electing more politicians in order to conduct the business of the Legislative Assembly.

And individuals know this in the province, Mr. Speaker, because many people have an understanding of the number of individuals that Saskatchewan MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] represent compared to other provinces. We know that the ratio here in the province is not as great compared to other provinces. We know, Mr. Speaker, in other provinces, a member of a legislature or a provincial parliament actually represents a far greater number of people, Mr. Speaker. It appears, Mr. Speaker, today members are very keen to enter into this debate, so I look forward to the comments and the speeches that will be coming after mine.

Mr. Speaker, for all politicians here in the Assembly, we do take this calling, we do take this job very seriously, and I know that is something that applies to both sides of the House. And in my comments around the — what I see as — the absence of a need for more provincial politicians, Mr. Speaker, the comments are not in any way to run down the role of elected individuals, the role of people that serve in this House or serve in the federal House of Commons or serve on a city council or serve as a trustee on a public school board or a Catholic school board, Mr. Speaker.

But it really comes down to an issue of whether or not there are enough existing politicians to do the job, to do it well, and to represent the needs and interests of Saskatchewan people. And we've been discussing this in the House here for a number of weeks through different forums. And, Mr. Speaker, the arguments that I've heard from members opposite to me have not been convincing and have not suggested that we do in fact need to increase the size of this provincial legislature.

When we all, Mr. Speaker, take positions and promote causes and things that we believe in, Mr. Speaker . . . I think for people on both sides of the House, but perhaps I shouldn't speak for colleagues, but I know for myself what informs that position, Mr. Speaker, are the interactions that I have with other people, interactions that I have with constituents. And, Mr. Speaker, that can occur on an ongoing basis for example in coffee shops or at ball diamonds or in the park, at the playground with the kids. There's all sorts of venues where we receive feedback and input, and of course through the office as well, whether it's through email or phone calls.

But the time when the interaction with constituents and voters is perhaps most intense is during door knocking. And whether that's being done in summers outside of the election cycle or whether that's being done during an election, Mr. Speaker, those are the instances where we get direct feedback. And people don't always expect a politician to show up on the

doorstep and say, hey what are you thinking about. What are your concerns? What are your priorities? What should be done differently or better? In what ways could something be improved? And so often people are caught off guard and don't necessarily have an answer on the tip on their tongue. But often people also have real concerns in the things they want to share.

And door knocking experiences, Mr. Speaker, are memorable. And I know members on both sides of the House could share many stories about the time when they were chased out of a yard by a dog or perhaps an angry constituent, which has also happened at times by some members, I've been told. Or, Mr. Speaker, the occasions when there's a humorous or a really touching interaction with someone or someone takes the time to give some warm cookies and a glass of milk when you're out door knocking. Those are all things that stick out in your mind as you're door knocking and having contact with constituents.

But what really stands out for me, what really sticks in my mind are the times when someone shares a real concern or a real priority they have, a real issue that they have a passion for and a concern about, Mr. Speaker, or something that's affecting their life. Those are the moments and the instances that stick out in my memory when thinking of my interaction with constituents and voters. And it's based on many of those interactions, Mr. Speaker, that informs the views that we take forward, whether that be in our respective caucuses, whether that's in the Assembly in debates such as this, or whether, Mr. Speaker, it's in the things that we publicly report about.

I remember one exchange, Mr. Speaker, I had with a senior in my constituency who lived in a complex on the western front, the western end of the constituency. And, Mr. Speaker, this is a senior who lived on a very fixed income. This is a senior who really did in fact count her pennies, a senior who did not have disposable income, a senior who in many ways lived month to month, and a senior who was very careful and truly felt every increase in the cost of living and how it affected her life because what it meant for her was that it often came down to decisions about groceries, decisions about bus passes, decisions about a little bit of entertainment or decisions about buying that special gift, that special little token to give to a grandchild, and her desire to want to be able to give more and care for her grandchildren in a better way.

And this constituent, Mr. Speaker, relayed to me a number of health concerns and problems that she had. And because she had these concerns, there were a number of prescriptions that she was on. And she talked to me about how much she benefited from the seniors' drug plan and the fact that the amount that she paid had stayed steady and was really allowing her to make the proper decisions around her medications, around her health care, and allowed her to take care of her needs.

Mr. Speaker, that constituent expressed to me the importance of having an affordable drug plan for seniors. That constituent expressed to me how if there was an increase, even if it was \$5, Mr. Speaker, as an example we see in the budget, even if there was what seemed as a minor increase on one prescription over the multiple prescriptions she had, and over the months, over the year, Mr. Speaker, that truly did affect her bottom line, affected her quality of life, and affected her ability to provide

nice things for her grandkids, and make decisions around housing and shelter and food — those types of issues, Mr. Speaker.

That individual, Mr. Speaker, at no point in my interaction with her — and we've had a few points of contact — at no point, Mr. Speaker, has she ever said, what I really want to see from the provincial government, what I really desire, what I really think is the silver bullet and the solution for our province is to add more politicians to the Assembly. What I really think, Mr. Speaker, is that that will solve my problems and help my quality of life. She didn't say that, Mr. Speaker. She didn't think that that was an appropriate expenditure. If she had, if she thought this was a burning issue — she's a very open person, a very upfront person, and very clear in her views and not afraid to make her views known, Mr. Speaker — she would have told me if she thought that was what in fact should occur, and that simply did not occur, Mr. Speaker.

Another example, another incident that sticks out, Mr. Speaker, are some interactions also with seniors, I should add, of a group of individuals that are really involved with the Western Development Museum in Saskatoon. These individuals pour their heart and soul into the WDM [Western Development Museum]. For them it's a community. It's an opportunity to contribute. And yes, it keeps them busy, and it provides good friendships. But it also they realize they are helping and contributing to many other roles and facets to Saskatchewan society. They know, Mr. Speaker, that every time they go to the WDM and give a tour, stand as a guide at one of the stops in Boomtown, Mr. Speaker, and interact with an elementary school child and talk about what Saskatchewan was like during the pioneer days and over the years of progress, Mr. Speaker, they know they are playing an important part in telling the Saskatchewan story, passing on our history, and developing an appreciation, developing an appreciation for Saskatchewan history and for our unique story.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's not simply something for them to do to fill the days. For them it's something with purpose, and it's something that they thought, it was something that they believed was valued by the provincial government. You can imagine their surprise, Mr. Speaker, when in recent weeks they were informed that instead of providing the necessary resources to the WDM to have it open, to have it functioning as it needs to be, to host those school groups . . . and not only school groups, Mr. Speaker. In Saskatoon, the situation where I know best, when conferences come to town, it's very common for the conferences to have a meal, to have a banquet at the WDM and for Boomtown to be opened up. And this happens, Mr. Speaker, throughout the year on a variety of days. So you can imagine the surprise of these seniors when they heard that in fact there wouldn't be the proper resources during boom times to fund Boomtown, Mr. Speaker. There wouldn't be the proper resources to do that.

But instead the government's main priority, when it comes to clearing government business and pushing something through, was the addition of more politicians which we know will be an expense of millions and millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, my interactions with these people, some that I have met on the doorstep and some that I've just gotten to know

through a variety of community involvements, not on one occasion have any of these individuals come to me and said, you know what? You know what, Cam? That's my name. You know what, member from Saskatoon Massey Place? Well we think the best solution is for Saskatchewan, for telling our history, telling our story especially through WDM is to increase the number of politicians. I think that is the solution. Mr. Speaker, I have never heard that because I don't think any of those volunteers that give so many hours to the WDM think that it's an appropriate decision to fund more politicians in the province over opening of the museum to the full amount of hours and days that it ought to be open. I've never heard that, Mr. Speaker.

Other examples, Mr. Speaker, well I should say on this WDM incident or the decisions that members opposite have made to shortchange the WDM with respect to its funding and then having consequences for the days and hours that it can be open, what I heard, Mr. Speaker, that for the staff of the WDM, instead of allowing some of their colleagues, some of their peers to be laid off, the staff of the WDM actually agreed to take a couple of weeks without pay so that the cuts put on the WDM by members opposite could be absorbed by all of the staff, Mr. Speaker.

If only, Mr. Speaker, some members on the front bench, if only provincial cabinet, if only the backbencher MLAs had the same commitment to the WDM, had the same commitment to tourism, had the same commitment to educating our children as the staff of the WDM, we would be in a much better place. Instead, Mr. Speaker, what we see from the priorities and the things that members opposite are pushing through, Mr. Speaker, is a willingness to add more politicians at an expense of millions of dollars.

Mr. Speaker, we've also had, in interactions I've had with people, not as much in Saskatoon but certainly in Regina, the film television tax credit. And, Mr. Speaker, we've heard in recent weeks so many individuals who chose to stay in Saskatchewan and again to tell Saskatchewan's story, but not just the cultural aspects of Saskatchewan history but to also participate in the provincial economy, especially the economy of Regina. And we've heard, Mr. Speaker, from so many businesses that benefited from the film industry about how important it is in fact to have a vibrant film industry here in the province. And it's been sad to see the steps that members opposite have taken on this front.

[11:00]

So there's a number of components to this motion, and I know some of my colleagues will be speaking to other aspects of it. But at this time, I'll read the motion so that the Assembly knows what's up today. I'll move the motion. I would move this motion, Mr. Speaker:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its willingness to spend millions of public dollars on more politicians while increasing prescription drug expenses for seniors, eliminating the property tax rebate on early payments, raising tuition, shortchanging the Western Development Museum, eliminating the film and television tax credit, and gutting funding to the Go Green

program.

Mr. Speaker, I so move.

The Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Massey Place has moved:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its willingness to spend millions of public dollars on more politicians while increasing prescription drug expenses for seniors, eliminating the property tax rebate on early payments, raising tuition, shortchanging the Western Development Museum, and eliminating film and television tax credit, and gutting funds to the Go Green program.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to begin with, I obviously do not support this motion. I commend, I commend the Saskatchewan Party government, and I commend our Finance minister, the member from Canora-Pelly, for putting forward the only, the only balanced provincial budget in the whole Dominion of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, this is a prudent government. This is a government that takes steps to ensure that what we put through is sustainable, is proper, is good for the people of Saskatchewan. It does not, it does not, Mr. Speaker, pit urban against rural. We support all of the people of Saskatchewan in this budget.

Mr. Speaker, let's just back up a little while ago. Let's go back to the November 7th election when the NDP were going forward and going on, they had — what? — 5.5 billion and counting in promises, Mr. Speaker, that — let's face it — even their calculator on their own website couldn't keep up with. Mr. Speaker, had the NDP gotten in as government — I put it like this — it would've been very similar to the good Captain Smith, the captain of the *Titanic*, saying that they ran into minor technical problems. And had the NDP got in, they would've sunk us just as surely as the iceberg sunk the *Titanic*, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we have to look at all the good things there are in this budget, the things that we, we as a government listened to the people of Saskatchewan. And obviously the people of Saskatchewan listened to us and said this is a prudent government. This is a government that is working for us, and we are not, we are not going to drive this province into the abyss of the sea such as what happened with the *Titanic*, Mr. Speaker.

Take a look. I'll just tell you some of the things that have been happening in my own constituency, the constituency of Carrot River Valley. You know, under the NDP, I was a director on Pasquia Regional Park for a number of years, and under the NDP they basically starved our regional parks. They kind of said we don't need that. They can sit there and talk about all the different things they were going to do, but you know something? They didn't get around to doing it. In other words, they didn't get around to it.

Mr. Speaker, since we have formed government, our regional parks have had an increase in government funding by 600 per cent — 600 per cent for our regional parks — so that the people of Carrot River Valley can enjoy the Nipawin Regional Park, the Pasquia Regional Park, the regional park over in Hudson Bay, Mr. Speaker. Now, Mr. Speaker, these are great things.

The other thing, long-term care facilities, the NDP completely forgot to build any long-term care facilities for their seniors. No, they didn't care about the seniors. They claim now they do, but they really wouldn't do anything for them. And they short-funded, they short-funded the communities that actually wanted to put up long-term care facilities.

Mr. Speaker, this government is prudent. We looked at the various different places, and we said, you know this old formula of 65/35, let's change that. Let's change that and make it far easier for these communities to put up the long-term care facilities. So we changed it to an 80/20 formula. With that, what do we have? We have 13 new long-term care facilities going forward within this province, one of them in Tisdale which is in the Carrot River Valley constituency. I will tell you, Mr. Speaker, these are very, very important things for us people in rural Saskatchewan and in Carrot River Valley constituency.

There's many things that the NDP talked about, but they wouldn't do it. Like I mean let's talk about the revenue sharing for the municipalities. Right from the Tommy Douglas days, they said that they wanted to improve the revenue sharing, the education portion of the property tax. They wanted to do something about that. But you know something, Mr. Speaker? They just didn't get around to it.

So now, Mr. Speaker, this government, this Saskatchewan Party government has come up with a plan for revenue sharing — this year under this budget, 237.4 million in revenue sharing, this year. We've already increased it in previous budgets. This year it's actually an increase of \$20.6 million. This is what the municipalities have been asking for, for ages . . . and of course the education portion tax on property which this government hasn't eliminated but has certainly taken down to a substantial amount, far less of what it was under the NDP, which they kept on saying they were going to change. But it's the old story. They didn't get around to it.

Mr. Speaker, the other thing comes in health. Now let's take a look at how the NDP, how they operated health in Saskatchewan and how this government operates health in Saskatchewan. We have lowered the wait times for the people in Saskatchewan, the surgery wait times. We've also increased the training seats for the positions up to 100.

We have come up, during this budget alone, with a great program. And this is a great program for helping to get doctors out into our rural communities, Mr. Speaker. We have put forward a program that, with new physicians coming out, we will allow them to forgive up to \$120,000 on their student loans if they work and up to \$20,000 of forgiveness of student loans for nurse practitioners and new nurses to practice in the qualifying rural and remote communities for five years.

Mr. Speaker, these are all great initiatives put forward in the budget by this government. This government, like I said, is

working for all of the people of Saskatchewan. They are working great for Carrot River Valley.

Another thing, the NDP was always undercapitalizing basically everything. The roads in Carrot River Valley, we can actually drive up and down the highways now. People can go to that regional park that the NDP underfunded, hauling their camper on a road . . . that, you know, they don't need a four-wheel drive to pull their camper over there. So the people in Carrot River Valley can enjoy the regional parks that the NDP underfunded for years.

Also I have to say that, within this budget, we have a new school project slated for Hudson Bay. There again, the NDP never thought of that because, you see, they didn't have to worry about any new schools or anything. They were too busy shipping all of our youth to other provinces to try and get meaningful employment.

Mr. Speaker, this government has worked hard, has worked very hard and very diligently to provide a budget which is the best one in Canada, which is the best provincial budget in Canada, to be able to move Saskatchewan forward, to be able to put Saskatchewan on the map, not only in Canada but also around the world. Mr. Speaker, I . . .

The Speaker: — Ten minutes has elapsed. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very honoured to stand today to support my colleague from Saskatoon.

I think the motion that he's made to correctly tell the people of Saskatchewan that this whole silly idea of adding three more MLAs that the Saskatchewan Party and that Premier are trying to put forward on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan is going to be in many ways — since the member from Carrot River used the analogy of the *Titanic* — well, Mr. Speaker, this is going to be your titanic error in bringing in more politicians because the people in Carrot River and the people of Saskatchewan and the people all throughout the land, Mr. Speaker, don't want any more MLAs.

They want to see some progress, Mr. Speaker. They want to see some great opportunity for our young people, Mr. Speaker. And the reason why they don't want to see more MLAs simply is because it's not common sense, and it doesn't really meet the needs of the Saskatchewan people. So the member from Carrot River, I would advise him that this is going to be your titanic mistake in making sure that you have more politicians as opposed to more programs and more services to the people of Saskatchewan, in particular for health care.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this is absolutely rich. I sit here each day and I smile. And the reason why I sit here and I smile, Mr. Speaker, is because we have a right wing government who put this province fifteen and a half billion dollars in the hole. It takes the NDP years to rebuild, years, years, and years to rebuild, Mr. Speaker. And we went through some great, great leaders, as I spoke about yesterday in the Assembly. And we talked about the fact that in one year, I believe, that our debt, our interest on the debt was almost three times more than what

we spent on education, Mr. Speaker, almost three times more. That would translate in today for the Saskatchewan Party who had to pay \$3 billion in interest today if they had the same conditions that the NDP took over from the previous PC [Progressive Conservative] government in 1991. They would be paying \$3 billion today in interest alone, Mr. Speaker. They would not be able to sustain that in any way, shape, or form. So what the NDP done in those early years to rebuild the credibility of this province and to grab the opportunity to rebuild and to make sure that Saskatchewan prospered, Mr. Speaker, was absolutely remarkable and amazing.

So today I hear the members from across the way talk about the NDP, Mr. Speaker. And their answer, Mr. Speaker, is that we believe that three more politicians are in the best interests of Saskatchewan. And I can tell you right now today, what we have seen from the current government is they're taking credit for the economy. Mr. Speaker, they never developed the economy. They inherited the economy. Mr. Speaker, they're taking credit for the debt going down. Mr. Speaker, they inherited that money from the previous government and the people of Saskatchewan.

[11:15]

Mr. Speaker, talking about the growing population in the province, Mr. Speaker, the population was growing in 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, and we hope the population will continue to grow, Mr. Speaker. But they had nothing to do with it, Mr. Speaker. Let us absolutely be very clear: the Saskatchewan Party had nothing to do with the great fortunes that we have today, Mr. Speaker. It was all done by the people of Saskatchewan in concert with the NDP governments of the past, Mr. Speaker. So we have absolutely nothing to apologize for as New Democrats, Mr. Speaker.

And about all we see from the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, all we see from the Sask Party is themselves tapping themselves on the back on a constant basis, bragging about how much money they have in their savings account, Mr. Speaker, while the rest of the people in the province suffer, Mr. Speaker.

And now we look at what they're doing now. What's their latest foray into politics? Number one, they want to add more politicians — and I say shame on them. Number two, they want to go to war with the organized labour. Why go to war with the working men and women of this province, Mr. Speaker? What's the purpose of that, Mr. Speaker? And third thing that now we hear today, we're having a shortage of nurses. We're having a shortage of nurses in the hospitals, in the operating rooms. Why? Because we believe that the private for-profit clinics that these guys brought into place, Mr. Speaker, are now sucking nurses away from the public sector and public system into the private system — exactly what we said would happen.

And now, Mr. Speaker, they want to bring three more MLAs. That's the Saskatchewan Party for you, Mr. Speaker. They take credit for absolutely everything that they had nothing to do with, and the people of Saskatchewan know that, Mr. Speaker.

So as we stand here today, as we stand here today, I can tell the people of Saskatchewan one thing, we're in opposition right now. We're going to continue to fight. We are going to

continue to remind people exactly what the Saskatchewan Party's about. And we asked the Premier, we asked the cabinet members, we asked the Minister of Justice if they would pull this Bill, pull this Bill that's asking for more MLAs. And all three of them said no, they wouldn't do it. All three groups said no, they wouldn't do it.

Okay. If you're not going to pull this Bill, then let's go back to the public. Let's have a plebiscite on this Bill. Let the public decide. And, Mr. Speaker, they refused to do that as well, Mr. Speaker. And it's absolutely amazing, it's absolutely rich from our perspective to hear the right wingers claim credit for an economy they had nothing to do with. They had absolutely nothing to do in creating that economy. It's absolutely rich they claim credit for the population growth. It's absolutely rich for any of them to claim credit for reducing the debt, Mr. Speaker, and they had nothing to do with it.

And what's really embarrassing, Mr. Speaker, is after they've been patting themselves on the back through all this process, they are now going to continue their war with labour. They are now going to continue taking away resources from the public health sector to push for their agenda for the private health sector, Mr. Speaker. That's what's happening, the private for-profit clinics, Mr. Speaker. We've done some of the work to make sure that those centres out there actually complemented the public system, not competed against the public system. That is a significant difference, Mr. Speaker.

So what you've got from the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, is you've got simply people that are always patting, patting their back. They're always petting themselves or giving themselves a pat on the back. And I asked one day to a couple of my colleagues, what do you get when you mix an octopus with a Sask Party candidate? And I don't have the answer for that, Mr. Speaker, but that's what we see, a bunch of octopuses over there patting themselves on the back for doing all these things that they had absolutely nothing to do with — the booming economy, debt being reduced, and of course the population growth, Mr. Speaker. A great news flash for the Sask Party government: you had absolutely nothing to do with that. But please, as caretakers of the economy right now, don't mess it up. Please. That's the most important message.

And so what we've got from the Sask Party so far, Mr. Speaker, is they're claiming credit for the boom, and everybody in the world knew that Saskatchewan was going to start the move. Everybody in the world knows that Saskatchewan will continue to move, Mr. Speaker. That's the most important lesson. They will continue to move, despite the Saskatchewan Party's war with organized labour, despite the Saskatchewan Party's philosophy of trying to bring in more for-profit health clinics that will really begin to deteriorate our public health system, and, Mr. Speaker, what is even worse is that you have to look now that they're going to try and gerrymander the process by adding more politicians.

Who needs more MLAs, Mr. Speaker? There are families out there that are suffering. There are people having a difficult time making ends meet. And it's not just the lower income people. It's the middle-income people and the middle class. We know they have difficulty, Mr. Speaker. It is young people starting a job. It is people coming out of our training institutions that want

to have a home, that want to own a house, Mr. Speaker. That is now something that is not being attained by many young families because the house prices now are just out of their reach. And what's the answer of the Saskatchewan Party, is they want to add more politicians. They want to add more MLAs.

And, Mr. Speaker, I want to point out one thing that's very clear, is that we asked and we challenged the Premier, the cabinet, and the entire Sask Party government, let's have a plebiscite on this matter. Let's have a public vote, Mr. Speaker. And they said no. You know why they said no? Because they would lose, Mr. Speaker. They would lose that vote in a heartbeat.

So I tell the people of Saskatchewan, those guys keep patting themselves on the back for something they never created. And they're using the opportunity now as government to move their agenda forward to go to war with the working men and women, to forget about the environment, and to start sucking away resources in the public health care system — which we said they would do — into their for-profit, private clinics, Mr. Speaker. That's what's being done now.

So the message I'll have to every New Democrat and the people that don't believe in the philosophy of adding more politicians nor believe in the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, I would have one message for them: it's all downhill for the Sask Party from here on in, baby. And this opposition is going to continue working hard. We're going to hold them to account, Mr. Speaker, and we're ready to rock and roll.

The Speaker: — Ten minutes has elapsed. Why is the Premier on his feet?

Hon. Mr. Wall: — To introduce guests, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The Premier has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I noted the hon., I think the hon. member might have just called you baby. I'm not sure, I'm not sure how that fits with the rules of the House, but it's an interesting debate.

Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to introduce to you and through you to all members of this Assembly, a great-looking group of 47 students from the great city of Swift Current, Saskatchewan, from Ashley Park School. And you can give us a wave.

Mr. Speaker, it's always great to have students visit the legislature from Swift Current. It happens fairly regularly, but not necessarily from Ashley Park. We have some visits from l'École Oman and a few from Ashley Park. So I just want to say to the teachers and those have chaperoned, thanks very much for bringing the students to their provincial capital and to their Legislative Assembly. I look forward to meeting with

them in a moment, taking some pictures. And we'll maybe show them the Premier's office in a little bit and have a chat about what they might have seen here.

So joining the students today, Mr. Speaker, are their teachers. Mrs. Blackmer, Ms. Eppich is here. We have educational assistant Mrs. Nykolaishen; school youth worker Ms. Carrie Davis; and chaperones Mrs. Alexandre, Mrs. Calkins, Mrs. Dekowny, Mrs. Duquette; and Mrs. Busse. That is a lot of chaperones for this group. They don't look like they need that many chaperones. They're very well-behaved.

But I want to just take this opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to welcome the kids and the chaperones and the teachers to their Legislative Assembly. And I look forward to meeting with them in a moment.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Priorities (continued)

Mr. Phillips: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise in the House today to enter into the debate about the budget and about the direction of the government. You know, I agree with the member from Saskatoon Massey Place about one of the most enjoyable times during the campaign is when you're face to face with people on the doorsteps. And I think about the young families that I visited with, and I think about the families with the little kids and how nice it is to see all these kids back around town and how the community's growing and things like this. But my most favourite part of the time was when I was talking to the seniors because it's educational. They've been there. They've done that.

And you know, that's what I would like to talk about a little bit today because I have no problem looking a senior in the eye. And no offence, Mr. Speaker, I'll use you as an example — not that you're actually there, okay — I have no problem looking you in the eye and saying, what we have is a sustainable program. What we need in Saskatchewan is programs that are good programs, a program like the Saskatchewan seniors' drug plan that covers 70 per cent of every prescription that the seniors buy unless it happens to be under \$20. Covers 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and it's up to date. You know, we're not talking about drugs that were there always in 2007 when the program started under this government. We're talking about 400 new drugs, 400 improved medications for our seniors, 400 ways to make their life easier.

Now all of us have watched TV on *The National* news and we've seen these actual horrible stories, Mr. Speaker, of seniors who have to choose between food and prescriptions. And I am so proud to be in a province, so proud to be in Saskatchewan, where we can have a program that will cover 70 per cent.

But what happens if they still can't pay it? What happens then? Well this government has programs that if your drug costs become too high, according to your income, they will cap them off and you won't have to pay. And I believe the deductible is \$200 on that. For the low-income people, people on the

Saskatchewan Income Plan. Those people have the special rates and a special support program, and they don't pay for them. Now those people, when we talk about the Saskatchewan drug plan and the member from Saskatoon Massey is standing at a doorstep talking to the seniors in his constituency and brings it up, you know . . . And I heard yesterday a desire on both sides to give credit where credit was due.

And in 2000 . . . No, pardon me, it wasn't 2000. It was 1992, and I believe it was under an NDP government that the Saskatchewan Income Plan, SIP, was introduced in 1992. Now it came out, and it was a good program. It gave seniors in Saskatchewan, a single senior \$90 a month. Ninety dollars a month, and that helped. You know, you can imagine if you're just scraping by, just getting by, and you get \$90 a month, that's a good program. And I compliment the NDP government at the time for doing it.

Where I have a problem is, I can understand not raising it in '93 or '94, '95, '96, but maybe by '97, chip a few dollars in. '98, '99, 2000, still haven't done it. But you know, maybe after two elections, maybe chip a few dollars in because these people, they care. They just stand up and they tell me how much they care about these people that, from 1992 to 2000, they didn't raise the seniors' income plan. But they care.

So 2001, didn't raise the plan, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005. And now they've got the economy rolling in 2006, so they pour the money I don't where, because it sure didn't go to the seniors, you know. So here we're going, and we heard, you know, 16 years and they were this close to actually doing something — 16 years. It just, just, if they had have had a little more time.

In four and a half years, in four and a half years, the Saskatchewan government took that plan from \$90 to \$190. And in this year's budget, this year's balanced budget, the only provincial budget in the country that is balanced, in this year's balanced budget, we raised it another \$50 a month. And then are we going to leave it? No, we're not. No, we're going to give it \$10 next year, a month; \$10 the year after; and \$10 again the year after. Remember from 1992 to 2006 — not a dollar. So while I compliment the idea and the plan, I do have some trouble with that fact.

[11:30]

You know, there's other things that happened, you know, with the senior income plan, with the adjustments made in the senior income plan. We're now nearly double the amount of people who we're helping. So not only have we given the raises, the increases too, but we're helping more than double. And we can see that in so many ways. We can see that in income tax, just allowing people to keep their own money, just allowing people to keep their own money. A person with \$25,000 income is hardly rolling in the dough, yet the government was taking \$1,979 away from him. In 2012 that figure from 2007 to 2012 had dropped to \$1,103. That's another \$876 in that senior's pocket.

Now a senior with 25 or a family of four with \$50,000 — to just get away from seniors for a minute — theirs was \$3,382, and there again they dropped from \$2,431 . . . \$2,431 saving on income tax. Now that works to \$214 or \$204 a month,

something like that. That's a payment. You know, you could buy new appliances. You could buy furniture. You could buy . . . \$2,400 a year, you can actually do something about that.

And there's other things like WDM has been brought up. The increase to the Western Development Museum was 34.6 per cent in the last five years — 34.6 per cent. And we're accused of underfunding. Shortchanging I think was a quote that came from the other side of the House, shortchanging the WDM even though we raised it 34.6 per cent. Boy, would I love to be shortchanged like that, you know.

And we talk about common sense, you know, common sense. One of the largest defeats in the Saskatchewan political history happened last November 7th. One of the largest defeats happened last November. Sixty-four per cent of the people voted for the government. One of the largest polarities ever, and they did nothing wrong, nothing. It was the people who were wrong. It was you and I who were wrong. It wasn't them.

You know, they have to get that message, and I'm fine if they don't. Actually I sit back. I relax, and I'm so happy that they do not get the best . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The member's time has expired. I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm not sure if they're applauding for my speech or for the end of that speech, but I think it's probably the end of that speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

It's good to rise in the debate today in terms of the motion in front of the Assembly which I'd restate, reads as follows:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its willingness to spend millions of public dollars on more politicians while increasing prescription drug expenses for seniors, eliminating the property tax rebates on early payments, raising tuition, short-changing the Western Development Museum, eliminating the film and television tax credit and gutting funding to the Go Green program.

Mr. Speaker, certainly one of the things that I've heard the member opposite just talking about, and certainly the member from Carrot River Valley before him, was the importance of going out and talking to people in the election.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, for me, that's one of my favourite parts of this work we do as politicians, is getting out and talking to people. And it's a real privilege in terms of the way that this work that we do gives you entrance to all sorts of different situations in terms of people's houses, in terms of people's lives, in terms of different organizations. And there's an expectation that they'd welcome you. There's a tremendous generosity, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the way that people will welcome you in and reciprocate the interest that you're showing by showing up to see what their issues are and the way that they'll very freely share that information with you.

And, Mr. Speaker, I mean it's such a rare thing in this job, the way that you get to talk to all kinds of different people in all

kinds of different circumstances, and a real blessing in this job, Mr. Deputy Speaker — a really excellent thing. This work is many things, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but it's never dull. It's never boring, and it's always pretty interesting. And again a lot of it has to do with those many different people and many different circumstances that we get to encounter as elected officials or as people seeking elected office. And certainly I really enjoy the opportunity to get out on the doorstep as often as I can, in terms of getting out to different events throughout the year, in terms of the constituency and across the province.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the election and in terms of that work that we get to do, going around and talking to people in different organizations, I've yet to hear one of those groups say, you know, if you could just address that deficit problem as it relates to politicians. If you could just grow the number of politicians, that's really going to address the concerns that we have as a group or as a person or as someone out on the doorstep or at the kitchen table. I've never heard that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And again in terms of going out and looking people in the eye and the election and saying that, you know, here's the respected platforms of the different parties. That, of course, was a huge part of the last election. We made the case for ours and held majority sway in Elphinstone, and I'm glad for that. But certainly the government opposite has a mandate in terms of their platform that they ran on the campaign. Now the problem, Mr. Speaker, is that you find out that different things in that platform that they ran on weren't as they seem to be.

So certainly the members opposite that just participated in the debate before me talked about the seniors' income plan and the interesting conversations he'd had with the seniors across the province or across his constituency. And I suspect that was the case because of course there's a helpful measure involved in that for making sure that seniors can afford keeping bread on the table and a roof over their head and pay the bills which is as it should be.

But I'll bet you, I'll bet you any money, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that none of those members opposite went around and said, oh and by the way, we're going to charge you an extra ten bucks on each prescription under the prescription drug plan. They didn't talk about that in the campaign, Mr. Speaker. And the way that these things net out, Mr. Speaker, is that there was more money being clawed back in terms of the money being clawed back under this . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker, than was being put forward under the seniors' income plan. So again giving on the one hand but take and take and taking on the other hand was the way that this operation worked on the part of members opposite.

The constituency I represent, Regina Elphinstone-Centre, there are a lot of people that are involved in the film and television industry that live there, Mr. Speaker, a lot of different businesses that have their base of operations in Regina Elphinstone-Centre. And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the soothing and positive noises that members opposite made about the importance of the film and television industry to the future of Saskatchewan and the way that that was important and the way they were quite happy to shine up things like declaring *Corner Gas* day or appearing as cameo guests on *Corner Gas*, Mr. Speaker, that of course belied what came in the budget which was a complete 180 in terms of nearly a decade of public

commentary on the part of members opposite when it came to the film and television industry and when it came to the film employment tax credit.

Again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of looking people in the eye and, you know, going out to seek support in the campaign and seeing what different people are up to across the province, that was nowhere in terms of the activities of the members opposite. But of course, it's not mentioned in the platform. It's not mentioned in the Throne Speech. But come the budget, Mr. Speaker, well it turns out that the expenditure related to the film employment tax credit was what made the difference on a balanced budget or not. So the members opposite argued that they had to do away with it.

And again, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't part of the conversation that we just had mere months ago on the doorstep with the people of Saskatchewan. That wasn't said by the members opposite. And so you put that alongside the fact that also not having been talked about was they couldn't go on that, Mr. Speaker. They needed to cut that program, but what they needed to grow was three more MLAs. So again in terms of what happened with the seniors' prescription drug plan alongside three more MLAs — make seniors pay more but, you know, grow the number of MLAs in the Legislature — that shows some priorities that are out of whack.

But worse than that, Mr. Speaker, they didn't have the courtesy to talk to the people of Saskatchewan about their plans for it. We see that again with the film employment tax credit and the hugely detrimental if not fatal effect that will have on the film industry, Mr. Speaker. That was nowhere to be seen in the campaign but, you know, it's okay to bring in three more MLAs.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, in terms of spending those monies and the kind of questionable priorities that that demonstrates, Mr. Speaker, the other thing that wasn't mentioned in the campaign platform or the speeches by members opposite . . . And again, it's sort of galloping through the activities of this government because we see things that were decried in the campaign now being brought forward under the labour legislation review that's been launched yesterday, Mr. Speaker, and the way that that runs counter to different things that were said, different undertakings made by members opposite in the campaign.

And of course, Mr. Speaker, the last time we saw the government come forward with labour legislation that was under the heading of fair and balanced . . . well we saw how that worked out at the International Labour Organization with the United Nations condemning it. And we also saw how Justice Dennis Ball condemned their legislation as unconstitutional, as against the law. So they'll forgive us, Mr. Speaker, if we see them coming forward with what they propose as fair and balanced in terms of a labour legislation review, in terms of . . . Well we've seen this movie before. We see them coming on this.

But I guess the other thing that's common about this is certain undertakings that were made before the last election turned out to be not worth the hot air that floated them. And the same thing with this, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that they're

going after the payment of union dues and the detrimental effect that that will have on organized labour in this province.

But they've got time and energy and, you know, political capital to put towards those kind of activities, Mr. Speaker. But when it comes to showing some constraint or restraint on the number of politicians, well it's let's have three more politicians, and into the bargain, Mr. Speaker, eliminate everyone under the age of 18 in terms of the way that we build constituencies in this province and what that says about their equality rights under the Charter and what that says about the importance of those issues for people under the age of 18 . . . And then again, Mr. Speaker, coming forward today in the legislature and saying that somehow the labour legislation review was about discounting union dues for those under the age of 18. It defies belief, Mr. Speaker. And I think the public sees it for what it is.

So I guess our concern, Mr. Speaker, is where were these things in the election? And if they'd had the decency to come forward with these things at the election, we think it would have been a very different story in terms of the ballot box and in terms of what numbers were on that side and what numbers were on this side. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate on the motion from the member from Massey Place, Mr. Speaker. And I know the motion refers choices and a willingness to spend public dollars. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's certainly my pleasure to talk about how our government spends its public dollars.

I'd like to talk about a certain thing in our budget, Mr. Speaker, that's important to our province — certainly my family, the families in Regina Dewdney and, certainly I would imagine, the people of the province — and that's the active families benefit, Mr. Speaker. That's something we're willing to spend our money on.

[11:45]

This program gives every child that wants to participate in a sporting activity or a recreational activity, Mr. Speaker, \$150. In our first year in government, in '07 we had it from age 6 to age 14, Mr. Speaker, and in this most recent budget we bumped that up to all kids between now 6 and 18 are eligible for this grant. What it really does is reduce the financial barriers for kids to participate in sport. And I'll talk in a second about those things that I think are important about sport. But it certainly helps lower income families, Mr. Speaker. It helps families certainly with multiple children involved in sports. That can get expensive if you have 3, 4, 5 children and they all want to be involved in sports. And this certainly goes a long way in helping that out, making it more affordable.

And certainly I know a lot of programs well here in Regina. This will cover not only the cost of one program; it'll help cover the cost of another program, Mr. Speaker. So not only can kids now afford one program; Mr. Speaker, they can try a multiple program. And I think that's a great thing, Mr. Speaker. I think especially in the early ages I like the model of trying

different things, trying different sports, having fun in different activities rather than the model of just having one sport all the way through. And you learn different things about your proprioception and about how to try other sports and, you know, and they all build upon each other. So the idea to specialize so young, I like the idea of kids being able to participate in a variety of different sports, Mr. Speaker.

So the other thing we've done, this past budget, for youth in sports and what we're willing to spend money on, Mr. Speaker, is we're giving \$2,500 annually to community rinks out there, Mr. Speaker. It's expensive to run those ice plants, and we know what a important part, especially in rural Saskatchewan, what a hub those rinks can be for communities, Mr. Speaker, and how important it is for our kids.

The other thing, Mr. Speaker, the government has assigned a five-year agreement with KidSport to lower the lottery licence by four and a half million dollars. Now I could go on for a long, long time about all the great programs that Sask Sport is involved in, Mr. Speaker. One certainly that I'm very proud to say we have here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, is KidSport, and that again, that's another program that reduces barriers for kids to participate in sports, Mr. Speaker. And I know the people at Sask Sport are very happy with having a five-year agreement rather than each year a new agreement that gives them a chance to budget a little better, Mr. Speaker. So those are the things we're willing to spend with public dollars, Mr. Speaker.

Well it's well documented, I think, what sports can do for the people in our province and our society, Mr. Speaker. And one of the things . . . I think it helps build community pride. It builds school pride, Mr. Speaker, and it really brings families and communities together, Mr. Speaker.

And I can think of my own family, Mr. Speaker, my youngest son. He just began his, not career, but he started playing youth sports, Mr. Speaker, recently. I'm not sure who was more excited, his parents — it's our last child to begin this — so I'm not sure if it's parents or his brothers that were more excited or if he was more excited. And that gives our family and of course families across the province something to talk about, something to get behind. It was great to see all the parents along the field getting together in their lawn chairs, watching sports, cheering their kids on. It's just a great community thing, Mr. Speaker, just interacting with peers, interacting with kids.

Sometimes at school you don't get a chance to do that, Mr. Speaker, as much. Sports teams allow that, Mr. Speaker. I've seen many kids turn their lives around. It gives them something to do. It keeps them occupied. I know with children sometimes, if you don't give them something to do, they'll find something to do, and sometimes it's not, you know, the most constructive thing, so this gives them some way to burn off energy, to have some fun out there, Mr. Speaker.

And I think it helps some kids when they're having trouble at home, maybe some trouble at school, gives them some sanctuary for a couple hours — you know, a couple of hours a week, Mr. Speaker, to be with their buddies, not think about their problems at home or at school or wherever it might be, Mr. Speaker. I think it teaches character, Mr. Speaker. Life will

knock you around a little bit, and I think sports helps you to sort of muster up the courage to pick yourself up and dust yourself off and keep going, Mr. Speaker.

You know, I think sports is a way to give back. It's a way of volunteers. There's many volunteers here in Saskatchewan. And I'm involved with a flag football league. And you know, it's one thing for a parent to coach their sons or daughters in a league, but I think it's really important and a good thing to see that we have . . . well there's young adults coming out to coach kids, and they're volunteering their time. They're 20-years old. They played for the Rams. They played for the Thunder. And they're coming back and giving back to their sport and giving back to their community. And that's what youth sports does for our province, Mr. Speaker, gives people a chance to give back. And that's great to see. That gives me, you know, such a great feeling to see those kids do that, Mr. Speaker.

You know, it's certainly more and more here in Saskatchewan. We have new Canadians coming into our province, more and more each day. And it gives those kids a chance to be involved in . . . It's hard to put your thumb on what Canadian culture is, but I think sport has a part to play in that certainly when you think about hockey — it's very important here in Canada — Canadian-rules football, Mr. Speaker, lacrosse. And to see kids coming into our province and giving those sports a chance, it's really a positive thing for our community as a whole, Mr. Speaker.

And certainly, you know, we see obesity rates increasing here in Canada, Mr. Speaker. Giving youth a chance to be a part of a sporting culture and a part of an event, Mr. Speaker, it gives them the ability to learn how to be fit. And studies have shown over and over, if you're active when you are young, there's a much better chance to be active when you're older. Mr. Speaker. And when you talk about heart disease and cardiovascular and all those costs to the health system, Mr. Speaker, I think that \$150 is something we're more than willing to spend to get those kids active, Mr. Speaker.

And I know, Mr. Speaker, being a teacher, I know what it does in schools. It gives kids a sense of self-confidence, of self . . . [inaudible] . . . rather, I'm sorry. And it, I know a lot of kids or teachers use sports as leverage to do better in school, Mr. Speaker. They say, well you know, if you don't have your grades where they need to be, Mr. Speaker, you know, you can't participate in sports. So they use that as a little bit of a carrot. That's another thing youth sports can do, Mr. Speaker. And I think it gives kids a chance to do well in high school, so they can get a chance to get a scholarship maybe in a post-secondary institution, Mr. Speaker.

So there's a lot, a lot of things that sports do in our community and to our youth. And I know our government in the first term . . . And of course they need a place to play, Mr. Speaker, and we've put \$122 million for sports capital projects just in our first term in government, Mr. Speaker. And I can quickly think here in Regina. I can think of Leibel Field, Mr. Speaker, a great . . . There's going to be no rainouts now, Mr. Speaker. There's no gopher holes on the field, Mr. Speaker. And what's very unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, is that opposition, they voted against this budget to have kids be involved in youth sports, Mr. Speaker. If it was up to the, if it was . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — The time for debate has expired. I recognize the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow.

Mr. Lawrence: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, on April 24th the member from Saskatoon Nutana stated and I quote, "It's an expectation, I think, of any property owner that you have to pay your fair share of taxes." Under the former NDP government, the Saskatchewan people paid the highest education property taxes in Canada. They promised property tax relief but did nothing. I ask the member from Saskatoon Massey Place, why does the NDP not support legislation that provides equality and fairness on education property tax, ensuring that all ratepayers pay their fair share?

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member from Moose Jaw Wakamow for the question. Clearly taxes are important, Mr. Speaker, to whatever order of government that they are paid because they do fund the programs and the services that people need. And people have an expectation when they receive these programs and services, especially in the area of education, that the services be there. I know in my constituency in Saskatoon Massey Place the good people of Hampton Village need a school, Mr. Speaker. Members opposite have not moved on this school. I know my constituents want that school, and I would encourage members opposite to make this a priority and provide a school for my constituents. Thank you.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. A question to the member from Dewdney: how many people on the doorstep told him that they were looking for more politicians in the legislature? And how many seniors did he talk to about how their prescription drug costs were going to go up?

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

Mr. Makowsky: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm really happy to talk about the previous election, Mr. Speaker. I think the people of Regina Dewdney, they wanted a Sask Party candidate, Mr. Speaker. And I think the people of Saskatchewan made their choice six months ago. They wanted responsible, sustainable government spending, Mr. Speaker. They wanted balanced budgets, Mr. Speaker.

And they don't want their kids burdened with the unsustainable spending that those members over there had in their platform, Mr. Speaker, five and a half billion dollars over four years that would have led to massive deficits and that would have been . . . [inaudible] . . . over onto our kids or they would have had to raise taxes massively, Mr. Speaker. The people of the province, they didn't want that, Mr. Speaker. They didn't want those people over there to buy votes with their own money, Mr. Speaker. And I think we saw the results in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, on November 7th.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from

Saskatoon Massey Place.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question to the member from Melfort, I'm sure he loves the province and loves our history as do all members in this Assembly. An important part of our history is the role of the WDM in telling in our story. Volunteers do this. Employees do this. And they've been doing it, Mr. Speaker, for some time. My question to the member from Melfort, his government has a willingness to spend millions more on politicians, but his government isn't providing the necessary resources for the WDM to stay open according to its traditional hours, teach young people, and welcome tourists. To the member from Melfort: how does he justify to the volunteers and the staff at the WDM that he'll spend millions on politicians but not on the WDM?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Phillips: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to have the question from the member from Saskatoon Massey. I think I answered the question while I was up on my feet, but I imagine I was going fairly, fairly rapidly.

So in the last five years, the provincial government, the Saskatchewan Party provincial government has spent 34.6 per cent more in funding to the WDM. So I think that pretty much speaks for itself. And you know, when we talk about the WDM, you know, we're talking about Saskatchewan history. And you know, there's a lot about Saskatchewan history that is so important to all of us. But the part that I have trouble with more than anything in the Saskatchewan history is the fact that prior to 2000 . . . not prior to, in 2000, I'm sorry . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Mr. Doke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member from Athabasca seems to be on both sides of this debate, as quoted from *Hansard* on March 5th, 2012, adjourned debates evening sitting. First quote: "There is no question that as our population growth continues that the question has to be asked when we're getting more seats," page 294.

Second quote: ". . . the obvious answer is yes, as the population grows. And you should have more MLAs as the population should reflect that in the number of seats that we have in the Assembly," again page 294.

Third quote: "I think [that] the overall thrust of the Bill in the terms to have more MLAs, and we think it is a great idea," page 296. ". . . there is a growing population and we need more seats. We agree with that, [and] . . . there is a growing population and more seats are necessary. We would applaud that . . ." page 297.

Yet in today's debate, he seems very much against Bill 36 and voted against the many good initiatives in the 2012-13 budget. To the member from Athabasca: will he support the Bill increasing constituencies?

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

Mr. Belanger: — I thank that member for that question. What's important, Mr. Speaker, when we made those statements it was before we'd seen the harmful cuts by the Sask Party government, before we saw that the elderly population in our province were paying more for their prescriptions, Mr. Speaker. We'd done that before we heard about the amount of people that were losing their jobs and the programs, whether it's the film tax employment credit, Mr. Speaker, or a number of a host of other programs that the Sask Party cut, Mr. Speaker.

Now that being said, that being said, Mr. Speaker, the message I would have today: how about this proposition? How about the Saskatchewan Party and the NDP say okay, instead of having this debate back and forth, let's have the people decide. And I challenge that member, why don't you call for a public vote on this, a plebiscite, and let the people decide as opposed to the politicians going back and forth on that? Will that member accept the challenge to have a plebiscite on this Bill to add more MLAs or not, yes or no?

The Deputy Speaker: — The member's time is up. I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

[12:00]

Mr. Marchuk: — Mr. Speaker, the member from Athabasca says, shared some useless information with us about octopus. Well here's some more: that a well-trained octopus can open a jar of shrimp.

Seriously, Mr. Speaker, one of the building blocks of our society and one of the founding principles is that of equal access to quality education for all students, no matter what. On April the 5th, Mr. Speaker, the member from Rosemont, regarding education, stated that a top priority for us should be establishing a long-term vision.

To the member from Athabasca: do you agree that eliminating the education property tax discount will help address funding for education and lead to greater equity for all students? Or should we return to the old, over-reliance on the property tax?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the most important thing that people ought to know is that education has been largely underfunded, Mr. Speaker, by this government. That's the bottom line. And as much as they try and change the channel and switch focus to their position on a few things, Mr. Speaker, overall we know that education in the province is suffering, and all roads lead to the Sask Party government in terms of how they failed to address a number of deficiencies within the education system, Mr. Speaker.

And I go back to my earlier point. We'd look at what the NDP done to rebuild this province, Mr. Speaker. When we started off rebuilding from the Tory mess left of the '80s, we had to pay three times, each and every year, on the interest of the debt left by their cousins — three times more than what we could afford to spend on education. So today that would translate into \$3 billion on interest alone for that government, Mr. Speaker. We faced those challenges and we met them head-on.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The Sask Party, shortly after the election, they've pushed forward with increasing the costs for seniors and families with prescription drugs. They've cancelled the property tax discount, and they've spent millions of dollars moving forward to increase the number of politicians.

None of this was talked about in the election. Why wasn't the member from Melfort straight with Saskatchewan people?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to answer this question, that I think we were. I think we were very, very straight with the Saskatchewan people when we talked about our fiscal responsibility, our balanced budgets, the way we run this province, the things we get done, the lack of having 16 years without things happening. I think we had the answer to that question and I think the people in Saskatchewan said they kind of liked that.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The NDP raised questions about tuition and affordability even though their record on post-secondary investment is abysmal — no enhancement to student financial assistance, paltry investments in student housing and high interest . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Time for the 75-minute debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No 1 — Support for Keystone XL Pipeline

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by Mr. Stewart.]

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my privilege and honour to rise today to speak in support of this motion calling upon all parties to support the Keystone XL pipeline without any further delay. And I'm pleased to add my comments today and put them on the record.

In recent months, there has been much more debate and discussion in traditional media and elsewhere regarding the job creation benefits of Keystone XL. During the last three years, TransCanada has provided facts on jobs for various governments, labour, media, and other interested stakeholders. Job data was provided throughout the three-year regulatory

process for Keystone XL in the US [United States] by many presentations, regulatory filings, and permit proceedings.

Most recently, TransCanada released additional details about Keystone XL's job creation potential. In total the \$7 billion Keystone project would directly create 20,000 jobs, Mr. Deputy Speaker — 13,000 in construction and 7,000 in manufacturing. In Saskatchewan River's constituency, putting constituents first has always been our government's commitment. And in rural Saskatchewan, these jobs would be most appreciated.

Thus, Mr. Deputy Speaker, employment opportunities are a good thing for Saskatchewan Rivers, for small villages, towns, all the rural municipalities. Growth and economic stability are needed to revitalize rural communities in Saskatchewan. Years of neglect have put infrastructure challenges in today's picture, and this government is addressing these issues.

Now constituents from across Saskatchewan Rivers are looking forward and they're very optimistic to a resurgence of the forest industry after the closing of several mills under the previous government. Local communities such as Meath Park, Weirdale, Love, White Fox, Debden — all across the line of Sask Rivers constituency are eager to add this good news to our list of positive opportunities present in our communities today. The Keystone XL pipeline would create thousands of jobs with a ripple effect in the economy, creating more restaurants, mom-and-pop shops, tire stores, gas stations, and numerous retail outlets. Potential suppliers and new companies in the marketplace would be great opportunities for employees, attracting and retaining additional talent would be a very good problem, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to present to business and community groups.

Current opportunities in growth forthcoming from the oil sector would also present job opportunities for First Nations and young people in the province. For many years, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we saw the outpouring of our young people, our greatest resource, over to other provinces. And now with this current government, we see the young people coming back, as well as other businesses. And I think this is a good news story for Saskatchewan. More people than ever can benefit in Saskatchewan, and we could actually say now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan is now hiring. This would be a significant industry expansion, ranging from entry-level, unskilled labour to professional engineers if the pipeline would be allowed to come across the provinces.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we would like to build our province into a leadership position. For many years, the previous government would say, we can't grow. We're stagnant; there's nothing we can do. But under the leadership of our great Premier, we see a different vision. We see hope, and we welcome new businesses, newcomers, thus providing growth and spin offs into the economy. And yes, hope does beat fear. So we're very proud of what our government is doing today.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we're also proud of our unique province, and we are busy promoting it. Our province's position is growth and a balanced budget. We support growth and the economic benefit that this growth brings. We try to balance a growing province and a balanced budget to achieve and maintain a good quality of life. And this, Mr. Deputy Speaker,

is called the Saskatchewan advantage. This advantage is about taking the benefits of having a strong, growing economy and a balanced budget, putting it to work for the Saskatchewan people and for the constituents of Saskatchewan Rivers that I represent.

To support our historical growth, we are making investments — investments for our future generations, investments in highways, investments in health care, investments in agriculture, historical investments in our annual budgets, more than 2.2 billion in our highways system since 2007. People across the province are finally being able to have a breath of fresh air and say, your government is doing the right thing. We like to see what's happening. It's a good thing to see road construction in the summer months.

Frankly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, our government is ready to explore ideas that would benefit the Saskatchewan people, ideas like supporting the motion to support the Keystone XL pipeline, ideas like job and economic growth. This government will represent and listen to all Saskatchewan people. We will plan to grow. We will keep the economic momentum and facilitate the right business plan. We are determined to balance the only balanced budget in Canada, and we are very proud of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We think this is all possible. And this government will continue to work on this plan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We are willing and able to explore ideas that will benefit Saskatchewan people, benefit with a balanced budget, and remain fiscally responsible and sustainable.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, we want to make sure we are proper stewards of our resources and lakes in Saskatchewan and we are providing monitoring and proper protection. Environment is very important to all of us. It's important to our families, our constituents. It's important to the whole province as well as the globe. We want to ensure proper assessments are done in Saskatchewan to keep us moving forward, thinking of the generations to come.

Some of my colleagues on this side are a little older, so we are grandparents already. We speak with our grandchildren. We discuss with them the important aspects of the environment and how to protect our world. And in Saskatchewan Rivers constituency, we do enjoy a high quality of life with pristine lakes and beaches. I am very proud to say I have one of two national parks in Saskatchewan and many regional and provincial parks. I invite you to come out there and to see everything Saskatchewan has to offer. We are very proud of our province, and we are even prouder of the people who look after our province.

Our government wants to ensure environmental regulations and management are being followed. We believe we can have both proper environmental stewardship and the economic growth of the Keystone XL pipeline. Location, quality, quantity — all of these things are very important to the residents and to the government of Saskatchewan. Our government is moving towards many long-term plans addressing the needs of this province. We want to work with all levels of government, and we will continue to work together as we face the challenges every government faces, every growing government faces. Supporting the Keystone XL pipeline is a prudent decision to make. Our government recognizes the economic growth this

employment opportunity would facilitate.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, today in Saskatchewan, people expect balanced budgets, lower taxes, spending on infrastructure such as schools and hospitals. Today in Saskatchewan, we have the management of a great government and leadership. Mr. Speaker, the US government's decision to sideline portions of this project, the XL pipeline, until at least 2013 is jeopardizing a \$7 billion project that will create thousands of jobs on both sides of the border — Saskatchewan, all in Canada, and in the United States — and billions more of additional dollars.

The problem, Mr. Speaker, is that not all Canadian federal parties are united in support of this project, particularly the federal NDP. Mr. Speaker, if their opposition is rooted in ignorance to the facts, I would like to use this opportunity to inform them of the state of energy in Canada and Saskatchewan.

[12:15]

Saskatchewan is Canada's second-largest producer of oil, home to a large part of the Bakken play. A formation of the US Geological Survey says it's the largest conventional play in North America, and one we share with both Montana and North Dakota, Mr. Speaker. Our province is the third-largest producer of natural gas. We produce 20 per cent of the world's uranium, and 5 per cent of the lights in the US are lit by Saskatchewan's uranium.

Mr. Speaker, we have 45.6 billion barrels of oil in place, and more than 38 billion barrels of that cannot be recovered using existing technology. Mr. Speaker, if we could increase our recovery rate through innovation and technology by just 5 per cent, it would triple our recoverable reserves of oil. Increasing our recovery rate by 10 per cent would increase our recoverable reserves sixfold.

Mr. Speaker, today's motion is about energy security in North America in general. But it's also specifically the Keystone XL pipeline and the jobs it will generate, the ripple effect it will have in the province. In general, Mr. Speaker, I do believe this is a very good motion.

Here is some more facts of the Keystone XL pipeline. There will be 20,000 new North American jobs in construction and related manufacturing created by this project. There will be more than 118,000 spinoff jobs generated during the two years of construction. Mr. Speaker, think of all the young people that will be employed here. Our families will stay. Our cities will boom. Our villages and towns will have spinoffs — more restaurants, more shops . . .

An Hon. Member: — It'll be great growth.

Ms. Wilson: — It is. It's very great growth. Mr. Speaker, without Canada's oil, American's dependence on oil from the Middle East will continue. And a life cycle comparison of North American and imported crudes shows that oils from Venezuela and Iraq has about the same carbon dioxide footprint as Canadian oil sands oil and less than California heavy oil and Nigerian crude. Mr. Speaker, these findings were confirmed by the United States Department of Energy.

The Keystone XL pipeline enters Saskatchewan near McNeill, Alberta and continues south east to Monchy, Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the total length of the pipeline in Saskatchewan is approximately 259 kilometres long. The Keystone XL pipeline is a National Energy Board regulated pipeline. So I do believe we feel fairly comfortable with this coming through Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the majority of the route follows the existing Foothills Pipeline constructed in 1981. Within the Great Sand Hills, the same route is followed. Through the Great Sand Hills includes crossing through approximately 3 kilometres on the extreme southwest edge of the Great Sand Hills. Again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the XL pipeline would be very good news for Saskatchewan — all the jobs generated, the ripple effects, the mom-and-pop shops, the tires, the restaurants. This is very good for Saskatchewan and our neighbouring provinces.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about the environment and the environmentally sensitive areas within the Great Sand Hills. The portion of the Keystone pipeline that crosses the Great Sand Hills falls entirely in an environmentally sensitive area. But we have strict development conditions. And the crossing of the pipeline is not within the proposed biodiversity conservation area identified within *The Great Sand Hills Regional Environmental Study*.

So, Mr. Speaker, the Great Sand Hills advisory committee and rural municipalities influenced by the program have been consulted. And I believe that's very important, the consultation process. No concerns have been raised to date. I believe it will leave a much smaller footprint on the environment. And this government wants to leave a clean and healthy place for our grandchildren, our communities, and all our friends in Saskatchewan, our community, our province, and our globe.

We are also investing in our greatest resource, Mr. Speaker, and that is our young people. Mr. Speaker, with the pipeline more young people will stay — more jobs, more schools, more families together. And that is a good news story in itself. If our young people don't have to leave the province, then families will be a lot happier, more economically stable. And I do believe this is the vision that our province has moving forward in a sustainable manner with growth.

Mr. Speaker, we now know that the state of Nebraska voiced concerns in the past about the XL pipeline being routed through environmentally sensitive areas. But TransCanada has since agreed to divert the 1,700 mile project away from the sensitive Nebraska Sandhills region. Investors are also united in the support for this pipeline. In fact Murray Edwards, one of the top investors and entrepreneurs in Canada's energy sector, regards "building pipelines" as one of the top issues in 2012. A November 29th piece in the *National Post* states:

... existing pipelines will likely fill up around 2015 to 2016 as oil sands production expands. That gives the sector a window of only three or four years to obtain regulatory approval and build new capacity.

Mr. Speaker, pipelines such as the proposed Keystone XL one serves a very important purpose, one that is obviously overlooked by some members of the House. Mr. Speaker, oil

needs to get to market, and most markets are not located near the oil. Local demand isn't sufficient to consume the amount of oil extracted from the oil sands. And in some cases, there isn't enough labour or resources to handle the sheer number of projects going on, Mr. Speaker. We do have a lack of labour and resources, so they can make these projects economically unfeasible. That's jeopardizing the province's economic strength through loss of jobs.

Mr. Speaker, this pipeline means jobs on both sides of the border. In fact, support for this pipeline is overwhelming. The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations has voiced its support for the Keystone XL pipeline. On November 17th the Building and Construction Trades Department announced that it unreservedly supports the Keystone XL pipeline. They also said, and I quote:

... that Keystone XL will create longer term employment in both Canada and the United States in refinery conversion projects, operations and maintenance. Moreover these jobs will keep an enormous amount of money circulating within North America. Energy security for North America comes from developing the oilsands and other Canadian energy projects.

Mr. Speaker, the same news release went on to quote Joseph Maloney, chairman of the CBDT, Canadian executive board and international vice-president for the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, stating that:

Jobs in Canada's oilsands are vital to North America. They support our standard of living and to be blunt, what is better for the North American economy, to support the United States and Canada or to support unfriendly foreign regimes?

So thus, Mr. Speaker, I would like to state on record again, we do support the Keystone pipeline for all above reasons. For job security, financial support, ripple effect, mom-and-pop shops, keeping families together, it's very important that this comes through.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has apparently turned its back on this country's labour movement by effectively ignoring the concerns of an organization that represents over a dozen labour organizations including United Association of Journeyman and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada, International Union of Operating Engineers, Sheet Metal Workers' International Association, International Association of Heat and Frost Allied Workers, International Union of Elevator Constructors, Plasterers and Cement Masons' International Association, Teamsters Canada, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, International Union of Painters and Allied Trades, Laborers' International Union of North America, International Association of Bridge, Structural and Ornamental Iron Workers, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. Why would the NDP be so opposed to something that is vital to the interests of Canadians and which also has the unreserved support of Canada's labour movement, Mr. Speaker?

There's certainly a lot of people involved here and everyone has an opinion. But, Mr. Speaker, we can only assume that the

NDP have become star-struck. Yes, Mr. Speaker, they saw an opportunity to rub elbows with the few celebrities who have turned faltering acting careers into a launch pad for ill-informed activism.

How else would you explain the fact that two federal NDP MPs [Member of Parliament] went to Washington to lobby against the Keystone pipeline? Megan Leslie, the NDP environmental critic and Claude Gravelle, the NDP Natural Resources critic both lobbied the US federal government to reconsider the Keystone. What can you say to this? Loss of jobs, loss of family, everyone moving away.

Well, Mr. Speaker, with their new-found status as the official opposition, these two might be extending themselves just a bit too far. Why would they take the side of Robert Redford, as much as I do admire him as an actor, and Daryl Hannah, star of the movie *Attack of the 50 Ft. Woman*? Why would they take the side of these people, jeopardizing jobs for thousands and energy security? Well, Mr. Speaker, it's a very confusing situation — job security, moving the province forward, and listening to someone else.

Mr. Speaker, this pipeline isn't about the star-struck NDP MPs. It is about jobs and energy security for North America. We know that objections to this project for fear of an environmental catastrophe are very unfounded. In August of 2011, the United States Department of State, Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs released its final environmental impact statement for the proposed Keystone XL project.

[12:30]

An Hon. Member: — What did it say?

Ms. Wilson: — Well this report consulted the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration, which is the primary federal regulatory agency responsible for ensuring the safety of America's energy pipelines. And, Mr. Speaker, both organizations determined that, with Keystone agreeing to special conditions, the Keystone XL pipeline would:

... result in a project that would have a degree of safety greater than any typically constructed domestic oil pipeline system under current regulations and a degree of safety along the entire length of the pipeline system that would be similar to that required in high consequence areas as defined in the regulations.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, this states itself, self-explanatory. Mr. Speaker, this may be one of the most heavily scrutinized pipelines and for good reason. It's important that energy security does not come at the expense of public safety and the environment, at our families, at our constituents of Saskatchewan, my own Saskatchewan Rivers.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, we've seen Transcor Corporation and the Governor Heineman of Nebraska agree to reroute the proposed pipeline after concerns were raised by environmentalists. Everyone from state governors to organized labour to private industry has done their homework on this project, and the evidence is overwhelmingly in support of this

pipeline. Mr. Speaker, as we travel across the province and visit our constituents, they tell us that this is a very good project. It will bring work. It will bring more revenue into their small towns, villages, rural municipalities, cities.

An Hon. Member: — Across Saskatchewan.

Ms. Wilson: — Yes, and not only across Saskatchewan but across North America and the border. Mr. Speaker, the only ones who haven't said that they're in support are a handful of ill-informed celebrities and a few of the remaining fans in the federal NDP and perhaps some other people in the House here, I'm sad to say.

But, Mr. Speaker, I have a few more facts about this pipeline. A recent report by The Heritage Foundation stated the following, and I quote:

Delaying or even rejecting the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline will not achieve the environmentalists' goal — to shut down Canadian tar sands production itself. Whether the pipeline crosses through the U.S. or not, the oil from Canadian tar sands is not staying in the ground. [Mr. Speaker] Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper told President Obama that while the U.S. delays its decision, Canada will begin diversifying by shipping its oil to Asian markets. [Mr. Speaker] Harper said of the delay: "This highlights why Canada must increase its efforts to ensure it can supply its energy outside the U.S. and into Asia in particular. Canada will step up its efforts in that regard and I communicated that clearly to the President."

Again, Mr. Speaker, we see that opposition to this pipeline is not rooted in any reasonable argument. This same report also highlights how opposition to this project may have to lead to undesirable and unintended consequences for environmentalists. And I quote:

With China's rapid economic growth, it is no surprise that that country would welcome the opportunity to import more oil from Canada. In fact, Canadian Natural Resource Minister Joe Oliver said that China was "very eager" to import oil from Canada. In addition, Enbridge, another Canadian company, is proposing to build a pipeline from Alberta to British Columbia to ship the oil to refineries in China. From an environmental standpoint, this means that Canada will ship the oil overseas in tankers, a much less efficient method of transporting oil.

And I do hope the opposition is listening to this as I believe if you're interested in the environment, this is a critical piece of the puzzle, of the argument, Mr. Speaker.

It also means that China will refine the oil in refineries that are subject to fewer regulations than those in the United States — causing more, not less, environmental harm than if the pipeline were built in the U.S. Furthermore, the U.S. will have to import more oil via tankers from overseas or carry crude oil from Canada in trucks or rails.

So, Mr. Speaker, I believe the facts do speak for themselves,

and that's why the people, the colleagues, the government on this side of the House are supporting the XL Keystone pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, the pipeline would also support the dramatic increase in oil production in North Dakota where pipeline infrastructure is lacking. Shutting down the Keystone XL pipeline project means that the environment and Americans, who would benefit from jobs and economic growth, lose out. Is this the scenario the NDP have in mind — less efficient shipping routes, jobs overseas, increased reliance on foreign oil from oppressive regimes, the risk of greater environmental danger? Mr. Speaker, these are the consequences of delaying and preventing this project, this very important Keystone XL pipeline project.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to being on the wrong side of energy and food security, the federal NDP have resorted to insulting supporters of the Keystone XL in our House of Commons. When the NDP's Megan Leslie isn't chasing celebrities who are long past their prime or supporting efforts that jeopardize hundreds of thousands of North American jobs, she is lowering decorum in our House of Commons by calling Canada's Natural Resource minister "grumpy old man" during debate proceedings about the Keystone pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, name calling isn't appropriate for this important issue. Yet this is what the federal NDP have been reduced to. Mr. Speaker, we are however pleased to see that today the US House of Representatives were able to pass legislation forcing a quick decision on the Keystone XL pipeline. I do apologize. It wasn't today; it was in the past, Mr. Speaker. It is our hope that President Obama along with the US senate and all federal parties join in support of this very important project.

So, Mr. Speaker, here's what the oil and gas industry contribute to the Saskatchewan economy. Mr. Speaker, the oil and natural gas sector represents 16.3 per cent of economic value created in Saskatchewan, measured in current gross domestic product. The oil and gas producing industry continues to be one of the largest contributors among primary industries to provincial GDP [gross domestic product].

Also industry investment and new exploration and development in 2010 was approximately 4.5 billion and 4.3 billion estimated for 2011. Mr. Speaker, in 2010, the upstream oil and gas industry accounted for approximately 30,400 direct and indirect jobs and 31,850 estimated for 2011. Mr. Speaker, this is great news — job security. Sixty-five per cent to seventy per cent of Saskatchewan's crude oil production is exported to the United States. On average, Mr. Speaker, during 2010 . . .

The Speaker: — Why is the member on her feet?

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, as a point of order.

The Speaker: — What is the member's point of order?

Ms. Sproule: — We've been asked to support a motion yet have been denied an opportunity to enter into debate on the said motion. Therefore we would appreciate an opportunity to speak to it, and as such I would like to move the following amendment, that this motion . . .

The Speaker: — That is not a point of order. I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, the combined value of oil and gas sales for 2010 was approximately 10.8 billion and 11.7 billion estimated for 2011. 2,730 oil wells were drilled in 2010. As one of the first of November 2,899 oil wells have been drilled in 2011. 1,531 horizontal oil wells were drilled in 2010. As one of the first of November, 1,643 horizontal oil wells have been drilled in 2011. Total land sale revenue for the 2011 calendar year amounted to 248.8 million, making 2011 the fourth best on record for land sales revenues. Mr. Speaker, how can you not say this is not good news? This is great for our economy, great for the residents of Saskatchewan.

There are approximately 81,500 oil and gas wells currently capable of production in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, we can all see that our oil and gas sector is very important, vitally important to Saskatchewan's economy. Of course it's reasonable to assume that the oil and gas sector is equally important to other economics within North America.

Pipelines are essential to ensuring the safe and efficient transportation of oil in various states of production, and I can say that the member from Rosetown, the Minister of Highways, has put 2.2 billion into our highway system over the next four years. This will enable us to help in the economic growth of Saskatchewan. If Canada only produced as much oil as it consumed, Mr. Speaker, the national economy would be decimated. Exporting oil from Saskatchewan and Canada is very vital to the national interest. From the US, importing oil from Canada is better than the alternative of importing oil from countries that do not aspire to the democratic values of Canadians and the residents here in Saskatchewan.

So in a sense, Mr. Speaker, this is not just about energy and food security, nor is it simply about creating new jobs for Canadians and Americans, although these are very worthy goals and of themselves are very good things. Mr. Speaker, this is about providing our neighbours to the south with a product that is recovered and transported from a country that is ethical. Our oil and oil sands are, without a doubt, ethical when you compare our nation's policies to that of other major oil producing nations.

Mr. Speaker, on all fronts this Keystone XL project has been shown to benefit all stakeholders, notwithstanding the whining and bleeding of a few uninformed NDP MPs and celebrities. And, Mr. Speaker, with a new leader we hope that the provincial and federal NDP will now throw its support behind the Keystone XL pipeline.

Mr. Speaker, our neighbours to the west just had an election. And even after this, Alberta remains a strong supporter of its oil industry. They are focusing on new markets for Canadian crude and will try to persuade Washington to let the Keystone XL pipeline go ahead. Mr. Speaker, in an article for Reuters, dated April 24, 2012:

"We expect the focus of the [Alberta] government will be on maintaining a stable, healthy economy, one that continues to attract investment to our province, provides

good jobs, and improves Alberta's overall quality of life," the Canadian petroleum producers said in a statement. "Alberta has the opportunity to 'set the tone' and demonstrate leadership for policy and regulation that enables responsible oil . . . development."

[12:45]

Mr. Speaker, Redford used her first news conference after her victory to reaffirm her support for this oil industry. And I have been talking to my colleagues from the west over the border, discussing the merits of this pipeline, the benefits to all of our provinces, opening up more markets and jobs. And we have great discussions, Mr. Speaker, on the XL pipeline. And in our discussions, Mr. Speaker, we were saying it's all great for the economy that the pipeline would go through, but this XL pipeline would also give back to our communities. Can you imagine what it would give back to our communities in many different ways, the growth?

So, Mr. Speaker, I do believe that Saskatchewan is moving in the right direction with our balanced budgets and our historical announcements as well as supporting the motion for the pipeline. In the *Keystone Connection*, Canadian edition, December 2011, I would like to quote:

TransCanada has worked with the DOS for the past three years in what has been by far the most exhaustive and detailed review ever conducted of a crude oil pipeline in the United States. To ensure Keystone XL would be the safest pipeline ever built, a draft, supplemental draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement were all issued for Keystone XL — totalling over 10,000 pages. Since 2008 more than 100 open houses and public meetings in six States took place, thousands of pages of supplemental information and responses to questions were submitted to state and federal agencies. and the DOS received over 400,000 comments on the project.

Fourteen different routes for Keystone XL were studied, eight that impacted Nebraska. They included one potential alternative route in Nebraska that would have avoided the entire Sandhills region and six alternatives that would have reduced pipeline mileage, crossing the Sandhills or the aquifer. TransCanada hopes this work will serve as a starting point for the additional review and help expedite the review process.

Mr. Speaker, the pipelines have been operating safely and in accordance with high standards for decades in Saskatchewan. The lack of pipeline capacity in North America has resulted in challenges for Saskatchewan's oil producers, and it is possible that this could slow down the growth of Saskatchewan's production. The construction of the Keystone XL pipeline will result in hundreds of jobs for Saskatchewan people, thousands of jobs for North America and across the border, and considerable economic benefits for communities and businesses in the area.

Mr. Speaker, this is all great news, great news for the growth of Saskatchewan along with our balanced budget. Expansion of the pipeline capacity, going both north and south and east and west, is critical for the continued expansion of Saskatchewan's

oil and gas industry.

Mr. Speaker, I will have to say that the NDP history hasn't been so great with the Keystone XL pipeline. The NDP have been all over the map on their support or rejection of the oil and gas industry. Does this mean they don't want jobs, they don't want growth, they don't want their families to stay here in Saskatchewan? Do we want to see our young people migrate away again?

The NDP have had several resolutions at their conventions in the past, and they've called for a phase-out of oil while when in government, they actively promoted the industry. So it is very confusing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in the *Keystone Connection*, Canadian edition dated December 2011, I would like to quote:

We remain confident Keystone XL will ultimately be approved. This project is too important to the US economy, the Canadian economy and the national interest of the United States for it not to proceed.

This came from the president and CEO of TransCanada, Russ Girling.

He says how the delay in the US impacts Canada:

With the recent announcement by the US Department of State to defer its decision on the Keystone XL pipeline, we understand that our Canadian stakeholders may have some questions regarding the status of the project. While we were somewhat surprised at the DOS decision, TransCanada remains confident that Keystone XL will ultimately be approved as it is too important to the US economy and its national interest. As well Keystone XL remains the best option for producers to supply crude oil to US Gulf Coast refineries.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to quote from *The Globe and Mail*: "Canada's oil sands: Not so dirty after all." This was published on Monday, February 20th, 2012. I will quote:

Canada's government, which has threatened a trade war over a proposed European rule to penalize oil-sands crude in a bid to clean up transportation fuels, has a powerful new argument in its favour, as new research shows other energy sources are far more dangerous to the climate.

On Thursday, a committee of the European Union will vote on a proposed fuel-quality directive intended to reduce the carbon footprint of gasoline and diesel on that continent. The directive directly penalizes oil-sands crude for its high-emissions content, using language that oil-sands supporters and others have called "flawed" . . .

Mr. Speaker, I have something from the *Stateline Midwest*. This is discussing decisions on an oil pipeline run through the Midwest: "The Keystone XL pipeline project: A time line of the application and approval process."

So, Mr. Speaker, a lot of discussion and thought has been going into the XL Keystone pipeline. It doesn't matter whether you

talk to our neighbours to the West, the Albertans, or our neighbours to the South, in Montana, our American friends. Everyone is saying the XL pipeline should go ahead. It creates jobs. It creates growth. It keeps families together.

An Hon. Member: — It's about the people.

Ms. Wilson: — It is. It is about the people. Mr. Speaker, as we talk about the XL Keystone pipeline, and there's been much debate in the recent months, the media has weighed in about job creation benefits of XL Keystone. And during the last three years, TransCanada has provided facts on jobs to all the various governments, the labour, and media and other interested stakeholders. Job data was provided throughout the three-year regulatory process for Keystone XL in the US.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP claim that the Saskatchewan Party government is secretly trying to sell off our oil and water to dangerous foreign . . . other people.

Yes, Mr. Speaker, the creation of pan-Canada strategy for energy production and exports has been widely discussed for several years. There is no secretive element to current discussions of the strategy. Energy and Mines ministers met in July 2011 and announced the draft of a Canadian energy strategy that would look to explore new markets for energy exports as well as articulate a vision of Canada as an energy superpower. During the December 2011 meeting of the three New West Partnership premiers, it was announced that a Canadian energy strategy would integrate the energy economy and include technology, infrastructure, and market access dimensions.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP has some history about this. The NDP had no vision for the province as an energy superpower and in the 2011 election denounced the oil and gas industry despite its importance to the economy of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, we see that our oil and gas sector is vitally important to Saskatchewan's economy. Of course it's reasonable to assume that the oil and gas sector is equally important to other economies within North America, our neighbours to the west, our neighbours to the south, and pipelines are essential to ensuring the safe and efficient transportation of oil in various states of production. Exporting oil from Canada and Saskatchewan is vital to the national interest, Mr. Speaker. For the US, importing oil from Canada is better than importing oil from other countries. And our oil and oil sands are, without a doubt, very important and ethical when you compare our nation's policies to that of other major oil producing nations.

Mr. Speaker, the XL pipeline is not just about energy and oil security, but it is about growth in Saskatchewan. It's about our own Saskatchewan balanced budget, how we are doing the right thing with a vision, how we are under the right leadership, how the colleagues on this side listen to their constituents about what they're saying about oil security and growth in the province.

And again, Mr. Speaker, we see that opposition to this pipeline is not rooted to any reasonable argument. The opposition may think we have some scary things happening, but it isn't so. We

want to see our province grow. And I believe we can have it all. We can have a balanced budget with sustainable growth, a pipeline that brings things, positive things to Saskatchewan and our neighbours, safe transportation . . .

The Speaker: — It being near the hour of adjournment, it is my duty pursuant to rule 26 to advise the Assembly that this item of business has been previously adjourned three times and that every question necessary to dispose of the motion will now be put.

The motion before the Assembly from the member for Thunder Creek:

That this Assembly calls upon all parties in the federal Parliament of Canada to unite in support of the Keystone XL pipeline project without further delay.

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

[13:00]

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — All those in favour say aye.

Some Hon. Members: — Aye.

The Speaker: — All those opposed say nay.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Call in the members, recorded division.

[The division bells rang from 13:00 until 13:05.]

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the member for Thunder Creek:

That this Assembly calls upon all parties in the federal Parliament of Canada to unite in support of the Keystone XL pipeline project without further delay.

All those in favour, please rise.

[Yeas — 37]

Wall	Morgan	Bjornerud
Krawetz	McMorris	Cheveldayoff
Bradshaw	Reiter	Ross
McMillan	Harpauer	Harrison
Wyant	Hickie	Elhard
Hart	Tell	Brkich
Stewart	Ottenbreit	Weekes
Heppner	Wilson	Michelson
Kirsch	Merriman	Doke
Makowsky	Jurgens	Steinley
Doherty	Lawrence	Tochor
Moe	Marchuk	Phillips
Docherty		

The Speaker: — All those opposed please rise.

[Nays — 6]

Nilson	Belanger	Wotherspoon
Brotten	Sproule	McCall

Principal Clerk: — Mr. Speaker, those agreed to the motion, 37; those opposed, 6.

The Speaker: — The ayes have it. The motion is carried. It now being after the hour of adjournment, this House stands adjourned to 1:30 p.m., Monday.

[The Assembly adjourned at 13:08.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Krawetz.....	1399
Michelson.....	1399
Moe.....	1406
The Speaker.....	1406
Wall.....	1412

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Belanger.....	1399
Nilson.....	1399
Wotherspoon.....	1399
Brotten.....	1399

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Spring Festival of New Plays	
Nilson.....	1400
Good News for Saskatoon	
Parent.....	1400
Impressive Performance at a National Debating Tournament	
Wotherspoon.....	1400
Corporate Income Tax Rebate on New Rental Housing	
Hart.....	1401
A Lifetime Dedication to Community Service	
Lawrence.....	1401
International Day of the Midwife	
Jurgens.....	1401
Special Olympics Bowling Tournament Awards	
Merriman.....	1401

QUESTION PERIOD

Review of Labour Legislation	
Nilson.....	1402
Wall.....	1402
Supply of Nurses	
Brotten.....	1403
McMorris.....	1403
Medical Training Programs	
Brotten.....	1404
McMorris.....	1404
Norris.....	1405

MOTIONS

Appointment of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner	
Harrison.....	1407

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

Priorities	
Brotten.....	1407, 1416
Bradshaw.....	1409
Belanger.....	1410, 1417
Phillips.....	1412, 1417
McCall.....	1413, 1416
Makowsky.....	1415, 1416
Lawrence.....	1416
Doke.....	1417
Marchuk.....	1417
Wotherspoon.....	1418
Docherty.....	1418

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS AND ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

Motion No 1 — Support for Keystone XL Pipeline	
Wilson.....	1418
Sproule (point of order).....	1422
The Speaker (point of order).....	1422
Recorded Division.....	1424

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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
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Hon. Jim Reiter
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