



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

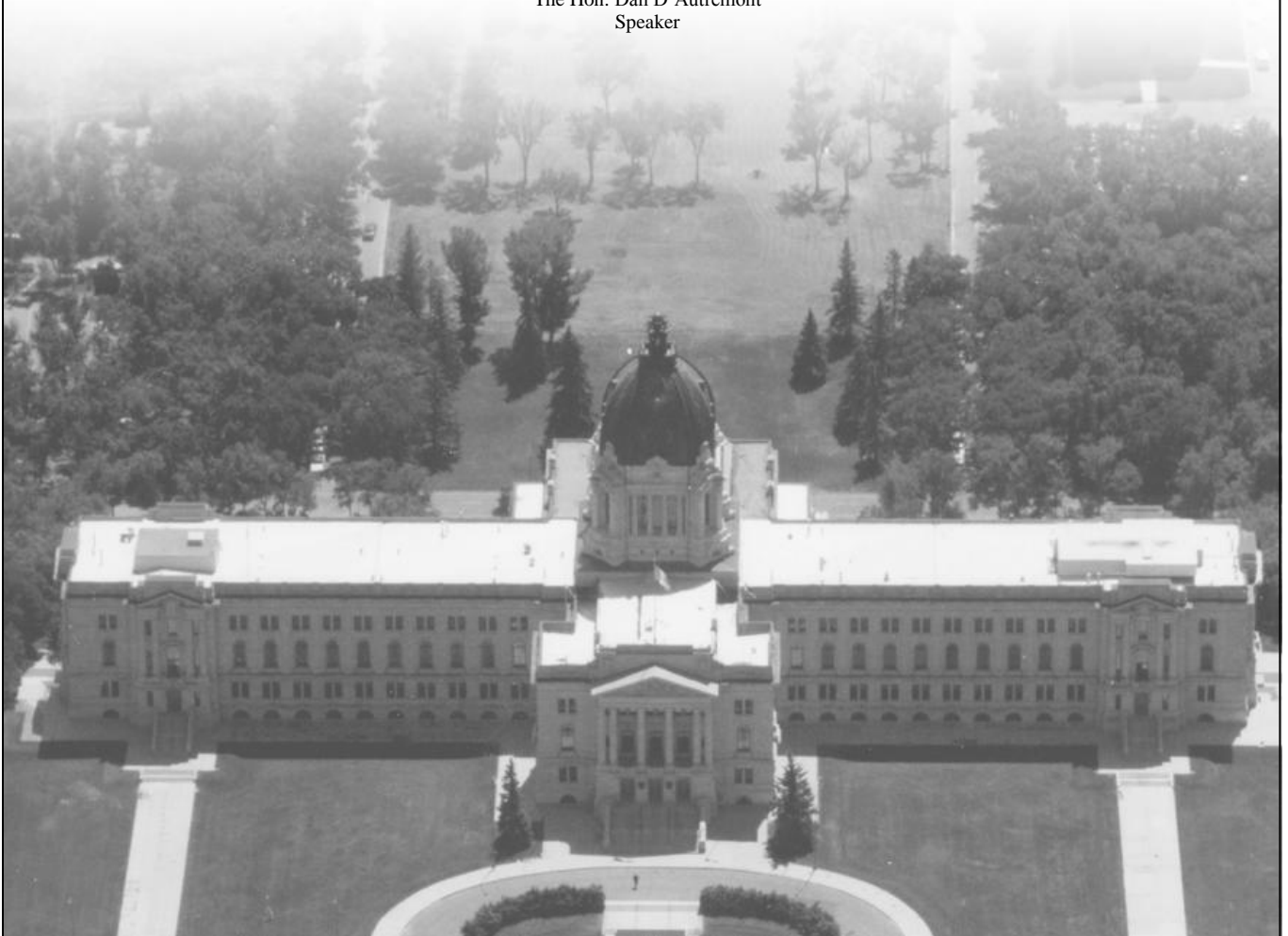
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
authority of  
The Hon. 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, 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, Hon. 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, Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, 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, Hon. 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, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu'Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. 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, Hon. Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, I would respectfully ask for leave to make an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a very special introduction to make to you and then through you to all members of the Assembly. Joining us in your gallery — and I'm going to ask for forgiveness on some pronunciations, if I get them wrong, ahead of time — but joining us in your gallery is Ms. Tahera Hussain Karimi. She is a 15-year-old student at Luther High School here in our capital city of Regina.

She is accompanied by her grandmother, Fatemah Mohammadi. I understand that it's her grandmother's birthday today, and we have permission to acknowledge that as well on the floor of the Assembly. She's also joined by her aunt, Zahra Karimi. Her host in Regina is Cameron Ulledal. He's joined us, as well as the president of Luther College, Dr. Bryan Hillis. I had a chance to find out about our guest from Dr. Hillis when we recently met. We invite them to take their seat, and I'll proceed with the introduction.

Mr. Speaker, Tahira and her family are Afghan refugees who came to Saskatchewan in 2008. When they arrived, their first priority was to ensure that Tahira had surgery for her cerebral palsy. This was arranged thanks to the generosity of a surgeon who waived his fee at the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region which covered the health costs. I'm happy to report Tahira's recovery has exceeded everyone's expectations. She has been able to attend school, thanks to some good work by the former Education minister and the Ministry of Education in terms of her required status as a full-time student, as well as a special bursary offered by Luther High School. Tahira is an avid wheelchair basketball player but I understand, I think she's taking a break this year to focus on her studies. As a young Afghan woman, she considers it a blessing to be able to attend school.

When she first arrived — I think I have this right — she received a gift, an anonymous gift of about \$200 and she thought that was pretty special. So in her spare time she's been giving back, Mr. Speaker. She was touched by the generosity she received when she arrived in Saskatchewan so she's now raising money to help refugees who come to this province.

Mr. Speaker, this is a very special guest indeed that we can

welcome today to her Legislative Assembly and I ask that members would join me in doing that now.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'll join with the Premier and welcome this remarkable family, this remarkable young student that's joined us here today along with President Hillis of Luther College. And certainly what I've observed, what I've heard, is a heartwarming story that reflects the compassion of our community, the compassion of our province, and then reflects the giving back of a very special young lady and a very special family.

I'd like to thank her for her contributions. I'd like to thank their family for coming here today to support her as well. And I'd like to thank the host, Cameron, who's here today as well, the host family for all the support. This in many ways reflects the caring province that we are. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Norris:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce someone that is very well known to everyone in this Assembly. That is Mr. John Hopkins, the CEO [chief executive officer] of the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce. John and team have made many contributions and have offered many accomplishments through the chamber of commerce. Most recently they've played a key leadership role in holding and hosting the All Nations Jobs Expo, and we'll have more to say on that.

I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming CEO John Hopkins to his Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I too, on behalf of the official opposition, would like to join in welcoming the chamber of commerce, Regina and region, CEO John Hopkins to his Legislative Assembly. As we well know in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, John Hopkins is a passionate individual who plays a very active role in the public policy discussions in Regina region and indeed in Saskatchewan and, when it comes to First Nations and Métis engagement in the economy and the labour force in particular, has played a standout role and something that we're very grateful for, not just in Regina and region but right across this province.

So I join with the member opposite in welcoming John Hopkins to his Legislative Assembly and say, keep up that great work.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Wood River.

**Mr. Huyghebaert:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to the rest of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce some students from the great community of Gravelbourg, Collège Mathieu. And there's three grade 10 students in the west gallery, accompanied by their teacher,

Raymond Michaud. And the students are Sydney Auger, Wade Auger, and Jamie Otterson. Just give us a little wave. I'll have a chance after question period to meet with these students and hopefully answer some of their questions, and have the normal photo.

So I'd ask all members to please join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to present petitions on behalf of Saskatchewan people from across our province as it relates to disappointment with our provincial finances. The prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to provide Saskatchewan people with the fair, true state of our finances by providing appropriate summary financial accounting and reporting that is in line with the rest of Canada, in compliance with public sector accounting standards and following the independent Provincial Auditor's recommendations; and also to begin to provide responsible, sustainable, and trustworthy financial management as deserved by Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses.

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

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Moose Jaw, Weyburn, Regina, and Buchanan. I so submit.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition by individuals concerned with better cellular telephone service in northern Saskatchewan, particularly in the Northwest, Mr. Speaker. The petition's prayer reads as follows:

Undertake as soon as possible to ensure SaskTel delivers cellular service to the Canoe Lake First Nation along with the adjoining communities of Cole Bay and Jans Bay; Buffalo River First Nation, also known as Dillon, and the neighbouring communities of Michel Village and St. George's Hill; English River First Nation, also known as Patuanak, and the hamlet of Patuanak; and Birch Narrows First Nation and the community of Turnor Lake, including the neighbour communities of each of these areas.

These petitions are signed by good citizens from Patuanak and Turnor Lake. I so present.

### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

### International Day of Persons With Disabilities

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in this House to advise all members that today has been proclaimed International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Saskatchewan. This year's theme, as chosen by the United Nations, is removing barriers to create an inclusive and accessible society for all.

Mr. Speaker, this theme is relevant here in Saskatchewan where our government has recently committed to developing a comprehensive disability strategy. We will work with our partners in the disability community to focus on five main goals identified in the plan for growth in the 2012 Speech from the Throne. These goals are reducing barriers to accessible housing, making transportation more accessible, increasing employment and education opportunities, supporting community inclusion, and supporting caregivers.

Mr. Speaker, this day is an opportunity to promote increased awareness of disability issues in our province and to celebrate the important contributions that persons with disabilities make to the quality of life we enjoy in Saskatchewan. The first annual public service disability forum will be held this week in Regina. Employees from around the province will attend the forum to learn more about persons with disabilities in the workplace and ensure they are treated with respect and dignity.

Working together, we will ensure Saskatchewan is the best place to live in Canada for people with disabilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, the United Nations has declared today the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. As a person with a learning disability, I recognize the importance of thanking the many people who work to level the playing field for people with different disabilities. For example, in my community the Gary Tinker Federation works tirelessly to ensure that people with disabilities in northern communities are given opportunities to work and learn. They also give ongoing support for those individuals, their families, and their workplaces.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many incredible organizations like the Gary Tinker Federation all across the province that work to improve the lives of people with disabilities. In our school systems, we have amazing teachers and support staff that dedicate their lives to students. They ensure students learn how to work with their disabilities and to proudly achieve their goals.

Throughout the years we have learned that by supporting and accepting those with disabilities, they can learn to work with their disabilities and become very successful. However, there are still many who struggle, and it is because of the good work of these organizations and individuals that we are reminded to embrace and accommodate all. I and others have learned how to overcome some of the challenges along the way. Many of us discover our strengths.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in thanking

organizations, schools, and the many dedicated individuals that work to support people with disabilities. Thank you.

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

#### All Nations Job Fair

**Mr. Norris:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last week several MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly], led by the Premier, had the pleasure of attending a very important event here in Regina, the All Nations Job Fair. This fair was organized by the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce and supported by the Ministry of the Economy.

Its goal was simple: to help make Aboriginal people aware of the many opportunities available here within the Regina area regarding employment, and the skills training they may need to secure that employment. And it was a tremendous success, with more than 50 employers participating and about 1,000 people attending. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Regina chamber for its efforts.

The Assembly should know the chamber's outreach to the Aboriginal community goes beyond this one event. It has established an Aboriginal employment liaison position to better develop connections between employers and Aboriginal communities here in the province. This person of course will work to recruit Aboriginal workers for chamber members. He or she will also develop an ongoing relationship for the chamber with the File Hills Qu'Appelle Tribal Council, individual First Nations, and the FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations].

Additionally, this liaison officer will help to develop a series of information sessions for chamber members on Aboriginal history and culture, sessions that will deal with the impact of residential schools, the importance of treaties, and provide greater understanding of Aboriginal ceremonies such as the sweat lodge and the pipe ceremony. Raising awareness in this manner is smart and progressive. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the Regina & District Chamber of Commerce for this initiative.

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

#### Publishing House Celebrates Anniversary

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This month Purich Publishing Ltd. in Saskatoon is celebrating its 20th anniversary in business. Purich Publishing specializes in books on Aboriginal and social justice issues, law, and Western Canadian history. It is a specialty publishing house that focuses on books of a multidisciplinary nature for audiences such as universities, colleges, and reference markets. It makes a concentrated effort to publish Saskatchewan authors and does so very successfully. And although it's based out of Saskatchewan, 75 per cent of its sales are outside of the province, both nationally and internationally.

The most well-known book Purich has published is *Law, Agriculture, and the Farm Crisis* by Donald Buckingham and Ken Norman. It has also published two books: *Treaty Promises,*

*Indian Reality* by Harold LeRat and Linda Ungar; and the book *Two Families*, written by Harold Johnson. These books are used to explain treaties and First Nations issues in schools across the province.

The owner of this unique business is Donald Purich who has been with the business from day one. Before opening up his own publishing house, he served as director for the University of Saskatchewan Native Law Centre and also practised and taught law. And I was fortunate enough to be his student in my first-year property law class which I really enjoyed. His partner, Karen Bolstad, joined in 1999 after practising law for 19 years. Mr. Speaker, please join me in congratulating Purich Publishing Ltd. on its 20th year anniversary.

[13:45]

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

#### Habitat for Humanity Writes Success Stories

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House to speak about a Habitat for Humanity sod-turning ceremony. Now because of the weather, Mr. Speaker, it kind of turned into a snow turning ceremony that I was able to attend on November 30th.

Our government is very proud to help Habitat write success stories across our province and to help make the home ownership dreams of Saskatchewan families come true. However some families need a helping hand to realize that dream. As a result of the partnership between Habitat and North Ridge Development Corporation and with the \$50,000 investment from the province through the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, we're going to help another family's dream come true.

Mr. Speaker, our province is growing. Our economy is growing. And our government is committed to keeping that momentum going with our plan for growth. That includes making sure that there's an adequate supply of safe and affordable housing across Saskatchewan. But we can't possibly achieve that goal alone — no government can. What we can do, Mr. Speaker, is work with our valued partners like Habitat for Humanity to achieve real, tangible results like the one we celebrated on Friday. By all of us working together, we are making Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and raise our families. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Carrot River Valley.

#### Nipawin Seniors' Facility Observes Anniversary

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House to talk about the 30th anniversary of Pioneer House that I attended last Friday in Nipawin.

Thirty years ago, a group of people saw the potential of this housing model. Today we can all be proud of the results of that caring and hard work. Pioneer House provides 61 homes for Nipawin and the area seniors so they can enjoy a good life in their community and have a safe, quality, and affordable place

to call home.

Over the years, it has taken consistently strong leadership, commitment, energy, and enthusiasm on the part of the board members, tenants, and community to make Pioneer House what it is today. This is what it's really all about, working together to find better ways of doing things and to help others.

Collaboration between governments, community organizations, citizens, and the housing sector is necessary as we work to address the challenges of our province's growth and economic momentum. Our goal is to continue to build on the quality of life as well as a sense of community and the pride that the people of our province have always had.

I ask all members to join me in congratulating Pioneer House on its remarkable achievement. You should be very proud of helping to make a real difference to the lives of seniors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Celebration in Rider Nation

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last Thursday I was pleased to be able to attend the official kickoff for the 2013 Grey Cup, which will be hosted right here in Regina. Mr. Speaker, nearly 1,000 fans, the majority of which were dressed in the colours of the Rider nation, attended the kickoff at the Agribition building. The party brought the iconic Riderville venue back to Regina for the kickoff of the 101st Grey Cup, which treated fans to live music and draws throughout the night, with the best dressed two fans winning the first set of Grey Cup tickets.

Mr. Speaker, the logo and theme for the 2013 Grey Cup were both announced at the party, the theme being Celebration in Rider Nation. Mr. Speaker, regarding the theme, Roughriders' CEO Jim Hopson really wanted to make sure it was about the whole province and the Rider fans. Mr. Speaker, more than 200 volunteers on 20 subcommittees are currently planning the Grey Cup festivities and over more than 3,000 volunteers will be needed for the event.

Saskatchewan has a strong history of hosting world-class events from the World Junior Hockey Championships to Canadian and world curling events and, Mr. Speaker, all of them have been hugely successful, and it's because of the people of Saskatchewan. They're what make our province great.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the province will once again rise to the occasion and put on a world-class event and that the Celebration in Rider Nation will be the benchmark for all Grey Cups to come.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Tuberculosis Prevention

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Over the weekend, we learned of a confirmed case of a University of Saskatchewan student infected with tuberculosis. This of course is concerning to everyone in Saskatchewan, especially those who are working or studying on campus.

My question to the minister: could he please provide an update to the House about what steps are being taken in order to ensure that TB [tuberculosis] is not spread on campus?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, I can confirm, as the member said, over the weekend the public learned about a case of tuberculosis at the University of Saskatchewan. Since that time, letters have gone out to students and faculty who may have come in contact with the individual that tested positive for tuberculosis. As well, testing clinics have been arranged for, on campus, for the dates of December 3rd and December 4th, and within 48 hours of those tests being taken, the status of that individual can be confirmed.

Mr. Speaker, we would encourage all those who have been contacted by the Saskatoon Health Region, who maybe have come in contact with this individual, to take advantage of one of these two dates to get tested. And we can then go from there in terms of those individuals' health care.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that update.

While many may view TB as an illness of past decades, it sadly continues to affect many people in Saskatchewan and, given its highly communicable nature and the mobility of Saskatchewan residents to travel throughout the province, its continued presence is certainly a serious concern to everyone.

My question to the minister: could he please provide the House with the Saskatchewan infection rates of TB over the past recent years and outline where cases are most prevalent?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, certainly I think that it would come as a surprise to many individuals in this province to know that tuberculosis is still a serious concern for a number of Saskatchewan residents, something that I certainly was surprised to be made aware of not long after becoming Minister of Health.

We spend in this province \$2 million annually on tuberculosis prevention and a control program, Mr. Speaker. And, Mr. Speaker, we do know that rates in Saskatchewan are higher than the Canadian average. That is why, Mr. Speaker, we are working with a group made up of Health Canada, First Nations and Inuit health, the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority, the TB control portion of my ministry, as well as our regional health authorities to develop a comprehensive five-year

tuberculosis strategy. And I hope to have more to say about that in the new year.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Evidence shows that TB disproportionately affects residents of northern Saskatchewan and Aboriginals. And while treatment and testing are vital and needed, what's truly needed is an approach that addresses the social determinants of health, which determines who contracts TB.

I applaud the steps that the health region has been taking as well as many of the initiatives that the minister just highlighted. But what's really needed, Mr. Speaker, is a focus on improving the living conditions for many of Saskatchewan residents, some of the poorest residents of Saskatchewan.

My question to the minister: does he recognize that the continued prevalence of TB is directly tied to the social determinants of health and, if so, what is he doing to address these root causes?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, while I think it's important to stress once again that we are working to implement, to develop and then announce and implement a five-year strategy for the control and reduction of tuberculosis in Saskatchewan, currently through largely the Saskatoon Health Region as well as our northern health regions and the Ministry of Health, we do have a TB control and prevention program in place. And a part of that, Mr. Speaker, is a combined clinical, population health, social, and community approach, which we believe is essential in addressing tuberculosis in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, that being said, we know that not just through this case at the University of Saskatchewan but as well, Mr. Speaker, largely in northern Saskatchewan, this is an issue of great concern for this province. And as I said before in my previous answer, that's why we'll be addressing it through a five-year strategy to be released in the new year. And, Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that goes beyond just the Ministry of Health. We're going to be working with a number of partners.

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

### Greenhouse Gas Emissions

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, world leaders are meeting today in Qatar to talk about responses to climate change, but here in Saskatchewan the Sask Party is taking us backwards. They've drafted watered-down responses to climate change since day one. They haven't even proclaimed their own legislation about managing greenhouse gases, meaning nothing is enforced, and so emissions have gone up every single year of the Sask Party government. Now Saskatchewan has the highest greenhouse gas emissions in the country. And instead of concrete actions, the Sask Party is tweaking the definitions of who will be regulated.

Last week, the government released the concerns that have been raised about their code, and those concerns are many. In fact, whole industries are to be left out of the regulations. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: exactly how many emitters will be required to reduce their pollution and greenhouse gas emissions under this draft code?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the member for the question. That's the second time that the topic of greenhouse gases has been brought up in the legislature. Certainly it's something that we take very serious.

The Government of Saskatchewan has a commitment to reduce greenhouse gases by 20 per cent from the 2006 level. It's something that we are working on to reduce, in partnership with businesses in the province. Certainly we're wanting to work together. The Environmental Code is one way to do it. The Environmental Code is an innovative way of ensuring that those goals can be reached together, that we continue to have the fastest growing economy in the country, but we do so in an environmentally sustainable way.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, the code is weak and the regulations aren't finished yet. But the question was how many emitters will be required, how many emitters will be required to reduce their pollution and greenhouse gas emissions? How many?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, the code is anything but weak. The code is leading the way. The code is looking at how Saskatchewan is being innovative. Recently, as I mentioned before in this House, I had an opportunity to meet with colleagues, ministers of the Environment from across the county. Those were very interested in the leadership that Saskatchewan is providing.

Provinces such as Manitoba, provinces such as Nova Scotia have asked us for more information on how we're doing it, on regulation-based results, Mr. Speaker. What we're doing is ensuring that the resources that the Saskatchewan government does have, the Ministry of Environment does have, can be addressed towards those emitters. And we're doing so in a way that's leading the country, and we're asked for more information. So we're very proud of the work that has been done.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps my microphone isn't working well. I asked the minister twice now, how many emitters will be governed under the new code?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Thank you very much for the question. The code provides an equal and level playing field for all businesses in Saskatchewan, for all areas. Mr. Speaker, it's something that again we take great pride in, that we're leading the country in. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday last I had the opportunity to speak in front of a mining symposium where people from across the country were there. It was put on by the Canadian Institute and certainly they were very impressed with the work that's been done.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, you know, as was the process under members opposite, the Premier gives out awards for those that go above and beyond. The people that worked on the Environmental Code should be very proud. They received the Premier's Award this year, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, perhaps I can put the minister out of his misery. The government's code only includes about 29 of the large emitters, based on the projections that they have. The province's largest emitters do not, though, take up the bulk of the emissions coming into the province. Mr. Speaker, roughly two-thirds of the province's greenhouse gases will now fly under the radar, based on this new code. Emissions are growing every year and yet the goalposts keep getting moved backwards. It's a race to the bottom instead of aspiring to be green leaders for this country.

Mr. Speaker, how on earth will the province meet any of its targets when the Sask Party has no plan for over two-thirds of the emitters?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Mr. Speaker, it is a fact of life that in Saskatchewan we rely on coal for electrical generation. Provinces such as Manitoba are blessed with an abundance of hydro. In fact in the 1970s, when Manitoba was going forward with their hydro, we were buying up potash mines that we already owned, Mr. Speaker — something, something that was a big mistake by members opposite.

What we're doing in the area of coal is well-known, again across the country and should be well-known to members opposite. Clean coal technology is something that's leading the way. We have the fastest growing economy in the country, Mr. Speaker, but we also have the responsibility to ensure that we're innovative and leading the way. That's indeed what we're doing in clean coal. We're doing other things in oil and gas and others if there's more questions, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand the

clean coal technology will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1 per cent, and that's simply not enough. The facts are that the Sask Party has done as little as possible on the environment. In a month where the province is experiencing freezing rain in December, this is unacceptable.

The Sask Party has reduced its own targets, reduced its own targets from 32 per cent to 20 per cent in reductions. Fact. And they changed the threshold year from 2004 to 2006. Fact. The Sask Party hasn't even proclaimed their own legislation yet. Fact. And the Sask Party is now excluding two-thirds of the province's emissions from its own regulations. Fact. Mr. Speaker, emissions continue to grow. Fact.

When will the Sask Party step up to the plate and deal with the province's obligations to the world and reduce pollution in our province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, you know, an interesting fact is that there has been freezing rain in Saskatchewan in December for many, many years certainly.

What we're doing is taking a responsible, balanced look at greenhouse gas emissions and how we can move forward and ensure that any regulations are done in a responsible way that ensures that we have a continued growing economy here in Saskatchewan as well as doing it in an environmentally sustainable way.

I had an opportunity just last month, or two months ago, to talk to my colleagues, the ministers of Environment across the country. We had an opportunity to talk about what Saskatchewan is doing, the leadership that we were showing. And indeed that is recognized by those individuals across the country. It may not be enough for the members opposite.

We're working closely with the federal government. The federal minister was in Saskatchewan to announce the equivalency agreements on coal-fired electricity, Mr. Speaker, a fact that works well into the future. Members from all types of organizations were there, and indeed they conceded that the Saskatchewan government is leading the way . . .

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

### Immigration Issues

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's been seven months since the Sask Party government pulled the rug out from under many Saskatchewan families when it decided to gut the family class stream of the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program. This left many families feeling betrayed in the province, families that moved here based on the promises made by the minister and the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker.

Betrayal was added to by confusion when the minister promised he would work for some sort of compromise, but then in reality didn't even try. Mr. Speaker, some have suggested that the province essentially ended the family class stream in order to



buy favour with the federal government in hopes of increasing our SINP [Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program] allotment from 4,000 to 6,000.

My question to the minister: is this true and, if so, what SINP increase is being given to the province this year?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member's question, no, it is not true. We have indicated to the federal government that we would like to see an increase in the provincial nominee program from 4,000 to 6,000. It's a program that's working extremely well here in Saskatchewan. We exceed the federal numbers in terms of the number of immigrants that have moved to Saskatchewan. We have a very good retention rate and we have a very good wage rate, all of which exceed federal standards.

So what we indicated to the federal government is, is if you're looking for a jurisdiction that has demonstrated very, very positive and good results, look to the province of Saskatchewan for that. We also have said that, in terms of immigrants, we welcome people from around the world. We'll continue to do that. Much was done under the former administration. Unfortunately the results under the former administration were nowhere even close to what they are today.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of October, the Provincial Ombudsman agreed to review the changes that were made to the SINP, to evaluate them for fairness, giving an objective opinion. It's my understanding, Mr. Speaker, that the investigation is still under way and a report won't be provided during this fall sitting. It will be coming after, at some point, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the minister: if the Ombudsman rules that Saskatchewan families have been treated unfairly, and if he states, Mr. Speaker, that the provincial government has not acted responsibly in standing up for Saskatchewan families here in the province, will the minister pledge to follow recommendations that are provided by the Ombudsman?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I sat down with the Provincial Ombudsman with respect to this issue. We had a very good discussion about it. We indicated that the province is willing to look at flexibility within the rules. If an individual had started the process, actually had started down the road to an application, then we'd be prepared to look at it. He thought, I believe, that that was a reasonable position on behalf of the provincial government. We indicated that we would provide all of the information and be as co-operative as we could be in terms of the investigation that he's conducting.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Immigration is most effective when the creation of strong social ties is taken into consideration along with our economic priorities as a province. After all, many of us can think of our own family experiences of our previous generations coming to the province, homesteading here in Saskatchewan, working together as families to start a new life.

But sadly under the Sask Party, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a retreat from building strong social ties when it comes to immigration, preferring to view people only in economic terms. This does not serve our province well over the long run.

Today the minister will give first reading of *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*. Can the minister please state how this legislation will respect the need for strong social ties along with our economic objectives?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, the history around immigration in Saskatchewan is really quite interesting. From 2001 to 2006 under the NDP [New Democratic Party], there were about 8,000 newcomers come to the province of Saskatchewan. Since 2007 there are 39,000 people that have immigrated to Saskatchewan, fully just under seven times the number of people who have immigrated to Saskatchewan under this administration compared to the last number of years under the NDP, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we indeed are putting legislation forward with respect to immigrants. We want to ensure that they are not taken advantage of in any way here in Saskatchewan by what I would call unscrupulous activities. This is legislation and I think, I'm hoping that the NDP will support. We want to ensure that immigrants come to Saskatchewan are here in a manner that meets with their expectations of a good place to be.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, it's important for those working in the field of immigration that they act honourably, Mr. Speaker, and that they live up to their commitments. It is equally important, Mr. Speaker, for provincial government to live up to the commitments that it makes to Saskatchewan families to move here to the province.

We have a situation, Mr. Speaker, where many, many people move to this province based on their understanding of the widely advertised parameters. Parameters, Mr. Speaker, that this government changed without notice, that left a sense of betrayal with those individuals, Mr. Speaker. And then confusion was added when the minister said he would work for a compromise, but it turns out he didn't really do anything.

My question to the minister: does he think it's fair for the people that moved here to the province under an existing set of rules to have the rules changed in the middle of the game and to be left with a sense of betrayal?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for the

Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, it's interesting the member's, the premise of his question is, is basically that if he were in charge he would do better. The facts of the matter are not the same. He is suggesting that if the NDP were in government that they could do better. But yet when the federal immigration minister sat a few, Justice minister sat a few feet away him, well he missed.

Mr. Speaker, he wants to be the Leader of the Opposition and the premier of the province of Saskatchewan. When he had opportunity to lead, when he had opportunity to demonstrate his vast persuasive skills, what did he do? He did absolutely not a thing on behalf of the people that he now claims he represents.

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

### State of Provincial Finances

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has used plenty of spin as it relates to its budget. However an editorial in *The Star Phoenix* sums it up this morning that it is “. . . thanks more to good luck than sound fiscal management . . .” that they claim a balance. After cutting through the spin, it is evident that this government is adding more than \$1 billion to our provincial debt this year alone. An online commentary states, “I like Brad Wall. I voted Sask Party last election. But I don't like when the numbers are played around with. Tell us the truth.”

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to his increasing debt, why won't that minister simply be straight with Saskatchewan people?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, the province of Saskatchewan has the only balanced budget in all of Canada. This is the result of the fact that we have a growing economy here in Saskatchewan, an economy that's getting more diversified all of the time. When one area of the economy is underperforming a little bit, we see other areas, the economy picking up the slack and demonstrating a continued balanced budget here in Saskatchewan. We will make that and continue to make that a priority of this government now and well into the future.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Late last year the Sask Party raided more than \$120 million from SaskPower after they had promised they wouldn't take any money, Mr. Speaker. Now at mid-year that government is causing SaskPower to borrow an additional \$149 million more than they had budgeted. That's a pretty direct line, Mr. Speaker. And the consequences and the impacts on people are also pretty direct, for example, a rate hike of almost \$100 million being forced onto ratepayers, families, and businesses.

How can the minister pretend that this rate hike that he's bringing forward and the SaskPower debt increases are anything but a direct increase of his reckless cash grab?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister Responsible for the

Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, in Saskatchewan following the NDP administration, there were many, many areas of infrastructure deficit here in our province. SaskPower is now backfilling all of that infrastructure deficit left by the previous members. We have \$9.8 billion of capital infrastructure now taking place in Saskatchewan and will be playing out over the next number of years. In the similar period of time under the NDP, they invested about 3.2 billion. So we are investing today, Mr. Speaker, over three times what the NDP did in terms of infrastructure with respect to SaskPower.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, that government is increasing debt by more than \$1 billion this year alone. But not only that, they're also draining our rainy day fund. A *StarPhoenix* editorial criticizes their plan of drawing down the rainy day fund in “. . . what are the great times won't be enough to carry us very long when times get tougher.” It goes on to say, “Counting on good luck alone isn't enough.”

This is a government, Mr. Speaker, that in its short tenure has drained more than \$2 billion from our rainy day fund, that has drained more than \$2 billion from our Crown corporations. When will that minister recognize that good luck just simply isn't enough?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — The good luck that the people of Saskatchewan have is frankly the fact that in the past provincial election they did not support the \$5 billion plan that the NDP would've put us in deficit, Mr. Speaker. That's the good luck that the people of Saskatchewan have.

We are blessed with a very, very strong economy here in Saskatchewan: the highest per cent increase in investment in new housing construction, investment on non-residential building construction; the second highest percentage increase in average weekly earnings, manufactured sales, international exports, retail sales, housing starts. The list goes on and on and on, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the positive news that there is about the economy of Saskatchewan. And it's high time that the members opposite got on the same page with the people of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, public debt impacts all of us, whether it's the more than \$1 billion that's being added to our provincial books this year alone, whether it's the forced rate hike on the power bills of Saskatchewan people and families, whether it's the huge debt being pushed onto universities and onto the backs of students, or whether it's the skyrocketing debt of municipalities, our cities and towns all across our province. In one way or another, Saskatchewan people are impacted and on the hook for debt, whether it's through hikes in our property taxes, hikes in our power bills, or hikes in tuition fees.

Mr. Speaker, why does this minister dismiss his role in all of

these increases and the real and direct impacts on Saskatchewan people all across our province?

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, the people of Saskatchewan have a choice. They can believe the critic opposite or they can believe the credit rating agencies that take a look at provinces from all across Canada. They've indicated to the province of Saskatchewan, they've given us an upgrade to a AAA rating in Saskatchewan.

One would wonder if the member opposite put his finances of his personal finances related to his campaign at that same kind of scrutiny, whether or not you'd have the same AAA rating.

[14:15]

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

#### Community Rink Affordability Grant

**Hon. Mr. Doherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise in the Assembly today to inform the members about a new program my ministry has delivered this fall.

One of the advantages of our growing province is our ability to invest further in our communities. This fall our government kept an election promise and announced the community rink affordability grant. This grant program provides \$2,500 per eligible ice surface to help fund operating costs and minor capital upgrades.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to say the response has been fantastic. Already we have paid out more \$1.5 million to community rinks all across the province, and I am very pleased to announce as well that we have recently expanded the program to include land under federal jurisdiction, including indoor rinks on First Nations as well as the ice surface at 15 Wing Moose Jaw.

Mr. Speaker, we heard directly from First Nations communities that this type of grant program can help increase activity levels for residents and improve their overall quality of life. That is exactly what the community rink affordability grant strives to do, improve our quality of life, so we are happy to extend this program to First Nations rinks. We have extended the application deadline to December 21st, Mr. Speaker, so that these additional communities have time to apply.

Mr. Speaker, the grant is administered by one of our partners, the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association, and I would like to thank them for their help in delivering this program. Our government has committed \$1.9 million to this program. As our province continues to grow, our government will continue to ensure Saskatchewan people benefit from that growth. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Riversdale.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and first of all thank you to the minister for the remarks. And I want to start by addressing here the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association who administers the community rink affordability grant. The Parks and Recreation Association is a big part of keeping our province healthier and active and connected to community.

I know personally in my travels around Saskatchewan and visiting some of the rinks in Saskatchewan, the huge heating costs, sometimes upward of \$10,000 a month, Mr. Speaker, in a couple of rinks as well as some of the capital issues that you experience in very old rinks are the melting . . . You've got overhead heaters in some of these old rinks that melt the ice along the edge, Mr. Speaker. So I know that there's no doubt that communities and those who operate rinks are appreciative of this.

And I know from my own years growing up . . . Actually I grew up a block away from the Kinsmen rink in Saskatoon. Two of my brothers were hockey players. It's about hockey. It's about ringette. It's about figure skating. But it's also about those opportunities for families to come together and skate and connect and enjoy spending time together being physically active.

So this is, I think, a very good start. The community rink affordability grant is a really great start but, as this government likes to say, that there is more work to do. And that is a bit of an understatement when you talk to some of those in the community who have some serious issues in infrastructure in their communities. But with that, again I'd like to commend the Saskatchewan Parks and Recreation Association for all the good work that they do. Thank you.

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

#### Bill No. 83 — *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 83, *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has moved first reading of Bill No. 83, *The Foreign Worker Recruitment and Immigration Services Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 84 — *The Common Business Identifiers Act***

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 84, *The Common Business Identifiers Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister, first reading of Bill No. 84, *The Common Business Identifiers Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — First reading of this bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**GOVERNMENT ORDERS**

**SECOND READINGS**

**Bill No. 80 — *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2012***

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to move second reading of Bill No. 80, *An Act to amend The Power Corporation Act*, henceforth known as *The Power Corporation Act*. I'm somewhat amused by my colleagues' thoughts that as we introduced this, the lights dimmed slightly. It has nothing to do with the introduction of this whatsoever. It has everything to do with the careful management of resources of SaskPower.

Mr. Speaker, SaskPower has a responsibility to provide safe, clean, and reliable power to the people of Saskatchewan and industry here in the province, and the amendments to the Act will enhance SaskPower's ability to do so. No substantive amendments have been made to the Act since 2004, and the power industry in the province have undergone considerable change in the past eight years. As Saskatchewan's primary supplier of electricity, SaskPower is committed to supporting economic growth and enhance the quality of life in the province. Because of this growth, SaskPower is facing unprecedented growth in the years going forward. Its current infrastructure is aging and inefficient to meet the province's growing demand for electricity.

They are entering a new era of building and renewing the province's electrical system. This brings a once-in-a-generation challenge: balancing the incredible growth and change, and maintaining positive customer relations in providing an affordable, reliable product to the people of Saskatchewan. To address this, SaskPower is making a multi-year capital investment of over 10 to \$13 billion to renew and develop necessary infrastructure. As SaskPower plans and builds for the future, they must also ensure meeting increasingly stringent environmental regulations. The corporation has a comprehensive 40-year outlook in place that will help determine the best options to power our province today and into the decades ahead.

Key projects for the corporation include the continuation of world-leading carbon capture project at Boundary dam in Estevan, outside of Estevan, construction of a carbon capture test facility at the Shand power station that will allow international developers to evaluate the full performance of their systems, and the automated metering infrastructure or smart meter project. This is an exciting time to be a part of the power industry here in Saskatchewan.

In order for SaskPower to make the most of this opportunity, changes to this Act are required. SaskPower's borrowing limits have remained unchanged since 1987 and it must increase if SaskPower is to make the substantial capital expenditures required in the coming years to meet the province's growing energy requirements and continue to support the province's growth.

SaskPower seeks the power to enforce North America wide standards for the reliability of electrical power transmission. SaskPower has the power to adopt or implement reliability standards but requires the tools to ensure that standards are met throughout all of Saskatchewan's power system.

SaskPower seeks protection from nuisance claims to give it the same protection that cities and municipalities in Saskatchewan currently have. The proposed exemption from a nuisance liability will protect SaskPower where it carries out its activities safely and responsibly and will allow it to avoid the high costs associated with even a successful defence of nuisance claims.

Several of the proposed amendments are intended to clarify that SaskPower's current power, ability to access newer technology such as fibre optic lines to ensure SaskPower continues to be able to operate efficiently in a changing technological context. Of the remaining amendments, some are intended to simply clarify existing powers and others are housekeeping amendments.

The proposed amendments are intended to allow SaskPower to continue to operate efficiently in the best interests of all Saskatchewan residents. They are intended to strike a balance between the needs of the corporation and the people of Saskatchewan as a whole for efficient, reliable, and safe electrical power system for those individuals with whom SaskPower interacts with.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to move the second reading of *The Power Corporation Act, 2012*.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 80, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of . . . I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into this debate on Bill No. 80, *An Act to amend The Power Corporation Act*. And of course as the minister alluded in his comments, SaskPower is entering into some very interesting times. If there was ever a time for challenges for a power corporation in the world, North America, in our province, today is it. And so it's an important one and we need to make sure we take the time to reflect on this bill and all that it means because clearly as the minister referred to, that we've come to really trust and believe and we hold that Sask Power Corp. or SaskPower, as many of us will obviously know it from, they provide safe, stable, predictable, and affordable electricity to both our homes and to our workplaces, our schools, our hospitals.

And so clearly it's very, very important. And so as we go through this and we come to understand it better and more details . . . You know, this is what we do as an opposition. So if it seems the right thing, then we will support it. But clearly the questions will be making sure we strike a balance between the consumer and the corporation, and is this suitable and is this an appropriate balance in the legislation? And of course this is something that I think that it will be an interesting debate and I know as many of us will want to get into this discussion, that there is a lot to be said about SaskPower and how do we modernize it; how do we get it ready for the new millennium?

Essentially what we hear is an awful lot around the investment aspect. The minister referenced the number 10 to \$13 billion that will be needed over the next few years to make sure the investment, that we can see a renewal of the SaskPower portfolio. And this is critical as we draw new people and as we draw new investments to Saskatchewan, and new industry, that we want to make sure that we can do it in the most affordable way possible.

Of course there are challenges, and we have . . . And I don't know what the numbers will be, and I can only just imagine what they are in terms of the number of power lines that we have per capita. And it's a tough province. It's a very tough province. I know when they took the new power line up to La Ronge what an issue that was, and its not an easy thing to do.

And so we need to make sure we get it right, that we take the time to examine this and we talk to the stakeholders who will advise us about making sure that there is the appropriate balance between accountability and making sure our Crown corporation is sustainable and it can do the work that it needs to do, but that it's not gone overboard and we've given them too much, too many protections — that it becomes then when people have concerns that there is a way to get redress from the change.

So there is that whole renewal aspect. But again today, as we've talked about, and there was some very, very good questions around climate change and what we're doing about climate change. And the minister alluded to it a bit, but clearly we need to do much more. And while SaskPower in many ways is taking

a leadership role, it can do much more.

And I think that when we talk about the many characteristics — we think about SaskPower being safe, stable, predictable, and affordable — we also should be adding sustainable. That in fact in this province we've been known to be leaders when it comes to integrating the whole idea of good social policy and also economic policy. And if we can link those two together and strengthen them, particularly with SaskPower, this would be a great thing and it would show real leadership in the world. And so I think that while we can congratulate SaskPower in a lot that it's done to date, I think that it could even do much more.

[14:30]

And so I really want to think about (a) the whole issue around climate change and that we need to really step that up and whatever it takes. And I know that there's a cost involved, but I think that people are willing to say that the power they purchase is one that's ethically appropriate in terms of sustainability. You know, I know that SaskPower a while ago had Green Power initiatives, and whether they're still going, you know, I'm not sure. I'd like to know more about it. And we talk about the net metering, but we've also heard that there's challenges around the net metering program because people are not finding it easy to do.

And while we think, boy, in a world where Saskatchewan in many ways is so blessed with sunshine generally and with wind and all those renewable energy sources, that we could be doing much more, we have come a long way. And I'm pretty proud of the fact that I was part of a government that took wind energy and made it a real component, a real critical part of the SaskPower portfolio. But I do think that there's so much more that we can do, and I think we should not rest until we have done all that we can to make sure SaskPower's portfolio is a strong, sustainable, green portfolio, one that will take us not just a few decades down the road but into the next millennium.

You know, we see that people often talk about peak oil and the concerns around coal and how can we make sure we're doing the very best that we can, that we transition to a green, sustainable power regime. And of course it's important as well, and SaskPower's done some work in this area. But it's also the demand side of the area that we need to make sure that we can, that we don't just pay to the production side. I think that in this new world way of thinking about energy, that we also see a demand side. But how do we manage the demand side of the portfolio? How can we help people be a better consumer?

And in many ways I think about SaskEnergy and how they're the manager of the pipes and what they've done, such good work in terms of energy conservation and helping people understand vis-à-vis their bill how much energy they're also consuming. I'm not sure I can say the same with SaskPower. But it is good. It is very good.

I don't want to necessarily be overly negative or overly critical, but this is our challenge around the world in terms of sustainability, and this is our opportunity here in Saskatchewan to show real leadership. So I'm thinking more about opportunities and missed opportunities, and I would hate to see that. But I would also want to underline that it's not just a

boutique type of idea, that actually it's a critical piece. It's a very important piece, and really there's an urgency to it.

So I know, and we can see for example the hurricane that hit New York and the coast just a few weeks ago and how critical it was — power, the production — and actually after the hurricane how the power companies went in to put the power back on. And I'm not even sure if today all the power is back on in New York City because of the hurricane. I know that a few weeks afterwards it was not the case. It was taking them a long time.

But we have such an outstanding power corporation and the people who work there that we take power outages . . . it's a real rare occasion when it does happen. And when it does happen, boy, SaskPower seems to be right on the spot. And we don't seem to see the challenges they have in many of the states where in fact the power corporation is a privately held corporation. Either we're talking about the hurricane . . . But I was thinking about what was happening in Washington this summer, Washington, DC [District of Columbia] where they were having power outages. And the company that was providing the electricity just couldn't meet the demands that were put upon it in terms of the repair and maintenance and just the regular delivery of electricity.

So I think that this is an important one. And of course the minister has talked about that in fact this will increase, the bill allows SaskPower to increase its borrowing limits. And as he said, it hasn't happened for nearly a decade. I think he said eight years. Clearly we need to talk more about this and understand this. We have seen this government raid or take a special dividend from SaskPower last year. And now we see a situation where it's ironic that SaskPower customers will see a potential rate increase of up to 4.9 per cent to essentially replace the money that this government took from that special dividend.

And we are alarmed when we see that kind of thing because on one hand you have a government pleading poverty and saying, we have to make sure we get every dollar and every penny and every dime from whatever corner we can get, and then on the other hand the next day it will be complaining about the fact that its hands are tied and it wants to do more and it needs to be able to borrow money. And here's a perfect example of that. So it's that inconsistency, I think, that people have that they would like to have straightened out.

I mean if they're taking money from SaskPower to make their budgets work, then we have a problem. People are concerned about that. But if we're raising rates and we can see a direct line and it's very accountable and very transparent that this is helping SaskPower become a company that is, that they're investing in, that they believe in, then I think this is appropriate. But that's not what people see. They wonder, why are my rates going up? And yet the government's taking 100 million-plus from SaskPower to make its budget work.

So we have questions about that when it comes to the financing part. Of course though we realize these are big numbers when you're talking about a 10 to \$13 billion investment, and the renewal of their portfolio.

Now we talked about the standards, North American energy

regulation standard. I believe that's the NERC [North American Electric Reliability Corporation] that he was talking about. And that seems appropriate because, as I said, it is very interesting I think that in many ways Saskatchewan is seen as a leader when it comes to how to organize economic activity around our basic resources such as SaskPower, and then you also have SaskEnergy or SaskTel. And so I think that's appropriate that it makes that connection.

Now this is one that I do want to spend some time on, this protection from nuisance claims and the protection from . . . And he used the examples of municipalities and other places. And I think, on one hand we think, well that's a reasonable, very reasonable suggestion, and we can see a lot of value on that. But we can also see that we've got to have some way, some way of when concerns are raised about SaskPower and its activities, what powers, what do customers have as a way to make, to get some redress, make a point about service or something that they feel is untoward? And when SaskPower is such a major player, major player in many ways, some people would argue — and it does in certain ways, a monopoly — that if this could be taken advantage of. And so I just think that this section where it talks about:

**The following subsections are added after subsection 3(2.1):**

“(2.2) The corporation is not liable in an action based on nuisance, or on any other tort that does not require a finding of intention or negligence, for any loss or damage, arising directly or indirectly, from:

(a) its land, buildings, machinery, plant or other works, including any of its transmission and distribution lines, apparatus, equipment or other facilities; or

(b) its operation or non-operation as a public utility.

And then (2.3) goes on to say:

“No action or proceeding lies or shall be commenced against the minister, any member of the corporation, any officer or employee of the corporation or any [other] person authorized by the corporation, if that person is acting pursuant to the authority of this Act or the regulations, for anything in good faith done, attempted to be done or omitted to be done by that person or by any of those persons pursuant to or in the exercise or supposed exercise of any power conferred by this Act or the regulations or in the carrying out or supposed carrying out of any order made pursuant to this Act or the regulations or any duty imposed by this Act or the regulations”.

So, Mr. Speaker, that's a pretty wide, pretty wide umbrella or shield that's protecting SaskPower. And in many ways, I understand that if that's against nuisance charges. But I think — or an action based on nuisance — this is something we need to find out more. Because if this can be a shield that's gone too far, that will be, that has the potential to be abused, then I think that there needs to be questions raised on this, and we will definitely do that. So that part there, we understand that.

And as the explanatory notes said, this is becoming a big thing in other jurisdictions. We see this in the United States. And it's a tough thing when you're dealing, spending a lot of time in the corporation fighting off these nuisance claims, and I do understand that. But I do think there's that balance, that critical balance, that we must have to make sure that there's some way that this doesn't close off all avenues of ways to get some issues addressed by the corporation. And so I think there needs to be a balance there, and we'll be asking a lot of questions about that.

And so I think that, Mr. Speaker, I think that we could have many more examples of different things that we have questions on. And I know members will want to get up and speak. But as I said, that this is an important time for SaskPower. There are challenges ahead in the next years and decades. And it's a real opportunity to put itself in a place of real leadership when it comes to maintaining — as we've agreed — safe, stable, predictable, affordable electricity.

But I think that people really want to see it actually move even further in terms of sustainability, in terms of leadership around the environment, that in fact environmental regulations are not seen as something that's bogging them down but opportunities to do much more so. The people of Saskatchewan say, boy, we think that SaskPower is actually the best company when it comes to electricity in Canada. And it should be.

And I think the way to do that is to do what it traditionally has done but to move into its next area of expertise, and that is dealing with climate change. And we've talked a bit about that, how to make sure because we know that the production, particularly around Estevan, depends so much on coal. We have to get that right, get that right whether it's with carbon capture or whatever, make sure that that's done and it's working well but also just in the environmental day-to-day things of doing its business in the most appropriate way.

So it's a real time for opportunity. I would not think the minister should take the dimming of the lights when he got up to speak as an omen. I think that's just something that happens. I thought it was unusual though. But I think that this is a real opportunity. It got all our attention to the issue at hand. It got our attention to the issue at hand. And I think that we can do more. This company, SaskPower, is something that we're all so proud of. It's a real cornerstone of who we are in Saskatchewan, and so we want to see it thrive and we want to see it do well. But it is a new time, and it's a new opportunity to get things done right. And we don't want to see them miss its opportunity.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that many people here will want to be able to address this issue. I think that it's an important one, and we'll be looking forward to finding out more from people who are interested about this issue over the winter months. And we'll be talking more about it in the days and months ahead. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to adjourn debate on Bill No. 80, an Act to amend the power corporation. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 80, *The Power Corporation Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

[14:45]

**Bill No. 81 — *The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act***

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

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to move second reading of Bill No. 81, an Act respecting the Global Transportation Hub Authority and to make consequential amendments to *The Municipal Board Act*.

The new Global Transportation Hub authority Act establishes the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] as a statutory corporation, as an agency of the Crown. The GTH was established as a Treasury Board Crown corporation in June of 2009, to be known as the GTH Authority. The original order in council was interim in nature and focused on the need to quickly establish an entity to manage various immediate issues of the new provincial development.

The GTH was to return to government with recommended adjustments after initial pre-development activities were completed. In essence, Mr. Speaker, this is what is occurring through this Act. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's extraordinary economic success has been largely due to exports. The Saskatchewan plan for growth recognizes this fact and sets out a road map to address the infrastructure challenges going forward. Specifically it notes the government will invest in the province's transportation system to meet the needs of a growing economy, including transitioning the Global Transportation Hub into a full inland port operation to grow Saskatchewan's warehousing and logistics sectors. This arrangement is similar to the agreement between a municipality and a regional park authority.

Mr. Speaker, for the purposes of the land use and planning and regulation, the GTH becomes the regulatory body for its master land use plan, inclusive of all the GTH land planning, zoning, and bylaws, infrastructure design and development standards, and subdivision approvals and building permits. Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 81 will provide the GTH and the provincial government with the appropriate oversight and control of planning and regulatory matters.

Mr. Speaker, regarding infrastructure asset ownership, the GTH will assume jurisdiction and responsibility for the infrastructure operations and maintenance, including several provisions within the GTH boundaries.

Mr. Speaker, regarding taxation, we are in discussions with the city to establish what is the grant in lieu of taxation going to be of all the municipal tax collected on land inside the GTH. We will be negotiating the best deal for the GTH, but we are also going to be negotiating from a sense of fairness.

The ownership of the infrastructure, combined with the property tax revenue, will ensure sustainable client service levels and maintenance of infrastructure standards. The property tax revenue will pay for common amenities, infrastructure operations and maintenance, and services provided to the

clients. Examples are such things as snow removal, annual road maintenance and repair, maintenance of the drainage systems, etc.

The city of Regina will continue to have the responsibility for regional municipal services, for example, water chlorination station, sewer lift station, and the main sewer line exiting the sewer lift station. Mr. Speaker, the new Act will provide the powers and authorities which will enable the GTH to respond quickly to the new opportunities and will allow the GTH to offer highly customized solutions for clients.

From the beginning of the GTH project, the city of Regina has worked together with the province to assist in the development of what has become one of the most important economic development projects in Saskatchewan. I have met with the former mayor and now the current mayor as well, of the city of Regina, and his officials are aware of the move to an authority model. Discussions with the city of Regina to facilitate the long-term operating relationship between the province and city are ongoing.

Mr. Speaker, the new legislation, Bill No. 81, moves the control and development and operations for the GTH from the municipal to provincial jurisdiction to increase management ability to operate on a commercial basis to further ensure the business success of the GTH clients. The GTH has secured the necessary zoning bylaw amendments and have signed an interim agreement with the city that allows our infrastructure construction to continue until a new Act is proclaimed.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan plan for growth: vision 2020 and beyond concentrates in part on enhancing exports and transportation infrastructure. Making the GTH a more efficient authority will help contribute to building the Saskatchewan advantage through increased investment, job creation, and building of Saskatchewan's export capacity. We are ensuring success for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that the GTH is up and fully functioning, a story of rapid and remarkable success. What we are doing with this legislation is ensuring that success for generations to come in the future. Positioning the GTH as a more effective authority will further contribute to the level of success of the GTH than it has achieved to date. Right now over 425 acres of serviced land is being offered, complete with over 4 kilometres of roadways, asphalt paving, site grading, water, sanitary sewage lines, and storm channel construction — in all, a \$32.8 million capital investment program for this year alone, making the GTH the most significant, most exciting distributions and logistics hub in the country. Currently about 3,600 truck movements are coming and going from the GTH footprint every week.

Mr. Speaker, in total the GTH is a 2,000-acre development on the west side of Regina adjacent to our major highway networks. No. 1 Highway and No. 11 will be connected by a new four-lane, high-speed west Regina bypass which is just minutes from the Regina International Airport. Our anchor client is Loblaw, which they have invested \$250 million in its 1 million-square-foot warehouse which is operated by Canadian Logistics Services, employing well over 800 people now, Mr. Speaker.

Canadian Pacific, the railway, is near completion of phase 1 of its 300-acre intermodal facility at the GTH, a \$50 million investment that offers mainline rail access to all major Canadian ports, gulf coast ports, and Midwestern US [United States] transshipment points. Major transportation clients, Yanke Group of Companies and Consolidated Fastfrate, have also announced their arrival at the GTH.

Mr. Speaker, Bill 81 will advance the unique position of the GTH and the transportation logistics industry. It will allow the GTH to be fast and efficient and will further the GTH's ability to offer fully customized solutions for clients and facilitate regulatory and approval processes. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to offer into second reading Bill No. 81, *The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act*. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to present.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 81, *The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion? I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana.

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I'm very pleased to rise to speak to the second reading of this bill in the House today.

I had an opportunity to drive by the Global Transportation Hub a couple of weeks ago I guess when I was heading over to Moose Jaw, down to my parents' farm. And indeed I could only see it from the No. 1 Highway, and it was my first sort of sighting of the Global Transportation Hub, which I wasn't very familiar with. And it's certainly an impressive undertaking that this government is working on. Certainly we know that there's a need for this kind of economic promise and the way it speaks to economic development and diversification that, you know, this certainly we support as the official opposition. These are areas that need government support, and we're happy to see that that's occurring here at the Global Transportation Hub.

Just in contrast to that, Mr. Speaker, I also was driving north of Saskatoon to North Battleford on Highway 16, the Yellowhead, not too long ago and I was completely amazed at the industrial development out there as well. And I don't know if there is anything like a transportation hub that's occurring in Saskatoon. I certainly haven't heard anything about that. I understand this is a pilot project at this point in time but certainly we see industry taking matters into their hands in Saskatoon as well, and obviously the needs of both centres are growing, based on the economy as it's growing.

And I just wonder what the connection is between the two major cities and the transportation needs of Saskatoon as well, and whether industry is just picking that up on their own, and that the need for government intervention in Regina was greater. So those are the kinds of questions I have about this kind of authority. And as I'm new to this game, I'm just learning as we go. So those are the kinds of things I will want to examine and explore as we debate this bill and move it through the process.

It seems like this project is moving along fairly quickly, and I think the minister made comments to that effect when he said that in 2009 they had to quickly act under an order in council



just to establish the authority. So obviously this thing has wheels and this government is doing its best to keep up. However it appears there is a bit of scrambling that's going on, and we've seen that in the need for the minister to rush off and meet with some clients just a couple of weeks ago, and for this bill to appear as quickly as it has.

It appears there's some rush going on here and perhaps the government isn't able to keep up as best as they can to make sure that the legislative authority and the things like payment in lieu of taxes, all those things, are being dealt with properly. So hopefully the minister has enough resources in his ministry, despite the 15 per cent cut to the public service, where he can have enough people to make sure that this is dealt with properly and fairly, not only to the people that are using the authority but certainly the taxpayers who are paying for much of the infrastructure that's out there.

It seems that when this government has a habit of sort of making it up as they go . . . And this isn't the only example for that we've seen in this session, Mr. Speaker. We've also seen the quick introduction of Bill 69 to convert yet another Crown corporation to a privately held corporation, a privatized corporation. And just last week again we had the minister make a bit of a surprise announcement which wasn't mentioned before in the Chamber that now it appears that the registrar and the controller of surveys are no longer going to be part of ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan]. And they are an integral part of ISC at this point in time. And now we're going to have to see legislative changes to *The Land Titles Act* and *The Land Surveys Act*.

So the homework isn't done on that side of the House, and unfortunately we don't see a minister prepared to sort of present the whole suite of legislation all at once for consideration here in the House. It seems to be rolling along very quickly and the minister's just trying to keep up, introduces Bill 69. But certainly that cannot be the total legislative suite that's necessary for him to effect the changes that he dropped in the House last week regarding the registrar and controller of surveys. So we have some questions about their ability to keep up, particularly with again, as I mentioned, the intent to reduce public service by 15 per cent. This is putting more and more work on the people in the ministries that are trying to keep up with all these changes and then an agenda that's moving along fairly quickly, Mr. Speaker.

And another example we saw today is the management of, the management of greenhouse gases. The legislation was introduced and passed in 2010, but it's not in force yet. That's almost three years ago and we're still seeing changes. We're seeing an amendment here in this session to that bill to bring into effect some minor changes, so obviously the homework wasn't done when it was introduced.

And then we see the development of the code, and the comments coming back from the code last week were significant. There's a number of concerns in that code. And as well again the regulations are in draft form so we have no idea where this is going to end up. People are being asked to comment, and I think several people, you know, were commenting and also provided papers. But the amount of questions that come out of comments seem to be as significant

as the actual drafting of the draft code, and the draft regulations, and the amended bill. So it just seems to be a rolling out of an ongoing process that should have actually been wrapped up and dealt with a long time ago.

Perhaps the Global Transportation Hub is another example of that where we have the minister scrambling to ensure that people don't walk away because of interjurisdictional squabbles. We see him hurriedly introducing legislation and removing . . . It appears there's some problem with the leadership. There was some instability in the leadership and they yanked the leader, in June, of the organization. Now they have interim leadership and there's all kinds of things that seem to be driving this authority, the creation of this authority other than careful planning and good stewardship of the resources of the people, Mr. Speaker.

We have a lot of questions about this and obviously we're watching this very carefully. But first of all I guess we're wondering what is motivating these changes. What is it that's driving the minister to change the agency to an authority? And obviously in his comments he indicated that he wasn't, that it was prepared very quickly in 2009 as an interim measure and that now he's moving forward. And we've seen a number of news stories where various clients are concerned about the regulatory instability of the area, and the minister's scrambling to make sure that he doesn't lose major clients for the Global Transportation Hub.

[15:00]

We want to make sure that there's a lot, that the minister is being thoughtful in dealing with this issue because the issues are very costly and the taxpayers have invested a huge, huge amount of money into this hub. And it's a significant investment. And I guess our obligation as the members of the opposition is to ensure that taxpayers are receiving value for their dollar.

We know that this hub is currently subject to a lawsuit because of the expropriation that happened. So there's obviously some discontent out there in the public, Mr. Speaker. And you know, we want to make sure that it's proceeding appropriately. Is that discontent a factor in what's going on now with the lawsuits that we see happening? And are these types of lawsuits a liability for the success of the hub? We're not sure. And we want to ensure that this minister and his staff have done their due diligence to make sure that there isn't liability for the taxpayer dollar, and that it's being done properly.

We're not sure about the relationship with the city. It doesn't appear to be totally cosy at this point. And we can see, although the area was, the city limits were expanded to include the area of the authority within city limits for reasons, now we see the authority being created to remove it out of the authority of the city. So for example, some of the things that were cited as issues were the turning lanes for the very large trucks. And apparently the city doesn't have a bylaw that accommodates that or the green spaces that are required, and because of the size of this transportation hub, those things are deemed to be inappropriate.

But it seems to me, Mr. Speaker, this is something that's

entirely within the purview of a city municipality, urban municipality to make bylaws respecting those types of changes. So it's not clear to me why this needs to be removed from the regulatory authority of the municipal government, either the RM [rural municipality], the rural municipality of Sherwood, or the urban municipality of Regina. And indeed what we see now is just another layer of government intervening into the ordinary processes of what happens in municipal areas in terms of industry and transportation. And we haven't seen this kind of extraordinary intervention on the part of government ever in this type of thing.

I know the minister gave an example of, you know, an example comparable, he said, would be a regional park authority and a municipality. Well I'm not sure that this is the same kind of scale that you could make a proper comparison to that type of regional park authority within a municipality. Where I grew up, the regional park, basically they built a swimming pool, and there was a marina that was built and some campgrounds.

But that's not quite the same as what this Global Transportation Hub is doing. I think first of all it's costing the taxpayers a whole lot more than any regional park authority has ever cost in a municipality. And certainly we don't see taxpayers' dollars going into the regional park authority in the same way that we see money being poured into this Global Transportation Hub. And also we don't see in regional park authorities where the government has regulatory control over the regulatory development of the area. So it's maybe an apt comparison at some levels, Mr. Speaker, but I think the size of the project and certainly the cost to the taxpayers is certainly not comparable to a regional park authority within an urban or rural municipality.

Also one of the things that we want to look at is, what are the conflicts of interest with the city? Why is it that we see this reluctance on the part of certain investors? We know that certain people are bypassing the GTH, and they're choosing to locate outside of the GTH. So one has to question why that is happening and what the concerns are with those particular patrons or businesses and industries that see some advantage being nearby but are hesitant to actually enter into the authority.

And I know one of my experiences working with an authority is the Regina Airport Authority and some of the difficulties that arise because the land is still owned by the federal government and it's within the city limits of the city of Regina. So when that authority was established, the same with the Saskatoon Airport Authority, because of all the layers of regulation and the layers of government, it makes it more difficult to administer. And is this something that's going to be a factor with the GTH? We don't know. And we're going to certainly want to take a close look at that and monitor that very closely.

We see some concern from commercial realtors about the GTH, and they have indicated there's some confusion about how their clients are going to be treated. So those are questions that we want to also look at when we're exploring this bill and its impact on commercial realtors and their significant clients that they're representing. And we want to make sure that their concerns are being heard and that they're being treated properly within the new legislation that this government is introducing.

As I mentioned earlier, we saw in June that the head of the

Global Transportation Hub Authority had been removed unceremoniously. And the comment that the minister made at the time was that it was because the hub was going in a different direction. They wanted another person in the top job. So there wasn't any comment from the previous civil servant who was removed. But there's some questions there about the stability in leadership and why this move was made right now.

I believe the interim CEO is a former senior official from Premier Grant Devine's office in the 1980s. So one has to question what his connections are. Politically, certainly they're quite obvious. And we're not sure that that's the reason why he was chosen as interim director or whether the skill set was also there to properly lead this group into the future in the Global Transportation Hub.

The minister indicated that there were unique needs and that's why this legislation was introduced so quickly on Wednesday. I think if you want to read into that a little bit, Mr. Speaker, it may be there are unique concerns on the part of the government in terms of how this agency is going to succeed. And we see a very direct intervention here by a Conservative government into a business arrangement, which is quite contrary I think to what we see in some of their other statements and policies, Mr. Speaker. And so it's of concern again when you see an interventionist government in a free market when they profess to be supportive of free market. So it seems inconsistent in some ways to some of the policies that we've seen come out of this particular government.

Again the minister indicated to the press that these unique needs or, as I say, unique concerns are things like the free flow of long combination vehicles or LCVs. And certainly driving on the winter highways as I have been in the last little while, I've seen some of these long vehicles and had to pass them in the passing lane. And it's quite a sight to behold, especially when your knuckles are white holding on to the steering wheel, but they are more and more a feature I think of our highways. In fact I have a friend from Nova Scotia who is very surprised to see these being allowed in Saskatchewan, and they're not allowed in Nova Scotia. But I think, Mr. Speaker, our highways tend to be a little straighter and longer, and we have more access to those kinds of facilities where we can load those kinds of vehicles. But they do need wider roads for turning, and the other thing that they needed was, as I mentioned earlier, was the green space that was required in the new development.

Again I'm not certain why the city of Regina couldn't make changes to their bylaws to facilitate these needs. And the Premier has indicated to the press that the authority would have the authority in terms of the types of municipal bylaws within their property footprint. It seems extraordinary intervention on the part of a provincial government in these types of ordinary business enterprises. But we understand that, you know, the goal, and we're hoping they do meet their goal of the economic promise.

The minister indicated in his comments just now that they want to ensure business success. And again I think we see some inconsistency on this part from the government. And you know, if we look at what's happened with the film industry in this province, we certainly haven't seen a government that's wanting to ensure business success. In fact it's almost the

opposite. We've seen significant investment on the part of the government in this transportation hub, but we do not see that same kind of commitment to the many hundreds of jobs in the film industry that are now lost because of their haste to get rid of the film employment tax credit which is basically an industry standard across North America for the film industry. And they're of course ignoring the benefits that are reaped as a result of that type of government intervention in an industry. So here we have government intervention in the transportation industry that is to the many millions of dollars, and yet we don't see any sort reciprocal support for another industry like the film industry.

He mentioned that they're working on negotiating the best deal for grants in lieu of taxes. And this is another thing I think that really this government . . . And we will be watching for this to ensure that that negotiation is totally fair to the taxpayers of Saskatchewan and not just to the businesses, that this isn't a big advantage for these businesses operating out of the transportation hub. He said it needs to reflect Saskatchewan investment. And we want to ensure, Mr. Speaker, that this reflects our return on investment here, that it's not just fair to the companies.

And what does that mean when we talk about fairness in taxation? There's more than snow removal involved here. There's more than all the considerable infrastructure that needs to be built to support these very thriving businesses who are making a lot of money out of being able to use this transportation hub on the taxpayers' dollar. So we want to make sure that the taxes, the grants in lieu of taxes are at least comparable to what they would be within the city framework, or the rural municipal framework as far as that goes, and that this isn't some sort of advantage that's being given to these businesses just for locating within the transportation hub. So we'll be watching those kinds of negotiations very carefully, Mr. Speaker.

I think I've covered almost all of my comments at this point. So I know my colleagues are going to want to follow up with some of these, and we're certainly going to want to talk to the people and make sure that they're comfortable with this approach and certainly if there's any concerns in terms of the questions that are being raised about liability, about due diligence, about what's motivating these changes on such a rushed basis, why the minister wasn't able to be more prepared in terms of how this is rolling out. And not only in this one but, as I said, in other areas like Information Services Corporation and greenhouse gases where we see our government rushing to keep up and not fully implementing the whole suite of legislation in an orderly fashion.

So I would like to move at this point that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 81.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 81, *The Global Transportation Hub Authority Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 66

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 66 — *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure this afternoon to join in on the discussion with respect to Bill No. 66, *An Act respecting a Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings*. This is in follow-up, Mr. Speaker, to the second reading speech that was provided by the Minister of Advanced Education on November 19th, 2012.

Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation is something that has been talked about for a little while. It was an issue that was covered in the previous provincial election, Mr. Speaker, as an item that was proposed by members opposite. So it's not a huge surprise to see it coming up in legislation, Mr. Speaker.

The timing of the matter perhaps is a little bit of a surprise. I know I was approached by the minister recently about the possibility of the opposition allowing this to pass before Christmas. And I will say at the conclusion of my remarks I will be sending this to committee in order to facilitate that process. But given that this was something that was talked about for some time, there may be some opportunities, Mr. Speaker, that it could have been presented at an earlier time and not have had to rush the process, so to speak.

The piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, is essentially an RESP [registered education savings plan] top-up allowing families who are already contributing to an RESP to receive a provincial benefit to add to the funds that are being saved for a child's education. The notion, Mr. Speaker, of allowing families to help save for a child's education in principle is a thing that I support, Mr. Speaker. And it's good when families are in a position that they're able to save in order to provide for the future with respect to education.

There is, Mr. Speaker, I think some comments that are important to make with respect to how the RESP fits into the larger issue of affordability for post-secondary education in the province, as well as how post-secondary institutions are being treated currently under the current administration.

[15:15]

So as I said, Mr. Speaker, helping families is a thing that most people support. That's a good thing. But we need to look at what the costs are that are being faced by families in the present as well as down the road. Many people want to open up and start RESPs when a child is small. It's perhaps one of the first things that is done after getting a birth certificate and doing the legal paperwork and getting a social insurance number for a child. And as I said, it's a good thing when families are able to

save and prepare for the future.

But, Mr. Speaker, it does not address the proposed legislation here with respect to providing a top-up of benefit to families for their RESPs. It doesn't address the issue of reducing barriers for current students and as well as ensuring that education is affordable for everyone down the road. And we need to ensure that any benefit being given now, Mr. Speaker, through this proposed legislation, that it would not be outstripped by increased costs for families and for students down the road. And we know, Mr. Speaker, with provincial universities having one of the highest tuition levels within the country, we know this is a concern for many Saskatchewan families.

And then when we also look at current actions that provincial institutions such as the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] are facing, it is a concern, especially, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the University of Saskatchewan. I will use this example because I've talked about it a bit through question period and on a few occasions, as have other colleagues and on different occasions, because what we see is a financial picture on campus that is tight and is causing the university administration to take a number of steps. And it ties back to the turning away from an earlier promise, Mr. Speaker, to fully fund the Health Sciences Building. When we saw when the Sask Party promised to do that but then decided not to provide the funding upfront instead forcing that amount of debt onto the university's books, we saw a tightening of the financial picture on campus. The government forced the University of Saskatchewan to basically take on about \$100 million of debt. And by the university's own documents, they have stated clearly that this has maxed out their borrowing capacity and has also put them at the very top, beyond other institutions within its class, with respect to the debt load per FTE [full-time equivalent] student.

So that is a concern and we've seen the university take some steps with respect to cuts. I mean the one example that stands out is the Kenderdine Campus as just one example. But we also know that there are significant layoffs occurring on campus, and that's concerning as well. And then we also know, Mr. Speaker, I believe that this will have an effect on tuition down the road, in the very near future down the road.

So it's important, Mr. Speaker, to say that while it could be viewed as a positive thing in providing the support to families to allow them to save at these early stages, we also need to keep our eye on the ball, be aware of the other side of the coin. And that is the financial picture on campus, and how that will influence and determine the affordability of education in the near future and in the long run.

So, Mr. Speaker, some comments with respect to how we will be allowing this legislation to carry through the House. The minister identified in discussions that we had that it would cause some complications with respect to retroactivity in dealing with financial institutions and the work that needs to happen within the bureaucracy in order to allow this program to happen. And he suggested to me that this would be a problem in passing it in the spring. So we are willing to accommodate that. We do not have a desire to be obstructionist in that way, though I would say there has been opportunity to raise this at an earlier point in order to prevent the fast-tracking requirement.

And I think any time that we can allow and provide for proper review and proper discussion about any proposed piece of legislation, I think that's a better thing for democracy and it's a better thing for the quality of legislation that we receive in the House, as well as the awareness within the broader community in the province with respect to what's being accomplished with a particular bill. So we're willing to co-operate in this instance, do not have a desire to be obstructionist on this, but we would ask that things be handled in a faster or earlier manner in other instances.

And as I've said, Mr. Speaker, some steps here in the legislation that I would support, but we can't lose focus of current barriers for post-secondary education that students are experiencing, as well as long-term issues of affordability. And, Mr. Speaker, an RESP top-up . . . I mean it does help families. It helps families who are already saving. There are instances where families may not be able to save or are not in a position at the time currently to do that. So we also need to be aware of having the proper programs and services in place in order to ensure the post-secondary education is accessible to all and that all people in Saskatchewan are able to reach their full potential through receiving the type of education that they hope to receive and complete.

So, Mr. Speaker, having made those remarks and having reached the end of my conclusions, I will state that to enable further progress of this bill through the process, I conclude my remarks on Bill 66. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is the motion moved by the Minister of Advanced Education that Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — To which committee shall this bill be committed? I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, I designate that Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act* be committed to the Committee of the Whole and that the said bill be considered in Committee of the Whole immediately.

**The Speaker:** — This bill stands committed to the Committee of the Whole. I do now leave the Chair for the House to go into Committee of the Whole.

#### COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE ASSEMBLY

#### Bill No. 66 — *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*

#### Clause 1

**The Chair:** — The item of business before this committee is Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*. Clause 1, short title, is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

[Clause 1 agreed to.]

[Clauses 2 to 8 inclusive agreed to.]

**The Chair:** — Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan, enacts as follows: Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*.

I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair, I move the committee report the bill without amendment.

**The Chair:** — It has been moved that the committee report Bill No. 66 without amendment. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Chair, I move that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again.

**The Chair:** — It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the committee rise, report progress, and ask for leave to sit again. Is that agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Chair:** — Carried.

[The Speaker resumed the Chair.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of committees.

**Mr. Hart:** — Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the committee to report Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act* without amendment.

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a third time? I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

### THIRD READINGS

#### Bill No. 66 — *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act*

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Mr. Speaker, by leave, I move that this bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — The minister has requested leave for Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act* be now read the third time and passed under its

title. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Leave is granted. I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — I move that this bill be now read the third time and passed under its title.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 66, *The Saskatchewan Advantage Grant for Education Savings (SAGES) Act* be now read the third time and passed under its title. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Question.

**The Speaker:** — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

**Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel:** — Third reading of this bill.

**The Speaker:** — When shall the committee sit again? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Mr. Harrison:** — At the next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

[15:30]

### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 69

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 69** — *The Information Services Corporation Act* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm being tormented by the member from Moosomin right off the bat here. But I'll have to compose myself and get to the debate at hand here on Bill No. 69, a bill that, in comparison to the exercise we've just gone through in the House here, Mr. Speaker, should be held up in this House as long as possible because, Mr. Speaker, it comes to this Legislative Assembly in some pretty illegitimate ways.

And again it draws a good comparison with the last piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. It's not the whole story on what just happened right now. But one of the things that that particular bill has the advantage of, Mr. Speaker, is that it was a measure

that was contested in the election last year. It was put before the people. It was weighed and assayed by the voters of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And you know, the government got a mandate and that's the way it goes: you get to bring new legislation forward, having gotten the mandate at election time. And certainly the Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings, Mr. Speaker, that was something that was put before the people and that is as it should be.

Something that was not put before the people, Mr. Speaker, was the sale of 60 per cent of the Information Services Corporation. And I guess, you know, it provides a good starting point, Mr. Speaker, in terms of some of the ways that we can agree in this Legislative Chamber and some of the things that we'll disagree upon, Mr. Speaker. And one of the things that we'll disagree upon is whether or not the members opposite have been straight with the people of Saskatchewan when it comes to how they're approaching the Crown corporations generally, and how they're approaching this particular Crown corporation especially.

And, Mr. Speaker, when you go back to the way that Crowns have played a role not just in the last decade, Mr. Speaker, but certainly through the '90s, through the '80s, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that I often remember and that was part of a family that got to live through it, Mr. Speaker, was the way that the government of the day, between 1986 and 1991, having not gone to the people to get a mandate for this action, Mr. Speaker. But in my family I grew up, we were very lucky to have my mom as a homemaker who stayed, was a very active community volunteer. But we as the four McCall kids benefited mightily from the way that she was able to make sure that we took her up on her love of reading, the way that she was able to teach us how to ride bikes, Mr. Speaker, and the way that she in so many ways helped us along in becoming the people that we were.

And alongside that though, Mr. Speaker, was the work that my father did — and again a very active person in the community — but the work that my father did as a journeyman gas fitter with SaskPower in the gas division. And then of course after 1987, Mr. Speaker, the way that SaskEnergy was hived off from SaskPower and became its own entity, and then there was a sale attempted of that corporation. And I guess you'll forgive me, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that you can sometimes see history repeating itself in terms of certain of the initiatives taken in this Chamber, the way that certain issues play out in the public policy discussions of this province.

The way that Crown corporations have been sometimes attacked in this province, Mr. Speaker, is oftentimes not talked about at election. And certainly that was the case in 1986, Mr. Speaker, where there'd been some initial forays made into different of the Crown endeavours of the province at the time, to either in many cases hobble those corporations, Mr. Speaker, and then the way that they were lined up for sale. And up until the post-'86 election period, Mr. Speaker, a lot of that was skirmishing around the edges. For the most part, people in Saskatchewan have been well served by their Crown corporations, the mixed economy that we enjoy here in Saskatchewan, not just meant for good service but for a return to the people in terms of particularly areas where there's a natural monopoly, Mr. Speaker.

So after the '86 election when suddenly the bottom fell out of the finances and when it became apparent that there was not . . . there was a government that was less than forthright with the people of Saskatchewan in terms of how they'd approached that '86 election, the things that they campaigned on, and the reality when it came to the finances of the province, Mr. Speaker, there came a time of reckoning. And of course, you know, the sky was falling, Mr. Speaker. It turns out that projected deficits were much greater than had been earlier let on. And of course right after the election all these things came to light, and the people of Saskatchewan looked at that and said, you know, how the heck does this work?

And one of the ways that, you know, certainly there was an ideological groundswell on the part of members opposite in terms of the way that they identified with the new conservative revolution, but again, Mr. Speaker, this being the latest sort of expression of a much older debate and discussion in not just places like Saskatchewan but in many quarters of the world.

When neo-conservatism came to Saskatchewan purely writ, Mr. Speaker, and it coincided with a period of economic decline and the way that the finances had been disastrously managed by the Grant Devine government, after '86 of course they went looking pillar to post to find ways to contend with this situation. And one of the measures seized upon by the government was privatization, writ large.

And there's a fair amount of scholarly work that has been done in terms of that period of this province's history, and the way that that was handled or mishandled, Mr. Speaker. And certainly SaskEnergy provided for a fairly intense period of debate in the history of this province and a fairly interesting example of just where the government of the day was at and where they were going to be come 1991, Mr. Speaker.

And one of the things that people bore witness to and that they did not forgive that government, Mr. Speaker, was the way that things like the privatization of SaskEnergy — which again had provided good revenues for the people of Saskatchewan, good service for the people of Saskatchewan, and Saskatchewan headquarters for Saskatchewan economic activity, Mr. Speaker — that was not talked about in the 1986 election. And when the government came forward with it, it was a significant fight in the history of this province's political life, and it was a significant fight as regarded the path that that government was on.

And, Mr. Speaker, in the McCall family household, it was a fairly significant time of course because we'd taken what was my . . . I should say, Mr. Speaker, my father was a 35-year employee with SaskPower and then SaskEnergy, of course. When he and my grandmother came in off the farm and he got in a trade, he'd gone to work for SaskPower and worked very hard, Mr. Speaker, but was active in community, active in his union, and I think put in a good day's work for a good day's dollar.

And in terms of what the decision of the government of the day meant to what happens now for we as a family sitting there saying, this is your father's psyche; this is how this household is afloat, Mr. Speaker, and this is how you're able to make a living and send kids to school. And my older brother

was in university at the time, and my sister and my brother and I were in high school, Mr. Speaker. In terms of the kind of uncertainty that that action that . . . You know, for me it's never, it's never been just a sort of historical debate or the philosophical debate. But I have some recollection, Mr. Speaker, of what it meant to the McCall family at our kitchen table in terms of the kind of uncertainty that had been injected into our lives by a government of the day, and again, Mr. Speaker, a government of the day that hadn't run on this at election time, hadn't said, you know, people of Saskatchewan, here's an idea: what do you think of this? But rather said something very different, Mr. Speaker, and of course acted very differently, having not received the majority of the popular vote but having received the majority of the seats in 1986.

And you know, you think about what happened with SaskEnergy and the debates around that and the ringing of the bells and the way that that debate played out on the floor of this House, Mr. Speaker. You think about that, but you also think about, particularly in conjunction with the debate around Information Services Corporation, Mr. Speaker. The privatization of the Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan has been brought up by the Minister Responsible for ISC in conjunction with this proposed privatization. And it's interesting that what is brought around Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan is that it will somehow free the corporation to pursue opportunities in the global economy.

Well, Mr. Speaker, we've heard other things about opportunities that were there for Information Services Corporation as recently as with the Government of the Yukon, to provide an additional revenue stream for the corporation and again enabling the corporation to add to that last year \$17 million dividend payment to the Crown Investments Corporation and then again, Mr. Speaker, the way that benefits the people of Saskatchewan.

The minister also said that, you know, so we can't compete globally; we've got to free Information Services Corporation to go beyond our borders and go global and all of these good things. And one of the things that'll be very interesting to see, Mr. Speaker, because one of the hallmarks of what happened with the actual sale of PCS [Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan Inc.] shares initially in the mid-'80s, Mr. Speaker, is the way that those shares were in the initial public offering devalued. So you know, lo and behold, mere days and weeks later, there was a rise in the value of the stock and there were a lot of people made some very quick money, Mr. Speaker, on what had previously been an asset belonging to the people of Saskatchewan, what had previously been making a return to the coffers of the people of Saskatchewan.

And again the way that that defrayed the need for higher taxes, the way that that underwrote and helped to support the provision of public services and education and health care, and again the way that that has seen somebody like David Dombowsky as the CEO of Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan — a Saskatchewan person and somebody doing very good work on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan — but with the privatization of PCS, you saw a lot of those things go out the window. And you saw the corporation get put on a track where again, Mr. Speaker, I don't know, there's still some debate as to whether it was design or blundering that saw the

way that the financial circumstances evolved into the early '90s. But once something like PCS was put on a privatization track, and again where that initial public offering was devalued and saw an automatic buoyancy in the stock value, and again the way that that was pointed to as somehow a success by the government of the day, Mr. Speaker.

We're going to be watching very closely to see what happens with the initial offering out of ISC and whether or not that stock comes on market at a fair market value and whether or not that's reflective of the different sort of valuations that have taken place at the corporation or whether or not in fact that's lowballed, Mr. Speaker, and then there'll be an attendant rise in the value of the stock. And we'll see where it goes.

Or it could go another way, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what has been the experience with Facebook and the way that we see different IT [information technology] stocks having rid up and down through peaks and valleys in terms of the market, and the tech boom of the earlier part of the last decade and the way just initially the stock value for Facebook went to great heights and then crashed down.

How these demands play out, Mr. Speaker, it'll be very interesting to see. But I guess the problem of it is the 60 per cent stake that is being put on the chopping block by members opposite is expected to bring about \$120 million in revenue, one-time revenue, Mr. Speaker, to the people of Saskatchewan, and again cutting into the ability of the corporation to provide what has been an increasingly better, an improving public service for the people of Saskatchewan up to and to the point where ISC is now quite well ranked, not just in terms of the corporate scorecard, Mr. Speaker, but in terms of the health of the corporation in terms of the way that it's able to play a role out there in the broader community and the way that it is able to return dividends to the people of Saskatchewan, again defraying either increased taxes on the one hand, Mr. Speaker, or helping to support the provision of public services on the other.

[15:45]

So how this plays out, Mr. Speaker, in a technical sense and how the value of that asset is recouped for the people of Saskatchewan, you know we've seen a few different movies on this theme from members opposite over the history of this province and we'll be watching very closely to see how that plays out.

But what it comes back to, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the parallels to other sort of circumstance in the not too distant history of this province is that this was something that was forsworn by members opposite, not just in the 2007 election, but again was absent from the 2011 election. And now you get a number of tricks being played or, you know, sort of caveats. Or you know, if you'd be unkind to them in the legal profession, Mr. Speaker, some people would say, well it sort of sounds like a lawyer's trick where, you know, because you didn't specifically outlaw or rule out a particular action . . . Of course we're getting interest from the legal profession members in the House here, Mr. Speaker. But I think they know of what I speak. I think they know of what I speak in terms of people that are overly legalistic and say, well you know you should have read the fine print, or well there was an asterisk that said, you

know, up to, including, but not this.

I guess, Mr. Speaker, there have been some fairly categorical statements made by members opposite when it comes to this file in terms of the protection of the Crown corporations, you know. And no amount of manoeuvring or hopping from one foot to the other or trying to dodge what has been a very clear statement on the part of the government, you know, if you'd have that kind of lawyering of the situation at election time, Mr. Speaker, I think people would have been very interested in that. I think people would have said, okay, well how does a partial privatization of Information Services Corporation work? And what does that say about your managerial acumen and the kind of care that you're going to take of the finances of the province? And how in turn does that square with the fact that historically you're coming from a party that has been, has done some pretty dangerous things with the finances of the province and some pretty reckless things in terms of taking public assets and turning them over into private hands, and taking that benefit for the many and putting it in the hands of the few, Mr. Speaker?

And I think people would have been real interested in the conversation about that at election time because of course that's been contentious. And again the trajectory that you've seen members opposite on since the 2003 election, which as we'll all recall, Mr. Speaker, the balloons were up in the arena at Rosetown ready to come down, and the win in that election was money in the bank for members opposite. They thought, you know, it was all over and done.

But the leader of the opposition at the time, Elwin Hermanson, had I think the . . . He was straightforward enough with the people of Saskatchewan to say, yes, this is not just a historical thing. Or you know, you can look at the remarks from the member from Melfort at the time or the member from Kindersley or the member from Wood River or, you know, pick your Sask Party member at the time that was on record as saying, this should be sold or that should be sold or this should be sold. You know, the leader at the time was forthright enough to say, of course we'd be a fool not to sell the Crown corporations if you made the right offer.

And, Mr. Speaker, again if that is the way it lined up with their history — and again there's a pretty clear historical record when it comes to the way that members opposite and that party opposite have approached the Crowns and the kind of reckless and dangerous privatizations that have gone on in the history of this province — if they'd said something that lined up with that record, Mr. Speaker, I think people would've been very interested in that. And certainly in 2003 folks were very interested in what the then leader of the opposition, Elwin Hermanson, had to say about entertaining options around privatization.

And I'll hand it to the Premier, Mr. Speaker. He's a smart guy. He recognized that the privatization of the Crown corporations was not something that people were interested in. And so you know, you get into things like the promise of Saskatchewan in 2004 and the different sort of pronouncements by the new Leader of the Sask Party at the time, the member from Swift Current, the now Premier of the province. We got to see a lot of, you know, trust us. And, you know, we're not interested in that. We've been selling, but the people of Saskatchewan ain't

buying, so we're going to forgo all that, Mr. Speaker. And you get into some fairly categorical statements about what happens with the Crown corporations in this province.

And I guess one of the things that's interesting about that, Mr. Speaker, is that, you know, if it was just a listening to the broader sort of public sentiment and realizing that for the mainstream, the Saskatchewan electorate, that this business, this ideological fixation on trying to sell off various of our Crown corporations and to put into the hands of the few these assets that generate benefit for the many, if that was all there was to it, Mr. Speaker, then, you know, if that had answered the question, then on we would go. We wouldn't be here debating this particular piece of legislation. But that Premier's got a base in that party that used to be fond of saying things like, you know, he could sell off SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority] before breakfast, Mr. Speaker. And that's what happens when you're a big, tough right wing government.

And you know, again I'll give the Premier credit in this regard, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has counselled moderation and incremental change to his members and said, you know, we can't go at these things straight on. And so that's where you get into these gymnastics, Mr. Speaker, these sort of contortions where to square themselves with what the record is around, you're not going to sell off public corporations. You see this business coming forward with all new liquor stores for SLGA will be developed by the private sector. And again, you know, I cast my mind back to the different Sask Party supporters that said, you know, right wing governments should be able to privatize SLGA before breakfast.

And, you know, so how do you square that kind of sentiment out of your base, Mr. Speaker? Well you counsel moderation and you counsel incremental change. And so that's where you see something like, you know, all the new liquor stores are going to go to the private sector. And you see that in no small way in this particular operation, Mr. Speaker. You see it in the way that they're bringing forward 60 per cent, which different of the commentators of *The StarPhoenix* editorial board said in terms of the public policy initiative, "It was the worst of both worlds."

And why is it the worst of both worlds? Well because, Mr. Speaker, if you're going to continue on with the corporation gaining revenue and providing a valuable service for the people of Saskatchewan and having a head office located here in Saskatchewan and having all these things for certain — and again, the different undertakings that have been made in the press release that have failed to find expression in the legislation, Mr. Speaker — if you're going to get around all those things, you wouldn't be selling off. Why would you be selling off Information Services Corporation? How does that make sense?

And if you're going to gain that maximum value of the assets, you know, you'd have to, again the commentators say you'd have to sell off the entire asset. But to square the circle, Mr. Speaker, to make these seemingly competing objectives work in concert, Mr. Speaker, that's where you see these contortions, these gymnastic routines that are things like, you know, all new SLGA liquor stores will be developed by the private sector, and, you know, we're going to jam our fingers into the



operations of the corporation. And you see it in this business of selling off 60 per cent of the corporation, which again, Mr. Speaker, last year returned \$17 million to the people of Saskatchewan, which is in so many different ways a natural monopoly in this province.

And, you know, how does that make sense? Well the only way this makes sense, Mr. Speaker, is because that Premier is trying to serve two masters. He's trying to serve the ideological base of his party, and he's trying to also square his public record with what the ideological demands of that base are.

And I think there's also a third sort of objective into the situation, Mr. Speaker. How do they get into these sort of operations to begin with? Again there's a similarity to the mid-'80s, Mr. Speaker, where well, we need the money. We need the quick money, and you know, we'll punt the costs off to future generations. And you see that in different initiatives being brought forward by this government, Mr. Speaker. You see it in the piece of legislation around SaskTel where now we're going to be moving to bonds that have a 30-year limit, Mr. Speaker, the kind of practices that after the Gass Commission did its work in the early '90s and took the full measure of the different sort of disastrous practices that have been going on in this province around the management of the finances said, you know, you shouldn't be doing these things. It punts these problems off to future generations.

And again, Mr. Speaker, I often think of, you know, how in the early '90s, coming to terms with what had happened in the '80s and the way that you had to pay and pay and pay for decisions that had been taken in the '80s. And again, Mr. Speaker, it's this confluence of, you know, on the one hand sort of ideological drive, ideological desire on the part of members opposite, but it also has the added advantage of quick-term cash injection into the finances.

And, Mr. Speaker, on so many fronts with this piece of legislation we see writ large the kind of motivation behind actions on the part of members opposite. You see admittedly — you know, again the Premier's a gifted communicator and he is a canny political operator — and in this, I think you see the kind of contortions that the people of Saskatchewan get brought along for the ride with in terms of something that doesn't make sense, something that has been deemed to be the worst of both worlds.

But so why would they go ahead with doing it, Mr. Speaker? Again, it's that Premier taking an incremental approach and saying, you know, look we'll get to the right wing nirvana — to his conservative base — and here's a sign of good faith. We're going to chop off a portion of the Information Services Corporation for sale. And to the public who say, well what about all this, you know, we're not going to sell off the Crowns, undertakings that you've made; it gets said, well you know, this wasn't part of it. You know, you should've read the fine print. Or you know, I had my fingers crossed behind my back, or I don't know what, Mr. Premier.

But this is a target of opportunity for that government opposite, for the kind of contortions that they'll be subjecting the people of Saskatchewan to. And again, you know, contortions are fine at the circus, but when it comes to public policy, this is a pretty

significant piece of legislation when it comes to the life of that government and the kind of things that are driving their decision making.

And again, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the case that has been made around the finances and the way that, you know, one time sort of shots in the arm, be it from the federal government or from other sources, Mr. Speaker, the way that we saw the mid-term finances kept afloat for one more little, one more round, it reminds me of the old analogy of laying out the track one section in front of the train, Mr. Speaker. But one of the things we found out again in the history of this province is that approach to the finances, that approach to the good times, Mr. Speaker, can be pretty disastrous should there be a turn.

And the kind of opportunity and the kind of prosperity that the people of Saskatchewan entrust their government to manage, they expect, they expect tough decisions, Mr. Speaker, but they also expect being dealt with plainly and straightly. And in terms of what has happened around ISC and the approach of this government on Crown corporations, Mr. Speaker, is not surprising, but it is at odds with what the undertakings were in the 2007 election and the 2011 election, which again are supposed to be the sort of benchmark activities that we as politicians engage with citizens in terms of saying, here's our plan for the province. So, Mr. Speaker, this piece of legislation, it's really interesting and it's really significant I think in terms of where this government is at in terms of trying to come to terms with where the people of Saskatchewan want the province to go and where their right wing base demand that they see action and how they find sort of short-term cash, cash band-aids to get through the current circumstances, Mr. Speaker.

The problem is, once you make decisions like this, Mr. Speaker, it's not something that has an impact that lasts an electoral cycle. It's literally something . . . This kind of decision has an impact that goes for decades.

[16:00]

And again, Mr. Speaker, I think back to the different sort of approaches that were taken to the question of privatization in the 1980s in this province and the way that the hands were tied and the die was cast for generations to come in terms of decisions that were made in those years. This decision is not something to be, you know, to see the way it plays out over the next four years, Mr. Speaker. This is the kind of decision that will work its way through the process of this legislature, work its way through the life of this legislature for many years to come.

And again, Mr. Speaker, the problem is, it's almost a self-fulfilling prophecy when you sell off assets like this and you screw up the finances so badly that, you know, good luck, good luck trying to regain these opportunities. It's a ship that sails, Mr. Speaker, and never to come around again.

And you know, on the initial offering of these sales, Mr. Speaker, of the stock that will be associated with ISC, on the way that the press release doesn't line up to the actual legislation, Mr. Speaker, on the way that the community involvement of ISC continues to . . . Will it be impacting schools like Albert Community School where the Information

Services Corporation has been a valuable community partner with schools like Albert Community School, you know, as just one of a multitude of broader sort of public engagement on the part of Information Services Corp? Will the natural sort of monopoly activities that are anticipated in this legislation, how will they be handled by a shareholder intent on profit versus that public interest which is balanced off right now, Mr. Speaker, where there's a return to the public purse, but there's also that concern around providing what are in many ways monopolistic services at a fair rate to the people that rely upon this corporation?

How will it translate in terms of jobs, Mr. Speaker? How will it translate into being kept here in the province of Saskatchewan, headquarters that are being kept in the province? How will this translate into opportunities outside of the province in terms of again taking opportunity beyond our borders and providing additional revenue for what happens here in the province?

And again, Mr. Speaker, on a number of fronts, this is a very interesting piece of legislation and a very significant piece of legislation. And we, as the opposition, we're going to talk to the people of Saskatchewan about it. We're going to talk to the folks that should've had a say to begin with, that that government should have been straight with, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the proposals they were taking forward at election time, not just in 2011, Mr. Speaker, but 2007, and again, you know, the litany of undertakings made by the current Premier of the province in terms of who should be trusted when it comes to the conduct and the stewardship of these public assets.

The people of Saskatchewan I think are pretty fair-minded and they're pretty broad-minded. And I think they don't like it when people are playing games, semantic games with what the intentions of the government are really all about.

And I also think, Mr. Speaker, that people in Saskatchewan, they've got a memory that's longer than just what happened last week or last year. I think they're pretty active participants in the life of this province. And when they see something like this come along that again is brought forward out of the history of a particular political party, I think that again I don't know that we'll be ringing the bells as per the proposed sale of SaskEnergy, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know that this will constitute a boulder in the backpack of that government as they climb the hill, but I do think it's significant.

And I do think that the people will pay attention and say, you're doing something now that is very much at odds with what you said when you were on my doorstep, when you were at my kitchen table, or when you were on my television screen, Mr. Speaker. So I know that there's a lot more consultation and discussion that we hope to have on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker.

I know that our critic, the member from Nutana, as the critic for Information Services Corporation and as an individual that has a very, very finely detailed understanding of the workings of this corporation and the way that it has been of benefit to the people of Saskatchewan and the different sort of concerns that are out there through third parties and through the broader society, Mr. Speaker, I know that she's going to be continuing to do some good work on this front. And I know that there are

others who have long been observers of the political evolution of this province and the debates and the discussions that have been had on a topic like privatization that look at this, Mr. Speaker, and say, well here we go again. And how much further does it spread out in terms of the activity of the government?

We know that privatization is the seized upon policy tool in a number of other circumstances, Mr. Speaker, but again in terms of making a bigger move on the Crowns and a bigger move on what happens with taking public assets and turning them over to private hands. And oftentimes it is a bargain, Mr. Speaker, not even handling the management of those assets with the management of the sale of those assets in a proper way. We've seen those things in the history of this province and sadly, Mr. Speaker, we see a lot of it here again today.

So again, you know, we know that the Premier and that party opposite, they've got a base that they're looking to. We know that they've got members that are long on the record in terms of their hostility towards any kind of public enterprise, but we've always wondered how that squared with their other undertakings of late, Mr. Speaker. Well we see here how that works today in terms of, I think, what is being counselled as incremental privatization of the Crowns.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that other members will want to participate in this debate. I know that the people of Saskatchewan will want to have a bigger opportunity to register their opinion on something that they weren't talked to at election time about, and something that again comes in a pretty interesting historical way in the debates of this legislature, Mr. Speaker. So with that, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 69.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The Opposition House Leader has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 69, *The Information Services Corporation Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 79

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 79 — *The Representation Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to enter the debate on Bill No. 79, *An Act respecting Representation in the Legislative Assembly*.

This bill basically takes the work of the Constituency Boundaries Commission and puts it into legislation. And the government has to do this by law because of *The Constituency Boundaries Act*, which is interesting. This bill directly has some . . . well it's connected to *The Constituency Boundaries Act*, Bill No. 36, which was passed this last spring. It lays out . . . right now we currently have 58 MLAs who sit in this legislature, and

what Bill No. 79 does is put into law now, this government has chosen to add three more MLAs. And I know that the opposition is well on record for opposing the addition of three more MLAs for many reasons, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So Bill 79 basically entrenches those three more seats along with any other name changes to other constituencies that have happened into law.

So with the bill that was passed in the spring, we saw the addition of three more MLAs — which is something that I know that campaigning last year, knocking on doors, I didn't hear a single person who I spoke with who had told me that they thought one of their priorities was adding any more MLAs. That was not something that people were asking for. And interestingly enough it was about this time last year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that we heard about the government's intention to increase the number of seats in this legislature and add three more politicians . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — Merry Christmas.

**Ms. Chartier:** — Yes. As my colleague would say, Merry Christmas. But I don't think it was in fact a very merry Christmas present.

So we heard about it about this time last year. So what happened prior to that? Well we had an election, and adding three more MLAs was not part of this government's election plan, not in the platform. I've flipped through the platform many times. I haven't seen the addition of three more MLAs at all in that particular platform, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So they had ample time at that point to let us know that this was part of their plan and let people know in Saskatchewan that this was part of their plan.

The next opportunity they had actually was their Throne Speech, and I can't remember the date, but it would have been in late October, early November. And was the addition of three more MLAs in the Throne Speech? No it was not, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So it did again come as a surprise in early December that the government was going to choose to . . . wanted to add three more MLAs.

I just want to give you some context here in terms of representation and numbers here in Saskatchewan. So I just want to let you know how we are currently represented before the addition of these three more MLAs. So as it stands now already our constituent to MLA ratio is extremely low compared to many other provinces. So in Saskatchewan with a population of just over 1 million people and 58 MLAs, MLAs would represent 18,240 individuals.

So let's go next to Manitoba that has a greater population at 1,250,600 and one fewer constituencies at 57, and they represent about 21,940 people per MLA, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Alberta, the MLA to constituent ratio continues to expand here. In Alberta, a population of 3,779,400, they have 87 constituencies and they represent on average 43,441 individuals. Let's move to British Columbia with 4,573,300 people, 85 constituencies, 85 MLAs, and they represent one MLA per 53,804 constituents. Quebec, 7,979,700, 125 seats, they represent 63,838 constituents. Ontario — this one is particularly interesting — 13,373,000 is the number of the

population, 107 seats and 124,981 citizens to elected members there. So I think even prior to these changes, we were doing quite well in terms of ample representation, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And again I know that not once, not once in this entire year that we've been talking about this have I had a single person come up to me and tell me that the addition of more politicians is a good thing. People have other priorities, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know that. And this is, in fact the members on the other side of the House seem to get quite riled up when we say it's going to be at a cost of millions of dollars to the taxpayer, but that in fact is what it will cost over the course of a term and into perpetuity. And here they go, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I knew that that would get them a little fired up, but that is the reality — that adding more politicians costs the people of Saskatchewan a great deal of money.

And I know people in Saskatchewan have very different priorities. As the culture critic, I know the film employment tax credit is a priority of many people here in Saskatchewan, not . . . The credit that this government chose to cut arbitrarily in the spring in the budget, that has huge ramifications on people, Mr. Deputy Speaker. People have had to pack their bags and go earn a living elsewhere. And it's not the chamber of commerce, which wouldn't be a usual . . . You wouldn't automatically think that the chamber of commerce would be speaking in favour of a film tax credit, but they did the numbers, and they came out firmly on side that the return on investments for the film employment tax credit and to have a film industry here in Saskatchewan was well worth the cost.

So that's one example of priorities. And again, it's not just people who work in the film industry who supported the film employment tax credit. It was business people. It was people who enjoy having the Saskatchewan story told, not just here in this province but around the world, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Lower costs, for another priority, is making sure that prescriptions are affordable. This government has increased the costs to seniors and youth for prescription drugs, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know I represent a constituency where the extra cost per prescription actually has a very real impact on many, many people. I know the one thing that this government has chosen not to touch is creating social housing. They've chosen an approach that I think still hasn't quite met the mark, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[16:15]

So in terms of the people in Saskatoon Riversdale, I know that adding three more politicians was not a priority and continues not to be a priority. They'd rather have millions of dollars funnelled into programs and services that better support citizens in leading their best possible lives, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Another part of this legislation: so Bill No. 79, as I said, entrenches in *The Constituency Boundaries Act* basically or it has to . . . We passed a resolution here. We is actually generous; the opposition did not support the resolution.

We had actually, last spring we had two opportunities. We brought forward a reasoned amendment suggesting trying to

work with the government and help them understand that they were making a huge mistake, that this wasn't speaking to the population or the needs and wants and desires of Saskatchewan people. Adding three more politicians was not speaking to what people really had as priorities.

So the opposition on two occasions in the spring tried to work with the government and provide some opportunities to not add three more MLAs. But because there are nine of us on this side of the House and a considerable number more on the opposite side of the House, our amendments fell on deaf ears, although not on deaf ears of the people of Saskatchewan. I know, talking to many people, they were very pleased that we were talking about an issue that was important to them, that they in principle agree with, that adding three more politicians was not something that they wanted to see happen.

So this resolution, so this resolution that was passed in the spring, the resolution in the spring has to then come to . . . Because of *The Constituency Boundaries Act*, it now needs to be entrenched in law. So that's why we're talking about Bill No. 79, an Act respecting representation in the legislature.

One of the arguments made, I know, following the announcement last December was that constituencies were too big or it was too difficult. But the irony is . . . And the Premier actually suggested, when they decided to add three more MLAs, he said perhaps there would be two urban and one rural. But obviously there is a commission that is struck that is responsible for determining where those constituencies are and how they play out.

So the interesting thing is there were many members on the opposite side of the House who talked about constituency size. But the interesting thing, we have two northern constituencies that are entrenched in legislation that I had colleagues in. Our colleagues on this side of the House who represent the biggest constituencies in the province were not in favour of this either. They know that it's a very difficult thing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to represent a large geographic area. Definitely, for sure. And there's challenges to being a rural MLA, and there are challenges to being an urban MLA. There's pros and cons in both experiences. But the wonderful thing about technology is it's much easier to stay in touch than it ever was. We have allowances to be able to create offices and have our offices not just in one location, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So there are many ways of trying to better support our constituents in some of these large geographic areas.

But another part that we had disagreed with was excluding those under 18 out of the count. I have a daughter who's going to be 15 soon. So in the creation, in the redrawing of Saskatoon Riversdale, she wasn't included in that count despite the fact she will be voting in the next election, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think an interesting person who weighted in on this debate actually was the Children's Advocate, who talks that this is about rights. This is an issue of human rights, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He says, "To eliminate those under 18 of the eligibility runs contrary to everyone's right to equal representation. Every citizen has the right to effective representation."

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, he also outlined, the Children's Advocate also said that he believed there was no valid reason to

exclude young people, and that exclusion based on age is not acceptable whether it's because you're young or because you're on the other end of the spectrum. Exclusion at any time based on age is not acceptable, and that equals discrimination based on age. So I know that there were many strong voices weighing in against the Bill No. 36 to add three more MLAs.

I think the one thing that the Premier had said in some of his speeches, he had said elections are about voters. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I couldn't disagree more with that statement. Elections are about citizens. Just because you don't vote doesn't mean that the people who are elected are not important and valid. Elections are not about voters. Elections are about citizens. If elections were about voters, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a woman less than 100 years ago, elections were not about me then. Women did not have the opportunity to vote in Saskatchewan less than 100 years ago. First Nations men and women, not until 1960 were they eligible to vote and not lose their status. So elections, Mr. Deputy Speaker — I couldn't disagree more with the Premier — are not about voters. They are about citizens, and counting those under the age of 18 out is absolutely not acceptable.

I think it also really disadvantages some of the communities, First Nations communities, where you have some of the population growth here in Saskatchewan, where you have a large number of young people in some of these, in First Nations communities. So this excluding those under 18 out of the count really has an impact on skewing those constituencies, I believe, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I think there are many, many difficulties with adding three more MLAs. And this Bill No. 79 to which we're speaking today entrenches those three more MLAs and the names of all the other constituencies into law here. But we still continue to think that this was a huge mistake and unfair to many citizens, and just makes absolutely no sense in a time where this government has record revenues in this province but seems to be making some decisions like they don't have record revenues. We wonder, with the debt going up by \$1 billion this year, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that perhaps this government is out of money. So choosing to add three more MLAs, again governing is about priorities, and the priority should not be to add three more MLAs, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So in terms of Bill No. 79, I know that I have other colleagues who will be weighing into the debate and discussion on Bill 79. And again I know we have very strong feelings on this side of the House, which I think are reflective of many people here in Saskatchewan.

Oh, interestingly enough, actually I have a letter here from the Taxpayers Federation which again . . . The Canadian Taxpayers Federation, an editorial, I'd just like to read a small portion of this. It says, "During the recent provincial election . . ." So obviously I'm just going to back up and preface this. So this was written a little closer to this time last year rather than right now. So:

During the recent provincial election do you remember Premier Brad Wall saying anything about a dreadful shortage of provincial politicians?

Do you remember him saying anything during televised leader debates, radio interviews or in newspaper stories about his plan to add three more seats to the provincial legislature?

We don't. In fact we checked his party's provincial platform and there was no mention about adding more politicians.

Then why is this government sliding in legislation during the busy Christmas season that would add three seats to the Saskatchewan Legislature? Good question [says the taxpayer federation].

So again, it's not just the opposition who has some concerns with adding three more MLAs. I believe it's a large majority of people here in Saskatchewan. But the Taxpayers Federation does not think it is a great plan either. Again, when you think about priorities of governments, you think about how best to spend citizens' very hard-earned money, the taxpayers. And we're all taxpayers, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But I would argue that this isn't the best choice, the best priority. I think that we could have spent that money more wisely, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I think citizens in Saskatchewan would agree with that.

So as I said, when I got sidetracked yet again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that I know that my colleagues also have much to say about this bill. And I would like to move to adjourn debate, as much as my colleagues would like . . . [inaudible].

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 79, *The Representation Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 72

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 72** — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To join in on the Bill 72, *An Act to amend The Traffic Safety Act and to make a consequential amendment to The Summary Offences Procedure Act, 1990*, to join in on, I guess, debating the bill and some of the concerns, and I guess the concern that has been raised about safety and safety of our highway workers and flag people. And you know, our condolences go out to the family and the loved ones of the individual that was, last summer was killed in a traffic accident. And, you know, again this is good legislation coming forward to address the situation, to protect not only highway workers but motorists to make sure they're protected.

So we've seen in this Act there's provisions to come up with some measures to assist and try to make I guess the area, work

zones, the orange zones, safer for individuals. But not just about the workers; it's about, you know, motorists. It's about anyone that's out there on the roads to make sure when you talk about safety. So of course the government's taken a response, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to that and we agree with the government to go ahead and move forward on this. And we will support that and we do support that. And it's the right thing to do, and if we can help out in any way, you know, from our government, a government to help out the people, it's good.

And we have to sometimes come together as a Legislative Assembly and work together to pass some of this. But I guess, you know, they're talking about different areas in this bill. That was one area of it. It covers off safety and safety is important. Losing one life is one life too many. It impacts a family. It impacts a lot of people, whether it's the workers, whether it's family. So when you talk about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's one area that we're doing.

Where we're looking at it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from another side and another point, there are other provisions in here that they're going to amend this legislation. And they're going to put in some ways to deal with the licence plates and the way one would operate, and the way SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] deals with our licence plates and whether it's the stickers and the police enforcement, and the way they can, I guess, take possession of certain vehicles. So it's interesting to see how this bill goes on, and we would have a chance to talk about that. There's a lot of areas to go in and talk about.

But you know, when you talk about safety, and I know my colleagues have raised this about the safety area of it, and not only in the orange zone but, you know, the amount of deaths that we have had in our province with impaired driving. And if you look at that and using those comparisons — you know, the amount — I think it's 147 right now currently, and that's not to the end of the year yet. We'll see what happens.

And I think I want to talk a little bit about that and safety. And safety is important because they're talking about the safety. And any time you lose, you know, the loss of a loved one for any family to have to go through is, I guess the notice being notified of that, your heart goes out in prayers to the families that have to deal with that.

But having said that, I think we have to — and we have — commended the government for bringing in this piece of legislation. And I think it's going to help. But there is also, you know, so many people suffering with the impaired driving and the death that that's caused. And I think we have to look at the deaths that have been caused by impaired driving, and I think the government's going to have to look at this closely.

And I'm going to talk a little bit about that, just to show the comparisons. And I'm glad that the government's bringing some legislation forward for when you have a loss of life. But when I look at the numbers and hearing my colleagues talk about the numbers, it kind of just, you know, gives you a little more attention to the situations. And it's concerning to see the amount of family members, loved ones, kids, and people that lose their life to an impaired driver or to an accident. And when you find out that it was a cause of someone's impaired driving,

and we look at . . . And I know we're going to get into it, and I'm going to have an opportunity to talk more about this in more detail when we talk about regulations that are being changed, proposed legislation that's being amended and regulations that will be changed.

But I want to go back and refer . . . When we see a bill like Bill 72, what it's trying to do. It's about safety. It's about taking measures to prevent the loss of life. And we commend that. But when we see 147 people dying in our province because of impaired driving, then we say the government has to do more and needs to do more. And we're hoping that the government will be coming forward with ways of dealing with this because you can't just open up regulations and allow access to more alcohol and not realize that you're going to have more.

[16:30]

And you know, some minister has made comments about well there's more people. Well that's not an answer. You know, that's not an answer. When you have 147 fatalities in car accidents because of impaired driving to say well because of our population, there's just a . . . You know, that is just the wrong way to look at it. And I think for some people, it would be a little bit upsetting to them to hear that.

Now we have to do more, and I think the government has to do more to address the numbers. And the numbers are way too high. I mean one, you know, person's death in an accident caused by impaired driving is probably one too many. We understand that, and I think people will agree with that. But to have 147, I think the government has to do more and has to start taking some action on this.

And again any time governments want to increase, I guess, its fines or the conditions to address this, definitely we have to go through legislation. We have to go through a process. And we'll bring that information back here, and we have to debate it to make sure that we're doing the right things and making sure we're taking care of all our Saskatchewan citizens and people that are visiting this beautiful province because it's not just Saskatchewan residents that probably lose their lives here. We don't know exactly. Were some of them, you know, visiting? Had they moved away? Did they come back to our province to see their family, or were they here a tourist? You know, that's many people impacted in different ways.

So when we see that and, you know, about safety, and it's about preparing and making sure that we have the right, I guess, tools for our enforcement officers to make sure that they have the opportunity to address. And you know, you talk about it, and I know my colleague mentioned it when she was referring to talking about, you know, the bill and using examples and showing that there's more work that needs to be done. Clearly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that needs to happen.

You know, the RID [report impaired drivers] program, you know, report impaired driving, again I commend. This is a good thing and that's . . . You know, mothers against driving, you know. You have all the different groups that are . . . MADD [Mothers Against Drunk Driving], you know. You have a lot of groups that are out there doing what they can do, and the public, the awareness, SGI being . . . And the awareness of reporting,

you know, drinking and driving and stuff like that. And if you see something happen . . . And that's a good, that's a good way to do it. And you know, you talk about some of the measures I guess that we need to come forward with and government needs to do. But the challenges that are out there . . . And I mean, I don't want to get too much into the regulations because we will have that opportunity. But I just feel I think when it comes to safety, government has to be doing more and needs to do more to deal and to curb the 147 deaths. That's way too many.

And the frustration, you know, that people are saying and we have to do more. And you know, there's a way that government can do more by introducing legislation and provisions. And I'm not sure exactly what the government plan is, but it's about educating. Education's important, and you know, I'm going to have an opportunity later to talk more about this when we get into one of the other legislations, a piece of legislation that's coming forward for debate.

But I guess the frustration . . . And you talk about that from people saying educating people about the alcohol and the effects, and people going in for one or two drinks, you know. Where are we looking at? And is it three drinks? And does somebody realize, you know, who's responsible for that? Are we going to start saying, holding, you know, and legislation . . . And is it more going to be on the facility or the establishment that's allowing those individuals to drink and then they leave whether it's to home? There's different ways to look at it when a person's not aware of how much they drank. And we know that some people leave places and they're just, they're wasted. And it wasn't just social drinking. They might have started out having a few drinks, harmless. And that's fine. Nobody's opposed. But to see some of the damage and destruction that's done after that person gets in their vehicle and leaves, you know, a house party or they leave an establishment where there, yes, there's a bouncers in front. And it's about safety.

And it goes back to 72 when you talk about safety. We're trying to have some provisions to protect our workers, highway workers, so we come up with legislation to protect that but also using the comparison on other issues that are facing motorists and people that travel on our highways. Those are the areas. So I'm just trying to show that the relationship to government making a response to, you know, clearly an incident that needed to be addressed. And I commend the government for addressing that.

But I don't commend the government for not addressing 147 fatalities because of drinking and driving. And more needs to be done. I think people of our province deserve that and want that. Those families, you know, need to have government come forward to say, we're willing, and we're prepared to take some action, and we need to do more to protect all Saskatchewan residents when it comes into dealing with this type of a situation.

But I know they're going to the orange zone, and I know individuals are supposed to slow down to 60. And they refer to whether it's gates, whether they narrow the pathways. When individuals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, go into an area that's the orange zone, where we have highway worker construction going on, to slow them down, they're recommending there are certain ways that they can address that situation by slowing

down traffic.

And then they refer to in here as photo radar which I think is a good thing. It's another provision that could protect. And they talk about ensuring that the motorist is responsible to make sure that their plates at all times can be visible for photo radar, or if need be, they're in a work zone, that's going to give some protection to the workers. And I mean, some people for whatever reason maybe aren't aware of it, don't see it. I'm not sure what's causing them not to notice the signs.

When you go into a highway work area, we'll say, with highway workers, the flag people, the signs, there's so much . . . the flashing lights. There is so much notice given to individuals that you're coming upon a I guess a work site. There's going to be flag personnel there. The warnings are there, and I don't know why some people miss it. And you'll see some people and, you know, that fly by. And you wonder . . . Even I have done that. I've seen some people, you know, drive by me, and I'm thinking, wow, the speed they're going when you're supposed to be slowing down. And those, those are some of the issues I think they're going to address, and I think it's time that, you know, it be addressed.

We've been hearing that for years I think from workers saying, there's more protection needs to be put, whether you're passing our highway vehicles that are with flashing lights and are saying . . . whether they're painting. There's a lot of different provisions. Whether it's the paving companies that are in and whether they work for highways and they're doing repairs on highways, they're highway workers, or it's construction companies doing that. We have to make sure that they're protected while they're on our highways. And we have to make sure that the education and awareness to people . . . And maybe that's where it needs to happen. And you know, maybe the government's going to come out with more.

And I know Highways itself does a lot of awareness, and you see on the commercials on TV. And they do do a lot of awareness, and I commend what they're trying to do to reach out and make people more aware of the orange zone, making people more aware of slowing down. And when you see, you know, people being injured and hurt because of . . . They're doing, just doing their job. You know, they went to work to try to take care of a road, to make sure that our roads are, you know, kept in a good maintenance. And you know, whether it's resurfacing, whatever they're doing on that highway, whether it's signs they're putting up, whatever area they are, that we're doing all we can as a government, and as I guess the department, to make sure workers go to work and are safe and can return to their home being safe.

We have to do all we can do, and I think that's clearly what we've been asked to do. And I think, you know, again, I'll go, this is a good idea, and I think it's an opportunity to address an area that needed to be addressed in light of the loss of a life. And it brought some attention, and I'm glad that it brought the attention. But also, like I said, there's other areas where we have to, you know, loss of life we see, and we need to do more. And the government needs to do more. And hopefully over the next while government will introduce some legislation to protect and educate people about the effects of alcohol, especially impaired driving, and seeing the cause of death that

has happened there.

And I think some education and awareness is warranted by the government in light of allowing access to alcohol the way the government is. And some people will have access to . . . And I see some of the regulations being introduced, and I don't want to get into that so much. But I want to make comment of a few areas because if somebody is out and they're going to a spa now, apparently they're going to be allowed to have drinks while they're at a spa, whether they're getting, you know, a pedicure, a manicure, whatever it is, the way I read it. If you look at certain regulations that the government's going to . . .

So a person could have a few drinks. Now how would that impact that person if all of a sudden they go out and they get in an accident. And all of a sudden it's . . . They're impaired because of the amount of alcohol they've had. Who will be liable for that? Because the person went in thinking they could have that. So you know, and I know they talk about social drinking, and you have to watch it. So I'm a little concerned about where we're going with some of the changes. And I'm going to get a chance to talk about that, and I will get a chance. And I think there's some numbers that we need to talk about, but I know that there's people concerned about some of the changes.

But I just refer to it because when we're talking about the loss of a life, and if that's in the orange zone or if that's just highway workers, it's not stopping somebody who's impaired driving, going out and driving, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And even though we have all the warnings — we have the signs going up, we have the gates to make vehicles narrow, be aware, and you bring all the awareness with the signs — but if it's an impaired driver and that person's just not aware of that and they're under the influence of alcohol, what's going to stop them from slowing down or even paying attention? And they go through and cause an accident, and we end up having a loss of life again.

Now that person might have been out, thought they just were a social drinker and had a few drinks, and went out. So if it's found out in that situation, you know, I think those are things the government's going to have to look at. You're giving an area where you're allowing certain people to consume alcohol, you know. Whether it's the right thing at the end of the day, I don't know if it is. But if it impacts and it creates an accident or a loss of life or injury to someone, then I don't know that these so-called changes are going to be warranted or seen by the public as a good thing. So there's a lot of concern that way when it comes to that type of situation.

So when I go back into this, you know, and I want to be clear, Mr. Deputy Speaker, people are concerned. And again I go back to the loss of life and, you know, any family that has to deal with that and a tragedy that has happened and has impacted many Saskatchewan families, and with the loss of a life of someone going to work figuring they were protected and unfortunately, you know, we lose a worker or we lose a construction worker or a highway worker, somebody who's there, asked to do an excellent job and was doing a good job. We have to make sure they're protected so that hopefully at the end of the day they put in their good work. They do a job. They go home and they take care of their family to be reunited with

their loved ones. Everybody wants that and we hope that . . . And when these situations arise, we know we have to do more.

And again we are proposing some changes, whether it's the photo radar, whether it's the gates narrowing the access to a work zone. There are things whether it's the flagman, whether it's the awareness, and I guess the fines. You look at the fines and trying to impact it more so those individuals that decide that they're going to not, for whatever reason, didn't notice it, maybe the impact of . . . You know, the fine is what needs to happen. And maybe more needs to be done and maybe harsher penalties to those individuals need to come out, and maybe if this doesn't go far enough and maybe we have to do more, but I think it's a good start and it's trying to deal with a situation.

And again, I commend the government for moving forward on this. This is a good start and let's see where we go and if, you know, hopefully it saves lives. And it brings people, educates people, individuals who are driving, and they won't be driving through the orange zones and the work areas, that they'll remember and there's such an impact that they will, you know, pay attention and slow down. And we know that people get busy on the roads and technology sometimes. We know we passed legislation to protect people from hands free device that people were using and it was taking their attention, and sometimes I think that's caused a lot of problems.

And again, legislation that protects individuals when drivers are paying too much attention to their cellphones and, you know, certain other device that now we have whether it's . . . There's many different device that people are using now that distract them when they're driving and to say that, you know, it's clear that our police officers, our enforcement officers can ticket people who are not following the law. And I think that's a good law. It adds something.

[16:45]

So it's all about safety, and anytime we see safety coming in to bring people's attention and educates people, I commend what we're doing and the government and, you know, everyone that's coming together to bring awareness about the orange zone and about making sure people are safe. But at this time, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I wanted to make a few comments about this and join my colleagues, and I know more of my colleagues have comments they want to say about some of the other bills. At this time I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 72.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 72, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 73

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 73** — *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter debate here this afternoon as it relates to Bill No. 73, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2012*. I've read through the minister's comments as it relates to this bill that's been brought forward and I've also analyzed some of what's been put forward here.

What I would say is that I'll get to the point of the bill and the suggested intended consequences that the minister has put forward. But I will say that it's going to be really important for us to establish that the consultation that the minister has suggested has occurred in this bill. It's going to be important for us to make sure we're doing our follow-up, our checks on that work, to ensure that that's the case.

Far too often when this government has derived legislation and brought legislation to this Assembly, they've dismissed the consultation process that serves building good policy, Mr. Speaker, building good legislation. And on a piece of legislation like this, it's awfully critical that the stakeholders, those that are impacted, are fully engaged in the development of this bill and that the consequences — intended and unintended — are fully considered by the minister. I don't have a level of confidence, Mr. Speaker, that that's occurred in this case. It's been far too often when this government rushes forward legislation with its own agenda and has dismissed that important consultation process for whom is impacted by legislation, in this case our municipalities all across this province, urban and rural.

So we're going to be following up with SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and with SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and with administrators, rural and urban, to make sure that this bill reflects their consultation process that's been suggested by the . . . alleged by the government opposite, and making sure that there's not opportunities to strengthen legislation here at this point in time by way of amendments or making sure that there's not aspects of this legislation that aren't in the best interests as well of municipalities.

To look at municipalities in a broader context and the challenges and pressures that they're facing, I would argue that this is certainly very lacking by way of stepping up to the real challenges and pressures that they're facing in all across this province, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's our rural municipalities or our urban municipalities, there's important needs that government needs to be able to support.

I think of so many of our small towns, our cities all across this province and the pressures they're facing by way of making sure that they're able to deliver . . . have access to water, be able to deliver drinking water, but also able to deal with waste water within this province. And I know there's such a pressure for many, and whether it's the city of Regina who's dealing with putting forward a plan as it relates to waste water, or whether it's communities all across this province.

So many of these small towns, this is really the issue that they're dealing with. In so many cases we have lagoons and systems that are at capacity or that are at their lifespan, Mr.



Speaker, and they're looking for real solutions that will allow them to chart a course into the future that doesn't come at a significant cost for their residents. And in many ways that's the big connect that we need to make is that a lot of the decisions and debt that municipalities are being forced to take on right now is certainly coming as at a direct consequence to ratepayers, families, and businesses all across this province who are going to carry that burden, carry that cost.

And if we look at it in many ways and we look at the growth agenda of this current government, this government needs to do a better job of supporting those who are impacted with that growth agenda and making sure that we're building healthier, stronger communities for tomorrow and for years to come.

And it's not good enough, Mr. Speaker, to boast about growth as this government does, but then fail to support that growth on the ground in the communities where the impacts are being felt. And it's being felt by certainly families and homeowners. But it's also being felt by those communities, those municipalities all across this province who are working hard to expand their infrastructure to meet the needs of growing communities by way of, as I've said, some of the water and waste water issues, but also the road infrastructure and public infrastructure that's at strain, in strain and needs to be renewed, Mr. Speaker, and also the development of lots, servicing of lots that certainly is an important responsibility of municipalities.

What we see is a government that boasts about growth, but then takes a very narrow view as to what role they play in supporting that growth and ensuring that growth improves the lives of communities and improves the lives of people. And I know when I look at the balance sheet of our province in a broader sense, we have to understand what's going on in our municipalities all across this province, small and large, and that is significant debt growth within those municipalities. And of course there's only one source of revenues to pay for that debt, and that's back to property taxes.

And it's fair to say that, while our municipalities are very constrained with the revenue sources they have to deal with, it's also fair to say that they have inordinate pressures and challenges, costs that they're needing to deal with in addressing some of the challenges and opportunities we're facing as a province. We have a government that's failing to enable municipalities to address that in a meaningful way. And it is certainly fair to say that while the revenues of municipalities are constrained, the revenues of the province certainly are much broader, and certainly the province has many other fiscal tools at their disposal and record revenues to deal with these challenges and these pressures.

Simply abdicating any responsible role in working with municipalities isn't the right approach of this government. What we need to see is a government that's willing to work with municipalities, to listen to municipalities, and to put forward thoughtful, meaningful solutions to address the challenges of the day. And I know that's important whether you're in Cupar, Mr. Speaker, or whether you're in Carlyle or whether you're in Strasbourg or Southey — as I know the middle desk here would care about — or all across this province in our larger centres.

And I know Regina as an example . . . And I watch the debt

levels and the borrowing of the city of Regina as but one example. And it's exploded over the past few years, the borrowing limits for the city of Regina. And I look at the demands they're facing by way of infrastructure, water, waste water, community and lot development, Mr. Speaker. And those pressures are inordinate and they're placed in a heavy burden onto the backs of property tax payers, homeowners, business owners all across our city, and then of course across the province as well, Mr. Speaker. And I know there's a role for government to work together to make sure that this infrastructure and these infrastructure challenges are met.

I am disturbed by what I see right now by way of protection or the lack thereof of our Qu'Appelle watershed as but one example that's directly related to municipal infrastructure. When I read the reports that analyze what's directly going back into the Qu'Appelle chain, Mr. Speaker, from our fine city and back into the natural environment, Mr. Speaker — that connects in fact right through your constituency, Mr. Speaker — through that Qu'Appelle chain right through the creek of course and up through Last Mountain, in through the valley lakes and on and beyond, up through Round Lake and Crooked Lake, and the kind of contaminants that have been studied and analyzed and found to be within that system are something that we should be acting in a way to, acting now to protect ourselves for the . . . protect that natural environment for the next generation, Mr. Speaker. This government seems uninterested in playing an active role in working with municipalities to address these challenges, but we know not doing so comes at a consequence to so many.

So when I look at the broader financial circumstance of the province, we have to take into view our municipal partners because it has such a direct impact both on the communities but also the property tax payers, the homeowners and businesses across the province. And really we see a very significant off-loading of debt onto municipalities, and it doesn't fool anyone, Mr. Speaker. All we have to do is go look at the respective books of our small communities and towns and cities all across this province, and we know that the debt in this province is growing in a very, very significant way and that certainly someone's going to have to pay for it. In this case it's going to be residents, homeowners, families, as I've stated.

Now this bill puts forward various changes that we'll be analyzing. We'll be seeking consultation and input with stakeholders, Mr. Speaker, with SUMA and SARM and administrators, both rural and urban. A few of these changes involve annexation and processes around annexation. We want to make sure that these are fair, both to urban and rural partners, that they are as effective as they can be. We know that this can be a big challenge for our municipal partners. We want to make sure that this represents the best interests of the public by way of the changes that have been put forward.

It also highlights the changes that were made unilaterally by that government without any consultation as it relates to the New West Trade Partnership, and we want to fully understand what the impacts are on municipalities and our local economies all across the province by way of procurement and potential costs for those jurisdictions that are now having their hands tied in how they operate by way of an agreement that was signed by this government without any consultation with Saskatchewan

people, and making sure we understand how this will impact the operations of our municipalities across this province but also impact them by way of cost.

And I know there has been a lot of concern by way of, now, the fact that the tendering process will go all across Western Canada, that there's a potential that this may simply drive up the bids that are coming in from municipalities, driving up the costs of our public goods but also sending our public dollars outside our province in many cases to other jurisdictions. And I believe there's many that would like to have a reasonable discussion about how do we use our public dollars, deliver effective efficient services and keep some of those local benefits, economic benefits back within our province and within our jurisdiction, making sure that they're driving investment in this province and collecting tax revenues as well. So that's a big area that I look forward to further consultation with our members all across this province.

I also recognize that there's some changes as it relates to some of the recommendations suggested by SARM and SUMA. We're going to go directly to the source, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that these do reflect their best interests and then do a broader analysis as to the impact on our province.

I know when I look a little further here, it talks about bringing about certain flexibility for borrowing. Mr. Speaker, this speaks to the fact that this government is an unwilling partner to be working with our municipalities across this province in making sure that they are properly resourced to address the infrastructure challenges that they're facing. And instead of simply bringing about broader flexibility so they can borrow more, property tax payers can pay more, Mr. Speaker, or homeowners who can least afford it are going to be asked to pay more. We look to a provincial government with a broader set of fiscal tools, a broader set of revenues to be working with our municipalities, to be addressing those challenges that are real, whether you're in Moose Jaw or whether you're in Prince Albert and you're looking at that bridge that's been piecemealed together by this government instead of stepping up to the plate and doing the proper work, rehabilitation that was required.

So there's many areas that we'll be looking at. But certainly we have concern with a government that's really shirking its responsibility onto the backs of the homeowner, back onto the backs of the property tax payer, Mr. Speaker, instead of a government playing the role that it should in developing healthier, stronger communities for tomorrow and, again, of course the impacts that are a direct result of the unilateral agreement signed by this government that now ties the hands in many ways of municipalities all across this province. These are the kinds of questions we're going to be bringing forward. We're going to be there as advocates and champions for the communities across this province, for those for whom it impacts. And we're going to make sure the proper consultation is done to make sure it reflects their best, best interests, the best interests of our province, Mr. Speaker.

With that being said, at this point in time, I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 73, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2012*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Regina Rosemont has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 73, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried. It now being past the hour of 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed until 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]



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