



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

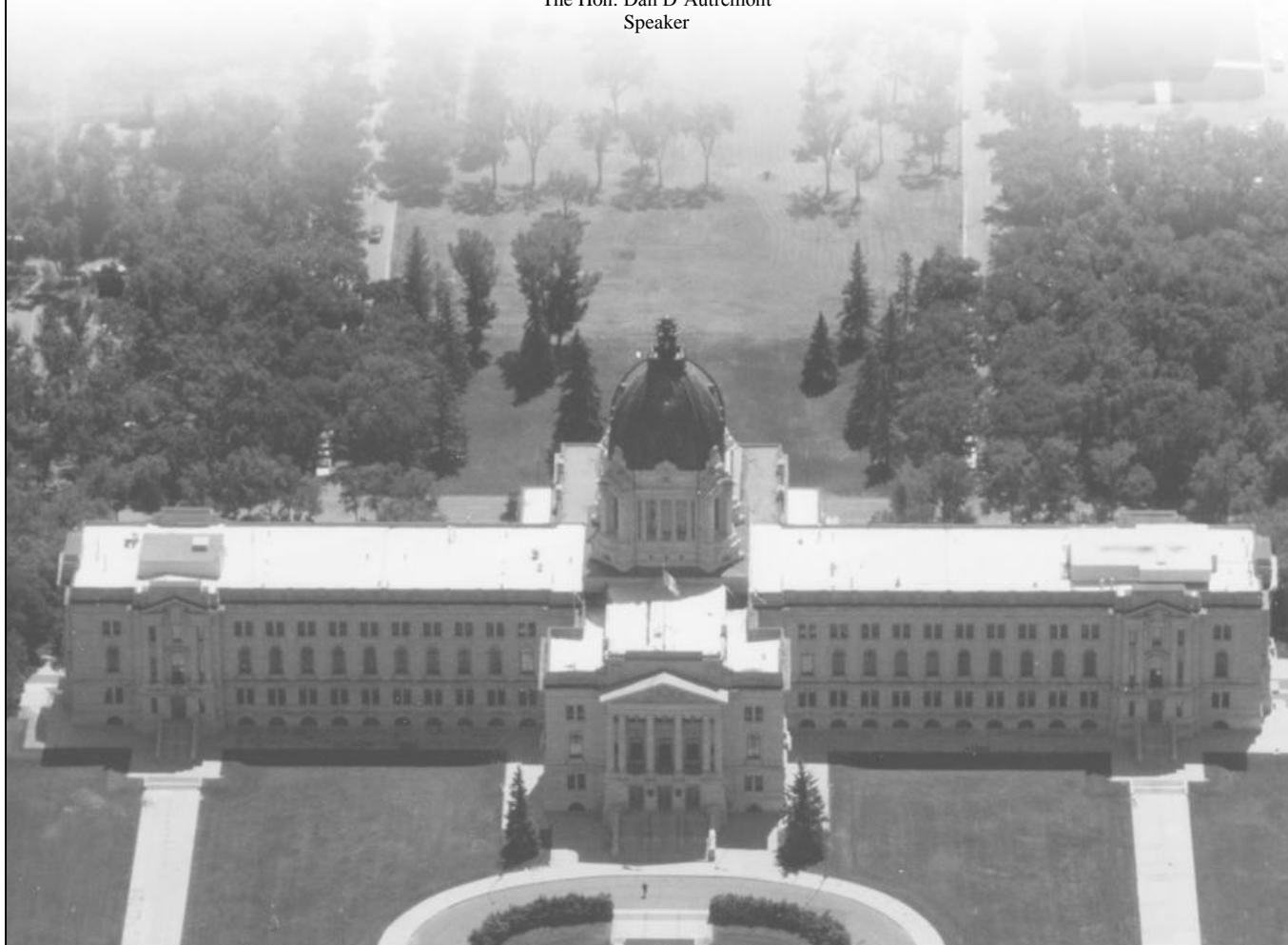
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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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

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
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, Hon. 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 member for Saskatoon Centre.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House some very important guests in the east gallery, and there are 48 English as an additional language adult learners from the Saskatoon Open Door Society. So if they could give a wave to us, that would be great. Thank you.

I was telling them about how important newcomers to our province are, and we sure welcome them here. I'd like to introduce their teachers: Don Campbell, Vicki Gerwing, Laurel O'Hanley, and Kim Pratt. I'd like to ask all members in joining me in welcoming them to their legislature. Thank you.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming these people to the Assembly today. We're hoping that all the members will be on their best behaviour so we're able to demonstrate that we are always productive and always very respectful, as I'm sure the members opposite wish to present today as well. And it's an interesting piece of democracy for these people. Many of them are new residents here. So on behalf of all members, I think we should welcome them and wish them a good day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce two guests that are joining us in your gallery. Today this afternoon with us is Dr. Robin Evans, the associate dean of the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Regina, and as well Dr. David Gregory, the dean of Faculty of Nursing at the University of Regina.

Dr. Evans is in attendance today to be recognized for a significant accomplishment, Mr. Speaker, that we'll hear shortly through a member's statement, but I would invite all members to welcome our two guests to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too, on behalf of the opposition, want to welcome the senior people from the school of nursing here in Regina. And we very much appreciate their work that they've done right across the province, and we will continue to support the work that they're doing. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased this afternoon to introduce to you and through you individuals from the community of Grenfell. We have with us today Mayor Lloyd Gwilliam, along with councillors Gib Heinemann and Phil Peter. I'm looking forward to joining them as we meet with the Minister for Rural Health later this afternoon. And I would ask my colleagues and members of this Assembly to join with me in welcoming them to their Assembly.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, seated in the west gallery, I am pleased to introduce Mr. Luke Annand who is here today. Mr. Annand is a film producer and writer. Born and raised here in the province from Mossbank, he's currently residing in Regina. Unfortunately he's moving in a couple of weeks to Winnipeg to pursue his career. He does hope to come back to Saskatchewan. Mr. Annand has shared with me a quote that he'd like me to share: "What is dead may never die."

And certainly as we look towards tomorrow's budget and the Saskatchewan film employment tax credit and the film industry as a whole, this is an area that we certainly continue to hope to be resurrected, Mr. Speaker. I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome Mr. Luke Annand to his Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you and to the rest of the Assembly, sitting in your gallery I wish to introduce a few guests from my constituency this morning: Amaima Noor; her mother, Iram; father; and the other children. Give us a wave.

Amaima and her family came here to Canada last year from Pakistan and have been actively engaged in the community and are getting used to Saskatchewan's winters, to say the least. Amaima attends grade 7 at Regina Coronation Park and I'll be speaking about Amaima's accomplishments a little later in a member's statement. But I'd like all members to please join me in welcoming Amaima and her family, Iram and the rest of them, to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

## PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very happy and pleased and proud to present a petition today in support of bringing cellphone coverage to northern Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, the prayer reads as follows:

Undertake, as soon as possible, to ensure SaskTel delivers cell service to the Canoe Lake First Nations, along with the adjoining communities of Cole Bay and Jans Bay; Buffalo River First Nations, also known as Dillon, and the neighbouring communities of Michel Village and St. George's Hill; English River First Nations, also known as Patuanak, and the hamlet of Patuanak; and Birch Narrows

First Nation and the community of Turnor Lake, including the neighbouring communities in each of these areas.

Mr. Speaker, and the people that have signed this petition and other petitions that we have presented day after day here have signed them from all throughout Saskatchewan, and we're very proud of that, Mr. Speaker. And the people that have signed the petition here today are primarily from Turnor Lake. And I so present.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the reconsideration of passing Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. And we know since the Act was introduced in December, literally hundreds of hours of study and comparison have been carried out in the interest of due diligence.

And if Bill 85 does become the new consolidation of labour laws in the province, working people, particularly young workers, immigrant workers, and other vulnerable workers will suffer from a hasty watering down of our current labour standards which set the mandatory minimums for all Saskatchewan workers. I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: cause the Government of Saskatchewan to not pass Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* in this current session before the end of May and to place it on a much longer legislative track to ensure greater understanding and support for the new labour law.

Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Weyburn, Maple Creek, Saskatoon, Regina, Melville, throughout the province. I do so present. Thank you very much.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### Northerner Celebrates 90th Birthday

**Mr. Vermette:** — Mr. Speaker, I had the honour and privilege of attending the 90th birthday celebration of Joseph William Charles, held in Stanley Mission in late December 2012. The honour feast was attended by over 150 family and friends, and it included traditional dancing and sharing of stories.

Mr. Charles was born and raised on a trapline near Fish River in northern Saskatchewan and also raised five of his 18 children there. The rest of his family was raised in Stanley Mission. Mr. Charles is blessed with numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren, most of whom were in attendance at his honour feast.

Mr. Speaker, northerners place great value on traditions and culture. Most of Joseph William Charles's life was spent living and handing down the traditional lifestyle to his family and community.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in congratulating Joseph William Charles on celebrating his 90th birthday and wish Mr. Charles many, many more years to come.

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

#### Z99 Radiothon

**Mr. Makowsky:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to share an important event that happened in Regina last week. Mr. Speaker, there are few things as exciting as waiting for the arrival of a newborn baby. Parenthood is a journey that has many joyful moments, but unfortunately unexpected complications can arise and lead to young babies needing special care. These moments are what make the annual Z99 radiothon such an important event in our community.

Mr. Speaker, last Thursday and Friday Z99 radio personalities CC, Lorie, and Buzz broadcast live from the Cornwall Centre for 36 straight hours to help raise money for the neonatal intensive care unit in the newly opened Rawlco centre for mother baby care at the Regina General Hospital. This unit houses on average 21 fragile newborns and sick babies daily. This year's radiothon raised a record-breaking \$742,343 which will go toward enhancing services within the unit. Throughout its 26-year history, the fundraiser has raised over \$5 million for the neonatal intensive care unit.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this House to join me in recognizing the outstanding efforts of the event organizers and volunteers, CC, Lorie, and Buzz, and the generous contributors within our community who helped make this year's Z99 radiothon a phenomenal success. Thank you.

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

#### Craik Wins Award for Greenest Town

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to congratulate Craik, Saskatchewan on receiving the Reader's Digest award for the greenest town. This award was a reader-nominated award with the judging panel receiving over 400 entries across seven categories.

Last September, Reader's Digest launched a contest asking Canadians to send in stories explaining why their city, town, or village was the most artistic, healthiest, greenest, and all around greatest place in the country. Quebec City took the top prize, being named the most interesting city. But Craik, as the greenest town in Canada, receives a \$1,000 prize and bragging rights. All the winners will be featured in April's *Reader's Digest*.

The Craik ecovillage was conceived as a joint venture between the town of Craik and the RM [rural municipality] of Craik No. 222. The two parties worked closely together to make the ecovillage a reality. Craik's ecovillage has been working at educating the public on the benefits of green living since 2004. Residents are warm, inviting, and willing to share their knowledge with visitors to the ecocentre.

Mr. Speaker, the town may appear eclectic with solar panels, wind turbines, straw bale and clay houses, but they are also living proof that it is possible to live in an environmentally sustainable way. Craik's community sustainable living project is an inspiration to anyone who wants to reduce their carbon footprint.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask all members to join with me in congratulating Craik on their Greenest Town Award. I look forward to watching the community grow and explore what it means to be a sustainable community.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley.

#### **Nursing Leader Receives Award**

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to recognize Dr. Robin Evans who is seated in your gallery today. Every year the Canadian Association of Perinatal and Women's Health Nurses recognizes a nurse who has shown excellence in leadership, caring for women, newborns, and families.

Last fall the organization announced its 2012 selection for its Excellence in Leadership Award. This prestigious award winner is Dr. Robin Evans, associate dean of Faculty of Nursing at the University of Regina. A nurse for 37 years, Dr. Evans has worked in numerous areas including long-term care and obstetrics at the Pasqua and Regina General Hospital. She was a consultant with the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association and has taught at SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] and at the University of Saskatchewan. And she is now serving as the associate dean in the Faculty of Nursing at the University of Regina.

We are very fortunate that Saskatchewan is able to draw on the expertise and experience of such a skilled nursing leader such as Dr. Evans. We are thankful for their outstanding contribution, leadership, and maternal and child nursing as well as in nursing education. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members please join me in recognizing Dr. Robin Evans on her outstanding achievement as the recipient of this national award in nursing leadership. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Grade 7 Student Mayor For a Day**

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House today to recognize one of my constituents, Amaima Noor who is sitting in your gallery. Amaima and her family came here to Canada last year from Pakistan and since then have been actively engaged in life here in Saskatchewan. Amaima attends grade 7 at Regina Coronation Park School, and recently wrote an essay that was chosen as the February winner of the Mayor For a Day contest.

Her submission spoke of the amusement park she had close to her home in Pakistan as well as the traffic jams experienced here in Regina, and was selected based on her keen interest in civic politics. Amaima's artwork has been selected twice to be displayed in the Regina School Board art show and has

dominated track and field, taking second place in the city track meet.

I had the privilege of attending other accomplishments of Amaima's, including her victory at the regional Canspell spelling bee as well as her reading of "Exercise is Good" at the 2012 young authors night. This year Amaima and her sister Nabeera have both been chosen as two of three young authors to have their writings published in the South Saskatchewan Reading Council's 2012 publication.

I'm honoured to have Amaima and her family as residents of Regina Coronation Park and I look forward to following their future achievements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

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

#### **Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities' Annual Convention**

**Mr. Moe:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week I had the pleasure of attending the 2013 SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] annual convention. I would like to congratulate Saskatchewan's rural leaders on yet another successful event with over 2,100 people attending. Mr. Speaker, SARM has always been a gracious host to MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and last week's event was no different. It's important that we continue with a positive working relationship with our municipal partners.

At last week's convention, the Premier announced that our government will hold the line on education property taxes in 2013. This maintains the historical education property tax decrease that reduced the education portion of property taxes on agricultural land by approximately 80 per cent. Our government has also recently announced an increase to the funding for the municipal roads for the economy program as well as a new municipal revenue-sharing agreement.

Mr. Speaker, this funding allocation strikes a balance that provides funding to address both population growth, the demands that an expanding economy place on our rural roads, all the while recognizing challenges facing northern communities. We are committed to building a strong Saskatchewan. Conventions like SARM are an important avenue for government and communities to connect, consult, and move Saskatchewan forward together.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to invite all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating SARM on yet another successful convention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Regina Trades & Skills Centre Opens New Facility**

**Mr. Steinley:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm happy to recognize that the Regina Trades & Skills Centre announced today that it has officially opened a brand new facility. The

RTSC [Regina Trades & Skills Centre] is a not-for-profit organization which was established in 2007 and works with industries to develop and deliver short-term trades and skills training to high school students and adults leading to entry-level jobs in industries where workers are in high demand.

Mr. Speaker, the centre offers courses in trade and skill areas such as culinary arts, plumbing, electrical framing, residential roofing, commercial construction, and commercial flooring. This new building will provide 20,000 square feet of training space and the ability to expand the number of courses provided in Regina. The centre has an impressive 90 per cent completion rate and a self-declared Aboriginal participation rate of 30 per cent, and all of the programs are industry-verified for employment outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, it's been a privilege for our government to support the great work of the Regina Trades and Skills Centre. It is through partnerships like these that our province will continue moving forward.

We know that to sustain economic growth for the benefit of Saskatchewan people, we need to ensure we have a skilled workforce to meet existing and future labour demand. Mr. Speaker, the new facility will greatly expand the opportunities of training and employment and is yet another example of innovative partnership to meet industry and community needs.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in recognizing the great work being done by the Regina Trades and Skills Centre in providing opportunity for training and employment. Thank you.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

#### Home Care Issues

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Premier is now musing about the importance of investing in home care in order to allow seniors to stay in their homes and their home communities as long as possible. We've been pushing for this for some time, Mr. Speaker, because we think and we know it is a common sense approach. That's why we're pleased, Mr. Speaker, that the government may have a stronger focus on improving home care, especially since the Sask Party's last Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, made no reference to improving home care for Saskatchewan families.

My question to the Premier: how many more home care nurses, how many more home care staff will be on the ground working, helping Saskatchewan families, and when will this happen?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my honourable friend for the question. This government has made seniors' issues a priority since coming to office. That priority has been manifest in things like the seniors' income assistance program which has been increased significantly by the government. Perhaps, perhaps we'll be able to make more progress on that tomorrow when the budget is

tabled, Mr. Speaker. It has manifested itself in, for the first time in a very long time, actual long-term care beds being built in Saskatchewan after 16 years of neglect, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to home care, the hon. member is on point. This is also a priority of our government. It's part of the continuum of care for seniors we want to ensure exists. There may be some information in the budget coming up. We invite the hon. member to stay tuned.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Home care is important and that's why it's unfortunate, Mr. Speaker, that there was no reference about improving home care in the last Throne Speech. If the Premier spoke with families, front-line care workers, Mr. Speaker, they would know that support for caregivers is very important here in Saskatchewan. It needs to be more of a priority. Better home care services obviously would help to alleviate some of the pressure on caregivers, but it's only one component. And we can think of the many baby boomers who are caring for aging parents, and we can think of the many seniors in the province, Mr. Speaker, who are doing their best to care for their aging spouse.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: will his government be improving support for caregivers and, if so, how?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, the government has moved to improve care for seniors at every level. That involves those who are the family of seniors, of those who need care. That has involved those who are on the front line in the profession of not just seniors' care, of health care, Mr. Speaker.

When we took office, there were some very acute pressures with respect to the number, the complement of health care professionals, that do affect not just seniors' care but care for all in the health care system, Mr. Speaker. I can think significantly of the shortage of nurses that this province inherited from the previous administration, the goal we set to hire the correct complement of nurses in our view — 800 of them. I think we exceeded that goal, Mr. Speaker.

We've moved, as we've said, on the seniors' income assistance plan. There may be more progress on that to be had. We've implemented the personal care home benefit, Mr. Speaker. That's also very important for seniors who are involved in those kinds of care facilities around the province. There's more work to be done in home care, there's no question about it. The country's acknowledging it. It's going to be a priority of the work of Premier Ghiz and I in the health care working group. We invite the Leader of the Opposition to stay tuned for developments in this regard.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More needs to be done to help the caregivers here in our province. One program that I've repeatedly called for better assistance for, Mr. Speaker, is the Alzheimer Society First Link program. This program, currently the Sask Party government only provides \$50,000 to

this program.

We know that dementia is a growing challenge for this province. There are 18,000 people in Saskatchewan who have dementia and the CBC's [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] Taking the Pulse survey identified that 44 per cent of Saskatchewan families identified dementia as a challenge and a problem for their family. And we know that if families have the proper support, they can on average keep their loved one out of a long-term care facility 557 days on average, as opposed to those who do not have the proper support. So it's the right thing to do for families and it's the right thing to do for our health care system.

My question to the Premier: will his Sask Party government be improving supports for the First Link program and have specific programs to help caregivers here in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, Alzheimer's is a disease that does impact many, many families in the province, including my own. Mr. Speaker, the question that the hon. Leader of the Opposition puts forward goes directly to budget. He will know that the budget's going to be released tomorrow, and details will be pretty evident about the spending priorities for the Government of Saskatchewan. He will be able to see whether or not we are making progress with respect to the specific area he's just raised. And if we are, I hope he will acknowledge that progress. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Children and Youth in Care

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last June, the province claimed in a news release it was moving ahead on child welfare transformation. What they call transformation, Mr. Speaker, is the pending closure of Dales House here in Regina, along with other facilities operated by the province.

Recently staff members at Dales House have been asked to go above and beyond their normal duties. While they normally assist high-risk youth, the Ministry of Social Services asked Dales House to care for infants as young as nine months old. Will the minister confirm that babies in her care have been housed at Dales House, a facility designed for youth with some of the most complex needs?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, the number of children that are in our care is actually declining, but the number of children that have medical needs and are fragile are ones that we're looking at right across the piece.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of any children at nine months old being in Dales House, but I do know that we are supporting the foster homes and the therapeutic foster homes to ensure that our children get the very best care possible. I also know that the employees that we have working in Dales House and in other government-run organizations where we're looking after our

children are doing their very best and working very hard with us.

The most important and valuable asset we have in the province is also our most vulnerable asset. So we know as a government that we continue to look at supporting not only the children but their families in every way we can.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The staff at Dales House does incredible work every day. They do this because they love their work, and they are committed to helping these kids create brighter futures.

Dales House is designed to support young people with serious challenges who are falling through the cracks of the foster system. But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, the staff have been forced to care for babies in a portable classroom. Let's be clear: Dales House was designed for high-risk youth, not infants and toddlers. How could the minister possibly accept housing and caring for babies in this way?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, first of all I'm going to acknowledge that everyone that we have working with us in the child care area are doing a fabulous job, and they do that job because they care about our children and the responsibility that we have as a province. We know that the best job we can do is supporting families to ensure that they can keep their children. But if we can't do that, we have to rely on, and we do rely on, the people that are trained in the various areas.

Again I'll say to the hon. member that I'm not aware of children being in Dales House. I will definitely look into it. But I also know that the people that are looking after our children right across the province, whether it be in Dales House or the foster homes or any of the other facilities that we have, are doing their very best every day. We also know that the number of children that are in foster homes is declining, and I believe that there's a 60 per cent reduction in the children living in overcrowded foster homes. And it's an issue that I take very, very seriously.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — I'm wondering what her contingency plan is going to be when she actually closes Dales House.

We've heard this isn't the first time young children have been placed in these situations. Facilities like Dales House do such important work, but they are constantly under pressure beyond their mandate to help close the gaps in the system. This should never happen, Mr. Speaker. There should never be a moment when the province is scrambling to find a safe and healthy alternative for children, especially of this young age.

Instead of closing facilities and failing to support foster families and persons of sufficient interest, the minister needs a thoughtful and well-resourced approach, well-resourced approach. What is the minister doing to ensure vulnerable

children are properly housed and cared for and this situation never happens again?

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I know that the member opposite is well aware that we have increased the funding to child and family services by 133 per cent since we became government. I also know that the member opposite is aware that we've got 30 new front-line workers on staff. I think the member also knows that we put additional money into the wages for front-line workers last December, which means 4 to \$6,000 a year more for the workers that are in that area. We've invested \$74 million in the child and youth agenda so far, waiting for next year . . . next budget, the one that's coming tomorrow.

Mr. Speaker, we know we have a new case management file. We have a Linkin system set up so we can track our children, and that there is always more work to do when we have vulnerable children involved. But to know that the children are the most important part of what we're doing, why we have a growth agenda, and why we have all of the ministries working together to ensure that our children are safe and have a valuable future, are what we're doing as a government.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The most recent Children's Advocate report shows there is a drop in the number of foster families in our province. On the Sask Party government's watch, there are 20 per cent fewer foster families here. The province is relying more and more on persons of sufficient interest, who are often family and close friends, to care for children, but the reality is the resources there aren't there to support caregivers. We see this when babies are housed in a classroom in a facility designed for high-risk youth. Without proper support for caregivers, children will continue to lose out. This is not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, last year's budget cut 100 positions in Social Services. Can we expect this again from the Sask Party? Will tomorrow's budget make further cuts to supports for vulnerable children and youth?

[14:00]

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

**Hon. Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite refuses to talk about the other money that we're putting into the system, and that's for the child and youth agenda. Mr. Speaker, jurisdictions right across Canada are having trouble attracting foster families, and that's why we have developed 440 new out-of-home spaces for children in the province. We have a 19 per cent reduction in the number of children coming into care in the last four years because we are working with persons of significant interest. We know that someone who knows that child or understands the family are in a better position to ensure that child is safe.

Mr. Speaker, we know that when it comes to children there's

always more work to be done. That's why we've got the committee on child and youth. And that's why all the ministers that are dealing with human services work together and talk about children in care — not just in Social Services, but Education and Health — knowing that together we can make a better province.

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

#### IPAC-CO2

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — We've been talking about the IPAC [International Performance Assessment Centre for geologic storage of CO<sub>2</sub>] affair for the past three weeks in this session and we've been pushing for answers for the better part of a year, and yet we can't seem to get any straight answers from that minister or that government without another investigative report that's exposed in the media. The minister has tossed around blame to many, pointed her finger, but has accepted no accountability and hasn't answered the questions. The government simply hasn't come clean with its IPAC affair.

The government has three Sask Party-appointed members on the IPAC board. They've had them there right from the start. They've seen the audits. They've read the legal advice. And I expect they've fully briefed that minister, that Premier, that government, a long, long time ago. To the minister: what have those three trusted advisors told the minister about who has benefited from the wasted taxpayers' dollars in the IPAC affair?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, time and time again I've identified the issues that happened when the IPAC was being managed by the U of R [University of Regina]. And when the board was formed with the three members that the member opposite identified, yes indeed, problems were identified and steps were taken.

So what has happened, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, IPAC then proceeded to do the research and the work that the government was expecting them to do. They developed the world's first carbon capturing storage standards, both nationally and internationally recognized standards, which is extremely important, Mr. Speaker, for enhanced oil recovery projects.

They developed a Carbon Commons web portal, Mr. Speaker, which links scientists around the world so they can share information on carbon capture and storage. And they completed a comprehensive study and identified the potential areas within our province that we can use carbon capture storage, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, perhaps the minister didn't understand the question. It's pretty straightforward though: who has benefited from the misuse of taxpayers' dollars, something that's been described, as the current CEO [chief executive officer] of IPAC, as mostly waste. And she's referenced inflated contracts, computers that aren't used, a \$600,000 computer, Mr. Speaker, that's been claimed by a private company that has



conflicts all around it. Saskatchewan people have lost money, and someone or some people have benefited.

To the minister: why can't she be straight with the public and tell them where those wasted taxpayer dollars have gone, and what's she doing to get them back?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Ms. Harpauer:** — Mr. Speaker, the Provincial Auditor audited the relationship between the University of Regina and IPAC, their relationship with CVI [Climate Ventures Inc.]. So, Mr. Speaker, the member opposite has read that report, and I encourage the public to read it as well.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite also has the Meyers Norris Penny forensic audit which, quite frankly, points out the issues that occurred when it was under the management of the U of R. And, Mr. Speaker, it identifies that nobody that they could find personally benefited from what happened. And I repeat: in the Meyers Norris Penny report, it points out that they cannot identify anybody that personally benefited.

Also there was a third party review of the value of the assets that are in the hands of IPAC, the new agency, Mr. Speaker. And it said, although a premium price was paid, the assets do what they're supposed to do.

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

#### **Lawsuit Regarding Technology Contract**

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — It doesn't make any sense, Mr. Speaker. She says there's wasted dollars, but somehow no one's benefited. Where did those dollars go? Have they been sequestered in the way that the carbon was supposed to, Mr. Speaker? We're not sure on this side of the Assembly.

But that's not the only minister, Mr. Speaker, that's been having troubles on that side of the House. There's a disturbing slow leak of information that was brought forward yesterday, a \$1 million lawsuit by the university and countersuits by private companies. Millions of taxpayers' dollars is on the line and involved, and many of the same players are involved that are also involved in the IPAC affair.

Yet yesterday somehow the minister astonishingly shared he had only learned of the lawsuit, that had been launched in November, yesterday through media reports, despite the fact that it involves taxpayers' money and is a major project in his portfolio. Question to the minister: was yesterday really the first time you learned of these lawsuits in this debacle? If so, do you call that a ministerial responsibility or what exactly is that, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Mr. Speaker, to the member's question, very similar to the question yesterday, the people . . . the Government of Saskatchewan has funded the university, Mr. Speaker, starting in the year 2000-2001. We were one of 14

funders of this research, Mr. Speaker. The research was done at the university that we funded. As far as the commercialization that the university then undertook, that is the responsibility of the university. All universities, Mr. Speaker, enter into agreements with the private sector to commercialize research and in fact, Mr. Speaker, that is what they did.

This one, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately has ended up in a lawsuit between the university and the private sector. The Government of Saskatchewan is not named, is not a party of this lawsuit, Mr. Speaker. It is purely a conflict between the private sector and the university, Mr. Speaker. I have reported that to the member opposite yesterday and will look forward to his next question.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, it's certainly more than strange for that minister to not be aware of a \$1 million lawsuit in his own portfolio. It's absolutely irresponsible for that minister not to be doing his work. This is a major provincial and national project, one that involves millions of taxpayers' dollars.

But it gets worse. Despite the fact that this debacle involves millions of taxpayers' dollars; money from sponsors, including companies and other governments; a technology with huge potential; reputations of a Saskatchewan company, our university, and this government itself, Mr. Speaker, that minister dismisses any concern.

Mr. Speaker, honestly, how can that minister brush this off as not as his concern and not a big deal to the people of our province?

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

**Hon. Mr. McMillan:** — Mr. Speaker, again this is a lawsuit not with the Government of Saskatchewan as a party of it. It's between the private sector and the university. As far as the research, Mr. Speaker, we were a funder, one of 14 for this research. We think this is important research and, Mr. Speaker, that is why it was funded.

Mr. Speaker, the research was concluded. And the commercialization, Mr. Speaker, that is something that all universities do. They endeavour to commercialize the technologies that are developed at the universities. They enter into multiple different types of agreements — some specific, Mr. Speaker, that are proprietary, some that aren't. This one, Mr. Speaker, there is a conflict and it has ended up in the courts. The university and the private sector, Mr. Speaker, have been unable to resolve it, and I think that the appropriate place for this to be decided at this point, Mr. Speaker, is in fact where it is today. Thank you.

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

#### **Northern Roads and Investment in the North**

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week the Premier told the media that tomorrow's budget would finally deal with the North. And he said, "I think you're going

to see a theme, by the way, in the budget around northern development, northern mining and specifically around uranium.”

The development of the North, in terms of economic and social growth, needs the infrastructure to deliver, and part of that includes roads. Mr. Speaker, this isn't the first time northerners have heard that there will be commitments for them, only to see the Sask Party once again turn their back on the North.

To the minister: you have said there's no commitments for the roads in northern Saskatchewan despite the Premier's assurance that there is. Who is right, you or the Premier?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, we've already touched on the fact that in the growth plan, Highway 914 — a very important northern road, a very important piece of infrastructure in the North — is going to be a priority of this government. In fact we've developed a partnership with Cameco, the world's largest uranium mining company, happily located in Saskatoon: \$30 million each to build the road.

Mr. Speaker, there may be other things in that budget with respect to the uranium industry. Because we know that when it comes to major sectors of the economy in this country, there are few that have the record that our uranium mining sector has in terms of employing northerners, in terms of employing First Nations and Métis people: 40, 44 per cent of their workforce in the front line, good jobs, are First Nations and Métis.

Mr. Speaker, we've worked hard as a government to expand uranium markets around the world through a federal government that's co-operated. We've done so without much noise or help, frankly, from the NDP [New Democratic Party].

In this budget we will focus again on uranium. And the question for members opposite: are they now comfortable with expanding uranium mining with the uranium industry in this province that's creating opportunity for northerners, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, the Premier has to get with the program. The people of the North are asking this government to fix the roads, Mr. Speaker. There's no question in our mind that the Sask Party government has been in power for 2,000 days, and that answer looks plain silly, Mr. Speaker.

On the day after the CAA [Canadian Automobile Association] announce their competition for the province's worst roads, I know many people in the North will be nominating their moose trails up there, Mr. Speaker. The people are very, very angry with this government and with this Premier and with this minister. And the worst part is our corporate friends that want to invest in the North are beginning to feel that anger. Does that not make . . . Does that make smart growth, Mr. Speaker? Absolutely not.

So once again, to the Premier or to the minister: can you guys both get with the program and put the money back that you took

out that the NDP committed to the North? And will you finally commit to the North, Mr. Speaker?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm relying on the Minister of the Economy, who tells me it was 5,840 long days that members opposite were in government, Mr. Speaker, when infrastructure not just in the North was ignored but highways all over the province were ignored, Mr. Speaker.

What we've seen from this government, what we've seen from this government are five successive record investments in highways. And what did members opposite do? They voted against every single one of those budgets, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, after tomorrow, people in this province will want to know where that new Leader of the Opposition stands and where the NDP stand on the uranium industry in this province, on the importance of increasing investment into the uranium industry, on the importance of expanding uranium mining to take advantage of the Chinese market and the Indian market. That party has been very uncomfortable with uranium in the past. We hope they get comfortable with it pretty soon because it is essential to the North. It is essential to the province of Saskatchewan.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, the NDP — news flash for the Premier — we support northern development 100 per cent, Mr. Speaker. But what we want to know and what we want this government to do, Mr. Speaker, is start investing back in the North. This government, this Sask Party government has sucked every penny it can from all the northern resources, and there's nothing going back to the North, Mr. Speaker, especially for our roads.

The roads we're talking about here today, Mr. Speaker, are between two mines. And while we appreciate the mining sector and what it does for northern people, we want to ask the questions of the Premier and the Minister of Highways, how about Patuanak's road? How about Cumberland House's road? Wollaston Lake's road? Dillon's road? Turnor Lake's road? Canoe Lake's road? You're taking millions and billions of dollars out of the northern economy. Why don't you put something back? Mr. Speaker, when will this government stop taking resources out of the North and finally commit to northern roads, Mr. Speaker?

[14:15]

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Mr. Speaker, just a few months ago in the growth plan, Highway 914 announced by the government. It's being executed now by the Minister of Highways, \$30 million worth of investment. I didn't hear the hon. member eloquently supporting the growth plan because it's identified that important road.

Mr. Speaker, yesterday — now maybe the hon. critic wasn't paying attention; I'm not sure he was for the 5,840 days he was

in government, Mr. Speaker, long, long days — but yesterday new revenue sharing was announced for municipalities. And what did this government do with respect to northern municipalities? What did the minister announce? A \$3.1 million increase to northern revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker.

Tomorrow in the budget, tomorrow in the budget members opposite will be able to note the fact that this government places a high priority on mining opportunities in the North for northerners, a high priority on uranium. That party has a hard time agreeing on something as basic as Keystone. Will they be able to agree on the importance of expanding uranium opportunities in the province of Saskatchewan?

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Chair of the Standing Committee on Private Bills.

##### Standing Committee on Private Bills

**Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Standing Committee on Private Bills met earlier today and considered compliance of the rules for the petitions for private Bill No. 901 and private Bill No. 902. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on Private Bills to present its first report. I move:

That the first report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Chairman of the Private Bills Committee:

That the first report of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be now concurred in.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — The motion is carried and pursuant to rule 98, private Bill No. 901, *The Orange Benevolent Society Repeal Act, 2013* and private Bill No. 902, *The Lutheran Sunset Home of Saskatoon Amendment Act, 2013* are deemed to be read the first time and are ordered for the second reading on the next private members' day.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### GOVERNMENT ORDERS

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill No. 49

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 49** — *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to rise today and join in debate on Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Act* — good to join in the debate. Again, Mr. Speaker, in this vast, beautiful province we have certainly, certainly the boreal forest, the North, the parklands. Forestry is a huge part of the province that may not be apparent here in the city of Regina where indeed, you know, every tree we have today including those in throughout the beautiful Wascana Parkway and my home neighbourhood of North Central, a lot of beautiful elms, all of which were planted by hand down here on the great plains.

But certainly in the central and northern parts of this great province, the boreal forest, the parklands, there's a tremendous, tremendous opportunity there in terms of forestry, an industry that's had its ups and downs certainly, but that potential that is some days more realized than others. But it's good to see a piece of legislation coming forward like this, as with other pieces of legislation brought forward by this government to . . . What the member from Moose Jaw North, what I'm talking about, it certainly could be perhaps not characterized as housekeeping precisely, but perhaps, you know, good, good profession keeping.

The legislation itself coming forward in response to requests from the industry itself . . . And I guess one of the things that we will be looking for, Mr. Speaker, is further confirmation of that — the needs from the industry — but just the way that the terminology in this legislation is keeping up with the modern practice and what is required by the industry itself.

In the minister's second reading speech, the minister had referenced the way that this legislation will concur with labour mobility concerns, the way that the Saskatchewan Forestry Professionals, the association, have been consulted with in this development of this legislation. I'm interested to note that the First Nations and Métis communities have been consulted with as well, but again we'll be looking to confirm that for ourselves, Mr. Speaker, because of course, as is sometimes the case with this government, consultation proclaimed is not the same as consultation actually carried out.

So in terms of the actual legislation itself, one of the first changes in provision has to relate to the professional practice of forestry, the existing provision wherein different subclauses will be deleted, such as teaching and research in the definition of the professional practice of forestry, it being considered that forestry experts practising these activities are not offering professional forestry services in Saskatchewan but are engaged in the broader science of forestry. So again, you know, perhaps not splitting hairs as much as splitting logs, Mr. Speaker, but not exactly earth-shattering. But again, we'll see how that plays out on the ground.

The next provision in the legislation to be changed regards the existing provision 22(1) wherein "Every professional forester is entitled, in accordance with the bylaws, to sign and seal all final plans, reports and other documents relating to the practice of professional forestry that are prepared, issued or approved by that person."

The explanation that is attached in the notes states that “This amendment will expand the use of the professional seal to other categories of membership and makes the use of the seal an obligation of professional practice rather than simply a right.”

So again, a bit of a change in the onus there, Mr. Speaker. I’m glad to see you’re still with us, Mr. Speaker. But again, not exactly something to turn the forest upside down over.

The next change proposed in the legislation is 22(3). Existing provision states, “A professional forester who is expelled or suspended shall return his or her seal to the association for the period of the suspension or expulsion.”

The explanation states that “This amendment will add professional forest technologists and restricted members as they will be issued professional seals.”

Again as you expand the scope of those being issued seals, it only follows that the disciplinary actions that attach to that seal and who can or cannot use that seal in good conscience. Again, it would seem to only make sense.

The next change proposed is a new provision, 23.01(1), stating in the explanation that “This amendment prohibits persons not registered as a member of the association from engaging in the professional practice of forestry.”

Again, with the regulations for self-governing bodies in a variety of professions, this is largely a matter of course in terms of, you know, they possess that right to sign off on who is and who is not a professional forester. So keeping the regulations up to date with what is being proposed in the legislation, change of scope only makes sense.

Next new provision, 23.01(2). The explanation states that:

This amendment recognizes individuals or classes of persons that may engage in activities falling under the definition of the professional practice of forestry without being registered as a professional forester, professional forest technologist or restricted member.

Again better calibrating that definition of practice and who does and does not fall under the aegis of the legislation.

Certainly, Mr. Speaker, it’s important to keep the regulations and the guidelines, the bylaws by which foresters conducting their business in this province. This legislation seems to be in and of itself fairly straightforward in responding to the needs of the industry to better respond to concerns arising around labour mobility practice and the evolution of the guidelines and regulations themselves, and we look forward to talking further about this particular piece of legislation in committee.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, for Bill No. 49, I would urge that we move this bill on to committee.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of the Environment that Bill No. 49, *The Forestry Professions Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on the Economy.

**The Speaker:** — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

### Bill No. 67

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 67 — *The Community Planning Profession Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It’s a pleasure to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 67, *An Act respecting Professional Community Planning in Saskatchewan* which is a very, very important piece of legislation and one that will meet the needs I understand of community planners in Saskatchewan and some of the updates. And I’d like to review that in a minute.

But I do think that it’s important for us to take a minute and think about the good work that community planning does and community planners do in Saskatchewan. You know, in fact I just . . . It’s interesting how important this really is, you know. I was at a meeting last week at the Bessborough in the city of Saskatoon. They were talking about infill housing and the impacts that all could have while we try to have the very best communities that we could possibly have throughout the province, in our cities, in our towns. But it’s important that we have people who are properly trained, understand the challenges, understand the complexity of good community planning. And these are professionals; this isn’t something hit or miss or something we do on the back of a notebook or a napkin. You really take some time to figure this out. And so it’s really important that we have a community that has the respect for planners who build our towns and our cities and our province, you know.

And so this talks about that, and it meets their needs as a profession with integrity, that’s self-regulating and has those challenges, but yet has both a national and a regional perspective so that they can practise their trade in other provinces, but also speaks to national membership in the Canadian Institute of Planners. So this is no small thing.

In fact, actually it’s interesting, Mr. Speaker. This bill is quite lengthy. It’s some 22 pages and has quite a lot of details as it’s played out. But as I was saying, you know, it was funny. Last Thursday night after we had spent quite a week here in debate, I went back to Saskatoon. We had a public meeting about infill housing and the challenges of that, and whether garage suites or

garden suites, granny suites . . . And I was amazed actually at the turnout, the number of people who came out to have this discussion. There was probably 100, 150 people out at the Bessborough to hear what the city of Saskatoon had come out with. And of course, you know, it's a challenge when trying to develop new housing and new ideas in our communities. And there were lots of really good questions.

So planning isn't something that we should take for granted or always assume that whatever somebody comes up with will be accepted. It was interesting too. The planners were very welcoming in terms of ideas or things they hadn't thought of. But that's what makes planning the kind of profession it is. They are embracing ideas but applying their professional knowledge, and making sure that they don't become remote because in many ways it's a bit of an architectural type of design where you're dealing with a lot of numbers and a lot of guidelines, a lot of bylaws, and applying those in circumstances that you may not be familiar with. But it's something that we really need to appreciate. And when it goes wrong, it can go horribly wrong.

[14:30]

And we know of communities that have that barren, dull, stagnant feel because there hasn't been good planning in it. But we also know of communities that feel like they're vibrant and alive and that good work has gone into that. You know, again if you travel throughout the province, you see signs of that. I see signs of that in Saskatoon when I think about Riversdale and the kind of work that's gone into that in terms of planning and how to revive a community. And you can really see that while it's a slow growth, it's a definite growth. People are moving back there. Businesses are moving back there, and there's real hope in the community.

I can see it in Caswell where we hope the bus barns will be moved out to the suburbs and not in the inner city. They come with all sorts of problems where there's idling diesel or congestion around that two or three blocks. Come 7 o'clock, it's hard to even drive by because they're waiting to park the buses, or especially on cold winter mornings where they're warming the buses up. People are looking forward to seeing that those go. But what takes their place? And of course there's been a lot of community talk, a lot of community planning about what kind of developments do we want to see at the bottom of Caswell Hill. And of course it looks like it'll be a nice park, and of course there are challenges with that though because, you know, we have some real issues around making sure that it's a safe, healthy environment to build or to do new things. And so this is where the kind of work of a good community planner can come and do their stuff and work their trade.

And so we're very happy to see this kind of bill come forward because we think it's important in terms of developing the kind of professionalism we need in this province as it goes forward.

I'm going to take a minute and just review what the minister had to say. Of course it was introduced back in mid-November. He talks about repealing and replacing the old professional Act to update it with standards consistent with other self-regulated professions legislation in Saskatchewan. So that's important that we have these standards are consistent right across the

board. And this is very important, especially when it talks about consequential amendments to *The Planning and Development Act, 2007*, *The Engineering and Geoscience Professions Act*, *Land Surveyors and Professional Surveyors Act*. So that's important.

So what they're really doing is replacing the term professional community planner with registered professional planner. So they're taking out the word community and adding the word registered.

So other ones that the Association of Professional Community Planners called for include changing the name of the association to the Saskatchewan Professional Planners Institute. Again the word community is being lost, which is too bad, but also putting in the word registered, and creating a new image in terms of being an institute. So that's very, very good.

And it talks about — and apparently this is consistent with other associations across Canada — clarifies the composition and role of the association professional conduct and discipline committees. And I know that's critical when you're talking about a professional, self-regulating organization. There must be a way of having some way to maintain professional conduct. And if there's things when they do go wrong, that they will have a way of correcting them, and that's hugely important, and as well a way to discipline. So that's very, very important.

And it also talks about a requirement that the majority of members of the professional conduct and discipline committees are licensed members and enhance the disciplinary authority by allowing the committee to inform the employer found guilty of the professional misconduct or incompetence. I guess that makes a lot of sense and I think hopefully that's been well thought out, and maybe we'd ask about the circumstance of that in committee. If they hadn't told the employer before about the misconduct, that would be a huge oversight, I would assume, because clearly if you could think of some of the scenarios that might evolve if the employer didn't know of the misconduct . . . Then this is the work that they do and their work is very public. It's not an internal type of thing. So that's a huge thing.

So and again the Act fully complies with the labour mobility obligations under the Internal Trade and New West Partnership Agreement. Apparently, though, it had already done that.

And then a bit of a change with the members' association through the national association, CIP [Canadian Institute of Planners], instead of the University of Saskatchewan. And apparently the University of Saskatchewan agrees with that and feels that it's quite good. So that's good.

Now it does not establish the scope of practice of planners or restricting persons from calling themselves planners or requires that only members can do planning. It recognizes association or institute once the new Act is proclaimed. So that's an interesting part, the scope of practice of planners or people calling themselves planners or requiring that only members can do planning. So perhaps not quite as strong as some of the other professional organizations. I think that social workers are one that have that scope of practice. Teachers I believe also have scope of practice. So I think that's hugely important. So I think that's critical. So we'll be asking more about that, if that's

something that they see that we will at some point go back to.

So as they say, we'll continue to "... the government's practice to consult with ... professions to refine and update legislation, ensuring it meets the needs of the profession, the association, and the public." So that's good.

So as I go through the bill, I do have some questions about this because it does talk about, for example, that there will be two members of the public, so there's a public interest being served. And I think that's important. Of course you have to live in the ... To belong to the council, you have to be a member who resides in Saskatchewan.

So public appointees: "The Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint two persons who reside in Saskatchewan as members of the council." That's very important. And these people cannot be members. Their term is not longer than three years. And I think that makes some sense. And at least one of the members who are from the public will be part of the discipline committee. That's important because there's always this idea that it's a closed shop. And so I think that's important, maybe not so much in terms of the professionals conduct, but in terms of discipline, that's very significant.

So, Mr. Speaker, I think that in many ways it's a good piece of legislation that we can support in general right now. I think we have questions for committee, and we would like to see it go to committee where we can actually do more questions and find out more details. I know members have spoke at length on this. And I think at this point I would move that we would move Bill No. 67, *An Act respecting Professional Community Planning in Saskatchewan* to committee. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Government Relations that Bill No. 67, *The Community Planning Profession Act, 2012* 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 the bill be referred? I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

### Bill No. 82

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that **Bill No. 82** — *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, joining the debate on Bill 82, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2012*. I just want to talk a little bit about pensions in general. And some individuals who work for government, work for certain corporations, organizations, they do have pension plans. And as an employee, you pay a portion of your earnings into a pension plan. And sometimes the plan, whether it's a government one or it's an organization, some of the bigger companies, they will match you or they will give you a percentage that will go into a retirement saving plan or a pension plan so that some day you've served years and you've worked hard and you have something in your retirement to assist you with the cost of living and to enjoy a retirement.

And even those individuals right now that we know have pension plans — some of them are on fixed income — they're having struggles. And you talk to some of our seniors and individuals and they talk about the struggles that they're having — the cost of living, and once you're at age 65 you don't have a drug plan, so that has to come out of your pocket. I mean you might have had a plan. Whether you work for an organization or a government, you have coverage — prescription drug cost, dental cost, eye. So there's provisions in there. But once you get to retirement and you're 65, if you don't have a private insurance that you carry, whether it's with one of the companies that provide private insurance for eye care, dental, medications, prescriptions, the cost to seniors ... And I've talked to some of the seniors. They have so many different medications that sometime when you get up there, the challenges, and we see those challenges that are out there facing a lot of seniors, and they express their concern.

But that's an opportunity for them, for individuals, and some people have done well. And they've taken their pension plan and they actually have a fixed income and they're living quite comfortable. And they're happy, and they're saying that their pension plan was good. When they were working, for whatever reason, their employer matched their contribution, and they invested that.

And some plans — it's my understanding, and I'm not an expert in the area — some individuals will manage their own investments. Some have a company who ... administrator, and they have nothing to it. Some plans have trustees, and they manage the affairs. When we look at this Bill 82, it talks about that. And I'm going to get into a few of the amendments that they've talked about.

But Bill 82, when you look at the Saskatchewan Pension Plan, in general when you look at it, developed I believe in 1988 or '86 it came into light. It's grown to about 32,000 members now with assets about \$318 million, and there is trustees that look after the money. And I think those individuals that pay into that would be individuals that maybe don't have a pension plan, whether it's working with governments, whether it's an organization, so these are for individuals who maybe work part-time, seasonal. They get an opportunity to put a little bit of money at certain times into a Saskatchewan Pension Plan.

Clearly some of the notes, looking through the file, show that Saskatchewan is the only province I believe that has this plan to

provide for retirement for individuals. And if that's the case — and that's what I've kind of got from it — that's really good, and I think that's wise. It gives some provision for a little bit of money when they retire. And I mean some might invest a little bit, and at least they're having a little bit of an income coming in when they do retire, in that stage of their life when they're ready to retire and want to. So there is a little bit of a provision for them.

And it might be some of, you know, rural farm and small-farm family who invest into this, you know. There's years where they have a little extra money, so maybe they put a little bit away for themselves.

But I'm going to get into some of the amendments that they're asking. And one of the areas the minister is asking . . . And I know there must be reasons. And I know in committee we'll ask some of these questions — we'll do this. But clearly their survivor benefits are some of the amendments are being proposed. And we're going to look at those, and I know in committee we'll ask about them. And these could be simple things within compliance with the rest of Canada. And there might be a good reason why government is making these amendments. And we don't have any . . . And myself personally, there might be a reason. Maybe survivor benefits, it would benefit them better. They're going to move things around. That's one area.

[14:45]

The other area — where members would be allowed to transfer funds from registered pension plans, locked-in retirement accounts and into their Saskatchewan Pension Plan. So they would be able to transfer some dollars is what I'm getting from this. And they would be able to transfer some dollars. So there must be a reason why — there's been a request or they ran into a situation where this provision, amendment, would allow somebody to transfer some of their dollars into Saskatchewan Pension Plan when you're locked into another plan or something. So there is some provisions there. It sounds like moving some dollars around. And that, you know, that sounds pretty straightforward. They're asking for it.

Now those are areas where I guess this pension program, it's maybe housekeeping items or requests by individuals who are in the plan. And maybe it's the trustees that are requesting this. Maybe they found some problems with clients and they want to make sure that the clients don't run into problems. And there's the trustees. They're looking after the assets and making sure that individuals that are in the program, and the members — there's 32,000 members — that there are services to make it cost-efficient for them, also to make sure there are services.

This program also talks a little about the service that those members are provided. And it sounds like they're . . . You can get hold of the administrators. They're easy to get hold of. They're willing to work with you if you have questions. They want to work through. And this is good. So this is a good program where you have individuals who might have some questions or they're close to retirement or individuals who want to start investing. There's provisions and, of course, administrators who look after this. And they come forward with giving the advice to the clients, which is good. So we want to

make sure that happens at all costs, that that is done. So those individuals . . . And it's minor cost, is what it's talking about.

And that was the one thing, I think, when you have a pension plan and you're not putting a lot of money away, you don't want it to be eaten up in costs from your administrator or cost of running the organization. So I think it states in here, from my understanding, that the costs are low cost to the members, and that is a good plan.

And so as they invest and the program grows, and when we have good years of investment, those investments grow and people are prepared and ready for retirement. You have years where investments are not doing so well and you can see these programs suffer. So where someone's ready to retire, there could be some challenges. But that's areas where we see this going on.

And at this point, you know, I guess some of the language they're talking about changing is modernizing some of the language, and that's fine. And I mean times change and some of the wording from '86 needs to change, and that's what they're talking about. So they're making those changes to the wording of some of the legislation in here and some of the documents — that are probably used to deal with the clients — the administrators use.

So I think that's just housekeeping items that they're going to deal. So, Mr. Speaker, at this time I think I'm prepared to move Bill 82 to committee.

**The Speaker:** — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Finance that Bill No. 82, *The Saskatchewan Pension Plan Amendment Act, 2012* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

**The Speaker:** — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

#### Bill No. 84

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 84** — *The Common Business Identifiers Act* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 84, *An Act respecting Common Business Identifiers*. As identified by the Minister of Justice when this bill was introduced in December, this legislation is part of a

broader Canadian plan to have business identifier numbers which can be used in many places to make it simpler for corporations to share business information.

And this is a project obviously that every province and territory has been participating in along with the federal government. And I think that it's one that takes some time to get it into place, but what we see is that other provinces have introduced similar bills, whether it's in New Brunswick or British Columbia. And obviously the wording is pretty well the same as what we have here in Saskatchewan, and the whole purpose is to make it easier for corporations when they are registering documents.

We have a similar system right now that is part of our land titles system, which is at the Information Services Corporation, where businesses, banks, individuals all have a number. And when that number shows up, then it reflects the fact that it's the particular business, and it makes it much simpler for the software that handles all of the information to deal with that particular information.

But what happens is that the whole legislation has as its core then this establishment of a business number. Now I think that probably the key part of the legislation relates to the definitions that are in the legislation, and so those definitions obviously match with other corporate and financial legislation we have in the legal system here in Saskatchewan.

But, for example, business information that is going to be part of the identifier is crucial but also clearly laid out, and this is helpful. So for a business, it would have to have the name obviously. What's the legal structure? Is it a corporation? Is it a co-operative? Is it a partnership? It has to have a mailing address or street address. And if it's an incorporation, they have to have the information there that's around the date of incorporation, which jurisdiction was the corporation incorporated in, and then the incorporation number from that jurisdiction. Also if it's registered in Saskatchewan, it would have to have the registration number, and it would also have to have the names of the directors of the corporation. And then obviously, you would have the business number, which is what we're talking about here, and the program account number, which would relate to whatever programs it was interested in being part of, and then further identification numbers that are there — telephone number, fax number, the email address. And also the status of the number — is this an active business that's operating, or is it closed, and why. And also information on how this status is changed.

Now also if it's a partnership, it has to have the name of at least two partners. And as a former law partner, we had many partners in the law firm, and so you'd probably just pick the two most senior people or three and have them listed in this information. But clearly the information is there and laid out in a very straightforward fashion so that others can see who they're doing business with, or a government department can see exactly which business is applying for a particular grant or applying for a particular type of licence.

But when you go through the legislation itself, it's pretty straightforward. But much of the Act actually delegates the actual structure to the Lieutenant Governor in Council so they can make regulations. And so the actual structure of what we're

going to have will be identified once the legislation is passed and presumably when it's negotiated on a national basis because this is something that's going to be dealt with interprovincially.

And so then what we end up is giving the government the power and the minister the power to enter into agreements around how this system is to be used. And it looks like it contemplates the development of a public body or some organization to actually be in charge of these business numbers. I don't think that's quite clear yet how that's going to be done. I think the way the minister described it is that there would be an establishment of a hub which would allow this information to be shared. But we're not entirely clear what it is that will be the public body that shares all of this information.

So when we have section 5, this may be an area where we can ask some questions in committee because we can then get a better sense of the types of regulations that the government will be presenting to put this system in place. Normally when you do something like this, you don't like to have so many, so much of the substance of the Act in the regulations. But I can understand why this particular legislation is designed that way because of the fact that you're dealing with provinces and territories and the federal government in attempting to design what the system will actually look like.

So when the system is in place, it'll be held in place obviously in Saskatchewan with this particular bill or the law when it's enacted and then all of the regulations. And I'm certain that the minister or the officials will have more information at some point that will be able to answer some of these questions.

Now one of the powers in this legislation in section 7 is that there may be a requirement by this public body that the minister effectively sets up or I guess — what do they call it? — enters into an agreement with, so contracts with to run the system, there may be a requirement by that public body that a business has to use the common business identifier in any transactions that are designated to have that use.

So effectively, I'm sure what that means is that if any business wants to deal with the Government of Saskatchewan or any of the Crown corporations or other agencies within the purview of the government, they will be required to get a common business identifier so that it makes it simpler for the government to deal with them. This is not necessarily a bad thing. But I think the public needs to know that this initial time period of the common business identifier system being set up may include some extra work for some businesses and may require them to file more information than they have to date to make sure that they comply with this law.

To date I haven't heard any specific concerns about this here in Saskatchewan, but it is a possibility that there may be some businesses that don't want to give all of the information that's been identified in the legislation or the further information which may be required in the regulations.

Now section 8 sets out that the public body that's going to obtain the information, and we're not quite certain which public body this is, will basically provide the information to the minister. And so that the Minister of Justice will manage an



information system for the purpose of receiving and storing all this information.

Now it's a bit interesting that this legislation itself is so noncommittal on which public body will be getting this information. A couple years ago or last year, I would have said almost for certain that the information would be going to the Information Services Corporation because that's the publicly owned operation of government that does this kind of work. But given the recent information in this legislature and the bill that's before the House to privatize the Information Services Corporation, it begs the question whether this information will be going to that private corporation and beyond the total control of the government. We don't know that.

[15:00]

But I think this legislation itself is drafted in a way that doesn't clarify what public body will have all of this public information. So that raises a further line of questions that we'll be asking about when we get in committee because I think there are many businesses that would be quite curious where their information is being stored, in the same way that many individuals become very concerned about where their information is stored.

Now I don't know if the similar concerns from the Information and Privacy Commissioner are being registered about this particular legislation. And it may be that that is also something that we will have to ask the minister when we get into committee is whether there's been a sign-off by the Information and Privacy Commissioner on this particular legislation because the way it's drafted, it's not totally clear where this information will go, which public body will have it, and whether it will also be under the purview of the Information and Privacy Commissioner.

What it does do is it does provide immunity for the minister and for employees and others as it relates to the use of this information, and that's interesting. I think we'll need to know why that particular clause is there, but clearly there can be damages when sensitive information is not used in an appropriate fashion.

So going through the Act, you get through all the sections, you get finally to section 13 which is the regulatory Act. And there's a page and a half of different regulations and powers that are given to the cabinet and the Premier to set out what the rules are for this legislation. And it's lots of very simple, detailed information, but also it has some of the crucial points around who is going to manage this information, where it's going to be stored, how it's going to be used in the long term. And quite often when we have legislation that deals with information, those kinds of definitions are right in the legislation because then we will have better protection for the information. So right on the face of this one it does have some particular challenges.

Now what we know, as I said at the start, the legislation is across Canada and has been developed with other provinces and territories and the federal government, and sometimes the way the regulations are set out are to deal with all the varieties of traditions in each jurisdiction on how they deal with particular information. And so it may be that only a few of the regulatory

clauses in this section 13 apply to Saskatchewan, but that's something that we maybe will need a better explanation about when we continue looking at this particular bill.

Now the other issues that are dealt with in the regulations relate to things like fees and licence fees which are effectively a form of taxation. It's I guess more common that these kinds of taxation powers are dealt with in this kind of unknown way recently. It used to be that something like that had to be very clearly set out in legislation so everybody knew exactly what the costs were going to be for a particular process or a procedure.

Now I think that in this legislation it also has a section 14 which says that the Act and regulations prevail, so:

Subject to the regulations, this Act and the regulations prevail in the case of any conflict . . .

[of] this Act and the regulations; and

any provision of a designated enactment.

It's not a very common phrase to see in legislation and so we will obviously need an explanation of why this is put into this particular legislation as opposed to maybe some of the other legislation we have. So it's a little bit different, this legislation compared to some others that we get in the Saskatchewan legislature, but I think much of that can be attributed to the fact that it's across Canada or provinces, territories, and federal government that are involved with the drafting of the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of the legislation is to make the lives of businesses easier, to make the lives of civil servants working in the system easier when they deal with corporations. And so it has a good purpose, which we support, but we want to make sure that it's done in a way that protects crucial information to businesses and that it's done in a way that doesn't cause problems between jurisdictions across Canada.

We will have a chance to ask a number of these questions of the minister and the officials in the committee. So I'll end my comments now. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The question before the committee is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 84, *The Common Business Identifiers Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

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

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — To the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

**Bill No. 62**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 62 — *The Parks Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)*** 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 today to enter the discussion on Bill No. 62, the parks amendment Act, 2012. I'll talk a little bit about what the minister has proposed here in this Act, but I think it's important to talk about the importance of provincial parks, particularly here in Saskatchewan, what they mean to so many families and to so many people here in the province.

I know my own experience . . . I referenced this a little bit when I spoke to *The Regional Parks Act*. But camping and provincial parks or camping and parks here in Saskatchewan, I know, are often a more affordable holiday for many, many families. My own family growing up actually spent a great deal of time going to provincial parks. I'm the youngest of seven kids, and my mom was home, and so we spent a great deal of time on the road when we had holidays, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'd like to talk about some . . . And actually as an adult too, camping for me in provincial parks has been a big part of some more formative experiences, both in my own life and in my kids' lives.

And some of the parks, my own experiences . . . But the first time actually, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I ever water-skied was at Blackstrap Provincial Park which is not too far outside of Saskatoon, about 40 minutes. I have fond memories of being about nine years old and going out to Blackstrap with some friends actually and their parents, and being absolutely terrified and trying water skiing and thinking that somehow a fish was going to bite me. So I have to say my first water skiing experience was not stellar. But Blackstrap for me, that was a place that I remember trying water skiing.

It was actually Blackstrap Provincial Park when the ski hill was still open, was the first place many of us . . . I tried downhill skiing there for the first time, and I know many people here in Saskatchewan, that was their first experience as well. So I think it's a shame that the province has gotten out of the ski hill business, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know that it was a popular activity for lots of young people and lots of people I knew growing up. But for me it was again Blackstrap the first time I went skiing.

And I can remember, Mr. Deputy Speaker, actually a friend that you'd know, Celeste — my good friend Celeste from Cupar — and I were at Blackstrap. And I'd never skied before, and she and I . . . She told me, whatever you do, Danielle, don't sit down on the T-bar. So I took her advice; she was giving me good advice. And so we're sitting next to each other on the T-bar and she told me to look back at the moon. It was a beautiful Thursday night ski, a night ski. I looked back, and apparently sat down on the T-bar while I was doing it. And I

was fine, but poor Celeste went rolling down Blackstrap. So she was not very happy with me, I can tell you that, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So skiing, I never really did pick up downhill skiing, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm much more of the cross-country skiing kind of athlete, Mr. Speaker.

So Blackstrap has had fond . . . I've got fond memories of Blackstrap, and I know many people in Saskatchewan, especially in the Saskatoon area, do as well. Growing up, going to Candle Lake, those childhood memories when you're under two or three, you don't remember them very well, but I do remember car trips, riding in the big, red station wagon. And my mom will tell stories about me being an infant and she would heat my baby bottle on the campfire at Candle Lake, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I remember actually we had a huge military-style tent because there were seven of us. And the girls slept in the car and the boys slept in one tent and my mom and dad and some of the kids were in the military-style tent. But I can remember my sister Cathrine and my sister Michelle believing that there was a bear and it was a great commotion. And I would have only been about one or two years old, but those vague memories of Candle Lake are still with me today, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Cypress Hills too, in Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park . . . As I said, we did a lot of travelling. Camping for my family was one of the most affordable ways for our family to take some time off. And I know it remains the case today that if you want a vacation, that is one of the ways families do that today. So Cypress Hills for my family, I remember going to Fort Walsh as a child. Again I would have been under five when we were taking lots of these trips. And I think the neat thing about Cypress Hills Interprovincial Park is it is actually, it was the first park in Saskatchewan and Alberta to become recognized as a dark sky preserve. And it's one of the largest dark sky preserves in North America, preserving 39 600 hectares, or 97,850 football fields. I know I have a friend in Saskatoon who is a huge dark sky advocate and is very appreciative of particularly Cypress Hills. And I have yet to . . . I haven't had a chance as an adult to make my way down to Cypress Hills, but that's one of my summer travel plans, hopefully in the next few years, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Danielson Provincial Park, that was my daughter Hennessey's first camping trip ever, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that I was a little over . . . We did sleep in a tent, and she would have been about four months old. And that was the first and only time, I think, for the first couple of years where she slept overnight, slept through the night sandwiched between her mom and dad on an air mattress in the tent, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So Danielson Provincial Park was, like I said, the first camping trip for my four-month-old, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I know I'm relaying some of my experiences of provincial parks, but I know that there are very fond memories for so many people here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And it's absolutely imperative that we preserve them and ensure that there's not only recreational opportunities for people but the unique ecosystems in Saskatchewan are preserved and well taken care of as well.

Emma Lake recreational site — which is actually what this bill is about, and I will get to that in a bit — two of my siblings, two

of my brothers actually have cabins at Emma Lake, so we spend a great deal of time up there as well. And one of the big activities at Emma Lake is boating. And I'm not such a big boater, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I know that my kids really love that.

[15:15]

I think one of the things that families really appreciate about camping is, when you're a 12-year-old or a 13-year-old, those early teen years, camping trips are one of the first times where you have a little bit of independence or freedom from your parents. There's something about camping and being in that setting that kids just tend to have a little bit more freedom. I know with my own daughters, both of them — not so much my five-year-old but . . . You let them out just a little bit longer or allow them to do things just a little bit later than you would just because there's something very secure about camping with a group of people. And it's very different than obviously living in the city, Mr. Deputy Speaker, which is what I think so many of us appreciate about the opportunity who've grown up in urban settings.

You know, I've never been to Makwa Lake Provincial Park. It is on my list. But my dad actually grew up not far from there at Rapid View. He spent the first 12 years of his life on a homestead at Rapid View, which is near Loon Lake and Loon Lake is adjacent to Makwa Provincial Park. And I've heard really wonderful things about it, but I've not had an opportunity to go visit my dad's old homestead site. And I think that that's definitely one of the things on my own list, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I couldn't talk about provincial parks without talking about Pike Lake. For me as a young child, we would go to Pike Lake on occasion or school trips actually out to Pike Lake because it was only 25 minutes from our school. But I know with my own kids, that has been . . . When I was home, particularly with my oldest daughter, that was a great way to spend a day and even a weekend. I had never gone so close to home and spent a weekend until just a few years ago. And it was nice actually to only drive 25 minutes and set up. We have a little Boler trailer, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We'd set up our little Boler trailer and had a great time at Pike Lake. It's a nice little getaway, close enough to the city that you're not driving for hours and hours which any of us, any people who have children, know it's nice to save on a drive if you can, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Historic Park . . . Actually believe it or not but on my honeymoon my husband and I drove down to St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Historic Park. The petroglyphs at St. Victor are a prehistoric mystery. There's more than 300 petroglyphs at the site, and it's the only place on the Canadian Prairies where you can see the horizontal petroglyphs. And no one really knows who did the carvings or when they were done, but most experts believe that the carvings were created between 500 and 1700 AD [Anno Domini]. I don't know what inspired us on our honeymoon to drive down to St. Victor Petroglyphs Provincial Historic Park, but we thought that that would be a pretty neat trip to see part of Saskatchewan.

So I know for me, the provincial parks hold a place near and dear, both as my own experience as a child and my own start of

my adult life and with my own kids.

So I'd like to talk a little bit more about the bill specifically, Bill No. 62, *An Act to amend The Parks Act*. So what is this Act proposing? What is the minister proposing doing here, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

The first amendment establishes a new provincial park in the area of Anglin and Emma lakes. That will result in an additional 12 821 hectares of Crown lands being protected in a park that will absorb the existing Anglin Lake and Emma Lake recreational sites, resulting in a total park area of about 16 010 hectares. So that's the first thing this bill will be doing, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is establishing this new provincial park.

And I remember a couple years ago when this announcement was first made on the consultation process. And I'm glad to see that the minister has said that he's held two open houses, three trade show events, consulted with 25 various interest groups, consulted with five local First Nations and Métis groups as well as the respective provincial agencies, and consulted with local jurisdictions. He also did an online survey to reach a broader cross-section of the population. And apparently 5,500 surveys were distributed with 721 completed surveys specific to Anglin and Emma lakes.

This government has not made consultation its strong suit, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I'm glad to see in this case that there has been some more serious consultation undertaken. We had flagged that as a concern, I believe it was two years ago, when they announced that they had this plan under way. And apparently overall support for the proposed park at Anglin and Emma lakes among the general public was high, at 87 per cent, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Secondly, the minister has introduced an amendment that will remove 31 hectares of land from the Coteau Bay area and Danielson Provincial Park for the purposes of making this land available for cottage lot development. We always have concerns when land is no longer being protected, Mr. Deputy Speaker. There are some very precious ecosystems in Saskatchewan, and it is important that we ensure Crown lands, that we ensure that we keep some of these lands under protection because if we don't protect them, many others won't, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But the minister does say, "The land being removed has a low ecological integrity due to impact from the construction of Gardiner Dam." But he also said that the bill will offset the reduction to Danielson Provincial Park. The amendment adds 65 hectares of other land which contain native prairie grassland to the park.

So it was just a few years ago actually that this government removed I think it was 2 million hectares — a lot of land, a lot of land, a lot of land; I'm sorry, I can't recall the exact number right now but a great deal of the land — from provincial protection. Under *The Wildlife Habitat Protection Act*, land was removed from protection. So that was a huge concern a few years ago not only from the opposition but many, many organizations across the province, who by the way had said that the minister had said she had consulted with them, which had turned out not to be the case. So even though the minister has said here consultation was fairly thorough, it always raises a

flag for us, the consultation piece for us, when this government talks about consultation. The reason we talk about it a great deal is because this government does not have a stellar track record.

So the third amendment, the minister says:

... improves visitor safety while they are in the parks and reduces risk to our park wildlife by reducing the potential for dangerous wildlife encounters through visitor education on the proper management of dangerous wildlife attractants.

He goes on to say that “Over the past five years, our [provincial] parks have experienced record growth in visitation numbers.” So even though that’s been good news for the parks, it’s not always ... It increases the encounters with wildlife within the parks.

He mentioned the dangerous wildlife within the parks, and some of those dangerous wildlife attractants can include things like improperly stored food, greasy pots left for later cleaning, or waste improperly disposed of. I think we’ve all been at campsites where we see people who come from urban centres who are not always respectful of moving into the wilds. We talk about potentially dangerous wildlife, but I’d argue that that wildlife is only potentially dangerous because we’ve created a situation that we’re not always playing fair when we go and camp and invite those creatures to our campsite by leaving a toothbrush in your tent or a cooler out or not washing your dishes or wiping things down properly.

So the minister has said that “Education of park users is foremost in minimizing wildlife encounters, but sometimes patrons refuse to become compliant with park regulations ...” So the minister is saying that:

... enforcement officers need the ability to exercise stronger authority for those few instances. The amendment will allow park officers to remove dangerous wildlife attractants and the container they are found in from campsites to a secure storage area when the owner cannot be located ...

And which I would agree with the minister on that, that my experience again with camping, that we have to be respectful. And it’s the people who are ignorant of rules or ignorant of the habitat to which they’re entering that create problems not just for themselves, and create dangers for their own, perhaps their own children but others in the area. But they’re also creating problems for the wildlife who were there first, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I think this is a very good move, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

... the fourth amendment deals with the Steele Narrows Provincial Park where the description of the park is being adjusted to improve mapping of the park, confirm that shore lands currently shown between the waters of Makwa Lake and the current boundary of the park are part of the provincial park, and to remove a sliver of land separated from the main park area by Highway 699 so it may be transferred to the Ministry of Agriculture.

The minister says his ministry has worked with the Ministry of

Agriculture and Information Services Corporation to ensure agreement with the legal description and that the mapping of Steele Narrows Provincial Park meets with their approval, and they’ve assisted with the amendment.

As I said, I’ve never been up to the Makwa Lake area, so I can’t picture in my head this particular area, but as I said, my dad grew up not very far from there, was raised on the homestead at Rapid View and so this is an area that is on my to-do list to visit at some point, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So I think the bottom line is Bill No. 62, the parks amendment Act is doing some good things. The consultation piece I’ve raised, it sounds like the minister has done due diligence, but we always have some concerns. I think it’s important again to mention provincial parks as places of recreation for us, a good opportunity to get out of the city or our towns or just an opportunity to escape with our families, whether it’s just with our individual family or gathering for family reunions, or whether it’s fishing, swimming, canoeing, hiking, boating — all kinds of things that people love to do here in Saskatchewan.

But aside from the recreation piece, the conservation piece is absolutely imperative where within these provincial parks we’ve got some provincially significant ecosystems, landscapes, and cultural areas that need to be protected, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And that I think is what provincial parks are all about.

So with that, I do know I’ve got colleagues who are interested in speaking to Bill No. 62. And with that, I would like move to adjourn debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 62, *The Parks Amendment Act, 2012 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 63

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 63 — *The Regional Parks Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I’m pleased to rise to speak to Bill No. 63, *An Act respecting Regional Parks and making consequential amendments to other Acts*. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this legislation appears to be a consolidation of the legislative changes over quite a number of years. I think it’s important to note that it’s over 50 years now since the first regional parks legislation was introduced in this legislature.

And all of us in Saskatchewan are proud of the regional parks that have been developed. They provide a nice complement to the provincial park system, and there’s no question that every one of us has our favourite regional parks because they’re the

parks from those parts of the province where we have our families and share events at the parks.

And so it's important that the legislation deal with the particular issues that arise right now. Now I think when you look at the legislation, it does some good things. It identifies the powers of the minister, where I think that there have been some situations over the last few years where it's not entirely clear of the direct responsibility of the minister. And what this legislation tries to do is to set up a process for that. We want to make sure that that process is something that is not heavy-handed or it doesn't diminish the role of the regional parks associations. And it appears that further changes in the legislation actually will provide some help that way.

How it does that is that when powers are given to the minister, it's going to give the ability of the minister to transfer those powers to the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association. And as a former minister of Parks, I know that that organization does a very excellent job in organizing and lobbying but more importantly accrediting and marketing and actually helping the other boards for various regional parks across the province when they run into particular jams that they're having a hard time dealing with. And so I think that the way the legislation has outlined the powers for the minister and the ability to work with the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association will assist in providing good advice, good management for the parks.

[15:30]

And it's interesting, when the parks were originally created, there was a sense of the local area really having control as opposed to the provincial park system where it was run from the Saskatchewan government side. And because of that, many different ways of managing the parks developed, depending which part of the province that you were in. And so the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association has provided a good job of educating the boards and the people involved in the regional parks, and they have I think developed systems and methods of using best practices right across the province, and we want to thank them for that kind of work.

One of the anomalies or one of the problems that needed to be dealt with is that originally regional parks were set up with representation from rural municipalities and towns, sometimes cities but more often it was the towns and villages and rural municipalities that would work together to build regional parks. This legislation recognizes that often there are community organizations, non-profit organizations that are involved in the management of the parks. And I think that's a good thing to recognize, how the support for parks has evolved.

The other piece of this, which I think is helpful as well, relates to the boundaries of parks and the ability to expand or delete parts of the parks, and it sets out some procedures for doing that. And obviously we'll have questions about how some of these things will work, but it appears that the legislation has been prepared working in consultation with the Saskatchewan Regional Parks Association. So a number of the questions I think will be answered as we understand the particular problems that they're addressing and how they're being dealt with.

On a final note, I would just say that I enjoy going to regional

parks right across the province. I encourage people to buy the book that my brother edited in his series *Discover Saskatchewan*. Dr. Ralph Nilson has the *Discover Saskatchewan* series, and there is a specific book on regional parks, one on provincial parks. And now the most recent edition has both those parks together. It's a very good source for all Saskatchewan people, to go and see parks that they don't necessarily know about because you can get a little bit of a description of the park and the services that are there.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll adjourn debate because I know some other colleagues want to comment on this bill as well. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member for Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 63, *The Regional Parks Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 64

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 64** — *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act, 2012/Loi de 2012 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Regional Parks Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Mr. Deputy Speaker, glad to rise as ever to join debate on Bill No. 64, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Regional Parks Act, 2012*. These remarks may not seem to be of great consequence, Mr. Speaker, but I assure you they'll be on topic and consequential if anything.

The bill itself arises from the changes made in the legislation just discussed by my colleague, the member from Lakeview, and relate to the overall regional parks Act, changes that have been proposed in front of this House as relates to *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act* and *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act*.

From the explanatory notes brought forward with the legislation, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the existing provision, in terms of the changes proposed in these consequential amendments, the first existing provision states:

#### Where prohibited

48(1) Subject to subsection (2) and section 50, the authority shall not consider any application for any type of permit, other than a permit allowing the sale and consumption of beverage alcohol at a special occasion, for any premises located in a municipality that has passed a bylaw prohibiting the operation of permitted premises in that municipality pursuant to section 49.

48(2) then goes on to state:

The authority, on any terms it considers advisable, may issue or renew a permit respecting any premises situated in:

- (a) the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District;
- (b) a provincial park or regional park established pursuant to *The Parks Act* or *The Regional Parks Act, 1979*;
- (c) an area that, in the opinion of the authority, is a summer or winter resort area; or
- (d) a national park of Canada, subject to any regulations made pursuant to the *National Parks Act* (Canada).

Relatively straightforward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of the intent of the way that these changes ripple out through the consequential amendments and that the updates and the consequential amendments then need to made.

The next existing provision affected in this legislation is:

Establishment where no vote necessary

100 The authority, on any terms it considers advisable, and without conducting a vote of the electors as required by this section, may establish a store in:

- (a) the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District;
- (b) a provincial park established pursuant to *The Parks Act* or a regional park pursuant to *The Regional Parks Act, 1979*;
- (c) an area that, in the opinion of the authority, is a summer or winter resort area; or
- (d) a national park of Canada, subject to any regulations made pursuant to the *National Parks Act* (Canada).

Again you make the change in the legislation under *The Regional Parks Act* and it ripples forth into this and the proposed consequential amendments that are necessary.

The next provision up for change, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is section 5 in the — I'm just referring to the notes here — wherein the existing provision deals with beverage alcohol bans in campgrounds. Section 107.1(1), in this section:

“campground” means:

- (a) an area of park land designated as a public campground pursuant to *The Parks Regulations, 1991*; or
- (b) an area of a regional park designated as a public campground in a park bylaw made pursuant to clause 9(2)(c) of *The Regional Parks Act, 1979*; [wherein]

“minister” means:

- (a) with respect to a provincial park or a recreation site, the member of the Executive Council to whom for the time being the administration of *The Parks Act* is assigned; and
- (b) with respect to a regional park, the member of the

Executive Council to whom for the time being the administration of *The Regional Parks Act, 1979* is assigned.

“park land” means park land as defined in the . . . Act.

“provincial park” means a provincial park as defined in *The Parks Act*;

“recreation site” . . . [same thing, but] constituted pursuant to section 6 of *The Parks Act*;

“regional park” means a regional park established pursuant to *The Regional Parks Act, 1979*;

“regional park authority” means a regional park authority that operates a regional park pursuant to *The Regional Parks Act, 1979*.

Again, these changes are consequential arising from the changes discussed earlier by my colleague, the member from Regina Lakeview, under *The Regional Parks Act, 2012*, and the appropriate updates therein. Next provision, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with the existing provision concerning penalties:

139(1)A person who contravenes any provision of this Act or of the regulations or who contravenes an order made by the minister, the authority or the commission pursuant to this Act and for which no other penalty is specifically provided is guilty of an offense and liable on summary conviction to:

- (a) a fine of not more than \$10,000 for an individual and not more than \$50,000 for a corporation;
- (b) imprisonment for a term of not more than six months; or
- (c) both the fine and imprisonment.

Again, for the purposes of (1), (2):

“minister” means:

- (a) the member of the Executive Council to whom for the time being the administration of *The Parks Act* is assigned; and
- (b) the member of the Executive Council to whom for the time being the administration of *The Regional Parks Act, 1979* is assigned;

“other penalty” does not include a penalty that has been or may be imposed by the authority or the commission pursuant to this Act.

So again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, those changes are consequential to the proposed enactment of *The Regional Parks Act, 2012* and update references to the new Act. That's about it, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of what I'd like to say about the consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of *The Regional Parks Act, 2012*. Again, consequential amendments, you put the main legislative pebble in the water and the changes ripple forth

and they are manifest here today in these consequential amendments.

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 64, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Regional Parks Act, 2012*. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 64, *The Regional Parks Consequential Amendments Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 53

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 53 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2012 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise and speak on this bill, you know, Bill No. 53, the miscellaneous statutes repeal Act, 2012.

You know it's always interesting when we put these up, and we think these bills are dead, and they're from a bygone era, and we've not any need for them. And it's like cleaning out a basement, and you don't even look in the box, you know. And maybe you should look in the box, you know. And I think that when I look at some of these, I all of a sudden start to have lots of questions. And I think this'll be a very interesting one when we get to committee because I think that we should be careful.

Now there's some new bills that I'd like to see repealed. Like Bill 85, that might be a good one we could start with. I'd like to see that one. Or there was another one, Bill 43 from a few years ago, trespass. I'd bet that's never been used. And I don't know why it's on the books, so it'll be soon ready for the trash heap.

But that's not the issue before us today, and we will have plenty of time to talk about that in the future. But I do have some questions about the things that are in front of us today. And I know that in many ways it seems, as I said, really straightforward and, you know, it's like when we clean out the basement, don't look in the box. And then you start to find things you kind of like and move it back in. But we really should be a little careful about this.

So one of the things as I go through the minister's speech, he starts to talk about *The Crown Foundations Act*. The bill will repeal *The Crown Foundations Act*:

That Act was introduced in 1994 to allow universities to take advantage of a difference in the income tax treatment of donations made to charitable organizations and to the Crown. At that time the income tax deduction for

donations made to charitable organizations could not exceed 20 per cent of a taxpayer's income whereas donations to the Crown could be . . . 100 per cent of the taxpayer's income.

And so this Act had:

permitted Crown foundations to be established for . . . [our] two universities to act as a conduit for donations to those universities. This allowed donors to take advantage of a larger tax benefit [particularly, I would imagine, when there was significant amounts of money involved].

And so that seems relatively straightforward.

[15:45]

In 1996 the tax credit distinction between the donations to charitable organizations and donations to the Crown was eliminated. The new limit of 75 per cent of a taxpayer's income is the same for either type of donation. As there is no longer any tax advantage gained from establishing a foundation, there is no need for this Act to continue. The Crown foundations at both universities have had no activity in the past several years, and both universities support the elimination of the foundations.

Now I just want to stop there for a minute because I know the U of S [University of Saskatchewan] has run into some interesting issues in the last year or so, and I'm wondering what the implications are for that. And one of them is particularly around the Kenderdine area, which was a gift from the Kenderdine family I think, if I'm correct, from a family to the university for biology research. And from what I can recall, and I'm not 100 per cent sure on this but this will be questioned in committee, is what happened . . . the idea was that at a time when you were to give land or give gifts to the university, they were to be used for the purpose the gift had stated.

So in this case, now the Kenderdine campus had two real purposes. One was for biology students to learn a lot about biology in a field setting. And so they would go up every summer, and it was a big deal because everybody knew the lay of the land in that area and it was a major part of their field experience. The other part was an artistic part where Kenderdine and others had painted. And so this was very specific about what the intent of that gift was.

Now we're hearing lots of talk about what may actually happen to that land because ironically it's right on the fringe of the new park, and it's pretty prime real estate. Now that was a gift. Now I don't know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, all I'm just saying is there is lots of questions here. When you get rid of a foundation, was this the foundation through which that land had been given? I don't know, but I'd sure like to know.

And gifts that were given through this foundation, now maybe it was straight financial gifts and that was the only kind of gift that was accepted. But I would bet and I would not be surprised, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if there were other kinds of gifts that were given and then valued for a certain amount of money, at a price, and said this was worth 50,000 or this was worth 100,000, and then they got a tax credit based on that.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to know more about that Act than just say it's all about the tax donation deduction. Maybe it is; maybe that's the only thing it's about. But I know particularly at the University of Saskatchewan, this is becoming a big, big issue about what's going to happen to gifts that were given to the university but may actually be used for other purposes. But when they were given, the legislation was very clear that they were to be used for the purpose for which they were given or returned. Now if you get rid of this legislation, does that have an impact on that? I don't know, but we'll have to find out more when we go to committee to say, so what is the whole legislation? What is the whole thing?

Because right now both universities are under . . . And we'll hear more about this tomorrow. We'll hear a lot about this tomorrow, about the stress of what's happening to the universities. And if they can have fewer strings on some of the things that they would like to do, I'm sure they would not have a problem with that, and if they have to deal with maintaining some of their older properties when they have an option of doing something.

We saw that with the Kenderdine Campus, that here was, for actually a very small amount of money, but that was their first thing on the cutting block — very symbolic when they got rid of the Kenderdine Campus. And it was a real sad day for not only the biology students but for the art students. Many had really actually come to think of that as what they saw the University of Saskatchewan as a much bigger campus, much bigger than what is on the banks of the South Saskatchewan River, that in fact the University of Saskatchewan represented all of the province. And we start to see these changes. We have some questions.

And so this is not a simple thing. I don't know, maybe it is a simple thing, but of course the minister in his speech tends to make it a very simple thing, and so we will have questions about that. And as I said, I don't know when they just say that they've written the letters to the universities and both have supported it. We've seen what that really means in terms of consultation and what this government does in terms of consultation. They get a letter and they say, bingo. We've done it. We got the job done and we can do whatever we want. It's a licence to do whatever they want, and actually I'm not sure that people fully understand that.

So we'll have questions. And so this is a kind of thing when I say that we should move cautiously when we're repealing old pieces of legislation.

The next one — and it also is kind of interesting because I know it seemed to have got a few laughs when I was reading *Hansard* — over on the other side, the minister was talking about repealing *The Vegetable, Fruit and Honey Sales Act*, and there seems to be an inaudible interjection. Now I don't know if anybody was so mad they swore and left here — I don't know if that happened — or maybe they were laughing. But something happened, you know. I don't know what happened when that happened over there.

But it's been in place since 1947, and it permits inspectors appointed pursuant to the Act to certify that vegetables, fruits, and honey for sale in Saskatchewan meet the standards and

regulations. And he goes on to say, however, since the Act was first introduced, changes have occurred in the industries . . . to federal regulations have rendered the Act irrelevant and cumbersome.

And I just have to say, Mr. Speaker, am I wrong? Maybe I'm not . . . Maybe I'm wrong here . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Now the member from Moose Jaw, he seems to know it all. He seems to know it all. Right away he's on it and this is great. But are we not debating another bill that's called *The Animal Products Amendment Act* because of what the federal people did two years ago, off-loading? Now maybe the member from Moose Jaw North knows more about this, and he's the expert. That's the inaudible interjection over there. I think he's the inaudible interjection.

**An Hon. Member:** — What are you talking about?

**Mr. Forbes:** — What are you talking about? What are you talking about? What are you talking about?

I've got to say I find it very interesting that we have a Minister of Agriculture bringing forward *The Animal Products Amendment Act, 2012* because the federal government is walking away from its responsibilities. They've given notice two years ago because they're not going to do the inspections that they had always committed to.

But yet we are now repealing *The Vegetable, Fruit and Honey Sales Act*. Maybe it's a little premature with the government in Ottawa that maybe you should just take a little time here because, you know, maybe next year we're going to be bringing this back because the Harper government on Thursday, Harper's government on Thursday is going to be cutting more inspectors, and all of a sudden we're going to have to be inspecting our own honey, fruits, and vegetables. I think maybe we're a little premature here. I don't know because on one hand we're . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Hey, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if he's talking about immature fruit, that's when you need an inspector to tell you when your fruit is immature or not.

But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again I think this is an issue. And I think on one hand we can laugh about it, but you know we see . . . And we see this more and more, particularly . . . I know in Saskatoon we have a very active farmers' market. Regina has a very active farmers' market. And we know across the province there are many, many very active farmers' markets.

And I think that, I'm not sure what the point of repealing this . . . And we'll have questions about that too because I'm not sure if, what, they go into farmers' markets, whether it's federal inspectors who watch the honey sales there . . . And it's in my riding, the farmers' market, so I go down there very often on a Saturday morning and I see the people, you know, selling honey and, you know, I think this is a very important issue and I think that this is a critical piece. And I think we may be premature or it may be immature of the government to ask for the repeal of this at this stage. I don't know. But I think we need to think this through.

And I also think, you know, it's interesting in 1947 . . . This bill was introduced in 1947. And sometimes we think of that as the good old days, you know. And I think, and I'm not sure who



was with me on that trip to Toronto . . . Midwest legislators conference . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . What's that?

**An Hon. Member:** — You were on a trip in 1947?

**Mr. Forbes:** — No, it was just a few years ago, a few years ago. I'm glad the folks are listening over there. But, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there was a Midwest legislators conference in Toronto just a couple of years ago and we were on a tour of the Toronto food exchange. And I don't know if you've ever heard of this. It has got to be the neatest thing I've seen in a long time. It's the third largest fresh food exchange in North America. New York has the biggest one, I think Los Angeles, and then Toronto.

And what it is . . . And it was built in response to all the major highways that were being built, you know, where the interstate system that was being built in the States after World War II. And what was going to happen was there was going to affect the farmers in southern Ontario who were used to selling their fresh fruit and vegetables into Toronto, and they had to set up a system so that it would be protected. And the government of the day said yes, we're going to support it. It's like the co-op, large co-op. The farmers, the fresh fruit and vegetable farmers every day . . . We went for that tour. Our tour started like at five in the morning and it was late; he said the day's already over. What you did . . . All these trucks, they'd be loaded up about midnight, driven into Toronto with potatoes, all sorts of vegetables, and then you would see . . . then they'd be out in this parking lot, essentially, and people would come and buy them for the restaurants and the grocery stores of Toronto. You know, when you go to a fancy restaurant in Toronto and they say we bought our vegetables locally, they really did. They went down to the back market in the morning and bought their vegetables.

And it was very interesting as you go in there. And you would see these restaurateurs pull out their wallets and they would have hundred dollar . . . They would have a whack of cash. Very few people actually paid with cheques, but rolls of money. They'd buy their vegetables for the day that they needed that night in the restaurant, and they'd be back the next morning, you know, about 5 or 6 in the morning to buy the best vegetables. It was really interesting. It was not a farmers' market, like ordinary people couldn't go and buy the groceries there, but it was for restaurateurs and small grocery stores. And it was phenomenal.

So I think there was some interesting things that were happening in the late 1940s to protect, you know, the people who did this kind of thing. So I think when we talk about that, these kind of things, it brings back a hope that maybe we could do things better. I know in Saskatoon, we're trying to think of how can we have more local produce in our city. And that's a real challenge. It's not just, you know, a pipe dream. We talk about some real food issues and food security, food security, and I think that this is an important thing. So we should look back at these things and not dismiss them so out of hand, because there were some really interesting things happening.

In Toronto this food exchange has been attempted to be bought out by the big grocery stores, but they have fought hard to remain independent because it's all about being independent, and it's a phenomenal thing. And if you ever get a chance, Mr.

Deputy Speaker, to see it, you should. It's really pretty neat. And actually many of us actually see it every time we go to Toronto. If you're at the airport and you're going downtown, it's under the freeway. And Mr. Nilson, the member from Lakeview and I were there a while ago, and I pointed it out to him. I said look down there; it's underneath the freeway. And there it was, all the trucks and stuff, but very interesting. I think farmers could appreciate the fact that people make a living, but it's just, you know, a different way of doing things. And I think we need to think more about it.

So when I see this kind of bill and when I see the era it's from, I think . . . And that's the same era, the late '40s, early '50s, when we were talking about independence and, you know, the local markets and supporting the local producers and supporting our local restaurants and local grocery stores. We can do things to make it a little bit better. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm going to be very curious to ask about that too. I want to know about the farmers' markets. I want to know . . . Like maybe this is something we should've been doing. Maybe this is something we should've been doing. And what will happen with the federal producers?

[16:00]

And as I know and it's seen from yesterday, you know, the minister actually had some difficulty following the discussion around C-52. Not sure what that was about. And he said the government seemed to be on the right track, doing a better job. I'm not sure that many people would agree with that, but he seemed to think it was okay.

Are we setting ourselves up to seeing a bill in two or three years calling for a bill similar to what we're looking at in Bill No. 60 where we say, hey, the federal government business . . . Well they seem to be in the habit of doing it. So maybe we should keep what we've got and not throw this out as quickly as some in . . . I don't know what department would be asking for this kind of thing.

Anyways, so I have some real concerns about that. So those are the first two bills that we have. I do want to just say that, you know, it's also interesting that, you know, how this government, how the minister framed this, Mr. Deputy Speaker. He talks about, and I quote, Mr. Speaker, *The NewGrade Energy Inc. Act* will also be repealed. This Act was enacted to facilitate the financing, construction, development of the heavy oil upgrader in Regina. In 2007, the Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan sold its interest in NewGrade Energy Inc. and as such the Act is no longer required. End of story.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think he might have mentioned that, that of course the government realized a profit I think of \$300 million. And I think that the new government of the day that came into power in the fall of 2007, the Premier of the day said, the new Premier of the day said, the cupboard was bare; it was stark, I think, was the actual word. He couldn't believe it. Then all of a sudden he realized, no, actually there was about 200 million or 300 million there, and it was from the sale of NewGrade.

We had set . . . This government on this side had set it aside for some very exciting work when it came to environmental

projects. And we were really hoping for some new . . . a new way of how we did things in Saskatchewan. And we were excited about our green strategy. And I know, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you would actually come out to many of the meetings. You were the environmental critic at the time and you had followed that work, and this was going to be a big part of that, a big part of that. And a big part actually of even curbside recycling, all sorts of things that we were going to be able to do and this was going to finance it. But somehow that money went some other places and we're not sure where it went.

But in all now, we just have sort of a sad footnote that NewGrade, that Act is no longer with us. End of story. But for us it was a great story because it did help this province along. It really did achieve some great things. And I think that we need to see more of that kind of stuff happening where we see some bold initiatives of the government to really invest and support its people in the kind of things we can be doing. And what you can do with \$300 million is amazing, is truly amazing. We would hope that they would have used it on some green initiatives.

And of course as the government, the Premier of the day, now I don't know what he was thinking when he said the cupboard was stark; it was bare. And really it was not at all that. I mean that was quite a thing when he said that.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there's so many other things here that I know that we'll have questions about, particularly around the municipal funding and different things like that. I know that we have many questions of that. Of course now that they're relying on the Municipal Board for much of the financing . . . And I know and I realize that sometimes these things are created in response to federal initiatives and then the initiative goes away and you might as well let the bill go, you know. But I think that there were some things in here that I'm not sure that are ready for the trash heap.

I'd be interested, for example, *The Subdivisions Act*. Now it says they haven't used it in the last 25 years or haven't received an application for it, but I mean I would say that about the trespass bill this government passed five years ago. I'd bet a dollar that there's not been one charge under that bill. I don't think . . . I bet there hasn't been one, but if . . . And it sounds like the material for a written question. That's what it'll have to be, a written question. Who knows? It might end up in QP [question period]. How many times under the trespass bill has it been enforced?

So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I said, we will have questions about the university part because I do think that we need to be careful in these times that universities are very stressed, that nothing untoward is happening, unintentional or intentional. I think that it's important that people understand that this is straightforward, as the minister says. And if it is, then that's very good, and if there are any questions then we need to ask them.

And I know particularly in my riding, in my constituency, they are asking a lot about the Kenderdine. What's going to happen to it? And because it was a gift and it was a donation to the University of Saskatchewan, they expect it to stay the same. But you know, the university's giving all sorts of signals because

essentially it's closing it down.

And if we see the university . . . We don't know what's going to happen this summer because that really becomes a problem because, you know, winter right now would slow down any mischief that might happen on the campus. But as soon as spring comes it's going to be tough to maintain the buildings and property. And so we have some real concerns about that, and we don't want to see that campus abandoned for a long time. And in fact we would hope that it would return to the original use that it was meant for in terms of a biology camp and an art camp because that's really, really critical. So we have that.

And as well you know, I know that, as I say, I still don't know what this inaudible interjection . . . It might have been the member from Moose Jaw North yelling, what are you talking about? That could have been it. I don't know, because I know he often has to chirp that in.

But anyways we will be asking questions about *The Vegetable, Fruit and Honey Sales Act* as well because I think, as I said, that's an important thing when we talk about food security and if we're relying totally on the federal government when they have seemed to be not very reliable, not reliable at all. And in fact we've had to put in new legislation, and it's just a wise thing to do. It might be time to repeal this repeal.

And with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know many of my colleagues will have comments to make as well. I'd like to move adjournment of this bill. Thank you very much.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Centre has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 53, the miscellaneous statutes repeal Act, 2012. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 58

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 58** — *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2012* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today to speak to Bill No. 58, *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2012*. This is a very significant rewrite of the existing workers' compensation Act. And the minister in his comments has indicated that this came about as a result of a committee of review that did some work in 2010. And this is a review that happens in regular periods, and this is part of the process that's involved when workers' compensation is being reviewed. The executive summary of the report of the committee indicates that it's “. . . a guaranteed periodic forum for persons and organizations to describe their experiences with workers compensation in Saskatchewan.” And this has been going on since 1945 when we had Premier Douglas here in the

Legislative Assembly working for workers' rights and for employers as well, making sure that there's a fair balance in the workplace. And certainly when it comes to workers' health and safety, that's something that is very important to a modern workplace.

Now just a few comments initially on my experiences with workers' compensation. And I think this is probably the experience of most young people in Saskatchewan when they start out in the workforce. Quite often they're involved in physical labour positions. I was working as an assistant for my hometown one summer. These are summer jobs during university. I also worked out at our local regional park. And these are physical jobs where quite often injuries are prevalent. But more significantly, I worked for about six summers in northern Saskatchewan, Alberta, and BC [British Columbia] as a tree planter.

And one of the things you'll know when people are doing this kind of seasonal work, it's very, very physical work, and it's work where there are a lot of physical injuries. And certainly tree planting was no exception.

A number of people were often injured. There was different things that happened. First of all there was a regular occurrence of tendinitis in the wrists because the physical labour that you're doing as a tree planter is lifting heavy shovels with mud and all kinds of things associated with working in the soil. And then also just some people would get — because they were planting so fast — would get tendinitis from pulling the trees out of the bag, just from that repetitive action. And there were significant injuries where the swelling was visible on people's wrists either from the use of the shovel or the use of their wrist removing trees from the tree planting bag.

Falling, you know, hurting yourself climbing over trash and slash on the forest floor from the clear-cut, there's all kinds of ways people could be injured. And certainly I always was surprised that there weren't worse injuries because you're riding out in equipment, rough equipment with quad trailers, and all kinds of things could go wrong.

But generally anyone who was injured, because the company I worked for had the proper workers' compensation procedures in place and certainly safety was number one for the companies, you know, people were able to heal properly, get some time to make sure that their tendinitis was dealt with before going back to work. And it's something I think that without those programs, a number of people would simply be worse, much worse off. And as I say, much of this physical work is done by young people, university students, people that are probably in menial tasks and maybe not highly paid tasks. So the importance of the workers' compensation regime in our province and I think across the world is something that needs to be commended and recommended and lauded as a sign of a modern workplace.

I also have experience through running a company in northern Saskatchewan, where we run a campground in a cultural recreational site, and we often hire workers. And I was always, whenever paying the bills, a bit, you know, grumpy about having to pay the workers' compensation premiums because employers pay a significant amount of money into the scheme.

And understandably, you know, you collect as you're doing payroll. You would collect the workers' portion and then you would remit your portion as the employer. And you can see where it's a balance, you know. Both sides are paying for this insurance. And it's a form of insurance that assures a number of things in the workplace. So I've experienced it from both sides in the workplace, and I think it's something that's very valuable.

I was curious to know a little bit more about the history of workers' compensation, and when I looked it up I found out the origins of workers' compensation actually started in Germany. And this is back in the days when we were having the Riel Rebellion. The chancellor, Otto Von Bismarck, introduced a compulsory, state-run accident compensation system in Germany — so I found that to be very interesting — in 1884 to 1886.

So this is not new, Mr. Speaker, and I think it's certainly something that reflects the importance of this kind of program in the workplace. And as I was able to find on a website that describes the history of workers' compensation, the initial system was financed by workers and employers. So that seems to be something that's been very successful and is continued.

It moved then in the United States. It was introduced during . . . well just before World War I. So as this building was being built, it was introduced in the United States. And several states enacted this type of legislation, and then it moved into Canada. It started in Canada around 1910, at the same time. And in that case there was a judge, Mr. Justice William Meredith was appointed, and there was a Royal Commission established to study workers' compensation in Ontario.

And there's a well-known report that came out of that called the Meredith report. And you will see that referenced very early in the committee's report that came from the most recent review. In fact they talk about it on page 1 of chapter 1, and that's the Meredith principle.

[16:15]

So the Meredith report, it sort of outlines . . . This was a very important stage in workers' compensation where there was a trade-off. And it's much like we saw in no-fault insurance here in the 1990s in Saskatchewan. In this case, workers were relinquishing their right to sue their employer in exchange for compensation benefits.

So it's much like no-fault when we come to automobile insurance. And he advocated for that, this judge. He advocated for no-fault insurance, collective liability, independent administration, and exclusive jurisdiction. So the other thing that was important was that the system exists at arm's length from the government and is shielded from political influence, allowing only limited powers to the minister responsible.

And in the Meredith report he established five basic principles or cornerstones to the original laws, and this page indicates that indeed these cornerstones have remained intact over the last 100 years.

First of all, as I indicated, no-fault compensation. So no matter

what, if you're injured at the workplace, you are compensated even if you . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . We'll get to collective liability. That's the second one on the list. The minister is asking . . . I'm glad the minister is interested in the history of workers' compensation. First of all, to finish off on no-fault compensation, the important point here is both the worker and the employer waive the right to sue. And perhaps he's got his laptop open and can follow along with me as we go through this.

So that's the first principle, is no-fault compensation. There's no argument about who caused the injury or how it happened. If you're hurt, you're hurt, and fault becomes irrelevant. Providing compensation becomes the focus. So I think that's a healthy approach and one that deals with a lot of the issues that can arise when you're trying to prove fault.

So, as the minister pre-empted me, the second principle or cornerstone to workers' compensation is collective liability. And in that case the total cost of the compensation system is shared by all employers and they all contribute to a common fund. So this is something that becomes collective, and we know that collective is a good way of doing things. So it helps out the individual and it . . . You know, a single employer could be put out of business if he had an individual injured that required a lifetime of, say, wage replacement. So that was something very risky for an individual employer, but by working together collectively and putting your resources together collectively, you're able to reduce that risk by sharing it across the employers' realm.

The third one, the third cornerstone of the workers' compensation program is security of payment. So in this case the fund is established to guarantee that compensation monies will be available. So there's no threat of it being depleted. And that's why, I think, the Workers' Compensation Board always checks their revenues, makes sure that the premiums are there to sustain the workers' claims as they come in.

So again, there's security of payment. We know that employers aren't going to be put out of business in case of a catastrophic injury to one of their workers, and that fault is not something that has to be argued about. If you're injured, you're injured.

The fourth cornerstone is exclusive jurisdiction. So there's a board that's established and they're responsible for all the claims. They're the decision maker. They're the final authority and they're not bound by precedent. They have power and authority to judge each case on its individual merits. Again it removes a lot of the ability for disputes, and if disputes are available then you know lawyers are going to be available, and lawsuits, and all the complications that arise from that. So this is a simplified system that helps make payments quickly to people who are injured, which they will need, and then also the future benefits that are required.

And the fifth basic cornerstone to the Meredith proposal was that there be an independent board, and this has been preserved as well in most regimes. The governing board will be autonomous and non-political and financially independent of government or any special interest group.

So with those five basic cornerstones: no-fault compensation,

collective liability, security of payment, exclusive jurisdiction, and an independent board, we now have in our province a very modern and sustainable Workers' Compensation Board. In fact I had the pleasure of attending a ceremony last fall in Saskatoon for Saskatchewan's top 100 businesses. And interestingly enough, a large number of the most successful businesses in Saskatchewan are either co-operatives or state-owned organizations or some form of community-based organization where people pool their resources together and actually work together to build strong businesses.

We know the importance of the co-operative regime in this province, and one that sadly we don't see reflected in the current government's assignment to mandates. But we know the strength of the co-operative sector in Saskatchewan. It's incredibly important. And in fact the workmen's compensation board, Workers' Compensation Board, in terms of the top businesses in Saskatchewan, has been in the top 25 of Saskatchewan businesses over the past six years at least. I didn't look any further beyond that. But certainly the presence of the Workers' Compensation Board, the people that it's hired to work for it, the amount of money that it handles and deals with, and its independence as a business but still one that's based on the collective rights of employers and workers, is one that can't be underestimated, nor can of course the influence of most co-operatives, credit unions, and groups that came from co-operative organizations like Viterra and businesses like that.

So just a little aside there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, about the importance of these types of businesses in our economy, and certainly the Workers' Compensation Board is no exception to that.

So I wanted to take a minute at this point to talk a little bit about the minister's comments and the types of the things that he has indicated will be found in this bill. The bill itself is quite extensive. It's one of the larger bills that's being introduced in this session, and it actually has over a hundred . . . almost 200 sections to it, 201 sections in the bill. It's a comprehensive bill that comes out of the final report of *The Workers' Compensation Act* committee of review.

The minister has indicated that there's a number of changes that have come out of the review. And the ones . . . The review, I think, made quite a few recommendations: just over 55 of them, 57 recommendations came out of the review. And the minister indicated that the ones that required legislative amendments are included in *The Workers' Compensation Act*. And I haven't been able to verify whether every one of these recommendations were actually taken into account and included in the legislation, but that certainly is something that we'll be looking at when this bill moves to the committee stage, is to ensure that all of these recommendations have been considered and incorporated into this rather significant piece of legislation.

He's also indicated that the Act has been modernized and restructured to improve its readability and ease of use. And again, kudos to the good people in the ministry and in the Department of Justice who are responsible for the legislative drafting work that takes place within the Government of Saskatchewan. And I'm certain that the modernization and restructuring is something that will certainly assist the users of the legislation.

He's indicated that the bill will increase benefit levels for injured workers, and I know that's certainly some of the recommendations coming out of the report. Some of these levels have been stagnant for quite some time, and indeed we are still hearing from people who are concerned about, you know, the freeze, basically on the levels of support and benefit levels, because they're not reflective of the cost of living increases that these injured workers are subject to. You know, we see a serious increase in rents these days and cost of food and everything else, and for those who are injured and unable to work for an extended period of time, it's clear that they simply will not receive the increase in benefits that are adjusted accordingly.

The minister goes on to say that there's now a system of indexation to ensure that the benefits are going to be adjusted annually, and then workers can choose between either an annuity or receiving a lump sum payment. He indicated, though, there have been no increase to the workers' compensation benefit levels since 2005. And sadly there was a review done in 2006 that had made some recommendations, but this government has not been able to respond to that until 2013. So it's been a long haul for a lot of people that have been stuck at the 2005 levels. That's eight years ago.

So the 2006 review was done, but the board has indicated that they had to . . . nothing was acted on at that time. So the current review, the committee of review indicates on page 7 of their report in chapter 1 that they took into account the recommendations of the 2006 committee of review, especially the ones that had not been implemented. So those are now being reflected again in this 2011 report that came out in 2011.

There's other changes that he's indicated. He indicates that the bill addresses the compensation benefit levels in a manner that is fair and fiscally responsible. The test, I think, will be once the bill is implemented and the workers themselves are subjected to the new regime. We'll be able to see more whether it is indeed fair and fiscally responsible.

The minimum wage rate was going to be increased up to 59,000 for workers injured after the bill comes into force. And the board is then going to increase the maximum wage range incrementally over the next four years until it reaches, he says, 165 per cent of the average weekly range. So without any more detail, that's something that we'll have to look at in committee, as we have questions on this extensive bill.

He indicated that the bill also has a benefit formula that will ensure future changes to benefits be done in a fair, transparent, and predictable manner. And that would be a welcome change to what we have been seeing in some areas of the work this government does. So that is something else we'll look at in committee and make sure that the legislation describes what the minister is promising.

He's talking about fines that can be implied. And some administrative penalties are now being introduced, and it's also increasing the borrowing limit for the WCB, for the Workers' Compensation Board, to \$25 million. And I'm not sure why the board needs that kind of flexibility for borrowing, but I assume that if there's situations where they're short on cash, they need to do this. And that certainly is appropriate to bring it up to a

level of other provinces.

There is another obligation that's being placed on employers here to help with an employee's Return to Work program. And these programs, as he indicated, assist in maintaining an employee's connection with the workplace. And I imagine most members here have been in workplaces where there have been people coming back to work after being injured or off work for whatever reason, and I've seen those work very successfully for people where they're gradually reintroduced to the workplace and then become fully integrated if their injuries allow, as their injuries allow.

So there's a number of clarifications and codifications to the internal processes of the board. They have a fair practice office that's now codified within the legislation, and the appeal process is apparently being clarified. So the fair practices office has been around since 2003. It will continue to operate now, but he is describing it more as an internal ombudsman. So we will take a look at that as well and make sure that this is fair and transparent as he's promising.

And his final comments indicate about the removal of gender-specific language, using consistent terms, improving clarity and ease of use. And those are the kinds of changes, Mr. Speaker, that I think are, you know, the basic ongoing work of the good public servants over in the legislative branch who are responsible for ensuring that the wishes of the government are properly reflected and the rights of the people are reflected as well in the drafting of legislation.

So as I indicated, the committee of review submitted its final report in 2011 and the bill itself has taken its guidance from that bill. There's a few things that I think are of great importance to workers. As I indicated, the Meredith principle itself is one that guides the thinking behind this.

There are other principles that are indicated and different themes which guided the committee in their work. One of them is prevention, and again I think this is something that we have seen significant advancements in the workplace. And I would presume it's been ongoing right since the day a workplace existed. We don't want injuries; we want safe practices. And I know certainly in the field of tree planting, for example, the safety practices have evolved incredibly from the early '80s, mid '70s when this type of work became more prevalent in the Saskatchewan forestry industry anyways.

[16:30]

And certainly safety first has become the theme for a lot of these companies. And I see significant changes in sort of the types of first aid equipment that are available and the care that's being taken to ensure that the workers are safe. So prevention is very much, I think, at the forefront of most employers' thinking. And that's something that guides not only employers and workers, but it's obviously guided the work of this commission.

The other principles that they're working on are things like inclusion, the service to stakeholders because the board itself knows that it's the stakeholders that are at their best interests. So they're making sure that the board's ability to provide good service to the stakeholders is important.

The other notion that's guided the review was the notion of fairness. And obviously this board has to be seen as fair in all aspects of the work that it does to all its stakeholders, not only the employers but the workers. And you know, people need to feel that the claims are being fairly adjudicated and that payments are reasonable. So that's one of the principles that the committee of review was interested in.

The improvement of the work, operations of the board itself, obviously something that's important. And finally accountability, which is something people really look for in any kind of organization that's handling premiums, or funds, or workers' funds and things like that.

I won't go through all of the 59, or 57 recommendations. They're certainly located within the report itself, and there's a good summary and costing section at the end of the report if people are interested in looking at it. There's a summary of recommendations by chapter, and the final section shows a bunch of figures and rates based on the claims that the WCB has been receiving. So you can see some very interesting history and information about the types of work that the WCB has been doing.

Just with respect to the bill itself, I'll make some final comments about how the bill is structured. And you can see, through these comments, the extent of the legislation and the extent of the work that this very important board does.

So the first section of the Act is, of course, just the preliminary matters. And the second section of the Act talks about the scope. I believe most workers in Saskatchewan are covered by this bill. I think some agricultural workers and self-employed people are not, although I believe there are provisions for people to buy in if they're self-employed. Teachers are not covered by . . . My colleague from Saskatoon Centre indicates teachers are not covered by the workmen's compensation and I'm sure there are other workers' groups that aren't included, but that's one of the recommendations. In fact I think the very first recommendation is that all workers be included. And I'm just going to verify that that is the case . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . We're getting lots of help from members opposite.

But recommendation no. 1 of the 2011 report is that *The Workers' Compensation Act* apply to all employees in Saskatchewan with no exclusions. So if that recommendation is being taken into account, maybe we'll have that question in committee and make sure that that recommendation is indeed being applied. Historically, self-employed people, it was more difficult to establish what the correct replacement would be for their wages. So that's one of the concerns that I think the board has struggled with over the years.

The third part of the Act deals with the board itself. So the first division in the third part talks about how the board is established, what the terms are, the vacancies, what the remuneration is, head office, all those kinds of things, CEOs. The second division in that section talks about the duties and jurisdiction of the board, so that is administrative stuff.

The meat of the bill is found in part IV of the bill and it's split into a number of divisions. Let's see, we have 11 divisions. The

first division is eligibility, so that's always a question is whether if someone's injured they're actually eligible. And obviously one of the presumptions of the application of this bill is that the injury would be presumed out of and in the course of employment. So that's one of the basic premises we're talking about here.

Certain occupational diseases regarding firefighters, and this is a presumption for those people who are often forced to breathe in dangerous fumes. Certainly we've heard lots about asbestos-related cancer recently which is a work-related form of cancer, that mesothelioma and those kinds of things where people actually become gravely and critically ill and often end up with a fatal illness, you know, as they're not able to work as their illness progresses. This is the type of bill that would provide them with at least some financial assistance when they're no longer able to work because of a workplace acquired injury.

So the first division of this compensation part deals with eligibility. The second division is the right of action respecting injury. So this is, I believe, the section where there's no ability to bring a lawsuit but you can go to the board for your right of action.

The third is the division, division 3 in this section is the claims for compensation. So it talks about how to apply for compensation, what happens if there's a pre-existing condition, what happens if you're a worker in training. And I would think for young people that are seriously injured in their course of being trained, this could have a significant impact on them for the rest of their work life. So there has to be ability for those types of people to be looked after as well.

Division 4, it talks about the duties — duties of the worker, duties of the employer to notify the board. And indeed some of the comments that you find in the committee of review indicate that there's a tendency for employers to discourage their employees from reporting their illness, and there may be tendencies for certain employees to overemphasize their illness or fabricate it. So there's duties listed in the division 4 of this section that talk to that.

Division 5 is regarding the medical examination claimant, the process the claimant needs to go for medical examination.

Division 6 talks about the compensation to workers. This is probably the most important part of the bill and one that requires close review. But certainly what happens if somebody's 63 years of age and gets injured? How long do their payments apply? What percentage of your compensation will be set aside for an annuity when you turn 65 and would normally retire if you weren't working? Those of us who are working have to put aside our own, some of us more than others. But if you are injured and not able to work, then there are provisions for an annuity or a retirement fund.

There's all kinds of things that are really important in this: the formulas used for minimum compensation, the formulas used for maximum compensation, and how those are dealt with in the former Act. Because this Act is replacing the former Act, the 1977 workers' compensation Act. So all those things are factored into that division.

Division 7 talks about compensation to dependants, and this is in the case of the death of a worker. And I know here in this Assembly we take time every year to acknowledge the tragedies when people are killed in the workplace. This bill provides for compensation for the dependants of the people who are killed in the workplace.

Division 8 is a general division.

Division 9 is a review of compensation and levies so that a worker can request a review or they can be cut off of compensation in certain circumstances.

Division 10 talks about medical and surgical aid and all the rehabilitation that needs to take place when a worker is injured. And I have known of many people who have benefited from the workmen's compensation board. I know there are some frustrations, and indeed I think as MLAs we often get calls with people who are struggling with the process and with the decisions that are made by the board. And it's like any insurance scheme, you know. People aren't always going to be happy with the levels that they get. And there may be some fairness issues, and that's our role as MLAs to ensure that the people who are struggling with the board are fairly treated.

Part V talks about the fund itself. So obviously the board manages some significant amounts of money in order to make the payouts that they need to do and collect the premiums. So there's several . . . That's also a large part of the Act. There's a number of divisions in there. It talks about the fund itself, how statements need to be made by employers, inspections and inquiries, how the employers and the principals and the contractors are worked with. And then part VI is a very long part of this section and it deals with assessments. And those are the ones, the forms that I remember filling out as an employer, where you had to report on how many employees you had, what kind of payroll you had, and then your assessments would be calculated accordingly.

There's a number of other parts. Part VII is the "Other Matters" part. It talks about advocates and committees of review. And I know the minister referred to the committee of review in his comments when he introduced the bill. And then there's the miscellaneous and the regulations.

So as I indicated at the outset, Mr. Speaker, this is a fairly comprehensive process. It's a very comprehensive replacement of the . . . I think it was the 1977 workers' compensation Act . . . 1979. And we'll have questions when we get to committee. And certainly we'll watch this, if and when the bill gets passed, as to whether it's accomplishing the goals that the minister identified in his comments on November 6. So at that point, I know other of my colleagues want to speak to this bill, and I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 58, *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2012*.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 58, *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

## Bill No. 61

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. McMorris that **Bill No. 61 — *The Railway Amendment Act, 2012*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I'm glad . . .

[Applause]

**Mr. Forbes:** — I'm glad . . . It must be the topic, Mr. Speaker. They're anxious to hear about *The Railway Act*. It's not because of me. I'm sure it's not me they're clapping for. It's *The Railway Act*, and it's a fine piece of legislation. I just have a few questions about it, though. But I do have a few comments to make, so I won't disappoint the crowd. I won't disappoint the crowd, because it is . . . As you know and I would know, we all appreciate how important the railways are in this province, this fine province. And so as I was looking through this, I thought I do have, I do have some things to say about this. And I know . . . I do appreciate the warm welcome, though, I must say. I must . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . That's right.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as I often do, I like to refer and reflect on what the minister says because quite often it's helpful. Sometimes not as much as other times, but most often it is helpful. And I know that the minister really was quite quick to the point here, and he talks about how *The Railway Amendment Act*, Bill 61, 2012, outlines the railway abandonment process which requires railway owners to offer to sell their railway lines to interested parties before being allowed to permanently abandon their railway.

And I think this is an important thing, you know, Mr. Speaker. I think that as . . . And I don't know if this has much to do with downtown Saskatoon. My riding in the heart of Saskatoon is a very urban riding. We don't often think about abandoned rail lines, but we do, and in fact we wish that sometimes those rail lines were a little bit more abandoned, how busy they are, and what we can do about rail lines.

So this is an issue that I think . . . I can't think of a single person in Saskatchewan who may not have some comments to make about railway lines and what we should be doing about this. So I think this is an important topic.

And he talks about how the abandonment process requires that a railway owner first advertise their intentions to either sell or abandon the line and invite any expressions of interest from buyers. And so he talks about how currently the Highway Traffic Board doesn't have sufficient authority to remedy this situation when perhaps the buyer or the sellers are negotiating in bad faith.

So in this case they want to set the stage a little bit more constructively, so we can actually see these things dealt with appropriately. In the government purchase phase, the municipal government is required to either decline or accept the offer to purchase the net salvage value within 60 days. And that's an important thing. So what is net salvage value? Well that's the

cost of the steel of the lines. And that's no small thing. That's no small thing, but it's important. And so they can go from there.

[16:45]

It's proposed that *The Railway Act* be amended to adopt the following provisions to address the bad faith negotiation allegations against the seller during the sell phase. They're proposing the Highway Traffic Board has a way to evaluate the dispute and if necessary issue an order to the parties to enter an agreement which the board believes is fair and reasonable. So in fact it sounds like a bit of arbitration and I think that's fair enough. And so I think that's good.

And he goes on to say:

In order to give municipal governments more comfort in their decision to accept the offer to purchase, we are proposing the amendment that will allow . . . [them] the opportunity to request a net salvage value cost estimate before accepting the offer.

I think that's only fair. They know how much the estimate is and how much it would take to reach a fair agreement. So that's straightforward and I think that's important.

But I just want to take a few minutes to talk about how important our railways are in Saskatchewan. And of course we often think about that, you know, particularly when it came to the pioneers and the settlement of Western Canada and how important the rail lines were in building our farming communities, but also our urban communities and what that meant, and interestingly actually in terms of building a healthy middle class in Western Canada.

Interestingly I was reading last night, as I was preparing for some other bills, how important the rail line was to establishing some income for both the local people but also bring tradespeople out here, and it was essentially our first major industrial projects. It was our first major capital investments, and it was significant. So our railway lines are important.

And as I understand and we've done some research on this actually, it's very interesting that we have now 13 short line railways. That's pretty . . . I would not have known that. I think that's impressive. Some own their own operating equipment, their units. Others do not. Some actually, it's interesting what they . . . we often think that they just ship grain. But actually Long Creek Railway, it's a short line railroad that runs from Estevan to Tribune, about 41 miles, and they're starting with shipping oil and there will be grain traffic to haul once the harvest is on its way. So it's oil down in the South, the southeast corner, but I know up in the northern central part of the province it's wood, wood products that's on these lines. So it's very good. So I think that's interesting.

So we have Thunder Rail that's out of Arborfield; Carlton Trail Railway out of Prince Albert; the Red Coat Road & Rail out of Viceroy; Southern Rails Cooperative out of Avonlea; Great Western Railway, Westcan Rail out of Shaunavon; Fife Lake Railway out of Coronach; Torch River Rail out of Choceland; Wheatland Railway out of Cudworth; Great Sandhills Railway,

Leader; Last Mountain Railway out of Regina; Stewart Southern out of Fillmore; Big Sky out of Regina; Long Creek out of Tribune.

And so as well, most of these seem to be in the South. And of course this is a long process that many of us have been following for many years, the abandonment process, and what that meant in rural Saskatchewan. Of course we can remember those days when we were talking about the death of small communities, and of course in many ways they were because no longer would people be hauling grain to the local elevator. But also it was a major source of income for the local RMs, and when that kind of stuff went, it hurt in more than one way. And so when you see these things coming back and the initiative and ingenuity of local producers to do this, this is just great. This is absolutely excellent.

But we do worry about . . . Like yesterday we raised questions. Bill C-52 I imagine impacts this, the willingness of the major rail companies to do in good faith what they're obligated to do. And this is a worry because if people are investing in shortline railways that they want to make sure that they can actually work, that they can actually work. And quite often they're reluctant to do this, and we see that if there can be more profit in hauling out of other circumstances, out of other situations, then that's where the money will go. And so we have to make sure that legislation like C-52 — a federal bill but has huge implications provincially — has the teeth to do what it's supposed to do.

And so that's why we were asking questions about this yesterday. Well what started out to be a very good idea by the federal NDP has seemed to have taken a bit of a U-turn on the rail line, and you don't want to see them backing up on the rail line, and it seems to be a problem here with the major rail lines. And so we have some concerns about that, and we'll be asking those kind of questions when this bill goes to committee.

But it is interesting that it talks about 2000 kilometres of rail line. I'd be curious to know how that compares to how many kilometres of STC [Saskatchewan Transportation Company] line we have. How many kilometres does the STC actually travel? Now if I had an iPad, I would look that up. But I don't have an iPad, so I'm just, I'm thinking it would be a good question for a written question — STC, how many kilometres? It would be an interesting comparison.

Also on this information it talks about amusement parks, a Western Development Museum shortline 101 in Moose Jaw — now I don't think that's more than 1 kilometre — the Claybank Historical Society, what they operate. I haven't been. I have not been there, so I don't know what kind of rail line they have. But also one at Hudson Bay Park. You know, I think this is interesting when you see the responsibility of government and the impact it has in different ways. I think this is important.

Also industrial railways, and apparently there are 20 industrial railways throughout the province. And where they would be, I'm not sure. I would think the old Weyerhaeuser plant, IPSCO definitely would have, you know. But 20, that's pretty significant. How many kilometres would be involved in that?

Now I think that clearly this is a straightforward piece of



legislation, but we do have some questions about that and what the implications are.

You know, Mr. Deputy Speaker — and I know time is going — there's a couple points I did want to make on this. I was . . .

**An Hon. Member:** — David, that's Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Forbes:** — Mr. Speaker. I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. But there is a couple points in here. I was surprised about this: the cleanup of abandoned right-of-ways. And there is no specific federal or provincial legislation requiring cleanup, a reclamation of a railway right-of-way after the operations have been discontinued. However the municipal governments do have some authority to deal with the problems as they arise.

And so they talk about a couple of bills that they have, talking about refuse and waste control in relation to nuisances and untidy and unsightly premises, *The Noxious Weeds Act*. And they can also do some work under *The Planning and Development Act*. But I'm surprised that they're not regulated under some environmental legislation that they would have to do more. I'm surprised about that. And so that's an interesting thing, so we may want to explore that a little further.

The other one that I thought was interesting was working with the Trans Canada Trail Foundation. And as many of the folks here would know, the Trans Canada Trail Foundation is a non-profit organization with the goal of developing a multi-use trail system across the country. Now in 1999 the foundation received a donation from CPR [Canadian Pacific Railway] and CNR [Canadian National Railways] consisting of almost 900 kilometres of abandoned right-of-ways. Now it'd be interesting to know how much of this is being used to date, and it was being converted into trails for hiking, snowmobiling, or cycling.

So what has been . . . But it says a large portion of the right-of-way has been left undeveloped. And so what has been . . . What is the state of that? And again they talk about what can the Trans Canada Trail or TCT be forced . . . Can they be forced to clean up the donated right-of-way received from the federal railways? And of course it's the same three Acts that they talk about: *The Noxious Weeds Act*; *The Municipalities Act* under section 8(1)(b). And one part of it refers to waste and refuse and the other, nuisance — unsightly, untidy property.

But again it would be interesting in terms of . . . And we'll have questions about the legislation, whether or not the process could include the Trans Canada Trail folks and what's the plan to . . . I mean, because clearly, clearly when they have 900 kilometres of trail or old lines and we have 2,000 they have about one-third of the trails, of the abandoned lines. So they're a significant player I would think. They would have by far more than any one of the 13 shortline, but of course they're not operating in the same way. But I would think that they would have some questions about this.

And I think they're a very worthwhile group. I think it's a wonderful idea how we have developed a . . . You know, we want to have a more healthy lifestyle, and whether that's hiking, cycling, or snowmobiling, it's a good reuse of this land. But I'd be curious from the minister whether or not they have actually talked to the Trans Canada Trail folks and what's the

implication of this for them. Do they have any questions about this or any comments, you know? I mean right away when I look at the first section of the bill, dismantling of the rail line, section 22.1(1) it says:

In this section, 'interested person' means a person who, pursuant to subsection (4), makes known his or her interest in buying, leasing, or acquiring a railway line or part of a railway line.

I think the Trans Canada Trail would be part of that.

But I think this is important, and I think that we would have questions on this. I know many of my colleagues will want to speak at some point on this. And as I said, railways are a huge part of who we are in Saskatchewan. And I think that whenever we can debate issues like this, it's very important. And particularly in terms of the heritage aspect, particularly in terms of the industrial part of this, I think that there is much that we can be doing.

So, Mr. Speaker, I do want to say that I would like to adjourn Bill No. 61, *An Act to amend The Railway Act*. Thank you very much.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate of Bill No. 61, *The Railway Amendment Act, 2012*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the attendance by all members at the embargoed budget lock-up, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 16:59.]

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