



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

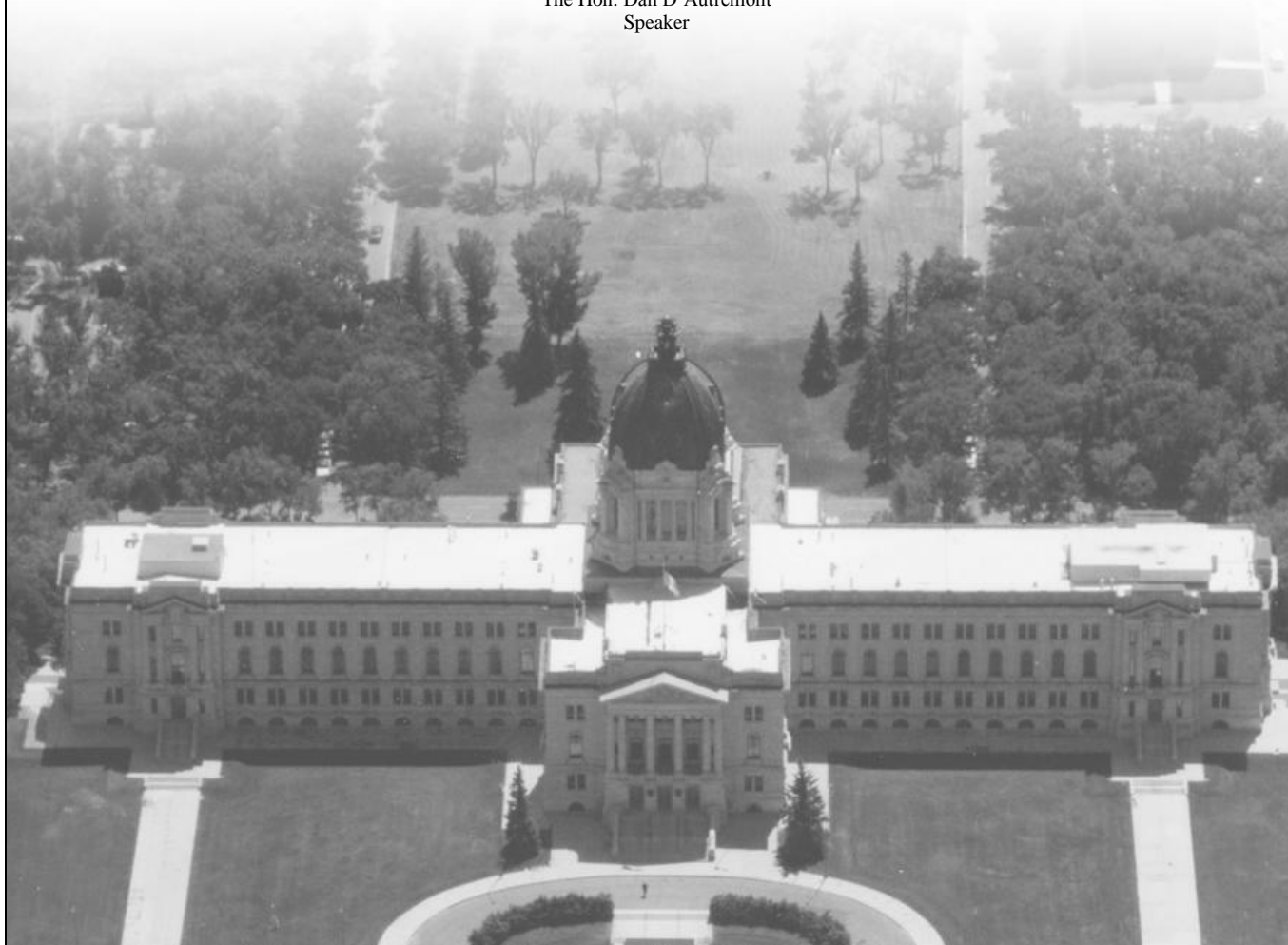
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Speaker



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

Name of Member	Political Affiliation	Constituency
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, 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 Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour for me to be able to introduce to you, and then through you to all members of the Assembly and to our guests, some very special people that are seated in your gallery. We're going to hear more about them in a moment in a member's statement, I think. But we're pleased to welcome today Michael Regan and his mom, Tania. He should give us a wave, and there's his mom, right? And Joel Galenzoski-Deis who is also here with his dad, Ryan.

Mr. Speaker, they've joined us today to celebrate important recognitions that have been bestowed upon Michael for his very courageous efforts and his cool demeanour when he was forced to make a crucial EMS [emergency medical services] call to help his friend. Again we're going to hear more about that in a moment, Mr. Speaker, but I want to welcome them and ask all members to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly today.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in welcoming Michael and Joel along with parents. Sounds like an interesting member's statement we're about to have. I'm interested to hear more. And it's inspiring, Mr. Speaker, to always see young people who are doing important things here in the province and leading by example. So I'd like to join with the Premier on behalf of the official opposition and welcome these guests to the legislature. Thank you for being here today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Central Services.

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today in your gallery are 14 public services employees who are here participating in a parliamentary program for the public service. Participants come from a variety of ministries: Advanced Ed, Agriculture, Central Services, Economy, Environment, Government Relations, Health, Highways, Justice, Public Service Commission, and Social Services. I think that covers probably all of us.

They are taking part in various things today, including a tour of the building and watching the proceedings today. And I'm going to have the opportunity directly after question period, I believe, to meet with them and explain what it's like to spend a day in the life of a politician in this building — and some days are better than others, but today is a pretty good day — and answer some of their questions. So I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon

Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to join with the Minister for the Public Service Commission to welcome the professional public servants here today. Saskatchewan has a long track record of a professional public service that helps build and shape good public policies dating back to the 1940s that we've exported to other parts of the country, Mr. Speaker. So I'd like to say welcome today to your Legislative Assembly, and I believe that I'll have an opportunity to chat with you after the minister. So I look forward to that as well, and answering any questions and telling you a little bit about what it's like to be an opposition politician.

As well, in the west gallery, I would like to welcome some folks from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Canada. Today I believe the minister will probably be doing the same as well. But today we have here Bruce MacDonald, Wayne Wiens, Irma Van De Bon, Kim Megyesi. The youth involved: Brandi Thomas, Avery Cornelius, Ryan Hamilton, Nicolaus Goertzen, and Meghan Remy.

We appreciated the opportunity earlier today to hear a little bit more about Big Brothers and Big Sisters in our caucus meeting, and we look forward to hearing more tonight at the reception. And thank the organization for all the good work that they do in ensuring that youth have the supports that they need to grow into the full citizens that they have, should have the opportunity to be. So thank you so much for all the work that you do in Saskatchewan and in Canada as well. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Saskatoon Riversdale in welcoming the representatives from Big Brothers Big Sisters to the legislature today, to their Assembly.

With them as the member did introduce some of them: Bruce MacDonald, CEO [chief executive officer] of Big Brothers Big Sisters Canada; Irma Van De Bon-Nicol, Yorkton ED [executive director]; Wayne Wiens, Saskatoon ED; Kim Megyesi, Saskatoon; Brenda Robinson, Lloydminster; Sharla Sept, Weyburn; Anne Lindemann, Regina; Ash Noureldin, Regina; Kendra Strong-Garcia, Regina; Catherine Gibbs, Regina; Jodie Palaniuk, Regina; Erin Skoretz, Regina; Stacey Poss, Humboldt, ED.

And from the Little Brothers and Sisters, Mr. Speaker, Brandi Thomas of Yorkton; Avery Cornelius, Churchbridge; Ryan Hamilton, Yorkton; Nicolaus Goertzen, Saskatoon; Meghan Remy, Saskatoon; Conry Hessdorfer for Humboldt; Brent Dawood, Humboldt; Jennifer Koffing, Humboldt.

One other person I'd like to point out in the Assembly with them is Jennifer Faryon of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. And the reason for that is, Jennifer is actually related to me, is the niece of my brother. I consider all the Faryon girls my nieces as well. And I'd just like to welcome her specifically to the Assembly and ask all members to join me in welcoming all the representatives of Big Brothers Big Sisters to their Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce two individuals seated in the west gallery, Sheryl Rosom and Ashley Rosom. Sheryl is my aunt and Ashley is my cousin, and it's great to have them here in the Assembly today. They're residents of Regina. Sheryl works for the city of Regina and Ashley is a kinesiology grad from the U of R [University of Regina].

And when I was first elected in '07, I crashed at their house for a few months. So they've always been very hospitable and welcoming of me. So I'd welcome them here to the legislature. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, sitting in the east gallery and down on the floor of the Assembly here today, I'm proud to welcome some students from A.E. Peacock Collegiate in Moose Jaw, along with their teachers here today. I'll welcome their teachers, Mr. Stephen Lys along with his wife Catherine Lys that have joined us here today. Catherine's a public health nurse here in Regina. Mr. Redstone is here. Ms. Prokopetz is here.

And I had a brief chance to visit these students before proceedings here today. And I look forward to sharing a very interesting venture that they're involved with, as a class, very shortly that might be quite literally out of this world, Mr. Speaker. But I'll ask all members at this time to welcome these students, these teachers to their Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the member opposite as well. I'd like to join in welcoming the students from A.E. Peacock School. I had the great pleasure of visiting A.E. Peacock last . . . Well, I guess, this winter I was presented with a pair of beautiful orange socks as we celebrated their charity fundraising event. And so I'd have my colleagues welcome A.E. Peacock to the Chamber. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there's not too many groups that get three introductions, but I too would like to welcome Mr. Lys and the grade 11 class from A.E. Peacock in Moose Jaw. A.E. Peacock is actually in my constituency, Moose Jaw North. And they're one of the largest, well they are the largest school, the high school in Moose Jaw with a wide range of programs and courses including pre-university and some college academics.

I had the privilege of talking to the grade 12 class just last fall and found them to be an enthusiastic group, wanting to learn and eager to . . . and very interested. Peacock is a very interesting high school in Moose Jaw and they have got a lot of extracurricular as far as sports and drama and music. You'll recall, Mr. Speaker, that they won provincial awards with their Junior Achievement and also national awards through the

Junior Achievement program. So I want to welcome them here, and ask all my colleagues to also welcome the class of A.E. Peacock to this Assembly.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seated in your gallery is an old friend of mine, Terry Sinnett, wearing a lovely Dog River Howler rugby jersey, it looks like. And Terry and I had worked together at Dale's House for many, many years, and certainly appreciate the work that he's always done, plus his co-workers. And just wanted to welcome him to his 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 proud today to rise to present a petition in reference to cellphone service, Mr. Speaker. The people that have signed this petition are asking for better cellphone coverage for the North, and the prayer reads as follows:

To 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 Nation, 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 Nations along with the community of Turnor Lake, including all the neighbouring communities in each of these areas.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition have signed this petition from all throughout Saskatchewan, a great show of support. But the petition I'm presenting today are people that have signed the petition are primarily from Dillon, Saskatchewan. 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 greater protection for renters from unreasonable rent increases. And we know on February 28th, tenants at 2221 Robinson Street in Regina, an apartment building purchased by Castle Mountain Properties on February 1st, 2013, received notices of rent increases as large as 77 per cent. And this is a petition that the tenants put together and had done in the media and that type of thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, we know that with a growing shortage of quality, affordable rental accommodations available in cities across Saskatchewan, property management companies are buying up property, increasing rents by amounts that are unreasonable, unfair, and to many are basically an eviction notice. I'd like to read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize that these increases are

unfair. It should not be allowed by law.

Furthermore, we pray that the government immediately enact legislation to regulate the amounts that rents can be increased, and protect these renters and all renters across Saskatchewan from receiving rent increases so large and unfair that they amount to eviction notices.

Mr. Speaker, I do so present. Thank you.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Youth Receives Emergency Medical Services Awards

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize Michael Regan, who is seated in your gallery today. Michael is 12 years old, attends Lumsden Elementary School in Thunder Creek constituency, and is here with his mom Tania, his good friend Joel Galenzoski-Deis, and Joel's dad, Ryan.

Michael recently received two prestigious emergency medical services awards for helping his friend Joel who was in dire need of help. The incident happened during a sleepover at Michael's Lumsden home in December. Joel woke up and wasn't feeling well. His condition worsened and he had a seizure. Michael was the only other person at home. He took action. He phoned his mom at work and then 911.

Michael overcame his fears and was able to help Joel and provide a really good description of what Joel was dealing with until the paramedics arrived. Michael had rolled Joel onto his side to prevent him from choking, and closely updated 911 communications specialists on Joel's condition.

In recognition of Michael's efforts, the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region Emergency Medical Services presented him, on January 25th, with the Director's Commendation, the highest civilian honour. Michael also received an induction coin. He is the first civilian to ever receive this award from the health region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this honourable Assembly to join me in recognizing Michael on his achievements and the receipt of the prestigious EMS awards.

[13:45]

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

AIDS Programs Life Skills Graduation

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last night I had the honour of attending and bringing words of congratulations to a very special and inspiring event. Last night saw the graduation ceremony for the life skills class at AIDS [acquired immune deficiency syndrome] Programs South Saskatchewan. The ceremony saw the graduation of eight very courageous and determined women from the empowering families and individuals life skills program.

To get through, the program demands a tremendous commitment on the part of participants and requires a lot of support from friends and family. And last night that determination and support paid off with reaching the goal of graduation. And as one of the grads said, Mr. Speaker, "Once you achieve one goal, you want to achieve another." And certainly it was great to hear the proud statement of future goals by the grads in terms of education, employment, and healthy living.

Thanks to everyone on the board and staff at AIDS Program South Saskatchewan for their great work. A special shout-out goes to relatively new APSS [AIDS Programs South Saskatchewan] Executive Director Sope Ogunrinde, an old friend of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and a huge thank you very much to program leader, Doreen Lloyd. She makes a very real and positive difference in so many lives.

Finally congratulations to the graduates and their families. Congratulations to the wonderful MC [master of ceremonies] Nicole Leont, to Anna Marie Henry, Sarah Lee Tobacco, and Charlie Wahpooseyan. And congratulations to four more graduates representing a remarkable three generations of one family: Tanya, Deanne, and Chenique Desjarlais, and Wanda Manitopyes.

Graduates, keep on living in that good way and keep on making us all very proud of you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Business Supports Close Cuts for Cancer

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House to bring to the attention of the Assembly yet another new business in Yorkton. Mr. Mikes Steakhouse Casual, Yorkton, is one of the latest to open in my hometown, among many retail, manufacturing, processing, service industry, and hospitality businesses.

What is special about this locally owned and soon to be expanding province-wide business is its owners in their community involvement. Dave Nussbaumer, Mark Butchko, Dr. Andy Van Heerden, Arlan Maddaford, Glen Gelowitz, Blaine Buckle, and manager Barry Hilderman wanted to do something special during their opening and support a local charity. During the initial three-day invitation-only dry run of the restaurant, donations were collected and staff offered up their tips.

On their grand opening day of March 16th, they donated an amount equal to 10 per cent of their day's sales. The official amount collected, \$8,750, went to a cause very close to my heart, named in memory of someone very special to me. Funds were directed through the Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer local initiatives fund, through the Health Foundation, to expand and enhance the services offered by the community oncology program at the Yorkton Regional Health Centre. This will offer cancer patients more space and local treatment options.

Mr. Speaker, my family is so thankful to the owners of Mr. Mikes and all the people involved in this, and so many other

initiatives over the past 16 years that has helped Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer raise almost \$700,000 for cancer research and local initiatives that strive to find a cure and make the lives of those battling this disease a little better. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Let's Launch the Saskatchewanaut

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, Stephen Lys has ideas and drive that could potentially take him places literally out of this world. You see, Stephen is also known as the Saskatchewanaut. By day he is a teacher at A.E. collegiate in Moose Jaw.

In January he entered a space race competition by AXE to send 21 civilians into low Earth orbit in a private, two-passenger spacecraft. Yes, his first goal is to enter space, but secondly he plans to educate his students on the experience for the next 20 years. To qualify, he needs to collect as many votes online as possible before August 31st. If successful, he will attend a five-day astronaut training camp in Orlando, Florida. To win this competition, Stephen needs the support of an entire province. Currently, Stephen is among the top two competitors here in Canada.

Stephen sees this competition as more than just a chance to go into space. He wants his students to become excited about science. The potential exists for the first teacher-astronaut to be a science teacher from Saskatchewan. It's a special opportunity for our province and for our students.

I invite everyone to visit Stephen's Facebook page at Saskatchewanaut, and of course to vote and promote this endeavour. And I would ask this Assembly to congratulate Mr. Stephen Lys on his work thus far to earn this opportunity and for already effectively engaging and exciting his students about science. Let's launch the Saskatchewanaut into orbit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Scouts Awards Ceremony

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I had the honour of bringing greetings on behalf of the province at the annual awards ceremony for the Saskatchewan scouts and leaders. The ceremony recognizes the amazing efforts and dedication of Saskatchewan scout youth and adult leaders.

I would like to identify some of these impressive awards that were presented: the Chief Scout's Award for completing a number of requirements identified in the scout program; the Medal of the Maple for Distinguished Youth Service, an award created by the members of the national youth committee designed to honour those youth who have significantly contributed to the movement and the spirit of scouting. The Gallantry Award for especially meritorious conduct was presented to one of the youth members. The Outstanding Service to Scouts Award to recognize youth leaders and adult leaders, and the awards for Adult Long Service of 10 to 35 years was also presented.

Mr. Speaker, it was an inspiring event to see all the worthy scout members receive these prestigious awards. I ask all members of the Assembly join me in recognizing the award recipients, as well the 100,000 scout members across the country for their dedication and service to their organization, their communities, their province, and to their country. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Cupar Canucks Win Championships

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, many communities in rural Saskatchewan will be turning off their ice plants this weekend to mark the end of another hockey season, and that certainly is the case in my hometown community of Cupar. But Mr. Speaker, I must tell you that they will be marking an extremely successful hockey program this year, especially when it comes to our senior hockey team, the Cupar Canucks, who last Friday evening defeated the Wynyard Monarchs to claim the Highway Hockey League Championship, which is without a doubt the most competitive senior hockey league in all of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

But there's certainly more to this story, because last Sunday afternoon the Canucks travelled up to Wynyard to play that team again. And this time they defeated the Monarchs 4 to 1 in a close game to claim the Provincial Senior 'A' Championship, Mr. Speaker.

So it's rather unique, Mr. Speaker. The Canucks were the southern representatives and the Monarchs were the northern representatives, Mr. Speaker. So I'd like to congratulate the players, the coaches, the fans on a job well done, Mr. Speaker. But also I'd like to, for the record, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to set the record straight. We've all heard the member from Arm River-Watrous claim that his constituency is the centre of hockey excellence. Well we all know now that Last Mountain-Touchwood is the centre of hockey excellence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Health Care Efficiencies

Mr. Merriman: — Mr. Speaker, one of these things is not like the other. In recent days, the Leader of the Opposition has been attacking this government for asking health regions and Saskatchewan Cancer Agency to find \$54 million in efficiencies within a record-setting health budget of \$4.84 billion. Maybe the Leader of the Opposition should better manage his flip-flops.

The leader states on his website that he wants more efficiencies built into our public health care system. Then this past Monday, the Leader of the Opposition stated in this Chamber that "The health . . . system should obviously be efficient, and we should be more efficient."

Since the Leader of the Opposition is suddenly against efficiencies, he must also be against the good results that come

from a well-managed and increasingly efficient health care system. He must be against the \$70 million invested this year in the Saskatchewan surgical initiatives aimed to lower surgical wait-lists province-wide. He must also be against the \$10 million saved through improved management of the blood inventory. He must also be against the 600 more MRIs [magnetic resonance imaging] being delivered in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region.

We've seen him flip-flop on Keystone. We've seen him flip-flop on uranium. And now we're seeing him flip-flop on health care efficiencies. Mr. Speaker, will the NDP [New Democratic Party] leader ever stop his flip-flops? Maybe today we'll find out.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Children in Care

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week we raised the case of children as young as nine months old, Mr. Speaker, being placed in the care of the staff at Dales House. Mr. Speaker, the staff were asked to care for children in a former classroom even though their facility is not set up to do such work. It shouldn't be this way, Mr. Speaker.

The Ministry of Social Services and the minister has had a week to sort out what has happened with these children, children in the care of the minister. So my question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier — not to the minister; to the Premier — is: why did infants and toddlers as young as nine months end up in the care at an at-risk youth facility?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think the members know or at least they should know that our first goal is to ensure that children can stay with their families. If we can't do that, Mr. Speaker, then we try to go to extended families. If we can't do that, then we go to foster homes. And if we can't do that, we'll go to community-based emergency operations, and then they would go to Dales House. An emergency might be something like road closures or storms or keeping a sibling group together, Mr. Speaker.

So when we had to take someone to Dales House, Dales House is one of the facilities, one of the last facilities left in the province that is still government run. And I think the members opposite should know that they, under their government, were the ones that stopped these homes. In fact it was in 1999 was the last time there was a government-operated residential space for children opened in this province.

The Speaker: — I would ask all the members to direct their comments through the Chair. I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Whether the incident or the situation for a child is emergency or not, that doesn't change the level of care that these children deserve, regardless of their situation.

Mr. Speaker, Dales House is intended to house not young children, not toddlers, but troubled teens and pre-teens. The teens in Dales House are there for a variety of reasons, Mr. Speaker, including violence as well as, Mr. Speaker, problems arising in homes because of sexual abuse. These are high-risk teens, Mr. Speaker, with high-risk needs. Dales House is not intended or designed for toddlers and babies. And it's not appropriate, Mr. Speaker, to have these very young children sharing accommodation very close to teens with these very serious concerns.

To the Premier: does he think it's appropriate for toddlers and babies to be housed in the same facility as teens and pre-teens who have very tragic and complicated lives?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, my first concern and my government's first concern is making sure that children are safe. I'm well aware that the staff at Dales House are very capable of looking after the children there. And we also know that the children that were there were in a separate room and they were double doors away from the trained staff that we have in Dales House. And we have trained social workers who were actually there looking after those individuals. The staffing levels there are three to one. It's the same level that was there when the previous members were in government, and I assure you that the children were safe. That is our first concern always. And I think the members . . . There was a quote from an individual at Dales House that's saying right now:

I understand that younger children are being placed at Dales House on emergency basis in cases where there are no other placement. I don't have a serious issue with this if it can keep Dales House open.

Mr. Speaker, I think what we should be talking about is the safety of children at all times.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The question is not about the staff's desire to have the safest conditions possible. It's not about the staff's willingness and their competence and their determination to have the situation safe. The situation, Mr. Speaker, is about whether or not Dales House facility is appropriate for babies and toddlers.

It's not appropriate, Mr. Speaker, to have babies and toddlers sleeping in a modified classroom. I'm told the children sleep on cots, and there are no bathing facilities in the classroom. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I'm told that the children are bathed downstairs in the basement, and this is where the staff normally bathe the facility's dog.

This is not an appropriate living situation for these children, Mr. Speaker. Even when emergencies present themselves, we have to have the highest level of care for children under the control, under the responsibility of the provincial ministry. My question to the Premier: does he think it's acceptable to have these conditions for babies and toddlers at Dales House?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I'm aware that we had one incident of where trained social workers were used at Dales House in an emergency situation. These are trained social workers, and these children were there 48 hours. And when I talk about an emergency situation, Mr. Speaker, I'm talking about storms. I'm talking about poor roads. I'm talking about not having the opportunity to put those children into other facilities where we would have them.

I also trust that the workers at Dales House were looking after them to the best of their ability, and I know that's very good. I also know that the children the next day attended daycares and medical appointments and they went on as they would if they were in another home. Mr. Speaker, our goal is to look after those children. And I think the members opposite should be using the word children more often than they're talking about the actual staff at a facility when their real goal is to talk about politics instead of children.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this issue is about the appropriateness of young children, babies, and toddlers being housed, being cared for in the same facility as pre-teens and teenagers, Mr. Speaker, individuals who have had very complicated lives, individuals who have been exposed to sexual abuse, who have been exposed to violence, Mr. Speaker. And in my opinion, Mr. Speaker, it's not appropriate to have very young children exposed potentially to that interaction with much older children, Mr. Speaker.

My question to the Premier: will the Premier ensure that the proper resources are being put in place, Mr. Speaker, so that babies and toddlers who find themselves in Dales place not because . . . Dales House not because of their own fault, Mr. Speaker, but will he ensure that the proper resources are put in place so that this type of exposure, this type of placement, does not occur in the future?

[14:00]

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I think that the member opposite knows that some of the proper resources means things like funding, the fact that we've put \$91 million more into child welfare than what the members opposite did. The member opposite should know also that the number of children coming into care is down 19 per cent.

When the children are put into a facility like Dales House, it is an emergency situation. We try not to put them in hotels like the members opposite used to do. We have to make sure the children are cared for by trained individuals. And, Mr. Speaker, we know that the individuals that are looking after our children are caring about them. We know that we are looking after them to the very best of everybody's ability. We know that there are now 900 child welfare spaces in the community. There's 31 of them left in government-run organizations. And I know every one of the individuals that are working in these organizations are looking after our children. And they're worried about everything, including the safety of our youngest children to the ones that are 12 and 15 years old.

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

Venture Capital Funds

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the federal government announced in its budget that it's eliminating the tax credit for labour-sponsored venture funds, funds that allow residents to invest in their own province. In Saskatchewan, funds such as Golden Opportunities and SaskWorks have been popular, a very popular fund choice for retirement savings with more than 50,000 hard-working people making an investment or an RRSP [registered retirement savings plan] as part of their retirement plan, and putting their savings to work right here in our province.

These investments have provided hundreds of millions of dollars to capitalize our province, boosting our local economy, creating jobs with local investment, and generating big returns to the province by way of direct revenues from income tax, corporate tax, PST [provincial sales tax] and GST [goods and services tax]. Mr. Speaker, to the minister: was he consulted on this cut before the federal budget? And what has he done to stand up for Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, specific to the question that the member asks, whether we, whether I as the Finance minister in Saskatchewan, whether the province of Saskatchewan was consulted on the plan of the federal government to eliminate the labour-sponsored venture capital tax credit, the answer is no.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the second part was what case has he brought forward on behalf of Saskatchewan people. But it wasn't just the federal cut that hit these funds. This government, with their budget, also hit these funds. In that budget the government lowered the investment cap from \$110 million to \$80 million, something that will pull tens of millions of dollars out of our province by way of investment, something that is important to the people of our province.

Many people are trying to make an RRSP investment in their own province, and that will be denied. Their investment will be pushed to New York or Toronto. Mr. Speaker, economically it doesn't make sense to reduce the investment by Saskatchewan people in our province. So will he work with the industry, the funds here in Saskatchewan, to find a better solution than his hasty cut?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Ministry of Finance has undertaken a review with the Ministry of the Economy of the labour-sponsored venture capital. We made some changes last year to the kinds of actual investments that the funds could undertake. And those changes were made that took effect for the fiscal year 2013. As we move forward . . . 2012, I'm sorry, Mr. Speaker. As we move forward we've looked at the entire investment funds. Those were at about \$90 million last year. They weren't at the full \$110 million that was

the maximum allowed under the program. And we took a look at whether or not those funds could still continue. And we wanted them to consolidate and look at innovation.

Mr. Speaker, we believe that there are many opportunities in this province that can deal with innovation, and we are now concentrating on ensuring that the \$80 million that now we hope will still be reached by those investors who want to contribute to that plan will now be able to have those dollars channelled more into the area of innovation.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The minister actually introduced the most egregious new change introduced by the Sask Party government with these funds. And it's that government's decision to unilaterally change the mandate of these funds, forcing them to focus on much higher risk investments, directly impacting the return of more than 50,000 hard-working Saskatchewan people receive on their precious retirement savings. It's not fair.

The savings must be held in the fund for eight years, and of course people invested based on the mandate and the prospectus that was in place. Now those funds are being interfered and monkeyed around with by their Premier changing the prospectus on the fly and on his own, placing hard-working people's retirement savings at risk and denying them the return they deserve. Mr. Speaker, how does this government think it's fair to interfere with the hard-earned retirement savings of Saskatchewan families and deny them the best return possible?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the decision for investment by a particular fund, which has now been capped at \$40 million for any fund that would be accumulating the investments, those decisions will be made by the fund managers.

Mr. Speaker, this is a venture capital fund, so we've indicated that there are specific areas that we don't want them to invest in, Mr. Speaker. We do not want them to put venture capital dollars into current oil and gas companies that are currently operating. Mr. Speaker, we want to ensure that there are opportunities for those investment dollars to pursue other venture capital initiatives.

So, Mr. Speaker, nothing has changed in that respect. The analysis will still be done by the investment fund managers. All we have done, Mr. Speaker, with the goal to ensure that we have a balanced budget, is we have reduced the amount of tax credit that now government will be responsible for.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — It's simply not true that the cut was the only impact. This government has also interfered and intervened by directing the mandate, changing the prospectus on the fly of where those funds will be placed. I hope the Finance minister knows that change.

Many Saskatchewan families have been utilizing these funds as

an important part of their retirement savings, and they placed those funds into those funds based on the prospectus and the investments that were in place. And their investment is locked in for eight years.

Investors have rights. And with these savings funds, a change of this nature should be voted on by the investors, not foisted upon them recklessly by the Premier. It's certainly not fair. It doesn't make sense. And it may not even be legal. To the minister: is he sure the unfair, unilateral change he's making to retirement savings of so many Saskatchewan families is even legal?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, the venture capital funds will continue. The dollar figure that we have now reduced as far as the total cap that we have put in place is now not a maximum of 110 million. The cap is a maximum of 80 million.

We continue to see investment — last year, Mr. Speaker, the \$90 million that we saw. The average investment by individuals was about \$4,200. So, Mr. Speaker, those kinds of investments will continue. It will be up to now the relationship between the investor and the investment fund managers to ensure that the funds are being placed in an area of return.

Mr. Speaker, we're trying to ensure that there is continued growth, that there is continued investment in this province of Saskatchewan. That's why the changes.

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

Decision Regarding Film Employment Tax Credit

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the minister did not answer the question as to why his government spent taxpayers' money on a contract to spin their senseless decision to end the film tax credit. That contract was supposed to create an easily understood narrative for the minister to spin the decision that government had already made months before. Let's be clear. The contract came long after the Sask Party had decided to kill the film tax credit. And it came while that minister sat as a member of the Treasury Board. He knew the budget plan.

Mr. Speaker, since the minister couldn't answer either here in the House or to the media, I will ask again: why would the government spend taxpayers' money to find a rationale to end the tax credit after they had already decided to cut it?

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

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The hon. member did raise this issue in question period yesterday, and she alluded to a contract that was in her possession. I can inform you, Mr. Speaker, and the House, I had never seen that contract until minutes after question period yesterday, Mr. Speaker. I never saw the product of what that contract was to deliver with respect to the services. But that contract had been entered into, Mr. Speaker. Nor had any member of Executive Council at the time — last year, March of

2012 — seen that contract or the services that were delivered on behalf of the Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport at that time, Mr. Speaker.

What I can inform the House is that the ministry at that time entered into a contract late in March to engage a third party consultant — an economist, Mr. Speaker — to help them with some language that was going to be delivered on budget day with respect to the changes in tax policy on the film employment tax credit, Mr. Speaker. There was an awful lot of information presented to cabinet during budget finalization last year, Mr. Speaker, things around econometric modelling, things around economic impact analysis, things around volume production, Mr. Speaker. This economist was assisting senior officials to advise the minister as to how to deliver that language in understandable fashion.

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

Ms. Chartier: — But they didn't understand it when they made that decision, Mr. Speaker? You'd hope the government would have a rationale for a decision that they had already made. When the Sask Party government decided to kill the film tax credit, they had ministry communications people to help with the spin. Mr. Speaker, they also have well-paid Executive Council staff to help with the messaging. But instead they spent even more money to review the tax credit and come up with talking points after they'd already made the decision to end it.

Mr. Speaker, this does not make any sense. Why would the Sask Party spend even more taxpayers' money on the film tax credit after they decided to cut it?

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

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in my previous answer — perhaps the hon. member didn't hear it — was that senior ministry officials engaged the assistance of a third party consultant, an economist in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, not unlike the NDP did in 2004 with respect to engaging the services of an economist outside of government, Mr. Speaker, to help them with some of the estimation with respect to the econometric modelling, Mr. Speaker. What I can tell you is senior ministry officials, in preparing the minister of the day for budget communication with respect to a very complex tax issue, had engaged the services of this particular economist who had expertise in the film tax credit system, Mr. Speaker, to help them in messaging a very, very complex issue on budget day.

Mr. Speaker, what I can tell you is what's becoming interesting now, Mr. Speaker, is we're starting to see a clear delineation, a clear delineation on policy and budget, Mr. Speaker. We're starting to see this government made a very difficult decision last year to move away from refundable employment tax credit. We moved to Creative Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, a \$5 million fund available for all of our creative industries in this province now, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The record shows the Sask Party scrambled every day following the budget announcement. The Premier himself looked for spin lines to solve his PR [public relations] problem of his own making. The very next morning following budget, he looked for urgent help on how to spin, then an hour later he used those spin lines on Twitter. As the week ended, his office looked for further help on how to respond to the complaints they were getting. Even though the Sask Party government had spent taxpayers' money just days before to gain supposedly better messaging, they still had to scramble for urgent lines on what to say.

The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is the Sask Party did not have the rationale for cutting the film tax credit when they made that decision, Mr. Speaker. Even the Premier couldn't articulate without help why the government made this senseless decision. Mr. Speaker, why can't this Premier admit his mistake and reverse the government's ill-informed decision?

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

Hon. Mr. Doherty: — Well, Mr. Speaker, here we are one week from the day that the Minister of Finance tabled this government's sixth consecutive balanced budget, the balanced budget for the years 2013 and 2014, Mr. Speaker. And we continue to get questions from the Culture critic for the opposition, Mr. Speaker, on last year's budget. More than happy to talk about this, Mr. Speaker, more than happy to talk about this, and if that's all the criticism they have for this year's budget, we're more than happy to talk about this.

What we do know in this year's budget, Mr. Speaker, is a new agency, Creative Saskatchewan. The legislation was introduced yesterday. It's going to be creative, Mr. Speaker. A \$5 million fund, brand new dollars available to all of the creative industries in this province. And we know that the Culture critic, Mr. Speaker, the Culture critic doesn't care about the other creative industries in this province aside from film. Her quote, Mr. Speaker, "It will do nothing. It does nothing for the economy, and that's the bottom line."

Mr. Speaker, they would reinstate a refundable employment tax credit. They would take the money from farmers and they would take the money from rural and urban municipalities to fund it. That's their position, Mr. Speaker. That's not this government's position.

[14:15]

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

Surgical Wait Times

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, that minister can yell all he wants about this issue but everyone in the province knows it was a mistake to eliminate the film employment tax credit.

Mr. Speaker, on another issue, on the issue of health, the Canadian Institute of Health Information is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides high-quality data for our health system. Their latest report on surgical wait times shows that the percentage of Saskatchewan patients receiving

hip and knee surgeries within the benchmark time frame has actually worsened over the last three years. My question to the Premier: why is that number going in the wrong direction?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, if the member is asking, Mr. Speaker, why surgeries, the wait times are getting longer in this province, I am not sure where that member's getting that information, Mr. Speaker because everybody in this province knows that surgery wait times have been reduced over the last three years by this government, Mr. Speaker.

We set a firm target of three months by the end of 2014 and we know that there is still work to do. But, Mr. Speaker, it is safe to say that this government is doing more than any other government across Canada in setting targets, in funding those targets — 70 million additional dollars for the surgical wait times, Mr. Speaker. And we're certainly going to be able to provide sooner surgeries for our residents.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, government news releases may say that wait times are becoming shorter, but if you look at independent organizations — Mr. Speaker, this isn't just the opposition saying this — if you look at what CIHI [Canadian Institute of Health Information] says, Mr. Speaker, it says a different story.

In 2011 half of those needing hip replacements had surgery within 102 days. In 2012 that wait grew to 120 days. In 2010 half of those needing knee replacements had their surgery within 135 days. Last year the wait was a full 30 days longer. These are the numbers of CIHI, Mr. Speaker. These are real people in Saskatchewan waiting for surgeries. My question to the Premier — not to the minister; to the Premier: why have the wait times increased by up to a month?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, since taking over government from the NDP, this side of the House, the government, has made some strategic investments in health care. We've also made some strategic decisions. We implemented the surgical wait times initiative. We decided to deploy private clinics within the public system.

Mr. Speaker, we know the results from our surgical wait times initiative. We know that the record is this: wait times of 6 months, down 55 per cent; wait times of 12 months, down 83 per cent; people waiting 18 months and longer, down 92 per cent. Surgeries completed, Mr. Speaker: 99.6 per cent now done within the 18 months; 97 per cent within 12 months; 90 per cent in six months; 78 per cent in three months. These are the facts of the surgical wait times initiative in this province.

Another \$10 million in this budget, and the only people that oppose it are those members. And do you know why, Mr. Speaker? Because we're using private clinics in the public system. That's what that member said, Mr. Speaker. We'll put our record against his plan every day of the week.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the Premier can become angry if he wants to, but that doesn't change the fact of the matter that CIHI is telling a very different story than what the government news release is saying.

My question to the Premier: the numbers released by CIHI, when we look at important procedures here in the province, show that wait times are getting longer. Does the Premier agree with CIHI? Does he agree with this independent, not-for-profit organization or does he rely only on the news releases that come from his own government?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is no. We talk to patients in the province of Saskatchewan. We talk to those who are doing the surgery, the nurses and the doctors. We actually hire the right complement of nurses that we need, unlike members opposite.

Mr. Speaker, from time to time we even take, we even take counsel from a former NDP minister. In fact, Mr. Speaker, sometimes we get some advice from the former Finance minister for the New Democratic Party under Mr. Romanow when he was the premier. She pointed out in a recent paper on this particular subject when she was looking at the importance of health care delivery, here's what Janice MacKinnon had to say: "Saskatchewan has an excellent example of the use of private clinics in the Saskatchewan surgical initiative . . ."

[Interjections]

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well the members don't want to hear the answer to the question, Mr. Speaker. They don't want to hear it because it's an NDP minister saying, "The initiative was established in 2010 by the Health department to reduce wait times," Mr. Speaker. They may lose their voice heckling because they don't like the facts. But they ought not to worry because health care for everything, including throat problems, is more quick now in the province of Saskatchewan.

The Speaker: — Will the members come to order — all of them. Will the member for Athabasca come to order.

TABLING OF REPORTS

The Speaker: — Before orders of the day, I will table the *Detail of Expenditures — The Election Act, 1996 — Provincial Constituencies 2011-2012*.

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I ask for leave to make a motion regarding absence of members.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, and I like to be able to speak without interruptions, if I may. The Government House Leader has asked for leave to move a motion regarding absence from the legislature. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Leave of Absence for Members to Attend Conference

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

That leaves of absence be granted to the members for Prince Albert Carlton and Saskatoon Riversdale for Monday, April 29th to Wednesday, May 1st, 2013 inclusive to attend the International Conference on Urban Traffic Safety in Edmonton, Alberta, on behalf of the Special Committee on Traffic Safety.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved:

That leave of absence be granted to the members for Prince Albert Carlton and Saskatoon Riversdale from Monday, April 29th to Wednesday, May the 1st, 2013 inclusive to attend the International Conference on Urban Traffic Safety in Edmonton, Alberta, on behalf of the Special Committee on Traffic Safety.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SPECIAL ORDER

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Krawetz that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure again to continue off where I left off last night. Just to recap briefly some of the things that I was discussing, we talked a little bit about child care and where we had some concerns on this side of the House, with 60,000 live births in the last four years, that 500 spaces a year is not enough.

I pointed out the fact that the subsidy system is completely broke and the fact that we paid out . . . Last year in a written question I asked what the range of subsidies were, and we learned that it was 25 cents was the bottom end. So I was wondering if that was in fact something that we paid via direct deposit or perhaps a cheque, Mr. Speaker.

Anyway we have some very critical issues with child care. You can't go a week or two without a story in the media about the pressing demand for child care. We have a government who doesn't have a sense of how many licensed child care spaces we actually need, Mr. Speaker. So child care was a big issue.

Education, I touched a little bit about education and this government's focus on testing rather than teaching. I talked a little bit about some of the strains that I see in Saskatoon Riversdale. A classroom, this is not an anomaly, but a classroom with 31 grade 1 students, Mr. Speaker. Ten minutes a week — that is not an exaggeration, Mr. Speaker, I've spoken to educators who've said that with English as an additional language students, this one particular classroom, their kids were getting 10 minutes a week support for English as an additional language.

This government, education, they often ask us what would we do differently. Well I can tell you an NDP administration would put lots of emphasis on education, Mr. Speaker. It's absolutely imperative that we support educators to do their jobs well, to ensure that capital as well is supported. But there's much to do on the education front, Mr. Speaker, and building schools by P3 [public-private partnership] models probably isn't one of the best methods. I'll get on to talk about that a little bit as well.

I mentioned last night the increase of government debt that we've seen. All one needs to do is look at page 57 of the budget summary to see that every year this government's debt, contrary to its billboards and its spin, that debt is on the rise here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

The balanced budget notion, it's interesting. I mentioned yesterday, and we've talked about this in this House before, around flooding and not allocating money for flooding when we've heard that the average of the last three years in payouts has been 105 million. In fact, this government has only allocated 2.65 million, which is considerably less than 105 million, Mr. Speaker. They've said, oh just in case, we've got it in the growth and stability fund. But the reality is, Mr. Speaker, they haven't budgeted for it. They've chosen not to budget for it so they could try to convince the general public that they have a balanced budget.

I left off in my speech talking a little bit about arts and culture and sport, Mr. Speaker, that particular element in my critic portfolios. I've talked about the government, how they've held the line on the Western Development Museum funding, which is causing huge difficulties at that organization which does great work in terms of ensuring that school children, families, visitors to our province, and newcomers have an opportunity to get a real feel for what this province is about, Mr. Speaker.

I talked a little bit about the Arts Board. And yes, the Arts Board did get a five per cent increase this year. But I also pointed out, read into the record, this government's track record from 2008-09 onward. They'd like to take credit for the '07-08 budget, which was 10.534 million for the Arts Board. But that was an NDP administration at that point in time, Mr. Speaker. We actually saw a clawback in '08-09 to 6.094 million, a small increase '09 and '10, holding the line in '10-11, and a small increase in '11-12, holding the line in '12-13, and then an increase this year.

So the bottom line is, it is the 65th anniversary of the Arts Board this year. And this is the body that supports the creators in being able to create, Mr. Speaker. And if the Arts Board wouldn't have gotten this 5 per cent increase, it would have had a huge impact and continue to have a huge impact on this organization. So I'm very glad that the government has seen fit to give the Arts Board 5 per cent. But it hasn't, it has not been stellar in its support for the Arts Board in previous years in its whole administration, Mr. Speaker.

Had an opportunity to talk a little bit about the film tax credit. We've heard again from a minister today . . . We hear and we see a government who made a decision to cut a very critical program to a key component, one of our creative industries, Mr. Speaker, without any economic analysis. They made a decision to cut it, and then they call in an economist at the last minute, the final hours, Mr. Speaker. What kind of policy-making is that? It's not fair. It's not right. I don't think the citizens of Saskatchewan think that that was a good idea, and I think we deserve better than that, Mr. Speaker.

The irony actually is, Mr. Speaker, that one of their spin lines that they used last year is they were opposed to grants, Mr. Speaker. This government has said that they are opposed to grants, and they called the film tax credit a grant, which it was not. And at one point I think the Premier said it was a cheque whether or not you spend the money, which is patently false. The money had to be spent here in Saskatchewan and it often was paid out two years after the fact, Mr. Speaker. But I think it's ironic that the grant piece that this . . . Some of their spin line was all about grants, Mr. Speaker.

And the transition funds that this government set up as they're transitioning to Creative Saskatchewan has provided some good support for some of the other creative industries for sure. But I need to point out that that, Mr. Speaker, is a grant. So how is it that a year ago they were diametrically opposed to grants in their talking points, but have turned around and put in place a grant, Mr. Speaker? A real grant, Mr. Speaker. They put in place a true grant in place. So we have yet to see what the money in Creative Saskatchewan, how that will be administered. But if it is going to be administered like the transition fund, that is a grant. So how can you say a year ago that you're opposed to grants and then do the exact, do that exact thing that you are so opposed to, Mr. Speaker?

[14:30]

One of the things that I find quite disturbing is I've engaged in some heckling conversation a few weeks ago with three members, and one of the members had told me that I was making a mountain out of a molehill. And the two other members agreed and said, oh we haven't heard from anybody, Danielle. What are you talking about? Well I can take them to my office and show them the stack of email and stack of letters that I've received from people from across this province, Mr. Speaker — people involved in the film industry, people who benefited from film industries, catering companies, hoteliers, lumberyard folks, people who have clothing boutiques. The cut to the film employment tax credit has a ripple effect across the province.

You know what, Mr. Speaker? It also has a very real personal

impact. I think they, the people who have been so negatively impacted, will be distressed to hear that their government was asking for financial analysis just shortly before the budget, long after they'd made the decision. This was not a thoughtful decision, Mr. Speaker.

And so the people who have really experienced the negative personal consequences, rightfully so, have very little faith or trust in this government, Mr. Speaker. I had mentioned last night a gaffer who had built his career here in Saskatchewan — 27 years. He had come from BC [British Columbia]. He wasn't working in the film industry that whole time, but he was in on the ground floor in this industry and had to sell his house at the end of October and has moved back to BC to declare his residency in BC to be able to be eligible for their film tax credit. But it is hard to break in in a new community, Mr. Speaker. So do you know where he is? He's in Manitoba working on a project, Mr. Speaker.

I had mentioned last year I had the opportunity . . . I won't call it a privilege. It's actually incredibly sad. I had three pages of names of people who have left Saskatchewan or were in the midst of planning to leave Saskatchewan because of the cut to the tax credit because they couldn't earn a living. I had mentioned the gaffer originally from BC who has had to go back there and after he had made a life here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

I talked about two producers who were the co-creators of *Dust Up* that was featuring crop dusting. And one of those co-producers is from Nipawin, Mr. Speaker, and she was one of the co-producers and is an award-winning actress. She actually is expecting, Mr. Speaker, she and her husband. And they have had to move to Toronto. So there are future grandparents who are very unhappy with this government's decision to cut the tax credit — huge personal ramifications. These are just a couple of stories.

And as I said I took 90 seconds last fall and read into the record many of the people who had been impacted. But it goes far beyond just direct film workers, Mr. Speaker. So I find it quite galling that three members could say that we haven't heard anything, Danielle. We haven't heard anything on this. The reality is this had a huge impact on so many people, and not just those who worked in the industry. And again I am beyond belief at this government. One of its spin lines was that we don't believe in grants. And they've gone ahead and their support of the industry now is a grant.

I need to point out this minister thinks that somehow I am not supportive of any of the other creative industries. That's the farthest thing from the truth, Mr. Speaker. I spend a great deal of time fostering relationships and connecting with people. I know that they have some concerns about the board of directors for Creative Saskatchewan. There's some potential mistrust that they have. They've seen what has happened with the filmmakers in this province, and there's much trust to be still earned, Mr. Speaker, from the creative industries. And I need to point out that you could have raised the bar for the other creative industries without killing an entire industry, Mr. Speaker. We could have elevated the other creative industries without knocking one down, Mr. Speaker. So that I think is important to note.

So this government does not have a stellar record on arts and culture, and we'll see how Creative Saskatchewan shakes out. I have many questions. In estimates, there's some changes to some budget lines. I know the industry organizations are very concerned. They have funding in place, I believe, I've been told until the end of August. The industry organizations are the direct link with the creators, Mr. Speaker. They are the voices of the many creators in this province, and they're concerned that their funding may not be in place beyond August. So we do have questions that we'll take into estimates, into committee, to get a further sense of this budget, Mr. Speaker. But we do have concerns. It is not — contrary to the picture that the minister has painted — all rosy. This government doesn't have a stellar record on arts, culture, and heritage here in Saskatchewan.

Just a couple other things. I know that I had ample time last night to speak, but there's a few other things that I would like to touch on, Mr. Speaker. There are a few other things that I would like to touch on, on the many papers that I have on my desk and many sticky notes. I noticed in the budget summary, I think it's important to note that page 13, the supports to the most vulnerable, it talks about:

The following programs will receive decreased funding due to lower utilization, perhaps an indicator of a growing economy and increased opportunity to find employment.

It talks about "... a \$3.1 million utilization decrease for the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement." Well part of the reason that there's decreased use of that supplement, Mr. Speaker, is the parameters haven't changed since 2008. The government did make a change to it in 2008, but that is already several years past, Mr. Speaker. And I'm actually hearing from people; I've had a few people come into my office.

I flagged for the minister, last year, a concern around the employment supplement where there was one couple. She was a child care ... She had a home child care. He worked for the school board and got a small raise, which is awesome. They were very excited about their small raise. But they discovered that that small raise bumped them out of receiving the Saskatchewan employment supplement, Mr. Speaker — just barely.

And it wasn't the employment supplement itself that meant a lot because it didn't. It actually wasn't a huge amount of money. But what comes with that employment supplement are family health benefits. And this family was cut off of family health benefits. He was a diabetic, some of their children had challenges, and she had some health challenges. So getting the increase in fact ended up being very hurtful. And the Saskatchewan employment supplement was created to help ensure that people ... it paid to be employed, Mr. Speaker. So we've seen a case of that.

Just about a month ago, Mr. Speaker, we had another individual who is in school finishing her master's and has done a little bit of contract work in her master's. Her husband has worked for many years, and he was laid off. He's on unemployment ... or he's on employment insurance, pardon me. And they were not eligible for the employment supplement just the way the formula worked. They were initially told that they made too little money to be eligible for the employment supplement. So

we're still trying to get to the bottom of that issue, Mr. Speaker.

This is exactly who the Saskatchewan employment supplement was designed for. It was designed to encourage people to work and to ... but a little extra support so they could stay in the workforce, Mr. Speaker. This is not a family ... The second family, not dissimilar from the first, aren't people who have any interest in being on social services or social assistance. Nobody really does, Mr. Speaker. Living on social services or social assistance is not a pleasurable experience, Mr. Speaker, to say the least.

But the reality is this second family doesn't know what they're going to do when his employment insurance runs out, actually April 1st it runs out, Mr. Speaker. They're in a bit of a bind. So for the government to postulate perhaps an indicator of a growing economy and increased opportunity to find employment, I need to put on the record that it is because the parameters of that program haven't changed. That is the problem there, Mr. Speaker.

I would say the same point around child care parent subsidies. And I mentioned this last night when I talked about child care. So parent child care subsidies, something called the turning point hasn't changed since the early 1980s, Mr. Speaker. This is the point at which you're eligible for the full subsidy. The reality is it is \$1,640, \$1,640 and money over that you don't ... You slowly lose the full subsidy. That \$1,640, Mr. Speaker, is not far above minimum wage. So people who make minimum wage are not much more, aren't eligible for the full child care subsidy. That makes absolutely no sense. So I would argue that this nice language around increased opportunity to find employment isn't the true picture here. The true picture is the fact that parameters around important programs have not changed, Mr. Speaker. So I think that that's important to point out.

There's just a couple more things that I want to talk about, Mr. Speaker. We've talked a little bit about Dales House today. And Dales House is one of the organizations that provide service to at-risk children, young pre-teens and teens who are high risk and have high needs, Mr. Speaker. We have a similar facility in Saskatoon called Red Willow.

They were told last June that they are on the chopping block, and the language that the minister used is "when capacity in the community is created," Mr. Speaker. But what this has done, these two organizations ... Well the minister within just a couple of months closed some other facilities with public servants operating them. But these two in particular are on the chopping block. So what has this done? It's made it very difficult to find staff because why would you want to go work at a facility that you know that's closing? So it's made recruitment of staff more challenging, Mr. Speaker.

Morale at these facilities is low. They've been told that they needed to have a plan, or a plan would be in place February — so last month. And then they were told no, no, no, we're still closing you still, and we'll have a plan in place by June. So these staff members are working under duress, Mr. Speaker. And they're also being called on ... And happily these are professional individuals, but they are picking up the slack and being asked to care for children who have ... children outside

of their mandate, under six, six and under, Mr. Speaker.

We heard about one case two weeks ago where there were children, five children under three. But the reality is, I've been told, that it's not an anomaly to have children not that young, but outside of the mandate, under six, stay in this converted classroom, Mr. Speaker. That is not acceptable. And I think the worst part is that this is being used as a contingency plan, Mr. Speaker, for children in the care of the ministry when they're in a pinch. And to have that hanging over their heads that they're closing, all of this creates for not very good circumstances for the employers first of all. Well not first of all, but for the employers on one hand and for our most vulnerable citizens, our little people, Mr. Speaker. This is not fair or right. And this budget confirmed in fact that there is a plan to in fact close Dales House and Red Willow, and I think that that's incredibly unfortunate, Mr. Speaker.

The thing about these government-run facilities is they don't have the option to turn people away. Some of the CBOs [community-based organization], if some children are more challenging . . . And there are lots of children who have had extremely challenging upbringings. There are CBOs who provide excellent care, but they have the ability and the option to say, I'm sorry, we can't take that individual. But these government-run facilities are there as a last resort, Mr. Speaker. And so there's some, in light of especially what we heard today, but in light of the budget and . . . This uncertainty for these organizations is huge, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to talk also, Mr. Speaker, about an organization in my own, or not an organization, a facility in my own constituency, actually, of Saskatoon Riversdale. Many of you might be familiar with Gordie Howe Bowl, which is a football stadium. It currently has grass. And the Hilltops have played on it. The minor football teams, the high school football teams play on it. But last year there was . . . They've been hoping to put in artificial turf for many, many years, Mr. Speaker.

And so this last November, the city put in . . . They have a memorandum of understanding with an organization, a foundation called Friends of the Bowl, and they are trying to raise money for artificial turf — 4 million. They need \$4 million for turf and about 5 million for a clubhouse basically, Mr. Speaker, or a service building. So they are getting about \$600,000 from the city. But I know that they were, having spoken to them a couple of months ago . . . This is where I have many questions in estimates. But they were hoping to get some money from the province to help with artificial turf, Mr. Speaker.

And what will this artificial turf do? Well not only will it support minor football. It'll support our high school football teams. But the opportunity to put artificial turf in means that we have soccer, spring football . . . or spring baseball, softball, field hockey, ultimate Frisbee, the high school athletics. So I'm curious to find out a little bit more in the budget and to see if there actually was money for this.

I know that the member from Regina Dewdney took part . . . or wrote a report, actually, called *Growing Minor Football in Saskatchewan*, which was a \$20,000 expenditure, before he became an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], Mr.

Speaker. And one of his recommendations was in fact for the provincial government to put in place a program to support minor football and that involved some capital infrastructure, Mr. Speaker. I'd asked a couple of years ago in written questions if anything had been done about this, and they'd said the report had been received and that's it.

[14:45]

But I think we need to look to this report, *Growing Minor Football in Saskatchewan*. We need to look at this government's commitment to the active families benefit and to the rink grants that have gone out. And I know that Gordie Howe Bowl is not only a huge part of the community of Saskatoon Riversdale or the constituency of Saskatoon Riversdale, but it's an important facility for the Hilltops of which I know we're all incredibly proud here in this Assembly, especially those of us from Saskatoon. And myself, my father actually was a former Hilltop and was part of the dominion championship team in the '50s. So this is really near and dear to my heart that Gordie Howe Bowl gets artificial turf sooner than later. They were hoping to have it up and running, artificial turf in by 2014, Mr. Speaker.

And this is about, this is about encouraging physical activity but it's also about safety. You get a rutted field, you have knee injuries. You have all kinds of things that happen when you have players on grass, Mr. Speaker. And as the season goes on and on, it gets more and more rutted and causes huge problems, Mr. Speaker. So I hope that this government somewhere in the budget has seen fit to put in place some dollars for minor football capital and as per the recommendations from the member from Regina Dewdney, Mr. Speaker.

And the one last thing that I'd just like to touch on is — in my many notes here on my desk — P3s, Mr. Speaker. So this government has voiced its support of P3s, and there are big concerns with them. And we've heard some of the big concerns. And I have some huge concerns when the government talks about bundling schools together in particular.

There's a good case in Edmonton actually, a K to 9 [kindergarten to grade 9] school in Edmonton that currently has 742 students enrolled, and it was built on a P3 model, Mr. Speaker. That area has grown and grown, and they've run out of space in that particular school. They've had to forfeit enrichment classes like the art lab and the wood, shop classroom as well as some of the smaller auxiliary rooms. They are totally out of room, Mr. Speaker. And the reality is that area is growing, and there are no plans for the construction of a new school in the area despite pre-existing areas zoned for school development. So the school boards aren't planning on building any more schools so you would think, well perhaps you could add portables which isn't ideal, but perhaps you'd add portables to that school. But because that school was constructed over a P3 arrangement — and there are restrictions in this particular deal for adding additions to the structure — in this case they are restricted to adding two portables to this school, and those portables cannot house more than one classroom each, leaving this particular school with the capacity to expand by only two. So we have some concerns on how P3s play out, Mr. Speaker.

One of the things that the IMF [International Monetary Fund]

has flagged is that if you're doing a P3 you have to make sure it's on the books. We have some concerns that this government is deciding to pursue P3s in an effort to build infrastructure but to keep that infrastructure off the books as they have done with flooding relief, those kinds of things. So we will be watching this very carefully and continuing to read the literature on P3s which there have been, there are some huge problems with P3s, Mr. Speaker.

So I know that I have more to say, but I know that there are many others in this Assembly who would like to enter into the debate on this budget. But I need to say I will not be supporting this budget for all the reasons that I've mentioned last night and today, Mr. Speaker. I will not be supporting this budget and I will be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Rural and Remote Health.

Hon. Mr. Weekes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to take part in the budget debate. Since my appointment to cabinet last May 28th, I've been very busy naturally. And I'd just like to thank my constituency assistant, Janet. Obviously I'm not able to be in the office as much as I was before my appointment to cabinet. She's doing a great job looking after constituency concerns and keeping me informed of what's happening in the constituency. Of course I'd like to also thank my staff in my office — Megan, Selena, and Theo — who's doing a wonderful job in the office and dealing with my ministerial duties.

On budget day of course it was a very important day for the province. And of course we had quite the extreme weather through that period. And I had a delegation come from Biggar as well as Borden and Langham that came down for the budget presentation, and some of them made it back home and some of them had to stay overnight in Regina. But I'd like to thank all those individuals who came down to Regina to listen to the budget.

Of course I think an acknowledgement and a thank you needs to go out to a number of people that worked very hard putting this budget together, and naturally the Finance minister, the Treasury Board, the Finance officials naturally, Premier, cabinet, and all caucus members who worked very hard in the preparation of this year's budget. As we know, Mr. Speaker, this is a . . . The budget's theme is balanced growth. It's a balanced budget. It's the sixth consecutive balanced budget by this government. And that's a very important point to continue to make, that we were one of the . . . I think the only jurisdiction in Canada that have had six consecutive balanced budgets. And I suspect we'll be the only budget that's brought down this year that is balanced.

And it's balanced, Mr. Speaker, in the General Revenue Fund and also on a summary basis. That's very important. The auditor recognizes that. And I think a lot of the thank you has to go out to our Finance minister and officials who worked very hard to make sure it was a balanced budget. But it's also . . . Besides having the finances balanced, it also balances the priorities of the Saskatchewan people. It's a balanced approach to address both the opportunities and challenges that come with growth.

Now, Mr. Speaker, overall the spending is up 3.1 per cent in this year's budget, a modest and sustainable increase that allows us to make key investments. I'd like to . . . Just before I go into some of the health areas and some of the areas that are in my area of responsibility, I'd just like to make a few points from the budget document about different priorities in my constituency.

And you know, my constituency of Biggar is much like, well like all constituencies in the province; it has a growing population. Biggar and the constituency has a very active and growing manufacturing sector. Agriculture is obviously very important. And so we have a lot of growth, more people coming into the province. You know, there's pressures on infrastructure as far as real estate and communities that are developing new subdivisions, and people are building new homes. So it's very gratifying to see that happening in the constituency, more people living and working in the constituency, paying taxes and taking part in a very active, robust economy.

Mr. Speaker, just allow me to make a few points about schools in the budget. And for the first time in over 40 years, our schools are seeing significant increases in enrolment as our population grows and our families are making Saskatchewan their home. And that's very true in the constituency of Biggar, not only the communities that are close to Saskatoon, but the ones who are further out. Biggar, Wilkie and other communities that are further out are seeing that impressive growth and increasing enrolments in the schools.

So our Finance minister stated in the budget that it is a total funding of 119.6 million, an increase of 7.2 million into funding for a number of school projects: 36.9 million to continue construction on 10 third party grant funded projects; 31.9 million to continue construction on shared ownership projects; 28.2 million, an increase of 9.5 million, for preventive and emergency maintenance, renewal, capital asset management, and 40 relocatables; 18.7 million for the construction of major capital projects in Hudson Bay, Leader, Martensville — they're approved in principle, 2012 and '13 — 1.9 million to begin planning on new projects in Langenburg and Gravelbourg; \$1 million for expansion of 15 new pre-K programs; and \$1 million for automating the school capital request process. So schools and education is a very high priority with this government.

The other, obviously, area of concern this year is flooding, and I'd just like to state some of the items in the budget concerning public safety and sound stewardship. The budget has addressed and provided \$2.7 million for provincial disaster assistance program claims and operations; \$1 million in new funding to provide capacity for provincial emergency response; and 2.2 million, a \$760,000 increase, for the provincial contribution to capital upgrades as a partner in the provincial public safety telecommunications network. So our budget addresses those concerns and we'll continue to be . . . The province and the government will continue to be there for the people of Saskatchewan.

Under partnerships and municipal government, the 2013-14 budget builds upon the commitment to provide steady and reliable revenue to our partners in municipal governments. And there's a considerable amount of money that's directed towards

the municipalities so that they can meet their commitments and work in partnership with the province to better the lives of Saskatchewan people.

And of course under the Ministry of Agriculture, under the leadership of the member from Thunder Creek, the Minister of Agriculture will continue a commitment to fully fund the province's portion of Growing Forward program to support the businesses and interests of Saskatchewan farmers: \$198.3 million, an increase of \$21.2 million, to fund crop insurance; 20.7 million to fund AgriStability under the new Growing Forward 2 agreement; \$32.4 million to fund AgriInvest under the new Growing Forward 2 agreement; and more than 70 million in funding for non-business risk management programs under the new Growing Forward 2 agreement.

And so again, Mr. Speaker, it shows our commitment to rural Saskatchewan, to agriculture, to municipalities, to schools, to parents, children, and the infrastructure. This is a very responsible budget.

Just one thing, Mr. Speaker. As the Ministry of Agriculture and the minister announced, just to remind all the producers that March 31st is the deadline for crop insurance enrolment. So I'd just like to remind producers that the deadline is fast approaching, and if they're going to enrol, they should do that very soon.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud to be part of a government that is making health care a priority. Since our government has taken office, we've increased the health budget by 41 per cent. The regional health authorities received 46 per cent more funding than they did when members opposite were in government. We have over 1,000 more nurses practising in Saskatchewan than we did five years ago. Our promise was 800 nurses, and we've far exceeded that. We have over 270 more doctors practising in Saskatchewan today than we did five years ago. Since our government took office, the number of people waiting more than six months for surgery has dropped by 58 per cent thanks to our surgical care initiative. These are real results, Mr. Speaker, and this year's budget builds on that success.

Mr. Speaker, this year we will spend a record of \$4.84 billion in health care in Saskatchewan. That means a 3.5 per cent increase in health care spending over last year. That's an increase of \$163 million this year. Our regional health authorities will get \$3 billion in this budget. That's an overall increase of 4.5 per cent. The Saskatchewan surgical initiative will receive 70.5 million this year, an increase of 10 million over last year. The Saskatchewan Cancer Agency will get an 8.6 per cent increase in funding, which equals \$12 million more than last year for a total investment of \$150.7 million. This year's budget invests almost \$164 million in health care infrastructure, Mr. Speaker, a very impressive budget for health care.

Now, Mr. Speaker, after 16 years of NDP government, they devastated rural Saskatchewan. Closure of 52 hospitals. Since we formed government in 2007 we have building . . . continued to try to rebuild the province and the infrastructure all across the province, but in particular in health care. And in rural Saskatchewan this means that we continue to work on new long-term care homes or integrated facilities. And I'd just like to list the homes that are being worked on right now in

communities of Rosetown, Tisdale, Shellbrook, Radville, Redvers, Maple Creek, Kerrobert, Kelvington, Kipling, and of course my home community of Biggar.

[15:00]

Now, Mr. Speaker, since my appointment as Minister of Rural and Remote Health last May, April 28th, a big part of my responsibility has been to tour Saskatchewan. And I have visited 45 communities since my appointment in May 28th, and it's been a very rewarding tour of the province, Mr. Speaker. And the communities definitely have a common concern. One of the common concerns is physician recruitment and retention. And I'm going to talk a bit more a little later about the very impressive things that our government has been doing since we formed government in 2007. And we've built on what the former Minister of Health has done since 2007 in doctor recruitment and retention.

Besides the important capital investments I just mentioned of the 13 new long-term care homes, we also are building a children's hospital, announced the building of Moose Jaw hospital, the Plains surgical centre in Regina. So we're moving ahead as in the budget to where we're committing money towards the building of the North Battleford hospital. So we're making great strides in capital investment as well.

There was \$23.6 million overall investment in rural health services. Something that the people in rural Saskatchewan speak very highly of is STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society]. We have committed \$10.5 million to continue to support STARS. We promised to bring STARS to Saskatchewan. We've delivered that, and we'll continue to invest in STARS which plays a very key role in rural emergency health care. STARS is now operating out of both Regina and Saskatoon and, to date, STARS has already flown over 220 missions in Saskatchewan. This is a commitment to emergency care in rural Saskatchewan and it's very beneficial to the people in rural Saskatchewan.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we've also committed in the budget 9.8 million for primary health care. There's a \$4.3 million increase from last year. Now, Mr. Speaker, I have been working diligently on setting up collaborative emergency centres and this \$4.3 million will go to generally as primary health care. But of course collaborative emergency centres is a form of primary health care, and this investment will allow us to establish four to five collaborative emergency centres, or CECs, in the coming year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, just a brief explanation of what CECs are. They're open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, staffed by a primary health care team during the day, and a team that includes a nurse and a paramedic with physician oversight by telephone or telehealth at night.

And, Mr. Speaker, this is one of the things along with many other initiatives that we're going to bring into rural Saskatchewan, will be really a recruitment tool and a retention tool to keep physicians working in the province and attract physicians to work in rural Saskatchewan because the physicians in the community will not be on call. The CEC will be looking after the nighttime on call, and the physicians will,

as part of a primary health care team, will be looking after clinic duties, same-day, next-day appointments for people. So that'll keep people out of the emergency centres at night, and the physician will not be on call 24-7. That certainly gives a better quality of life, and that will certainly be one of the things that will keep doctors in rural Saskatchewan.

Just briefly, Mr. Speaker, \$3 million dollars was set aside for rural locums. That's a \$1.5 million increase from last year. Now, Mr. Speaker, right now we have 12 to 15 doctors rotating through our locum pool at a given time. This investment will allow each southern region and the North to recruit two region-based locums. We've seen this program is very successful and is helping to stabilize physician services in communities like Kipling, Fort Qu'Appelle, and Kindersley.

Now the other important piece of rural health care was the announcement made by the Premier at SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]. We've committed \$250,000 for the rural physician recruitment incentive. This is a promise made by our government and kept by our government, and we expect that this year about 15 new doctors will qualify for the program and about 30 doctors per year will qualify once the program's fully utilized in five years.

Now, Mr. Speaker, these are things that are in the budget, but they were just building on all the many initiatives that we've taken as a government in health care. And of course the creation of the Physician Recruitment Agency, or Saskdocs, is working very well. They are attracting doctors to go through the made-in-Saskatchewan assessment. And the physician recruitment incentive of course will be doctors that have . . . Recently graduated doctors in the last two years that are Canadian-trained and international grads who have been recently graduated in the last three years are eligible for the incentive. And of course they need to work for five years in rural Saskatchewan to take advantage of the \$120,000 that's being available for the incentive.

So we expect great things out of these announcements, and to keep and attract doctors into rural Saskatchewan. That builds upon of course, we're not . . . We're also, are educating more doctors. So we have . . . We've increased the medical seats at the university, 40 . . . and now there's a total of 100 and doubled the number of residency seats from 60 to 120. So we're training more doctors, and we're certainly attracting more international grads to come to our province, Mr. Speaker.

Just one or two more points right from the budget that is noteworthy — \$27.4 million, a 3.2 million increase for the seniors' income plan; a \$10 per month increase beginning in July 2013, to a maximum of \$25 per month to clients living in special care homes. That's a continued commitment to our elderly and seniors and people of this Saskatchewan. Also, Mr. Speaker, \$2 million for an innovative home care service pilot for seniors in Regina; \$350,000 of an increase to expand Alzheimer's First Link services. Again, Mr. Speaker, a commitment to the people of Saskatchewan in health care.

Mr. Speaker, there's a number of other colleagues that would like to speak. But I just want to once again say our government has a balanced growth budget, and we're controlling spending. We support a growing economy and growing population, and

this budget supports those in the province who are most vulnerable like seniors, those with disabilities, and women facing violence. This budget provides an increased funding for municipalities, for highways and infrastructure, to fill more training opportunities for education and of course for health care. Mr. Speaker, for these reasons I will be supporting the budget motion. Thank you.

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

Mr. Doke: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The theme of the 2013-14 provincial budget is balanced growth. This year's budget is balanced. It controls spending and continues to make investments to ensure better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. It also delivers on the commitments we made in the plan for growth.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan remains the only province with a balanced budget. This is key to achieving our growth plan goal of 1.2 million people by 2020. Through prudent management of the province's finances including debt reductions, saving hundreds of millions of dollars in interest payments, we lay a solid foundation for the future.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, before I continue on, I would like to take this opportunity to thank some people. Firstly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, my colleagues at Treasury Board for their knowledge and guidance during this budget process. As a new member of the Treasury Board, I was very impressed by the presentations of all ministries. I would like to thank the Finance ministry and the Finance minister for all the support and resources needed to obtain a balanced budget decision. I would like to thank all the third parties for their presentations and future plans. This includes universities, SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology], health regions, and school divisions. I would also like to thank my constituency assistant, Cheryl Hume, for her dedication to the constituents of Cut Knife-Turtleford while I spent extra time on this budget process.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is our government's sixth consecutive balanced budget. Our population grew by 21,690 people in 2012 to an all-time high of 1,089,807 people according to Statistics Canada. From January 1st, 2008, to January 1st, 2013, Saskatchewan's population increased by 82,302 people. Saskatchewan's 2012 population increase of 21,690 people consisted of a natural increase of 5,672, a net interprovincial in-migration of 2,647, and net international in-migration of 13,321 people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to talk about how this 2013 budget supports municipal growth in Saskatchewan. Municipalities will receive record revenue sharing for the third straight year, helping to foster economic growth and enhance the quality of life for Saskatchewan people. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2013-14, 264.4 million in municipal revenue sharing will be provided, an 11.4 per cent increase from previous years and a 108 per cent increase over the 2007-08 budget.

Overall provincial funding to municipalities in 2013-14 will be \$362 million, up 19.6 million from the 2012-13 budget and up

120 million or nearly 50 per cent from the 2007-08 budget. Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2013-14 urban revenue sharing for all cities, towns, villages, and resort villages will rise 11.9 per cent to \$170 million. Revenue sharing for rural municipalities, which includes organized hamlets, rises to 8.5 per cent to \$74.7 million.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the 2013-14 budget will also provide 50.9 million in provincial support to municipal infrastructure through a number of ministries and program funding including: 33.4 million from the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure through programs that support municipal roads, urban connectors, and truck hauling agreements; 13.3 million from the Ministry of Government Relations through provincial and federal-provincial-municipal cost-shared infrastructure programs; 3.2 million from the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport for the building communities program.

This budget also provides funding to the municipalities from other ministries, which include grants for libraries, urban parks, policing, and other programs totalling \$46.7 million.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in order to offset an average 67 per cent increase in property values over the last four years, the government is lowering the education property tax rates on all classes of property to keep the impact of reassessment revenue neutral overall. The new education mill rates will be 2.67 mills for agricultural land, reduced from 3.91 mills; 5.03 mills for residential property, down from 9.51 mills; 8.28 mills for commercial property; and 11.04 mills for the new resource property category.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the 2013-14 agriculture budget, which affects most of the Cut Knife-Turtleford constituency, there is significant investment. The agriculture budget will be 406.9 million for 2013-14.

Crop insurance coverage levels will increase to a record of \$194 per acre in 2013, more than double the coverage offered in 2007. This year's \$198.3 million crop insurance budget is the largest in the history of the program and a 91 per cent increase since 2007.

This budget also has an increased commitment to research and innovation with a record \$27.7 million agriculture research budget, a 104 per cent increase since 2007. This includes a \$3 million investment in the Global Institute for Food Security.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, in 2013-14, the Ministry of Agriculture will provide 71.2 million for strategic incentives through the federal-provincial Growing Forward 2 framework, an increase of \$25 million over the previous framework. In addition to research, funding we have targeted will target to areas such as rural water infrastructure, trade and market development, and farm business management. Further details of the Growing Forward 2 programming will be answered in April.

[15:15]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, a record 4.84 billion invested for health care for 2013-14. We'll continue to reduce surgical wait times and improve the quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. The investment marks \$162 million or a 3.5 per cent increase over

last year's health budget. In total, health care funding has increased 1.4 billion or 41 per cent over the past six years, demonstrating the government's commitment to improving health care for Saskatchewan people.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Saskatchewan surgical initiative will receive 70.5 million in 2013-14, an increase of \$10 million or 16.5 per cent. This will result in 7,000 additional surgeries over last year. Since 2007 there are 61 per cent fewer people waiting more than six months for surgery, and 46 per cent waiting . . . waiting more than three months for surgery. Ninety per cent of patients who had surgery between August 1st, 2012 and January 31st, 2013, received their procedure within six months and 78 per cent received it within three months.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency will receive 150.7 million to provide enhanced cancer care services, a 12 million or 8.6 per cent investment over last year. Annually the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency has more than 6,400 new-patient appointments.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, recruiting doctors in rural areas and keeping them once they're there is a huge priority for our government. The new rural physicians program will provide 120,000 in funding over five years to recent medical grads who establish a practice in rural communities of 10,000 or less. This program will help improve patient access to physician services in rural areas.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, 9.8 million, an increase of 4.3 million, for innovative approaches to improve access to primary health care. This is including the introduction of the collaborative emergency centre, or the CECs, to improve health services for Saskatchewan people. CECs are designed to enhance areas to high-quality, comprehensive primary health care that is capable of dealing with unexpected illness or injury in a timely fashion. One of these centres may open in Maidstone in the Cut Knife-Turtleford constituency this year.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, 350,000 for the expansion of Alzheimer Society's First Link program as well as to establish six dementia advisory networks to improve the system of care and support for people with dementia, their family, and caregivers.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this 2013-14 health budget is the biggest ever. The health budget has steadily increased over the last six years, not like the last five years of the NDP government where 173 doctors, 455 registered nurses and registered psychiatric nurses, 155 pharmacists, 95 physiotherapists left Saskatchewan to work elsewhere.

Mr. Speaker, over the last four to five weeks I have sat here and listened to the NDP talk about how we the government don't listen to the people of Saskatchewan. I would say that this budget truly indicates what the people are saying. They want responsible, balanced budgets, and that's what they are getting.

I would suggest to the opposition that they listen to learn, not to respond. Mr. Deputy Speaker, with a AAA credit rating, 24,400 new jobs last year in the province, and the lowest unemployment rate in Canada at 3.8 per cent, along with another balanced budget, Saskatchewan is very well-positioned to lead the country in economic growth.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will be supporting the motion but will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I am honoured to have this opportunity to discuss a few points about this year's budget. But first I would like to thank my staff who are in our office in Fairview — Adrienne Stone, who is on maternity leave after having twins, you are sorely missed but I know you are where you need to be, and Karen Favel, who works tirelessly in the office. And I also wanted to welcome Aaron Slippery who is with our office on a casual basis and is one of many vulnerable youth. And I hope that he uses this as a stepping stone to a career that he will love — working with computers.

So one of the factors I would like to focus on is how this budget focuses on people all the while bearing in mind fiscal responsibility and the challenges of growth. Although I do have an educational background in business, I have grown up the daughter of a social worker who has worked for many years in the Indian Child and Family Services field. The value of investing in people is certainly not lost on me and those serving on the government side of the House. I am one of many members who serve on the child and youth agenda committee.

And when I look at the diverse background of my constituents in Saskatoon Fairview, I see myself reflected back in a lot of their eyes. Mr. Speaker, my constituency consists of a large portion of new immigrants of Filipino and Southeast Asian origin. We have a vibrant Muslim community and a growing Afro-Canadian population and of course those who have lived in the area for generations of Eastern European origin. And also we have a vibrant First Nations and Métis community. In the words of Tupac Shakur, and I quote, "I am a reflection of the community." Also my daughter being a reflection, as her father is from a different country as well.

This is the new Saskatchewan — families moving to Saskatchewan from a variety of different countries and very diverse cultural backgrounds — very different than the Saskatchewan that I grew up in and very different than the 16 subsequent years that the party opposite had governed. Mr. Speaker, I'm grateful to the people of Saskatoon Fairview. I represent all of these people, and I am very honoured to be their voice.

And I would just like to have the following on record before I start discussing the budget. Mr. Speaker, no one time in my life previous to public life has my ethnicity been brought up so many times in this Chamber by a couple of the members opposite. As Frederick Douglass once said, "The soul that is within me, no man can degrade."

I just would like to reflect a little on this topic and put on the record that I am not just of First Nations and Métis ancestry. I must put myself in the shoes of those who I represent when I sit in this Chamber, which in essence means that I am an assortment of all the cultures that exist in my constituency. I am also a combination of the economic backgrounds of Fairview. I do not pick and choose a select few from my constituency and

solely concentrate on representing them. I take into account all those who live in my constituency, regardless of ethnicity or economic background.

And that brings me back to what is most important in Saskatchewan — its people. Mr. Speaker, a population of people who total 1,089,564 and working towards the Saskatchewan plan for growth, a bold goal of 1.2 million living here by 2020. I wanted to speak a little bit about the investment that this government has in its people. Mr. Speaker, being the child of someone who has worked in child welfare for much of her career, watching my mother's dedication to the children of Saskatchewan has affected me in a profound way. Also one of my constituents is the executive director of Foster Families who does very important work.

This brings me to my next topic. In particular I would like to talk about the child welfare transformation, which funding consists of \$7 million to increase supports for agencies that provide services for children in care and their families and 800,000 for new intensive family support programs to assist families in crisis. Another 1.8 million in funding will be maintained for the structured decision-making tool to help front-line workers assess child risk and safety. And as a result of fewer children coming into care, funding for out-of-home residential and extended family care can be reduced by 3.8 million to offset some of the additional investments, for an overall budget increase of 5.8 million. Investment in families is evident in this budget, Mr. Speaker, and I'm confused as to why those members opposite will vote against the budget.

Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to have a conversation with Dr. Ryan Meili last Friday at the Future 40 event here in Regina. I was very honoured to be included in among 39 others who help make this province the best in Saskatchewan. Dr. Meili is always a pleasure to talk to, and his contribution to this province is vital to the health of the people of this province. Though I have not seen many reasons to be hopeful that the members opposite will include him and his contributions going forward, I think they would be wise not to shut him out.

Mr. Speaker, I've had the opportunity to take part in the FASD [fetal alcohol spectrum disorder] walk in Saskatoon put on by the FASD network of Saskatchewan. I'm very pleased they have received continued funding in the amount of \$600,000 to provide an intensive FASD prevention program to pregnant women who are at high risk of having a child with FASD. This budget reflects the commitment of 76.1 million for child and family services, community-based organizations. And those members opposite are going to vote against it.

I had the opportunity to go to the grand opening of the Egadz downtown youth centre in Saskatoon, which actively supports services that empower youth at risk. And it was at this opening that I disclosed that I too was a teenage runaway at 15, and an organization such as this helped me when I felt I had no one else to turn to. I definitely know first-hand the value of community-based organizations and my six-month stay in a transition house as a youth. And I am very proud to be a member on this side of the House in terms of the support our government . . . to programs such as this. And those members are going to vote against the budget.

Mr. Speaker, it is the ability to relate to constituents which make us effective MLAs. It allows us to put a face to where the resources are allocated. Investment in people is key to the success and effective growth of this province. Our government is cognizant of this and this is why we are investing in people. I've been asked many times from members opposite how I feel about our government's record. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to take this opportunity to say that I am very proud of our government's record and will gladly compare our record with theirs. Investing in people has been possible while still introducing the Saskatchewan Party government's sixth consecutive balanced budget.

Mr. Speaker, there are many people in Saskatchewan who are dealing with taking care of aging parents and those who are affected by Alzheimer's. Mr. Speaker, our government has committed to increasing the funding by 350,000 to expand Alzheimer's First Link services. And those members opposite are going to vote against the budget.

Mr. Speaker, the 800,000 allocated for women's shelters across this province and the new women's shelters in Melfort is integral. These shelters allow families to stay in their communities and the children to not have to switch schools.

Mr. Speaker, we're investing in our province, in our people by allocating a 1.544 million increase for the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission to purchase an additional 300 training seats in 2013-14; 6.6 million for First Nation and Métis education and employment, including 3 million for the response to the joint task force on First Nations and Métis education employment; 1.5 million to add 300 more spaces for adult basic education and help reduce the program wait list. And those members are going to vote against the budget.

One point five million for work readiness employment development initiatives. Mr. Speaker, I would have gladly compared our record to theirs. The budget reflects a 500,000 increase to the skills training funding that is allocated to our training institutions for industry-driven training programs, programs that will have real outcomes such as jobs at the end of the training.

And as I said earlier, Mr. Speaker, Fairview has a significant newcomer population, and our government has allocated a 1.5 million increase for immigrant settlement support program. And the budget reflects a 900,000 increase for the provincial training allowance and a 119,000 increase for the apprenticeship training allowance.

The budget also provides increases to support the government's commitments to build on programs that assist First Nations and Métis people with accessing education and employment opportunities, and a 1.5 million increase for industry-driven quick skills training projects that link industry with training providers and job seekers, and prepare First Nations and Métis for jobs. And examples include northern career quest, they get 700,000, and inroads to agriculture, 200,000. And a 1.5 million increase to begin work toward eliminating the wait list for adult basic education by 2015. And 150,000 to aircraft maintenance engineer training program at the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, part of the 500,000 increase to training

institutions for industry-driven skills training.

[15:30]

Mr. Speaker, the other day I was able to attend a meeting with SIIT [Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies] and I was able to meet students who are in the aircraft maintenance engineer training program. And Ray Ahenakew, the president of SIIT, has indicated that 33 per cent of their funding comes from the province. And I am proud to be an alumni from there, and I am looking forward to the graduation ceremony this year.

As George Washington Carver once said, "Education is the key to unlock the golden door of freedom." So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude that I support this budget going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure and my honour to rise today to speak in support of our government's budget. I'd like to thank the people of Coronation Park for placing their trust in me, and I continue to listen and engage.

I'd also like to thank my mother for continuing to tune in into the legislative channel and ensure that my tie is straight. Thank you, mom. And I'd like to thank my CA [constituency assistant] Kalee for her work in our very busy constituency office.

This is the sixth balanced budget this government has tabled, and I'm proud to be part of a government that takes such prudent care of its citizens' hard-earned money. In today's world, a balanced budget is rare and an important achievement for any government. And I applaud and congratulate the Premier and the Finance minister for their leadership in ensuring Saskatchewan maintains our solid fiscal footing. We truly are the envy of other provinces, indeed other jurisdictions in the world.

Yes, this budget is balanced in a fiscal sense, but it's also balanced in another way, Mr. Speaker. This budget does more than balance revenues and expenditures; it balances priorities. It balances the needs of urban and rural Saskatchewan. It balances the needs of southern and northern Saskatchewan. It balances the needs of our province, our communities, and our citizens, especially our most vulnerable.

Mr. Speaker, our government has a strong record of supporting our province's most vulnerable. We've taken thousands of low-income families and individuals off the tax rolls. We've increased benefits to seniors and for people living with disabilities. We've increased funding to community-based organizations. We've worked to eliminate the 440-person wait-list for residential and day program services for people with intellectual disabilities. And as we've done so, we've actually served over 130 more people who weren't on the original wait-list.

Mr. Speaker, I'm happy to say that this year's budget builds on that strong track record. Last fall the Premier launched the Saskatchewan plan for growth, our government's vision for a

proud, prosperous Saskatchewan through the year 2020 and beyond. The plan for growth set out some ambitious goals for our province on many different fronts, be it in terms of province's finances, infrastructure, health care, or education needs.

But the goal that captured my attention, Mr. Speaker, is one that focuses on quality of life. The plan for growth outlines that, to quote, "The purpose of growth is to secure a better quality of life for . . . Saskatchewan people." That's a powerful vision, an exciting vision, and a balanced vision; a vision not just of prosperity and a good life for some of our people, but for all of our people.

The plan for growth also set out a goal of making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people living with disabilities. Mr. Speaker, this vision and this goal are not only near and dear to my heart, but are guiding my work as a Legislative Secretary to the Minister of Social Services for disability issues. I was honoured to be offered the opportunity to work with members of the disability community and partners across government in helping achieve that goal. I'd like to thank the Premier for the opportunity and for his confidence. I want to thank the Minister of Social Services for being so welcoming and for sharing my commitment to make a real difference in the lives of people of this province. And I want to thank the community members and organizations I've already met with for their dedication and determination to improving the lives of people with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, I'm proud to say that this budget delivers on the goal of making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada for people with disabilities. How about, and also making Saskatchewan the best place in Canada to live because you have a disability. It includes \$330 million for new and enhanced programming and increased program utilization for people with disabilities. That's an increase of \$18 million, Mr. Speaker. It builds on our already strong record of increasing funding that benefits people with disabilities by over 62 per cent and more than \$126 million since forming government.

The Saskatchewan assured income for disability, the SAID program, is at the heart of our government's commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities. Last June we implemented the first instalment of a four-year commitment to increase SAID benefits by \$100 per month for people in residential care, and \$350 and \$400 per month for single individuals and couples respectively, living independently. This year's budget includes the second instalment of the planned increase to be rolled out in June. Mr. Speaker, I can't stress enough the importance of the SAID benefit. Many of my constituents in Regina Coronation Park are people living with significant, chronic, long-term disabilities. Whether they live independently or in residential care, SAID plays a crucial role. I'm proud to be part of a government that recognizes this and is acting on it.

Mr. Speaker, anybody who's watched a friend, family member, or neighbour live with a disability knows the kinds of supports that are often required. And not everyone is able to afford those supports on their own. This budget recognizes that and provides \$2.5 million for more Saskatchewan Aids to Independent Living. This important program provides supports like prosthetics, mobility equipment, rehabilitation, oxygen, and

insulin pumps for children. This budget also recognizes the important role accessible transportation plays in supporting full and active participation in our communities.

Paratransit services are crucial in allowing people with disabilities to get to work, to appointments, and to social activities. But the availability is limited and people who use the services need to book their arrangements far in advance in those cases. I can guarantee that people with disabilities want to be included in their communities, want to have purposeful employment, and want to be independent. This budget will help ease some of the pressures on the province's paratransit services by increasing funding to the transit assistance for disabled program by \$325,000. That brings the total funding for the program to three and a half million dollars and will enable it to expand to additional municipalities and to double the capital grants available for paratransit services and buses.

This budget also commits \$12.5 million to help community-based organizations recruit and retain front-line staff, and to increase the level of care allowances in approved private service homes which provide 24-7 days a week care for people with intellectual disabilities.

This year's budget also recognizes that some disabilities can be prevented, Mr. Speaker. Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder or FASD is still far too common in our province and it's absolutely 100 per cent preventable. My partners in communities . . . Many communities across the province are already doing good work in raising awareness to promote prevention. This budget includes an increase of \$600,000 to support three projects in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina, to offer intensive fetal alcohol spectrum disorder prevention programming for pregnant women who are high risk of having a child born with FASD.

Mr. Speaker, our government recognizes that we need to support our most vulnerable citizens, and that goes beyond people with disabilities. It includes housing, Mr. Speaker, which is why this budget sets aside important funding for things like \$3.8 million increase to the Saskatchewan rental housing supplement to enable more households to access the program and to keep pace with increases in the cost of rent.

This budget also continues our commitment to the Saskatchewan advantage housing plan which will invest \$344 million in 12,600 new housing units across Saskatchewan by 2016. It includes \$9.2 million for the third year of the federal-provincial affordable housing agreement, which is building new affordable housing units, supporting home renovations and adaptations, and providing rent and housing supplements.

This budget is also doubling the funding for Habitat for Humanity from \$1 million last year to \$2 million for the coming year. Habitat will use this funding to support 40 new homeowner units across Saskatchewan. According to the Habitat CEO Dennis Coutts, our government is leading the country in support of Habitat for Humanity. This partnership is all about empowering families with low income to achieve home ownership. And anyone who's been to a Habitat sod-turning or a building site or a key ceremony will tell you the incredible difference it makes in the lives of families who

participate.

Helping our most vulnerable citizens means helping our province's children and youth, Mr. Speaker. Community-based agencies across the province are helping our children and youth each and every day. It's important work. It's valuable work. And it's work that our government has recognized and through a \$6.7 million increase to child and family services CBOs. Those groups will receive \$76.1 million in funding overall. This includes that \$6.7 million recruitment and retention salary funding increase for 24-7 care homes. It includes \$800,000 for intensive home and family supports. It also includes \$374,000 for a salary lift for the remaining CBOs.

Mr. Speaker, supporting vulnerable citizens also means supporting seniors, the men and women who have helped build Saskatchewan into what it is today and have laid a strong foundation for the Saskatchewan of tomorrow. This budget increases funding for the seniors' income plan by \$3.2 million for a total of \$27.4 million. This includes a \$10 increase to monthly benefits beginning in July. That's on top of the increase last year.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we're doubling the maximum monthly benefit for seniors in special care homes. And we're increasing the monthly income threshold for the seniors' personal care home benefit to \$1,875. This budget includes an additional \$3.1 million for seniors' care, including a two-year pilot in the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region called first quick response home care which will enable more clients to receive intensive home care supports.

Mr. Speaker, we know that at least 18,000 people in Saskatchewan are living with Alzheimer's disease or related dementias. We're also providing an additional \$350,000 to the Alzheimer Society to expand its Alzheimer's First Link program and to build six dementia advisory networks. This brings our funding to \$400,000 in total. And that, Mr. Speaker, is a sevenfold increase from last year.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight some important investments we're making to support women and children fleeing domestic violence. We all know that domestic violence exists. It exists here in the cities and it exists in rural areas as well. But while the violence exists in both cities and rural areas, it can be much harder for women to find support and services outside of the major centres. A rural woman fleeing violence, wanting to create a fresh start for herself and her children, simply has fewer places to go. That's not right. It's not fair. And I'm proud to be part of a government that is doing something about it.

This budget provides \$375,000 to support services for women and children who are escaping violence. That funding supports the expansion of existing transition houses here in Regina and in Prince Albert. And even more importantly, it supports the creation of Angel's Lighthouse shelter, a new transition house in Melfort which will be the first transition house opened in Saskatchewan with capital and operating funding provided by the province since 1989.

Mr. Speaker, I have the privilege of sharing a desk with the member for Melfort. That's right — I said privilege. I know that

this project will mean that the women and children in his community and across that entire region . . . And I congratulate him on his leadership and support of the project, both as a member of this Assembly and during his tenure as mayor. Mr. Speaker, I can't think of anything more important than the kind of investments this budget is making in improving the lives of Saskatchewan's most vulnerable citizens.

Mr. Speaker, the members opposite have used the concept of fairness, common sense, doom, and stubbornness in order to advance their narrative fable. I'm going to assist them in their view of fairness. As any parent can attest, fair is not equal. Do parents treat all of their children the same? Do teachers believe that students learn and comprehend at the same rate? I think not.

Mr. Speaker, why do the members opposite channel Henny Penny and Chicken Little and believe that the sky is falling? Chicken Little believed the world was coming to an end. Thankfully this government is hopeful for this province's future and isn't going to prophesize catastrophic doom. Our government produced a budget that cares about people and this province. I'm sorry, Chicken Little, but the sky, and in this case the living sky, is still in place.

I know that some of my colleagues across the floor like to use the word stubborn when they describe our government. Well if you ask anyone who knows me, they'll agree that I can indeed be stubborn — stubborn about doing the right thing; stubborn about helping those who need it; stubborn about showing up each and every day and doing my best. And, Mr. Speaker, that just doesn't apply to me. It applies to all my colleagues on this side of the floor in this government.

If you look at the number of desks over on this side of the floor compared to the sad few over on the opposition side of the House, it seems like the people of Saskatchewan think we're on the right track. This budget will keep us on that right track, Mr. Speaker. It sets out a path for Saskatchewan that we can all be proud to follow.

This budget is a good budget. It's a balanced budget, a responsible budget. And I'll reiterate, I use the words from the members opposite, a common sense budget. And more importantly, it's a budget with heart. And it's a budget that I am pleased to support, and I will not be supporting the opposition amendment to the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[15:45]

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to speak to the budget for Saskatchewan for the years 2013 and '14.

I want to start off by saying thank you to all of the people of Saskatchewan and all of my colleagues here in the legislature for the kind words that they said about me in my role as the leader of the New Democrats over the last year and a number of months. I especially appreciate some of the comments from the members opposite that were made. And I know that when we

work here for many years, we have strong opinions on many things including budgets — and we'll hear about that in a few seconds — but we also get to know each other and respect each other. And so I want to say thank you especially to the members of the legislature.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this particular budget has a significant number of issues, but it starts right at the heart of the budget. And I know, as a member of this legislature who worked on many budgets over many years, that there are some fundamental things that you do when you prepare a budget. And one of the things that I see in this budget, unfortunately, is that the Premier has told the Finance minister, I want to have the numbers balance no matter what.

And so what we have is not dissimilar from a situation where you have a couple who one says to the other, we really want to buy these things; we want to do these things. And the other says, no, honey, we don't have enough money to do that. But the one who wants to spend says, no, we want to go and spend that money.

And so, Mr. Speaker, in this budget I think that the Premier has told the Finance minister that we want to do some things and the Finance minister said, "Well as long as we don't have some of these expenses that we really know are expenses in this budget, we can still give you that illusion of a balanced budget."

And, Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of very simple, straightforward issues that have not been included in this budget which put it into deficit right off the bat. Number one, the money for flood work. And we see that every day. It's still staying cold outside, as we know, so we're not getting the water there, but we know our neighbours down in South Dakota, in Bismarck, Minot, they're planning very carefully. They're working like crazy over at Fargo and Moorhead as the Red River is melting at the south end and flowing north. And here in Saskatchewan, we put zero in our budget for the flood issues.

And, Mr. Speaker, if we use a figure even of \$75 million or \$100 million, which is the amount over the last few years, this budget's in deficit. But, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, what we also know is that when the Minister of Health told all of the main service providers, the regional health authorities and the Cancer Agency, to come forward with the leanest budget possible, and they did that, they then give them almost \$54 million less than what they needed. And they've said in here, and it's quite an interesting quote. I don't know if I've ever seen a quote like this in a budget summary. But on page 12, they said:

Regional Health Authorities and the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency have been tasked with finding \$53.9 million in efficiencies in 2013-14. This will be realized through administrative savings and other efficiencies, increased use of shared services co-ordinated through 3sHealth, as well as through attendance management and efforts to reduce lost time due to injuries, premium pay and sick time.

Mr. Speaker, when I asked about what this meant, I was told, we gave them \$53.9 million less than what they knew they needed. Now, Mr. Speaker, I know and trust the people who run

the Cancer Agency and the regional health authorities, that they had already looked at these administrative savings when they had brought their lean, careful budget into the process. And so, Mr. Speaker, take off \$54 million here is another way to create that illusion that this budget is balanced. And, Mr. Speaker, that's not an acceptable way of advising the people about what's happening in the finances of the province.

Mr. Speaker, in the latest edition of the *CAmagazine*, the chartered accountants magazine from March 2013, there's an article about enhancing audit quality. And the fundamental question asked in the article is, could auditors have prevented the failures of the 2008 financial collapse, which we know has affected many parts of the world and it affected us here in Saskatchewan. And one of the comments of a speaker who went to the conference for chartered accountants and others who were interested, and the conference was called the Audit Quality Symposium and the speaker was James Doty who was the Chair of the US [United States] -based public accounting oversight board. And it's basically a counterpart I think of the Canadian Public Accountability Board which we have in Canada. And he said, "If the story, if the numbers, are too good to be true, the auditors are supposed to call it." Now Mr. Doty said that because they were looking and trying to figure out what happened five years ago that so many auditors got it wrong in the financial situation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, we here in Saskatchewan have our Provincial Auditor making comments to the government, to the Finance minister, to the Premier, saying that, your books are misleading, that you've got two sets of books. You should be doing it the way every other part of Canada is presenting the books, to the province of Saskatchewan. And, Mr. Speaker, they have not . . . They've been in government now five years, and they have not listened to that advice to move along like all the other jurisdictions in Canada, so that we are now the sole jurisdiction that's reporting our finances the way we are. And, Mr. Speaker, that allows them to give this illusion of a balanced budget by pushing pieces of this to other places.

And, Mr. Speaker, what we also know, and which the public is slowly starting to figure out, is that last year's increase in the debt of the government was \$1.1 billion. This year's increase is another 835 million. That's almost \$2 billion in two years. Now, Mr. Speaker, we've been down this path before where we know that it gets us into trouble. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that the members opposite want to take little pieces of this budget and go and see about the good news, but when the fundamental face of the whole budget is a problem for the province, then we're all in trouble. And, Mr. Speaker, we need to ask questions about that, and we will be asking questions about that because I think there may be some other places where there are adjustments — if I can put that in quotes, "adjustments" — to some of the expenditures that are going to come and a recognition that there will be some changes.

Now, Mr. Speaker, when the Minister of Finance and some of the others talked about, well how do you respond — I think the Premier — how do you respond to some particular issues, the response was, and I think this was the Premier actually who responded around the issues of education and some of the increased costs because of increased numbers, 4,500 more students, oh well we'll deal with that in September. Well that's

another way of getting around presenting a budget that actually reflects what everybody knows is going on.

And it's what happened last year. When you look at the total number of supplementary estimates that were brought forward, it was hundreds of millions of dollars. And that's why the last three years in a row, at the end of the year, we have a deficit. We have a deficit in the . . . And we're spending more money than we're taking in. Now, Mr. Speaker, that is something that the Premier needs to account for. That's something that the Minister of Finance needs to account for because it fundamentally affects the long-term future of all of us.

We on this side of the House have said that there are other methods that the government are using to push the costs out on to our children and grandchildren. And there's no question that the various methods that they've looked at around the P3s are another method of using a charge card, of sort of saying, well we'll put into the budget how much it costs each year. There's quite a number of examples of that. And I mean practically you can look at how you can work together with partners on financing different things. I acknowledge that. But it appears in this particular situation that once again you have this leader who wants to spend and please lots of people, and his Finance minister has figured out a way to push some of that cost down the road.

Now two years ago or I guess it's even only . . . Yes two years ago in the budget, we knew, or we thought we knew, that there was going to be money to the University of Saskatchewan to pay for the Academic Health Sciences Building, and it was \$100 million. Well when we got to last year's budget, the amount showing up for that Academic Health Sciences Building was \$4 million, the same number that's in the budget I think this year — somewhere around \$4 million. And guess what that is? Well that's the interest on 100 million that they forced the university to borrow.

Now we all know that that kind of strange business about how you manage your affairs doesn't work in the long run. Somebody's going to have to pay the \$100 million at some point, and presumably it's going to be the people of Saskatchewan. So what it's using, the Minister of Finance's devices . . . He's pleased the Premier. Well we got a balanced budget, but we've pushed costs way out down the road. So we call it a charge card budget because that's what they're doing. They're paying fees now, paying the interest. And fortunately for us and maybe as people of Saskatchewan, the interest rates are quite low. But unfortunately we also know many people are kind of living their lives that way where they're buying things that are maybe just a little more expensive than they would otherwise buy. And, Mr. Speaker, I see that some of that kind of a characteristic is coming back to haunt us here.

Now we know back in 1992 there was a report prepared by the auditors of the province and, Mr. Speaker, that report was called the Gass report, and what they did was they took some of the best accounting minds in the country and they came together and looked at the results of the decisions during the 1980s, and the net result was that the province was on the brink of bankruptcy. Our Finance minister at that time, Mr. Tchorzewski, and the Premier met with the federal government and were able to work out some methods of effectively saving

the province or there was some accommodations made by the federal government and so that the finances could be put in shape. But we had quite a number of years where we all had to put more money in on income tax, more money in on other taxes to make sure we could pay for that.

[16:00]

Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm raising a flag here today to say that we may be starting down on that same kind of a track with this Premier and this Finance minister, and they're not just playing with their own money, they're playing with the money of all of us, of our children and our grandchildren. And, Mr. Speaker, it's not appropriate that that type of disregard takes place of the Provincial Auditor, of others who are looking at this particular situation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are ways that you can spend more money than you take in, but you need to tell people that's what you're doing and let them judge you about that. And there are times in anybody's business or life where that might be an appropriate thing to do, but you need to be direct about it and explain what you're doing.

Now, Mr. Speaker, this fundamental flaw in the whole budget then goes back to influence a lot of the choices that are made and the decisions that are made. And unfortunately our children are suffering, not just by the fact that they're probably going to have to pay for it all, but also as it relates to the funding for our K [kindergarten] or pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] education, and then also for some of the people at the universities.

I'm the member for Regina Lakeview, and I have many people who are involved in businesses and involved in some of the key service agencies, organizers of the province. But I also have many members who work with Crown corporations. They work with the provincial government. They're professors at the university. And, Mr. Speaker, I know that the universities and the University of Regina and Luther College and Campion and First Nations University are frustrated and a bit mystified by how they're being treated by this government.

I think the civil service is wondering about some of the decisions and choices that are being made and by some of what's happening with them. And that's reflected to me when I meet with them in the neighbourhood. And, Mr. Speaker, when there's that kind of unease, people ill at ease about what's happening with this government, it forces us as members to look and see, well what's going on here? Why are all these different things surfacing that are causing people to be uneasy about the direction of the Premier and the Finance minister as it relates to the budget?

And, Mr. Speaker, that's what I'm hearing. We're listening to people, not just in urban areas, not just in rural areas. I'll give you an example on the highways. I mean that's always an interesting one. But I think it's about, well it's almost two years ago that I asked the Premier about this and he came back to me and he said, you're right, we're spending a lot more money on highways, but it's costing us almost twice as much to build the same kilometre of road. And so every time I hear the Highways minister or the Premier or any of these other members talk

about dollars for highways, I'm always asking myself — and I know the public are doing this as well — okay, it costs a lot more to build that. How much are we actually getting?

And then you get people calling us and saying, well ask about this road; ask about that road, and what's going on. And I know, I know that in many parts of the province, people are uneasy about how this issue is being dealt with. We know, for example, some of the promises have been made in the North and haven't been kept, but that's another whole issue that's of concern. But, Mr. Speaker, people want to understand how their dollars are being used and how they're providing services for the province of Saskatchewan.

Now as a former Health minister, it was interesting to me that the announcement about the long-term care facilities are all the same ones that were announced four years ago. You know, there aren't any new ones. They've built a couple on that list but they're the same ones that were there in 2009. And, Mr. Speaker, there's some major concerns about what exactly is happening as it relates to that particular area and that particular responsibility.

But I'm not going to spend a long time on it, other than to say that it's the services that are provided for people . . . It's the roads. It's the education for their children, whether it's in elementary or high school or at a technical institute or university. It's those issues that are the concern of the grandparents, the parents, and obviously the children themselves.

And so, Mr. Speaker, that's how a budget like this gets to be measured. And unfortunately I think there are some definite concerns that are raised, as in that particular area. Now, Mr. Speaker, the things that a budget are supposed to do is to provide some long-term stability and some long-term plans for the province.

And I know that the Premier likes to talk about many things. He's pretty good at some of the PR and the photo ops and things like that. But we know that the big sort of splash last fall was this pamphlet that he put out about a vision for the province. And I couldn't see any vision then. I still have a hard time understanding exactly what the long-term vision for the province is, and I think the public are in that boat as well.

And, Mr. Speaker, they've attempted to resurrect some of that with this budget. But once again, there are these allusions or these things that just don't quite hang together, or as some auditors put it, the smell test. Like does this thing actually hang together? Or like as the auditor said, it's their role to make sure they point out that some of these things aren't working right.

And so what the people of Saskatchewan want is a long-term plan for the future. They want to know that it's sustainable, that it's built on some very practical things, and that it's smart growth. And, Mr. Speaker, that's not what we've been hearing. We've been hearing there's some short-sighted decisions. And we heard a lot about some of the decisions over the last year and the lack of understanding by the ministers as they worked those through, whether it was the film employment tax credit or, in the midst of all of the curtailing of what they called government reducing the civil service, reducing services to the

public, they add three more MLAs at a cost and don't even seem to blink and recognize that that's a very hypocritical move.

And so, Mr. Speaker, what the people of Saskatchewan want is a plan that will allow them to understand where the government's going, what they're going to do, what they're going to do with some of the crucial aspects and attributes of our Saskatchewan economy, whether it's related to long-term business and economic solidarity, whether it's related to the role that some of our service Crowns provide for us, whether it's something as straightforward as keeping control of the information around our land titles system and corporate registries and personal property registries. Those are questions that people are asking.

Now I'm not sure whether the Premier has really thought through the long-term consequences of some of the decisions, but we've seen over the last few years and what we've seen as we've asked more questions is that some of these decisions seem to be made on a whim or on a Twitter or who knows where. And, Mr. Speaker, that's not a way to run a railway. It's not a way to run a government.

And, Mr. Speaker, when we look at some of the decisions that the Premier has made, and we also look at some of the things that he emphasizes in his press conferences or other things, we can often see that they're distractions. He likes to go off and do something in Alberta or he likes to go do something in Washington. He likes to take some shots at federal politicians because he thinks maybe he can distract from what's going on here.

But three years in a row where you spend more money that you take in. These two years now, we're going to increase the debt by almost \$2 billion. We have classroom sizes that are getting bigger and bigger without any recognition by the minister of what's going on. We have a whole number of things that need to be taken care of at home, and he's off doing other things.

And, Mr. Speaker, there's a reflection on what is happening here. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that all Saskatchewan people deserve to have a more accurate budget. They deserve to know that the information that's being provided is something that will stand the scrutiny of our Provincial Auditor and others, and that it will accurately predict what services we're going to have and what services we won't have.

And, Mr. Speaker, lots of words here, lots of PR. But I think that sort of the common sense Saskatchewan perspective says, something's not quite right. And so what I would say to the Premier and others is, let's keep track of what's best for the middle class of Saskatchewan. Let's keep track of what's best for the ordinary people of Saskatchewan. We're tired of benefits to friends or insiders of the government. We're tired of benefits going to big corporations that are controlled somewhere else. We're more concerned about how it's going to affect our children in school, how it's going to affect our parents or grandparents as they get health care. We're more concerned about how it affects people in our family roots in various parts of rural Saskatchewan. Because all of those things matter to the people of Saskatchewan.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I ask people to be very careful when they listen to what is said about this budget by the government because there are some fundamental flaws that are at the base of the budget. So, Mr. Speaker, I will be voting for the amendment to this budget and against the main motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Parent: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm very honoured to be here to be able to join on the debate of the budget motion. But before I begin, I would like to thank some people. First I would like thank my CA for taking care of every detail that comes up at our Saskatoon office. As well as I would like to thank Connie and Helen for filling in when Matt is away.

Second, I would like to thank all the people in Saskatoon Meewasin who voted for me and allow me to represent them here in the Legislative Assembly. I would also like to thank all the volunteers who worked and helped me on three different campaigns to help me get to where I am today. Fourth, I would like to thank all the people in Meewasin again for their support in giving me this honour.

I would also like to thank all the ministers, who I have the utmost respect for, on all their work in developing this balanced budget. I would also like to thank the Finance minister from the constituency of Canora-Pelly for all his work on this balanced budget

Mr. Speaker, I would like to, also like at last to thank my family: to my loving wife Sheila who was there through the good and the hard times and never once tried to stop my pursuit to be an MLA, also my daughter Shanaya who is a rock for me and helped me door knock in every election and never complained about my persistence. They are the only reason I am here today, Mr. Speaker.

[16:15]

I would like to start with this quote: "Saskatchewan budget released today — you're not going to find a better one in Canada this year." That quote is from Colin Craig, prairie director for the Canadian Taxpayers Federation.

Mr. Speaker, this is the sixth balanced budget in a row for Saskatchewan. And Saskatchewan has become the envy of the nation and the place to be. Not like when the opposition was the governing party, and it was the place you had left, as seen in the early years when the population was declining when they were in . . . governing party. I saw a lot of this when I finished school, when I graduated from mechanical engineering technology many years ago. Everybody that I graduated with pretty much all moved to Alberta or BC or somewhere else to work. I also saw it when I graduated from business administration years later and almost everybody left again.

Mr. Speaker, through prudent management of the province's finances, including debt-reduction saving hundreds of millions of dollars in interest payments, we lay a solid foundation for the future of Saskatchewan and our children. Mr. Speaker, there is over 1,089,000 people in Saskatchewan today, with a

population growth of 2 per cent in 2012. Second best in Canada, thanks to the economic atmosphere created by this government. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is one of two provinces to enjoy net interprovincial in-migration and the lowest unemployment at 3.8 per cent. Best in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, our government has a strong commitment to our students and labour force development: 448.6 million to support base operating of Saskatchewan's universities and federated and affiliated colleges, an increase of 9.2 million; 149.6 million in operating funding for Saskatchewan's technical institutes and 27.6 million in operating funding for regional colleges; 117.4 million in student supports, an increase of 19.6 million or 20 per cent which includes 63.9 million in refundable and non-refundable tax credits for the graduate retention program; 34.5 million for the Student Aid Fund; 7.5 million for the Saskatchewan advantage scholarship and 6.5 million to establish the Saskatchewan advantage graduate grant for education savings; 1.5 million for work readiness - employment development for First Nations and Métis people; 3 million to support future recommendations of the joint task force on improving First Nations and Métis education and employment outcomes; 1.5 million increase for the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission for an additional 300 seats in 2013-14 as well as 119,000 increase for the apprenticeship training allowance. This is quite a difference than when the NDP were the governing party and the graduates left to work elsewhere, also known as the brain drain.

Mr. Speaker, at the University of Saskatchewan, 16 million in operating and capital funding for the new health science facility. The NDP loves to criticize the Health Sciences Building when they had 16 years to fund it. Could have cost 125 million at its inception, but the NDP dragged their feet. The 16 million adds to the record spending we have provided to the University of Saskatchewan; also 17 million for the Canadian Light Source, international vaccine centre, Water Research Chair, and other initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, this year the agriculture budget is 406.9 million with record crop insurance funding. Insurance funding levels will increase to \$194 per acre on average, which is 198.3 million, the largest in Saskatchewan history. Mr. Speaker, this ensures Saskatchewan farm families have the support they need to grow. Mr. Speaker, David Marit, president of SARM, had this to offer regarding our agriculture spending:

Agriculture and agriculture producers are one of the primary drivers of our growing economy and a focus of the Premier's Growth Plan so these investments are greatly appreciated.

Also 27.7 million increase to agriculture research, a 107 per cent increase since 2007.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP neglected farmers for years, ripping up the GRIP [gross revenue insurance program] program, leaving farmers stranded. We will never take lessons from the NDP when it comes to helping farm families in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, new mines and mine expansions could create thousands more jobs in northern Saskatchewan. However, Mr. Speaker, our royalty system has been a barrier to new

investment in uranium mine expansions. Mr. Speaker, we've removed those barriers to uranium mine growth. A new structure recognizes actual cost incurred by industry and it replaces allowance-based systems. Allowances were as much as 50 per cent below the industry's actual expenditures.

Mr. Speaker, here's a quote from Mr. Tim Gitzel, president and CEO of Cameco, offered his support of the new royalty structure with this quote:

While the long-term fundamentals remain positive, uranium mining is addressing some short-term uncertainty. The changes announced by the provincial government will give us added confidence to continue the large investment we are making to sustain and grow productions from our Saskatchewan operations.

With production increases and new investments, uranium royalties are expected to exceed \$5 billion in total over the next 14 years. New mines and mine expansions could create thousands of more jobs in northern Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, making sure students are receiving the best possible education is challenging with enrolments increasing for the first time in many years. Funding has increased by 6.7 per cent from last year's budget. Operating funding will be 1.775 billion, up 23 per cent from last year. Seventeen million is in the budget to address growth pressures some school divisions are facing. Five point nine per cent is being provided to initiate a new student assessment program. This program has been affectionately referred to as standardized testing by the members opposite. However, Mr. Speaker, the assessment program supported by Janet Foord from the Saskatchewan School Boards Association, who when asked if the NDP's assessment of this new program was fair, replied, no I don't. School boards and school board associations have been involved in this, and it's not standardized testing. It's an assessment of students and where they are at.

Mr. Speaker, 119.6 million in capital funding is being provided to advance a number of school projects, a 6.4 per cent increase. Since 2007, more than 600 million committed toward 43 major school capital projects and approximately 900 additional, smaller school capital projects. Five hundred new child care spaces are nearly 600,000 for new pre-kindergarten.

Mr. Speaker, municipalities will receive record revenue sharing for the third straight year, helping foster economic growth and enhance the quality of life for Saskatchewan people — 264.4 million will be provided in this budget, 11.4 per cent increase over last year, and 108 per cent increase over 2007-2008. Municipal funding will be 362 million overall, 50 per cent more than 2007 and 2008, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Debra Button, SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] president, offered this in response to revenue sharing:

The government has acknowledged the challenges faced by the urban communities in Saskatchewan. We appreciate that, their special acknowledgement of our northern members and that they continue to share significant revenue to help all urban governments address

their unique challenges.

Mr. Speaker, record 4.84 billion investment in health for 2013-2014. This will continue to reduce surgical wait times and improve quality of life for Saskatchewan people, 3.5 per cent increase over the last six years. Saskatchewan's surgical initiative will receive 70.5 million, a 16.5 per cent increase.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan's Cancer Agency will receive 150.7 million for enhanced cancer care services, 8.6 per cent investment over last year, which allows operations of prevention and early detection programs, innovative research, provisions of safe patient and family-centred care at cancer centres in Regina and Saskatoon. 86.5 million to continue work on long-term care facilities in 11 communities.

Mr. Speaker, we are opening more beds in the new Saskatchewan. It's a far cry from the NDP closing 1,200 long-term beds, turning their backs on those who needed care most.

Mr. Speaker, physicians recruitment strategy is paying off with more than 240 additional physicians practising in Saskatchewan today compared to 2007; 17.8 million investment will support the doubling of post-graduate training seats to 120 to further boost physician numbers in Saskatchewan and improve access for residents.

Fifty million for the Moose Jaw hospital replacement. We replace hospitals instead of the NDP closing 52 hospitals when they were the governing party — 52 hospitals.

Health system aggressively pursuing transformation in many ways: lean management system; improving primary health care; transforming the patient experience through sooner, smarter, and safer surgical care; and enhancing our safety culture with a focus on both patients and staff safety.

Highways, Mr. Speaker. I heard people like Sean Wilson, SHCA [Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association] board chairman: "This is definitely a budget that we can work with and a positive message is being sent to our industry that the future of our province's growth is dependent on the investment we make to . . . [our] infrastructure."

The budget includes work on major new multi-year projects that support the Saskatchewan plan for growth and our vision of a province of 1.2 million people by 2020.

Mr. Speaker, Shantel Lipp, president of the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association, said our infrastructure spending in this budget, this ". . . budget announcement shows the government is listening. Infrastructure investments tops the list of public priorities."

Highlights of the highways . . . [inaudible] . . . budget include 63.6 million for multi-year projects such as starting the Estevan truck pass, passing lanes between Balgonie and Fort Qu'Appelle and west Regina bypass, 168.1 million to repair and upgrade existing highways including grading on Highway 15, east of Highway 11, part of a high-clearance corridor, and grading and paving the Dalmeny access road and Highway 305 from Highway 11 to Highway 12, repaving about 280

kilometres of highway, 49.1 million to rehabilitate or replace bridges and culverts, 25.5 million for the municipal roads of the economy program.

NDP can heckle all they want about the P.A. [Prince Albert] bridge. They had 16 years to build it. Crumbling roads, turning rural highways into gravel roads, yet another reason we will never take lessons from the NDP. There is more work to be done, but we are certainly doing much more than the members opposite ever did in 16 years.

Mr. Speaker, let us not forget over the 16 years the NDP were governing, they raised the PST three times. They raised income taxes twice. They raised the business tax four times and raised fuel taxes twice. And all during that time the NDP created a drop in population. Mr. Speaker, it would've been even worse, as their platform would spend an additional 5 billion to existing expenditures, signed and developed by the new NDP leader, putting us even further in debt. They also wanted to double royalty rates, killing any mining growth and chasing companies away again like they did with K+S potash many years ago.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is a growing place. We need to keep on growing and moving forward. Members opposite want to hold us back and put us into debt and drive away business with bad economic plans. This budget ensures that we will never go back to those days of have not province.

Increases to infrastructure ensures we will have safe roads to travel. Increases to health care ensures that we will have prompt, quality health care. Our employment numbers indicate that we are a province that works, and that what we are doing is working.

This balanced budget ensures that we will retain our sterling credit rating while other provinces are going into massive debt. This budget keeps us in the driver's seat, not just in Canada, but in North America.

[16:30]

Mr. Speaker, with all that said, I will not be supporting the amendments from the negative nine. That is why I will be supporting the budget motion and this government of 42 members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last Wednesday the Minister of Finance delivered a balanced budget. This budget is balanced, Mr. Speaker, in every way that a budget can be balanced. The General Revenue Fund is balanced, Mr. Speaker, and it's balanced as well on the summary financials.

The people of Saskatchewan are happy that we report the budget in both ways, Mr. Speaker, both in the General Revenue Fund and the summary financials. But the NDP complain that we report too much. They think we should only report the summary financials. That's interesting, Mr. Speaker. All of the information is in this budget. It's all contained in this budget, and it's interesting that the NDP never did report anything but

the GRF [General Revenue Fund] until the last few years that they were in government. They would . . . They'd steadfastly refuse to report the summaries at all. We insisted on it for many years, Mr. Speaker, and then finally they relented and started to report both ways like we do now.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very proud to be associated with our Minister of Finance, as I am with all of my colleagues. I've worked with the minister since 1999 when I first got elected, and in recent years I've served with the Minister of Finance on Treasury Board and I appreciated very much his able leadership. And I'm proud that this budget is balanced and proud of the work that the Minister of Finance and Treasury Board and all of our ministers and all members on this side of the House have put towards this budget. Everyone on this side of the House contributed something to this budget, Mr. Speaker.

This budget, entitled *Balanced Growth*, is about more than a balanced budget, Mr. Speaker. It's also about improving the quality of life for every Saskatchewan resident, looking after the needs of those among us who need a hand up, Mr. Speaker, with increases in spending in education, health care, social services, long-term care homes. It's also about addressing the challenges of growth, Mr. Speaker, through more money for K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education, post-secondary education, skills training, highways, as well as municipal revenue sharing, housing, a new hospital for Moose Jaw, 40 portable classrooms to add to schools that are becoming crowded because of growth around this province, Mr. Speaker, and many school renovations and new schools around the province. Mr. Speaker, it's about quality of life with more funding for the arts, the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] Heritage Centre, and more funding for parks and recreational facilities around this province.

Mr. Speaker, this budget truly addresses the challenges of growth. But when you try to explain that to the NDP members opposite, their eyes glaze over and for good reason. They don't understand it, Mr. Speaker. They never did. Under the 16 years of the most recent NDP government, there was never any growth. There was only decline, and they learned to govern for decline.

In a famous article about 10 years ago, Mr. Speaker, they actually bragged about people leaving the province at a slower rate that particular year. No growth, low levels of support in their budgets for social programs, health, education, post-secondary institutions, highways, agriculture, and nothing to find at all for municipal revenue sharing, Mr. Speaker — that's the NDP brand in this province. They didn't know how to create growth, and they didn't get that it takes economic growth to provide the revenue to do those things that affect the daily lives of people. This budget is balanced fiscally, economically, and socially, Mr. Speaker. And I'm proud of it, as are the people of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to give some particular attention now to agriculture and how agriculture has been treated in this budget. Mr. Speaker, in this budget we see record crop insurance coverage of \$194 an acre on average across this province, Mr. Speaker, up from \$174 an acre last year which was a record at that time — record funding for the program, Mr. Speaker, of \$198 million.

Mr. Speaker, in research we see record spending in research of \$27.7 million, including \$3 million for the recently announced Global Institute for Food Security. Mr. Speaker, research is an important component that will help us meet our goals under the plan for growth, the Saskatchewan plan for growth that was announced last fall by the Premier. And a couple of the ambitious goals under the plan for growth are to increase exports from 10 to \$15 billion annually, Mr. Speaker, and to produce 10 million tonnes of crops, Mr. Speaker. We can't do that without research. Research is a very important component.

I remember 35 years ago, we didn't know very much about lentils at all in this province. In fact I'd say that many producers wouldn't know what a lentil looked like. Now with, because of excellent research, mostly around the University of Saskatchewan, and innovative producers, we are the world's leading producer and exporter of lentils.

The same can be said for the canola story, Mr. Speaker. Forty years ago there was no canola. We had a spindly plant that we used to try to grow called rapeseed. It was low yielding. The oil was basically unfit for human consumption. It was high in erucic acid. Erucic acid causes cholesterol to form in humans, so it was not recommended really for human use. It was mostly an industrial oil at that time. The price was always low, it didn't yield very well, and it could only be grown at all in certain areas of the province, Mr. Speaker, that had cooler temperatures and very high rainfall. That, through research, evolved into the plant that we now know as canola, and we are the largest producer and exporter of canola in the world, Mr. Speaker — both canola seed, canola oil, and canola meal.

Mr. Speaker, during the whole time that the NDP were in government there was a dispute between the irrigation districts and the RMs [rural municipality] that those irrigation districts were in about funding for irrigation bridges. Those are the bridges over irrigation canals, Mr. Speaker. The RMs claimed that this was an irrigation asset. They were put in place on, mind you, on municipal road allowances at the time that the irrigation canals were put in place and they should be the responsibility of the irrigation districts. The irrigation districts claimed that they were an asset of the municipalities, were put in place to complete the municipal roads that they were on, Mr. Speaker, and that the municipalities should pay for them.

So nothing got done, Mr. Speaker, resulting in many weight restrictions on these bridges. They've fallen into disrepair. The NDP didn't care. Some of these bridges have been closed, Mr. Speaker, and many more will be very soon if something wasn't done. And we did something, Mr. Speaker, in this budget. We've provided \$1 million for maintenance to the irrigation bridges in the irrigation district, Mr. Speaker, and that is very popular with both the municipalities in those districts and the districts themselves.

Growing Forward 2, Mr. Speaker, which will come into force and effect on April 1st, over \$70 million investment for strategic initiatives such as rural water infrastructure, research farm, business management and trade and market development, environmental programs, and so on. Mr. Speaker, that's an increase of \$25 million annually over last year.

This is the fourth largest budget ever announced in

Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and the five largest agricultural budgets have been introduced since 2007 when the Saskatchewan Party became the Government of Saskatchewan. In the last six years, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party has announced 50 per cent more in funding for agriculture on budget day than the NDP did in their last six years. The average agricultural budget over the last six years under the Saskatchewan Party was \$405 million, a total of \$2.5 billion. Average agricultural budget over the past six years under the NDP, \$273 million, Mr. Speaker, for a total of only 1.6 billion.

The NDP closed 31 agricultural extension offices around this province. They refused to commit any funding to AgriStability and AgriInvest upfront. Mr. Speaker, producers had to wait and wonder if there was going to be any funding. And by the time that we knew how much funding there was in this province, our applications were in last and they were in the pile on somebody's desk in Winnipeg where the programs were administered at that time, and they were always dealt with last. And it was at least a year and a half, often two years, before producers even knew what they were going to get for a particular agricultural year, a particular crop year. And it was a hopeless situation, Mr. Speaker. The NDP steadfastly refused to fund those programs upfront, and we have, every single year since we've become government, Mr. Speaker, in 2007, and we will continue to do so.

In 1991-92 — I think it was the spring of '92; I remember it well — the NDP tore up GRIP contracts with producers. I had one myself. I was in that program and I haven't been in too many since. But it was a pretty good program and it was the only program we had, Mr. Speaker, and then the NDP wanted to cut costs so the first thing they did was go to the agricultural community. And even though producers had signed their GRIP contracts for the year 1992, the production year for 1992, they tore up those contracts, Mr. Speaker. They had to go to court to defend themselves over it, Mr. Speaker. They were sued. It was a mess, and producers have never forgotten it. That was disrespectful beyond belief, Mr. Speaker. And they'd do it again. They'd do it again tomorrow if they had the chance. Mr. Speaker, the NDP increased crop insurance premiums regularly without increasing coverage and they cut the spot loss hail program twice.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about the federal community pastures. We've set aside \$1.15 million for the transition of the federal community pastures. We've stated and I've stated ever since it was announced this past early summer that the federal government was divesting of the PFRA [Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration] pastures . . . And under that agreement, those pastures come back to the province that they're in, Mr. Speaker, an agreement that was signed in 1940, I think. And so we get these back.

And we didn't ask for this. We didn't want it and we don't want it still. But it's happening, and it's happening under a timetable that is dictated by the federal government. They're turning 10 of them over to us soon for operations in the 2014 grazing season, Mr. Speaker, and those will be the first 10. And the last of them will be turned over to us in 2018. And patrons have been our priority the whole time. We are concerned that the patrons have the opportunity to use this grass in the future as they have in the past, Mr. Speaker.

The pasture patrons can currently receive up to \$120,000 per pasture to assist with setting up their business entities and any training they may need on the specifics associated with their pasture. We're not going to take over managing of these pastures, Mr. Speaker. The patrons and the cattle industry and cattle producers are the best stewards of grassland that we can find in this province. It's a skill, Mr. Speaker, that's been passed on from generation to generation. They're proud of their ability to manage grassland and they do it very, very well.

[16:45]

I'm hearing a little activity on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker. The member from Nutana has stated that — stated in this very legislature, Mr. Speaker, and other places — that cattle producers who have for generations been stewards of the grassland in this province are not, are not good stewards of grassland. She thinks that federal, she thinks that federal bureaucrats are better at that. I guess that's, I guess that's typical for the NDP way of thinking. I mean, if it's expensive and it's unionized, it's got to be better, right?

She also referred to the PFRA pastures as cow daycare. Mr. Speaker . . .

An Hon. Member: — As what?

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Cow daycare, you heard me. That's what she said. Disrespectful. Disrespectful, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we are going to do our level best to see that the patrons go on to operate these pastures. And I believe when the dust settles, they'll be very happy that a Saskatchewan Party government was in place through this transition and they get the opportunity to either purchase or lease these pastures.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP have no rural representation, and it's no wonder. It's no wonder when they're as disrespectful to rural Saskatchewan as you would glean from the remarks from the member from Nutana. It's no wonder they have no rural representation, Mr. Speaker, but they think they know what's best for ranchers and the environment that ranchers have protected for well over 100 years.

Mr. Speaker, the NDP spent 16 years attacking farmers, ranchers, and rural Saskatchewan and they want a chance to do it again. They want a chance. They won't get one, but they'd like it. They'd sure want it. They want it so bad it hurts.

The NDP continually, Mr. Speaker, wasted taxpayers' money, investing in losing private business rather than supporting agricultural programs. They did it every single year, Mr. Speaker. I did a little calculation of my own and it worked out to nearly \$100 million a year that they squandered for a number of years in a row. Nearly \$100 million a year that they squandered on investments and private industry that virtually all lost money for the taxpayers.

Not only didn't they properly fund programs, Mr. Speaker, they cut programs and services to farmers and ranchers. Mr. Speaker, I think the jury's in on who best serves rural Saskatchewan, the NDP or the Saskatchewan Party government, but I want to read some quotes from independent people and agencies regarding

this budget and how it affects agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, a news release from SARM says this, and I quote:

During a time of fiscal restraint these funding increases reaffirm the government's dedication to help fund the municipal infrastructure needed to foster continued economic growth. This commitment is important to rural Saskatchewan because the growing industries driving this province's economy are located in rural municipalities.

It goes on to say:

The Province is also committing to fully fund Growing Forward 2 programs, continuing to fund SARM administered pest control programs and encouraging irrigation opportunities . . . these investments are greatly appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, SaskCanola Chair Joan Heath said this, and I quote:

SaskCanola is very pleased to see the ministry's continued increased emphasis on innovation and research funding. A significant part of the success of canola has been a direct result of research.

Mr. Speaker, in a news release put out by the Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association, they say this: "The Saskatchewan Cattlemen's Association is encouraged by the provincial government's commitment to agricultural research." The news release goes on to say: "The SCA does appreciate the increase in Growing Forward 2 framework funding as well as the commitment to hold the line on education property tax on farm land."

Mr. Speaker, the Western Grains Research Foundation says:

Producers will benefit from the Saskatchewan Government's increased commitment to research . . . I would like to thank the Government of Saskatchewan for their commitment and Minister Stewart for his ongoing support of agricultural research and innovation in the province.

Mr. Speaker, these are a few quotes from leaders in the agricultural industry. We appreciate their comments and the confidence they have shown in this great balanced budget. And as I said previously, Mr. Speaker, I am very proud of this budget and very proud of our Minister of Finance. And accordingly I support the motion and this budget.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Arm River-Watrous.

Mr. Brkich: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to . . . [inaudible] . . . this balanced budget, our sixth balanced budget. You know, since we formed government, all our caucus members have always been involved in designing the budget. That's one of the things, the great part of this party. But now that I'm on Treasury Board, I've been involved even a little bit more. And I admire the work of the Finance minister and the Finance officials that do work year around to help us, providing

us the right information to do this budget, but also to the caucus members that gave us the information, their input that they've been gathering up over the year of what their constituents have been telling them.

And naturally I mean, same as in Arm River-Watrous, health care is always at the top of the list of that. And that's something that we recognize in this budget, Mr. Speaker. You know, we will be spending a record of 4.84 billion on health care in Saskatchewan. This means a 3.5 increase in health care spending over the last year. You know, our regional health authorities will get 3 billion in this budget. That's an overall increase of 4.5.

And you know, I'll talk about under the NDP how they used to always . . . That's one of the reasons that I got into politics was they were always looking on the decline. They were closing things in rural Saskatchewan. We had long-term care facilities that were on the waiting list for a number of years. One of them was Watrous. They were on the waiting list since '91 looking for an okay, for the go-ahead from the government to build it. Under our government, we've built Watrous. It's up and running. We're also building the other 10, working towards that as the communities come together, knowing that they're going to need the long-term care as they go on.

That's something that differentiates us than the NDP in any of the budgets. Our budgets have always dealt with growth, Mr. Speaker, and looking towards the future. That's one of the reasons that I got into politics was because before '99 the province was always — and it was run by the NDP — it was looking on decline, how to manage decline.

We can talk about the education system when they used to predict how many students they would be losing per year. You know, since we've come in we're dealing with the increase in students. I mean that's a good thing. That's dealing with growth. And that is one of the things that propelled myself and all my colleagues to get into politics. And that's why we have 49 members on that side and they have nine.

You know, I've listened to many speeches on their side and it disappoints me that, you know, all they talk about is the negative things, not how we're dealing with growth . . . how, you know, basically things that would almost hold the province back.

Uranium is one. We realized, you know, talking to the industry, that there hasn't been any significant increase in mine production and they gave us reasons why. They gave the minister and our caucus reasons why. So we've looked at adjusting the royalty rates. I've never heard one good thing from that side on that — and two northern members — that's going to help their constituency, going to provide good, union paying, high paying jobs to that area, plus over the province. Even though these are union jobs, they still can't say, I haven't heard one of them say in a speech, but you know what, that was a good move; this is going to help grow the province, Mr. Speaker. I haven't heard one of them say that.

You know, we talk about Keystone. You know, we had the motion here and I was here when they voted against it. They voted against that motion. And yet after, with the new member,

with the new leader, he finally, after days, after days of the press going to him, says, yes I kind of support it. But he still will not go against his federal leader who is against Keystone, who is against the pipeline expansion and against tar sand expansion, which . . . When I go door to door, as many as my colleagues do, I mean the people say, that's good for the province; the growth is good. They can't say that. I've yet to hear that in any of their speeches how we need to be working together. How can we work together to convince Obama and the United States that this pipe, we need this pipeline? The United States needs it. They realize it. But you know what? They have a federal leader that is talking against it.

They still cannot work towards growing this province. That is the negativity of them, and that's why they're sitting with nine you know, and they're going to be in the future if they don't change that. I hear the same stuff from the current leader that I heard from the previous one, Mr. Lingenfelter, same stuff. Same stuff. Just the same old, you know, almost the rhetoric, trying to . . . how can we not grow this province. You know, let's keep it the same.

I can remember when . . . I was here when Mr. Lautermilch made the comment right here in this House saying, you know, if more people leave, well there's just more for the rest of us. Well how does that work? You know.

But this budget is dealing with growth which we have over the six years. Highways, in my constituency we have Highway 15. We're going to start work on it. We're going to make that a long, a wide-load corridor, Mr. Speaker, and we need that to get the wide loads off No. 11. As you know, No. 11 is getting busier and busier every year. We need to move that. We know that. And it's costly. It's going to cost us between, you know, 30 to \$40 million when that's completed. But that's something we're planning for. We're starting work on that. That's in this budget. That's helping out the constituents, it's helping out the residents, and it's also getting traffic off No. 11, moving the heavy, wide loads as the oil industry and other industries are growing throughout this province.

I mean I've got to look at my constituency of any major town — Watrous and Wynyard and Dundurn and Hanley, Kenaston — they're all growing in population. That is a good thing, Mr. Speaker. That is what this budget is all about. This is what these budget speeches are about is how we want to grow this province and how they want to hold it back.

When we look at designing a budget, it's how can we help this province grow, and also how can we improve the quality of life for the residents. Because to improve the quality of life, Mr. Speaker, you need money. You need to bring in business. You need to have jobs for the people. You need to have the money to do things such as the transition house that we did in Melfort. You need money for that.

The increases that we've given to social services over the years, that comes from hard work, from people working, from businesses being there, from more business moving in so we have more money. The more businesses you have, the more money you have for your social programs, for health care, for social services. Then you can go building highways and schools and hospitals and expanding what you've . . . as you're working

towards growing your budget.

You know, we deal with . . . As each ministry brought forward their plan to Treasury Board, I mean it all dealt with growth. It all dealt . . . Two things, two things it would bring forward was how to grow the province, but also how can we also improve the quality of life for the people of Saskatchewan. Each and every ministry that brought that to Treasury Board, and myself as a member, that's what, those are the two things that the ministers always were working towards, two principles that we had for this party. And that is why we have 49 members over here and that's why they have nine because they still cannot realize that growth . . . You have to have growth to improve your social and the quality of life for your residents of Saskatchewan.

I'm very proud of this budget and I think you can gather from what I'm saying that I plan to be supporting it. I'm against the amendment that the opposition brings. They bring forth the same amendment over the six years, and it always talks about negativity and how to hold this province back.

I can remember how they tried to hold it back over the many years, letting the highways decline, our education system decline, letting our health care decline, closing 52 hospitals. Remember when they closed the wing in the Davidson long-term care facility? How many rural service centres did they close? . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thirty-one, a member tells me. They've closed so many things over the years that it's even hard to name, but I can still remember it because when you go around door knocking to people, they remind you. When you're door knocking, they'll say, we don't ever want that party back in power again because all they will do is hold this province back. They've held the growth of it back, and they've held the people back.

The Deputy Speaker: — It now being 5 o'clock, the time of adjournment, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Brad Wall
Premier

President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Bill Boyd

Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Corporation

Hon. Kevin Doherty

Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
Capital Commission

Hon. June Draude

Minister of Social Services
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. Dustin Duncan

Minister of Health

Hon. Donna Harpauer

Minister of Crown Investments
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Liquor and Gaming Authority

Hon. Nancy Heppner

Minister of Central Services
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for the Lean Initiative

Hon. Ken Krawetz

Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Russ Marchuk

Minister of Education

Hon. Tim McMillan

Minister Responsible for Energy and Resources
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan
Minister Responsible for Trade
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated

Hon. Don McMorris

Minister of Highways and Infrastructure
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Transportation Company
Minister Responsible for Information
Services Corporation
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Gaming Corporation
Minister Responsible for SaskBuilds

Hon. Don Morgan

Minister of Advanced Education
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Jim Reiter

Minister of Government Relations
Minister Responsible for First Nations,
Métis and Northern Affairs

Hon. Lyle Stewart

Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan Crop
Insurance Corporation

Hon. Christine Tell

Minister Responsible for Corrections and Policing

Hon. Randy Weekes

Minister Responsible for Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Gordon Wyant

Minister of Justice and Attorney General