



SECOND SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

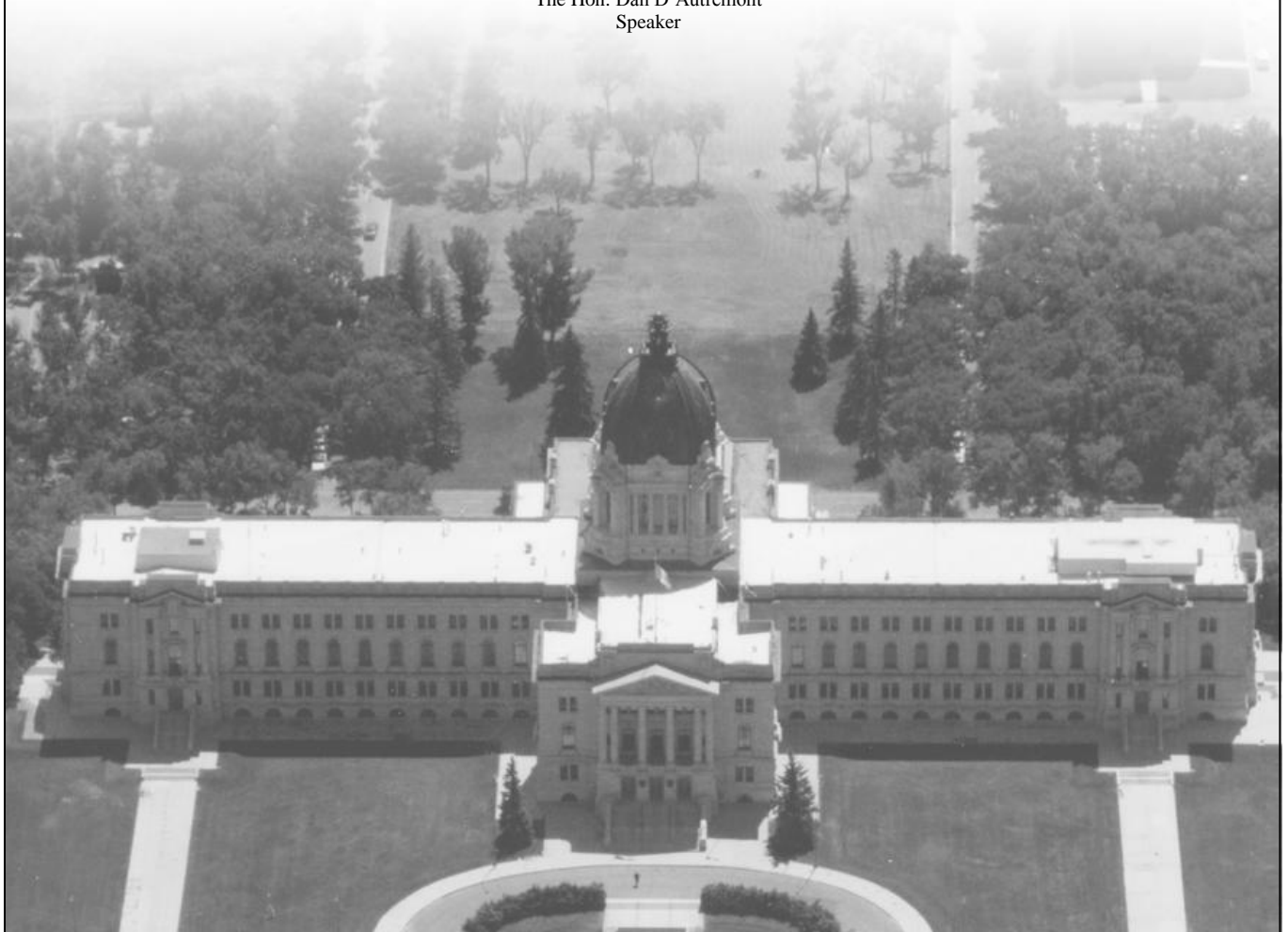
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

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



**MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN**

Speaker — Hon. Dan D’Autremont  
 Premier — Hon. Brad Wall  
 Leader of the Opposition — Cam Broten

<b>Name of Member</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>	<b>Constituency</b>
Belanger, Buckley	NDP	Athabasca
Bjornerud, Bob	SP	Melville-Saltcoats
Boyd, Hon. Bill	SP	Kindersley
Bradshaw, Fred	SP	Carrot River Valley
Brkich, Greg	SP	Arm River-Watrous
Broten, Cam	NDP	Saskatoon Massey Place
Campeau, Jennifer	SP	Saskatoon Fairview
Chartier, Danielle	NDP	Saskatoon Riversdale
Cheveldayoff, Hon. Ken	SP	Saskatoon Silver Springs
Cox, Herb	SP	The Battlefords
D’Autremont, Hon. Dan	SP	Cannington
Docherty, Mark	SP	Regina Coronation Park
Doherty, Hon. Kevin	SP	Regina Northeast
Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
Duncan, Hon. Dustin	SP	Weyburn-Big Muddy
Eagles, Doreen	SP	Estevan
Elhard, Hon. Wayne	SP	Cypress Hills
Forbes, David	NDP	Saskatoon Centre
Harpauer, Hon. Donna	SP	Humboldt
Harrison, Hon. Jeremy	SP	Meadow Lake
Hart, Glen	SP	Last Mountain-Touchwood
Heppner, Hon. Nancy	SP	Martensville
Hickie, Darryl	SP	Prince Albert Carlton
Hutchinson, Bill	SP	Regina South
Huyghebaert, D.F. (Yogi)	SP	Wood River
Jurgens, Victoria	SP	Prince Albert Northcote
Kirsch, Delbert	SP	Batoche
Krawetz, Hon. Ken	SP	Canora-Pelly
Lawrence, Greg	SP	Moose Jaw Wakamow
Makowsky, Gene	SP	Regina Dewdney
Marchuk, Hon. Russ	SP	Regina Douglas Park
McCall, Warren	NDP	Regina Elphinstone-Centre
McMillan, Hon. Tim	SP	Lloydminster
McMorris, Hon. Don	SP	Indian Head-Milestone
Merriman, Paul	SP	Saskatoon Sutherland
Michelson, Warren	SP	Moose Jaw North
Moe, Scott	SP	Rosthern-Shellbrook
Morgan, Hon. Don	SP	Saskatoon Southeast
Nilson, John	NDP	Regina Lakeview
Norris, Rob	SP	Saskatoon Greystone
Ottenbreit, Greg	SP	Yorkton
Parent, Roger	SP	Saskatoon Meewasin
Phillips, Kevin	SP	Melfort
Reiter, Hon. Jim	SP	Rosetown-Elrose
Ross, Laura	SP	Regina Qu’Appelle Valley
Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
Steinley, Warren	SP	Regina Walsh Acres
Stewart, Hon. Lyle	SP	Thunder Creek
Tell, Hon. Christine	SP	Regina Wascana Plains
Tochor, Corey	SP	Saskatoon Eastview
Toth, Don	SP	Moosomin
Vermette, Doyle	NDP	Cumberland
Wall, Hon. Brad	SP	Swift Current
Weekes, Hon. Randy	SP	Biggar
Wilson, Nadine	SP	Saskatchewan Rivers
Wotherspoon, Trent	NDP	Regina Rosemont
Wyant, Hon. Gordon	SP	Saskatoon Northwest

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks, colleagues for the leave. It is a special day at the legislature today because of the group that I'm able to introduce, and a much larger group that was here a little bit earlier on when the Minister of Social Services chaired a press conference in an announcement about the multi-year wait-list initiative for people in our province with disabilities.

Mr. Speaker, members of the House will recall that in 2008 there was a wait-list of 440 names. But much more importantly, Mr. Speaker, than the names were the people represented behind those names and the families represented by those names. These were the names of individuals, after all, who have intellectual disabilities in our province and who are seeking only the dignity of a place to live or perhaps proper programming, in some cases it was day programming.

Mr. Speaker, today services are in place or in the development for every single person on that list, on that list of 440, as well as an additional 215 community living clients with emerging needs.

Mr. Speaker, the government was able to provide the funding to help achieve this. But those who are on the front line, those who are providing care, those who are providing programs and services for people that have intellectual disabilities are the true heroes in all of this. And we want to welcome a representative group of that particular team of people that work right across the province of Saskatchewan. And so today in your gallery I'm happy to introduce Carol Cundall, who's with Estevan Diversified Services and spoke very eloquent today at the event here at the legislature, as well as Amy McNeil from the Saskatchewan Association of Rehab Centres.

Mr. Speaker, they represent others that have joined them today, and there was a large group of both residents and those who benefit directly from the programs, to those who are the caregivers, those who provide those programs. They are committed individuals, to say the very least. They are here today to recognize the end of the wait-list. But we know, Mr. Speaker, that this is a process, not an event.

Even in Swift Current where Southwest Homes has seen the elimination of their wait-list of 25, we know that there are names that are being added to that. And we want to make sure we're vigilant, and that was the counsel we received from those I've just introduced: that we not stop here, that we monitor the list as well.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to introduce with the group, the executive director for the Interlake Human Resources Corporation, Deborah Farago; Leanne Zacharias, human resources facilitator with SARC [Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres]; David Ratzlaff, NIT family planner; as well as Lynne Demeule, the social associate representative of the board of directors for Cheshire Homes of Regina, Mr. Speaker.

These are true heroes who are on the front line of this initiative. We want to welcome them to this Legislative Assembly. We want to encourage their vigilance in terms of this particular wait-list, and we just want to thank them very much for what they do every single day.

**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 this very important group to the legislature, individuals who have done so much for so many here in the province. We want to say thank you to you for all that you have done. And we recognize that while there are few in the gallery, they represent many, many people in Saskatchewan communities, in large and small Saskatchewan communities, doing the work and caring for everyone here in the province.

So thank you so much for the work that you do. Without the work that you do, either as front-line individuals or in the area of advocacy, what government wants to do, needs to do, couldn't be done. So thank you so much for your role here today and what you do throughout the year.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice and Attorney General has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the members for the extended introduction. In recognition of National Victims of Crime Awareness Week, our government has declared April 21st to 27th Victims of Crime Awareness Week in Saskatchewan. This is a time to recognize not only impacts of crime on people but also the dedication of the people who give aid to victims in this province.

Today we have in the gallery 10 victim services volunteers who are being recognized for the years of support that they have given to victims of crime. These people are veteran volunteers of the victim services program in their communities, marking their 10- and 15-year anniversaries. Mr. Speaker, from Parkland victim services, we have Theresa Baumung, Gail Kaban, Anita Klochko, Mary Mayer, and Lucille Rezanoff. They are joined by Peggy Johnson from Moose Jaw victim services, Andrea Staples from northeast regional victim services, and Doug Haroldson from the south west victim services. Also in the gallery is Gerry Pepler of Yorkton, who is marking her 20th anniversary as a volunteer member of the Parkland victim services board of directors.

The volunteers here today and nearly 300 others from across Saskatchewan are what makes these programs so successful. I'm told that last year alone volunteer victim support workers gave nearly 11,000 hours to thousands of victims of crime and tragedy. Today I was honoured to sit down for lunch with our fine guests and join them in commemorating their great service to our province and its people. Since becoming Minister of Justice, I've been consistently impressed when I get the chance to meet the victim services volunteers like the guests here today. I always come away with the feeling that this hard work that these people do reflect in part the true spirit of this province.

I'd also like to mention Margaret Minski of Battlefords victim services, Mary-Ann Schilling from southeast regional victim services, Kathy Button from the northeast regional victim services, Noreen Kolback and Sandra Wright of Saskatoon victim services. These people are also celebrating their 10- and 15-year anniversaries. Although they were not able to be here with us today, that does not mean that we do not appreciate the work that they do.

Saskatchewan is a great place to live and work for many reasons, Mr. Speaker, but that does not mean our province is perfect. There's always more that can be done to help victims of crime. The Ministry of Justice is committed to giving victims the support they need to overcome their challenges and live productive, happy lives.

Last year we announced a major expansion of victim services that ensures everyone in Saskatchewan can access a variety of victim services. I am happy to say that the work on this expansion is well under way. We have already opened new victim/witness services in both North Battleford and Meadow Lake to assist child victims and other vulnerable witnesses who must testify in court. Over the next few weeks, victims of crime in a number of RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] detachments currently without police-based victim services will begin receiving support as this program expands province-wide.

As for our guests, Mr. Speaker, I only ask they continue the great work that they have been doing. The time I've spent with them today only reinforces my faith in how kind-hearted and dedicated Saskatchewan's victim services volunteers are. I had a wonderful time with them, and I'm grateful that they came to share their achievements with us today. To show our appreciation for their efforts, I would ask members to join me in applauding our guests for their accomplishments and to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Nilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to join with the Minister of Justice in welcoming our guests and congratulating them on their work. I had the privilege of taking over from Minister of Justice Bob Mitchell who started this program, and then I spent almost five years working with the people, and many of the people that are here today. And at that point we weren't certain whether this was something that would continue for the long-term, but we sure believed that it did. And it's very clear, through all the work that you have provided as the volunteers, this important service for Saskatchewan people is here for the long term. So thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm especially honoured to be able to introduce five individuals seated up in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, way up at the top row. Mr. Speaker, joining us today here in the legislature are four students from the Canora Composite School. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to introduce Haley Tratch, Laura Weinbender, Calvin Kuang, and Kevin Park.

Mr. Speaker, also accompanying these four students is teacher Simone Achmus. Ms. Achmus is a grade 6 teacher at the Composite, but spends a fair amount of her extracurricular time ensuring that this Global Vision initiative goes forward. Mr. Speaker, with the help of Ms. Achmus, these students were recently selected to be a part of Junior Team Canada, a national trade mission group.

And, Mr. Speaker, and to all members of the House, I'll expand on that a little later during members statements. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming this great group to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. Phillips:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased, very pleased to have my wife, April, join with me today and come into the gallery. She's a busy lady. She's a new city councillor for the last six months. Last Saturday she was elected to the Wapiti Regional Library board executive. She has a job back home, and last night we attended a brilliant Juno Awards ceremony. And today happens to be her birthday. So happy birthday, April, and ... [inaudible interjection] ... I'm not going to say. I'd like you to make April welcome.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask for leave for an extended introduction.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Advanced Education has asked for leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

**Hon. Mr. Morgan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thanks to the members for allowing the additional time on this.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce two medical researchers from the University of Regina sitting in the Speaker's gallery today. I'll ask them to wave when I call their names. They are Dr. Nick Carleton and Dr. Mohan Babu. Both were awarded research funding from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, an organization that supports health researchers and trainees across Canada.

Dr. Carleton is using software to help people deal with chronic pain. An assistant professor of psychology, Dr. Carleton has worked on the development of computer software that can help manage pain for people with fibromyalgia in only a few minutes a day. This software has been made available to people across Canada through the Internet. Dr. Carleton has received over \$460,000 in funding to support this work over the next five years.

Dr. Babu's research is focused on fighting a number of mitochondrial diseases. In Dr. Babu's words, mitochondria generate the majority of a cell's energy supply and are required for a large number of diverse cellular functions. Defects in mitochondrial function can cause or contribute to many diseases. Dr. Babu, an assistant professor of biochemistry, is assembling detailed information about how mitochondria function in yeast in an effort to pinpoint the role they play in human disease. Funding of \$780,000 will support this research through the next five years.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to congratulate these researchers for the work they are doing and thank them for their contributions to health and health care. Their work is a testament to the high calibre of research being done at the University of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that all members welcome Dr. Carleton and Dr. Babu to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming these two impressive research academics to their Legislative Assembly, Dr. Carleton and Dr. Babu.

Certainly that union between research academics and the improving of the quality of life, while at the same time bringing important research dollars to the University of Regina, is commendable. It goes to improving quality of life generally but is a signal to the good work being done on the University of Regina campus. So again I'd like to join with the Minister of Advanced Education, on behalf of the official opposition, as the Advanced Education critic, in welcoming you to your legislature, congratulating you, and thanking you.

[13:45]

#### PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased to stand today to present a petition on cellphone coverage for northwestern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. 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 Nations, along with 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.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition come from all throughout Saskatchewan. And on this particular petition, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are primarily from Dillon. And I so present.

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling for the reconsideration of passing Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. And we know since the employment Act was introduced in December, literally hundreds of hours of study have gone into carrying out the due diligence. But we also know there's no labour relations crisis to fix, no necessity to rush this omnibus bill through, and stable labour relations in all sectors run the risk of being thrown into turmoil as a result of Bill 85's sweeping changes. Thousands of represented workers stand to lose their rights to bargain collectively and be represented by the union of their choice. I'd like to read the prayer:

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

And, Mr. Speaker, people signing this petition come from Meadow Lake, Loon Lake, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Tisdale, Star City, Naicam, Melfort, and throughout the province. Thank you so much.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

#### 2013 Juno Awards

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise in the House today to say thank you to all the volunteers, organizers, sponsors, and everyone who helped make Juno Week such a success. To bring the 2013 Juno Awards to the province of Saskatchewan was no small feat. It took dedication, time, and commitment of many people, approximately 600 volunteers, to make the weekend possible. But we realize the positive impact the Junos bring to our province, and that is why

the people of Saskatchewan worked tirelessly to make this past week such a hit.

Juno Week was an opportunity to highlight our province Saskatchewan's music industry, the positive impact music has on our quality of life. Junos also offered the opportunity to showcase Saskatchewan artists who received exposure and publicity that they otherwise would not have received. This exposure of local talent is a critical aspect of hosting this prestigious event.

Even though the weather put spring on hold, people of Saskatchewan attended all the Juno events with enthusiasm and excitement. This weekend was loud, and I think many of us can still hear the music coming from the downtown Potash Corp tent.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all the members to join me in thanking everyone who helped make the 2013 Juno Awards such a huge success. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Earth Day

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, as someone who's committed to protecting and caring for the prairies, I'm pleased to be able to rise today in the House and recognize Earth Day. Earth Day outlines our responsibility as individuals and as a collective in protecting the environment for future generations.

Mr. Speaker, environmentalists come in all shapes and sizes. And even though not all of us use that term to describe our activities, Saskatchewan has a long history of caring for and valuing the natural beauty that surrounds us, whether it's the plains of the South or the trees and lakes of the North. Individuals take practical steps to protect and preserve the natural world around us. Farmers work to preserve wetlands for waterfowl. Ranchers preserve the natural prairie. And many households take initiative to recycle and conserve energy.

But the reality of climate change and the growing awareness of our ecological footprint demand that governments step up to the plate as well. With the 73 per cent cut in climate change and environmental initiatives in the last two years, the Sask Party government has continued to dodge its responsibility in this area.

It's not enough to utilize green branding and attaching a logo to mailouts. We must use common sense solutions and implement a real plan to protect the environment. It's not enough, Mr. Speaker, to rely on the actions of individuals. Our governments need to back the talk with concrete measures to move forward sustainably as responsible stewards of our resources.

Mr. Speaker, I urge this government to take action now to improve our international reputation, which is now in shambles, by implementing concrete programs to reverse the devastating effects of carbon on our atmosphere and aggressively reduce our overall CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

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

### Students Selected for Junior Team Canada

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today I would like to recognize and congratulate the special group of four grade 12 students I had the pleasure of introducing earlier on this afternoon. These students, Mr. Speaker, have recently been selected to Junior Team Canada, a trade mission group that sends youth around the world to help them develop international business experience.

Junior Team Canada is part of the national, non-profit organization, Global Vision. Mr. Speaker, Global Vision was founded in 1991 by prominent business, government, and educational leaders. The organization is dedicated to providing Canadian youth with the skills and experience to become the business leaders of tomorrow.

These students will represent Saskatchewan and Canada as ambassadors on the upcoming trade mission to China, Singapore, and Malaysia this August. After attending a regional conference in Winnipeg in February, these students were selected to the national team. The students were chosen to travel to China, Singapore, and Malaysia, Mr. Speaker, because of their enthusiasm and dedication to branding Saskatchewan on the world stage. While travelling, the students will meet with international business leaders and politicians and make presentations aimed at strengthening trade relationships between Canada and Asia.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate these students for being selected and thank them for their dedication and interest in developing both Canada and Saskatchewan's relationship with this region. I ask all members to join me in saying congratulations and wishing them best of luck in their trip in August.

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

### National Volunteer Week

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This week is National Volunteer Week in Canada and here in Saskatchewan. This time is set aside to recognize the work of volunteers across Canada and in our province. I'm sure that every member in this House has volunteered in their community, whether it was part of a political campaign, an event at a local school, or in the community in support of an issue in which we believe.

Volunteers in our communities coach teams, deliver meals, build homes, and contribute their time in more ways than I could list today. Volunteering and commitment to our communities is something that unites us as a province and speaks to each of us across the diversity that is present in Saskatchewan. I'm always amazed at the variety of those who are actively volunteering in their communities, from the youngest citizen to the oldest and across all cultural backgrounds and abilities.

The capacity of our community organizations to support, train, and coordinate volunteering in our community is something to be commended and valued. Organizations like Volunteer Saskatoon and the United Way in Regina help support and

promote volunteerism across Saskatchewan. Volunteering is the backbone of this province, and one of the areas where the warmth and generosity of the Saskatchewan people shine. This community spirit built this province and continues to shape our communities.

I'd like to ask my colleagues to join with me in recognizing National Volunteer Week. The generosity of people in Saskatchewan in contributing their time and experience to their communities is something that we all value and benefit from.

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

### Community Living Wait-List Initiative

**Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to recognize this morning's announcement of the completion of the multi-year initiative to address the wait-list of people with intellectual disabilities who require specialized, residential, and/or day programs to meet their needs.

The \$62.5 million dollar initiative launched in 2008 represents the largest investment in Saskatchewan history in support of people with intellectual disabilities. By completing this historic initiative, we ensured that some of our most vulnerable citizens will receive the services they need in their own communities.

Best practices tell us that people with intellectual disabilities do much better in community-based settings, providing them with enhanced opportunities to play a full and active role in their community. The community living wait-list initiative involved support for new, expanded, enhanced, or existing services in 41 communities across the province; funding for almost 500 new staff positions in community-based organizations; and served 655 clients. That's 215 more people than our original goal.

The initiative was driven by many of the hard-working Social Services staff, and supported by partnerships with the Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres, Saskatchewan approved private service homes Inc., Saskatchewan Housing Corp., and dozens of individual community-based organizations.

Mr. Speaker, the wait-list initiative is another example of our government's ongoing commitment to making Saskatchewan the best place to live for people with disabilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### National Cancer Awareness Month

**Mr. Cox:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We don't yet see many daffodils popping up in gardens in Saskatchewan, but they are an important symbol of the fight against cancer during April, National Cancer Awareness Month.

Today and this month, we should all take a few moments to pay tribute to everyone in our great province who faces a cancer diagnosis and the friends, family, neighbours, health care providers, and volunteers who support them.

Mr. Speaker, our government has increased funding by almost \$12 million to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency for the prevention and early detection of cancer through a number of programs and to improve timely access to treatment for an increasing number of cancer patients. Mr. Speaker, in addition to programs like the human papillomavirus vaccine to prevent cervical cancer, we continue our efforts to encourage teenagers to remain tobacco free or quit using tobacco. There are also many concerted efforts across the province to encourage healthy eating habits, regular exercise, and other choices that improve personal health and reduce the likelihood of a cancer diagnosis.

Mr. Speaker, during national Cancer Awareness Month, we acknowledge the work of the many people in Saskatchewan who devote themselves to this cause. To all the non-profit organizations, their staff, and their volunteers raising money for research, prevention, public education, and services for people with cancer: your important work is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### Earth Day

**Ms. Jurgens:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in this House to announce that today is Earth Day. Mr. Speaker, Earth Day provides the opportunity for all of us to reflect on the importance of our environment.

Our government is moving forward with three new recycling initiatives: the multi-material recycling program, the agricultural plastic waste program, and the household hazardous waste recycling program. The multi-material recycling program will divert up to 40 per cent of household waste from landfills. When implemented, Saskatchewan will be the first province in Canada to have a program of its kind to recycle agricultural plastic waste. With organizations such as Sarcan and SARRC [Saskatchewan Association for Resource Recovery Corporation], the Saskatchewan scrap tire association, and the Saskatchewan Waste Reduction Council working hard to run recycling programs in our province, we are well on our way to becoming a greener Saskatchewan.

Earth Day is another reason to recognize why we have undertaken an extensive sampling and monitoring program through the boreal watershed management strategy. Never before has a government of Saskatchewan taken such a strong approach to the protection of our northern lakes. This strategy will define areas in the boreal watershed where development can and cannot occur. This will help protect the environment while facilitating the development and growth of our northern resources, improving economic development, and creating job opportunities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### QUESTION PERIOD

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

### Health Region Staffing

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In recent weeks we've heard about home care services being cut, chronic

understaffing at seniors' care facilities, and the possible closure of a pediatric oncology ward. None of that is news Saskatchewan people expect when our economy is doing as well as it is. But that's the kind of news, Mr. Speaker, that just keeps coming.

We received a copy of an internal memo from the Saskatoon Health Region that says there will be no overtime and a freeze on hiring. The reason for this drastic action is the funding gap of \$25 million from the budget and the accumulated deficit of nearly \$70 million.

This directive for no overtime and a freeze on hiring will require a substantial casual pool if patient care is not to be compromised. So my question to the Premier: has he checked to see if the casual pool in the Saskatoon Health Region is sufficient to handle this directive?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question. I think it's important to note that in the budget just recently presented in this legislature, that members opposite voted against, there was actually an additional \$40 million in funding for this particular health region that we're talking about. Mr. Speaker, I also think it's important for that member, the Leader of the Opposition and other members, to remember as well that this government has increased resources to all the health regions so that the complement of health care workers — not just nurses and doctors, but all health care workers — is significantly higher certainly than it was. It's why we're able to see progress in terms of the surgical wait times initiative. It's why we're able to see the successful implementation of the patient-first initiative, Mr. Speaker.

As to the member's question, you know, we have in the health region, the board itself and professionals making these decisions. They know the mandate from the government is patient first, and we expect them to conduct their affairs accordingly.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, my specific question to the Premier was whether or not he had checked to see if the casual pool is sufficient in order to handle this directive of no overtime and the hiring freeze. Front-line health workers, Mr. Speaker, tell us that the answer is no, and they're deeply concerned about the implications of this directive.

Last year alone, the Saskatoon Health Region posted over 3,800 jobs. Now according to the internal memo from the Saskatoon Health Region, "no new or replacement positions are to be posted until further notice." Mr. Speaker, you don't go easily from filling thousands of jobs in one year to having a hiring freeze, Mr. Speaker. And those on the front lines of our health care system, Mr. Speaker, are concerned about the care that they provide to our loved ones. It's their fear, Mr. Speaker, and it's our fear that this will mean, Mr. Speaker, increased short-staffing situations and increased situations where people fall through the cracks because the level of care is not there that is needed.

My question to the Premier: what assurance can he give Saskatchewan people that the cancellation of overtime and the freeze on hiring will not affect patient care?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, over the last six years, this government has put in place budgets — which the members opposite, by the way, have voted against each and every one, Mr. Speaker — budgets that provide for increases to our regional health authorities. One billion dollars in overall increases to the regional authorities in those six years: a 46 per cent increase in their budgets, Mr. Speaker, historic funding for regional health authorities. Regional health authorities have used those budgets, Mr. Speaker, to provide for the proper complement of staffing. We know that regional health authorities' staffing levels were up 12 per cent over those years, Mr. Speaker.

The regional health authority of Saskatoon is looking to decrease their overtime, Mr. Speaker. Across all health regions in Saskatchewan, our health regions paid out close to I believe \$80 million last year in overtime. They are putting in place a process where qualified individuals who are not at overtime hours will be assigned hours, will be given the availability of hours, Mr. Speaker, to try to get that overtime number down to an appropriate level.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, it's necessary to have the adequate casual pool in order to fill the 3,800 jobs that were posted by the Saskatoon Health Region last year. By the Premier's non-answer and the lack of details from the minister, Mr. Speaker, it's clear they have not thought through the implications of this decision.

We saw in the legislature recently, Mr. Speaker, when Carrie Klassen came and demonstrated what happens, when the proper staffing levels are not there, what happens to our loved ones and the care that they deserve. We heard, Mr. Speaker, about calls not being answered. We heard about situations, Mr. Speaker, of seniors being left on the toilet unattended for hours because there weren't enough health care workers there to care for them. We heard about seniors missing weekly baths, all because of short staffing. And now with the cancellation of overtime, Mr. Speaker, and the hiring freeze within the Saskatoon Health Region and the fact that last year they posted 3,800 jobs, this is all compounding, Mr. Speaker, for a situation that's very concerning for our loved ones who deserve the best possible quick care.

My question to the Premier, and a question that many Saskatchewan people are asking: at a time when our economy remains strong, why isn't the Sask Party government doing enough in order to ensure that our loved ones receive the care that they deserve and the care that they need?

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

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear with the plan that the Saskatoon Health Region has put in place. Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear that no



overtime does not mean that there will be no coverage for patients and for residents, Mr. Speaker. In fact this will go a long ways, the region believes, to in fact strengthening the casual pool because it will provide for more hours for the casual workers rather than giving those overtime hours to individuals who have already reached the number of hours that they would work that would put them into an overtime situation, Mr. Speaker. So it doesn't mean that there will be no coverage. And the health region believes that it will in fact strengthen the casual pool.

As well, Mr. Speaker, in terms of positions to be filled or to be posted, the region has put in place a process through their executive management that will allow for, when positions that are deemed to be in high need to be posted, that there will be a way for those positions to be posted. So this does not mean that there will be, Mr. Speaker, people that do not have the help that they need in the region.

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

### Flood Claims

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the delay of spring, the whole province is concerned by the flooding that could hit our communities. But many people in the province are still waiting on their past claims for disaster assistance after flooding in 2011 that took so many by surprise, ruining homes, businesses, and dreams.

Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party government said it set aside money to help out with these circumstances but too many past claims are outstanding — \$60 million worth alone in 2011. To the minister: why has the province failed to clean up the claims for PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] that are going on two years, leaving people's hopes, dreams, and lives in the lurch?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that just simply isn't the case. From 2010 claims, 98 per cent of the 2010 claims are completed and the files closed, Mr. Speaker. From 2011, 85 per cent are closed, Mr. Speaker, roughly half from last year, 2012.

Mr. Speaker, when you talk about PDAP and you look at the process that this government has instituted, we've made remarkable improvements to coverage compared to the members opposite when they were in government. Mr. Speaker, personal deductibles under the NDP [New Democratic Party] was 20 per cent; under this government, 5 per cent. Maximum coverage under the NDP, \$160,000; under this government, \$240,000. Mr. Speaker, we have the maximum assistance levels are higher, the deductibles are lower, and the response time is much, much quicker than under the NDP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure the minister knows his file but the answer from his ministry staff is that \$59

million is outstanding. And that's in the response on a written question he can reference.

And one of those people that's waiting is Sheila Acton who's waiting for her circumstance to be cleaned up. She developed her dream of running a small business, a small resort on Katepwa, and was ready to operate and was booked up when her dreams were crushed in spring 2011 by flooding that structurally devastated her property and left her unable to operate.

Ms. Acton followed up with all the right steps. She had an adjuster from PDAP visit her property, filled out the forms, had a structural engineer and contractor provide reports. And she shared that she was reassured by PDAP staff all the way through that she'd be taken care of and that she met the criteria. Despite this, Ms. Acton is still waiting. She's lost two years of business. Her PDAP claim is yet to be finalized. Her dream project sits rotting on the shore of Katepwa . . .

**The Speaker:** — Will the member get to his question, please.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — With her project, Mr. Speaker, I would ask the minister, why would the Sask Party government treat people like Ms. Acton, an entrepreneur here in Saskatchewan, with the kind of delay tactics that we've seen instead of providing timely response for the claims that matter in their lives and businesses?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, our government has a great deal of concern and sympathy for people who have lost their houses or their businesses to natural disasters such as floods. I'm not aware of the specifics of the particular situation the member opposite has described, but I certainly will have our officials look into the matter.

Mr. Speaker, to his rather lengthy preface, the part about the \$59 million, if the member would read further into the written questions, he would see that the vast majority of those dollars are owed to municipalities. They're for large infrastructure projects, Mr. Speaker, for instance roads.

Mr. Speaker, we have paid out a great deal in claims to municipalities for issues such as roads. But here's the situation, Mr. Speaker. Advance payments go out, but we can't complete the claim until the road's actually built, and in some instances they're still under water. The NDP might think they can walk on water, Mr. Speaker, but you can't build roads that are under water. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, on top of the delay of over two years, just a few weeks ago the Sask Party changed the process on the file — a surprise for Ms. Acton. The Sask Party sent an out-of-province Alberta contractor to do a second review. Mr. Speaker, Ms. Acton shared that the contractor told her as he looked around the property that she could just simply rent a hydraulic jack on her own instead of waiting for PDAP. And he said she could do it herself for only \$10,000.

Mr. Speaker, such a claim is ludicrous. Her property has been assessed a total writeoff. The whole point of the disaster assistance program is to help people in need when disaster strikes, in a timely way.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister assure the House today that Ms. Acton's claim will get immediate action and settlement with no more dragging of feet, and will he condemn the approach of his contractor?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again as I said, our government is very concerned about individuals who have lost homes or businesses. That's why we made the improvements we did to the PDAP system, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned earlier to the member, I'm not aware of the particulars of that individual case, but I'll certainly bring that up with my officials, have them contact Ms. Acton, and see what we can do to rectify the situation.

Mr. Speaker, again I would just mention, we've made a great deal of improvements. Under this government, maximum assistance levels are much higher than they were under the NDP, deductibles are lower than they were under the NDP and, Mr. Speaker, we've made remarkable improvements in how quickly payments are made.

Mr. Speaker, let's put this in perspective. A number of years ago when Vanguard flooded, Mr. Speaker, the NDP response when they were in government, they sent a guy out with a clipboard and asked him to write a report. No assistance at all, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, the treatment of Ms. Acton through this two-year delay process by that government is neither fair nor acceptable. The surprise additional review by that government's out-of-province contractor is bizarre. Ms. Acton shared that not only did he tell her just to rent a jack and do it herself, he showed up and told her that the province was broke, out of money, and that she wouldn't be paid out. Up to this point, Ms. Acton had been reassured by PDAP that she'd be fully covered.

You can only imagine the stress and heartache of being told she'd be left out in the cold after two years of looking for a settlement. And before that government's contractor left her property, he told Ms. Acton he was headed for Moose Jaw next to change a \$50,000 concrete claim to only \$5,000.

How does that minister condone this unprofessional, unfair process to undermine claims? Will he condemn those actions today and will he finally step up and show some leadership to settle the claims of Ms. Acton and all those other outstanding claims here today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned on several

occasions previously, we will look into the matter. I'm not aware of the specifics, but if an independent contractor said that, Mr. Speaker, we'll investigate that as well. Mr. Speaker, I can only surmise that if he'd said something ridiculous like, the government's broke, maybe he was confusing these days with days when the NDP were in government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the line of questioning is just absolutely bizarre. Mr. Speaker, I told that member we take these cases very seriously. We will have our officials investigate it.

But, Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is, under this government PDAP is considered much more seriously. We have quicker response times, lower deductible. We've increased the maximum assistance rate. Mr. Speaker, this government will take no advice from the members opposite on how to manage a natural disaster. Mr. Speaker, their 16 years in government was a disaster. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### Conference Sponsorship and Crown Corporation Advertising

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. In today's SaskTel International document, something seemed to be missing, Mr. Speaker. The Sask Party government has failed to use today's report to showcase how the people of Saskatchewan have benefited from a \$75,000 sponsorship to an IT [information technology] conference last year.

Mr. Speaker, that \$75,000 was on top of a \$35,000 sponsorship by Enterprise Saskatchewan and \$25,000 from SaskPower for the same conference. That's \$135,000 of Saskatchewan taxpayer money, Mr. Speaker. To the Minister Responsible for SaskTel International: why did his annual report leave out an explanation of what SaskTel International got out of the WCIT [World Congress on Information Technology] or even any mention of the expensive sponsorship, Mr. Speaker?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, we've talked about that conference on the floor of the House before. What I would say though is that the conference was made up of delegates from around the world. SaskTel International operates outside of the borders obviously — that's why it's called SaskTel International — and deals with a number of these companies, Mr. Speaker. It was an excellent way to put the resources that SaskTel can offer, such as consulting and software packages, on display for their international customers, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I can check into what came from the conference as far as specific contracts, although that's getting into some pretty fine detail, Mr. Speaker. We know that when SaskTel International has worked around the world, it is sometimes garnered through a conference but quite often through work that it's done and other jurisdictions find out about it, Mr. Speaker. I'll be interested to see what the next question will be.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, in today's annual document, it shows \$780,000 in earnings for the important Crown corporation last year. And it's amazing, Mr. Speaker, that the government saw fit to spend 10 per cent of those earnings on one conference in Montreal. It's also amazing, Mr. Speaker, that SaskTel International was the only telecommunications company that was a platinum sponsor for this out-of-province conference. Mr. Speaker, those sponsorships came on top of staff time and per diems, hotels, flights, and other costs, and it came at a cost of 10 per cent of the total earnings of SaskTel International.

Mr. Speaker, could the government offer more than platitudes to explain this platinum sponsorship? Can the minister explain exactly how much was spent on this Montreal conference and what the people of Saskatchewan got out of the Sask Party's platinum sponsorship?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, SaskTel, as I said, contracts around the world — SaskTel International — and some years it will contract more than other years.

This year SaskTel International's revenues were down compared to the previous years of roughly about \$2.6 million, Mr. Speaker. But that is the nature of the industry that SaskTel International is in, Mr. Speaker. There are years where they garner a number of contracts. For about two or three years, they had a large contract; that's why the revenues were up. This past year, the revenues have dropped a little bit. That doesn't mean that you don't continue to advertise and make sure that the international community understands what services and products SaskTel International has to offer.

I find it interesting, Mr. Speaker, that on an overall annual report of revenues of over \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker, that the member opposite would key in on one specific area of 700,000. Mr. Speaker, obviously the rest of SaskTel is doing very well.

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

**Mr. Belanger:** — Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder if the Saskatchewan Party government really understands today's telecommunication business and the important Crown corporation that they operate.

They hand over hundreds of thousands of dollars for a conference but can't explain the benefits. Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder if the Sask Party was intentionally bleeding expenses out of SaskTel International. This conference alone ate up 10 per cent of the Crown's income for that year. Mr. Speaker, one has to wonder if the whole intent is to set up SaskTel International to be privatized.

To the minister: will the Sask Party government be straight with the public? Will the Sask Party government come clean and explain its plans for SaskTel International?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, I think I've answered the question as best as I possibly can. You know, they will have contracts. Sometimes those contracts end, and before they get another contract, Mr. Speaker, you'll see the revenues drop. Absolutely. That doesn't mean that you pull back and don't do advertising or at least promote the company, Mr. Speaker.

SaskTel International, over the last number of years, has made a large profit. This year it was down a little bit. That would be the only part of SaskTel I would think that has dropped down. We know that the revenues are up. We know the profit is up for SaskTel. I think SaskTel is a little bit of a reflection of the province. We see the number of people moving into . . . the population increasing, Mr. Speaker, which then creates more usage of cellphones, data services. We have seen a good, strong year for SaskTel as a whole corporation, Mr. Speaker, and we expect it to do very well because of the investment that SaskTel is making into infrastructure into the future.

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

### Protecting the Environment

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, today is Earth Day, and people throughout Saskatchewan and throughout the country are demanding better environmental protection. They're concerned about the serious neglect of the environment that we're seeing. The federal government has all but given up on the fight against climate change. They've removed 99 per cent of . . . of protection from 99 per cent of our waterways, and they've seriously undermined environmental assessment.

Here at home, Mr. Speaker, the Sask Party has slashed funding for both environmental protection, environmental assessment. And just over the last two years, they've cut funding for climate change programs by 73 per cent. My question to the Premier: why did his government cut funding for environmental protection, environmental assessment, and programs to fight climate change?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the Leader of the Opposition for the question. His preamble is wrong. Mr. Speaker, we know that, I think, one of the largest, one of the largest Canadian projects with respect to greenhouse gas emission reduction, with respect to climate change on a per capita basis in terms of public investment, you won't find it, that project, in Ontario or you won't find it in Manitoba or even in Alberta with their, with their own fund, their carbon tax and their CCS [carbon capture and storage] projects. You'll find it right here in the province of Saskatchewan.

And I haven't heard word one except for some muted criticism from the NDP about the clean coal project that's going on at Boundary dam, about a \$1.3 billion project, Mr. Speaker, on time and on budget to capture 96 per cent CO<sub>2</sub>, all the other emissions in terms of particulates taken care of. The sale of the CO<sub>2</sub> for enhanced oil recovery and then the geological storage of that CO<sub>2</sub>, Mr. Speaker, that is one of the most significant CO<sub>2</sub> mitigation projects you'd find, not just in Canada, but in North America. It'd be nice to hear the Leader of the Opposition acknowledge that, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, a few weeks ago the Premier was in Washington desperately trying to make the case for our province's environmental record. He talked about the need to "give them as much environmental elbow room as possible."

Then the Premier, Mr. Speaker, got back on his plane, came to Saskatchewan, delivered a budget, Mr. Speaker, that cut funding for environmental protection. He cut funding for environmental assessment and he cut funding for programs to address climate change, Mr. Speaker.

So on the one hand, trying to show the importance of Saskatchewan's environmental record needs to be shared and is important. Coming back, Mr. Speaker, to the province, and then cutting programs. Then on the issue of renewable energy, Mr. Speaker, the other night in committee, the member from Saskatoon Nutana asked the government about plans for moving to renewable energy. And what we heard from the government, Mr. Speaker, was that it's a fallacy and a misconception to think that we can greatly improve the sustainability of our electrical system.

My question to the Premier: why would he return to the province saying that the environmental record is important and then so clearly demonstrate that it's not a priority by cutting programs and also showing that there is no interest, Mr. Speaker, in positively moving to renewable energy here in Saskatchewan?

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

**Hon. Mr. Wall:** — Well the Leader of the Opposition got at least one thing right in that preamble. We were in Washington, Mr. Speaker. We actually flew economy there and back. But, Mr. Speaker, we were raising the environmental record of not just our province but the country, Mr. Speaker, to try to get support for Keystone.

He might want to turn his chair and ask his environmental critic who just last Thursday reversed the NDP's support for Keystone. After they had opposed it, then supported it — he had supported it — she's now opposing it again, Mr. Speaker. That's pretty interesting.

We also wanted to go down to Washington to let the Americans know that in terms of being serious about climate change and GHG [greenhouse gas], the province was doing a lot better now than it ever was under the NDP, Mr. Speaker. During the NDP's term in office, when that member was very supportive of NDP policy, we saw a 70 per cent increase in greenhouse gas emissions, Mr. Speaker. That's why Yens Pedersen, former NDP leadership candidate said, "We came out of government for the last 16 years and we hadn't reduced carbon emissions or reduced poverty, and we are the socialist party." By the way, he used this quite freely.

Mr. Speaker, that's what his own members are saying about his policies. He's opposed to cutting programs and defunding offices without any people, Mr. Speaker. We're in favour in investing money in the largest CO<sub>2</sub> project in the country.

**The Speaker:** — Order.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

### WRITTEN QUESTIONS

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

**Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 420 and 421.

**The Speaker:** — The Government Whip has tabled answers to questions 420 and 421. I recognize the Government House Leader.

**Hon. Mr. Harrison:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committees this afternoon and this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:25.]

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