



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

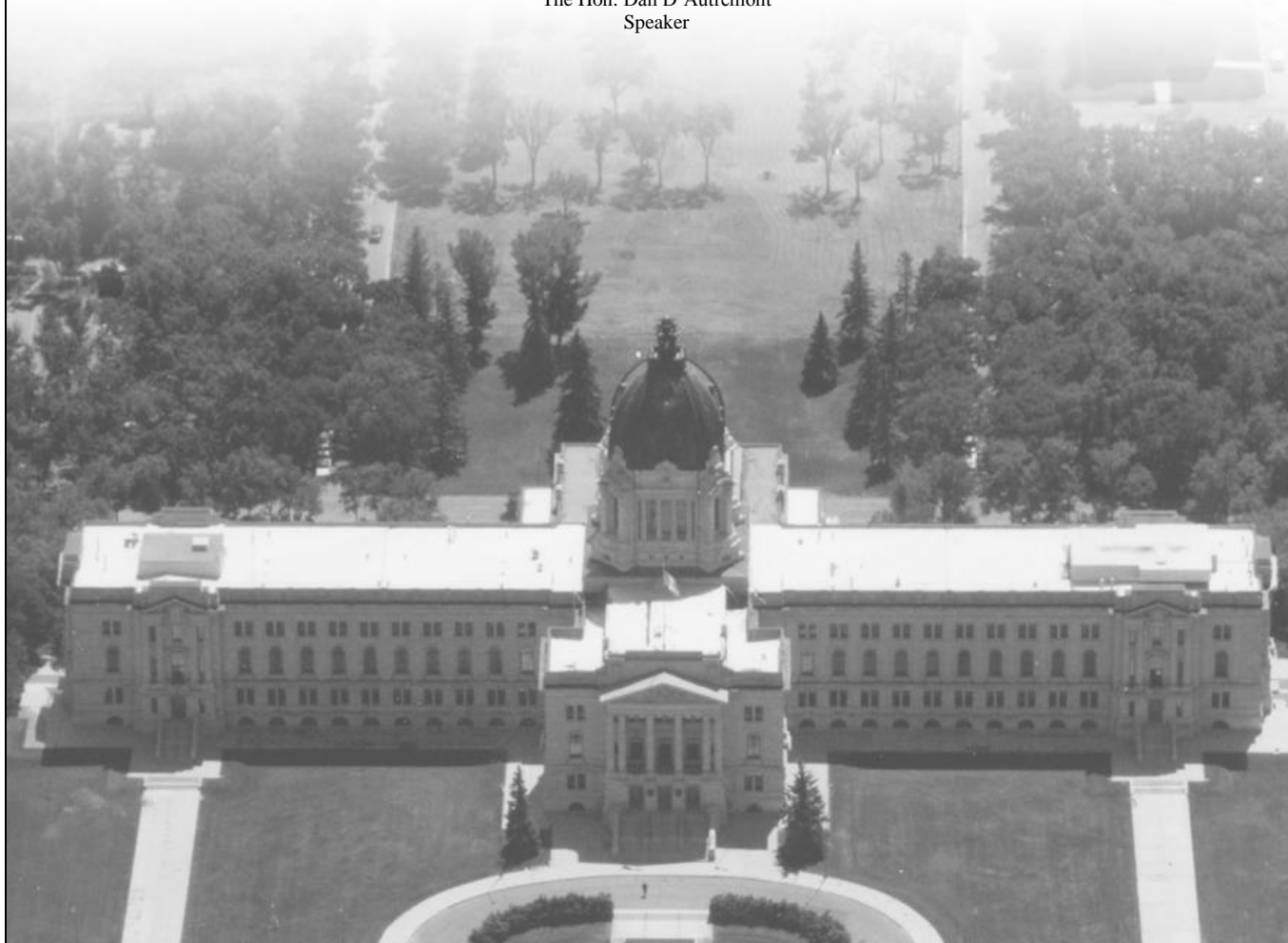
of the

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 — Cam Broten

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|--------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
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| Boyd, Hon. Bill | SP | Kindersley |
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| 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 10:00.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a real pleasure to introduce to you today, Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Junior Football champions, the Regina Thunder. Mr. Speaker, the Thunder defeated the Vancouver Island Raiders. And as an Oakland fan, I'm usually not in favour of beat downs of Raiders on the football field, but this was an absolute exception. It was 55 to 26; that was the score in the championship game.

Mr. Speaker, the quarterback — maybe he could give us a wave — Asher Hastings, tied a Canada Bowl record with five touchdown passes, Mr. Speaker. This is historic for the team. It's the first of many Canadian national championships for the football program. We congratulate all the players and the coaches, head coach Scott MacAulay and his staff.

Mr. Speaker, in addition to the coaches, I do want to single out a couple of Swift Current people. I think they're there; I think I saw Brock, Brock Myers and Connor Duncan are there. Mr. Speaker, I had the privilege of coaching both of them in minor football. They've managed to overcome that and make a national championship team though.

But we are very, very proud of them. What a great achievement on behalf of that entire organization. And we want to both congratulate them, thank them for this Saskatchewan national championship, and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly this morning.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the Premier and welcome the Regina Thunder to their Assembly. We know that Saskatchewan is certainly a hotbed of football, amateur and professional. And this team was formed, of course, 14 years ago, and they now take their rightful place in Saskatchewan's sporting history, in Saskatchewan's football history with this Canadian Bowl championship. It's rather exciting for someone like head coach Scott MacAulay to be there all the way through from the genesis of this organization as a player to now succeed as a coach at this stage.

There's too many board of directors and coaches to single out that are friends, but I welcome everyone that's here today. And to Asher Hastings, wow, pretty impressive. You lit it up on Saturday, tied a record with the five touchdowns. And to all the players, thanks so much for making a whole city proud, I'm sure, our province proud. And also I know past players and alumni and past board of directors, you've built a very proud organization. So thank you so very much and we welcome you to your Assembly.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join in with the Premier and the member opposite in congratulating the Regina Thunder on their victory. It was my pleasure to extend an invitation to the team, the coaching staff and the board to come out. As Regina and as a province we are extremely proud of your efforts. And hopefully . . . I think you're only going to lose about seven players, and so we're looking for some great things for next year.

And I'd like to take the opportunity to single out one person in particular, a friend of mine, Kevin Pierce, coach. I think he's coaching running backs. Kevin and I played rugby together for Campion Grads and also worked together at Dales House. It's my pleasure to welcome Kevin to his legislature. And I'd like to have all members join me in welcoming and thanking and congratulating the Regina Thunder on their exploits. Thank you.

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

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in the west gallery is 27 bright, shiny students from Peacock Collegiate in Moose Jaw. We want to welcome them here. And they've got a football story of their own that we will talk about a little bit later. But I would like all the members to welcome the 27 students along with Ms. Carrie Kiefer and Ms. Joanne Barber to their Legislative Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of replacing the gym at Sacred Heart Community School. The gym of course has been closed since last spring when structural difficulties at the building made it impossible to keep it open. There's been a temporary space refurbished in the old sanctuary of Sacred Heart Church, but the school awaits a permanent solution for their quest for a gym. The petitioners point out that Sacred Heart Community School is the largest school in north central Regina, with 450 students, 75 per cent of whom are First Nations and Métis. And they point out as a matter of basic fairness and common sense, Sacred Heart Community School needs a gym. In the prayer that reads as follows:

They respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the Sask Party provincial government to immediately commit to the replacement of the gymnasium of Sacred Heart Community School.

This petition is signed by good citizens of Saskatoon here in the province of Saskatchewan. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Remembering Holodomor

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, today we will remember Holodomor, a man-made catastrophic famine and a horrendous genocide in which death by hunger was inflicted on as many as 10 million Ukrainians in 1932 and 1933. A full one-third of the genocide victims were children.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine was a breadbasket. It was actually experiencing agricultural prosperity, but Stalin's brutal regime seized crops and farms, leaving Ukrainian families to face the unfathomable horror of this great famine.

I'm proud to have been part of this Legislative Assembly when in 2008 we became the first province in Canada to formally recognize this genocide. We must never forget this dark chapter in human history. We must never forget the plight of those who suffer the horrific consequences of hatred and extremism and tyranny. We must always be on guard to prevent such tragedy in the future.

And as we join with the people of Ukraine and Ukrainians around the world, especially the many people of Ukrainian descent who call this province home, to pay tribute to those who suffered and died senselessly as a result of this genocide, we must also remember and celebrate the tremendous accomplishments of the resilient and courageous Ukrainian people who refused to give up and let their will be broken. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Regina Thunder Wins Canadian Championship

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last weekend it was an exciting weekend of football right here in Regina. On Saturday our Regina Thunder football team became the Canadian Junior Football League champions for the first time in their history. The team beat the Vancouver Island Raiders on Saturday at Mosaic Stadium with a final score of 55 to 26. After opening up with a 7 to 3 lead in the first quarter, the floodgates opened, Mr. Speaker, and in the second, the Thunder extended their lead to 28 to 6. They never looked back from there.

Prairie Football Conference co-MVP [most valuable player] Asher Hastings had a spectacular game, throwing for 367 yards and five touchdown passes, earning him offensive MVP of the game. Hastings's five touchdown passes tied a Canadian Bowl record set in 1976 by the Rams' Lenny Knoll and tied again in 2009 by Regina-born quarterback, Jordan Yantz. The Thunder's Nick Brown had a great game also, rushing for 20 times for over 203 yards and one touchdown. Brown's rushing yardage was the sixth highest total in Canadian Bowl history.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to especially recognize Coach MacAulay on an incredible first year, winning both the Prairie Football Conference Championship, as well as the national championship. Congratulations. Mr. Speaker, that's quite a rookie year.

I would ask all members to join me in congratulating all

players, coaches, and the entire team and the football organization and their board on a very successful season in a great national championship. Thank you for being great representatives of Regina and Saskatchewan.

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

Peacock Tornadoes Win High School Championship

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Congratulations to the Peacock Tornadoes in Moose Jaw for winning the 3A Provincial High School Football Championship on Saturday.

Mr. Speaker, it was an exciting game that concluded an exciting season for the Peacock Tornadoes as they went through the season with a 9-0 record against teams from Central Collegiate and Vanier Collegiate in Moose Jaw and high school teams in Swift Current, Weyburn, Estevan, and Yorkton. The Peacock Tornadoes defeated Central Collegiate in the semifinals, then overpowered Yorkton in the league finals.

Mr. Speaker, this set the stage for the provincial championship game against the Regina O'Neill Titans at Gutheridge Field in Moose Jaw.

It was indeed a championship game with all the excitement of a champion finish. O'Neill scored first and led at half time. They scored again at the beginning of the second half and were leading 14 to 0. Mr. Speaker, the Tornadoes weren't going to let their season end on a loss, and they fought back to score 28 unanswered points to win. The final score: 28-14 and the provincial 3A title.

I'm asking all members to join me in congratulating the Peacock Tornadoes players, coaches that were led by Coach Blake Buettner, on an excellent season and a provincial 3A high school football championship. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Support for Child Protection System

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's perhaps no greater responsibility of government than to ensure that our most vulnerable citizens are protected. We've heard a lot of concern over the past few months about our child welfare system, including another tragic death of a foster child, the fifth child in care to die under suspicious or criminal circumstances in just the last several years. And we had a very concerning report, a disturbing case about the failure of the child protection system to protect a toddler from horrific child abuse.

At the beginning of September, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Social Services said she had many questions that she would be looking into, including "Did ministry policies and processes get in the way?" That's an important question to ask, Mr. Speaker. So my question to the Premier: does this government have an answer to that question yet?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you to the member opposite with the question. This is a very important question and one that our government and I take very, very seriously. Our biggest responsibility is for children that are in care. If they can't remain with their family then to have them in social services is only the next best step.

Mr. Speaker, we have many foster families that look after our children and that do that with their hearts full of love. And at the same time, we know that the systems falls down. So when we lose a child, Mr. Speaker, there's not only just a review done by the ministry. We contact the child advocate and we make sure that the systems that we're working through, not only through our government but through the First Nations child and family agency, is reviewed as well.

The report that I was talking about is not available yet, but I assure you that my goal is to make sure that the information that we receive, whether it depicts some issues that we need to deal with, will be brought forward because the children we're talking about belong to the families.

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

Mr. Broten: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that a report may be under way but the question that the minister posed herself was at the beginning of September. And now, Mr. Speaker, we are in mid-November so I think it is important to have an update whether or not there has been an undertaking and whether it's been determined whether or not ministry processes got in the way as the minister suggested that it could have happened.

Mr. Speaker, one of the significant concerns that has been raised is the unmanageable caseloads of front-line workers and the fact that child protection is being compromised as a result. The Children's Advocate noted that cutbacks at the Ministry of Social Services mean the management of cases is not what it should be. The Children's Advocate said this:

The quality of case management and case planning has to improve. If that's a resourcing issue, which I believe it is, I know the ministry has added 90 staff, but the ministry as a whole has cut over 100 staff members.

My question to the Premier: does he agree with the Children's Advocate that staffing cutbacks have compromised the protection of vulnerable children, or does he dismiss the concerns that have been raised by the Children's Advocate?

[10:15]

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again thank you for the question. We never dismiss the concerns raised by the child advocate, but we also know that the people that are no longer working for the Social Services ministry were not front-line workers. We've hired 90 new child protection workers. We know that we have fewer children in care. We know that the needs of those children in care are often very complex, and our goal is to make sure that the contact

standards, the work that we're doing, not just through the ministry but through the child and family agencies, is working more diligently together. The work that I've been doing with First Nations agencies and with Vice-chief Kimberly Jonathan, our goal's to make sure that all our children are looked at, not just through the eyes of the ministry but as a big part of the child and family committee. There's more work that has to be done.

Mr. Speaker, the member opposite talks about bringing forward issues as they come to light. I assure you that will be done. Our goal is to make sure the people of the province understand that when a child is in care, we are looking after them to our greatest degree.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Children's Advocate recognizes in the quote that I provided that 90 were added, but he also noted that 100 were cut. And as he said, Mr. Speaker . . . And the quote, Mr. Speaker, was from CTV [Canadian Television Network Ltd.] news at 6 on September 17th in 2013.

Mr. Speaker, it's hardly the first time, Mr. Speaker, that the Children's Advocate has raised concerns about casework overload. On page 21 of the most recent annual report, the Children's Advocate said this:

We continue to believe that part of the solution to these issues is to address the habitual overloading of child protection and family services worker caseloads, so that staff can better meet contact and case planning standards. The return on investment of giving case workers simply more time to spend with children and youth in care would be significant and could prevent many of the concerns referred to our office.

My question to the Premier: how many times will the Children's Advocate have to point out the problem before this government will listen?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — The issue that we're talking about, the protection of children, is the number one issue not only on my mind but on the members that are on the child and family committee.

In the last three years, we put \$53.7 million into the child and family agenda budgets. We've hired 90 new front-line workers. And the number of children in care has decreased. The number of children that are living in overcrowded foster homes has decreased. And the contact standards are being looked at on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, I know that the child advocate's goal is to make sure their profile is raised, and I agree with him. The people of the province need to know that the children in care are being looked after. Our goal and the goal of everyone on the child and family committee and the members of my government are to ensure that our children are looked after.

I will continue to bring forward issues to my government if there's things that we can be doing. And the meetings that we have with the child advocate are an important part of our reaching goals to make sure that children are always safe. Mr. Speaker, to the member opposite, if there's any issues that he has and thinks can work with us, I'd be more than willing to listen to them. The safety of our children is the most important thing we can be doing.

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

Mr. Broten: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I think we can listen to the concerns that have been raised by the Children's Advocate, by the non-partisan officer of this legislature. And the statement that was made by the Children's Advocate, Mr. Speaker, said:

The quality of case management and case planning has to improve. If that's a resourcing issue, which I believe it is, I know the ministry has added 90 staff, but the ministry as a whole also has cut over 100 staff members.

So if the government, Mr. Speaker, has questions about the staffing numbers, this is something that should be taken up with the Children's Advocate because these are his words.

Mr. Speaker, at a press conference several weeks ago in which the Premier announced changes to cabinet, he said they had not heard anyone express concerns about worse service as a result of staffing cuts in government. Well, Mr. Speaker, the sad truth is that vulnerable children aren't very good at articulating such concerns. But the Children's Advocate has been very clear on this. In his most recent annual report and again in September, Mr. Speaker, the Children's Advocate said that significant staff cuts have compromised management and child protection.

My question to the Premier: will he admit that this government's cuts to Social Services have been a mistake and that they are hurting vulnerable children?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, thank you. And to the member opposite, I want to make it very clear. There was no cuts in the number of workers that are working with our children. We've increased funding to child and family services by \$104 million in spite of a declining number of children in care. We announced an \$8 million lift in December for front-line workers to ensure that we can keep the people there working for our children in care. We've invested money in the child and youth agenda, Mr. Speaker. We've signed agreements with First Nations and Métis Nations, which is a very important part of ensuring that our children are not only receiving the care but receiving the cultural identity that they want. We work with the Lac La Ronge First Nations delivering off-reserve services in the North, Mr. Speaker.

The children in care are down for the first time in over a decade. There are 20 per cent fewer children in care, Mr. Speaker, and a 61 per cent reduction in children living in overcrowded foster homes. I know that any time we have a child in care, it means that there's a family that needs to be supported, and we balance that. And we balance that by making sure we have caring individuals, front-line workers that are working with our

children at all times.

The child advocate brings forward issues that are very important, and I continue to listen to him and I continue to care for the children of this province.

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

Education and Employment for First Nations and Métis

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, in May 2011, the government announced a joint task force to close gaps in education and employment outcomes for First Nations and Métis people. Nearly two years later, the government released the report with a number of recommendations. This initiative received a lot of hype and frankly it gave a lot of hope, but of the 25 recommendations the only policy introduced that directly targets the First Nations and Métis employment gap has been the funding of driver licences on reserves. We agree this is an important initiative, but it's been the only one addressing the community-specific concerns from the report.

My question to the minister: does he think on-reserve driver's licences are enough to close the education and employment gap among First Nations and Métis people in our province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you for the question, Mr. Speaker. The joint task force report was received. A number of the initiatives that were included in the report are things that we felt were appropriate to move forward with without waiting for a formal government response. Those included things like driver's licences on-reserve and as well moving forward with some advanced education programs to upgrade ABE [adult basic education] and a number of other things.

We will in the near future, Mr. Speaker, be having a response released but I can advise that we have over \$22 million in this year's budget for First Nations and Métis initiatives, \$3 million for seed money for specific recommendations of the joint task force. We're going to be moving ahead with those, Mr. Speaker, and the work that was done on the joint task force is a very good starting point.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, in the spring the Premier suggested that the driver's licences were one small recommendation, one that his government "... might be able to move on that very quickly." Certainly quick action on small steps is important, but we haven't seen any concrete plans on how this government will work to close this gap.

School boards and communities were told to wait and see what outcomes of this much publicized joint task force report would be. Yet in this year's Speech from the Throne, there's no mention of the much touted joint task force or its recommendations. With so little accomplished, it's way too early to be moving on. My question to the minister: how does he expect to make progress in addressing this crucial need when it appears the joint task force report has already been shelved?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the joint task force did good work, and we will look forward to how we implement the recommendations that came out of that.

Mr. Speaker, we're a government that's not afraid to set targets. I agree with the member opposite only to the extent that we have an unacceptably low graduation rate from people that attend high school within the Aboriginal community. We've set targets to reduce the difference in graduation rates between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students by 50 per cent by the year 2020.

Mr. Speaker, we had a resolution calling for equal funding for on-reserves, which was defeated at the NDP [New Democratic Party] convention this last March. At that time, and I want to quote, MBC [Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation] said, "Broten . . . [was] noncommittal as to whether the province should fund on-reserve education but says the government should be lobbying the federal government more vigorously to equalize funding." That was March 15th of 2013.

Mr. Speaker, we're a government that believes not just in lobbying the federal government, but doing things ourselves. We've provided \$3 million for seed money for the task force, \$4.3 million for First Nations- and Métis-specific initiatives in school divisions, \$500,000 for summer literacy camps targeted primarily at remote northern communities, \$500,000 for the community . . .

The Speaker: — Next question.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, on the matter of First Nations and Métis outcomes and how important this is to our province, that that minister would get up and play nonsensical political games instead of addressing the real matter is really disappointing.

You know, economists in this province have recognized how important and how vital closing this education and employment gap is to our province. Eric Howe says we're missing out on a \$90 billion opportunity. And we know what it means. We know what it means in the life of a young child.

There are, you know, there's a few words in the growth plan about some follow-up as far as graduation rates, but there's no commitment to funding to deliver on this front. But again we're told to wait and see how this plan will work out. Yet a year later in the one-year progress report, the update is disappointing. Clearly this government has failed to deliver meaningful action to support the education of First Nation and Métis students.

My question to the minister: when will we finally see some real action?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we are a government that's not afraid to set targets and not afraid to set aggressive targets. We've indicated that we wish to reduce the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal by 50 per cent by the year 2020. And I'm going to tell you some of the things specifically that

we're going to do with that.

I've indicated \$4.3 million for First Nations- and Métis-specific initiatives and school divisions, \$500,000 for summer literacy camps targeted primarily at remote northern communities, \$500,000 for the community literacy funds which will benefit organizations such as North Central Family Centre, \$1.6 million for 15 new pre-K [pre-kindergarten] kindergarten spaces targeted at our most vulnerable three- and four-year-olds, and \$268 million for supports for learning which goes to support our most vulnerable students, which include First Nations and Métis. We are not afraid to set targets and not afraid to be accountable, Mr. Speaker.

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

Long-Term Care Conditions

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, yesterday in the rotunda the Health minister was asked what he thinks about family members having to spend the whole day in care facilities to ensure their loved ones are properly cared for. He said it's great to see family members engaged.

We agree, Mr. Speaker, but these aren't cases of family members just wanting to spend time with their loved ones. These are cases of family members feeling that they absolutely must be there in order to ensure their loved ones receive basic care. We heard about this yesterday with the case of John and Marjorie Paul at the convalescent home. To the minister: does he understand the difference between families that want to be engaged and families that feel that there is simply no other option but to provide the basic care needs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, absolutely, this government understands the importance of providing a quality life for people that are in long-term care facilities across our province — those seniors who are our residents, who are in our care, Mr. Speaker.

That's why, Mr. Speaker, we enacted a whole number of initiatives earlier this year, including the first CEO [chief executive officer] tour of long-term care facilities in this province, Mr. Speaker, on top of the work that we've already been doing, Mr. Speaker — adding full-time equivalent positions to long-term care facilities all across this province as well as adding additional budget allocation to the regional health authorities to make those decisions, Mr. Speaker, to invest more heavily within long-term care as well as the renewal that we need to do. And we know that we need to do more of that, Mr. Speaker, so we absolutely know the concerns of families, Mr. Speaker. We want to hear directly from them, Mr. Speaker, and that's why we enacted a whole host of initiatives this spring which are just merely a starting point to improve long-term care for seniors.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, there's a big difference between

families that want to be engaged and families that feel there is simply no other option but to provide that basic care themselves. In fact the family members that often feel they have to provide the basic care are spouses who are elderly themselves. Here's what the family resident council minutes from the convalescent home say: "Family members are assisting their loved ones with transfers and toileting because they have to wait too long for assistance, putting both themselves and residents at risk of injury."

To the minister: will he admit that it is both unfair and unsafe for elderly spouses to have to provide the basic care for their loved ones who are in a care facility?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, we look to, as I said before, look to provide the quality of life that our residents should expect and do expect within long-term care facilities, Mr. Speaker. In this particular case at Saskatoon Convalescent Home, I can indicate to the members that through the work that we've done this spring, asking regions to bring forward business proposals for how they would access the \$10 million Urgent Issues Action Fund, Mr. Speaker, they have indicated that they would like to see an investment into a WanderGuard system, a type of call bell system, Mr. Speaker, in that facility. And then they have indicated that staffing levels are a concern at this facility, Mr. Speaker.

But I will note and I will point out, Mr. Speaker, at this facility alone — knowing that the number of beds have not changed in six years from when the members opposite were the government to today, Mr. Speaker, 60 beds in that facility — the level of staffing has increased 13 per cent in those six years, Mr. Speaker. So I think it shows that we are working hard to address these issues.

[10:30]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, it's great when family members want to be engaged, but it is not acceptable for family members, especially elderly spouses, to feel there is no other option but to provide care themselves. It's unfair and it's unsafe, but it's increasingly common, Mr. Speaker. The minutes from the convalescent home say, "Most weekends, family members are staying up to eight hours each day to ensure loved ones are receiving care needed."

That begs the question: what about those who don't have a spouse or family nearby? We saw this with Sylvia Phillips a couple of weeks ago. Her family had to pay \$1,000 a week for a private care aid to go into the hospital to look after her while she waited for a long-term care placement. To the minister: what option do these seniors have?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, what these seniors, what options they do have that they didn't have under the NDP was a commitment by a government that says that the senior leaders

and the CEOs of our health regions, on an annual basis, need to go out and actually spend some time in the long-term care facilities and report back to the government — something that never happened under the members opposite, Mr. Speaker.

And, Mr. Speaker, I wonder what those reports would have shown had they chosen to do them seven and eight and nine years ago when there were 700 less full-time workers working in long-term care, Mr. Speaker. There's no wonder they didn't want to do CEO tours at that time, Mr. Speaker, for what they would've shown.

Mr. Speaker, we are embarking on a process to improve long-term care for all of our residents within our facilities, Mr. Speaker. We've announced the Urgent Issues Action Fund, Mr. Speaker. We'll be flowing those dollars out in December to the health regions to invest in those issues that they did raise, Mr. Speaker. We're also going to bring together stakeholders in December to look to plan what the future of long-term care needs to look like, Mr. Speaker, because we know that we need to do a better job for our residents.

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

Combatting Bullying

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I understand we're going to hear something from this government on anti-bullying today finally. We debated in this House the wisdom of the government's decision to wait until Anti-Bullying Week to unveil its report so it could be part of a larger PR [public relations] exercise. Now the government obviously agreed to move up the release date of the report compiled by the Legislative Secretary by one whole business day, Mr. Speaker.

There are kids who are afraid to go to school today, Mr. Speaker, and there are kids in Saskatchewan right now being devastated by cyberbullying. So acknowledging the urgency of this situation and setting aside this afternoon's photo op, will the minister please tell this Assembly what actions will be taken immediately as a result of the work by the Legislative Secretary for anti-bullying?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite raises an important issue. I think bullying is a significant issue in our province, and we want to address it as quickly as we can. I can advise the House that the government will not be doing a formal response to the Legislative Secretary's report but will be accepting the recommendations and indicating that we're going to be moving ahead as quickly as we can on the recommendations. Some will come out virtually immediately; some will take a period of time to implement and develop protocols and that type of thing. We think it's something that we want to do as quickly and appropriate and effectively as we can. We also want to treat this as being an ongoing process as best practices are developed, and learn from things as they are taking place. But we appreciate the point that he's making.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Perhaps we can get

some specifics. In April the official opposition asked this government to ensure that students, parents, and teachers could easily access information on forming gay-straight alliances. Although an external link was put up on the ministry's website, which we appreciate as a small first step, the Premier was clear that further action to protect gay students from devastating bullying would just have to wait. On April 10th, responding to questions about GSAs [gay-straight alliance], the Premier told this House, and I quote:

With respect to resources that can come from this government or any other source related to government, funded by government, this is going to be part of what is going to be considered in terms of the work of the member for Fairview, the Legislative Secretary for the anti-bullying initiative.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister now confirm, will the government take more specific action to protect gay and transgendered students from bullying and ensure that they have a safe place in our Saskatchewan schools?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite raises the issue of gay-straight alliances and that is certainly part of the recommendations. We are going to ensure that the availability will be made by website to any members anywhere across the province. It is a commitment that we have made and it's on the website now.

Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat disappointed though that the members opposite chose not to make a formal submission. They had every opportunity to do that. The Leader of the Opposition said, I hear about it when I sit down with young people; I hear about it when I sit down with teachers; I hear about it when I sit down with parents; I hear about it from school boards. He's not sharing anything that he heard with us.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Regina Rosemont, virtually identical things: I hear about it when I sit down with young people, I hear about it with . . . [inaudible] . . . Mr. Speaker, if they wanted to show some leadership, they were out touring across the province during the summer months. They went to eight different places. And they have made absolutely no submissions, no input, Mr. Speaker. I'm frankly disappointed with the positions that they've taken, or lack of positions.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

MOTIONS

Altering Length of Seventy-Five Minute Debate

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There's been discussion between the parties and I believe, if you seek it, you will find unanimous consent for the following motion:

That notwithstanding the length of debate specified under rule 25(3)(a), on session day 13, being Thursday, November 14th, 2013, the period of debate under the said rule shall be 45 minutes, with the mover of the motion having a maximum of 15 minutes to speak and each

subsequent member having no more than 10 minutes in which to speak to the motion; and further, that the provisions of the rule for the 10-minute period for questions and comments shall remain unaffected.

The Speaker: — The Government House Leader has requested leave to move a motion. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I will read the motion by the Government House Leader:

That notwithstanding the length of debate specified under rule 25(3)(a), on session day 13, being Thursday, November 14th, 2013, the period of debate under the said rule shall be 45 minutes, with the mover of the motion having a maximum of 15 minutes to speak and each subsequent member having no more than 10 minutes in which to speak on the motion; and further, that the provisions of the rule for the 10-minute period for questions and comments shall remain unaffected.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

SEVENTY-FIVE MINUTE DEBATE

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

Implementation of Traffic Safety Committee Recommendations

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. At the end of my remarks, I will be moving this particular motion:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its failure to implement a three-day vehicle impoundment the first time a driver is caught with a .05 and over blood alcohol concentration, a measure that helped cut the number of alcohol-involved traffic deaths by half in Alberta and British Columbia.

So, Mr. Speaker, the reason we're having this debate here today is because of our absolutely abysmal impaired driving death rate here in Saskatchewan. I would like to tell you a little bit about some of that dubious record that we hold. According to SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] statistics, between 2000 and 2012 alcohol was responsible for 41 per cent of the fatalities and 12 per cent of the crashes here in Saskatchewan. From SGI we heard during a presentation to the Traffic Safety Committee this summer that Saskatchewan has "stagnated" when it comes to reducing impaired driving. And compared to other jurisdictions, "Saskatchewan is over the top in deaths and injuries."

A little bit more in terms of the context here in Saskatchewan.

Mothers Against Drunk Driving estimates that Saskatchewan has the highest per capita rate of alcohol-related road-crash deaths among the provinces. An estimated 9.76 of every 100,000 people die because of impaired driving here in Saskatchewan. We can compare that to the national average, in Saskatchewan, of 3.17 people per 100,000, Mr. Speaker. So we have managed to maintain this dubious record for more than a decade.

Another thing to take a look at, Mr. Speaker, is that impaired driving death rates happen to be going down across Canada and up here in Saskatchewan. I have a slide here from a presentation that MADD [Mothers Against Drunk Driving] Canada did here in January that shows between 2000 and 2009 our impairment-related crash deaths have gone up by almost 23 per cent, while Canada's have gone down by 17 per cent. So we went up by 23 per cent, Mr. Speaker, and Canada dropped by 17 per cent in that period.

So clearly here in Saskatchewan we are doing something wrong and something has to change. Something absolutely must change. This is not the time for incrementalism. We've heard both the Chair of the Traffic Safety Committee and the minister say that this is a starting point, that we'll start here with both the recommendations that the committee made excluding the minority report and then the minister's remarks last week when she came forward with the changes she's going to implement following the recommendations.

Starting here is not good enough. As legislators, we have the opportunity to create policies that will save people's lives, and this government is squandering that opportunity. Hence the reason we had put forward a minority opinion supporting a policy change that has worked incredibly well in two Western provinces — in Alberta and BC [British Columbia].

We had the opportunity during the Traffic Safety Committee hearings to hear from a wide variety of people who supported short-term vehicle impoundments in the warning range, in that period before legal impairment, but that you're still recognized . . . that every province has recognized you're still impaired, Mr. Speaker.

Some of the people include Doug Beirness from the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse. He's been involved in road safety research, mainly focused on impaired driving, for more than 30 years. We heard from the CEO of MADD Canada, Andy Murie. MADD Canada makes it their business to know about impaired driving statistics and policies that work, Mr. Speaker. We heard from someone here in Saskatchewan, Faye Rorke from North Battleford, from the Driving Without Impairment program. She's been with this program since 1995. She works directly with people who have been caught driving either in the warning range or in the criminal range over the .08. So with some of the things she, Faye, had said in her recommendations, is that the goal around the three-day impoundment is to help people learn to separate drinking from driving.

So these are just a few of the people we heard from, just some of the background. We had heard from other presenters too who also supported a three-day vehicle impoundment, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Pardon me, Mr. Speaker. I do this to you every time.

So I need to talk a little bit about what happened in British Columbia and Alberta. In 2010, British Columbia implemented a whole suite of measures to curb impaired driving, both accidents and fatalities, which included immediate vehicle impoundments for both those caught in the warning range, so the lower blood alcohol concentrations, as well as those over .08. And last year Alberta decided to follow suit with a three-day vehicle impoundment also for those caught on first offence in the warning range. So those are the things that Alberta and BC have done.

In those first two years in British Columbia, the fatality rate involving alcohol dropped by 50 per cent. In Alberta fatal crashes where alcohol was involved dropped by 46 per cent between July and December 2012 compared to the five-year average for those same months. These are early results but I know, having spoken to Mr. Beirness, he had said in his 30 years in traffic safety, he had not seen such an incredible turnaround as they had in BC in two years, Mr. Speaker. To quote Mr. Beirness from his presentation to the Traffic Safety Committee, he said, "The world changed in British Columbia."

[10:45]

These are incredible early results. Yet this government stubbornly refuses to listen to those who know this issue well. This makes absolutely no sense. Honestly, Mr. Speaker, I have no idea why the government has refused to follow policy that has proven to work in our two neighbouring jurisdictions.

I think it's important to talk a little bit about the minister's comments last week as to why the government has chosen not to follow the minority opinion and also why they've chosen to go the direction that they have. Last week the minister responsible said, "We are doing the impoundment for your new drivers because there's more new drivers involved in accidents." The fact of the matter is that is true, that young people represent a higher proportion of accidents, and we absolutely need to do something about this. But if we look at evidence presented to the Traffic Safety Committee, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read this. This is from again . . . or it's actually Dr. Beirness, who has a Ph.D. [Doctor of Philosophy]. He had said this during his presentation:

When we talk about drinking and driving, we often want to focus on youth. And it's always tragic when a young person dies in any kind of crash and the involvement of alcohol is substantial. It's almost 40 per cent of 16- to 19-year-olds test positive for alcohol, but it's that 20 to 24 and 25 to 34 age group that seems to be the biggest problem that we have in terms of impaired driving deaths on the road.

And then he goes on to say . . . He's got a slide here, Mr. Speaker, that illustrates that again those in the 20 to 24 and 25 to 34 age category are the real problem when it comes to impaired driving. And this government has chosen to ignore that group, Mr. Speaker, with a policy that could have really changed behaviours in that group. So I think the minister's comments there were missing the mark . . . [inaudible] . . . last week.

One of the things that the minister had talked about is that the

minority opinion at having a three-day vehicle impoundment in the warning range is one or two glasses of wine over supper. That is not correct, Mr. Speaker. I need to point to, I need to point to . . . Well I want to talk a little bit about what exactly happens at .05, Mr. Speaker. At .05 — and this is again from Mothers Against Drunk Driving — drivers experience reduced coordination, reduced ability to track moving objects, difficulty steering, and a reduced response rate. And MADD goes on to say, a 210-pound man can have four standard drinks over a two-hour period and not go over .05. And MADD also points out that a 130-pound woman can have two standard drinks over a two-hour period and not go over .05. They have a nice little chart here that points to the same evidence over a three-hour period.

So the reality, when the minister I think says that one or two drinks will put you in that range where you would lose your vehicle for three days, is not correct. From the evidence that we heard this summer with the Traffic Safety Committee, that is absolutely not the case, Mr. Speaker. And so I think it was wrong for the minister to leave the public with the impression that the opposition and these people who spoke to the Traffic Safety Committee wanted people to have their cars impounded if they had a drink of a glass of wine over dinner. That is patently false, Mr. Speaker, not the case at all.

Actually it's a bit disingenuous for her to talk about one or two drinks and the warning range because this government already has policies in place where there are actions taken for people in the warning range. So the minister made it seem like that the opposition was wanting to implement something new and absolutely radical, but the reality is there are already sanctions in place for those in the warning range, albeit incredibly ineffective as we see by the death rates here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

But it was a bit disingenuous for her to intimate that we don't do anything for that warning range. Again, we do, but it's incredibly ineffective. And we could have implemented a very effective policy as evidenced by Alberta and BC, a three-day vehicle impoundment for first-time offenders in the warning range.

I think the one thing that the minister talked about too is enforcement is key. While we agree that enforcement is critical and having the right complement of police officers is absolutely critical, but we would argue that having effective deterrents that you can enforce should be the goal. The police need the tools to be able to enforce. So yes, enforcement is key, but enforcement is not particularly useful if you don't have good policies to enforce, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about . . . So why would we concentrate on this warning range group, Mr. Speaker? Well why would we choose to concentrate on it? We've learned, some of the evidence presented to the Traffic Safety Committee, if we just give those people in the warning range a licence suspension, which is what this government will continue to do, those people . . . We saw a study that shows that those people who are caught in the warning range who receive a licence suspension are almost eight times more likely than the average driver to be charged with a Criminal Code driving-while-impaired offence within two years.

So contrary to what the minister said, these are in fact risky drivers, and it's important to curb their behaviour before you get to the .08 criminally impaired charges. As Doug Beirness said — one of the presenters to the Traffic Safety Committee — you don't start out drinking and driving and arriving at blowing a .16 blood alcohol concentration without practising numerous times. You don't just go out and blow .08. The reality is people test and test and push the limits, Mr. Speaker. And the goal with a three-day vehicle impoundment is to keep people from pushing those limits and learning that you separate drinking from driving, Mr. Speaker.

So why does an impoundment work versus licence suspension? Suspensions fail to address the reality that, while suspended, we heard that about 70 per cent of people drive. So 70 per cent of people who don't have a licence for a limited period of time do not heed that, and they continue to drive. So it's very easy to hide a suspension. It is not easy at all to hide a vehicle impoundment.

If you lose your car on a Friday night, or if you lose your husband's car or your mother's car, there are very real consequences. Or if you lose your own car, that impacts your ability to go to work for a short period of time. But it has proven to be an incredibly good deterrent, Mr. Speaker, losing your car. People like their cars. And when that is a very real risk, that hey, if I overindulge and have more than those couple of glasses of wine at supper, I could be in real jeopardy of losing my car for a few days, it keeps you in line, Mr. Speaker.

So the bottom line is this government is ignoring a key opportunity, squandering a key opportunity to save people's lives. This is what people in Saskatchewan expect us to do as legislators, put in policies and laws that do our best to ensure that people are safe. And this government has missed that opportunity. It's an absolute shame. So that is why I would like to make a motion, and it is:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its failure to implement a three-day vehicle impoundment the first time a driver is caught with a .05 and over blood alcohol concentration, a measure that helped to cut the number of alcohol-involved traffic deaths by half in Alberta and British Columbia.

With that, I move my motion.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Saskatoon Riversdale:

That this Assembly condemns the government for its failure to implement a three-day vehicle impoundment the first time a driver is caught with a .05 and over blood alcohol concentration, a measure that helped to cut the number of alcohol-involved traffic deaths by half in Alberta and British Columbia.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to this motion brought forth by the opposition. It's an honour and a privilege to be able to speak to it.

The Traffic Safety Committee that I was involved with — and on March 5th, 2013, the Legislative Assembly appointed a special committee to conduct an inquiry into traffic safety in Saskatchewan — I, along with the members from Cumberland, Saskatoon Riversdale, The Battlefords, Saskatoon Meewasin, Regina Walsh Acres, and Prince Albert Carlton were chosen to listen to the citizens of Saskatchewan. Under the guidance of our Chair from Prince Albert Carlton, we met with several communities in this vast province.

We also received recommendations from the public on improving traffic safety and reducing fatalities caused by things such as impaired driving, excessive speed, wildlife collisions. Our committee also found that the public wanted education and public awareness for traffic safety. The meetings were held in Regina, Estevan, Saskatoon, Prince Albert, Pelican Narrows, and La Ronge. There was a total of 27 presentations, Mr. Speaker: 10 in Regina, two in Estevan, 10 in Saskatoon, two in Prince Albert, and one in Pelican Narrows, and two in La Ronge, I believe.

Public participation and input, we found, will help give us a lot of recommendations. While we were in Lac La Ronge, Chief Tammy Cook-Se arson — whom I consider a friend; we go to a lot of events together and chat about different issues surrounding Saskatchewan people — she gave us a presentation on her thoughts, suggesting more awareness about driving without a licence, specifically the implications if one is in an accident.

Mr. Speaker, I was deeply moved by the presentation from Time To Twin when we were in Estevan. When elected officials listen to other people's tragedies and face them head-on, it becomes very real as we share their pain.

We all have lost families and friends due to traffic accidents. None of us are immune, as all of us MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] and our families are on the road driving, driving on the highways, driving on municipal roads. We're constantly travelling across Saskatchewan so we are aware of the road, the travel, the weather conditions. I myself actually know where that pair of deer like to graze on the side of the highway or that particular moose was sighted. So it's an awareness of our surroundings, Mr. Speaker, as we do drive.

But it's also the business of responsibility. Driving, Mr. Speaker, I believe, is a privilege not a right, and we have to continue to remind the citizens of Saskatchewan and our younger people about the privilege of driving.

Mr. Speaker, the Traffic Safety Committee also had many written submissions. The public was truly interested in giving information and gave the Traffic Safety Committee many recommendations. Some of the presenters were very emotional during their presentations, and we felt empathetic, as we've all experienced frustration and sorrow when we see accidents or fatalities. Whether it was an accident victim themselves or Mothers Against Drunk Driving, Mr. Speaker, our committee

listened as a whole. We listened together and all drew on past experiences to assist us in our evaluations.

The documents tabled were varied, from village and RM [rural municipality] councils to Saskatchewan Wildlife Federation and youth councils, Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police. We had many, many people come and give us recommendations. Saskatchewan citizens volunteered their information and recommendations to help reduce fatalities.

[11:00]

All were given serious consideration by our committee as a whole. Some recommendations were debated at great lengths. Some were given even greater focus and passion, but the recommendations provide a starting point to move towards a collaborative approach to reduce traffic fatalities. Our committee as a whole agreed we ultimately want, as a result of this special traffic committee, a reduction of traffic accidents in the province of Saskatchewan. We as a whole made recommendations based on a desire to change behaviours that have contributed to accidents of our friends, neighbours, and our families in Saskatchewan.

Stakeholders wanted more enforcement. We recognized the review was long overdue. And as we move to national accepted standards and generally accepted norms, our committee was moving forward. And I beg to differ from the member from Saskatoon Riversdale. Our government is listening, and this is a policy change. Our government is bringing forward a number of drinking and driving countermeasures which will give Saskatchewan one of the toughest packages of impaired driving legislation in Canada, Mr. Speaker.

The legislation focuses on inexperienced drivers, repeat offenders, and drivers with high blood alcohol levels — drivers who are overly represented in fatal crashes involving alcohol. Mr. Speaker, although the vehicles of experienced drivers with a low blood alcohol content won't be impounded on a first offence, there are increased penalties for these drivers, including a three-day immediate roadside licence suspension which is an increase from the current 24-hour suspension. Mr. Speaker, they'll also be required to complete a driving while impaired course within 90 days, which isn't a requirement under the current legislation.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, earlier this year, government strengthened section 280 of *The Traffic Safety Act* so that law enforcement can impound a vehicle if they determine a driver is impaired, including drivers with a blood alcohol level of .04 and there is no other sober driver to move the vehicle. This gives the police the ability to impound a vehicle when it is in the best interest of public safety to do so.

Again I beg to differ with the member across the way. Mr. Speaker, the reduction in traffic deaths due to impaired driving in BC and Alberta cannot be attributed solely to vehicle impoundments, as those provinces implemented a suite of legislative changes increasing enforcement, which our government is also looking at. And as announced last week, government is taking immediate action on more than half of the recommendations from the Special Committee on Traffic Safety as part of a comprehensive approach to addressing fatalities on

our roads.

These changes, Mr. Deputy Speaker, include numerous measures that strengthen Saskatchewan's impaired driving legislation, implementing zero drug and alcohol tolerance for drivers under the 19 years of age and for all drivers in the graduated driver's licensing program and motorcycle GDL [graduated driver's licensing] program. Mr. Deputy Speaker, currently there is a zero alcohol tolerance for drivers in the graduated driver's licensing program only.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I see my time is going to close pretty soon. But I do believe our Traffic Safety Committee recommended a lot of recommendations from the public. As you've heard, we went across the province to see a lot of different people, a lot of different groups, whether it be Mothers Against Drunk Driving or the Association of the Chiefs of Police. I believe that this Traffic Safety Committee listened to the people. So therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I will not be supporting their motion.

But I am very proud to say that I have been on the Traffic Safety Committee, and I'm looking forward to the questions across the way to help supplement what our government and our committee was doing. Thank you very much for listening to me.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm really pleased to be able to rise in the legislature today to enter into this debate. I think this is a very serious matter that's been . . . The subject of the motion is a very, very serious matter. And certainly traffic deaths related to alcohol use are nothing short of tragedies in this day and age and certainly have impacted a number of lives, as the member from Saskatchewan River indicated in her comments. It's impacted . . . We have all been touched by it. And so it's a very serious matter for debate. And I'm glad to see the use of this time in legislature being put to a debate such as this, and I'd like to see more of these types of debates, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

When I think about growing up in the 1970s when I was a teenager and the type of shenanigans that me and my age group got up to, I often wonder how my mother could sleep at all. And there were six kids in our family. We lived on a farm that was 10 miles south of town, so obviously vehicles were important to us as teenagers. And getting your licence was probably the single most important thing in your teenage life. It gave you the freedom, well, as a farm kid, to be able to go to town and visit with our friends and be social.

And certainly I have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that alcohol was a large part of my teenage years growing up. And really I shudder to think now of some of the situations that I put myself in when I was a teenager. And one particular incident I'll never forget, I was at a party at a farm north of Gravelbourg. And it was getting late, and for some reason, the person I had come with had left. I needed a ride, and I got into a car with a young man from my hometown who was, I knew, very, very drunk. And when we got into the car, I sat in the back seat, and he drove 120 miles an hour all the way back to my hometown. And

I sat in the back corner, and all I did . . . I was raised Catholic, so the Hail Marys came very quick and furious that night, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I consider myself very lucky in that night.

But certainly growing up, every year there were stories at each grad party. We had these notorious grad parties. Alcohol was a huge factor and someone . . . invariably there was a story of a fatal accident where someone would get killed. And it wasn't just the grad parties. It was so much part of our culture.

And now I just want to fast-forward a little bit to being a parent now and having two teenage boys — well my eldest son is 21 now — and I have to say I think there is a change in culture. And maybe it's a city/country thing, because growing up in the country, that's what we did. But my sons are city boys, and they are very, very aware of the sanctions of driving and, not only that, of the dangers of drinking and driving. I think there has been a lot of gains over the years in terms of awareness and certainly, you know, the idea of a designated driver. I didn't even know what that was in my teen years, but that's something that my son tells me that is very important, and so I have to trust him. And I do worry though as a parent because I know what can happen when teenagers, and even young adults or even older adults, get involved in driving and then getting behind the wheel of a car.

So one of the things I remember from my teen years, and it's something that my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale talks about, is the idea of practice makes perfect. When you start embarking upon drinking and then drinking and driving, it is something I think that a lot of teenagers experiment with. And it's that reason I think that this motion is so important, because it speaks to that time when young people or new drivers or new drinkers are experimenting and seeing where their limits are. And if there are serious sanctions that are imposed — and that's the whole essence of this motion is that if there are serious sanctions that are imposed upon those drivers — and they are aware of them, they may think twice about doing what they are thinking about doing.

So just moving forward a little bit then, I do want to take some time to acknowledge the work of the committee. I think this was very important work. And I understand that the committee worked well together and that there were some serious discussions and good presentations by members of the public, and that the travels of the committee really helped them reach out to a lot of people, even though we understand some people still are coming forward that hadn't heard about it. But in general I think the information that was provided was helpful.

Now we know, based on the comments from my colleague from Saskatoon Riversdale, that the numbers are still alarming. Even though my son's generation appears to know a little bit more about drinking and driving and designated drivers, we see that Saskatchewan still has the worst record. And I think that's the essence of this motion as well — why do we want to be the worst in Canada, Mr. Speaker? And these kinds of motions, or these kinds of suggestions, I'm not sure why the government is so opposed to them. Because if it saves one life, isn't that enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Isn't it important, even if we saved one life, to give this a whirl?

And I know the member from Saskatchewan Rivers suggested

... she dismissed the motion by saying, well there's no conclusive evidence that this particular initiative in other provinces has saved lives because they introduce other initiatives. Why not try it, Mr. Deputy Speaker? What if it does? What if we actually saved lives by imposing sanctions on young or drinking drivers that would cause them to think twice? To me, Mr. Deputy Speaker, saving one life is the most important thing. And if we saved many lives ... And I think some of the information that was presented by the Mothers Against Drunk Driving demonstrate the impact of these kinds of sanctions.

So it just seems to me to be a real shame that this government would just dismiss it outright without even trying it and seeing how it works. What's wrong with trying it for a year? If the numbers aren't different, well then it's nothing ventured, nothing gained. So if they ... [inaudible interjection] ... There are lots of numbers. The member opposite suggests there are no numbers. He's refuting the evidence that Mothers Against Drunk Driving have presented to the committee.

So the speaker doesn't even seem to want to acknowledge ... sorry, not the Speaker, the member opposite who is shouting from across the way obviously doesn't believe in Mothers Against Drunk Driving and the numbers that they presented to the committee. And it's shameful, Mr. Speaker, that that member isn't taking this more seriously. Because even if we save one life, that that, I think, is worth trying, and that this government should have the courage to implement these types of sanctions.

Another member's suggesting that I'm making stuff up, Mr. Speaker. I don't think that's acceptable commentary in this legislature, particularly when the evidence has been presented by reputable groups such as a Mothers Against Drunk Driving. And I think that's something that should be addressed, Mr. Speaker, those kinds of comments.

Right now we know the time is ripe. This committee has met. This government is making changes to the legislation. This type of sanction is one that has worked in Alberta. It's worked in BC. It may not be 100 per cent conclusive in terms of cutting the numbers in half, but what if it cuts the numbers by 10 per cent? The government seems to think that's not worth it, Mr. Speaker, and I think that's unacceptable.

This is something that should be taken seriously. And we know that we're the worst in Canada, Mr. Speaker, and that drastic measures may be appropriate — if this is even considered drastic. We could look at zero tolerance, Mr. Speaker. Mothers Against Drunk Driving are advocating that. And the committee, although they heard that, they didn't put that forward. The minority comments could have gone that far and maybe should have, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But the reasonable approach, I think, that the minority report addresses, is using this type of sanction to save lives.

And it could be my son's life. It could be my grandchildren's life when they're born — unborn yet. It could be my parents as they're driving down the highway to get their groceries in town.

So this is something I think that provided a wonderful opportunity. I think the work of the committee was excellent

and that this type of sanction is one that's been tried. It appears to have had good results. We are the worst in Canada. And my colleague from Riversdale pointed it out very amply in the statistics that she provided in her comments.

We have the member from Saskatchewan Rivers that gave us a description of what the committee did. She dismissed the motion. In fact she only acknowledged it once, saying that they aren't doing it. And then she went on to argue that because the other legislatures had introduced other measures, that somehow this type of measure was irrelevant. I think that's irresponsible, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think that's something that the committee seriously overlooked and would argue strongly that there's still time. There's still a whole legislative session ahead of us where this Assembly and this government could take this seriously and most importantly, Mr. Deputy Speaker, could actually save some lives.

And I think that it's worth trying. If it doesn't work and you have a bunch of people that are losing their car for three days and the numbers don't change, well maybe then it would be worth taking another look. But to dismiss it out of hand and to suggest these types of sanctions and measures are ones that are irrelevant or not conclusive, especially with the way our record and our statistics are in Saskatchewan, I think is shameful and disappointing, and I think this government is capable of much, much better.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I am definitely supporting this motion and look forward to the vote on it.

[11:15]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to start this off, Mr. Deputy Speaker, by quoting what the member from Saskatoon Riversdale said when she was on her feet that between 2000 and 2009 we have had an abysmal record for impaired driving. Well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, between 2000 and 2007 they were the government. They refused to change anything when they were government, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The member from Riversdale says that that is not correct. Well I'll tell the member something, Mr. Deputy Speaker. She forgets that I was a patrol officer through those years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I was also an intoxilyzer operator. I was a member of the Prince Albert Police Association on the executive as well as on the executive of the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers. So let's give a little history lesson here, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

In the years when I was on patrol as a member of Prince Albert Police Service we asked numerous times to have the laws changed, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We asked for the impaired driving laws to change because we as officers wanted to see the roadways safer in this province. You know what the members opposite did when they were in government, Mr. Deputy Speaker? After a person was charged for being over .08, they passed a law that allowed for a temporary licence so a person who's been charged by the police could drive for seven days still, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as a charged person. It was ludicrous.

We in the law enforcement community thought that was just plain ludicrous, poor policy.

So you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? We said to the then government, you know what we need? We need more police officers on our streets to help to enforce laws. So over two consecutive elections, two times the then leader of the NDP, the premier at the time, promised the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers, of which I was a member of the board of directors, that he would in fact — and the first time promised 200 more police officers. We thought, great. Let's see the promise kept. He did not do it, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So then he said to us again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in the next election, we're going to promise the same 200 police officers, the same thing. He did not, Mr. Deputy Speaker, keep that promise. And I know this because I was a member of the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers' board of directors who compiled a list of vacancies that were managed at the time only because they were short because the NDP failed to provide that commitment of 200 more police officers fully.

So the member from Saskatoon Riversdale, and I acknowledge her good work on the committee as my Deputy Chair, acknowledged today that more enforcement is required. Well during their time in government, we asked for that many times. We asked for law changes to be tougher on impaired driving. They refused to listen.

So now I want to talk about what's happening now, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We heard from presenters during the work on the committee that there are things different provinces do. The member opposite's motion talks about what's happening in Alberta and BC. But she also fails to recognize that it's part of a major comprehensive legislative change against road racing, stunting, speeding laws changed. More enforcement came into play, Mr. Deputy Speaker, as well because they added more officers.

Had we had more officers during my tenure on patrol, I could have said we could attack drinking and driving better. We could have. During their tenure in government as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we started to see selective traffic enforcement programs augmented, augmenting the actual enforcement efforts across this province. But you know what, now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, since we've formed government and under the tenure of our Minister Responsible for SGI, we saw the STEP [selective traffic enforcement program] programs increased to allow for more augmentation of actual traffic enforcement, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So we had to do that to manage what was left by the NDP at the time. So we're seeing changes happening.

So you know what, Mr. Deputy Speaker? The work of the committee, inasmuch as that we had this one particular section that we didn't agree on, the rest of the report and recommendations are being addressed by this government. And I want to just look at the headline in the news release from November 7th, 2013: "Government taking immediate action on traffic safety initiatives." That tells you something, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That tells you that this minister, this government, is taking our recommendations to heart. They aren't going to sit back like they did from 1995 when the NDP were in government, when the last comprehensive all-party traffic

safety committee sat, and sat on recommendations for years, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

And I know that because, as a police officer, I saw the change from .06 warning range to .04 during my tenure years after the recommendation came through. So that's not immediate action. I wish we would have seen that when I was on patrol. We didn't see that. So I want to thank the minister of SGI for taking this step forward to look at the recommendations. Cabinet decided. The government's moving forward on recommendations immediately.

Now on the impaired driving issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we looked at the graduated driver's licensing program. We heard from stakeholders that, to change behaviour in the future, you have to change behaviour now. We augmented the old program with a new recommendation. We are going to see the graduated driver's licence program, the new drivers, who can't have . . . It's a zero tolerance level up to the age of 19 from seventeen and a half which was the benchmark at the time. That will impact future behaviour for the category groups. We're seeing, we heard the member from Riversdale, the 20-, 24- to 35-year-old age, if we don't do something now, the young people to change their behaviour, we will not see the behaviour change when they become that targeted age.

And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one more thing that we have to do and the government will do is a very extensive public awareness campaign. Now that's critical, because if you don't inform the public of the new changes, how will they actually make conscious decisions not to drink and drive? So we're going to make those efforts to go forward, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that's critical.

Now I remember on patrol issuing numerous 24-hour licence suspensions. And I'll tell you what, the people I stopped were predominately males. And when I had them in the back of my patrol car, issuing them the paperwork, Mr. Deputy Speaker, numerous times, they would say, oh my God, what's going to happen when I get home? When I go home and my wife knows that I haven't got a licence, I don't come home with the car that night, what's she going to say? Well one thing we saw as police officers also was a 24-hour suspension didn't have a major impact on those drivers because the next day they could go and just tell their wives sometimes, I believe, I got a drive home from my buddies. So the car is still sitting on the side of the road. They go pick it up the next day and they were able to drive it home.

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the committee looked at various recommendations from stakeholders. What I can say is that we now fall into what would be the average across Canada: a licence suspension of three days for the first offence, but we made the subsequent offenses much, much more tougher on the actual repeat offenders, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The best practice model recommended by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators asked for a sweep, sweeping kind of change to administrative sanctions for warning range and suspended drivers. We've asked now to go to three days, 72-hour licence suspension, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We believe that we've also gone further than other jurisdictions. And other parts of the law changes, which are going to come in the future.

The committee also listened to Mr. Doug Beirness that the member for Riversdale quoted. And Mr. Beirness in his PowerPoint presentation very clearly identified that higher enforcement, more visibility of police officers was the purpose of deterrents. It creates a real actual probability of detection. It wasn't the law that was critical, it was more officers in the street. We as a committee looked at that, and we looked at these many, many times and took these into consideration, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So moving forward, we took the advice of all the different presenters. And I think, Mr. Speaker, this suite of sanctions, of change, will address the needs in this province. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — [Inaudible] . . . period for debate has expired. Questions. I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is strengthening sanctions for drinking and driving for new drivers, experienced drivers, and repeat offenders. This includes a 60-day immediate roadside licence suspension for new drivers, which is double the current 30-day suspension; and a three-day immediate roadside licence suspension for experienced drivers, which is an increase from the current 24-hour suspension.

To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: rather than working with the government to ensure more progress is made, why are you focusing on the point which isn't universally accepted across Canada?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We have the highest impaired driving death rate of all the provinces here in Canada. We have a key opportunity, Mr. Speaker, to look at jurisdictions that have had incredible success: Alberta and British Columbia who have, we heard from presenters who have said that the three-day vehicle impoundment in the warning range has been a big part of why they've been able to reduce death rates by 50 per cent. It is absolutely unacceptable that this government would not even consider that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I listened with interest to the debate here, and I want to draw some comments from the member from Saskatchewan Rivers when she said that this is indeed a serious matter. And we acknowledge that Saskatchewan has the worst record when it comes to drinking and driving. And she talked about listening to the people, and she really seemed to emphasize that this committee listened to the people. And I sat in on that, and they seemed to be doing that.

So I want to ask her, I want to ask her, who specifically, what person said the sanctions of impounding vehicles would not work? What person said that?

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

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Well I'm at a loss for words. Your record was dismal, and how many police officers did you promise and not keep the promise?

Our government is bringing forward a number of drinking and driving measures which will give Saskatchewan one of the toughest packages of impaired driving legislation in Canada. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, both sides of the House came together to work on the Special Committee on Traffic Safety, which is an example of bipartisan co-operation. This committee met with many stakeholders and looked at various other jurisdictions to devise its recommendations, many of which that this government has already put into action, included numerous measures that strengthen Saskatchewan impaired driving legislation.

To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: will you commit that your caucus will work with this government to ensure that these measures are passed unanimously?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Deputy Speaker, we worked incredibly well as a committee. And the reason there is a . . . And we supported with great consensus, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on all the recommendations with the exception of one, Mr. Deputy Speaker. One key recommendation that the evidence was clear — a three-day, a short-term vehicle impoundment save lives. This government refuses, dismisses out of hand that that does not work.

We have two provinces where it clearly works, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Why would we not take a policy that works if it's going to save lives, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I heard a lot of hot air over there from the member from P.A. [Prince Albert] Carlton, and he was going on about the past. What I want to know is, is he concerned about the future? Is he concerned about people's lives? And why is it he's not willing to support a motion to help save lives when Saskatchewan has the worst record right now for impaired driving deaths?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Mr. Hickie: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The audacity of the member opposite to ask me that question while I'm a serving police officer to the worst record in this province's history, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And I still am a police officer, very proud to support the brothers and sisters who work every

day and every night trying to make our roadways safer, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

This committee, in whole, supported these recommendations to strengthen the laws that the members opposite didn't do anything for for years, Mr. Deputy Speaker. This is a spot; this is a starting point for us. This will make our traffic, roadways, our roadways much safer, Mr. Deputy Speaker. In this totality of everything, the members opposite just don't get it again, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[11:30]

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

Mr. Tochor: — Mr. Speaker, in 1996 the then NDP government aimed to make Saskatchewan the toughest jurisdiction in Canada for impaired driving by implementing penalties for drivers at the lowest blood alcohol contents. We are still the only province with sanctions at .04, with other jurisdictions only going as low as .05.

To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: why is your party advocating to go back on their decision and move the Saskatchewan blood alcohol contents sanctions from .04 to .05, thereby putting more Saskatchewan drivers at risk?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We're advocating them . . . We were advocating putting in a policy that works, that at .05 you would have your vehicle impounded upon a first offence, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is not softening any regulations, Mr. Deputy Speaker. That is strengthening them. Putting in a three-day vehicle impoundment at .05 is not softening recommendations, and I cannot even believe the member from Eastview would suggest that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government does not have a policy on a three-day vehicle impoundment on a first offence, so how could that be possibly softening recommendations, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

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

Mr. Nilson: — Mr. Speaker, we're seeing an example this morning again of a government that ignores the evidence. The evidence shows that Saskatchewan has the worst record in Canada for deaths from impaired driving. And we know in British Columbia and Alberta, Manitoba, other places, that they are working and using a method which reduces those deaths.

And, Mr. Speaker, why — I'm asking the member from P.A. Carlton — why do you not listen to the evidence that comes from other jurisdictions in Canada to provide something that will save lives of Saskatchewan people? Mr. Speaker, we're talking about 2013 and as we go forward. And, Mr. Speaker, why is this member being so dismissive of the evidence that's available right across Canada?

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Carlton.

Mr. Hickie: — Dismissive? Really? Mr. Deputy Speaker, the Saskatchewan Federation of Police Officers asked for years and years for changes to the policy that that government had at the time, Mr. Deputy Speaker. They did nothing to help out the law enforcement officers with more members on the street. They did nothing to augment the law to make it more tougher on drinking and driving.

This government has listened to the people of this province and the recommendations provided. This government or this minister is making changes, and the officials of SGI equally are responsible for that. They want to see changes. They want to make sure that our daughters and sons are safe, our parents are safe, every day on the roads, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the member from the Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Earlier this year our government strengthened section 280 of *The Traffic Safety Act* so that law enforcement can impound a vehicle if they determine the driver is impaired, including drivers with a blood alcohol level of .04 and there is no other sober driver to move the vehicle. This gives police the ability to impound a vehicle when it is in the interest of public safety to do so.

To the member from Saskatoon Riversdale: do you agree that the strengthening of section 280 of *The Traffic Safety Act* by our government was a good decision?

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. What is a good decision is implementing policies that have been shown to work in other jurisdictions, like a vehicle impoundment, a short-term vehicle impoundment for those who have a blood alcohol concentration of .05 or over. That is a good policy, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — You know, Mr. Speaker, we've seen a really dismissive attitude from the members opposite who've been participating in this debate. And I've asked the member from Saskatchewan Rivers once, and I'll ask her again, who was against impounding vehicles to cause them to reject this common sense approach that is working both in British Columbia and Alberta? We know it works, but this government will not tell us who said no to that really good recommendation. Who said no, Mr. Speaker?

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

Ms. Wilson: — Well thank you for that question . . .

The Deputy Speaker: — Pursuant to an order made this day, time for this debate has expired.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' MOTIONS

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

Motion No. 1 — Plans for New Schools

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is indeed an honour and my pleasure to rise and speak to this motion. Mr. Speaker, this motion calls for this Assembly to support our government's plan to build nine new joint-use schools to help meet the challenges of our growing province. Again, Mr. Speaker, nine new joint schools for our province.

Mr. Speaker, our province is growing. That's not a secret, Mr. Speaker. Every corner of our country and friends and neighbours are celebrating Saskatchewan's successes and are applauding us at every chance they get, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, they said that this couldn't be done. We've heard the terms, Mr. Speaker, 100,000 more people — farcical, not possible, wishful thinking, flies in the face of reality, doomed to fail, a shaky business for an economic plan, reality says that that plan will fail, Mr. Speaker. Well we all know the facts. Saskatchewan surpassed 1.1 million people and, Mr. Speaker, we're well on our way to 1.2 million people.

Mr. Speaker, growth, and especially growth like ours, is terribly exciting. First place now, Mr. Speaker, is the norm, not something that we strive for, Mr. Speaker. It's becoming the norm in our province and we're succeeding at that. Mr. Speaker, to quote our Premier, and I quote:

It's the kind of growth we haven't seen since the earliest days of our province but it's about more than the numbers in the statistics, Mr. Speaker. What's more important is how growth is allowing Saskatchewan people to enjoy a better quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, this kind of growth record, this kind of growth indeed, has challenges. Mr. Speaker, we have developed a plan to meet those challenges and, Mr. Speaker, we've shared that plan. The plan is not a secret. Mr. Speaker, we've also set some goals and we've articulated those goals, Mr. Speaker. They too are not secrets. We have goals for education. We want to lead the nation in graduation rates. We want to increase the number of grade 3 students reading at grade level, and we want to close the gap in achievement between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

Now in order to do that, Mr. Speaker, everyone knows that we need to invest, and we will invest in both education operating and in education infrastructure. Again, Mr. Speaker, we've articulated a plan. We've set some goals. We've articulated those publicly and, Mr. Speaker, we will be accountable.

Mr. Speaker, in my years in education, I've seen the impact of rising student enrolments. I've seen the impact of declining student enrolments, Mr. Speaker. And again now we're seeing the impact of rising enrolments. Mr. Speaker, let's talk a little bit about that.

From 2003 to 2007, Saskatchewan saw a decline in student enrolment of, well it was 9.2 per cent, Mr. Speaker, a little bit

more than 16,300 students, an average of over 3,000 students a year. Mr. Speaker, that has a tremendous impact on schools, on school divisions, and on students, and those impacts are really quite dramatic.

For example at the elementary level, Mr. Speaker, it may have meant split grades, split grades all the way through from kindergarten to grade 8. And in some cases, Mr. Speaker, multiple split grades, three and four grades split, Mr. Speaker. That's just not acceptable. At the upper levels, Mr. Speaker, it impacted whether or not a school or school division might even be able to field a volleyball team, have a choir or a band, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, we talk about student success. We all know that success is all about student engagement. How do you engage students in those kinds of activities when you don't have enough of them to offer that kind of program, Mr. Speaker? So we know the impacts of declining enrolment.

At the high school level, significant student decline can affect choices a high school student can make in terms of their timetable, because if you don't have enough students for a section, obviously the school can't offer that program. And obviously, Mr. Speaker, that limits or certainly has a great impact on student engagement and therefore their success, Mr. Speaker.

Since forming government in 2007, Mr. Speaker, our student population has risen by almost 6 per cent, Mr. Speaker. And so now obviously we have the opposite dynamic. We have the opposite dynamic in some particular areas of the province. And I'd like to deal with a little bit of those or the impact in some of those provinces and where we've made some investment. And I'm speaking in particular of Regina, Saskatoon, Martensville, and Warman.

In terms of capital investment in those high-growth areas, Mr. Speaker, I'll begin with Saskatoon and area capital. In that area alone, Mr. Speaker, this government has invested \$146,019,000, Mr. Speaker. That includes 10 major capital projects including: Willowgrove, Nutana Collegiate, Holy Family, Georges Vanier, Holy Cross, St. Matthew, E.D. Feehan, St. Mary's, Martensville High School, Warman middle years, includes 21 relocatable classrooms, 180 renovation projects, 14 early years projects, and now, Mr. Speaker, six new joint-use P3 [public-private partnership] schools, Mr. Speaker. We said we needed to invest. We will invest, Mr. Speaker. There's demonstration of that commitment, Mr. Speaker.

In the Regina area our capital investment totals \$131,025,000, Mr. Speaker, including 10 major capital projects: École Monseigneur de Laval, Balcarres, Lumsden Elementary, Emerald Ridge, Campbell, Arcola, Douglas Park, Seven Stones, and École St. Andrew, 11 relocatable classrooms, Mr. Speaker, 121 renovation projects, seven early years projects, and now, Mr. Speaker, three new joint-use schools.

And so now, Mr. Speaker, we are asking this Assembly to support our plan to build nine new P3 schools, Mr. Speaker, using a bundling approach. Mr. Speaker, we need to play catch-up. Under the NDP government, Mr. Speaker, 176 schools were closed, enrolment declined, and we inherited a

\$1.2 billion infrastructure deficit. Mr. Speaker, over 70 per cent of our schools are 40 years old. Mr. Speaker, support for this motion is support for all of our children. It's a most significant investment for our kindergarten to grade 8 students, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, all this chatter coming from the other side about communities not having access, quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, well I'd call that farcical.

Mr. Speaker, schools will remain the centre of the community. Schools will meet the education purposes and it will meet community purposes. Our student-first plan, Mr. Speaker, will see to that. You see under this model, this model builds schools quicker. The model will produce cost savings. And this model, Mr. Speaker, will meet the needs of students and communities as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, everyone it seems is excited about this initiative. Everyone that is, Mr. Speaker, except the opposition. In fact, Mr. Speaker, their leader has stood in this House on 54 occasions calling for a new school in Hampton Village. Mr. Speaker, he didn't show up for the announcement.

Mr. Speaker, they say it will cost more in the long run. Well, Mr. Speaker, here are the facts. Ontario, Quebec, Alberta, British Columbia, New Brunswick all have P3 programs, Mr. Speaker. There are over 204 projects built or under way in Canada since the early 1990s. From 2009 to 2011, 39 P3 deals worth \$21.7 billion were finalized in Canada. There are municipal P3 projects in Calgary, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Regina, that are being planned or are under way.

Mr. Speaker, the federal P3 Canada fund oversees \$1.2 billion and will contribute up to 25 per cent of a project. The Conference Board of Canada analyzed 19 P3 projects and found that Canadian P3s have so far delivered savings ranging from a few million dollars to \$750 million when compared to traditional procurement.

Mr. Speaker, as we know, the city of Saskatoon's new Civic Operations Centre is a P3 and the city of Regina's new waste water treatment facility will be a P3, approved through a referendum as well, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I could go on, but I know that the constraints of the Assembly today prevent me from doing that. There is so much more to say and I'd like to have the opportunity to do that, Mr. Speaker, but at this point in time I need to move the motion, and it reads as follows:

That this Assembly supports this government's plan to build nine new schools in order to help meet the challenges of a growing province.

[11:45]

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Douglas Park:

That this Assembly supports this government's plan to build nine new schools in order to help meet the challenges of a growing province.

Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

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

Mr. Tochor: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move adjournment of the debate.

The Speaker: — The member for Saskatoon Eastview has moved adjournment of debate. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 11:46.]

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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
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Water Security Agency
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Minister Responsible for the Provincial
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Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for the Saskatchewan
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Hon. Rob Norris

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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