



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

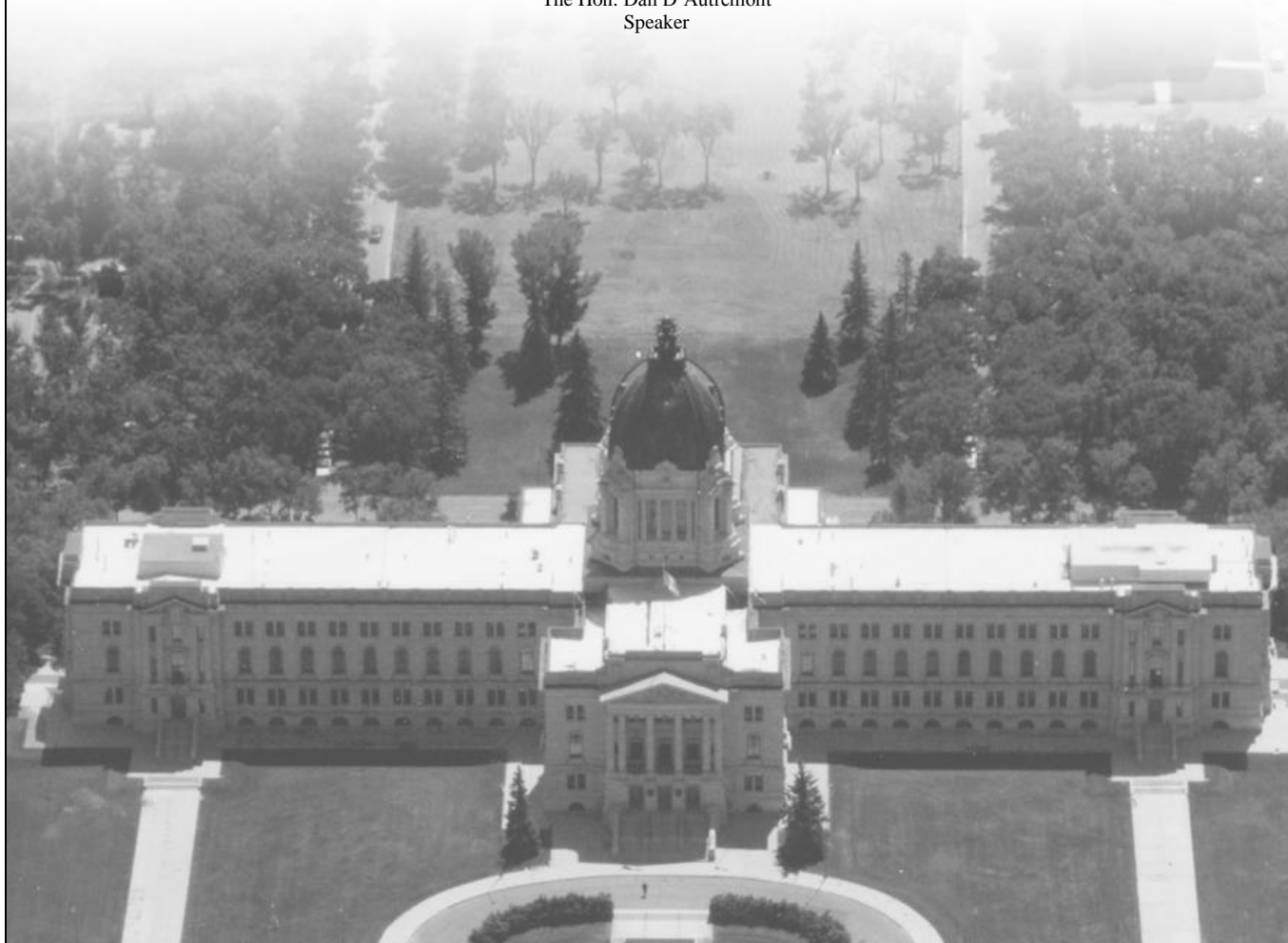
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
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The Hon. Dan D'Autremont
Speaker



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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

The Speaker: — It now being 7 o'clock, adjourned debates will resume.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 100

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 100** — *The Assessment Management Agency Amendment Act, 2013* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is a pleasure to stand again and continue my remarks on Bill No. 100, *An Act to Amend The Assessment Management Agency Act*, and I appreciate the opportunity. I may repeat some of the things I wanted to say because there's some things that I want to really reinforce. And I think that it's important, as I said, that assessment is one of those things that eyes may glaze over when we start to talk about this. This may be one of the more difficult ones, so we don't nod off, fall out of our chair. But it's an important one. It's critically important because this is how we get things done. Maybe if I talk long enough about this we'll all fall . . . [inaudible] . . . but I don't know.

But at any rate, this is an important topic, Mr. Speaker. I do want to say that because this is how we get . . . this is one of the most important vehicles that we have in terms of getting the work that we want to see done in our province. And whether it's in the education system or with the municipal level, it's critical that the job gets done and we have the resources to do it.

And people have high expectations, and rightfully so. We should have a high expectation of our education system and work that gets done in the schools and our province. And that's only reasonable throughout the 100-plus years of our history of Saskatchewan that we've come to expect that. We've come to expect that, and we've evolved to a state where we rely heavily on the Assessment Management Agency, often referred to as SAMA, the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency.

I wonder why that's left out of the Act title, actually when it probably should have been called the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency Act. I'm not sure why they left that out because we do refer to SAMA and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities]. They all have the S in it, so I'm not sure why that's not there.

But at any rate, we have work to do at our municipal level. And whether that's roads . . . We know how important roads are in Saskatchewan when it comes to transportation, both in terms of

recreation or our personal use, whether it's going to the library, going to the rink, going to our work. Roads are critically important, critically important when it comes to getting our goods to market. And we know that. I mean we know that on all our roads, but particularly in rural Saskatchewan, roads are huge, huge issues.

Roads, health care, the other goods and services that municipalities deliver — whether that includes police service, protective services, fire services — all of these things have to be paid for. And there are other things we just take for granted, whether that be library services, recreational services, our rinks, our baseball diamonds. All of those things we just take for granted.

So all of this happens because we have to pay property taxes. But I'll get to the point . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . You know, I did that, Mr. Speaker. There were people in the audience earlier, before 5, said it didn't seem people were listening to you. And I said, I think maybe they were hanging on every word I was saying, particularly when . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And they said I know they're listening to me. They're acting like they're not. They'll read about it later. Or maybe if I just say one thing, all of a sudden, things will flare up. Obviously sometimes people do listen to the most interesting parts, I guess, the things that really matter in the speech at hand.

And so that's why this Act is so critically important. And I know it's also important, so when we talk about the levels of government, whether it be municipal or the education sector who receive the funding, but it's critically important to those people who actually pay the taxes, pay the property taxes, that their assessments are fair, they're done well, they're done professionally, and there's some reasonable way to question how the assessment's done. And so that's why it's important the Saskatchewan Assessment Management Agency or SAMA has the resources to do it.

So as the minister talked about he had several reasons to do the bill. The first of course was that the “. . . repeal provisions relating to the 65/35 per cent split sharing of SAMA funding responsibility between the province and municipalities.” So this will be interesting to see how that plays out.

“Second, to make related financial amendments that provide SAMA greater flexibility respecting increases to municipal requisitions, provide timelines that are achievable . . .” and making sure the agency is properly funded and that it's efficient. That's straightforward.

“Third, to make miscellaneous amendments of non-financial nature.” And of course that's to “. . . better reflect the agency's present roles, responsibilities, practices, and respond to the change in responsibilities of the ministries of Government Relations and Education respecting the education funding system.”

And we've had . . . I made comments earlier because we were curious if there were flags going up that there's more to come down the line in terms of those kind of changes. And we'd be curious about that and need to know how significant they are.

Are they tweaking the system or are there major overhauls in the works? I don't know. We need to be aware of that. And so we'll have questions about that in terms of the changing responsibilities that he alluded to. What does he mean by them?

And of course then he talks about the government having a direct interest in the delivery of the services in a timely, accurate, professional, consistent way and ensuring public confidence is there in the property assessment taxation system.

So I think that's very accurate. That's very true. But not only does the government have that, so do the people who are paying the taxes, people who've been here for many years, many generations, and those who are just coming now and those who are maybe buying a home for the first time. And, of course, assessment is something that they may or may not ask about or may or may not understand. And it's important that this kind of work be done in a way that's clear and understandable. And as I said earlier today, it'd be interesting to take a plain language or plain English approach to some of this stuff so that people can understand this because these are some of the highest taxes that people will pay. And many people talk about how this is probably one of the most visible taxes that you pay.

And particularly now, when we're having more and more of our wages being — and any kind of income — put directly into our banks, and we're not really as aware maybe as we used to be when we would get our cheques and our banks and our statements and we would know what our deductions were. That may not be the case with a lot of people now. Their wages go directly into their bank accounts and they're not aware, whereas property taxes is something I think a lot of people, a lot of people think about.

I do want to take one moment to talk about the . . . And I'm not sure about this and whether this will provide some conversation in committee. I think it's an important area, and it's one that we've been hearing a lot about when we know that there are stakeholders that take a look at what's happening across Canada. And they look at other jurisdictions where they're able to do their assessments much more quickly sometimes.

I understand Alberta may be even doing it once a year. And they are much more flexible and on top of the growth of the property values, and they do it in a much more transparent, accountable way. People know what their properties are worth and how much they're paying for taxes, whereas we do it every four years. And then sometimes you're faced with very large property tax increases or the potential for that. Sometimes it's interesting because you think you're going to get a big property tax increase because you've read your assessment, but there's another step in between and it adds more confusion.

And so I think this is going to be an interesting conversation because this Act is open. And I know that there are stakeholders that would be very interested in having some input in this. So I think over the next few months as we do our job as the opposition, asking those questions and casting our net among the stakeholders, and I can think of one. The chamber of commerce has often raised this issue about doing annual property assessments and how they could be facilitated and what that might mean in a Saskatchewan context. I think that's something that we should be looking at, taking a look at the

pros and cons. What would be the cost implications? How efficient would this be? What would be the impact on the taxpayer, the property owner, and in the implications of that?

I think that's something we need to do. And so when I looked through the explanation notes and it wasn't as clear . . . Okay, there you go, I'm on. Okay. My voice was fading there. Thank you . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The aerial people cutting me off, no.

I think that it's critically important that we take a look at that, and when we have the discussion in the spring about this bill, that we take some time to discuss those issues. And I wouldn't be surprised if we get some correspondence back saying that this is something we should be raising in the House because with *The Assessment Management Agency Act* open, this would be the time to have that conversation, I think. Now it may be that the Minister of Government Relations can correct me on that and say that no, there's a better time and it's actually in the works. Maybe they have a plan for that. We don't know, but I think this is really critically important.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that many of my colleagues will want to have a chance to enter into the debate on this. There will be comments that they will want to make. We want to make sure that there is proper consultation and that the government is actually listening to them. They did say, they referenced it as the SARM and SUMA had no objections. Our question is, did they have other suggestions? Maybe they had other suggestions. And how were they dealt with or were they dismissed in a summary fashion? That happens way too often, Mr. Speaker. And we need to make sure that their concerns are dealt with and that's really, really important.

You know and, Mr. Speaker, I do want to say that our leader has said if it makes sense to do this we will support it, and if it's the common sense thing to do, then we're there. But the goal will be to make sure it's open, transparent, and accountable. Unfortunately we haven't seen that an awful lot from this government, and we've seen them be secretive and dismissive.

And as I said earlier, the biggest concerns we have, we've been talking a lot about the P3s [public-private partnership] and the funding of that, how that will be played out. And how that, you know, connects with property taxes because we do not want to see future generations saddled with a bill that really we should be paying for ourselves. The province is doing well. This is a time to get the job done, and we think we have the resources to do that if we set the priorities right.

So, Mr. Speaker, people are doing their part. They're working hard to buy their first home, that kind of thing, but we need to make sure that the process is going to work for people, the process is going to work for people.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move Bill No. 100, *An Act to Amend the Assessment Management Agency Act*. I'd like to adjourn that debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 100, *The Assessment Management Agency Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 101

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 101 — *The University of Saskatchewan Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to clarify. I understood the Clerk to say Bill 111, but I thought it was Bill 101. So just want to . . .

The Speaker: — It is.

Ms. Sproule: — 101? All right. Thank you. A little heart attack there. Just checking to see if I'm awake, I think. Thank you.

All right then, therefore it is my pleasure to rise and speak to Bill No. 101, *The University of Saskatchewan Amendment Act, 2013*. This is another example of this legislative agenda for the fall, Mr. Speaker, that seems a little light on substance but certainly doesn't take away from the work of the good people over at the University of Saskatchewan to just clarify and rectify a couple of things in their Act that deals with the senate, particularly the senate of the University of Saskatchewan.

[19:15]

It's interesting, I was just looking at a list of the members of the senate, and it looks like there's over 50 names on there. So it's a very large body, and representation on the university senate comes from all sorts of sources. And I think that's important to ensure that it's representative of the community that it's serving, Mr. Speaker.

So these kinds of . . . Much of what's in the explanatory notes suggest that these are housekeeping-style amendments, and certainly that's in keeping with the comments that the minister made as well. There's not earth-shattering changes of any sort in this legislation, but it is some necessary housekeeping, and certainly we're not opposed to looking after those small items as well. Certainly we're looking for more leadership from this government in terms of the big items, but when we see the members of the university coming forward and asking for these types of changes, makes total sense. And certainly I think this is an example of that type of legislation.

As the ministry indicated, there's a number of amendments that are being proposed, five or six types of amendments that deal with requests coming from the university. And I'll go through those in a little bit of detail in a minute or so, Mr. Speaker.

There's not a lot of explanation, even though this is a fairly straightforward style of amendments, in the minister's comments. So we'll have to dig into them a little bit and make sure that the public understands what's being proposed here.

The first one he indicated, and it's certainly as explained in the explanatory notes, is an amendment to section 11 of the existing University of Saskatchewan Act which talks about the ability of what convocation can do. And in this case they're talking about the authority of convocation to confer degrees and certificates and honorary degrees and to also admit graduands to the convocation. And certainly any of us who have had the opportunity to go to the University of Saskatchewan and taken in part of the convocation ceremonies knows how special those moments are, Mr. Speaker, when you're able to put on the gown of your college and receive your degree from the chancellor of the university. It's a very special day for a lot of people every year.

And so in this case the change that's being suggested is one where we are going to add diplomas to the list of what the powers of the convocation are. Now the minister hasn't given us any indication why that's necessary, although it does indicate in the explanatory notes that under the existing Act, under section 5(c), there's the ability to award diplomas. So I believe the intent of the amendment here is to bring section 11 into conformity with section 5. And that's something that we don't have any issue with, Mr. Speaker.

The next section that's being changed . . . And this I believe is to help ensure that members of the senate are actually graduates of the university. So it's just a clarity to make sure that we wouldn't be nominating senate members who are not graduates of the ceremony. I think that's what it's intended to do.

So if you look at the existing section in terms of the makeup of the senate — that's section 24 of the Act — there's a long list of all those many people who represent various constituencies within the university. And the one that we're talking about right now is sections (b) and (c) of section 24(1). And currently those two sections talk about 14 members elected by convocation to represent electoral districts established by the senate, and then part (c) is just 14 additional members elected by the convocation. And I'm assuming these are the members at large, Mr. Speaker.

What the amendment is doing, it's just adding a couple of words after members, and it's saying, members of convocation. So clearly the senate . . . I think this is to provide clarity, that the senate would be composed of members of convocation.

So these aren't just members of senate appointed from the public at large, but that they do need to be graduands of the University of Saskatchewan. And that's what's pointed out in the housekeeping or in the explanatory notes that were provided, that the amendment clarifies that elected members of senate in 24(1)(b) are members of convocation, and also that in 24(1)(c). And the only difference there is the (b) section refers to senators representing electoral districts, and I believe (c) would be members that are members at large. So again a very straightforward, simple amendment that seems to provide some clarity to ensure that senate members are actually graduands of the university and a member of convocation.

The next change that's being added is about students. The minister indicated it's to clarify the process by which student members of the senate are elected.

And we look at sections 29 and 32, a couple of changes there. Under 29(2) there's a clarity being added so that the convocation list is to be used for purposes of electing the members of the senate mentioned in clauses 24(1)(b) and (c). And those are the two that I just referred to earlier.

So 29 is the way the secretary of the university will prepare the list of convocation. So that's a responsibility to the secretary and this is to provide clarity that that's the list that's to be used when we're nominating these members, as I described earlier, for representing electoral districts and the members at large. So it's just providing clarity under the existing section 29(2).

There's a new subsection that's being added to this clause and it's subsection (4). And in that case it's providing direction to the secretary, and actually it's a mandatory thing the secretary must do. And it reads as follows:

The secretary shall oversee the election of the members of senate mentioned in clauses 24(1)(b) and (c).

This is a little bit curious to me, Mr. Speaker. I just wonder what discussions within the senate led to this requirement for the secretary to oversee the election. There may have been some serious issues internally that have provided some angst for the senate members and certainly for the secretary who has the responsibilities to prepare the list. So there must have been a question at some point about, if the secretary prepares the list, who oversees it? So this makes sure now that it's very clear to everybody that the role of the university secretary is now also not just preparing a list, but she or he is in charge of overseeing the election of those particular members of the senate we've been discussing.

Another further clarification in relation to those two sets of senators under clause 24(1)(b) and (c) is in section 32. Now the existing . . . This is the nomination section of the Act, and the existing provision doesn't make reference to those two subclauses. So it just currently reads, "No person is eligible to be elected as a member of the senate unless that person has been nominated in accordance with this Act."

And of course it can only refer to those two clauses 24(1)(b) and 24(1)(c) because those are the ones that are elected. The other ones are different types of nominations to the senate. For example there are nominations by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. We have automatics, a lot of automatic members of the senate, so they obviously can't be elected. And there's other ones that are nominated through other processes. So this section 32 has to be fixed in order to be clear, and I think this is an appropriate amendment to make sure that the elected part of senate is those under 24(1)(b) and 24(1)(c). So that's an appropriate change.

The next clause that's being proposed to be amended is section 45 of *The University of Saskatchewan Act, 1995*, and that deals with the terms of office. So I think what's being proposed here is . . . We're now looking at a different section of the Act, and that's the members of the board, and that's found in section 42 of the Act. It would have been helpful in the explanatory notes if that section had been provided as well because it's hard when you're looking at the explanatory notes to go from one clause that's referring to another clause that isn't even printed in the

explanatory notes. So just as a note to the minister's staff, it would be more helpful I think for members of the public certainly to understand the intent of the changes by providing the clause that's being referred to.

So when I looked at section 42, I saw that that is the list of all the members of the board. And there's again some automatic members of the board. There's also under 42(b) it's five members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. So there are five members of the board of the University of Saskatchewan that are appointed by this government. There are two members, and this is in section (c), that are elected by the senate, so the senate themselves propose two members for the board. And then the faculty association under (d) can also elect a senate or a board member.

Now what this clause change is proposing to do, it deals with the terms of two of those groups of people. One is the members that are elected by the senate, and the other is the ones that are nominated by the faculty. And it's curious. It used to be the members elected by senate served two-year terms and so would the members of the faculty, the faculty member. But for some reason, this is going to change and the members elected by the senate are now going to be provided a three-year term. And the explanatory note says that this is in order to bring these members in line with the appointees by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

And we know that that may or may not make sense, and we're not given the reasoning for that. What's interesting here is that the faculty member is not being offered the same extension of their term, that it's being held back to two years and it's not really clear why the distinction is being made this way. And there's certainly no indication from the minister about that change. It just says . . . He indicated that the senate nominees to the boards are allowing them to serve a three-year, a third three-year term, in section 45.

So it's not clear to me why this isn't being afforded to the faculty member as well and it would . . . I don't know that I have any particular view one way or the other, but it's interesting when these changes are brought forward and it's not indicated in the explanatory notes or in the minister's comments why the distinction is being made here. So that's a question we have. And whether or not there's an answer for it, we may never find out but certainly I think other of my colleagues may ask that question as well or we might have an opportunity when the bill is put before the committee to find out more about that particular point.

There are some changes also being made to section 61, and it's merely housekeeping. It's just to make some clarity around subsection (s) to make sure that it's subject to 61(2). So that's just a very, very small housekeeping item.

Then we look at section 98, and this is the last change that's being proposed. And this is to, as the minister indicated, the amendments will change the powers of the council to facilitate the appointment of student members on hearing boards. Oh sorry, that's section 61. What I was talking about, section 98, the changes there and all we're doing in 98, according to the suggested amendments, is to remove the requirement of a corporate seal when the university executes documents.

And I think I understand. You know, the use of the corporate seal has maybe waned or the need for a corporate seal certainly seems to be of less importance nowadays then it would've been many years ago. And in fact, back in the old, old days when the seal was imprinted, it was done with wax and there was sealing wax and all of those things that you hear about in lore of days past. Since then it's evolved to now what you could call just the rubber seal, and it's just stamped with ink. And I think the importance of it, of the real seal where the embossment was made is no longer relevant.

I know one of the things that was interesting about the corporate seal when I did some work at Information Services Corporation is that the embossed seals don't scan very well in this modern age so you actually can't see them at all. And there was a whole bunch of changes when ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] came on board that required people to start using the ink rubber stamp instead of the embossed seal. And I just think we're losing something as a result of that. But I guess I better get with the 21st century, Mr. Speaker.

So at any rate, the university has decided that you no longer require a corporate seal when you execute documents. Used to be when you had the corporate seal, it showed the authority of the people signing the document on behalf of the particular contractor, whoever that might be, and now I guess it's just on the strength of your name and your signature which, good or bad, it is what it is. So I guess the university has requested that that be afforded to them as well. And so this government has agreed to amend the section or proposed to amend this section to remove the requirement of a corporate seal.

[19:30]

So, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated at the onset, these are some very minor, minor changes, although I think they're important to the University of Saskatchewan on an operational basis and it makes things a little more clear for how senate members are nominated and who's responsible for overseeing their election and those types of daily, or not daily, but housekeeping types of items that are important to the organization.

Again I think it's an example of a number of the bills that we see on the slate this fall that are ones that are being brought forward properly from community members with needs in their particular legislation but it isn't really showing any kind of I think legislative agenda or leadership on the part of this government that's going to take our province forward. So in that sense, it's a bit disappointing to speak to these housekeeping bills. But certainly we know that for the folks that the bills are requested by, it's important to them.

At this point I don't think I want to add anything further to the discussion. I know my other colleagues will. So I'd like to move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 101, the Act to amend *The University of Saskatchewan Act, 1995*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 101, *The University of Saskatchewan Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 107

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff that **Bill No. 107 — *The Wildfire Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into discussion here this afternoon on Bill No. 107, *An Act respecting the Prevention, Management, Control and Extinguishing of Fires*. This is Bill No. 107, *The Wildfire Act*, and I'm pleased to enter into discussion on this Act.

Certainly I recognize that this Act replaces the former prairie and forest fires Act, an Act that had been developed in the 1950s and had been refined in 1982. And I understand that it shifts responsibility towards industrial and commercial developments. We're wanting to make sure that, as we engage in our discussion and analysis of this legislation, that we engage in full consultation with all those that are impacted by this legislation and ensure that they have been heard through the process of developing this Act. Because certainly it's an important Act in its purpose of protecting communities, business, economic enterprise, recreational opportunities all through our North.

We know as well that this government has rammed forward in far too many circumstances without listening to the voices of stakeholders, with those that know best on the ground, and have moved forward with their own agenda to the detriment of many. Far too often we see that in education, Mr. Speaker, and we're wanting to make sure that this legislation has been derived in a thoughtful way and an even-handed way with all those that could and would be impacted.

We know that it was just last spring that this government had pushed forward with changes on this front to *The Wildfire Act* and I guess who would pay the bill to pay for protection and to address wildfires. And there was a significant off-loading of costs onto rural municipalities contemplated at that time, something that our critic, the member from Saskatoon Nutana, spoke up at that point in time, and who had been listening directly to the rural municipalities who were sharing that they didn't feel it was appropriate to have this level of off-loading onto their ratepayers, onto their rural municipalities.

We agreed and we took up that cause. We worked with the rural municipalities, and the rural municipalities shared their voice. And I understand that this legislation that's now brought forward has addressed this in some way. We want to make sure, dealing with the rural municipalities, that that in fact is the case because we know for certain that downloading costs onto these municipalities, onto these communities, onto these ratepayers, taxpayers, families, and businesses simply isn't appropriate.

Looking at the minister's comments, or before I get into some of the minister's comments, certainly I would recognize that certainly the prevalence of wildfires is a cause for concern. We see that through right across North America really. We've seen that occur in Kelowna just a few years ago with hundreds of

homes that were impacted or destroyed. We saw that in Slave Lake a couple years ago. We see it in recent years in California.

And we know that we're not immune to these significant risks as well that cause significant challenge for communities. I believe it was 1999 that La Ronge was impacted in a significant way. And we need to make sure we're doing all we can as a province and that government's doing all they can to protect these communities, to mitigate risk, and to prevent, prevent fire but also to respond effectively in the case of fire.

And of course this is about protection of our timber assets. It's protection of the communities, protection of homes, business enterprises, mines, and operations of outfitters that exist right across the North. So we're going to be looking for clarity from this government as to who was engaged in the consultation towards this bill, and then we're going to be engaged with those stakeholders, those partners, to make sure that this legislation is as strong as it can be, that it's as effective as it can be.

When we look at some of the changes, we know that the minister's suggesting there's going to be changes to building construction measures in place as well as vegetation management to better enhance the potential of survivability of a wildfire. But there's nothing more said on that point, and we want to look to the minister to explain what specifically he's bringing forward on that front, potential range of costs and options on that front. And we want to understand from those throughout the vicinity of regions impacted by wildfires, primarily in through the North, what this means for them.

We understand that there is some updating of terminology in clarifying administrative responsibility, clarifying responsibility for wildfire and liability for causing wildfire, and defining ministry responsibility and liability. We want to make sure that this balance is struck in an appropriate way. We want to make sure that it balances the realities of I guess managing a sustainable environment in through the North and balancing the protection needed to homes and economic enterprise throughout the North.

I understand that this legislation shifts a responsibility on to provincial utilities, I suspect our provincial Crown corporations. We want to understand what the scope of that liability is from an actuarial perspective, what's the potential cost of that liability, and making sure that all are entering into this with eyes wide open just the same as where, when the minister's stating that he's putting a larger burden of responsibility or onus onto industry, that we want to make sure that that balance is an appropriate one. We want to make sure that they've been able to contribute and share their perspective as to, as I say, the actuarial value of that liability or the risk that's being discussed. Certainly we know that the wildfires themselves are a significant risk, when not addressed properly, to life, to families, to communities, and that's important. We also know that it can cause economic disruption — damage to property, damage to provincial assets, damage to municipal assets. And so ensuring a fair and just balance of responsibility is crucial in this area.

So this is a bill that is one that should not be rushed along. We need to make sure we're engaging all the stakeholders in this process. And certainly the broad platitudes of the minister

aren't going to be good enough to justify the significant change that's here. Certainly the points that he's made are valid points and points that in general we would concur in. But we need to know the detail and who's going to be bearing the cost and who's going to be bearing the risk, what this means for communities, what this means for commercial enterprise, what this means for industry, what this means for the provincial government and our Crown corporations.

We want to as well make sure we fully understand the wild land interface area, which I understand government is suggesting we'll continue to expand. That would make sense. But there's specific risks in that interface area and we want to make sure that government is doing all they can to effectively mitigate those risks. And that's where, on the front end of planning, there's some opportunities, from community design to building design to management of vegetation and all factors that can make it more likely for a community and for a home, for a business to survive a wildfire, but also make it less likely for wildfires to begin in the first place.

We look here as well . . . There's new changes being brought forward, I understand, with a greater emphasis on prevention and preparedness. As I've said, certainly we support those platitudes. What we want to see now is what the plan is, what the detail is, who's contributed to that, what it means for them. We also see that the, as I say, that we pushed . . . We as the official opposition listened and worked with the rural municipalities who made the case that they were being off-loaded onto in an unfair way. We made that case in this Legislative Assembly. It seems that there's recognition in this legislation now, a retreat from government on that heavy burden they were going to be placing onto rural municipalities, primarily rural municipalities in the forest fringe that were going to be impacted in a big way.

We now want to make sure that the way this legislation is built reflects that, and that there's not a way for the minister or government to skirt around that at a time of an emergency or time of need; there's not a quick or easy way for government to download costs onto municipalities as that government had planned to do just a few months ago. So we need to make sure that municipalities, particularly those forest fringe municipalities that are directly impacted by this legislation, we want to make sure that they are confident with the legislation that's brought forward and the protection it brings to them.

It says here, and I quote the minister:

It also provides assurance to all municipalities that the minister will determine if costs for firefighting assistance provided by the ministry constitute an excessive financial burden on a municipality.

So it seems to me that there's some statement that the ministry or government might step up if there's an excessive financial burden. My concern is that this seems to leave an awful lot of discretion up to the minister, that this isn't a very objective statement, that this is incredibly subjective and it leaves it possibly into the hands of government or the minister or the Premier to decide if there is an excessive cost for a rural municipality. And for that government that pushed forward changes just last spring that were going to be an excessive

burden onto rural municipalities, it may not be good enough for those municipalities now to hear from government that it's going to be the minister that's going to be determining in a subjective way what's excessive for their ratepayers or for their municipality.

I think that we'll be fleshing, calling that government out to flesh out the detail of that plan and laying out the detail and commitments to municipalities about what excessive cost is and just what kind of support is that government willing to provide. Because we know with the prevalence of wildfires we certainly cannot leave an undue, unfair burden on the backs of forest fringe communities and rural municipalities, ratepayers, and businesses. We need to go at this challenge in a fair and balanced way, and government has some rightful responsibility on this front, and responsibility that, with all due respect, Mr. Speaker, shouldn't be shirked onto the backs of municipalities and hard-working, taxpaying public within those respective regions.

So we'll continue to follow up on that front. That's been an important point. I certainly commend the member from Saskatoon Nutana for working together with RMs [rural municipality] in through the forest fringe region and through Prince Albert when they couldn't get any action from that government to hear the concerns, and to raise those concerns with government to push the unfair circumstance that was being pushed on to government. I think in many ways it's one of those examples again, Mr. Speaker, and I hate to say it, a reflection of a government that barely knows where the North is in this province and barely knows where the other half of the province is, Mr. Speaker.

And we see that just in the allocation of where the members opposite are from as it relates to cabinet. And you know, so it's . . . And I know that's a, that's a . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . One of the members is rather worked up there.

But it's of concern to northern communities in the central part of the province and all the way north that there's not a member from, barely a member from cabinet, member elected in that region in cabinet, and barely a voice. And of course we see it in this Assembly all the time where government dismisses the need for a second bridge in Prince Albert or dismisses the opportunities for economic development in the region or, as we're speaking about *The Wildfire Act* here, where that government was all too willing, all too willing to place a direct and heavy burden, a cost onto the backs of forest fringe municipalities in that region. So I know that that's a concern.

[19:45]

But we're willing to speak up for the North. We're willing to speak up for an entire province. We're willing to speak up for Prince Albert and the entire region. Certainly we will do so, as we have on this legislation. We'll continue those sort of consultations and making sure that we consult with all those members on the other half of the province, Mr. Speaker, that, as I say, I know that many question whether or not that government knows exists in many cases, Mr. Speaker.

But when we look to this piece of legislation, we see in many ways some refinements of legislation that certainly needed to be

refined. Certainly the principles and platitudes brought forward by the minister seem to be reasonable. Now we need to make sure that the balance is appropriate, that the plan respects the needs within communities, respects the challenges of the region, making sure it respects and has consulted with industry stakeholders. And that's the kind of consultation we'll be moving forward with, and we'll be seeking more detail from this government on this plan. But as it relates at this point in time to Bill No. 107, *The Wildfire Act*, I will adjourn debate. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 107, *The Wildfire Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 111

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 111 — *The Personal Care Homes Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join in on debate of Bill 111, *The Personal Care Homes Amendment Act, 2013*.

I guess initially I want to give some comments about showing what's going on for our seniors' care in this province and the lack of care for seniors in our province, the pioneers, you know, of the province. We talk about respect, and you're supposed to respect our elders and our seniors. And currently I'll be speaking about the bill and the amendments of the personal care home for seniors.

But, Mr. Speaker, to see some of the stories and some of the challenges families are facing when trying to place their loved one in long-term care . . . And I think about the North, and I look at the shortage and the critical code red, you know. If you look at the incidents of families trying to get their loved one in a long-term care facility, not just 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 30 minutes away from their community, but we're talking placing them, having to place them, you know, up to hours, somewhere from two, three, seven, eight hours, eleven hours away from their community.

What they're used to, our seniors are used to the culture. They're used to being around their community, their family. And sometimes you'll see the challenges. You see loved ones being sent away and not that the loved one wants to.

You know, we heard some of the stories. It was interesting, you know. I just want to give an example of La Ronge had a large meeting, a public meeting for long-term care, but to have one of the elders get up and talk about his family and his personal story he shared with the group. And you know, he talked about his loved one having to be sent away from La Ronge and area, and they had to go down south. Large family, but they couldn't all get down to see their mother or father, whichever one was in

the long-term care down south. And it was sad to listen to the story.

That elder, that community member, that grandma, that parent of that family made it very clear, it was heartbreaking to not be able to be there all the time. So certain family members could get down. Some couldn't get down to visit. We're talking about the care and understand the language which is, you know, they're very proud of the language and the culture and even if you look at the food that they're used to, as an elder who lives in the North. So when I listened to the story and we shared the story of the struggle that their loved one had, he said that it was tough on the whole family. It was tough on their mother.

But when they came back later on, years when their father needed long-term care, they happened to find, you know, under the NDP [New Democratic Party] they built the facility in La Ronge with 16 beds — 14 for long term care, 2 for respite. They got a chance to have their loved one there and to be with their loved one and making sure the family was close so they can go and visit at the hospital at the long-term care, to spend time and make sure that loved one wasn't left alone and isolated and feeling, you know, not within the culture.

So it was good. They could spare the time and show the love and the caring that that family member needed and that elder needed. And they did that. And he talked about that, the difference; he showed the difference. And he said it was sure tough, but it was nice having him at home, close to the community where, you know, they're with their family and loved ones, what they're used to. So these are some of the sad stories we're hearing. There's many more of them when you go into it.

But having said that, I just wanted to go back to talking about the good work that they're doing in La Ronge and area. And they're going to continue to work hard and try to make this government understand the needs.

It isn't that we're talking about replacing a facility for seniors. And we talk about seniors have so many challenges, and this government's not responding. And they're going to pay a price for that. You know, those seniors and families that are coming into this Legislative Assembly that are telling the stories, they're not making this up. There's no reason for them to make this up. It's their loved one. Their hearts are being torn by what they're having to deal with and watching their loved ones being in a facility.

And they're not saying that it isn't the staff that's there doing the good work. They say that. They are doing, the staff that's there is doing a great job. They're saying obviously there's a shortage of staff. There isn't someone to feed them, bath, toilet. You look at it and, you know, it's sad to see the challenges.

But having said that, I just want to give credit to the group in La Ronge for coming together. It's a large group, and they're doing their best for seniors' care. And we're going to make sure.

It isn't that we're trying to say, don't announce facilities or replace facilities that are there. And there may be challenges. I understand that. But we're talking about communities where we don't even have the proper number of facility, of beds. Like

we're talking, you know, going from 14 to 48. That to me, a code red. That's a shame. In 2009 a report came out that showed that. So it's about taking care of our seniors, making sure that they're a priority. And under this government it doesn't seem like they're a priority, and that's sad.

Now let's hope that group and everyone else and the good work that we can do in opposition to bring it to the government's attention as a priority to say, you have to make sure that you take care of the needs of our seniors all over the province. This is a province that we should be proud of. We talk about the growth and we hear that.

So when we talk about seniors and all the challenges, you know, here I want to show that personal story and some of the challenges that people in northern Saskatchewan and the rural areas. Yes, it's definitely there's struggles all over. We're hearing it. So having said that, I hope the government will look at those priorities and say, not only is it to replace existing facilities that maybe need . . . We don't have enough beds. Never mind. It's code red. It's been for four years. They've had years to address it and they haven't. We're hoping they will.

And we're hoping the good work of that committee will come together of community members, leader, whoever wants to sit on there to bring the cause forward and work with government in a meaningful way and show them the need is there through the Croft report, working with the health region, working with the leaders, working with community members, working with families to say, let's work together. Let's do what's right for northern residents. Let's make sure what's right for Saskatchewan seniors.

So I want to get into, you know, the bill and talk about seniors' care. And we see that. We see all over there's a need. And yes, there are . . . [inaudible] . . . Some people will look at going in a personal care home. You might put your loved one in there. But you want to make sure that your loved one is being taken care of. There's nothing more that we want for our loved ones, whether it's our mom or dad or grandparents, you know, whether . . . It doesn't matter who you are. When it comes to seniors we want that. And we want to make sure seniors are taken care of.

And they have a right, you know. They've done the hard work. Many of them are veterans. Many of them are, you know. They did the hard work. They're the entrepreneurs. They're the individuals that put the tough job in, the tough work. They worked the land. They worked the farms. They did the hard work that was asked of them to do. They didn't complain about it. They did it.

But they came back and, you know, they get older, and they're ready to retire. And they go through a process, and they think their government will take care of them. They know their family will do their best to take care of them and advocate for them, will bring forward . . . But they want their government to do that.

And you talk about economy. And you know, we talk about the growth and all the good things in the province. And we're happy for that, and so are Saskatchewan people. They're all saying that. It's good. Right on. But when you see the

challenges that our seniors are faced with, and you see some of the conditions. And we talk about the inspections, and you talk about our personal care homes and the reports that have gone on, and they look at the facilities. And now they come back, and they're talking about the challenges at some of the care homes.

So now they're going to try to improve accountability. They're going to make sure before they get licensed they're going to have to meet certain standards. Well you would've thought that would've happened before. But they're talking about making it public so that if you are in a position where you can afford a personal care home or if that's the only place you have because in your community you do not have a provincially funded long-term care facility, then you go. And the minister talked about that in his, you know, when he talks in second response to the bill, second reading. He talks about that.

You know, I want to make it clear. They're different. Personal care homes are different than . . . You know what? Yes, they might be different because one is funded by government, run by a hospital, and people refer to them as your government care home versus the private. And people see that. And the minister wants to make note of that, that they're different. Well yes they are, but they're having many problems.

Seniors are having the problems. Families are dealing with it. That's who's dealing with it. They're making sure that they're there, making sure their loved ones are getting fed, that they're getting to the toilet, that they don't have to lay in bed. Those are the challenges. When you have to deal with a loved one who's in that situation, you want to make sure they're fed. They don't want a cold meal, you know. And families are going through that right now in this province. They're struggling with that. So they want what's best for their loved one. And we don't see some of the situations going on.

And the government's saying, well we're going to allow maybe with the provision and this amendment and the Act to actually have it, the report, put on public or notice so they're posted somewhere. So if you're looking at different care homes, personal care homes, you can look at one and say, well the report . . . And you can look and see, how is this personal care home doing? How have the reports been in the last three, five years? So you can look at it and see what kind of care, what were the challenges when the inspections were done? Were there any incidents or issues that needed to be cleared up? So they can look at that as families when they're making that decision about a personal care home for their loved one. A government agency that does the inspections can make sure that they're doing the work that they have to do so the families can make those choices.

And that's important, and that's a good start. Right there is a good start. And no one's going to say that it's not going to be. It is. It gives a person, when you're looking at personal care homes . . . Well what's this one rated? I'll be honest with you; if I see one that's struggling in a report, I definitely don't want my mother, my grandma and grandpa in there. I wouldn't want to put them in a care home that's not taking and doing the best care. And if there's challenges that need to be addressed, it's good to know that. And I think it's important.

And I think we owe that to Saskatchewan people. We owe that

to our seniors, to do what's best for them. They have done the hard job. They did the work that we've asked them to do. They've done their part. The family's doing their part. The workers in long-term are doing their part. It's time for the government to do their part. And they have an obligation here as well to take care of our seniors, especially when a province is doing as well as our province is doing and we talk about.

And it's fine. You know, if they want to pat themselves on the back for everything and take all the credit for the province, the way it's doing, that's fine. Pat yourselves on the back all you want. But when you see seniors struggling and families struggling and there're heartbreaking stories of what's going on in this province, and our seniors expect better, then, you know, when you correct those problems, then give yourselves a pat on the back. Deal with that issue first, and let's deal with that our seniors are important to us.

We care about them. We want to make sure that they have a place to go and it's close to their community. And it should be in their community. And we have areas where, you know, they're dealing with the challenges. And I, you know, we talk about the staffing, front-line, and is staff an issue? We're hearing a lot of that is staffing when you hear families' stories talk about the staffing. And they're covering up those areas.

So when we talk about these amendments, will that improve the personal care home? I don't know that it will. But at least it'll show families they can look at it. Will it give them more staffing? Well government will say, well it's different. It was a provincially funded one. It's different. So we'll have to look at that, Mr. Speaker.

But I want to make it clear, you know, we have an obligation. All of us do in this legislative . . . We have an obligation to our seniors as well as our children, our working families, the people of this province, to take care. And we need to do a better job as a government.

And before anyone gives themselves a pat on the back, they should be dealing with those issues throughout this province. Then when we've dealt with the chance . . . When we've given people a fair opportunity, a job, a fair opportunity at training, fair opportunity at being a respected elder, senior giving the quality of life they deserve, then give yourselves a pat. All of us give yourselves a pat on the back when that happens. But until that day happens, don't be patting yourselves on the backs because I'll tell you, you don't deserve it. There's a lot of work that needs to be done. You keep saying that. We hear that. Well it's time for action because our seniors deserve better in this province.

And, Mr. Speaker, at this point I know the provisions are in here. My colleagues will want to have more conversations about it, but at this time I'm prepared to adjourn debate on the bill.

[20:00]

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 111, *The Personal Care Homes Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 108

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Doherty that **Bill No. 108** — *The Athletics Commission Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter discussion as it relates to Bill No. 108, *The Athletics Commission Act*, an Act respecting the Athletics Commission, professional boxing, mixed martial arts contests, and exhibitions.

This Act itself works to enable the establishment of an athletics commission that would have the authority to sanction professional combative sports including mixed martial arts. This move follows a move by the House of Commons that passed a bill in June legalizing contact sports such as mixed martial arts. And this legislation makes professional boxing and MMA [mixed martial arts] contests legal in Canada when they have the authorization of a provincial athletics commission.

I understand that this piece of legislation and the establishment of an athletics commission was called for by the cities' mayors caucus across the province, also called for by the city of Saskatoon. Certainly we recognize that this would leave opportunities for many other sports to sanction and compete, to hold events, bring together athletes, bring together communities, and bring together new sporting opportunities.

In looking at the bill, it seems that the proposed commission would consist of five people: an athletics commissioner — I believe appointed by that government; we'll seek some further clarification from that government at committee on that front — and an advisory committee comprised of three subject matter experts, as well as an adjudicator. So we'll be seeking further information, more detail on that front.

The commission itself I understand would be in charge of approving events for the province and would also be responsible for making sure that competitors participate in appropriate pre- and post-fight medical exams, and that would include, as I understand, eye tests and blood tests. And certainly all of those provisions provide a level of confidence, from my perspective, that these are actions that are there to provide some concern and some regard for the safety of the participants as well.

And certainly that's what the goal of legislation like this should be aimed towards: making sure that the proper protections are in place; the organization of events; the athletes themselves, making sure that they are in appropriate and fair condition to compete; making sure that there's safety provisions in place; making sure there's proper regulation and oversight of an event; making sure that the appropriate medical staff that should be retained for an event are retained for an event; and making sure that the consequences of the event are contemplated and that risks are mitigated.

Certainly we understand that other provinces have made changes on these fronts. They've started or have developed sporting commissions on these fronts for this very purpose. Certainly we want to ensure what . . . and learn from government what they've learned from other jurisdictions. We know that some municipalities have taken this space. We'd call on government to provide what experiences they've learned from those municipalities.

Of course we want to ensure that it's understood who's liable from a financial perspective for potential injury or damage as a result of one of these events. And what role does the province have in that? Who's financially liable and responsible? So those are questions for government and just questions that we'll certainly flesh out around the safety of the participants, of the athletes.

Certainly we recognize that many of these sports, whether it's karate or whether it's different martial arts or different mixed martial arts, we need to make sure that we're providing opportunities for our athletes but also protecting them. And I believe that's the purpose of this legislation. Certainly it will or could provide good opportunities for communities and for athletes to come together. It could provide some economic opportunities within a region. But we do need to make sure that this is done in a way that's going to be safe and going to protect participants and really, as I say, contemplate all of the consequences.

Certainly worth this . . . The benefit of this legislation is that it would provide a body to be providing some of these considerations and then approval potentially of certain events or sanctioning of events. And that certainly could add a level of safety to these events where currently those events may be illegal, where they may be non-sanctioned, where they may be quite dangerous. So we certainly need to recognize the I guess evolving world of sport and making sure that we as a jurisdiction keep pace and that in doing so we're protecting those participants, those exceptional athletes across our province.

So as we move forward as the official opposition, we'll be consulting with all those impacted. We'll be seeking from government some detail on their plan. We'll be seeking a list of who's been consulted to date and the various consequences and concerns that may have been shared to date. But on the whole we look forward to that discussion. I think there's a lot of promise in the opportunities of sanctioning these events and bringing a level of safety and protection to participants in doing so and creating good opportunities for those that want to come together in these sorts of events.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I don't have much else to say at this point in time as it relates to Bill No. 108, *The Athletics Commission Act*, and I'll adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 108, *The Athletics Commission Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 102

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 102 — *The Builders' Lien Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I was very much looking forward to joining the debate tonight on *The Builders' Lien Act*. I was interested to see what ways this government was seeking to introduce lean management techniques into the whole concept of building. Then upon listening to the second reading speech from the minister and looking over the legislation, it becomes apparent that lean management is not in fact part of this.

But *The Builders' Lien Amendment Act, 2013*, again in terms of keeping up with the provisions, the safeguards that are there for not just the construction industry itself but for certainly people that are getting homes built for them or properties, or pardon me, getting some construction built for them, it's important to make sure that we've got legislation that's keeping up with the times and certainly, looking over the minister's remarks, in terms of the balance that this attempts to strike between the rights and obligations of landowners and the building trades and the professions that assist in construction projects.

Again we think that's, on the face of it, a reasonable balance to be seeking in terms of the protections that are offered through the Act being available to the trades and the professions that perform the services included under the definition of improvement or improvement holdings or construction, the services of a land surveyor such as the preparation of a survey plan and the placement of boundary markers in describing what happens with land surveyors often working alongside other tradespeople, and professionals that perform the services that are recognized as improvements under the Act such as architects and engineers. Again, refining and amending the definition of improvement to provide that land surveyors and professional surveyors can utilize the process under the Act to recover unpaid fees for their services.

Again, Mr. Speaker, as these processes evolve and experience accrues, again it's certainly right that we entertain a bill such as this here today.

Again when the minister introduced the bill talking about increasing the limitation period applicable to trust claims from one to two years:

The Act currently provides that a trustee is discharged from its obligations on the expiry of one year after the contract is completed or abandoned. The limitation period is at odds with the general two-year limitation period in *The Limitations Act*. Additionally it often catches claimants by surprise, as a trust claim is usually brought at the same time as a lien claim, to which a two-year limitation period applies.

Again, Mr. Speaker, bringing it in line with *The Limitations Act*, again that's fine and good providing for proper discharging

of trustees. Again, fine and good.

And then the Bill updates:

. . . the section in the Act that determines when a contract is deemed to be complete. The current wording of the Act provides that a contract is deemed to be complete when the price of completion is not more than 1 per cent of the contract price or \$1,000, whichever is less. The reference to \$1,000, which was established in 1986, no longer reflects current construction costs. By repealing the \$1,000 figure, a contract will deem to be complete when the price of completion is not more than 1 per cent of the contract price. This is viewed as a flexible benchmark that will adjust automatically with the scale of construction projects.

Again, Mr. Speaker, a fairly reasonable suggestion on the face of it, and we'll be very interested to see, perhaps in committee find this out from the minister, what they project the volume of this, of these dollars involved will be, whether or not it will be that much more than \$1,000, what sort of dollar figures they think will be involved.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it's important to have these provisions there and to maintain that balance between both the people doing the construction and the various services that are brought to bear on a given construction project and the people that are buying the service or buying the work, paying for the work, and making sure that that balance is there; making sure that your safeguards are keeping up with the times, again modernizing and refining the definitions and the recognitions entailed in the Act. Again we were glad to see the land surveyors join us here at the legislature last week to better acquaint members of the legislature with the work land surveyors are doing and how they are impacted by this particular Act.

But again, Mr. Speaker, as different of my colleagues have said and as I've said myself concerning the legislation, this one's not just . . . This is fair enough legislation. It's good legislation in and of itself but definitely seems to fall under the heading of housekeeping, although in this one it would perhaps fall under the heading of home construction and then some housekeeping on top of that. But this is a fairly fine piece of legislation in and of itself. But in terms of the legislative agenda as a whole, you know, it's nothing against the Uniform Law Conference, Mr. Speaker, but again it sort of points to the housekeeping nature of this legislation.

All that being said, we'll be interested to see what sort of consultation has taken place on this, what sort of work has been done with the surveyors, what sort of work has been done with the architects, what sort of work has been done with the construction and trades generally, and what sort of cause is there evident around actions that have been moved under the existing legislation and how that is perceived to be impacted by the proposed amendments here today.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, we've got certainly a little more consideration to undertake. We're not going to be sending it off to committee tonight, no matter how much they try to lean on us, Mr. Speaker. But this one we'll consider a bit more. I know that I've got other of my colleagues that would like to participate in the debate on it at this stage and with that I would

move adjournment of Bill No. 102, *The Builders' Lien Amendment Act, 2013*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 102, *The Builders' Lien Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[20:15]

Bill No. 103

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 103** — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, and I'm pleased to wade into the debate tonight on this bill, Bill 103, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013*.

This is yet again another example of the housekeeping order of bills that we're seeing a lot of in this session. And this is one that comes from the maintenance enforcement office, Mr. Speaker, who have requested some updates to the legislation that it's responsible to. And there's one particular . . . There's one piece that's being offered in this bill at the request of the maintenance enforcement office, and I'll get into that in a couple of seconds.

But just to give a word of thanks and support to the work that's done, this is a very important office here in Saskatchewan that helps a lot of people in some pretty dire circumstances. And we know that, I think it was introduced in 1986 when this type of measure started coming into legislatures across Canada. And until that time there were a lot of parents, single parents who were left with the sole financial responsibility of looking after their children, and there were parents who were not meeting their responsibilities. So this is a way for government to assist those parents who are raising the children, to ensure that the other parent is helping as they should be, as much as they can.

So there's a number of tools right now that the director of the office could put on a non-paying parent. There's things like garnishment on their wages or other income, which is a huge support for those parents that are needing the support. They can suspend a driver's licence. You can apply for a denial of federal licences and a number of other things.

The tool that's being added to the toolkit, to the office today or being proposed under this amendment, it's an interesting one, Mr. Speaker. And I'm not sure of its applicability to a large majority of the parents who aren't making their obligations to their children, but it's an interesting one. And what's being proposed here is that the minister responsible, the director of the maintenance enforcement office, can direct ministers to prohibit

hunting or angling licences from being issued.

So we're talking about taking away the ability of these deadbeat parents to get an angling licence or a hunting licence. And again, I'm not sure how many of these parents are actually ones that use this type of service and actually get hunting licences or angling licences, but it is a tool I guess that the maintenance enforcement office feels that might help them in providing the services and the supports to the single parents that they are working with, where parents are refusing to pay timely payment for the support of their children.

So it's an interesting one. The one issue I think, and I'm not sure how far this has been canvassed by the minister or his staff, is the impact of this type of legislation on treaty First Nations who exercise their rights to hunt and fish in the treaty areas in northern Saskatchewan, particularly Treaty 10, Treaty 6 to a certain extent . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . And yes, the member opposite is quite correct in saying that they require a licence in order to exercise those rights, or that they don't if they're on-reserve. My understanding, if they're on-reserve they don't require a licence, but if they're off-reserve . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Okay, then the news report that I read was misleading in that sense. So I thank the members opposite for the clarification on that.

Certainly there would be concerns if First Nations weren't able to exercise their treaty rights. But I'm assured by the members opposite that that's not the case, so no consultation would be required for this one if they're not required to get licences. If they are required to get licences outside their treaty area, that might be another issue, but apparently that's not the case either in Saskatchewan. So that would be the one concern that would need to be attended to.

So in terms of the actual changes themselves, it's pretty straightforward. We have — first of all because these two types of licences are managed by other ministers; in this case I think it's the Minister of Environment for both angling and hunting licences — there has to be a change in the definition of minister under this Act because obviously in those sections where we're including hunting and angling licences, there is another minister that's being referred to. So that's the first change that's made is the definition of a minister, which basically adds an exception to the new sections that deal with the licensing for angling and hunting.

Then they go on to add, well a whole new subsection 43.01. And under 43.01 there's a few definitions of licence and then the minister that's responsible for those licences. And then 43.01(2) provides that the director can apply . . . This is interesting, we have a director that tells a minister what to do. So that's an interesting opportunity for a director of an office in the Government of Saskatchewan. And so what they will be able to do is direct the minister to not issue those licences. And it seems like a very straightforward tool, and it's something I think that will be effective on those individuals for whom angling licences and hunting licences are of particular importance.

Again I'm not sure and we weren't provided any indication by the minister in terms of how many of these deadbeat parents are going to be impacted by this enforcement tool. But I think any

tool that helps . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . That's exactly, the member opposite is thinking what I'm thinking. We're not sure how many of them are fishers and hunters, but if there are a few of them and that helps the parents that are looking after the children, then so be it. I think that's something that would be helpful.

So we know that section 43 changes, talks about the hunting licences, and that's under *The Wildlife Act*. So when these amendments to *The Wildlife Act*, angling licences of course, Mr. Speaker, are managed pursuant to the fisheries Act, so there we would need an amendment to the fisheries Act as well.

So I think these are pretty straightforward changes, as I indicated earlier. This is a review by the maintenance enforcement office and a request on their part that the government consider these changes — straightforward small change to an effective piece of legislation. And as such I don't think that there's any particular concerns. But we will look forward to hearing from the public and especially from First Nations whether it will have any impact on them and then take it forward from there, Mr. Speaker.

So I'm sure that many of my colleagues are going to want to comment on this bill at some point as well. And at this point, I would like to adjourn the debate on Bill 103, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 103, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 104

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 104 — *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Consequential Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I indicated in my comments recently on the previous bill, there will be some changes required, consequential amendments to the fisheries Act in order to ensure that *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act* is kosher and in proper order.

So there's a change being proposed here to the fisheries Act that indicates that the minister . . . It's a new section, new section 27.1 that says:

The minister shall prohibit a person from applying for or obtaining a licence if the Director of Maintenance Enforcement has directed the minister to suspend the person's ability to secure a licence pursuant to . . . [the proposed] 43.04(2) of *The Enforcement of Maintenance*

Orders Act, 1997.

So that seems entirely in order, and again this is another example of the housekeeping sort of bills that are being proposed. So at this point, I will move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 104, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Consequential Amendment Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 104, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Consequential Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 105

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 105 — *The Informal Public Appeals Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to enter into discussion as it relates to Bill No. 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act*.

The changes that are brought forward seem to make some sense, Mr. Speaker. We certainly do look forward to getting some of the detail from the minister in committee. Certainly I would like to put on the record of course something that we all know well, and that's the spirit of Saskatchewan people and the ability of Saskatchewan people and communities and families to rally together and support one another and support neighbours. We know this in our pioneering history, and we know this to be the case here today.

And that's very much what this bill is all about. This is those spontaneous fundraising efforts that pop up within a community or because of a pressure or strain or need that's placed on someone within the community or a neighbour or sometimes because of flood or fire. And it's those local efforts that come together to raise some dollars for a very specific need in an informal way.

And I know many of us would be quite familiar with these sorts of efforts. I know on a weekly basis I probably attend one or two of these spontaneous fundraising events, where there's sometimes a steak night or other times they're coming together, sharing some food and raising some dollars for someone that's dealing with a traumatic challenge in their life, sometimes by way of health and loss and strain within their own life, other times as I say because of fire or costs that they're incurring that simply they can't manage.

So legislation on this front may seem to make sense. What I want to get from the minister is, what are some of the circumstances and challenges that have arisen that make this bill necessary? So we'll be looking for some of those cases. What are the specifics that have driven the need for this legislation? Certainly it seems to be reasonable legislation.

We do want to make sure though that there's not undue hurdles or undue red tape placed upon the spontaneous efforts and goodwill of Saskatchewan people and communities. That being said, the minister seems to reflect some concern in that regard and seems to be working to establish a piece of legislation that reflects those challenges.

I understand that the minister's made some commitments to ensure that this is user-friendly legislation, ensuring that there are tools available in the community, possibly through financial institutions or lenders in community locations, so that those engaging in these spontaneous, informal fundraising efforts are able to have some structure that will assist them. That seems to make sense.

I understand that part of the legislation relates to the disposal . . . of a disposal mechanism of funds that are held in trust, if you will, Mr. Speaker. And that seems to make sense as well. But certainly we're looking forward to ensuring that the legislation that's being brought forward is flexible enough to meet the needs of communities and families engaged in these efforts. And we want to just get further detail about the trustees and duties of trustees and the responsibilities and the authorities as it relates to governance of these funds or disposal of these funds, application of this legislation, and so on.

So we'll continue to do some consultation on this front. We look forward to putting some questions to the minister, seeking some answers, moving forward. Certainly I just want to, you know, reflect that we recognize that it's in the Saskatchewan DNA, the Saskatchewan spirit to help out when challenges exist for a fellow neighbour, for family, for a community. We see those stories within our own lives. We see those in our neighbourhoods. We see those across our province.

And certainly we want to make sure that we're enabling those opportunities moving forward, of course making sure that where there's government's responsibility to step up to the plate, that government takes that responsibility, that certainly we . . . But where there's needs for people to step up and support one another, that they're able to do so and not encumbered by legislation that isn't, I guess, doesn't reflect their needs.

But it seems that the minister's looking at that balance and aiming to ensure just that. But we'll engage in consultation moving forward, and we'll look forward to questions with the minister. At this point in time, I would adjourn debate as it relates to Bill No. 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate of Bill No. 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[20:30]

Bill No. 106

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 106 — *The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into the debate on Bill No. 106, *An Act to Amend the Legal Profession Act, 1990*. And it sounds like there's some common sense points in this. Again, the question is around the consultation. We'll have to get on . . . talk to some of the folks about, does this meet the needs of the public?

And the reason I ask that, the reason I ask that — Mr. Speaker, there is a reason — is because the new section 3.2. Section 3.2 is very important — the protection of the public. So it's ironic that they didn't do any public consultations when they're protecting the public.

And in fact, it says:

3.2 In any exercise of the society's powers or discharge of its responsibilities or in any proceeding pursuant to this Act, the protection of the public and ethical and competent practice take priority over the interests of the member.

And the member, of course, I assume is the lawyer. So I'm wondering what public consultations they've done about this because if the public take priority, then were they consulted on this? It would only make logical sense that they do that but I don't know.

Now I'm hearing I should read the Act. I should read the Act. It's very encouraging. We should read the Act. I wonder if that's what the minister says to anybody in the public when they come in. When they walk in the door: have you read the Act? Have you read the Act? You know, I've got to tell you, we've got to be more friendly to the public here, Mr. Speaker, more friendly to the public. No setting up those barriers like, have you done your homework? Have you done your homework?

Mr. Speaker, I have done my homework and I have seen this and I do have questions . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . But now the Minister of Education, I do have something to say to the Minister of Education about this. I do have something to say. I have something to say here, Mr. Speaker, and what I want to say is I find it somewhat ironic that they are doing an amendment to the Law Society or *The Legal Profession Act*. Now have they consulted with, say, the dentists or the teachers or the social workers? Any professional organization?

Because that's what they're doing to the teachers, Mr. Speaker, when they talk about the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] Act and the disciplinary Act. They've gone out and they've got a medical doctor to review the teachers' Act. And so, Mr. Speaker, I find it ironic and I think it is interesting that the member who is the Minister of Education is a lawyer by trade and understands probably much better *The Legal Profession Act* than I do. But I find that in this day and age . . . And we've seen it in *The StarPhoenix* and the *Leader-Post* in June about the need to keep the teachers' Act current and how are their disciplinary procedures the best that they can be and how they went out of the usual process of doing this in terms of consultation with the teachers and government and the public

about how we can improve that or is it working or is it not working.

But in this case we're just going to the Law Society for their recommendations. So I'm thinking, this is a very good example of how we should cast the net further and seek opinions about how is this working when lawyers aren't up to snuff. And so how are we going to do that and does this meet the standard? Now maybe the Law Society's already done that. I don't know if they did that. And maybe they've passed the test that the minister has set out and say, this is the bar. This is what we want you to demonstrate. This is how we will have confidence in the lawyers that work in the province and that they are up, that they will live up to section 3.2, and that "... the protection of the public and the ethical and competent practice takes priorities over the interests of the member." So we'll have lots of questions about, what does that mean in reality? I mean have they ... How do they actually carry that out in their day-to-day business?

Now there are, and I would just take a minute to review this, five, I think there's five points the minister has set out that there's first, the reasons for this Act and he talks about the course, request of the Law Society providing "... provision clarifying that in regulating the profession, the public interest is paramount over the interests of the members being disciplined."

Second, the society will be given more control over the number of elected members to accommodate demographic changes and improve governance. Now what I understand, Mr. Speaker, is that there was set out apparently in legislation percentage that are from Saskatoon and so many from Regina, and they're going to allow that to be more flexible. And that sounds reasonable. It would be interesting to see how that plays out over the course of the years. And will we be back changing that? And I think that will be interesting.

As well, "... the ability to recruit persons who are not members of council or lawyers to assist with investigations and hearings." And that will be interesting to see who those folks are and how they carry out these investigations and hearings and what the process is and, of course, I do want to ... Because we've talked and I've raised the issue of other professions and how they carry out their disciplinary processes, and we do hear in the press about lawyers who've gone astray and how some of the consequences are. I don't know if that's a consistent practice or is that only in high-profile cases. So this will be interesting for us to ask in committee. Is this a typical process or is this just a, you know, the exception? Is it the exception? I don't know.

So will they do something to increase the public profile of these proceedings? Because that's what they're asking in other professions, that they become much more public, and it seems that's what this government is intent on doing for some professions. And so is this what's going to happen right across the board? And if not, why not? And if so, how's it going to work?

It talks about time limits being removed, so more flexibility. And hopefully that's fair enough. I'm not sure if that's a good thing or what, but we'll see. And it talked about the Law Foundation and the increase in the statutory exemption from

liability for good faith decisions being extended so that so they can help encourage volunteers to undertake this worthwhile activity.

So there's lots here. There's lots here, Mr. Speaker, and we'll have a lot more to talk about. I know that my colleagues will want to talk about this.

But as I said that it is interesting, this new section 3.2 and what that means and what that will mean in reality. I mean it's one thing to say it but it's another thing to do it, and another thing to see that the public actually feels that that's the case when there are disciplinary hearings and proceedings within a profession, that the public interest takes priority over those interests of the member. What does that really mean? And so we'll be looking forward to have that conversation in committee.

And again, you know, as I conclude my remarks, it's always a question about consultations. You know, who have they consulted with and what were the comments made? Was there anything left on the table? Who else would have an opinion about this kind of thing?

And you know, I did talk about how were the public ... why that comment was made about public interest versus the member's interest. Have there been examples of where the member's interests have taken priority over the public interest, and what was the outcome of that? Or is this just something that seems to be missing in the Act and is a good idea?

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know many of my colleagues will have comments to make in the second round, second debates, and then questions to follow. But at this point, I'd like to move adjournment of Bill No. 106, *An Act to amend The Legal Profession Act, 1990*. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 106, *The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 113

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 113** — *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 modifiant la Loi de 2002 sur les procurations* be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Glad to join the debate tonight on Bill No. 113, *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013*. Again, Mr. Speaker, this one may be from the Uniform Law Conference Christmas wish list, perhaps. Perhaps not. But it again would seem to be, on the face of it, make some useful clarifications in terms of the powers that are there under the existing legislation.

The minister described it as a response to recent consultations respecting vulnerable adults. It would be interesting to know,

Mr. Speaker, if this emerged from individuals that are on trusteeship or are under the powers of the Public Guardian or whether or not it came from the other side of the equation, but I'm sure we'll have some greater insight on that in committee.

Of the matters being clarified under the legislation regards the enduring power of attorney's authority to make gifts from an adult's property being clarified in the bill, there are three circumstances outlined as part of the clarification. First, if the document creating the power of attorney specifically authorized the making of gifts. Secondly, if an amount not to exceed the value prescribed in the regulations and if there are sufficient funds to make the gift and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the adult would have made the gift if he or she had that capacity. And third and finally, if the court authorizes the gift.

The bill sets up, or will allow regulations to set up a fee schedule for someone acting under a power of attorney. It will give new powers to the Public Guardian and Trustee to carry out investigations to ensure the accuracy of an accounting via . . . Regulations will prescribe the form of an accounting. For mid-term accounting, the court is given the power to remove an attorney if the accounting is not satisfactory. A final accounting will occur at the conclusion of the attorney's powers, such as when the donor dies, a property guardian is appointed, or the court removes that attorney. And a final accounting, again referring to the minister's second reading speech, a final accounting being provided within six months, and the bill directs to whom the accounting is provided and gives the court the power to order an accounting if it is not voluntarily provided.

Again, Mr. Speaker, as the minister states in the second reading speech, these improvements seek to provide protection or better the protection of vulnerable adults who have given power of attorney. So if this does indeed improve the situation for seniors who are under the power of attorney legislation, if it does improve the lot of those vulnerable adults under the auspices of the Public Guardian and Trustee, then this would be a good piece of legislation.

Again not exactly earth-shattering on the face of it, but for those individuals who are subject to the circumstances outlined in this legislation. It'll be interesting to see the kind of examples that again brings this legislation forward, whether or not it comes from one side or the other or both in terms of the authority equation outlined in this legislation.

And with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that other of my colleagues have contributions they'd like to make in this debate. I know that we'll have further questions when this bill arrives at committee, and we know that we have questions and consultation that we'd like to do on this piece of legislation with interested stakeholders. But with that, Mr. Speaker, I'd move adjournment of Bill No. 113, *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate of Bill No. 113, *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

[20:45]

Bill No. 114

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 114 — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into a discussion as it relates to Bill No. 114, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Amendment Act, 2013*. This Act is directly related to seniors and seniors in care. And just on that front, there's few things that are more important. This is one of the most important things that a government provides to its citizens, that being seniors' care.

And if we look at the context of seniors' care in Saskatchewan right now, we know of the crisis that's occurring under this government. We know the strain. We know the horror stories that we're receiving; the call bells that are going unanswered; individuals and seniors or pioneers of our province that have been left on toilets for hours; seniors that are woken up I understand as early as 5 in the morning; and the lack of space, dignified space for our seniors who quite simply deserve better.

And we know seniors deserve much better than this. We've been pressing this government to wake up to the reality and the crisis within seniors' care and to start to take it seriously. And we'll continue to do so.

But that's the context for seniors' care in this province right now as it relates to the legislation that's brought forward. The minister suggests that there's been significant consultation that has occurred with individuals and groups. We'll be following up on that, both directly with the minister for a list of those that have been consulted, also their perspective that they've shared. And we'll be following up directly with those stakeholders — those in seniors' care; those in health care; those advocacy groups dealing with seniors and those with mental health and individuals, persons with disabilities — all those groups and individuals that certainly have on-the-ground, first-hand knowledge of what does some of these changes mean.

I understand that this legislation fills some gaps that exist in designation of duties and responsibilities, and that this brings forward an opportunity for individuals to give advanced health care directives, to choose a person known as a . . . sorry, give advanced health care directives in the event that down the road they might not be in a position to do so, or also gives them the opportunity to choose a person known as a proxy to make health care decisions on their behalf.

I understand the minister's identified that this fills a few different gaps, which certainly seemed to make sense that they need to be addressed. It says that the first gap is the day-to-day decisions, if you will, Mr. Speaker. And those are decisions where seniors are in care, and who has duties and

responsibilities to make those decisions around things possibly like dental work? We are interested in ensuring that there's clarity as to what constitutes day-to-day decisions. And certainly that's going to be important to be clear to the public and to be built out of consultation with the public as well.

We also want to recognize that there's another gap here, and that's decisions around admitting a person to care or accepting placement. These are important decisions, and I understand that there's currently not clear legislation as to who would have authority in these situations. And certainly this Act seems to step up to address that. And as I see the way it's brought forward, I believe that the following could make decisions and in this order. A personal guardian would be the first and primary place decision maker. Then there'd be the proxy that would be designated by the individual. Then it would move on to a nearest relative and, in a final scenario, would be to treatment providers. So we'll follow up with some consultation on this. Certainly that order seems to make some sense.

We are dealing with individuals that have contributed to our province throughout their entire lives, in many cases pioneers of our province and communities, and are at a stage of their life where certainly they deserve dignity, deserve care. And these are difficult times for a senior and for a family member, family members who are observing a loved one going through these scenarios.

The last gap or the final amendment would address power of attorneys or a power of attorney. And certainly we'll be pressing the minister for a bit of clarity on that front as well. But certainly the three gaps that are identified seem to make sense. We will be looking for detail and clarity on day-to-day activities. We will be looking for all regulation and clarity to be built out in consultation with seniors.

And as I said when I started this address, Mr. Speaker, quite simply there's few jobs more important than ensuring the seniors of this province the dignity of care that they deserve. This Act itself seems to come from a common sense perspective. We'll be reviewing it. But what we know outside of this Act and as it relates more to the Health minister's responsibilities is that seniors' care is in crisis in this province, that seniors aren't being treated with the dignity they deserve, and that we, the official opposition, are going to continue to push for better for our seniors in this province.

But as it relates to Bill No. 114, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Amendment Act, 2013*, I'll adjourn debate at this point.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 114, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 115

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed

motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 115 — *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to enter into this debate on Bill No. 115, *An Act to amend The Public Guardian and Trustee Act, to repeal The Mentally Disordered Persons Act and to make a related amendment to another Act*. That Act is in the bill.

I think this is a very important piece of legislation. Interestingly the minister did not refer to who they consulted in the development of this Act in his remarks. Other times they would be very proud of who they consulted with, but in this case it sounds like they didn't consult with anybody really, to be quite frank. So that will be one of our questions, and clearly we'll be out asking people, particularly seniors' organizations, what they feel about this.

Of course there is the language modernization, and it's always a good thing to make sure the language is appropriate. But we do have some questions about making sure that this kind of work around Public Guardian and Trustee is the right fix. It's important that we don't go too far too quick. But at the same time, I have to tell you that even within my own riding in the last month or so this has become a bit of an issue, the Public Guardian, and something I wasn't aware of before, but I think as our society ages that this will be something that will become more and more an issue. Our society is aging, but as well some seniors, unfortunately, as young people move away — they may be in other provinces, other cities in the province — seniors don't have anyone really close at hand. And this becomes a situation that causes a lot of problems.

And so while it's difficult to really comment specifically on specific parts because I think you need to have that medical background — I'm looking at certificates re in-patient, certificates re other patients, other persons, you know, when we're dealing with psychiatrists, that type of thing, physicians — I think it would be very interesting, well it is going to be interesting for us to get some feedback from the medical profession, the seniors, that type of thing, about how this . . . Is this a good piece of legislation? How does it compare to other provinces?

As I said, this is one . . . It is interesting there were no comments whether this is something from the law society or the national organization that we often hear from. And so that leaves us wondering, where did this come from and what kind of background does this come from? Now if it is coming from the Public Guardian here in the province, that would be as well good to know in terms of that background because clearly that part of government has a lot of experience, and we value that. And if they're feeling this is the kind of stuff that we need to have, then fair enough. But we need to have that, and we'll have many more questions about that. It is important that we have that accountability.

But clearly as I said, it's always good to have a debate around this. And I'm looking forward to this for sure because, as I said, it's becoming more and more of an issue. And I think as MLAs

[Member of the Legislative Assembly], when we have to go out and explain what does the Public Guardian do or what does the trustee do, we need to be able to do that, and I think that's an area that we can all polish up a bit on.

So I think this is an important area around seniors and others who have come to a point where they need someone to help them with their finances or just with their living situation in terms of making decisions and that type of thing, so it's really important.

But I have to tell you that we have some concerns in terms of this government's track record, in terms of care of seniors and accepting that responsibility. I know that when we see this daily in question period, the reluctance to accept responsibility, to do a better job, and acknowledge that it's under this government that things are getting . . . There are many serious concerns that seniors are expressing about their care.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I know that we'll have lots of questions and lots of comments in the days ahead about this particular bill. And I know this comes out of the Throne Speech. I think there is merit in having the debate, and we look forward to finding out more about this and making sure the people in this province understand the changes that lay ahead.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move adjournment for Bill No. 115, *An Act to amend The Public Guardian and Trustee Act, to repeal The Mentally Disordered Persons Act and to make a related amendment to another Act*. I do so adjourn, move.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 115, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2013*. 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 the House do now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 20:58.]

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