



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

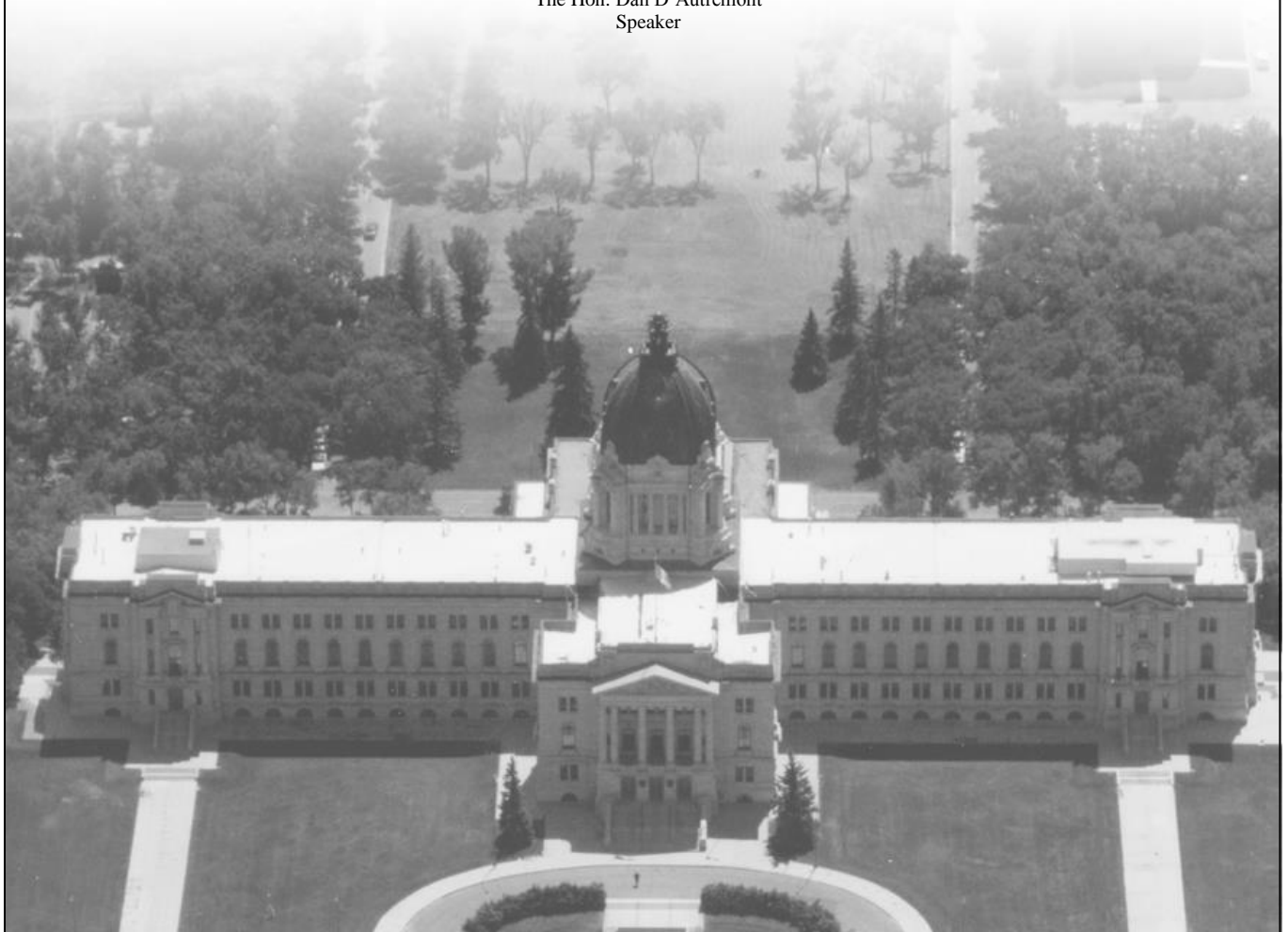
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to introduce eight individuals seated in the front row opposite. Mr. Speaker, the Ukrainian community in Saskatchewan and here in Regina is very strong, and we have a number of individuals that are here to follow the proceedings of this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to introduce the president of the Regina chapter of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, Orest Gawdyda. If you would just give us a quick wave. Thank you, Orest. I'm going to also introduce Mariya Sporysh, Petro Nakutnyy, Olena Andrusyak, Diana Dumanski, Vera Feduschak, Ken Mazur, and Volodymyr Makhov.

Mr. Speaker, these people, as I mentioned earlier, are here to watch the proceedings but they're also leaders. They're also leaders of the Saskatchewan Ukraine community, and I'm pleased that they are here. We also have students that are here from Ukraine that are studying here in Saskatchewan, and I want to thank them for being part of this afternoon's activities. And I ask all members to welcome them to this Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Deputy Premier in welcoming this important delegation to the Assembly here today from the Ukrainian community across Saskatchewan, but especially from here in Regina as well.

These are difficult days, Mr. Speaker, for Ukrainians in Ukraine as well as Canadians who have Ukrainian ancestry, as thoughts are with family members and loved ones and a country many miles away but very close to hearts here in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. So I join with the Deputy Premier in welcoming this group and extend my appreciation to the group for the leadership provided within the context of Saskatchewan, and ask all members to join me in welcoming this important delegation to the Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. To you and to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'm pleased to introduce six guests seated in the west gallery; and I'll ask them to wave when I mention their names. First of all, Mr. Speaker, from the College of Pharmacy and Nutrition at the University of Saskatchewan, we have Dr. Susan Whiting and Poppy Lowe. From the Saskatchewan Dietitians Association, Lana Moore and Bronwyn Smetaniuk; and Tammy Ives and Allison Cammer representing Dietitians of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, they're here today in recognition of National Nutrition Month, which the government is proclaiming for the month of March. Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly. And so I would ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet, I see in the west gallery a constituent of mine, Cody Rood who is from Bengough, Saskatchewan, ranches in the Bengough area. Mr. Speaker, Cody is an accomplished rodeo cowboy and I've had the opportunity to visit him at his ranch in the Bengough area a couple of years ago. I haven't had the chance to talk to him. Just seeing that he's here now today, hoping to have an opportunity to reconnect with him. So I'd ask all members to welcome Cody to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On behalf of the opposition, it's my pleasure to join with the minister in welcoming the six guests here to recognize National Nutrition Month, the health care professionals and educators who work very hard to ensure that people here in Saskatchewan have good information and good skills to be healthy on the front end of the whole health continuum, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we are preventing illnesses in the long term.

So on behalf of the official opposition, I'd like to welcome this delegation to your Legislative Assembly and thank you for all the work that you do.

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

Ms. Jurgens: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of this Legislative Assembly, I too want to welcome these fine dietitians to their Legislative Assembly. I have been taught by some of them. I have worked shoulder to shoulder with some of them. All of them have pushed and pulled me into and through the field of dietetics. So these brilliant women are leading the profession of dietitians through into the future.

And Tammy Ives, Susan Whiting, Poppy Lowe, Roseann Nasser, Allison Cammer, Lana Moore, welcome to your Legislative Assembly. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of replacing the gym at Sacred Heart Community School here in the fine city of Regina. The petitioners point out that the gym at Sacred Heart Community School in north central Regina is now quite literally falling apart, has been closed indefinitely, and is no longer safe for students or staff.

They point out that the school and the community have raised the issue with the Sask Party provincial government since 2007

without resolution. They point out that any school needs a gym as a place for the school and the community to gather together, to engage in cultural and educational activities, and to promote physical activity which we know is good for the mind, body, and spirit of a child, Mr. Speaker. And they point out that Sacred Heart Community School is the largest school in north central Regina with 450 students, 75 per cent of whom are First Nations and Métis.

In the prayer that reads as follows, the petitioners:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by individuals from Saskatoon and Kindersley. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very pleased today to stand up and present a petition on highways. And the petition reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to recognize that upgrades, repairs, and maintenance on Highway 123 is important to northern residents and must be undertaken immediately.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from Moose Jaw and all throughout southern Saskatchewan and northern Saskatchewan as well. And, Mr. Speaker, I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Celebrating Canadian Athletes at Sochi Olympics

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to stand and recognize individuals who really embody the true Canadian spirit and pride. I call on members to join me in congratulating our Canadian Olympic athletes who represented our country in Sochi. We always must be reminded that Canadian athletes can compete with the very best from across the world as they undoubtedly succeeded, having earned five bronze medals, 10 silver medals, and 10 gold medals, Mr. Speaker. In particular I want to recognize our very own Saskatchewan athletes for their impressive performances. Participating in these moments of leadership will motivate young people from across this province to pursue their goals and remain involved in Canadian sport.

The Sochi 2014 Olympics revived the spirit of inclusion, reminding us that it is crucial that all athletes are able to participate fully in the Sochi games. Mr. Speaker, we are very proud that we were among the local, national, and international voices who worked together to call for inclusion at the Sochi games, one that is welcoming to the LGBT [lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender] athletes and spectators. It is also

important to recognize the Olympic coaches and support staff as well as families that have played such an important role in guiding these athletes to success.

Finally the event wouldn't have taken place without numerous associations, clubs, and volunteers here at home who are part of the Canadian network that supports our inspiring athletes. I call on all members to join me in congratulating the Canadian Olympians and Paralympians from across this country, especially from Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melfort.

St. Gregor Family at Brier Competition

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For a curler, there are few things that top representing your province at a national level. However, sharing this honour and unforgettable experience with two of your family members might just be one of those, Mr. Speaker.

I rise in the Assembly today to recognize and congratulate brothers Dallan and Kirk Muyres along with their father and coach, Lyle Muyres, who join the Steven Laycock rink as they represent Saskatchewan at the Brier in Kamloops, BC [British Columbia].

All three Muyres hail from St. Gregor, Saskatchewan, just east of Humboldt in the Melfort constituency. The family has made a tradition of Brier appearances, Mr. Speaker. Dad Lyle played in the national showcase, skipping his three brothers, in 1986 as did lead Dallan who played there in 2011. Younger brother Kirk, a previous Canadian junior curling champion, is making his first appearance at the men's premier event as the team's third. The team currently curls out of the Nutana Curling Club in Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in congratulating Kirk, Dallan, and Lyle Muyres along with second Colton Flasch and skip Steven Laycock on their provincial title, and wish them the best of luck this week to achieve their goal of bringing the Brier trophy home to Saskatchewan for the first time since 1980. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Saskatchewan Musician Wins Prestigious Award

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to take this opportunity to celebrate the most recent success of singer, songwriter, and pianist Jeffery Straker, winner of the international category at the prestigious Viña del Mar song competition last Thursday night in Viña del Mar, Chile. Held at the 20,000-seat Quinta Vergara Amphitheatre and televised throughout South America, the competition is held in conjunction with the Viña del Mar festival, a week-long event featuring the best and brightest of artists throughout Latin America along with international superstars, this year including Ricky Martin and Rod Stewart.

Hailing from Punnichy and now splitting his time between Regina and Toronto, Jeffery was one of the six contestants in

the international category. Jeffery Straker is the second Canadian to win at the event which began in 1960, now joining Sierra Noble who claimed the top prize in 2011.

Jeffery Straker's music has been compared to the likes of Ben Folds and Harry Chapin. He has produced a variety of albums, beginning in 2003, and is constantly touring, performing up to 100 shows a year including a recent star turn hosting the Saskatchewan Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards. For winning the event he received the Gaviota de Plata trophy and \$50,000 US [United States] which I understand will help to produce a new album this summer.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the entire Legislative Assembly to please join me in extending congratulations to Jeffery Straker on winning the prestigious Viña del Mar song competition.

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

Impaired Driving Awareness Week

Mr. Hickie: — Mr. Speaker, March 2nd to the 8th is Impaired Driving Awareness Week in our province. Students Against Drinking and Driving, better known as SADD, with the help of SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] plays a lead role in promoting this week.

Mr. Speaker, SADD is a youth-based organization devoted to eliminating impaired driving. Every year they deliver presentations and raise awareness about the often devastating impact of impaired driving on families and communities across this province. This is a very important contribution, Mr. Speaker.

In 2012 in Saskatchewan, 67 people were killed in impaired driving collisions and 720 people were injured in collisions involving an impaired driver. Almost half of those injuries and fatalities were caused by impaired drivers under 30 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, groups like SADD are essential to educating people, youth in particular, about the dangers of impaired driving. Education and awareness helps people young and old to think about the choices they make before they get behind the wheel. SGI also continues with its efforts to highlight the dangers of impaired driving.

Mr. Speaker, the all-party Committee on Traffic Safety last fall put forward several recommendations to make Saskatchewan roads safer, including tougher penalties for impaired driving. We introduced legislative amendments in November which we anticipate will be passed this sitting. With the new laws being put into place, Saskatchewan will have one of the toughest packages of impaired driving legislation in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I thank SADD, SGI, and the all-party special committee for their efforts to help ensure our residents learn to always plan a safe ride home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh

Acres.

Regina Hosts Women's University Volleyball Championship

Mr. Steinley: — Mr. Speaker, last weekend was a very busy one for University of Regina student athletes. Members have already heard of the great women's hockey series that took place in Saskatoon. And here in Regina the women's volleyball team hosted the CIS [Canadian Interuniversity Sport] championship.

The championship was made up of eight participating university teams from across Canada, which included our University of Regina Cougars. Regina was happy to welcome the athletes, coaches, and team supporters from across Canada. The host committee did an amazing job of welcoming teams. They even had elementary school students meet the university teams arriving at the airport, waving banners and cheering as the athletes came down the stairs.

This year's winners were the Manitoba Bisons, defeating the UBC [University of British Columbia] Thunderbirds and ending the Thunderbirds' six-year winning streak.

Mr. Speaker, the Cougars did well in the tournament. After a slow start this season, they finished very strong. They were seeded eighth, however, in the tournament and faced the powerhouse UBC Thunderbirds in the first game. They put up a valiant fight but lost in four sets, Mr. Speaker. The U of R [University of Regina] Cougars performed well and were competitive in each and every match. Though the tournament results weren't exactly what we hoped for, the U of R did an excellent job of hosting the national event.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in expressing our thanks to the coaches, tournament organizers, and volunteers who worked hard to host the CIS women's volleyball championship here in Regina. Once again, Regina showed that it is the place to hold national sports competitions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan Rivers.

Premier's Award of Excellence to Lakeland Resident

Ms. Wilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize the outstanding work of Ernie Locke, who is responsible for the maintenance and upgrades of infrastructure within the district of Lakeland. On February 14th, I had the pleasure of presenting Mr. Locke with the Premier's Award of Excellence in recognition of his efforts to save the homes and properties of his neighbours and residents of Anglin Lake due to flooding.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier's Award for Excellence is presented to members of Saskatchewan's public service who have made an outstanding contribution to the government and citizens of the province. Mr. Locke exemplified those characteristics in the spring of 2013 when record rainfall resulted in severe flooding at Anglin Lake. During this time Mr. Locke went above and beyond his job to help residents protect their homes and calm

their fears. Mr. Locke was able to divert the water away from the Anglin Lake properties by working non-stop to build a berm. He showed compassion and empathy for his community members.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in congratulating Ernie Locke on this prestigious award, and thank him for his outstanding contributions by caring for the residents of Anglin Lake. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

National Nutrition Month

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today and recognize March as Nutrition Month, National Nutrition Month. Mr. Speaker, we are extremely fortunate in Saskatchewan to have highly skilled dietitians who are dedicated to the people of this province. The practice of dietitians is regulated through *The Dietitians Act*. Dietitians are important members of the health care team. They have specialized knowledge in food and nutrition and how it impacts our bodies.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize the vital role dietitians play in helping people make informed choices about nutrition in order to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to help manage chronic conditions. You will find dietitians working in a variety of settings. This includes hospitals, long-term care homes, long-term care settings, universities, research, public health, and that's just a few of them.

Mr. Speaker, dietitians have always been involved in quality patient-centred care. They are important partners in bringing about the transformation we are seeing in our health care system. Their Nutrition Month campaign, Simply Cook And Enjoy! is dedicated to serving up practical advice on cooking and food skills. Mr. Speaker, we have great dietitians in this province, and we are honoured to have a few of them in their legislature today. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking all dietitians for their ongoing commitment to high-quality, patient-first, centred care. Thank you.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Financial Support for Care Facilities

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The inquest into the deaths of three seniors at St. Mary's Villa in 2010 heard concerning testimony yesterday. The boiler that caused the deadly carbon monoxide poisoning was on the health region's needed capital repairs, but there simply were not enough funds, Mr. Speaker, provided to get the job done. There's a crucial lesson here for this government. When you force health regions to make difficult decisions about urgent projects to focus on, the consequences can be tragic.

My question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker: in light of what we heard yesterday about the government forcing health regions to scale back their urgent requests, how can he guarantee that there

are no urgently needed repairs that are being ignored like the boiler at St. Mary's Villa?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, each year we work with our regional health authorities within their operating capital budgets to look to see how we can improve and help the regions improve the maintenance, the facilities, the capital facilities that they do have, Mr. Speaker, whether that be through the renewal, building brand new facilities to replace aging facilities. We know that roughly two-thirds of our health care facilities in this province were built before 1970, Mr. Speaker, so there is a backlog of aging facilities that we're trying to work our way through, Mr. Speaker, as well as through the maintenance budgets of our health authorities.

We look to provide funding for those that are a high priority for the health regions, knowing that it's within the confines of what is available through the provincial budget each year, Mr. Speaker. We have provided, as I've said before in this House, nearly \$1 billion in just six years on both renovating existing facilities and building replacements, Mr. Speaker, but there is more to do.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the inquest, we are following it quite closely. Certainly our hearts go out to the employees, the residents, and the families that were affected by this tragedy in 2010. And, Mr. Speaker, we strive to always put patient and staff safety first.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Health regions asked for about eighteen and a half million dollars to meet urgent needs in seniors' care facilities. Those urgent requests, Mr. Speaker, included things like needed staff, equipment, and repairs. But the government, Mr. Speaker, said the health regions were asking for far too much. They forced the health regions to slash their requests for urgent repairs, and they only delivered about \$10 million, Mr. Speaker, to meet the urgent needs that were identified in care facilities.

Cypress Health Region for example, Mr. Speaker, identified \$900,000 that is needed in needed infrastructure improvements, but the government forced the region to cut that request to just \$300,000. We saw what happened, Mr. Speaker, in the situation of St. Mary's Villa when needs, urgent needs, are neglected. The government knew that there was a problem with the boiler, Mr. Speaker, but it chose . . . It did not bother to actually address it, and there were tragic consequences that came from that decision, Mr. Speaker.

So again my question is for the Premier: how can he guarantee that there are no urgently needed repairs that are currently being ignored like the boiler at St. Mary's Villa was ignored?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the infrastructure needs that are all around our province, Mr. Speaker, when this government took office in

2007, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that we were left with was a VFA study of every single health facility in the province, Mr. Speaker, which indicated that there was a backlog of in the billions of dollars in maintenance that was needed across the province, Mr. Speaker. That's why under the former Health minister in 2008-2009 an unprecedented \$100 million went into the maintenance of health facilities, Mr. Speaker, knowing that we needed more to do. And, Mr. Speaker, we've been doing that in the subsequent years to bring our spending in maintenance and in capital work in health care, Mr. Speaker, to nearly \$1 billion, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the Urgent Issues Action Fund, what we did know and what I publicly had said, Mr. Speaker, even as far back as November, was that we were asking for regions to bring forward their proposals within the \$10 million that was provided and that we would work with regions to prioritize which ones needed to take place within the money that was available, Mr. Speaker, knowing that it wasn't an unlimited pot of money, Mr. Speaker. We think that the \$10 million will go far, but more work needs to be done.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, health regions identified about eighteen and a half million dollars of urgent need, Mr. Speaker, that is required: things for staffing in a big way, Mr. Speaker, equipment, and for repairs. But we know, Mr. Speaker, there are many repairs and many needs that aren't even showing up in this urgent request.

It's important, Mr. Speaker. This is what the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region had to say about the process of the business case submissions. They said this: "Infrastructure needs require targeted funding that can't be addressed in this proposal." And that's from page 37. I'm going to say it again, Mr. Speaker, because the government needs to hear this from the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region. They said, "Infrastructure needs require targeted funding that can't be addressed in this proposal."

My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: how many urgent infrastructure needs currently exist in care facilities throughout the province and are being ignored by this government like the boiler at St. Mary's Villa was ignored?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I will be the first and this government will be the first to say that despite spending nearly \$1 billion in six years — I think the number is about \$935 million in capital maintenance and new construction in just six years, Mr. Speaker — we know that there is still more that needs to be done in terms of renewing the infrastructure that we have available in capital. Mr. Speaker, I would suspect that that job wouldn't be so large had previous governments spent more than just \$300 million, as a comparison, in six years, the last six years of their government, Mr. Speaker.

Well I'll tell you what we're doing about it, Mr. Speaker. We're replacing 13 long-term care facilities in rural Saskatchewan that were long overdue, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we are providing

\$10 million in urgent dollars for the regional health authorities that will result in 700 pieces of equipment, including lifts, slings, mattresses, and tubs that weren't available even six months ago, Mr. Speaker. There's more work to be done, Mr. Speaker, but I think that this is a right start to correct the mistakes of the past.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the answers that are coming from this government are as though they didn't just tell the health regions to slash their requests, Mr. Speaker, for urgent needs for staffing, for equipment, for repairs — the lines that we're hearing from the government, Mr. Speaker, suggesting that everything is going well.

When we have, Mr. Speaker, health regions being forced to scale back in a huge way their urgent requests, not even the requests that aren't showing up in the urgent issues fund, Mr. Speaker, when we see those kinds of steps we have to call into question, Mr. Speaker, this government's willingness to recognize the urgency and the severity of the situation.

It's about the decisions that this government is also making, Mr. Speaker. At a time when there are huge needs for seniors, we see this government deciding to spend \$130,000, Mr. Speaker, for wireless Internet for a few level 4 care facilities, Mr. Speaker. And while the Internet of course is important, Mr. Speaker, the reality is for many of the level 4 residents sitting in a care facility, Mr. Speaker, they're not sitting in their bed on Facebook. They're sitting in their bed in diapers, Mr. Speaker, and many of these seniors aren't even getting one bath a week.

We see, Mr. Speaker, this government has \$207,000 for yet another lean consultant. My question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker: why are they failing to fix the basics in seniors' care and putting their attention at things, Mr. Speaker, that are not about fixing the basics for seniors who are struggling here in Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, what I think the people of Saskatchewan have seen in terms of a difference between the approach of this government and the former government, the former NDP [New Democratic Party] government, Mr. Speaker, when in mid-year injection, in terms of dollars that weren't available previous, Mr. Speaker, \$10 million was made available, as well as \$3.8 million in ongoing funding to address some of the urgent concerns, Mr. Speaker, urgent concerns that all tie back to what we heard during the CEO [chief executive officer] tour, Mr. Speaker.

So those were dollars that were made available by the Government of Saskatchewan, knowing that more needs to be done, Mr. Speaker, as opposed to the members opposite. The only thing that they proposed to fix long-term care, Mr. Speaker, the only thing that they proposed was to dramatically increase the fees that long-term care residents would pay, to the point where some would have to go on welfare, Mr. Speaker. That is the record of the NDP, Mr. Speaker. We choose to take a different approach.

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

Grain Transportation

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, this grain transportation crisis is hurting our economy and costing producers billions of dollars. We've been listening to producers and experts about how to fix the system and move this bumper crop to market, but instead of listening to ideas, the Minister Responsible for Agriculture has been dismissive.

Yesterday in the emergency debate about the crisis, the minister said our suggestions for open running rights were "dumb ideas." Well, Mr. Speaker, we didn't pull this idea out of thin air or from a box in the basement. We got it from producers and ag experts.

To the minister: why does this government reject even exploring the idea of joint running rights as one of the solutions that could help fix the broken grain transportation system?

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — In a perfect system, joint running rights are something that might be able to fine-tune a system that's working pretty good. We don't have that. Joint running rights are available to railways to negotiate between themselves, and that's been done in many areas and the right is there for them to do that anywhere they want. Nothing has to change to make that happen.

The problem is not joint running rights or the lack of, the problem is not enough rolling stock on the rails to move the grain that needs to be moved. Hundreds of locomotives have been idled, thousands of grain cars. This is a choice by the railways and that is the problem, not joint running rights. There's no shortage of track. There's no lack of capacity there. There's no problem with having capacity to run more equipment. There's just no willingness to do so.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's well known that joint running rights have been in the Canadian transportation legislation for over 130 years. It hasn't been working the way it's currently legislated because of the monopoly that exists with the railways. Many agriculture groups that represent producers believe that open, competitive access to the rail system is one of the ways we could get this crop moving to port and fix this mess.

Here's a list of who supports the idea: the Keystone Agricultural Producers in Manitoba, the Federation of Agriculture in Alberta, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, and the Agricultural Producers Association of Saskatchewan. All of these groups have been calling for open running rights as part of the fix because it would increase the level of competition and break the monopoly that CN [Canadian National] and CP [Canadian Pacific] have enjoyed for decades.

To the minister: why is this government siding with the big rail companies and stubbornly opposing the concept of open running rights that could help fix the broken system?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — That's ridiculous, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, this is a very serious problem, not one that I think is appropriate for the NDP to join the fray all within the last month and take potshots from the bulrushes at the people that are actually trying to fix it.

We've made, just to outline what we've done, Mr. Speaker, we've made submissions to the level of service review back as far as 2010, and we've asked for improved accountability, including penalties. We've wrote to the federal standing committee last May supporting amendments proposed by the Coalition of Rail Shippers. We've sent letters last November to all stakeholders. Previously I've met with all of the major stakeholders and recently a delegation has been appointed by the Premier including myself as Chair, the Minister of the Economy, the Minister of Highways, and the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Rosthern-Shellbrook. And that work continues through the delegation.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, producers are facing overwhelming stress today. Their bins are full of grain and their mailboxes are full of bills. And they aren't sure if they can afford to put a crop in the ground this spring. Producers need to know that this government is willing to explore all of the options, and open running rights should be on the table. Even the federal Agriculture minister, who hasn't done much of anything to address the crisis, has agreed that open running rights should be considered.

So it makes no sense why Saskatchewan's Agriculture minister is saying it's a dumb idea. New Democrats are standing with producers and calling for joint running rights. To the minister: why is this government siding with CN and CP against the interests of farmers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Joint running rights are not the answer to this problem. CP Rail alone has idled 400 locomotives, 13,000 rail cars, laid off 4,550 people from train crews, and you think, that member thinks, Mr. Speaker, that joint running rights is going to solve this problem. CN did the same thing three years ago.

Mr. Speaker, that's the problem, not joint running rights. Joint running rights could be a good tool when, after we get the problem fixed and get the grain moving, it could fine-tune the system. Joint running rights in certain locations could be a fine thing. I agree with that. Nobody disagrees but it's not the solution to this problem.

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

Provision of Surgeries in Regina

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As of Monday, 80 surgeries and 22 procedures were postponed at the Pasqua. We've been told this is because of discoloration on the cotton packaging of surgical tools. But we've heard a lot over the last year about significant staffing shortages in Regina's operating rooms. To the minister: can he guarantee that these cancelled surgeries and procedures have nothing to do with short staffing?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, there had been a period in the past, about a year and a half ago, when we knew that Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region was not on track in terms of hitting their surgical target of nobody waiting longer than three months by March of 2014. Mr. Speaker, at that time there were some issues around some operating room nurse positions. We have added some dollars and some funding to increase those seats. Mr. Speaker, the region believes that they're in a good position in that respect.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of the postponements, obviously Regina Qu'Appelle is working hard to resolve this situation as quickly as possible. Urgent surgeries are now being diverted to the General Hospital, Mr. Speaker, as well as additional capacity in the General, as well as two third parties — suppliers, surgical units — are providing some surgeries, Mr. Speaker. And we certainly hope that this issue is resolved shortly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, we know this is not the first time that staff noticed this discoloration. The health region has admitted that such discoloration has been noticed at least twice before in February. To the minister: if package discoloration is significant enough to cancel surgeries for 10 days right now, why was nothing done when it was noticed previously?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding from the health region was that at that time it was noticed, Mr. Speaker, as it has been, Mr. Speaker, in other facilities in North America, from my understanding at that time they believed that they had rectified the situation. Mr. Speaker, it's not a situation that they're experiencing at the General Hospital and so they're looking to see whether or not it has to do with the filter in the machine, whether or not it's the machine itself, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the water supply into the Pasqua Hospital.

The Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region has a team that is working on this, Mr. Speaker, trying to find a resolution to the situation. They're meeting twice daily, Mr. Speaker, and I think providing the public, through the media I think, fairly timely notices in terms of what they have and have not been able to determine. But obviously we're all hoping that this situation is resolved shortly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What's the difference between February and now? Why the surgery cancellations now and not when the package discoloration was noticed in February?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again, from the Regina Qu'Appelle Health Region, it wasn't actually on the equipment, Mr. Speaker. It was on the packaging that wraps around the equipment when it is sterilized. They believe that the equipment is safe to use for patients, Mr. Speaker. But because it has been a recurring issue over the last couple of weeks, Mr. Speaker, they wanted to do their due diligence to try to rectify the situation so that the discolouring doesn't happen.

Mr. Speaker, in the meantime they are moving as many surgeries as they can to the General Hospital as well as to two surgical third-party providers of surgeries within Regina, here in the city, Mr. Speaker, and looking at seeing if there are other options if this is a longer term issue, whether or not equipment can be sterilized in other locations and transported back to the Pasqua Hospital. But, Mr. Speaker, I can assure you that the government and the region wants to come to a solution on this as quickly as possible.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Mr. Speaker, at the start of this, last Wednesday, we were told it would take less than a day to correct the problem. So just 16 people would have had their surgeries postponed. But then that was changed to a 10-day shutdown. And now over 100 patients have already been affected. Those patients and many Saskatchewan people simply cannot understand why there is no contingency plan in place. The region says they have considered the option of transporting sterilized equipment from the General Hospital to the Pasqua Hospital but they chose not to do so.

To the minister: why is there no contingency plan in place?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, just to . . . It seems I spend probably a good portion of my time on the floor of the Assembly correcting statements by the members opposite. I just want to correct them. There has been a contingency put in place to lower the number of surgeries that have been cancelled or delayed because of this, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a number of surgeries that have been moved. As of yesterday, Mr. Speaker — I don't have the updated information as of today; I'll get that later today — but as of yesterday, 20 procedures were moved to the General Hospital, Mr. Speaker. There were several surgeries that were moved to Aspen, Mr. Speaker, a third-party deliverer of surgeries within the city, as well as SCI [Surgical Centres Inc.] was able to take on some additional ortho, dental, and cataract surgery, Mr. Speaker.

So while they work through this issue, Mr. Speaker, there has

been a contingency put in place. Mr. Speaker, they'll develop that plan if it looks like this delay is going to be even longer than 10 days. But we certainly hope that there is a solution before too long.

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

Carbon Capture Project

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, this government doesn't seem to have its facts together regarding either the budget or the timing of its carbon capture project. In 2011 the government said this project cost \$1.24 billion. But by October 2013, the project was already running months behind and saw its costs balloon \$115 million over budget. And by December, the Minister of the Economy admitted the project was already a full \$120 million over budget. Yet for some reason, the Premier is still trying to claim the project is on time and on budget.

Mr. Speaker, a simple question to the minister: what exactly does on time and on budget mean for carbon capture?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, when this project is complete, it will be the first of its kind in the world. Mr. Speaker, as the member very sarcastically pointed out, there has been some time issues and a bit of a cost overrun. But, Mr. Speaker, we fully expect, as I said, this is going to be the first of its kind in the world for a project like this.

Mr. Speaker, I find this unusual that the members opposite are consistently criticizing the government, saying that we're not concerned enough about the environment. Mr. Speaker, we are on the verge of, as I said, a world-class project. Mr. Speaker, all they do is criticize it. I find that surprising, Mr. Speaker. As we speak, the Premier is in Washington promoting this technology, Mr. Speaker. We have every reason to believe that this project will be incredibly successful. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it's really not surprising that this government considers a project that's \$120 million over budget to be on budget. After all it's the same government that failed an audit for trying to pretend that a \$600 million deficit it was running was actually a \$60 million surplus.

SaskPower has admitted this project is over budget. The Minister of the Economy has admitted this project is over budget. So Saskatchewan people cannot understand why it is that the Premier keeps saying that the \$120 million of cost overruns are somehow on budget.

To the minister: what kind of accounting practices is the government using to claim a project that's \$120 million over budget is actually on budget?

[14:15]

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

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Mr. Speaker, to clarify for the member opposite, the power facility part of the project is slightly over budget. Mr. Speaker, the carbon capture portion of this project is on budget.

Mr. Speaker, as again I mentioned, we have a world-class facility about to come on stream here. Mr. Speaker, I have a quote from Kirsty Anderson who's the public engagement manager for Global Carbon Capture Institute. And this is what she said, Mr. Speaker:

You guys are world leaders in this field here in Saskatchewan, so the fact this is happening right here on your doorstep and the students can learn about it is really very cool.

Mr. Speaker, people from around the world are looking at this project. The Premier's in Washington promoting the technology. And, Mr. Speaker, I realize it's the critic's job to be critical but, Mr. Speaker, every once in a while when it's very clear that a project's doing a good thing, I think those members should be supporting it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Crisis in Ukraine

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the recent violence unleashed in Ukraine has caused great concern to many around the world and right here in Saskatchewan. Over the weekend, we have been alarmed by statements and actions that have the effect of violating Ukrainian sovereignty.

As we have affirmed all along, Mr. Speaker, the government and the people of this province support a free and democratic Ukraine where freedom of expression and the rule of law are guaranteed. We also stress that Ukraine's full territorial integrity must be respected. From the outset of the recent crisis, we have offered assistance and have been working with the Ukrainian Canadian community, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, and the federal government in coordinating a response to the situation.

Last week, the Premier and I requested a special meeting of the Saskatchewan-Ukraine relations advisory committee to provide recommendations to government on a meaningful response to the situation in Ukraine. This committee met last Thursday and yesterday I received their recommendations.

In addition, the Ukrainian Canadian Congress Saskatchewan Provincial Council has written to the Premier requesting humanitarian aid. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that the Government of Saskatchewan will provide \$60,000 in immediate humanitarian assistance. These funds will be advanced to the UCC [Ukrainian Canadian Congress] Saskatchewan Provincial Council for use by Ukrainian social services in Ukraine to assist those who require ongoing medical

attention.

I encourage the people of Saskatchewan to also support the people of Ukraine. Donations to Ukraine are being accepted by the New Community Credit Union in Saskatoon.

In addition, today I have also written a second letter to Minister Baird indicating that the province of Saskatchewan is ready to assist in a broad effort through medical or technical assistance. It is important that we coordinate the federal approach, the provincial approach, and all who are involved to ensure that we direct the aid to where it is needed.

Mr. Speaker, based upon the recommendations of the advisory committee, we will continue to work with those organizations within and outside government who have partnerships established in Ukraine. We want to assure our friends and partners that we have not abandoned them, but will continue to work with them in the areas of trade and economic development, education, and the furtherance of civil society.

Mr. Speaker, I've also requested that the advisory committee continue to meet on a regular basis to continue to provide their counsel and advice on this important issue. The situation in Ukraine, Mr. Speaker, remains dear to the hearts of many in our province. It is my firm belief that we must all work together to assist Ukraine's emergence to a future of prosperity and freedom.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, we stand together with the people of Ukraine.

[The member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

Thank you.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to make a few remarks following the statement that the Deputy Premier has made. All of us are closely watching the volatile situation in Ukraine. And for some it comes through emails or messages from loved ones. For others it's through the ongoing news reports we see, and the story unfolding on a hourly and daily basis. In the midst of a very concerning and troubling situation, this is a bit of good news and I certainly thank the Deputy Premier for making this announcement and providing this type of support.

As I said in the House yesterday, Mr. Speaker, Ukraine needs and deserves our support. And as I said back on February 24th when I called on the government to pledge humanitarian aid for victims of violence in Ukraine, our solidarity runs deep with the people of Ukraine and so do our ties, and sending help to Ukrainians who are desperate and in a troubling situation, Mr. Speaker, is simply the right thing for us to do.

We've all been, Mr. Speaker, troubled and appalled by the violent and brutal acts that we have seen on our TV screens in Ukraine over the last weeks. Mr. Speaker, we also remain deeply concerned about the aggressive actions of the Russian Federation in just the last few days.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, I rose in the Assembly to clearly say that we stand in support of a free and a democratic Ukraine, where freedom of expression and rule of law are guaranteed for all citizens, Mr. Speaker. I said that we condemn in the strongest possible terms any actions that could lead to an escalation in tensions or lead to more violence. I said we'd call on all sides to respect international law and to respect Ukraine's territorial sovereignty. And I said, Mr. Speaker, that we urge the Canadian government to play a leadership role in working for a peaceful resolution to this troubling situation.

I'm pleased to see, Mr. Speaker, as I said, pleased to see Saskatchewan making this contribution of humanitarian aid for the people of Ukraine. Time and time again the people of Ukraine have demonstrated just how resilient and just how courageous they are — always, Mr. Speaker, refusing to give up, never letting their spirits be broken, and always pushing for a better and brighter future. I'm pleased today, Mr. Speaker, that all of us here in the Legislative Assembly are able to stand with them in a small way. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, before orders of the day I would ask for leave of the Assembly to move a motion regarding the situation in Ukraine.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has requested leave to move a motion under rule 61, an emergency motion on Ukraine. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Crisis in Ukraine

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll make a few additional remarks beyond what I just have introduced to this Assembly through my ministerial statement.

I think it's important for non-Ukrainians to understand exactly what is going on within Ukraine and why there are so many people here in Saskatchewan that are very concerned about what is going on. So I'm going to give a little bit of a history lesson, as my colleagues would have expected.

Mr. Speaker, our ties, Saskatchewan to Ukraine, have been for almost 125 years, Mr. Speaker, and in fact in just I guess a couple of short years we'll be celebrating the 125th anniversary of the first Ukrainian settlers here to Saskatchewan. 1891, Mr. Speaker, is when that first wave started, and we have seen numerous waves of Ukrainian settlers coming to Saskatchewan to make their homes here. And that is why today we have over 130,000 individuals who can trace their heritage back to Ukraine.

So it is very important that the connection between Saskatchewan and Ukraine continues, Mr. Speaker. It continues to this very day, in fact, through the Saskatchewan immigrant nominee program, Mr. Speaker. Since 2008 we've had over

1,700 individuals call Saskatchewan home and that continues into 2013 and 2014. We're again seeing hundreds of people from Ukraine look to Saskatchewan, look to the opportunities that are here in Saskatchewan, and are moving here with their families.

As I indicated earlier on today, we have exchanges that occur between Ukraine and Saskatchewan, whether they be educational excursions as we have students that are studying here in Saskatchewan or whether it's the reverse where we do have individuals that are involved in Ukraine.

We have a very strong program right now with SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology]. I was fortunate to be in Ukraine in June of 2013 and toured three different areas where the colleges in Ukraine in Lviv, Ivano-Frankivsk, and Kiev are indeed benefiting from the fact that SIAST is rewriting their curriculum and is helping the instructors to deal with the modern teachings of today. That is going to continue, Mr. Speaker, and that is why it is so important as the Leader of the Opposition has already indicated.

We're concerned about the fact that Russia continues to show its mightiness by, in fact, being the big bully on the block and is really challenging what is going on in the province, or as I say, Mr. Speaker, it is the oblast, the Oblast of Crimea, where indeed the Russians are exerting their force.

Mr. Speaker, here in Saskatchewan we have a lot to benefit. We have a lot to benefit from trade agreements with Ukraine. And I'm just very, very quickly, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to indicate that since 1990 Saskatchewan has signed 14 agreements with Ukraine with the various . . . directly with the national government or with the oblast. Mr. Speaker, three, I'm just going to mention three that are very important.

We've had a discussion today about agriculture. There's an MOU [memorandum of understanding] between the Zhytomyr Oblast and the Government of Saskatchewan to identify opportunities for collaboration in the area of agriculture development. There is a memorandum of intent between Chernivtsi Oblast and the Government of Saskatchewan to promote and facilitate international links in education, which has been renewed for a second term until 2016. And I have already mentioned SIAST, Mr. Speaker, but we also have agreements between the universities of Regina and Saskatchewan with counterparts in Ukraine that continue to promote educational and cultural exchanges.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has the distinction of being the first Canadian province to sign agreements with the Government of Ukraine in the area of education. And many are familiar, Mr. Speaker, with the fact that in addition, artists, artisans, and dance troupes have been well received as cultural ambassadors in both countries, Mr. Speaker.

I was very pleased to stand in this Assembly and recognize Lastiwka and the Pavlechenko Ensemble who toured Ukraine last year and the tremendous response that they had.

Mr. Speaker, that takes us to today and the events of . . . since November when we start to look at the rapid changes that have occurred in Ukraine, the fact that in November there was hope,

there was a belief that indeed Ukraine would join with the European Union in an economic partnership and move forward with the kind of prosperity and freedom and rule of law that they see as being very important. But that decision was reversed. And, Mr. Speaker, that violence that was unleashed by the Yanukovich regime on the European Maidan in Kiev I think has caused everyone tremendous concern. We saw the clashes that occurred. And then on February 18th unfortunately we saw the first violence that resulted in death, many deaths, Mr. Speaker, of people who believed that there is a better future for Ukraine.

Subsequent to that, Mr. Speaker, of course with President Yanukovich leaving, and we understand . . . And it's very important that people who are listening today pay attention to the various newscasts because media is reporting on a minute-by-minute basis, Mr. Speaker, and it changes. It changes minute by minute, as we know. I saw at noon hour the exchange between the Ukrainian troops and . . . the army, unarmed by the way, Mr. Speaker, and the fact that the actual . . . There were rifles fired in the air. In the air, thank goodness. And I think it has the possibility to escalate to something that the world does not ever want to see.

Mr. Speaker, we have been very adamant in supporting the efforts of not only the Canadian government, but all of the governments involved. We listened to the reports of leaders, world leaders, whether they be President Obama or Prime Minister Harper or Angela Merkel from Germany. We see the fact that these individuals, these individuals who lead powerful nations, are very concerned about the direction that President Putin has taken.

[14:30]

Mr. Speaker, you know, the approach of Putin, we were in awe of the Olympic Games. And I think all it did was allow President Putin the opportunity to show off the games. And as we know many times he refers to those games as the Putin games and not the Olympic Games. And now he has the power, he has the money to turn his attention to what he may really want. Now there are positives, Mr. Speaker. Don't get me wrong. There are positives that I've heard in the last six hours where indeed Putin himself, President Putin himself has indicated that he does not see the need for force, but again, the second qualifier — at this time. And I think that's the part that, you know, is of great concern to Ukrainians living in Ukraine of course but also here in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there are a couple of groups that are very actively involved here in Saskatchewan, and I want to make . . . I want to give recognition — couldn't spit that one out, Mr. Speaker — I want to give recognition to many individuals who have worked tirelessly over the last number of weeks and months.

Mr. Speaker, I want to quote from a letter that was sent by the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Saskatchewan Provincial Council. It's a two-page letter and I'm not going to read it all, Mr. Speaker, but I do want to enter into the record of this Chamber a paragraph or actually two paragraphs that are from a letter written by Vice-president MaryAnn Trischuk on February the 26th to the Premier of this province.

The first paragraph reads this way:

The events of the past three months have shocked, troubled, and deeply affected the people of our community and province alike. With the removal of the autocratic Viktor Yanukovich and current attempts to assemble a new government in Ukraine, these remain unstable and uncertain times. It is our hope that this is the start of the fundamental change for which 88 heroes gave their lives and for which hundreds of thousands of Maidan protestors so bravely demonstrated. The work of building a new Ukraine is only just beginning and will require ongoing support from both inside and outside the country.

Mr. Speaker, her closing paragraph reads this way:

In closing, for as much as there is relief that hope defeated despair in Ukraine, ultimately it is the determination of the Ukrainian people together with governments and institutions around the world that will ensure Ukraine's future is bright, prosperous, and democratic.

So, Mr. Speaker, to MaryAnn, as vice-president, and Slawko Kindrachuk and all of the different branches across the province of Saskatchewan, Orest Gawdyda from the Regina branch who's in our gallery this afternoon, thank you.

The second letter, and I made reference to that in my ministerial statement, Mr. Speaker, I am very fortunate and the government is very fortunate. We all are very fortunate; we have something called the Saskatchewan-Ukraine Relations Advisory Committee — S-U-R-A-C — or sometimes I'll use the acronym SURAC.

SURAC is a committee of a number of people. And, Mr. Speaker, I have never actually entered the names of all of the individuals that are currently on the advisory committee, but I want to do that today because these people have worked tirelessly to advise our government, to advise me, on the affairs of Ukraine and the relationship with Ukraine and Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, the people on the committee are Gerald Luciuk, Alicia Klopoushak, Dave Dutchak, Dr. Natalia Friesen, Laurent Mougeot, Holly Paluck, Nadia Prokopchuk, Danylo Puderak, Jim Shevchuk, and MaryAnn Trischuk. Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last week, I asked for an emergency meeting of this committee to advise on what they believed the Government of Saskatchewan along with the Government of Canada should do and, Mr. Speaker, they attended to that promptly. Their meeting last week occurred on Thursday and, Mr. Speaker, as of yesterday morning I received a letter that contains a number of recommendations.

Mr. Speaker, all of these recommendations are very important. We will ensure that we move forward on them, and that's why today we've made the announcement of humanitarian aid. There's further recommendation about how we might work together with oblasts in Ukraine through the federal government or through other partners like the provinces of Manitoba and Alberta who have also announced financial assistance. We need to work together to ensure that there is a long-term relationship, there's a long-term solution for Ukraine that will exist forever.

Mr. Speaker, the concluding paragraph in this letter dated March 3rd says this:

We also resolved and requested that Mr. Rick Mantey, SURAC's secretary, speak with you requesting that the Saskatchewan legislature pass an all-party resolution in support of its solidarity with the Ukrainian people as they take action to build a free and democratic Ukraine that respects the rule of law and supports Canada's recognition of the interim government of the Ukraine.

In addition, we request that the Saskatchewan legislature pass a resolution expressing its sadness for the Ukrainians who tragically lost their lives at the hands of a corrupt regime while peacefully demonstrating for their right to self-determination and a free and democratic homeland.

Respectfully, Alicia Klopoushak, Vice-Chair of SURAC.

Mr. Speaker, with those comments and the comments already made by the Leader of the Opposition, I'm pleased to put forward the following motion for consideration by this Assembly. By leave:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan expresses its condolences to the families of the individuals who, in the defence of freedom, justice, and a democratic Ukraine, held fast in pursuit of these fundamental rights on the Maidan and, as a result, paid the ultimate price for these rights and today stand among the Heroes of Ukraine; and further,

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan recommit its support for a democratic and free Ukraine wherein the geographic borders of this sovereign nation are respected; and further,

That the Assembly commends the efforts of the Ukrainian Canadian Congress, the Ukrainian community of Saskatchewan, and the Government of Canada in their strong and ongoing support of the Ukrainian nation, especially to those on the Maidan, in the pursuit of fundamental rights and freedoms.

I so present.

The Speaker: — The Deputy Premier has moved the following motion:

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan express its condolences to the families of the individuals who, in the defence of freedom, justice, and a democratic Ukraine, held fast in pursuit of these fundamental rights on the Maidan and, as a result, paid the ultimate price for these rights and today stand among the Heroes of Ukraine; and further,

That the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan recommit its support for a democratic and free Ukraine wherein the geographic borders of this sovereign nation are respected; and further,

That the Assembly commends the efforts of the Ukrainian

Canadian Congress, the Ukrainian community of Saskatchewan, and the Government of Canada in their strong and ongoing support of the Ukrainian nation, especially to those on the Maidan, in the pursuit of fundamental rights and freedoms.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the chance to say a few remarks on the motion. I will not go on too long, Mr. Speaker, since we have had the chance to address the entire situation through the ministerial statement and the remarks that I made following that.

But I do want to add a few things, Mr. Speaker, in follow-up to a few of the remarks made by the Deputy Premier as the Assembly considers this motion and considers the response that we are taking or that we are making as the Saskatchewan legislature on behalf of our constituents and every region of the province that we do represent.

The Deputy Premier did give a good survey of some of the history involved and some of the current reality that Ukrainians are facing and really what the global community is facing as many nations wrestle with how best to address what we see unfolding before our eyes.

But I want to make a few remarks, Mr. Speaker, about the reality that we have in Saskatchewan and a bit how we are, I think, uniquely positioned to make a gesture like we are today in stating that we do support the people of Ukraine and seek a peaceful resolution to what we see occurring. A good number of us in the Assembly — I don't happen to be one of them, Mr. Speaker — but a good number in the Assembly can trace our roots and our family ties to Ukraine. And whether we have lineage or whether we are as focused on some of the economic ties that we've developed over the years, Mr. Speaker, with Ukraine, it's important that Saskatchewan clearly states where we stand on this issue and the type of support that we're prepared to make because of the strong ties that we have.

We think, Mr. Speaker, of the different waves of immigration that have occurred in Saskatchewan. And my thoughts go, Mr. Speaker, to really a sense of gratitude and appreciation that I have for being a Canadian, for living in Saskatchewan, and recognizing the blessings and the good quality of life that we experience here. And absolutely we have a lot to do to extend that good quality of life to more and more people. But we are very fortunate to be in Canada, and we're fortunate to live in Saskatchewan.

And with that type of reality, with those good benefits that we have, there's also a responsibility that we have, Mr. Speaker, to do our part. And it can be through gestures and statements of humanitarian aid which we've talked about here in the Assembly, and it can be through the words and the positions that we take and that we make.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we will be supporting the motion that has been brought forward. As I said in my earlier remarks, it simply is the right thing to do. And I know, I'm sure I speak for many members, Mr. Speaker, in stating that we want to see a peaceful

resolution. We want to see a de-escalation of the tension and the threat and the danger of violence that could be imminent. And we want Canada to play a constructive role in that process. And that means, well it could mean a number of things. But what's required is wisdom and determination and co-operation with our allies and with our partners in ensuring that the best steps are taken, that clear pressure can be applied when appropriate, and other acts of diplomacy can occur in order to ensure that a peaceful resolution is in fact the outcome.

And I know that's what the people of Ukraine want, and that's what the people of Saskatchewan want, and a more peaceful world is ultimately what all people on the globe want. So with that, Mr. Speaker, we'll be supporting the motion.

The Speaker: — Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Will the Assembly take the question as read?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — 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 would request that that motion be passed *nemine contradicente*, without dissent.

The Speaker: — *Nemine contradicente*.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 127

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 127 — *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, again it's good to rise in my place in this Assembly, particularly having such a clear reminder of these rights and privileges that we enjoy here in Saskatchewan, in Canada; that better life that many people came from around the globe to Canada, to Saskatchewan to build; and that reminder that to whom much is given, much is expected and with great benefit comes great responsibility.

And as those people came from around the world to

Saskatchewan, made a better life, so we have a responsibility to look back to the places like Ukraine, to do what we can to build upon that benefit, to build upon that good fortune, to build upon that legacy of hard work. And I think about that through the lens of my own Scottish heritage, Mr. Speaker, and the way that my people came here to make a better life, and that responsibility that we all have.

But in terms of responsibility, Mr. Speaker, it's again good to rise and join debate on Bill No. 127, *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act*. And I guess off the top, Mr. Speaker, in terms of mental health services, there are a number of lenses that I have opportunity to view the whole question of mental health as it plays out here in the province of Saskatchewan.

I view it through the lens of family and friends that have had occasion to interact with the services that are there, Mr. Speaker. I view it through the lens of constituents who have had similar interactions or who are on the health care provider side of the equation. I view it through the lens of individuals who work in advocacy and work in terms of community-based organizations and the work that is done there around provision of mental health services. And I also view it through, quite frankly, the lens of education that we need to do in the broader community, educating, informing, de-stigmatizing, but the work that we all need to do, be it on a family level, on a neighbourhood level, or as a city or a province, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

And I guess today it's interesting in some ways the manner in which Saskatchewan is keeping up to the question, to the challenge of proper provision of mental health services in Saskatchewan, in the province, the way that different national efforts have been undergone. We've just come through the Olympics and you have the example of someone like Klassen from Manitoba and the work that she has done coming out. Other Olympians have come out and said that mental health has been a struggle for them.

You look at the federal level where there have been different task forces launched, Mr. Speaker, and different sort of work being done bringing together the better resources to hopefully have a better national response. And you also look at the work of consultation that is ongoing on the part of this government right now in the province of Saskatchewan. And you look at all those efforts, Mr. Speaker, and still it's unfortunate that we hear too much about how mental health need is going unserved and how we need to do a better job as a province to respond in terms of the way that we as a community can support individuals with mental health challenges, the way that we as a community can marshal resources to do that work of education and healing and support, Mr. Speaker.

So I guess those are some things I wanted to say off the top in terms of how I approach a question like the bill in front of us today. This bill of course doesn't answer all of those questions but it's part of a broader front of activities that need to be engaged. It's part of a broader mission. And in that regard, Mr. Speaker, we're interested to see how some of the initiatives here work on the ground, whether it alleviates some of the stresses that again I think in terms of people that have interaction with folks in different sort of places in that mental health continuum

like, you know, MLAs would be, I would imagine, have a bit more contact than most, a bit more perspective than most in terms of the folks that we meet with on a daily to weekly basis.

And I guess, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the legislation that's brought here again, I always pay quite close attention to the second reading speeches that provide a good sort of overview of where the legislation is going and in this case the speech back . . . I'll just move through here, Mr. Speaker. I beg your pardon. *The Mental Health Services Act* was just a very, you know, very recently introduced, in matter of fact yesterday, Mr. Speaker. In the second reading speech, the minister talks about the intent of the amendments being to improve timely access to mental health services for vulnerable people, support integration of mental health and addiction services and information sharing, and resolve governance and administration issues affecting the ministry and health regions.

Now off the top, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the first draft of content for the legislation, the minister referenced the repealing of those sections of the Act dealing with confidentiality and release of information and substituting *The Health Information Protection Act* or HIPA, allowing for better collaboration among areas of health services and other ministries while still protecting personal information; reducing the criteria for community treatment orders, which allow for involuntary treatment in the community, and increasing the period of time, the time period of CTOs, the community treatment orders, to reduce barriers to treatment for very vulnerable clients; transferring the responsibility for licensing mental health approved homes from the ministry to the regional health authorities to align closer to day-to-day practice using facility designation regulations under *The Regional Health Services Act* instead of *The Mental Health Services Act* to designate facilities; transferring the power to appoint regional directors of mental health and chief psychiatrists from the ministry to regional health authorities, to align with day-to-day practice.

So just to dwell on those for a moment, Mr. Speaker. Again there's someone who's very important in my life who's very recently had fairly rigorous involvement, fairly extensive involvement with the mental health system. And one of the challenges there, Mr. Speaker, is of course the availability of qualified health care professionals.

And I guess in terms of the changes anticipated in this legislation, I think of the designation of regional directors in mental health and the chief psychiatrist in terms of the ministry. And again if that improves process and makes it more responsive to the situation as it presents on the ground, situates that authority with the most appropriate level of decision making in the health regions versus the ministry, then that's a good bit of work. But I can't help but think that there's a broader discussion that begs to be had as regards the availability and the supply of mental health professionals.

Now in a different context, I know that the government has moved forward on the degree for psychiatric nursing, and that's a good thing, Mr. Speaker. And it's certainly one part of the solution though in terms of what is that broader front of efforts that we're bringing to bear in terms of incenting people taking the courses. What are the tools that we can use in terms of perhaps return for service or bursaries? And what is the supply

of mental health professionals stacked up alongside the demand? And again, Mr. Speaker, I'd be interested to know that in a particular way, but I know from again just the people that I interact with that the supply is far outstripped by the demand.

And again, Mr. Speaker, if you think about how mental health issues are like any other health issue in terms of lost productivity, the stress on individuals and families, and the individuals not being able to live up to their full potential and to make that again that broader social and economic contribution, mental health isn't any different than any other sort of injury or health problem, Mr. Speaker, except in one regard. And again that goes to the broader work of de-stigmatizing and to bring some of these issues that have been held so close out into the light of broader public and to have that respectful and thoughtful discussion on real terms as opposed to, you know, tamping these things deep, dark, and down.

So again there's that broader front of effort that needs to take place, but as regards the first sort of suite of efforts in this piece of legislation, I don't know that it's going to do that much to alleviate stresses on supply and demand, questions around mental health professionals and the delivery of services, and the way that those services are in too short supply.

But again, better work around refining the criteria for community treatment orders, allowing for involuntary treatment in the community, and increasing the period of time, that would seem to be a reasonable step. The transferring of the responsibility for licensing mental health approved homes from the ministry again to the regional authority, fair enough, Mr. Speaker, in terms of better situating the authority to where the information is more readily available.

But again, all seemingly positive steps, but certainly not all of the steps that we need to be taking on what is a very significant journey in front of us if we're going to meet the challenges that are out there in terms of provision of mental health services, demand of mental health services, and marshalling the resources and the education and the efforts to do just that, Mr. Speaker.

Again referring to the minister's second reading speech, Mr. Speaker, the minister stated:

The Ministry of Health is responsible for providing services to promote, preserve, and restore the mental health of Saskatchewan people. As this Assembly is aware, we are developing an inter-ministerial mental health and addictions action plan to better meet the mental health and addiction needs of the people we serve.

Again, great. Glad to hear it, Mr. Speaker. But again the hope is that, you know, alongside the very good and necessary things around making sure that you have the multi-ministry approach and that you don't have silos and that you're bolstering co-operation and all of those very important things, Mr. Speaker, that the resources are brought to bear to take a very clear look at what the shortcomings are in the system in terms of what the need is there for services and professionals and that the development of an action plan leads to just that, to action, and not to a communications exercise.

Again, Mr. Speaker, the need is there in the community, and it's fairly . . . It's readily quantified in a number of different ways. So with the action plan and the very important work of reaching out to the community, we want to see it arrive at just that. We want to see action. We want to see action on mental health and then certainly on addictions as well, and the way that some of these things present is dual diagnosis and the way that sometimes these problems come together.

But again, Mr. Speaker, any time we hear government talking about an action plan, we're always very interested to see what the action is in that action plan, and we'll be looking for that. But we know that the need is significant in the community right now.

Mr. Speaker, the minister referenced the fact the age of the Act being 27 years old and the need to do some housekeeping, keeping it up with modern practice in terms of the shift from a more centrally provided era in mental health services to more community based in terms of allowing the ministry to improve access for vulnerable persons in need, to aid in the timely delivery of mental health services, but different things in that regard, Mr. Speaker.

But again there's some fine administrative questions being considered in this legislation and some reallocating of different authorities under the Act, refining of the approach under the community treatment orders. But honestly, Mr. Speaker, if the action plan doesn't result in action — and again one of those key actions is going to be around where we're at with the health professionals that provide the mental health services — then this will be so much administrative dancing on the head of a pin unless those real questions are addressed.

So there are some useful things in this legislation to be sure, Mr. Speaker, but it's not the whole of the moon. It doesn't claim to be. But again the good steps here will be significantly bolstered and won't be in vain if that broader front of effort is undertaken.

I know other of my colleagues are very interested in joining the debate on this piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, so I will take my place and at this time adjourn debate on Bill No. 127, *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013*.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 127, *The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 128

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 128** — *The Saskatchewan Employment 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 on Bill 128, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act, 2013*. And I guess I just want to make a few opening comments in regards to the legislation that's being introduced and discussed.

And it's unfortunate that the way the government's handling of labour legislation was handled in the province. And truly when they should have consulted with the working men and women of our province, the unions, there could have been an opportunity to communicate. But unfortunately the government decided in its bully tactics and its heavy-handedness to bring in legislation that unfortunately is being challenged and is going to the Supreme Court of Canada for a ruling. And many are waiting for the ruling within the province. And whether it be the official opposition . . . I know our colleague, the critic for Labour, has made it very clear on this side of the House, the member has made it very clear he's waiting and he, you know, to see what exactly the ruling will be.

And we're hoping that at the end of the day the courts will support the appeal, and government will have to deal with their essential legislation that they introduced. It was the wrong way they've done it. And I think it's no surprise, and they shouldn't have been surprised that it was going to be challenged. And not only in, you know, the appeals court but to go further to the Supreme Court of Canada for a ruling that clearly said you're violating the workers. And I think at the end of the day the essential services legislation that they introduced truly wasn't done with consulting, wasn't done with an open dialogue with so many people that would be impacted by legislation that this government's introduced.

But again, I want to show some of the examples this government has shown. You know, when we asked them to listen and consult with Saskatchewan people, the government just goes ahead and does what it wants to do. Doesn't matter. They just want to do what they want. Their agenda. And they, you know, they have no qualms with saying, look, we're a strong government. We've got a majority of 49 seats and we'll do whatever we want. And that's how they've played it.

I've seen groups send in letters saying we are not supporting what legislation you're bringing in and on many cases we've, in this House, have shown those letters. I've talked about groups that have raised their concerns when legislation . . . when you look at even a park and I think about the La Ronge Indian Band. Clearly chief and council did not support the new provincial park that this government introduced. Pretty sad when you have a First Nations and a large First Nations, probably one of the largest First Nations in Saskatchewan, who just want to have an opportunity to talk and be heard and have some concerns about the traditional territory that this government has taken on and saying, well we're going to make a provincial park. It just goes to show you how this government's willing to bully, to heavy-handed tactics to do what they want to get their agenda because it's a campaign promise, you know, a campaign promise. So it goes to show you the correspondence were there.

But I just want to show, Mr. Deputy Speaker, clearly some of the examples of this government, the way they handled some of the files and some of the concerns that Saskatchewan residents,

Saskatchewan leaders have brought forward to this government and how the government handled it. It goes to show. So it's no surprise and there shouldn't be a surprise that this has gone to the Supreme Court of Canada for a ruling.

Now I know they're introducing, you know, Bill 128 and they're saying, well we're making some changes. And some might say it's a good start, you know, and I know some will say, well okay, let's see. Is it going far enough to make sure workers' rights are protected? Is it going far enough to make sure that they're taking the comments and the advice from the unions, from the labour movement, from the working men and women of this province that have good advice, good recommendations and are saying, yes there needs to be a balance, but at the end of the day it's the way this government chose to do it and it wasn't the right way. It was the wrong way for them to introduce, you know, essential service legislation when they did that.

You know when you look at the Bill 107, and I just want to show some comparisons. The heavy-handedness they used. We had how many years of this legislation, you know, that this government took and just rewrote it within a very short period of time as they're coming into the government to be . . . and you just look how they took that legislation and changed our Saskatchewan labour laws that were there providing protection for men and women and many residents of this province. This government chose to just go ahead and do it the way they want.

And I mean, as you said it, I think it was the comments that were used and then my colleagues talked about it, you know, this government went to war with the working men and women of this province with the unions. And that's pretty sad that that's what a government chose to do when it had such opportunity to work with those individuals, to work with the unions, the working men and women of this province.

It's pretty sad when you see a government using the bully tactics. And they bring in legislation and it's important everybody sees what's going on. But sometimes maybe they should look at the way they handle some of the situations and the heavy-handedness. Some might say maybe that's a way of bullying people to get what you want. And that is not the way Saskatchewan people want to be treated. They wanted to be treated with respect, dignity, and that's what they ask.

So when we look at the legislation and this bill that they're bringing forward, yes, I know some have said there are some changes. And you know, I know there may be some changes that lighten their previous challenge. But the point is until the Supreme Court makes its ruling, this will sit there, and government's saying they won't proclaim it until they hear the Supreme Court ruling. We'll let's just hope clearly that happens soon so that we can move forward.

But it just goes to show again, I'm talking about the way this government handles . . . And it is the government, the members opposite, that have the responsibility, the obligation to the people of this province to do the right thing. And the way this government has handled some of the business, whether we look at the labour legislation that they've reviewed, changed, the essential service legislation they've introduced without consulting, goes to show you something.

People will not sit back. And they will for a while because they gave trust to a government and they say, here you go. They've got a strong mandate. We realize that. But a lot of people are getting tired of the way they're being treated, that that government is treating Saskatchewan people when it comes to affordability, when it comes to the cost of living, when it comes to the way the cost of living is affecting them, when it comes to government ministries and ministers that are supposed to be doing the right thing for Saskatchewan, whether it's foster care, whether it's long-term care, whether it's in our health system.

This government has the mandate. They've had years and years to fix things. They've had a record revenue. I just want to show the comparisons when you don't consult and you don't take care of the business that needs to be taken care of. You will have people challenging, and they will send a message. They will send a message, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to this government, to this government. They'll send them a message. Take advantage of them. Ignore those people. And at the end of the day, they'll get the message. They'll get the message, and there'll be their time for your evaluation. And did you do what you were asked to do here? The people will judge you on that. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, like I've said clearly, people are not happy with the way some of this legislation was dealt with. We'll wait for the Supreme Court's ruling and that will determine which way we go and which way the labour movement and the unions.

And I want to remind people out there, there's many brothers and sisters within the unions that are very proud, work hard. Many people out there that are working for minimum wage. They're trying their best — part-time jobs. They're doing all they can. But there was years and years of hard work done by unions to negotiate fairness to make sure that wages, whether we look at our plumbers, our electricians. There's many professionals, many apprentices that are out there who are getting the wages, whether it's in the private sector, because of the good work, fair negotiations. That's what it is. And they have established certain rates. And that is good and many people benefit from that.

So some say oh no, no, you can't have this. It has to be a balance. And a balanced approach is the right way to go. And it can't be the heavy hand of this government the way it wants to introduce its essential legislation. It wants to change the labour laws of this land. There's years and years of hard work, dedication by many people that were in this Legislative Assembly that were working the front lines, were doing the tough job to make sure that their rights were protected, that the rights of my grandchildren, my children are protected. That's what we want.

But this government has truly chosen, chosen to do it their way again. And like I've said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the people of this province, they gave you the trust. They gave you the trust. Make sure you do right with it, because when they decide that that's enough, you'll get the message and you'll get your evaluation. Take advantage. Mock the opposition and say what you want. I've heard it from them many times, you know, the nine. That's okay. I'm proud of what I've been asked to do here and my colleagues are very proud as the opposition to raise the issues and concerns of Saskatchewan people.

When we're supposed to be an economy that's doing so great, there are so many — our seniors, people living in poverty. There is many people out there that are suffering and not doing so good in this so-called boom economy. And we're happy for those that are doing well, but there are so many left behind. There are so many not feeling the boom. So many not feeling this economy the way they hear everyone talking about. So there's a lot of challenges out there for many Saskatchewan people.

And we see the crisis going on with our farmers now, the challenges that they're getting their . . . the producers getting their market. So it just goes to show government not doing what it should have done. It is government. It is in charge. It is their role to fix things, so it's time. You know, news flash. The job is yours. You earned it by the people, now represent them right. But at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 128.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 128, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, 2013. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 129

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 129 — *The Executive Government Administration Act*** be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Glad to join debate on Bill No. 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act*.

This one's, you know, I can't decide, Mr. Speaker. There's part of me that really loves public administration and the whole machinery of government-type questions and, of course, part of me loathes them. It's a bit of a split jury over here, Mr. Speaker. And it's been interesting to watch this government approach certain of the government, the machinery of government type questions since they came in in 2007, nearly seven years ago, Mr. Speaker.

And one of the things that they've done right off the bat that I thought was a good innovation was the issuance of mandate letters for the ministers. I thought that was a good practice, a good sort of, you know, get everybody on the same page, aids in accountability, aids in the public clearly understanding what the ministers should or shouldn't be up to. And of course it was very handy for the opposition as well, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of evaluating where is this particular minister at in terms of meeting or not meeting information set out in the mandate letter. That one was, I thought, a good innovation and I think they've done best when they were a bit more close to that mark, a bit more serious about what was in the mandate letter.

Where, you know, the other changes being the changing of the nomenclature from departments to ministries, that was a very interesting adaption, Mr. Speaker, in terms of machinery of government. And we're still changing the different pieces of legislation to bring about the transfer of departments into ministries.

And you know, for me, Mr. Speaker, that wasn't so useful. I don't think it really helped the department really elevate itself into a ministry. I think, you know, at the end of the day it was still a line department providing services for the people, and I don't think that there was any great value that accrued to the public from that change. But you know, here we are, still to this day changing different pieces of legislation to bring it in line to that change in machinery of government brought about by this current regime.

[15:15]

You know, so there's been a bit of a spectrum here, a bit of they've run the gamut, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of some of the things they've done around how they have organized government. And this piece of legislation is interesting because it would seem to run the gamut itself in terms of some things that are interesting, some things that would seem to be kind of preposterous, some things that would seem to be carrying preposterous things even further down the line. It's interesting to see how this legislation goes, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But I guess, again referring to the minister's second reading speech from yesterday so it is hot off the Queen's press, and it's interesting to figure out the first thing that comes up for significant mention is:

The new legislation will remove any confusion about the organization of ministries and the assignment of ministerial responsibilities. The following changes are being made to these Acts from the current legislation.

Well thank goodness for that, Mr. Speaker. You know, finally, finally we can cut through the confusion and find out who's really responsible for what in each ministry. And I only say that partly in jest. You know, one of the things that's very important in politics is you know who's responsible for what. And if this Act aids in that, then fair enough.

But then it gets into the particulars about how this is to be accomplished, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and first up "... legislative secretaries will not need to be reappointed every year. That was a requirement that simply added unnecessary paperwork."

Now, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I've lost count, and one of the things that was nice of the yearly reappointment of who's a legislative secretary or not was it really helped you out if say you were playing legislative secretary bingo. You know, you would be able to keep your card updated in terms of who's all legislative secretary over there.

And maybe it's one of these things where there is so much paperwork because there are so many legislative secretaries. You know, it would be interesting to get a show of hands, like who's all a legislative secretary over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker? Because is it a dozen? Are there a dozen legislative

secretaries?

Maybe something that would have been better was, you know, reinforcing the accountability of those individuals in terms of what value they're going to be adding to the Legislative Assembly, to the people's welfare. Maybe there could've been some kind of reporting function attached to the Legislative Secretary duties. But you know, some of them, we can figure out what they're doing. It's good. Some of them, you know, it's like a ship goes off in the night and you never see it again, Mr. Deputy Speaker, until — at least now, Mr. Speaker — until they'd be reappointed as Legislative Secretary the year later. And then you knew, wow, they're still a Legislative Secretary, and you can keep your tally up to date.

But now, Mr. Speaker, that's too much paperwork because apparently there are so many legislative secretaries that it's an onerous task that the government had to change so, you know, away goes the yearly reappointment requirement for legislative secretaries. And to date, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's interesting. I don't have anything against the practice of Legislative Secretary appointments. I've known some legislative secretaries over the years that have done some good work. I think it provides for a better engagement of backbenchers or people that are not in cabinet. And those are all fine things.

But the practice can descend into some pretty ridiculous depths. And I think at the end of the Devine government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, if they weren't in cabinet, they were a Legislative Secretary and they got pay in perquisite that came along with that. And one of the things that's been interesting to see that, you know, the government to date hasn't engaged in the additional pay for legislative secretaries, although there are some that are sort of hybrid, so we still have questions about that. But what it seemed to be at the end of the Devine era, Mr. Deputy Speaker, was a way to get everybody even more firmly on the payroll and dipping into the public purse. And you know, also, who doesn't want an extra title, I guess. So it gave them a bit of title and a bit of extra pay and made them feel better about their lot in life.

And as you look across to the members opposite, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of the ... You know, they haven't gotten into the pay yet. We'll see where that winds up. But again the great number of legislative secretaries that have been appointed and the vastly different sort of output that is demonstrable from those individuals, Mr. Deputy Speaker, it's one of these things where it's ... is it about providing better, more effective government for the people of Saskatchewan or is it about keeping people happy in the backbench or keeping peace in the caucus? And these are some of the questions that we look at when we see the measures being brought forward here.

And like I said, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at the start of that, that bit of thinking, at least when they had to reappoint them on a yearly basis, you could keep a tally of who was a Legislative Secretary. Now I guess we'll take it on sufferance, and we'll see who sort of fades and who actually produces reports and who, you know, sort of skips away without any sort of broader responsibility. And then if you ask questions, perhaps in question period or in estimates, the minister will say, well you know, that's not really my responsibility, that's a Legislative Secretary.

And you know, it does damage to the notion of ministerial responsibility. It does damage to the notion of responsible government when you don't have clear accountability chains in terms of what those individuals are responsible for. So instead of, instead of seeking to strengthen those bonds to better accountability — better, more effective government, Mr. Deputy Speaker — what we see in here and what would, you know, what is I think a diminishing action on the way that that accountability should be on offer. So again the Legislative Secretary bingo is going to get harder to perform, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but we shall endeavour.

Second up for the actual measures in the bill are the regulations establishing ministries will not be subject to review by the legislature. This exemption is not often granted. But because it's the prerogative of the Premier to determine the organization of government, it is appropriate in this case. And again, it's appropriate in this case . . . It's sort of the, you know, proof by declaration, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Why is it appropriate? Well it's appropriate because we say it's appropriate. This doesn't do much for scrutiny, Mr. Speaker. This doesn't do much for making your decisions in the full light of public disclosure and debate that we are afforded, however good or bad, by this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, moving it into regs and moving it out of the broader light of scrutiny.

Again, does that improve the case or worsen the case for a government that said it was going to be the most accountable government, the most transparent government in the history of Saskatchewan? Again, every now and then, Mr. Speaker, we see some things that fly directly in the face of those claims that were made seven long years ago. And this would seem to be one where, again, there is greater accountability, greater transparency, and they're rolling it into the shadows of the Premier's office. So does this improve government or does it make it worse? And does it improve what government does for people? Does it improve the accountability that people expect from their government? Does it live up to the claims made by this government in 2007 in terms of accountability and transparency? I would submit that it does not, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Next up:

. . . the appointment of advisory committees to ministers will require cabinet approval in all cases. Presently this approval is required if the advisory committees' appointment is for more than one year. This will provide more accountability and oversight.

While again, Mr. Speaker, as I'd said at the outset, there's a fair range of initiatives in this legislation, and I think that one is actually not bad. You know, I think it's got some hope for it in terms of living up to what it actually proclaims it's setting out to do. So we're glad to see that:

Federal-provincial agreements will not require cabinet approval unless they require an expenditure by the government of more than \$50,000. This is consistent with agreements under section 18 of the new Act.

On the face of that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of people

being able to keep track of what their government is up to, making sure that the government is accountable and transparent, that would seem to be a fair enough endeavour.

Moving right along, Mr. Deputy Speaker:

. . . all department Acts, such as *The Department of Justice Act*, are being amended to remove the word department from their title, change all references from department to ministry or minister, and remove references to things like annual reports, seals and staff.

Again, Mr. Speaker, you know, as I'd said about my thoughts on the changing from department to ministry at the outset, like big deal. On a list of 100 sort of urgent legislative problems that the government's got to tend to, I'm sure, you know, in most other circumstances the great department versus ministry debate would have ranked about 157, but you know, it was early on in the days of this government and we see its legacy living on. So we'll see how that shakes out as well.

Returning to the minister's second reading speech:

. . . redundant grant-making and agreement-making powers are removed as they will appear in *The Executive Government Administration Act*. Exceptional grant-making and agreement-making powers will remain in their respective Acts.

Again it would seem to be fair enough. I guess we'll give it a bit more thought, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I'm sure various of my colleagues will have something to say. But again on the face of it that would seem to be fair enough.

Then moving on through the amendments, Mr. Speaker:

The Financial Administration Act is being amended to eliminate the Investment Board and provide the treasury board can have non-ministerial members. This is consistent with all other cabinet committees.

I'll be very interested to see how this goes, Mr. Speaker, because unless I've missed something in the talk around the water cooler, there are currently backbench MLAs that serve on treasury board, do I understand that correctly? And if that is the case, is this some kind of retroactive legislating of the situation, Mr. Deputy Speaker?

Again it's not . . . I've got a lot of love in my heart for the hard-working backbencher, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and finding different ways that you can engage them in the machinery of government. But I'll be interested to get a more definite explanation in terms of the whole appointing of non-cabinet members to treasury board and how that authority was arrived at, and whether or not this is in fact, you know, closing the barn door after the horse is already down the course.

So that sort of brings the review of the minister's second reading speech to a close, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Again turns ridiculous, turns fair enough in terms of the legislation here, but we'll be interested to see how this actually improves governance on behalf of the people of Saskatchewan or whether or not it . . .

Again you know, if it's in the case of the legislative secretaries and the apparently, you know, onerous paperwork attached to the yearly reappointment, well maybe it's because you've got so many legislative secretaries, Mr. Speaker. Maybe that's the problem, and maybe you should solve it by paying a bit closer attention to who's made it in the legislative secretary sweepstakes.

You know, there are a number of these things. Ministry to departments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, again it's like, you know, in case of emergency, break glass because we're going to change it from department to ministry. It's like, big deal.

Anyway with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act*.

[15:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Bill No. 130

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 130** — *The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendments Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Executive Government Administration Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and thanks of course to my colleagues for the great support. Always great to have that solid support here in the Assembly. And I'm not sure if I . . . No, no. Moose Jaw North's not in the House so I guess I didn't hear that properly, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Oh wait, wait. He's moved, he's moved. We're going to have to put a bell on him, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Then we'll be able to keep track of him. But on the other hand, Mr. Deputy Speaker, you can always hear him bellowing from someplace sooner or later. You know it's sort of like the clock hits 12 at least once a day and you know the member from Moose Jaw North's got to wonder what the heck's going on at some point. So almost like clockwork over there, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

So again in terms of legislation that I've always sort of had . . . I've always found the concept of consequential amendments to be kind of interesting, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Consequence of course implies that they're substantial or that they're, you know, ushering forth from a decision that's been made and changes to the legislation so the changes ripple through the other legislation. And in terms of, you know, the great consequence involved in terms of removing the requirement for annually reappointing legislative secretaries, I don't know that

it does justice to the word consequential, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But here we are; here we are.

So in terms of, you know, what is the consequential amendment and just playing through the changes that are made in 129, again some of them are fair enough, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Some of them, there's a concept in law I understand from my television viewing, that there's such a thing as the fruit of the poison tree and, you know, if you've got something that's poison to begin with then anything that flows from it is poisoned itself. And I'm sure there is also something, you know, fruit of the ridiculous tree in terms of ridiculous changes that are now flowing through and provided to us in consequential amendment format.

So in terms of this bill ushering forth from 129, again there's some things that are fine, there's some things that are fair enough, but there are some other things in it that are fairly ridiculous. And you know, in terms of, I don't know if it's a commentary on the legislative agenda or what, but you know, aside from obviously, you know, the shameless interventions on the part of my colleague from Athabasca, I don't know that this debate needs much more said about it at this time, Mr. Speaker.

I'll see, I'll be interested to see if any of my colleagues are interested to get into the debate. But I think I've said in the main what I had to say under Bill No. 129. And as for this one, we'll just leave it on the desk where it lays. Anyway with that, I'd move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 130, *An Act to make consequential amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Executive Government Administration Act*. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 130. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Bill No. 126

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 126** — *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be now read a second time.]

The Deputy Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To join in on Bill 126, *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Just looking at it clearly, and I know at the end of the day as we go through, and there'll be more discussions about this. And previously I know there was legislation that gave government the power to seize, and we had this talk about property from I guess illegal profits, so that someone in the act of crime doesn't benefit for their own. And it gives an opportunity for government or law enforcement officers to seize certain property, I guess dollars, whatever. And having said that, it's a tool. And what they're asking here for amendment is to amend the tool.

And they look at the cost, and some of the explanations is the cost of administration and the process that they have to go through to seize, to go to the court, for the court to have that. So there are some provisions in legislation here to provide tools to I guess the agency that would be seizing or going before the courts to seize property that I guess under crime or whatever it may be classified as, it gives them tools. But there is process. And they make it very clear in here that it's quite the process to make sure the documents, everything's in order to go ahead before the courts. And it's a costly thing, and I think this is giving amendment. But at the end of the day, I think it needs to be clear, these amendments.

And I'm hoping due diligence was done by the ministry and the Minister of Justice to make sure, you know, that the rights — and there are rights — to make sure they've talked to . . . whether the individuals out there that are within the legal profession are understanding. And there will be a process. And I know when Justice deals with these items, I want to make sure that Saskatchewan residents are protected and of course it's going through the court system. So the courts are going to make sure that, you know, we dot the i's and cross the t's, and they're going to make sure the courts will protect.

And whether this legislation goes into effect . . . And I'm not going to get into the details of it. Like I've seen some of the other stuff where we've seen government introduce legislation, and then that essential legislation that this government introduced and the change it made, it's going through the Supreme Court of Canada for a ruling.

Now all I'm going to say on this point, clearly government has to do the good work. We require that they consult, and hopefully they have done that. And maybe there's something that's needed, whether it's the individuals that are working to prepare the documents, those agencies that are working, when they're going to seize. And maybe this makes good sense and maybe it's required, and that's fine.

I know there'll be provisions. And fortunately on our side, I know sometimes we're lucky we have a couple of our members that can get into the details and really work in committee and can ask the tough questions. I'm not about to say that I truly understand, as I am no lawyer. There are individuals that can ask the tough questions and get clarification in committee and do the good work to make sure the rights of individuals are protected and the amendments and changes that we are making are clearly tools that are needed.

And according to the minister, it is something that he's heard, and obviously he's introducing this. Hopefully we have no reason to believe that it isn't. Like some legislation they've passed before, we question it. But in this case I think the minister is asking to make some amendments that I hope will make the work of agencies that seize property from, I guess, crime, it makes it easier for them and it doesn't cost Saskatchewan taxpayers a pile of money to seize small amounts of property.

So I think, you know, not saying again, going that I am a lawyer but, you know, clearly we have that and those details need to be worked out. And in committee, there's a lot of time to flush out those questions.

We have an opportunity before it goes to committee to talk to some of the, I guess the law firms that are out there, the legal professionals that are out there and have some of their questions and concerns raised so we can deal with those and deal with them in the committee.

So at this point, you know, I'm not going to ramble on on these items. But I could use other examples, you know, if that need be to happen. But at this point, I think I've showed some examples when government doesn't respond. Well here you go. Well we'll go, when government doesn't respond to the needs of Saskatchewan people clearly.

You know, I just want to make sure that they understand because maybe, you know, they couldn't hear what I was saying. So I want to go over it, Mr. Speaker.

Now unfortunately we have situations, and I'll give you an example of some of our seniors, when we see what's happening to seniors. And I think about the many seniors I met with in Creighton. Their rents have gone up to 30 per cent. And honestly, to see some of them share their frustration, their frustration, their concern for their friends who are saying they're not sure if they can meet the rent increase. They're very concerned with covering their medical, transportation, their medications, the food. There are so many challenges facing them, the cost of living in these communities. And they say, here's a government again that doesn't listen.

And they feel like they have done their job. They've worked hard for this province. And here we have ministers and a government that's supposed to be taking care of our seniors who have paid the ultimate price, have done . . . They're veterans. You should be ashamed of yourselves. They are veterans. And there they are, asking them to pay \$1,200 a month in a senior's unit. Asking seniors, raising, raising . . . I want to show, I want to show . . . Mr. Speaker, I want to show an example of where government doesn't listen so that when the law profession brings clearly recommendations and suggestions, the government will listen.

So in like this bill, you know, when you look at the bill itself, the bill that's coming forward, that's being asked to be amended, the amendments that we were referring to and that the government has asked for clearly is coming forward. Now having said that, I was showing examples of when government doesn't listen. When government does not listen to the people, whether it's seniors, whether it's . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, that's exactly it. Whether it's seniors . . . an amendment. And this bill's going to amend some of the tools that the agencies will use, the agencies will use when they go to seize property, as I said before.

But I was showing, Mr. Speaker . . . But they want to hear more about it, about when government doesn't listen, when government has a responsibility to hear what the Saskatchewan people have to say. They may not like it, but this government has the responsibility to serve the people of this province. And when they raise concerns, government should listen, whether it's petitions, long-term care, whether it's the needs of health professionals. There are so many needs out there.

But I just want to show examples, just examples, Mr. Speaker,

when government doesn't listen when they amend bills, when they amend bills. Again back when they amend a bill . . . Bill 126, if that's what they want. They want to hear the number. They amend Bill 126. So a criminal . . . Clearly, clearly, one they amended. I just wanted to show some examples. They don't like it, but that's okay. That's okay. They don't have to like it. Because the people of this province, the people of this province, clearly of this province want to make sure their concerns, their issues are brought forward.

So in this case, they're amending this. This provides . . . And Bill 126, Bill 126 will give some tools to the agencies to do the good work that they're doing, to do the good work that they are doing. It's a tool. It's about cost, saving costs. And that's what people are trying to tell the government, save money. So at the end of this, Bill 126, I'm prepared to adjourn on Bill 126. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment . . . No. Okay, the minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 126, *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill 126, *The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

[15:45]

Bill No. 109

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Boyd that **Bill No. 109 — *The Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm once again pleased to stand today to give a very few comments on this particular bill. I think what's really important for the people of Saskatchewan to know that *The Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act* really talks about the impact that 40,000 Saskatchewan people may feel as a result of the changes in this Act. We see that *The Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act* really is a valuable tool to develop our economy. And as we've mentioned from time to time, and our leader has indicated and dictated to his team that it's important to note that when the government is doing certain things correctly, that we ought to support that notion.

And when I look at this particular bill, Bill 109, when we see some of the objectives and the targets of having *The*

Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act increase its activity by 25 per cent by 2016, that it's something that we want to encourage because we think that as you have more investing in Saskatchewan businesses, that is a good thing. It certainly fits well with the Saskatchewan NDP smart growth strategy. And, Mr. Speaker, some of the investment that is needed to look at innovative approaches and certainly for new products, that it's something that I think that the people of Saskatchewan support. And we want to see the economy of Saskatchewan continue to build and continue being very strong.

So, Mr. Speaker, on Bill 109, *The Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act*, we think that 40,000 people are not doing anything wrong. We think that the investment that they have made is a good investment. It's going to help the economy. It's going to help bring innovative products. It's going to provide for new products. And, Mr. Speaker, it's going to be a bigger tool and a more valuable tool as we continue to build the Saskatchewan economy for years to come. So on that note I'm pleased to offer those final comments on Bill 109.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the minister that Bill 109, *The Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act, 2013* be now read the second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to the Standing Committee on the Economy.

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

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 member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, a few comments on this particular bill, *The Builders' Lien Amendment Act*. What we're doing here, Mr. Speaker, on this particular Act is that we're just trying to make sure that we include land surveyors and professional surveyors when we talk about the whole process of the relationship of construction between the landowner, the builder, and all the subtrades that are involved. I understand that land surveyors and professional surveyors were not included under the builders' lien process,

and this is something that we also want to support and we also want to incorporate.

We also notice that there is some wording changes on defining the completion of contracts, Mr. Speaker. We also see that there's a limitation period that's being increased from one year to two years in terms of resolving some of the disputes around the builders' lien processes, Mr. Speaker. And we think that in terms of meeting the balance between the rights and obligations of landowners, the challenge and investment attached to the builders, and of course all the professionals that provide and assist the investors in building these units, that all of this construction, this team of construction people and landowners and builders and so on and so forth, that we have to make every concerted effort to make sure that we professionalize that service and we have good understanding of who does what, when, where, and how, and what the obligations are and what the legal obligations are between all these parties.

We think that that's something that ought to always have the attention of government. And as I indicated at the outset, our leader is not going to be wasting a lot of time. If there's certain things that are going along well, certain bills that are intended to enhance Saskatchewan's economy overall, that we as an opposition would want to support that and continue moving that agenda forward because this economy of Saskatchewan is fragile. We have to continue building it and building it for years to come. So those are my final comments on this particular bill, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 102, *The Builders' Lien Amendment Act, 2013* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

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

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

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

Bill No. 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 Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again, just to recapture what the intent of the bill is, Bill 103, the

maintenance enforcement Act, Mr. Speaker, I think what's really impressive, that as I look at the bill itself and you see that the maintenance enforcement office, the individuals and the staff and the team that go after payments from different parents that are either separated or have been divorced or involved with children, that many times there are the difficult tasks of tracking down the parents and ensuring that they provide the adequate supports to the children. And that's something that we certainly want to stress is really important. To strengthen the Saskatchewan family overall, they've got to have the proper care and you've got to have the support mechanisms in place for many — the single mothers and single fathers out there — that may be struggling to make ends meet.

So as I look at the bill itself under the maintenance enforcement orders, so to speak, you see a very impressive number that the collection rate for some of the arrears in the child enforcement payment orders is at 91 per cent. And that shows that the staff and this team are doing a remarkable job of tracking down parents that are trying to shy away from the responsibility of caring, not so much caring, but paying for some of the costs of raising children. And I think the rate of 91 per cent is certainly a very impressive number, Mr. Speaker. We certainly wish it was 100 per cent, but in this day and age, 91 per cent is certainly a very impressive number.

The other thing that I think is important, how do you translate that into dollars? According to the information that we received, it is a net effect of \$39 million that is being collected through this office that is going to support children in this province that certainly need that support. And the single moms or the single dads that are out there trying to help make ends meet, I'm sure that they appreciate the maintenance order enforcement office and seeing that the collections of \$39 million in one single year is something that's very, very impressive.

Now, Mr. Speaker, people should know that there are a lot of provisions out there and there are a lot of laws. And there's the long arm of the law when it talks about meeting your obligation as a parent in the event that you do have a separation or divorce or it was just something that was not meant to be in terms of staying together, that nowadays if you have children and then you try and not meet your responsibilities, there's a number of steps that are being allowed nowadays, and that includes garnishing salary. That also includes suspending your driver's licence. That also excludes, from the federal scene, denying your passport and also intercepting any GST [goods and services tax] refunds you might have as a parent that is not meeting their obligation, or income tax refunds.

That kind of pressure, that kind of law, that kind of incentive for people to pay, there's a series of not only provincial and territorial steps, but there's also the federal collaboration ensuring that folks that have obligations for child support are not finding ways in which they're able to shy away from that responsibility. And now what this particular bill does, Mr. Speaker, it not only defines the success of the maintenance enforcement office, it also defines what the rules are in terms of what the current laws are.

And now there's one more being added to this bill, Bill 103, and that is also denying hunting and fishing licences. So if you are a parent that is not meeting their obligations, then rest

assured that the maintenance enforcement office will be on your case. They'll be looking for you. Rest assured that they can garnishee your salary if they find out where you're at. Rest assured that they can suspend your driver's licence if you're not meeting your obligation. Rest assured that they can deny you passports, and rest assured that any kind of dollars that you may have coming in from the federal or provincial government — whether it's GST refunds, income tax refunds — that they can take that money as well. And now you'd be denied hunting and fishing licences as another step in trying to stem the challenges of making parents that are not meeting their obligations to make them pay and keep up with their maintenance enforcement order.

So, Mr. Speaker, this is something that I think is really important overall for the many single parents that are out there, the single moms. And I know there are many single moms out there and there are many single dads out there as well. And it just shows that it is important that we recognize their particular challenge. And it is something that we, within the caucus, the opposition caucus are always vigilant in ensuring that the proper supports are there for young parents, young, single parents that have the challenge of child care, proper housing, health care, and the list goes on as to the many challenges that many of these young, single and older, single parents face as they raise children in this day and age.

So we can basically tell them that we certainly hear your challenge. We hear your plight. And that the maintenance enforcement process to ensure that you have your child support in a timely fashion, there's always ways to improve that process. And when we see evidence of this sort, it is something that we want to continue seeing the government focus on. And this is one step in the right direction by adding a component of denying hunting and fishing licences to those parents that are not meeting their family obligations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 103, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013* be now read a second time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred?

I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 103, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

Bill No. 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 Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again Bill 104 is really a companion piece to the previous bill that I spoke about. It really relates to the child enforcement office in the sense that they've added a new provision that not only do you lose your driver's licence or you can't apply for a passport or they can garnishee your salary; now as I indicated earlier, that they can also deny you a hunting licence or a fishing licence.

And what this Bill 104 is, a consequential amendment Act which in the sense you can't have one Act enforced on the Justice front and not have a collaborative Act on the many other departments of government. So what this consequential amendment Act does, it's really a supportive Act. It's a supportive process of the Bill 103 to make sure that all the rules around issuing hunting licences and fishing licences are addressed right across the board when it comes to government services.

So the consequential amendment Act really is about being a supportive piece of legislation that is required to put in place the measures to ensure that the child enforcement office is able to successfully seek out the parents that are not meeting their obligations. And I think that's really a straightforward adjustment to what every department has to do when it comes to the ideals behind the previous Bill 103. And this Bill 104 is primarily going to be done to support that process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 104, *The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Consequential Amendment Act, 2013* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — To which committee shall this bill be referred?

I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

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

[16:00]

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 Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Again I'm very pleased to stand here and give our final few comments in the Assembly about Bill 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act*. And, Mr. Speaker, what this informal public appeals Act is primarily trying to do here is it's trying to address the spontaneous appeals made to the public after families or communities or individuals go through an emergency traumatic experience, as an example fire or flood or a particular challenge to their community or their home.

And as you know, the Saskatchewan people are fantastic people for helping each other out. We've seen that evidenced time and time again. Telemiracle again is another great example. And we really want to commend the Saskatchewan people for their kindness and their show of compassion and support, especially towards families that have had emergencies. I think that's really important.

We've seen a lot of evidence of that over time. And recently Saskatchewan, with their flooding, with some of the issues around fires, and some of the trauma caused to our family, it's important that we encourage as a government, and certainly as an opposition, that we encourage and foster the proper support so that when families are going to get helped by a particular group or a group of individuals or three or four trustees that's saying, look, they want to do their part in helping families through a trauma . . . And there's a lot of goodwill. There's a lot of goodwill.

And this bill, the 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act*, really is trying to clarify the process when you do want to do the public appeal to help a certain family or help a certain individual or help a certain group out of a very traumatic experience. And what they're trying to do is put some process into how they report the funding and how much they make and what they do with the proper accounting of that fund. So a lot of trustees that embark on an effort to try and help a family, you know, they can raise X amount of dollars, and all they want to do in order for them to feel good about their activity and their donation of time is to make sure that the money is well spent.

And obviously some of the questions we have on this particular bill we've asked earlier in the schedule in terms of, you know, does this require more process that the government is going to inflict upon some of the groups and organizations that might be doing this out of the goodness of their heart? So is there going to be more documents for us to fill out for government? The questions like, how many complaints have the government actually received from the different organizations that are out there doing this good work? Where are the concerns coming from? Like is it coming from the rural areas, the urban areas, coming from certain groups in a certain geography, from a certain area? And, Mr. Speaker, these are some of the questions we have on this particular bill.

And we certainly, through the committee process, we're going to ask those questions because it's really important for us as an opposition to basically say, if there are processes that are going to help the people of Saskatchewan show their compassion and they're able to do that without fear of misspent money and without fear of the government coming there and saying this was done illegally, then we're all in support of making sure the process is fair, accountable, and transparent. That's what we're about. But if it's all about the government themselves trying to discourage that activity, to try and harness some of the goodwill that the people of Saskatchewan have towards helping each other out, then of course we have some of the concerns and questions that we will ask during the committee phase.

So I think it's important that people out there know that there is a lot of good-willed people in our province that do the right thing at the right time. And many times you can't plan these things out because of the emergency basis of a certain incident. So a lot of the Saskatchewan families and people rise to the occasion. They do a bunch of fundraising to help each other out. And this bill is really talking about how we legitimately understand what was fundraised, how the money's going to be used, and that there be a proper procedure in place to make sure that all the goodwill is not spent on things that are not proper. And that's something that I think overall that we would look at and that we would certainly want to clarify a few questions we have during the committee process.

And, Mr. Speaker, that's all the comments I have on this particular bill. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Law Clerk and Parliamentary Counsel: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I designate that Bill No. 105, *The Informal Public Appeals Act* be referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

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

Bill No. 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 Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's always a pleasure to wade into debate about bills before us here today, and today I have the opportunity to talk about Bill 106, *The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2013*.

I think one of the things that's important to talk about when we're talking about bills before us, before I get into what the bill is about, is consultation. With whom has the government spoken? Have they . . . When a bill comes forward, you want to know why a bill is before us. Who asked for the bill? Are the things that impact stakeholders found in the bill? Are there any unintended consequences? Those are all things that you need to look at when a bill is before you, and consider.

I know in the minister's second reading speech, he does mention that this bill was proposed at the request of the Law Society of Saskatchewan, which is the body that it impacts. So that consultation piece seems to be done there, Mr. Speaker.

But I know sometimes when this government has said that they've consulted, it's kind of like the game, telephone. Someone says something on one end of the telephone, and by the time you get to the end of the telephone conversation it's something very different. In our experience here in this House, Mr. Speaker, someone may have said something in consultations, and it becomes something very different in legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I have my own experience actually. I had the opportunity last summer to sit on the Traffic Safety Committee, and we had many, many people come before us recommending a number of different proposals — and people who have far more experience than any of us in this House — on the issue of traffic safety.

We had people . . . So in two particular areas on impaired driving, we had experts, someone who has more than 30 years of experience in traffic safety in Canada, Mr. Speaker. We had Mothers Against Drunk Driving. We had someone who works directly with individuals who've been caught drinking and driving or driving while impaired. And they put forward suggestions at the committee level and this government . . . those suggestions looked very different when they got to this legislature in the proposed legislative changes, Mr. Speaker.

Around booster seats, we had the Canadian Paediatric Society make very specific recommendations, and we had the committee both . . . all members of this all-party committee heard what the people or heard what the Canadian Paediatric Society said. I was in the meeting. Everybody, both sides were incredibly enthusiastic. But when that bill was introduced or those changes were introduced here, which we will be passing in a few months, Mr. Speaker, it was very different than what the Canadian Paediatric Society had actually recommended and what other jurisdictions do. So sometimes in the consultation process, things start out well with this government and don't always finish as they should. So I am glad that the minister has consulted or that these recommendations have come forward from the Law Society of Saskatchewan, but some of the questions that will be asked down the road here is, are these the changes then in fact that the Law Society in fact asked for?

So what does this bill do? The minister outlines that first there

will be a provision clarifying that in regulating the lawyers, the law profession, the public interest is paramount over the interest of members being disciplined. That is a reasonable change, Mr. Speaker. Obviously public interest should be paramount at all times and I think most if not all endeavours upon which people embark, public interest is absolutely imperative.

Secondly, the society is given more control over the number of elected members on its council to accommodate demographic changes and improve governance. So in fact I think this change, if I'm looking at the existing provision and the explanatory notes, one of the pieces . . . So obviously we've had, in terms of demographic changes we've had people move throughout the province. There's heavier concentration in population perhaps in some of our urban centres. An increase in population. So one of the particular changes is that the numbers of public representative benchers has changed from four to not less than four, recognizing that I think this is probably acknowledging the increase in population and this permits additional public representatives to be appointed if appropriate. So when it comes to good governance too, obviously a body needs to be able to have in place the members that it needs to do that work.

As well, a third change, there are a number of amendments that the minister points out that provide the Law Society with the ability to recruit persons who are not members of council or lawyers to assist with investigations and hearings. The minister goes on to say that this is designed to increase flexibility and avoid delays in proceedings.

So obviously everybody in any legal process, whether it's in our courts or in this case here, the disciplinary hearing of someone who has been charged or is said to have done something inappropriate, a quick and speedy hearing is always important. Justice served is best done if it's done in a timely manner, Mr. Speaker. So speeding up that process or being able to speed up that process by perhaps adding other learned people is a good idea, Mr. Speaker. Timelier decision making is important in order for people to get on with their lives, both perhaps the lawyer who is before the Law Society and the individual or individuals who brought the case forward or the issue forward that needs to be dealt with.

And the final piece, Mr. Speaker, the minister outlines that:

. . . the statutory exemption from liability for good faith decisions is being extended to the Law Foundation and members of the Law Foundation to help encourage volunteers to undertake this . . . activity . . . There are also several changes in the rule-making power of the society [as well.]

So again these seem like very reasonable changes. But ultimately when it gets to committee, we'll have the opportunity to ask the minister questions about the consultation process and further questions about some of his changes, making sure that they are in fact doing what the minister said they are going to do.

But I do know I've got colleagues who would like to weigh in on this debate at a later time. So with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill 106, *The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2013*.

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 member for Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's again my pleasure to be up speaking to a bill, and on this occasion it's Bill 113, *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013*. I'd like to talk a little bit about what this bill will do. But again going back to the consultation piece, the minister outlines in his second reading speech that these changes are being introduced as a result to a recent consultation respecting vulnerable adults. And I think the question and some of the questions that we'll be following up with in committee is, with whom did this government consult? In what ways? Did they reach out to everybody who is impacted by this legislation to ensure that all the necessary voices and perspectives were heard?

So consultation, real and meaningful consultation when you're making changes to legislation, implementing any kind of public policy is so important so you make sure that there are not unintended consequences to make sure that those who are impacted by the bill are considered in the development and implementation of the bill.

[16:15]

So what does Bill 113, *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act* do? The minister outlines that as a result of the consultations — he doesn't say with whom but — it was determined that there were some aspects of the law around powers of attorney that were unclear. And he points to an example that the law was not clear about an enduring power of attorney's authority to make gifts from an adult's property.

So one of the goals of this bill, the minister says, is to clarify this. So a power of attorney can make gifts in, with this new legislation, in the following circumstances:

... if the document creating the power of attorney specifically authorizes 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 she or he had capacity [themselves]. And finally, if the court authorizes the gift.

So clarifying that. Any time in legislation if something is unclear, there can be room for perhaps not the best outcome.

I think clarification is undoubtedly a good idea here, Mr. Speaker. The bill also allows regulations to set a fee schedule for someone acting under a power of attorney. And it's interesting, Mr. Speaker. In this job, we all come to this place with certain experiences and expertise, I suppose, or focuses in certain areas. But there's lots that we have to learn when we come to this place, Mr. Speaker. And I knew very little about power of attorney actually until very recently. When something comes before you, you have to learn a little bit more quickly about it. But I didn't realize at one point that powers of attorney were actually paid, Mr. Speaker. So that's an interesting piece. But so this bill allows:

... regulations to set a fee schedule for someone acting under a power of attorney. The fee schedule will come into effect if the document creating the power of attorney does not specify the fees to be received and if there is no court order establishing the fee to which the attorney is entitled.

And the minister also points out that:

There are several amendments dealing with the requirement for an attorney to account for his or her handling of the property of the donor. They are divided between accountings that occur during the exercise of the power of attorney and accountings that occur after the power ends.

In this bill as well, The Public Guardian and Trustee is given new powers to carry out an investigation to ensure the accuracy of an accounting.

And the minister points out that "... regulations will prescribe the form of an accounting."

So I think it's always interesting in legislation. Obviously not everything is laid out in legislation. Often it can be in regulation. But so there'll be some questions, I think, for the minister around what that accounting will look like or how those new powers to carry out an investigation to ensure the accuracy of an accounting will look like, what the form of the accounting will look like.

The minister points out that:

For mid-term accounting, the court is given the power to remove an attorney if the accounting is not satisfactory. [And he also points out that] A final accounting occurs at the conclusion of the attorney's power such as when the donor dies, a property guardian is appointed, or the court removes that attorney.

Again I think about coming to this place and maybe we don't all have knowledge in every single area. I've just recently, in my own office, have learned a little bit more about the role of a property guardian, Mr. Speaker, and how important that is.

So around this accounting piece:

The final accounting must be provided within six months. 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. With these improvements ...

The minister goes on to point out that the goal of this bill is to protect vulnerable adults who have given a power of attorney, and so this power of attorney is further enhanced.

I know again we will have questions when this bill moves to committee. And I know that I will have colleagues who stand on their feet here and participate in adjourned debates and will have much to say about Bill No. 113, *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act*. But with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on 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.

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 Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To join in the debate on Bill 114, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Amendment Act, 2013*. It talks about three areas in here. And it's an amendment to an Act, and I think it clarifies, and it does that. It provides some clarification for day-to-day treatment for someone who is in long-term care or in a health facility, about the day-to-day care. And I guess the regulations will determine the day-to-day care that a patient or a resident requires.

So there'll be regulations designed that's saying what is the day-to-day care. And then it provides in there, if no family member is available, next of kin family member, whether there is no directive from the patient on the day-to-day care, then this gives provision for a health care caregiver to provide the day-to-day treatment saying yes, this is what needs to happen. So this gives some clarification I think as probably something that's been long waited for by the health care, individuals who provide health care out there for patients. And this will clarify it.

So that does one area where it clarifies the role and when it's needed and the regulations. When we talk we'll make it very clear as to who has . . . [inaudible]. And I want to get into that because the other side of that, when you're looking at the second part of this, it talks about clear legislation and rules. This is what this is going to do. It's going to once and for all clarify who has the responsibility when it comes to the day-to-day treatment of a patient when that patient is not able to give their consent, there isn't a family member close to provide, I guess, advice to the facility that's providing the day-to-day care of that patient or their loved one.

The legislation would then clarify clearly who has the

jurisdiction to provide that. Now it doesn't state in here other than day-to-day, and it says clearly that will be determined in the regulations. They will consult. They will go out and talk to many of the providers that provide. And it sounds like in this part of the amendment they have done that. They refer to that about the groups and many individuals that they went out and consulted. And I'm glad that they done that. And in this case it makes sense and it's good. Yes, it's all right to criticize but sometimes when the consultation and the good work is done, that's great and we want to see that.

And it looks like it's been asked once and for all, something that needs to be clarified from the health care profession and those that provide care for our loved ones that we need to make it very clear. If there isn't a family member, if there isn't a directive by the patient, when can the health caregiver say as a caregiver, the day-to-day treatment, we say this is what's needed and they can do that for the person that they're supposed to care? Just to take care of the best interests of the patient at the end of the day. I think this is clarifying it.

It also goes into a section of power of attorney where someone has decided to have a power of attorney over them. It's going to clarify I think in the health profession that the power of attorney, those individuals do not have . . . And I think, and this is what I'm trying to, being not a lawyer again, but I think it's trying to clarify that individuals, whether it's one, two, somebody has power of attorney for themselves. If they don't have the directive to the doctor or to be clear on whether they come into a situation where the power of attorney, the individuals that have been appointed, the person has, that they don't have the power to do certain things when it comes to health.

It talks about the finances, to make sure that is being dealt with. And I think what this is trying to clarify, if I'm correct, is clearly that they don't have, as power of attorney, when it comes to a directive, if a family member decides that should their health condition get to the point where they need to pull the plug . . . And some will leave those directives and some will not. But if those situations come up where the power of attorney does not — and I clearly, whether it's one, two, however is appointed — have the power to tell doctors, to my understanding if this is clear, to pull the plug if that was the case.

Because their loved one, they want to keep them or not. If there's no directive by that person, then I guess it's up to the doctor, the family doctor or the doctor that is providing the care will determine. And maybe they'll talk to the family. Maybe they'll talk to the power of attorney individuals and they'll say, well, we hear you. And it might be family members that are . . . We hear your concerns, but unfortunately the doctor may, you know . . . And we'll get clarification. And I think at the end of the day, the caregiver, whether it be the doctor in a hospital or a long-term care, will determine what decision will be made. But clearly I think the power of attorney does not have that power, but caregivers do have a day-to-day treatment.

So there's some amendments that's being proposed I think and giving some clarification, which is good. And it allows people to do the treatment, the day-to-day treatment to take care of our loved ones. And those are the most vulnerable, adults and

caregivers, to provide that if there isn't family members, loved ones close that can make day-to-day . . . So there are some things that are being clearly dealt with and clarified in this amendment.

So at this point I know there'll be more discussions in committee and as the regulations come out and are developed to make it very clear and clear it up and with the consultation in the health profession, the caregivers, families. I encourage and I hope the government will go out and make sure they are consulting and getting the information they need to provide good legislation and clarification that's probably been asked and needed for some time. And I think that's why the amendment's here. So at this point I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this bill.

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 Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise on Bill No. 115, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2013* which, as the minister pointed out, there's several pieces, or a few pieces of legislation before us dealing with protecting vulnerable adults. I just had the opportunity to speak to *The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013*, which I think goes in some measure with this particular bill, Bill No. 115, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act*.

So one of these things that this bill does, it removes the provisions respecting certificates of incapacity from *The Mentally Disordered Persons Act*, allowing that legislation to be repealed. The minister points out in his comments that in the former Act the terminology, the word incompetence, many people in the consultations found that objectionable, and I understand why.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is language matters. I know just a few years before this, Mr. Speaker, my colleague from Saskatoon Centre brought forward a private member's bill around removing the R-word from all legislation here in Saskatchewan. Language does matter. I think it sends a signal about how we view people.

And I never used to think that, Mr. Speaker. I was a reporter for 12 years and I always, when we used to talk about gender-neutral language . . . and for a very long time I scoffed

at that and never really saw the importance of language until actually I became a mother. And I was an at-home mother, Mr. Speaker, and it started to dawn on me as people . . . as I was an at-home mother and people would say to me, oh, so you don't work. Or they referred to working mothers. And I was a mother who was at home with my oldest daughter at the time. And I was in fact a working mother. I think all mothers are working mothers. So I think my point here, Mr. Speaker, is language matters.

So being able to repeal that particular . . . *The Mentally Disordered Persons Act*, and changing terminology from incompetence to the concept of capacity or incapacity is a positive step. And in fact I know the minister had said in consultation that is one of the things that came up.

[16:30]

I want to just go back to something I've said earlier in a bill today around the consultation piece. The minister didn't point out with whom he's had consultations, and those are things that we will talk about once this bill gets to committee. With whom did the minister consult? Are all those parties who are impacted, are all those people who are impacted by this particular piece of legislation in on the consultation process? Was it thorough and meaningful?

Another thing that this bill does, it creates a new ability for physicians to examine a person for capacity without a request from a chief psychiatrist and a reduction in the time period that can be imposed between re-examination for capacity from one year to six months.

I should talk a little bit about what in fact the public guardian and trustee does. You know, Mr. Speaker, I actually had no knowledge of this before becoming an MLA. And I actually have had several cases come into my office, either with concerns about public guardianship and trusteeship or wondering how this happens. So I just want to say that the mandate of the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee — I think it's important for us to understand that while we're talking about the bill — is to protect the property rights of children under the age of 18, to manage the financial or personal affairs of adults who are incapable of managing those affairs, monitor other guardians, and investigate allegations of financial abuse, administer the estates of deceased persons and missing persons, and hold and administer unclaimed property. So that's what we're talking about here when we're talking about the public guardian and trustee.

So the minister again had talked about, this is about addressing concerns for vulnerable adults and I just . . . a previous bill that we had spoken to earlier today on power of attorney, and then this all ties in with the public trustee. There's some changes that I haven't seen. I may be missing them in this suite of legislation, but I know from anecdotal and personal experience people can be very frustrated, particularly with trying to gain power of attorney over a vulnerable adult.

In my own family, last year my nephew who passed away very tragically this summer, his parents actually tried very hard last spring to gain power of attorney. And my nephew was 23 and was bipolar, and at times did not have the capacity to make

good decisions for himself, and his parents tried very hard. It's a very costly process and very time-consuming and they were not able to . . . it wasn't the tool that . . . The tools weren't there for them to be able to undertake that process.

And I have another . . . I had the opportunity after my nephew passed away to talk to a few other people about powers of attorney. I know one example of a physician in Saskatoon whose grown son has an acquired brain injury and was hospitalized. And I believe he needed to be intubated and wasn't eating. And the doctor said, well he doesn't want to eat. He's a grown man. He doesn't need to eat. But the mother, who also happened to be a doctor, was very insistent that her grown son would die if he did not have some nutrition. And she also tried going through the process, or had initially looked into it and discovered it was not only incredibly costly but very difficult and time-consuming.

So I don't know in the minister's consultations if that piece came up at all, but I'd be interested in hearing further, perhaps when these bills come before him in committee, if those kinds of scenarios had come up and if there were . . . They don't seem to be addressed in these particular bills before us, but I'd be interested in knowing if that was something that was flagged for him.

Some of the other amendments:

. . . update the powers of the Public Guardian and Trustee by adding the power to revoke an acknowledgment to act that was signed in error, and adding the power to administer the estate of a deceased dependent adult client of the public trustee and guardian pending administration by someone who's not a court-ordered personal representative.

The minister also says this bill “. . . updates references to legislation in a number of places that adopt the word incapacity and other legislation that references the Act.”

Again, I know the minister — I'm going to say this again — but the minister had said this came from consultation process. And our experience with this government on consultation, it hasn't been incredibly strong. The stance is that they engage in consultation and often will listen, but don't often hear what people are saying, or they choose to ignore what people are saying. So I'd be curious to again press the minister a little bit on this consultation piece and find out if what is in the bill is in fact what he heard from stakeholders, people who will be impacted by this legislation.

But I know that I have other colleagues who are interested in discussing Bill No. 115, *The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2013*. And I look forward to at some point down the road hearing what the minister has to say further in committee. But with that I'd like to move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate of 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.

Bill No. 116

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 116** — *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Well good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and I'm very pleased to be able to get up today and enter into the debate once again on Bill No. 116, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013*. We have the benefit of really good, extensive comments by the minister on this particular bill. And I have to say, Mr. Speaker, that's something that's appreciated because too often we are left guessing what the intent of the government is.

And I think the second reading speeches by the ministers aren't something that we in the opposition look to very carefully. But I think it's also something that the members of the public do look for. And certainly when bills are being interpreted by the legal profession, I know that those kinds of comments add a lot of context and background information for interpretation of bills. So I do want to congratulate the minister for his extensive comments and his guidance in terms of what the government's attempting to do in this particular piece of legislation.

Simply put, *The Municipalities Amendment Act*, the main thrust of the bill is to add a new kind of character to the municipal framework, and that's a beast that's being referred to as a municipal district. And I'll get into that in a little bit, Mr. Speaker.

But we see the government reflecting, I think, a reality that is out there in rural areas certainly, and some smaller urban areas as well. And I think if you look back at the history of this province, you know, when you look at the numbered municipalities, I think it was . . . there's up to 560, maybe, numbered municipalities. But I believe in Saskatchewan now there is only around 250, somewhere in that area, municipalities. So of all the municipalities that were created rurally, you know, about half of them have actually changed, disappeared, been amalgamated into other municipalities, or simply aren't functioning anymore as municipalities. So we see this in rural Saskatchewan in any number of areas of course, Mr. Speaker.

And you would know, coming from a rural area, some towns have disappeared completely. Many towns which were once thriving are now hamlets or villages, and a much smaller sort of population base. And certainly the depopulation in the countryside, where we see farms getting larger but the population, farm population, certainly getting smaller. So when it comes to municipal government, which isn't an easy task, I think even municipalities finding enough people to volunteer to be councillors is often a struggle for a lot of rural municipalities. And finding the people with the energy and the time and the commitment that they can put into being contributing members to the council of the municipality isn't an easy task.

And I think I understand, in reading the minister's comments here, that the thrust for the amendments has come basically from consultations and representations by the municipality associations, the various . . . well both SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association]. And apparently, according to his comments, there was an actual request coming from the SUMA to provide this kind of flexibility in terms of creating a new beast called the municipal district.

One of the areas . . . There's five areas of change I guess, and I could maybe address those right now in terms of my initial comments here. The first area of change is to determine whether unincorporated areas and communities have capacity to have local governance, municipal status. So apparently there's a concern that the criteria simply isn't there right now. And the desire and the intent of the bill is to create the legislative capacity to determine whether or not an unincorporated area would have the capacity to provide their own governance.

Secondly and conversely, this would be where there's the second part of the Act where changes is to give some criteria for action when municipalities are no longer able to function and meet their statutory requirements as local governments. And I think this is really important for legislation to reflect these kinds of realities, Mr. Speaker.

I can speak with some experience on that in relation to conservation and development area authorities. And back in the '60s when water management was becoming an important issue, there was a piece of legislation, *The Conservation and Development Act*. And what it did is allowed for the creation of a whole number of conservation development and area authorities. And they were created all over the place, willy-nilly. Often they were represented by the local rural municipal council. Sometimes it was a completely separate board that was created.

And what happened I think is the same thing happened there as it has in other areas of rural Saskatchewan. With depopulation and perhaps no need for active water management, the area authority simply stopped functioning. So on the books you would have an area authority that was duly incorporated pursuant to the legislation, but in reality it didn't exist. And in fact the original members of the board were often gone or passed away or not even locatable.

So back in the day when I was working with the federal government on treaty land entitlement, we often came upon . . . because those authorities had the ability to tax and issue levies on rural ratepayers in order to create works for water management, for example, channelization or dikes or any kind of water control structures. They had the authority to issue levies. So when it came time for treaty land entitlement and clearing off all the interest that existed provincially on the lands, quite often we would come across a conservation development area authority that simply was not locatable. These people no longer functioned as an area authority, but it was considered to be a burden on the title of the land, and it was very difficult to pursue reserve creation with these lands.

So I know that the problem was in the Act. And I'm not sure which minister's actually responsible for *The Conservation and*

Development Act, but there is no provision in that Act to do what the minister is proposing in this Act, and that's the ability to de-create I guess the municipality or the ability to de-create a conservation and development area authority. So I think this is a prudent move on this part. And the recommendations from SUMA and SARM make a lot of sense in terms of dealing . . . having a way to move forward when municipalities are no longer able to function and meet the requirements as a local government.

And I guess that leads into the third and the most important part of this legislation and that is, well, if a local municipality's struggling, perhaps its neighbour municipality is struggling as well, and there might be some opportunity for them to work together voluntarily. And so the minister has made some significant changes to the Act and has created a — proposing to create a beast — a legislative entity called a municipal district. So this is a new creation, and it's a new addition to our fabric of municipal governance here in Saskatchewan. So I'm going to talk about that a little bit more later.

Fourth there is a new opportunity here for citizens. And I think this is something that as well has come to the minister because of letters and concerns that have been raised by individuals about the inability to have a good look at audits and financial management of their local operations. So I know you don't want to give the opportunity for an individual, a disgruntled citizen to be able to, you know, constantly demand accountability from rural municipalities. I mean certainly that could be used as tool against efficient functioning of the rural municipality, but certainly I think the local individuals should be able. If there is a problem and if there is a valid concern, there has to be a mechanism to do that. And I'll talk about that a little bit more in a minute.

[16:45]

Finally the fifth aspect of the bill as indicated by the minister is to enhance both property owners' and the minister's ability to ensure municipal compliance with legislation and regulations and to constrain the potential misuse of local property tax tools and tax abatements.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think I want to focus most of my comments at this point on the creation of a municipal district. This is found in section 51 I believe of the . . . or it's an amendment to section 51 of the existing Act, municipalities Act. And it is found . . . I just have to find the place here if you just hang on one second. There we are, 51.1.

So what this talks . . . It walks us through the process. The new section 51.1 is added after section 51, and it walks us through the process that's going to be required to create a municipal district. Again the minister was quite clear in his comments about what the goals are here, and he was very specifically clear about that this is not forced amalgamation. You know, I don't think it is, Mr. Speaker. I think that this is something that's clear in its intent to be voluntary.

I think that the issue here is that a lot of RMs [rural municipality] may have no option because they can see their ratepayers are becoming less and less. They are having more and more difficulty being able to service, provide the kind of

services that they know that their ratepayers want without hiking up the local taxes. So although it's definitely a voluntary proposal, I think it's going to help this government deal with that exact issue where there are struggling municipalities.

I think it is very difficult politically to force amalgamation. It's not ever been welcome by rural communities despite the fact that it may look like it makes sense on paper. It's an emotional and definitely a personal and political issue for many, many local citizens when they feel like they are being told what to do.

People are very fiercely proud of their rural governments and, you know, I think it's one of the sources of community interaction. I know my dad was reeve, for a few years anyways, and certainly was a councillor on the rural municipal board. And I remember stories around the kitchen table, and it was always around, you know, people unhappy with the grader and where the grader had been and where the grader hadn't been and, you know, the garbage in the local dump. And there was always good coffee row conversations and just sort of the fabric of our daily lives in the municipal, particularly in my case when I grew up in the rural municipal areas.

So as I say it's a fierce source of pride for people to belong. I was from the rural municipality of Wood River No. 74. You know, and people definitely are aware of the number of their municipality and the name, and it provides a real history of the area.

In fact just recently I was looking at some of the history books that were created. I think it started in the 1970s when we had the 75th anniversary of our province, and people were given grant money to go home and write about their local histories. And in my local history book, it's not just the towns and villages who were represented, but it was the rural municipalities and a lot of talk about the school districts.

And in my dad's home quarter that my grandpa homesteaded, there was the Harwood School. And that was again another incredibly important part of the community fabric where people would gather and meet. And in fact my dad was telling me that there's still some . . . The Harwood School burned down I think in 1963, but dad said there's some valuable coins that are still in the basement there, and maybe we should go and dig them up sometime. So I don't know if that's ever going to happen but, you know, it's just a nice legend that I may want to pass on to my kids sometime about what happened when the school burned down at Harwood. And certainly that was a little bit before my time.

I went to school in town. I didn't go to the local school, the local one-room school house. But that's part of my stories growing up were those stories of my dad. His sister was one of the very first teachers there, and his aunt was also one of the first teachers there. And just rereading those stories in the history book a couple weeks ago, I just found it to be very refreshing and dear in many ways to realize that those stories still exist, and I'm glad they were written down.

So when it comes to the demise of that kind of community life or the shrinking of population, we have to have a way for communities to voluntarily reorganize themselves so that it makes sense. And I think the section 51.1 in this Act is

attempting to do that. Certainly the minister indicated that SUMA and SARM are supportive of this, and he actually said that this is a response to a request from the SUMA to create these types of legislative amendments.

He did go on to say near the end of his comments that the ministry did consult extensively on these amendments with both the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association and through them also with the municipal administrator associations. And I know the minister has some ties, having worked in that area himself, so obviously he's well placed to do the consultations. He indicated the consultations took place in April, between April and September of last year and there was all kinds of meetings, presentations, and sharing of drafts.

So I think the minister is attempting to listen to those concerns, and his staff have made a real effort to incorporate those concerns and bring them into reality in this draft of section 51.1. So the first part of the section gives some definitions of the former municipality and the local government Act and then the urban municipality.

And it says here . . . they can make an application, so that's 51.1(2) where it says:

The councils of at least one rural municipality and at least one urban municipality may apply to the minister to incorporate as a municipal district.

No. 3 says the application mentioned must be in the form that the minister requires, which is a typical kind of clause. And then the minister, if he is in agreement under subsection 4, would provide the incorporation and give a name to the district and allow for the establishment of a new council of the district.

So I think, you know, one of the tricky parts is, when you have rural municipalities and urban municipalities amalgamating, there's obviously two pieces of legislation that come into being, so there's provisions in this new Act to cover off with that kind of responsibility as well.

Mr. Speaker, I think at this point that's probably the extent of the comments I wanted to make on this bill. I think it's a good idea. I think, you know, the minister is listening to the rural organizations, urban organizations, that are requiring this kind of change. Obviously, you know, no government wants to force amalgamations, so we'll see how this goes and if it will actually address the growing concerns in these areas of about capacity and the ability to raise, basically raise enough taxes to manage the rural municipal affairs and the smaller urban affairs as well.

So I think, as I said, other people will want to comment, but at this point, I would like to adjourn the debate on Bill 116, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 116, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 117

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Reiter that **Bill No. 117** — *The Municipalities Consequential Amendment Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Bill 117, to wade into the debate on this one, is an Act to make a consequential amendment to *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995* resulting from the enactment on *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013*. And as you're aware, Mr. Speaker, I just spoke to the proposed amendments to *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013* which was the previous Bill 116.

And so what happens here is our good friends over at Justice have gone carefully through all other bills that might be impacted by the changes made to *The Municipalities Act. The Municipalities Amendment Act*, one of the biggest things they did was they had to add the phrase municipal district in a number of clauses, and I didn't go through that in my comments on the previous bill. But if you can imagine wherever rural municipality shows up in *The Municipalities Act*, they're proposing amendments to add the words municipal district as well to that clause. So then that's fine for *The Municipalities Act*. But what about other Acts?

So what people had to do, and I just keep thinking how useful the search or find feature is on computers these days because it used to be in the old days, you'd have to go through line by line and read the legislation to find these things. But nowadays we have the opportunity to hit find and put in the word, and away we go. So, is Mr. Speaker willing to make a guess on how many bills would have the requirement of changes in this? Possibly not.

I'll tell you, Mr. Speaker, the changes that are required for this bill and the consequential amendments Act, there's only one other Act that is actually affected by it. I was surprised by that. I thought it might be more. But at any rate, the Act that does require changes — and I know you're sitting on the edge of your chair just waiting to find out what it is — it is *The Non-profit Corporations Act*, surprisingly. And why is that? Well, there's a section in *The Non-profit Corporations Act* that actually defines the word municipality. So in order to reflect the changes in Bill 116 that are being brought forward, there's a need to amend it.

So what we have is in subsection 2(1) of *The Non-profit Corporations Act* is being amended, in this case in the definition of municipality by adding, comma, municipal district after rural municipality. So it would now read, municipality means a city, town, village, rural municipality, municipal district, or northern municipality.

So I think, you know, again I'm quite surprised that there

weren't any other bills that required this definition change, but it looks like it's only *The Non-profit Corporations Act* that has the definition of municipality that is requiring changes.

The minister in his comments was very brief in terms of what he had to say about this bill, understandably. And what he said, Mr. Speaker, was it makes an amendment to a bilingual Act as a result of the introduction of *The Municipalities Amendment Act*. So that's the other reason why this is being done separately, is because *The Municipalities Act* is, or sorry, *The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995* is actually a bilingual Act. And so why not take a whirl at it in French as well? We can talk about it. And here in French the new clause is going to read like, well we don't have it in the explanatory notes. But:

Le paragraphe 2(1) de la Loi de 1995 sur les sociétés sans but lucratif est modifié à la définition de « municipalité » par adjonction de « district municipal » après « municipalité rurale ».

So in French the new phrase for municipal district is district municipal. And so I think that's pretty straightforward, but because it's a bilingual Act it had to be done separately. And as the minister indicated, it's just going to ensure that the statute applies to municipal districts in the same way as it did to former municipalities that have now merged to become a municipal district.

The minister closed his comments by indicating that the amendments will provide flexibility and choice for interested urban and rural municipalities to voluntarily join together to form a new type of municipality for the benefit of their residents. And certainly that's giving some of the flexibility I think that the good folks over in the municipal level of government have been asking for.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think this is just a continuing part of the story of Saskatchewan in many ways where we see, as I said, 555 rural municipalities or more, maybe 560. I know Big River is 555, so I know for sure there is that many. And I looked recently and I think there was up to 560, or I think the highest number of municipalities is in the northeast area. So perhaps one of my colleagues across the way would know what the highest municipality number is. The Big River is no. 555, but there are not 555 municipalities. There is certainly quite a few less than that.

So at this point, Mr. Speaker, that's about all I have to say on this bill. And I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill 117.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 117, *The Municipalities Consequential Amendment Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — It now being near the hour of 5 o'clock, this House stands recessed to 7 p.m.

[The Assembly recessed from 17:00 until 19:00.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Krawetz.....	4509
Brotten	4509
Duncan	4509
Chartier	4509
Jurgens.....	4509

PRESENTING PETITIONS

McCall	4509
Belanger.....	4510

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Celebrating Canadian Athletes at Sochi Olympics	
Belanger	4510
St. Gregor Family at Brier Competition	
Phillips	4510
Saskatchewan Musician Wins Prestigious Award	
McCall	4510
Impaired Driving Awareness Week	
Hickie	4511
Regina Hosts Women’s University Volleyball Championship	
Steinley	4511
Premier’s Award of Excellence to Lakeland Resident	
Wilson	4511
National Nutrition Month	
Jurgens.....	4512

QUESTION PERIOD

Financial Support for Care Facilities	
Brotten	4512
Duncan.....	4512
Grain Transportation	
Sproule.....	4514
Stewart.....	4514
Provision of Surgeries in Regina	
Chartier	4515
Duncan.....	4515
Carbon Capture Project	
Sproule.....	4516
Reiter	4516

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Crisis in Ukraine	
Krawetz.....	4516
Brotten	4517

MOTION UNDER RULE 61

Crisis in Ukraine	
Krawetz.....	4517
Brotten	4520
Harrison.....	4520

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 127 — <i>The Mental Health Services Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
McCall	4520
Bill No. 128 — <i>The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Vermette	4523
Bill No. 129 — <i>The Executive Government Administration Act</i>	
McCall	4524
Bill No. 130 — <i>The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendments Act, 2013</i>	
<i>Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Executive Government Administration Act</i>	
McCall	4527
Bill No. 126 — <i>The Seizure of Criminal Property Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)</i>	
Vermette	4527
Harrison (referral to committee).....	4529

Bill No. 109 — <i>The Labour-sponsored Venture Capital Corporations Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Belanger	4529
Harrison	4529
Bill No. 102 — <i>The Builders' Lien Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Belanger	4529
Harrison	4530
Bill No. 103 — <i>The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
<i>Loi de 2013 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur l'exécution des ordonnances alimentaires</i>	
Belanger	4530
Harrison	4531
Bill No. 104 — <i>The Enforcement of Maintenance Orders Consequential Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Belanger	4531
Harrison (referral to committee)	4531
Bill No. 105 — <i>The Informal Public Appeals Act</i>	
Belanger	4532
Harrison (referral to committee)	4532
Bill No. 106 — <i>The Legal Profession Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Chartier	4533
Bill No. 113 — <i>The Powers of Attorney Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
<i>Loi de 2013 modifiant la Loi de 2002 sur les procurations</i>	
Chartier	4534
Bill No. 114 — <i>The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Vermette	4535
Bill No. 115 — <i>The Public Guardian and Trustee Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
Chartier	4536
Bill No. 116 — <i>The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)</i>	
Sproule	4537
Bill No. 117 — <i>The Municipalities Consequential Amendment Act, 2013</i>	
<i>Loi de 2013 portant modification corrélative à la loi intitulée <i>The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)</i></i>	
Sproule	4540

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