



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

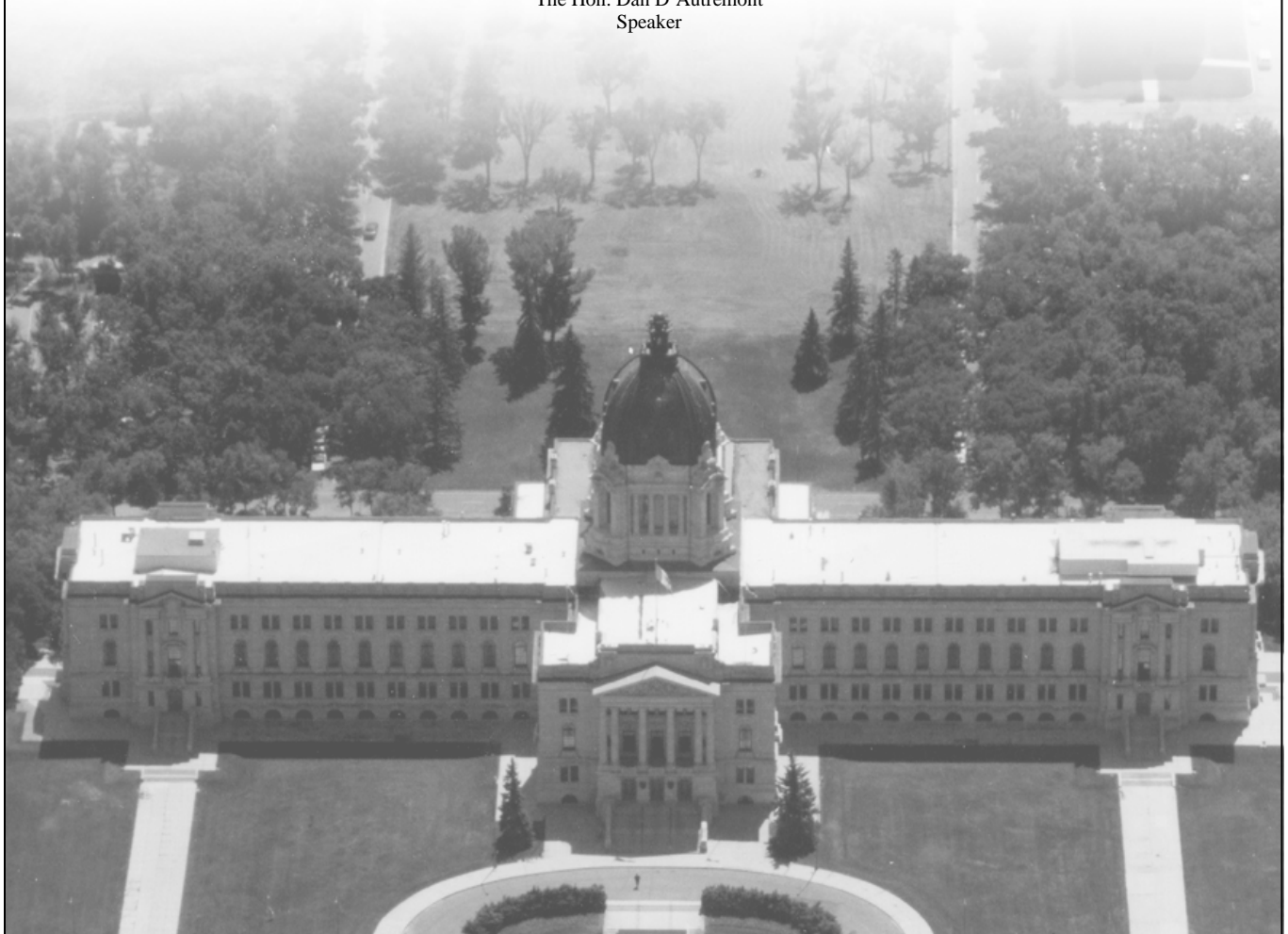
of the

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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Doke, Larry	SP	Cut Knife-Turtleford
Draude, Hon. June	SP	Kelvington-Wadena
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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
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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
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Sproule, Cathy	NDP	Saskatoon Nutana
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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: — Well I thought I was going to get time to find my list of people. Okay, I would like to introduce to the Assembly guests that we have in the gallery for Commonwealth Day.

We have with us Ms. Mavis Ashbourne Palmer from Jamaica; Mrs. Renu Kapoor from India; Ms. Muna Deciman from Sierra Leone; Mr. Mike Luti from Uganda; Dr. Michael Jackson, president of the Royal Commonwealth Society; Mr. Derek Nicholls and Mr. Keith Inches, both from the Commonwealth Society. I'd ask all members to welcome them to their Assembly today.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it's a pleasure to join in the introduction of the special guests that are here today in your gallery, particularly one that was left out there. I see Ms. Rani Bilku that's up there today as well. I'd like to say hello to Rani and to each of these guests here today, a good friend as well in Ms. Muna Deciman that's here today.

And I also want to welcome a couple familiar faces up in the east gallery here today; those would be my mom and dad. Nice to have you here today. That's Craik and Faye Wotherspoon. I ask all members of this Assembly to, well, welcome all of our guests to their Assembly here today.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. And I rise today to present a petition against Saskatchewan health care laundry privatization. And we know that in May 2013, the Government of Saskatchewan announced its plan to privatize health care laundry in Saskatchewan, handing it over to a for-profit, Alberta-based corporation, K-Bro Linen; and that as a result of this decision to privatize health care laundry, six non-profit, public health care laundry facilities will be closed within two years in the communities of Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Weyburn, Regina, and Saskatoon; and that the privatization of health care laundry will mean the loss of over 300 good-paying jobs, devastating local economies and families.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly be pleased to cause the government to reverse a misguided decision to privatize Saskatchewan's health care laundry which will result in the devastating loss of over 300 jobs in the communities of

Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Weyburn, Regina and Saskatoon.

And moreover, the privatization of health care laundry will misuse our vital taxpayer dollars by taking money out of Saskatchewan's health care system to boost the profits of an Alberta-based corporation; and furthermore, the privatization of health care laundry will put patient care at risk as Saskatchewan's health regions lose direct control over laundry and thereby will have significantly reduced ability to quickly and effectively respond to infectious outbreaks in health care facilities.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition today come from Raymore, Wolseley, Montmartre, Sinaluta, Kelliher, Southey, Semans, and Glenavon.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents in support of safety and rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic from Dewdney Avenue. Residents are upset by the unacceptable delay by that government and in addressing the unsafe circumstance that was created by that government. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to immediately take action as it relates to the unacceptable danger, disturbance, and infrastructure damage caused by the heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue west of the city centre to ensure the safety and well-being of communities, families, residents and users; and that those actions and plans should include rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic, receive provincial funding, and be developed through consultation with the city of Regina, communities, and residents.

And as in duty bound, your petitioners will ever pray.

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents of Regina. I so submit.

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. Mr. Speaker, 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 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 is good for the mind, body, and spirits of the students. They point out that the gym at Sacred Heart has

played an important role in the school's efforts to become a literacy leader, having served as a gathering place for the very successful reading assemblies and reading nights. They point out that Sacred Heart Community School is the largest school in north central Regina with 450-plus students, 75 per cent of whom are First Nations and Métis. They point out that enrolment has increased by 100 students-plus over the last four years and that attendance and learning outcomes are steadily improving. And as a matter of basic fairness and common sense, they point out that Sacred Heart Community School needs a gym.

Mr. Speaker, in the prayer that reads as follows:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens from Saskatoon and Regina. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Brain Awareness Week

Mr. Docherty: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to advise members of the Legislative Assembly that this week is Brain Awareness Week in Canada. This week is a worldwide public awareness effort to promote the progress, future, and benefits of brain research. Locally, the Saskatchewan Neuroscience Network, the universities of Regina and Saskatchewan, the acquired brain injury partnership project, and other agencies are hosting public education events.

Mr. Speaker, one in three Canadians will be affected by a brain-related disease, disorder, or injury at some point in their lives. The consequences of a brain injury can be physically, emotionally, and socially devastating. Our government is committed to building a vibrant neuroscience research sector so that we have the knowledge we need to help people living with brain injuries. The Ministry of Health granted nearly \$5.6 million to the Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation in 2013-14 to support health research, including neuroscience research.

In addition SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] provided over \$5.2 million to the acquired brain injury partnership project which is managed by the Ministry of Health. This project provides coordinated services for people with acquired brain injuries and their families.

I'd like to encourage Saskatchewan people to participate in Brain Awareness Week, Mr. Speaker, to learn about neuroscience discoveries and the importance of keeping the brain safe and healthy. We appreciate the work of those who promote brain awareness and support neuroscience research. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Regina Wins Paragon Award of Distinction

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to recognize and congratulate Regina businessman and champion of Regina's downtown, Mr. Harold Hague. The Regina District Chamber of Commerce recently announced that Mr. Hague will receive the Paragon Award of Distinction at their upcoming ceremonies.

Mr. Hague, 93, is only the fourth person to get the award. Harold Hague was among the Canadian Forces in the landing at Normandy on D-Day and has been a community leader, for these 70 years on.

Harold Hague has worked faithfully in preserving our community's military history through the Royal Canadian Legion, branch no. 001, and Regina's Remembrance Day services to name a couple of instances of that work.

Mr. Hague was the long-time manager of Loggie's Shoes, and regrettably, after 106 years in business, the store will be soon closing its doors for good.

Harold's son, Kelly Hague, has carried the family venture forward and, as you might expect, Kelly has given a tremendous amount of time and effort to not just the business but to the broader community as well. But good things do sometimes come to an end, Mr. Speaker, and we are thankful for the overall contributions of the Hagues and the remarkable downtown independent business, Loggies Shoes.

There is no question that Harold Hague has made his mark in our community. His contributions to the downtown business association initially came through his membership in the Junior Chamber of Commerce. He was also instrumental in founding Regina's Market Square, forerunner of today's Regina Downtown Business Improvement District.

Harold Hague's history and long-time service to Regina's business community is well deserving of this honour of the Regina and District Chamber of Commerce's Paragon Award of Distinction. Please join me in congratulating Mr. Harold Hague.

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

Habitat for Humanity Key Presentation

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to inform members today that we are celebrating another Habitat for Humanity success story. Today, keys were presented to another Habitat for Humanity family, Dawn Billingsley and her two sons Kieran and Connor, to help them achieve their dream of security, stability, and a more promising future through housing.

We're pleased that Habitat, News Talk 980 CJME, Saskatchewan Housing Corporation, Mosaic Potash Corporation, the city of Regina, and countless volunteers joined hands to help build the Penny Project house on Wascana Street. We are proud to have contributed \$50,000 to help build this

home in Regina and, most importantly, help another family build their future.

Mr. Speaker, this home is especially unique because it's the first Habitat for Humanity home constructed in partnership with NewsTalk 980 CJME. NewsTalk worked with Habitat hosting a radiothon and collecting millions of pennies, raising a total of \$100,000 to build the home.

Like Habitat and its partners, we are also working hard to meet Saskatchewan's housing needs. Our government has committed a total of \$7.1 million to Habitat for Humanity across the province since March of 2009, and I'm sure that we all agree it's money well invested. This is what the Saskatchewan plan for growth is all about: keep our province growing; improve our quality of life; and continue to make Saskatchewan the best place to live, work, and raise a family. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Heritage Language Day

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, on the weekend I learned how to say thank you in 14 different languages, but don't ask me to do it by heart. I haven't been able to memorize them all.

But I do want to say thank you to dedicated teachers and students from the Saskatoon multilingual schools who put together a wonderful choral concert on Saturday afternoon. Fourteen children's choirs from 14 of Saskatoon's multilingual schools performed as part of their annual Heritage Language Day celebration sponsored by the Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages and the Saskatchewan Intercultural Association.

The children were very proud to sing in the language of their families, and many were dressed in traditional costume as well. It was a very colourful and musical expression of culture and language. We heard a traditional Islamic song that was over 1,400 years old, a song that the Ansar sang to the prophet Muhammad upon his arrival at Yathrib. We also heard a Sinhalese song about a rabbit that gets in trouble for not listening to adults' advice.

International Mother Language Day is officially February 21st. The date represents the day in 1952 when students, demonstrating for recognition of their language, Bangla, as one of the two national languages of the then Pakistan, were shot and killed by police in Dhaka, the capital of what is now Bangladesh.

Mr. Speaker, languages are the most powerful instruments of preserving and developing our tangible and intangible heritage. I call on members to applaud the efforts of all who work towards awareness, tolerance, and diversity by promoting their mother language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

200th Anniversary of Celebrated Ukrainian's Birth

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, March 9th marked the

200th anniversary of the birth of Taras Shevchenko, painter, poet, and father of the modern Ukrainian language. This date has always been an important one for Ukrainians in celebrating Shevchenko's contributions to the Ukrainian nation and to the richness of global human achievement.

In our province and around the world, the Ukrainian community is marking this very special anniversary. Born a slave into serfdom, Shevchenko overcame tremendous challenges of being an orphan in a backwards political system. He not only became literate but became one of the most celebrated international artists of his day. He faced repeated arrest for his political beliefs promoting equality, freedom, and the love of his native Ukraine. As a result of his persecution, he lived only 47 years. However his artistic works and political ideals burn ever brighter in the 21st century.

The testament to Shevchenko's influence is even more real, given recent events in Ukraine. Those demonstrating for freedom, prosperity, and the rule of law regularly invoke his ideals and face attacks for it.

Mr. Speaker, one of the first killed on the Maidan, Serhiy Negoyan, quoted Shevchenko on film shortly before his death. To encourage the Ukrainian people, let us join with Mr. Negoyan by quoting Shevchenko: "Truth is behind you. Strength is behind you, and liberty sacred."

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Ukrainian.]

[13:45]

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

Moose Jaw Spring Sparkle and Shine Salute

Mr. Lawrence: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This weekend I along with the member from Moose Jaw North had the pleasure of attending the first annual Business Women of Moose Jaw's Spring Sparkle and Shine Salute to southern Saskatchewan PRISM [perseverance, role model, influential, successful, mentor] Awards. The Business Women of Moose Jaw work to provide support and networking opportunities to help entrepreneurial women succeed.

Mr. Speaker, the event was a complete success, selling a total of 260 tickets this year. The PRISM awards stand for perseverance, role model, influential, successful, and mentor. On Saturday, six awards were given out to notable Saskatchewan women. The award categories were Community Leadership and Enhancement; Leadership and Management; Science, Technology and Environment; Sports, Culture and Recreation; Lifetime Achievement; and Young Woman of Promise.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, International Women's Day was this past weekend, and I was very proud to have the Sparkle and Shine event in my city. The proceeds from this event, which also included a live and silent auction with food and entertainment by Stadacona Soul, went to the Moose Jaw Transition House which works hard to end violence against women.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all members join me in congratulating the Business Women of Moose Jaw on this successful event and support them in their cause to recognize the outstanding women of southern Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

National Volleyball Championship

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, this weekend was the National Volleyball Championship of the Canadian Collegiate Athletic Association were held in Moose Jaw. The event featured eight top college teams from British Columbia to Quebec.

Briercrest College and Seminary in Caronport hosted the tournament with the competition taking place in Moose Jaw at the YaraCentre. Mr. Speaker, YaraCentre has proven to be a valuable and versatile addition to our community, the National Volleyball Championships being the largest event to be held in the facility thus far.

The Briercrest College Clippers were the hometown favourites, winning their quarter final match on Thursday evening against the Douglas College Royals of New Westminster. They won the next game against the Mohawk College Mountaineers from Hamilton, sending them into the championship final against Red Deer College. Mr. Speaker, the match was set. Over 1,600 fans filled the stands with cheers and applause, but in the end, the Red Deer College was on their game and defeated Briercrest Clippers in three sets.

It was a great competition, and I extend congratulations to the Briercrest College and Seminary for the planning and organizing of this national event and the gracious hospitality for the teams and visitors alike. And congratulations to Coach Nigel Mullan, the players, families, and fans of the Briercrest College Clippers for a successful season and a tremendous showing in the National Volleyball Championships. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Fire Prevention on First Nations

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Four Saskatchewan children have died in house fires on First Nations reserves in just the last six months: Iesha Rabbitskin, Solomon Ballantyne, Josiah Ballantyne, and Denasia Sewap. It's heartbreaking, Mr. Speaker, and I'm sure all of our thoughts go out to these families experiencing such a huge loss.

Fire damage is twice as bad on First Nations compared to off-reserve communities, and that's shocking enough, but what's absolutely outrageous is that First Nations are 10 times more likely to die in a fire.

I wrote to the Prime Minister last week because it's time for the federal government to stop neglecting its responsibility to ensure proper fire prevention measures are in place, and that

they also have the capability to properly fight fires and save lives. My question is for the Premier: if he hasn't raised this issue already with the Prime Minister, will he agree to send a letter to the Prime Minister today calling for action from the federal government?

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

Hon. Mr. Reiter: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, Mr. Speaker, the recent tragedy that the member refers to, the loss of life, is indeed a tragedy. Our sympathy goes out to the family and the community there. Those sorts of tragedies should never occur.

Mr. Speaker, the statistics that the member also cited are also troubling. As he's aware from his question, that the on-reserve service provision is the responsibility and jurisdiction of the federal government, but certainly our government's extremely troubled by this as well. Our emergency services people have also responded. They're assisting the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] in the investigation on the most recent one, Mr. Speaker. We look forward to the results of that investigation.

And, Mr. Speaker, I will be having a meeting with the minister responsible in the next couple of weeks, I believe. That's one of the items on the agenda we'll be attempting to address. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Environmental Protection

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The seriousness of the situation, Mr. Speaker, calls on the Premier to apply pressure to the Prime Minister on this, and we'll be watching this in the coming days and weeks, hoping that that stronger pressure does come forward from this government.

Mr. Speaker, I want to ask a question about the Premier's recent trip to the States. Last week the Premier answered a question about pricing carbon. He then issued a lengthy retraction of his comments, saying he was only speaking hypothetically in response to a hypothetical question. But it's confusing, Mr. Speaker, because his own government announced back in 2009 that it would bring in carbon compliance payments. They said they would price carbon for large emitters and the money would go into the Saskatchewan Technology Fund to finance investments in low-emitting technologies. The government said that program would be in place by 2011. It's still not in place, but last spring the Environment minister said that the carbon pricing plan is still on its way. But the Premier's quick retraction of his comments about carbon pricing have cast doubt on that.

So my question, Mr. Speaker, is for the Premier. And this is a real question, not one of the tricky, hypothetical questions, a real question: is he backing away from his 2009 plan to bring in carbon compliance payments?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The hypothetical question referenced by the Leader of the Opposition was around the oil and gas regs. They've yet to be introduced for the country. The question went something like, if the United States were to bring in a nation-wide carbon tax — something that's very unlikely to happen — and if Canada were to harmonize it, what would it look like. That was the nature of the question.

Mr. Speaker, these two things, these two issues, one a nation-wide carbon tax and the levy that we've already committed to as a result of our greenhouse gas legislation, are indeed two different things, Mr. Speaker. And I talked to the Minister of the Environment this morning and, Mr. Speaker, as soon as the oil and gas regs are available to us, in other words as soon as they've been passed by the federal government, we'll be able to react then in kind by developing the levy system we've referenced here, the Technology Fund. This is significantly different than a carbon tax that all of the country would have to face — it would I think knee-cap the economy — that the members' cousins in Ottawa have been promoting.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, their commitment, this government's commitment to the Technology Fund, Mr. Speaker, is questionable when given the huge length of time it has taken from originally introducing the concept to now continuing with the stalling.

Whenever the Premier goes to the US [United States], he talks about the environment but it causes confusion for one reason or another, but especially because he always talks about giving our trading partners environmental elbow room. But his walk doesn't match his talk.

So let's talk about this government's record on the environment: slow walking the Technology Fund and carbon compliance payments; watering down SaskPower's conservation target; cutting environmental protection, environmental assessment, and climate change programs; saying it's a fallacy that we can increase our reliance on renewable power; slashing our province's emissions targets; and actually presiding over a significant increase in emissions. Mr. Speaker, that is not an environmental record to be proud of.

So my question for the Premier: how exactly does that record amount to providing our trading partners with environmental elbow room?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — There is so much that is wrong with the preamble and the question, Mr. Speaker. Let's start at the beginning. The Leader of the Opposition is advocating, I guess, he's urging our government to implement the levy system before we have the oil and gas regs from the federal government, Mr. Speaker. It's another indication that members opposite are not quite ready for prime time, Mr. Speaker. How in the world would you develop the levy for high emitters in the province in the most responsible way possible if you only have the coal regulations from our federal government and not the oil and gas regulations, Mr. Speaker? That is of fundamental

importance.

And again I would point to the member's question with respect to our record on the issue of greenhouse gases, Mr. Speaker. There is no other jurisdiction that we're aware of in the world, either a national jurisdiction or a sub-national jurisdiction, that has invested more per capita in the issue of CO₂ mitigation and the sustainable production of energy than this government of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, with the only world-class clean coal project, \$1.35 billion, Mr. Speaker.

Members opposite are wondering, why aren't there any more programs? Why don't we have any of those vehicles that were available to government to monitor the air quality without anyone to operate them? I'll tell you why, Mr. Speaker. Because this side of the House believes in action; that side believes in words, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Alberta has had a carbon compliance program in place for years. And if the Premier may not like my assessment of the situation, he should speak with the member from Martensville who promised that the carbon compliance program would be in place by 2011. So these are the dates set by this government.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier has a bit of a pattern here. He goes down to the US. He goes down, talks about the environment, then comes home and introduces a budget that slashes everything with the words green or climate change. So on this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, we're hoping that this government, that this Premier, won't repeat that pattern in the upcoming budget.

We want him to stop cutting environmental programs, We want him to institute a serious conservation and renewables mandate for SaskPower. We want him to actually implement the Technology Fund. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is resource producing and, Mr. Speaker, we're a trade-dependent province so it's vital that we're smart and diligent when it comes to environmental regulation and environmental protection.

My question to the Premier: will he promise today to break his pattern of cutting environmental programs in the budget and can we expect real action?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, does the Leader of the Opposition believe that \$1.35 billion invested in the world's largest clean coal project at Boundary dam 3 represents, constitutes action on the issue that he's raising?

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

School Construction

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, there's an article in today's *Journal of Commerce* online that's entitled "Concerns raised about P3 approach for Saskatchewan schools." The article quotes the executive director of Merit Contractors Association as saying, "We would caution them against using

bundling as a standard practice because of the long-range effects it could have on the province's construction industry."

Merit Contractors says the bundling approach will have a very negative effect on our province's construction industry, something we've heard from contractors across our province — something, though, that that government continues to ignore as they stubbornly plow ahead. So my question to the Education minister: is he listening to these concerns and does he share these concerns?

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Let's review some of the facts across Canada, Mr. Speaker. There are 206 P3 [public-private partnership] projects under way across Canada. One hundred and ten of them have been operationalized, Mr. Speaker; 46 of them are under construction. Some of those are now in Saskatchewan, in the city of Saskatoon, also in the city of Regina.

Mr. Speaker, we're trying to get a grasp from the opposition. Are they against P3s? Because we've got one going in Swift Current on a long-term care facility. They haven't asked a question on that. Are they against P3s or is it simply the bundling of schools that's got them in a knot, Mr. Speaker?

I was expecting these questions a little bit earlier because that member opposite is fresh off the CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees] convention last week, so he's got his speaking points, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad he waited till this week.

[14:00]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I don't know, Mr. Speaker. I don't know if that minister, the Minister of Highways — question was to the Minister of Education — knows who Merit Contractors are, but certainly that's not CUPE, Mr. Speaker.

Merit Contractors also has this to say about the misguided P3 plan from that government:

There are no local Saskatchewan-based contractors that have the capacity to do a project of this size, and these are the contractors who have built many of the province's schools to date.

So, Mr. Speaker, that government's plan will mean that Saskatchewan contractors will be shut out while large, out-of-province companies will benefit. It just doesn't make sense to Saskatchewan people.

We called for an economic analysis to be conducted in our P3 accountability legislation to understand the full cost of shutting out the Saskatchewan construction industry, but of course that government voted against that, rejected that legislation.

To the Education minister: why won't this government listen to the concerns of Saskatchewan businesses that don't want to be shut out of the building of our province's schools?

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, again as with the previous questions with the Leader of the Opposition, many facts have to be corrected. Saskatchewan companies are not going to be shut out of constructing these schools. Absolutely not, Mr. Speaker. In fact what we've seen, Mr. Speaker, is in for example the long-term care facility that's going forward in Swift Current, many of the . . . almost all of the work that is being done on that facility will be done with companies from Saskatchewan. We expect that to be the case also with schools, Mr. Speaker, that the vast majority of the work will be done with companies from Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

But it is awfully interesting and really quite refreshing over the last seven or eight years, six or seven years, Mr. Speaker, that this government has been in power, that companies from outside the province are looking at Saskatchewan as a growing province and want a piece of it, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Pretty remarkable from the Highways guy over there to be touting the benefits of shutting out Saskatchewan companies, Mr. Speaker.

Everybody agrees that we need new schools. The problem is, is it's that government's plan that's the problem. We've heard concerns from parents, teachers, school boards, auditors, the taxpayers federation about the implications of that government's private P3 rent-a-school scheme. And we've heard concerns from the Saskatchewan construction industry, Merit Contractors, about the negative implications of a bundling process that will shut out local builders here in Saskatchewan, who have done a great job of building our schools for decades.

To the minister: what will it take for the government to stop plowing ahead with its plan that will ship economic benefits far outside our province and result in the province renting costly private schools for decades to come?

The Speaker: — Well I recognize it's Monday. And obviously the members had a good weekend; they're full of vim and vigour. But I would appreciate it if either side of the House could actually hear the questions and the responses. I recognize the Minister of Highways and Infrastructure.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you for that recognition. I'm not the Highways guy, I guess, Mr. Speaker, to you.

Mr. Speaker, when you look at Alberta's experience with bundling . . . So it isn't the fact, I think we're pretty clear now, the opposition is not against P3s. They're simply against bundling. I think we've got that down, Mr. Speaker.

Because, Mr. Speaker, if it is a bundling issue that they're upset about, let's look at the one jurisdiction that has bundled schools, Mr. Speaker — Alberta. Now perhaps they would not be in favour of the way Alberta has done it, even though in their first bundle they saved \$97 million compared to traditional build. In their second phase they saved \$105 million compared to traditional build, and in their third phase, \$43 million, Mr.

Speaker. They're against that, Mr. Speaker. They'd like to see the schools built traditionally, the way they did. The only difference was, Mr. Speaker, when they were in government they closed a school a month, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

University Costs and Support

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, we know that Saskatchewan students already pay the second-highest tuition in the entire country, according to Statistics Canada. Of course the Premier disputed that in the fall, telling reporters that Statistics Canada was wrong. But you can't argue with the facts, Mr. Speaker.

And now we know that tuition is going to go up yet again. Students at the University of Saskatchewan learned this morning that life is going to get even more expensive for them because tuition will jump on average another 4.5 per cent. That means that students will be paying hundreds of dollars more every single year just for their tuition.

To the minister: when he talked about a tuition management system, is that what he meant, that students would be forced to pay big tuition increases every year?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, whenever we speak about students, we think about affordability and accessibility. And, Mr. Speaker, we've made some real inroads there. Mr. Speaker, that includes \$4.6 billion invested in post-secondary education since we've had the privilege of forming government. Mr. Speaker, specifically for the University of Saskatchewan, a foundation for that represents core increases on operating funding. What we've seen is an increase of 59 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That's \$333 million this year. That's helping to ensure that we're working with the university to help ensure affordability and accessibility.

We also do some other things, Mr. Speaker. We've put in place the graduate retention program which, Mr. Speaker, this year has 48,000 graduates participating in and benefiting from, Mr. Speaker. We've also put in place the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship which this year, Mr. Speaker, is seeing 10,000 students benefiting in their transition between high school and post-secondary education. And, Mr. Speaker, we've also put in place the Saskatchewan Innovation and Opportunity Scholarship, millions of dollars to support and ensure that students have increased affordability and accessibility to post-secondary education.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, let's not forget that back in 2007 the member from Saskatoon Silver Springs, at the time the Sask Party's Finance critic, said that tuition should be reduced. He said, "National average at the very least, that should be our goal." But the average tuition for an undergrad Arts and Science student at the University of Saskatchewan has gone up by about 27 per cent under this government. That's a 27 per cent increase in just the last five years, despite the fact that this government

has had record revenues. And what it means for students is about \$1,200 a year more for arts and sciences and \$1,500 more for business every single year.

Mr. Speaker, to the minister: what happened to this government's promise to reduce tuition costs to Saskatchewan students so they won't have to be paying more than the national average?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, the University of Saskatchewan is the best funded medical doctoral university in the country, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, as far as track records, I'd like to highlight that under the NDP [New Democratic Party] reign, Mr. Speaker, the University of Saskatchewan increased by 175 per cent, Mr. Speaker, 175 per cent.

And, Mr. Speaker, increasingly there are some stories that we can turn to, in fact not from the too distant past, Mr. Speaker, in fact in 2000, Mr. Speaker. And I quote from *The StarPhoenix* from November 14th, 2000, Mr. Speaker, and the quote is this:

Saskatchewan and Manitoba universities, along with the University of Sherbrooke, Quebec, have trailed other major universities because of low provincial funding. In fact *Maclean's* put the University of Saskatchewan at 15 out of 15, the lowest possible. Why? Because of provincial funding.

Mr. Speaker, much has changed — the best funded medical doctoral university in the country, Mr. Speaker. We know there's more work to do, but we're working hard on behalf of students.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Interesting to know, Mr. Speaker, he's not talking about the whole story with the College of Medicine.

We know that this government has spent well over \$54,000 on a spin and PR [public relations] campaign about its record in post-secondary education. But those ads don't match the reality for students or their families. Under this government, students are paying more and getting less. This government has created a massive funding crunch at our universities which continue to force layoffs of staff, cancellation of programs and services, and sell-offs of nearly everything that's not nailed down, including the research sheep at the University of Saskatchewan.

To the minister: why should students continually be paying more and getting less under this government's watch?

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Mr. Speaker, the University of Saskatchewan has a track record when it comes to agricultural research that is second to none, Mr. Speaker. And so belittling that, Mr. Speaker, misses some key points, including, Mr.

Speaker, 1,100 new beds in new residences, Mr. Speaker, the first time since the mid-1970s that any new beds were built, Mr. Speaker. In fact our track record for student residences and the support that goes with them is up by 4,000 per cent across this province.

Mr. Speaker, when we had the opportunity to form government, the Western College of Veterinary Medicine was tarped, Mr. Speaker, because the members opposite walked away from it. Mr. Speaker, we put in new operating funds to InterVac [international vaccine centre], VIDO [Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization]. We made sure that there were increased funds for the Canadian Light Source synchrotron. Mr. Speaker, regarding the College of Medicine, increased funding has gone up by 93 per cent because the member opposite, Mr. Speaker, was more interested in moving around a few rocks during a photo op, Mr. Speaker, than making sure that we're moving forward in building the buildings. They're built today, and we're making sure the College of Medicine is moving . . .

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

Grain Transportation

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, it's clear that farmers are doing their best to try and market their bumper crop, but they need this government's help to stand up against the powerful railway monopoly. At a meeting yesterday with producers, when asked if they had contracts that hadn't been met, at least two-thirds of them raised their hands. And that's why producers are saying Gerry Ritz remains the do-nothing Minister of Agriculture.

Mr. Speaker, the feds' Friday announcement is far too little and far too late. The so-called response won't force the railway companies to do anything that they aren't already planning to do this spring. And this is made worse, Mr. Speaker, by the pats on the back this government continues to give their federal cousins for essentially calling for the sun to rise in the morning. Why is this government defending a federal action that farmers themselves call too little, too late and is effectively meaningless?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This order in council that will be followed by emergency federal legislation that will be tabled on March 24th not only deals with the backlog of grain in this particular crop year, Mr. Speaker, but more importantly it will assure that this situation cannot happen again. Instead of putting out brush fires like the NDP always did when they were in government, and they encourage us to do, we have been involved in supporting the federal government with this long-term solution to the ever-recurring issues of poor and slow grain transportation, Mr. Speaker.

This issue has cropped up a dozen times in my farming career alone, and it'll continue until . . . Well it'll be stopped by this legislation, Mr. Speaker. This will put service level agreements in place that will mean that this will not occur again.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the minister and the Premier have admitted that the province wanted to see the government order more cars on the rail than they did in that order. In fact they said themselves the province needs to see 13,000 cars and not the 11,000 status quo mandated by the federal OC [order in council]. In reality we need a minimum of 14,000 cars for several months to get this mess cleaned up and get next year's crop moving too.

Mr. Speaker, spring is just around the corner and some farmers are now worried about wet and rotting grain. And the spring melt and the road bans are going to cause havoc at the precise moment the rail companies finally call on farmers to bring their grain to the elevator. Clearly the federal government, supported by the Sask Party, are not doing enough to actually help producers with the crisis. Why on earth would this government not push for right penalties and right solutions that farmers need?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. After working on this file since last May, we were very instrumental in bringing this matter to its conclusion that the federal government has announced now. And certainly we will have input into the legislation that's going to be introduced on March 24th, I believe, and we've been assured that by the federal government. And one of the things we're going to be asking for is to raise the minimum number of car deliveries to 13,000 a week, in the legislation.

This OC is a placeholder until that legislation is in place, and the number of 11,000 was chosen for whatever reason, but 11,000 is more than we've been able to accomplish in December, January, February, and the first 10 days of March.

[14:15]

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the government's threat to enforce the existing \$100,000-a-day penalty could be considered chump change from the personal salary of CP's [Canadian Pacific] CEO [chief executive officer], Hunter Harrison. It's laughable. What is also ridiculous is this minister told a radio program this morning that "This was basically what we've been asking for." Really?

The government is imposing a penalty on the railways that would go into government coffers and not to producers. It's not the government, Mr. Speaker, that's hurting; it's our farmers. Farmers are losing billions of dollars from their bumper crops as this catastrophe continues to unfold. Since the minister said he's being consulted about this promised emergency legislation and what it will look like, will he commit today to push for penalties from the railways to go directly to the farmers and not to the government coffers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — We will be pushing for the penalties to be directed into the industry, whether it be into research or in

some other fashion. But you know, \$100,000 a day, chump change, Mr. Speaker? I don't think so.

I did a little math. Since the last time the railways have achieved 11,000 cars a day, they would have each been fined well over \$10 million, Mr. Speaker. I don't think that's chump change.

Mr. Speaker, it's interesting that the Leader of the Opposition hasn't asked one single question on this subject, the most important, I would say, economic issue in the province at this time. I wonder why the member doesn't do an impersonation of him.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

The Speaker: — I would ask all members to please rise for a message from Her Majesty the Queen, Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada and head of the Commonwealth:

In July this year the opening of the 20th Commonwealth Games will be marked by the arrival in Glasgow of the baton that started its journey from Buckingham Palace five months ago.

Many of us are following closely the news of the baton relay as it passes through the 70 countries and territories whose teams will gather for the games. The images bring vividly to life what we mean by the Commonwealth family. It is wonderful to see the warmth, shared endeavour, and goodwill as the baton is passed through the hands of many thousands of people.

Affinities of history and inheritance from the past are strong. Yet we are bound together by a sense that the Commonwealth is a powerful influence of good for the future. People of all ages from different cultures are weaving an ever-growing network of links which connect us in our diversity and our common purpose. It is this unity that is expressed in this year's theme, Team Commonwealth.

While national teams will be concentrating on the competition in August, Team Commonwealth will have a longer focus, working together to achieve a more enduring success.

Experiences in this life differ widely throughout the Commonwealth, and we each make contributions from sometimes very different viewpoints. But we are committed to the same goals. Together we offer each other encouragement and draw strengths from this mutual support.

The understanding that we belong together and are able, through teamwork, to achieve far more than we could do alone has always been at the heart of our approach. For all of us, this is now captured in the Commonwealth Charter, which sets out the values and principles which guide and motivate us.

This year, more children and young people are

participating in Commonwealth Day celebrations. Advances in technology enable us to reach a greater number of young people in schools online, using the Commonwealth Class initiative, and through events in local communities where the Commonwealth flag is being raised.

I am delighted that in this year, the year of Team Commonwealth, we will be working to build a brighter, united future in which every one of us can play a part and share in its rewards.

Queen Elizabeth II

You may be seated.

STATEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Chairs of Former Speakers

The Speaker: — You may have noted in the Chamber some new furniture. These chairs are chairs of former Speakers of the Saskatchewan legislature. This chair was the chair of Speaker Archibald Beaton Gillis. This Speaker's chair dates from the Territorial period — specifically the last years, 1903 to 1905 — prior to the establishment of the Province of Saskatchewan.

The chair to my right, in the corner, is a Speaker's chair used by several Speakers in the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly. The time frame during which this chair was used is unverified. The wood carvings, Saskatchewan and 1912 in Roman numerals, suggest it dates from 1912.

The chair to my left, in the corner, is a Speaker's chair that was selected and used by Speaker Walter George Robinson, Speaker from 1925 to 1929.

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave to return to ministerial statements.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to return to ministerial statements. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

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

Launch of Redesigned SaskTenders Website

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As you pointed out during question period, it was a little bit raucous in here after QP [question period] and I missed your call; my apologies to the House.

Anyway, I am pleased to announce today the launch of the redesigned SaskTenders website. Operated through the Ministry of Central Services, the SaskTenders site helps to procure billions of dollars in goods and services annually. It is a central

storage for all government and Crown tenders in addition to tender opportunities for the municipal, academic, school, and health sectors. This site helps us meet our obligations under the New West Partnership and other trade agreements, allowing for open and fair tendering.

Benefits of the new site include more intuitive site navigation, enhanced competition display, improved search functionality, and an easy to create and maintain email notification process. In addition to the new features, this site has a new and simplified web address, www.sasktenders.ca. The old gov.sk.ca web address will be directed to the new site.

Since the province joined the New West Partnership, SaskTenders is designated to be the primary gateway for public sector tender notices in Saskatchewan. This site was enhanced to ensure it can meet current needs and future growth and make it easier for businesses to access public sector procurement opportunities.

With more than 15,000 users and up to 200 open competitions at any given time, the SaskTenders site is the best vehicle to access public tender opportunities in Saskatchewan. We are pleased to provide this enhanced procurement tool that supports the provincial economy and drives business opportunities in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, just a quick response on behalf of the official opposition in terms of the ministerial statement.

I've had a quick look at the redesigned SaskTenders website, and what the minister says would seem to bear out on the face of it. It looks good. It seems to have improved functionality, but the proof as they say, Mr. Speaker, in the pudding is in the eating. And when it comes to websites in this government, well we've seen misadventures coming at us out of Ontario. We have seen misadventures coming out of Tennessee.

So we've got a number of questions about, you know, who's providing the service. Is it entirely within house at Central Services in terms of who are the vendors that have been utilized in the provision of this, and whether or not this provides good service over the long haul here, Mr. Speaker — all things that we'll be watching very closely in terms of the operation of this site.

So we'll be staying tuned, Mr. Speaker, and we'll see how this newly relaunched SaskTenders website works out. Thank you.

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 member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise this afternoon and enter into this debate on Bill No. 127, *An Act to amend The Mental Health Services Act and to make a consequential amendment to The Health Information Protection Act*. And I think this is a very important, timely one. And of course we're very anxious to see much more work, much more leadership around the issues of mental health in this province. And we know that there is some work being done now in terms of consultation about the bigger picture. We are disappointed of course that it's taking so long for that to actually come to a head because obviously this needs attention as we speak.

And we'll go through this, but it is an important one, and of course it's important that we modernize the language and we modernize how the province responds and how the health regions respond and treat mental illness. It's an important thing to do. And of course the common sense parts we will support, but we have many questions, and of course those questions will come in due time. But I know many of our members will want to speak to this.

But I do want to get some points on the record because this is a pretty important area, as I said. The quality of mental health is one that is important to all of us, each and every one of us. We used to just generally focus on physical health, and now we're seeing more than ever the quality of mental health is so important. And it's one that we need to take seriously as we set our standards in a province like Saskatchewan, where we expect and demand the best health care service in Canada. In fact we have no reason to believe we can't have the best in the world.

But unfortunately what that means is that we have to be vigilant about making sure our legislation reflects those aspirations and we do it in a timely manner, and that we don't get caught in budgetary cycles or electoral cycles and that in fact delays and delays and delays while we know . . . [inaudible] . . . either family members or ourselves who deal with mental health illnesses. And so while it's important to see this in front of us today, I think that we will have a lot to say about the whole area of mental health in the days and weeks and months ahead because it's very, very important.

So from what I understand, this shifts the power from the ministry to the regional health authorities, such as giving licences to approved homes, allowing resident psychiatrists who are already MDs [Doctor of Medicine] the ability to admit patients. and that can help improve the system. And the modernization of language: we can go from mental health centres instead of an in-patient facility. But at the end of the day, it's going to be about resources, isn't it? And that's what we've got to see next week in the budget. What kind of resources will there be in place for supporting those with mental illnesses so mental health can improve in Saskatchewan? So that will be what we're looking for.

And while it's important to have this bill before us, it's important that we have a strong mental health strategy in

Saskatchewan. And we're concerned and we're hearing concern from families about the lack of immediate steps in that area, and we can go on at length. And I know that every family, I would think . . . I know our family and I know other families who have members who are suffering from mental illness and the challenges that brings. And it ranges from the ability or the inability to work, the inability to have strong relationships, caring relationships, and even to suicides. And that's an uncomfortable topic that we often find it difficult to talk about, but we need to be able to address the elephant in the room. And quite often it's about mental health.

[14:30]

And so today I am delighted to stand to say that we are very committed to seeing a strong mental health strategy in this province. And I think it's critically important that we have that. I think right from youth right to seniors and of course every age group has its own challenges, you know, whether you're talking about youth and, you know, the dynamics of friendships and group relationships, the ability of forming relationships, and also just coming to terms and understanding who we all are — those are very, very important challenges.

And so this is something that I think is an important topic, a very important topic. And I think that we are really keen to hear more from this government about its mental health strategy, and we are very keen to see that it is supported with resources and personnel and legislation that will really make Saskatchewan the province that we dream it can be, the one that is healthy and safe and supportive.

And so while I do have some specific things about this, I just want to make sure that we also recognize — and we talked a little bit about the consultation aspect of this — that I hope that this part did come out of some strong consultations with the stakeholders and with the public. We've not heard that necessarily, and I'll review the minister's comments here, but particularly with this that we have . . . that we do include the patients.

And I know this government has gone on at length and it's talked about its Patient First Review from a few years ago. I've not heard the minister talk about how that they've connected with the clients in this particular legislation. We'll hear more when their strategy is announced in the months ahead. But I think that, I know for example in my own riding, we have Crocus Co-op, a very supportive centre that works with people who are facing mental health challenges. And it does such fantastic, fantastic work. But I think this is one that I'm wondering if they were consulted with, this area here.

But I just want to take a minute to talk about how important proper consultation is. And I think that we've seen over and over again the lack of proper consultation from this government, whether it be the clients, whether it be interested stakeholders, or whether it be the families, whether it be professionals. I'd be very curious to know.

And I have not seen the comments from the speaker about whether or not the Privacy Commissioner was consulted. And that is one that gravely concerns me because often he has very insightful comments about how do we ensure people's privacy

is protected and yet services are provided in a timely and effective way? And that's really the crux of the issue before us when we talk about privacy in health care.

People need services immediately, but at the same time that there is this issue of privacy. And we've seen it at length. In fact we've seen concerns as simple as the issue around faxes, and regional health authorities or their agencies or private health care providers inappropriately using fax numbers that they aren't sure whether it's an accurate number to be faxing to. We've heard these stories in the media. For example, people's health records being faxed to schools when the schools are even saying, don't send us any more of this information. And for some reason their numbers still seem to be the numbers that these providers tend to use. And we've seen a situation a few years ago where health records were dumped into a dumpster in south Regina, and yet very little came of that.

So I speak of that because I am watching very carefully and I am very interested in this government's work around privacy. And whether it's health care, whether it's in labour, whether it's employment, whether it's in education, whether it's in government services, we have a lot of work to do ahead of us in making sure our privacy standards are the best in Canada, the best in Canada.

And that does not mean that we're closing the books completely. It means that people know how to keep records private. The right people need to know the information, not anybody else, but it's done in a very timely and effective way. And simple things like fax phone numbers are treated with a respect, and they're checked and kept current and not just dealt with in the old way of saying, well, it's just some information and people can live through it. No, that's not, that's absolutely, that's absolutely not good enough.

So I have not seen him reference the work of the Privacy Commissioner. I have not seen him reference the work of families, and maybe that'll come up in committee, but I think that it's very important that we actually have that information. And that's why you often think that the second reading speeches of ministers could be much fuller. Now we're not saying that they should be 20 minutes or 30 minutes or an hour longer. We would have maybe some problems with that because that doesn't give us enough time to talk about the bills at the time that we would like to talk because we have concerns. But just a few more minutes about some of the details we think are important, like who are they consulting with. Who are they consulting with?

I find it kind of ironic actually. Sometimes the folks opposite will make a big deal of who they've consulted with, and they will really get out there and really get out there and say, this is the list of who we've consulted with. Well somewhere in between is the right way of doing it. We don't need the names of 120 organizations during a second reading speech, but gee, maybe one or two or five. And have you talked to the Privacy Commissioner when we're talking about a bill like this; I think that's important to know.

So I want to take a minute and just review the minister's comment because it's always insightful to think about what he

has said. And he talks about this. And this was a bill that was just introduced just before Christmas. In fact it was only a week ago, in fact exactly a week ago, that the minister stood with his second reading speech. And he talks about:

The intent of the amendments are to improve timely access to mental health services for vulnerable people, support integration of . . . health [services] and addictions services and information . . . [services], and resolve governance and administration issues affecting the ministry and health regions.

And of course that's a very laudable goal and one that I think is important for us to support.

So the intent is to provide timely access to mental health services for vulnerable people, and that's huge. That's huge. And we know that it's critical that in this . . . And so I hope that this legislation in fact enables them to provide better services, and that's what we're looking for. And it's not just words on a page or paragraphs in legislation, but actual access to mental health services for vulnerable people and the integration of mental health and addiction services and information sharing.

And clearly, as we've come to appreciate, the intensity of addiction services and addictions in our population is huge. And we often think of course of substance abuse, but we know of course gambling is a huge one particularly that's emerged in the last 10, 20 years and the impact it's had on families. This is a whole range of addiction services and that's very, very important.

So it'll be interesting to see how this legislation, how they plan to support this legislation with resources to make that come to life so that people can have the services and it will be integrated and it will be there for them. So I understand and appreciate the governance and administration issues, and of course that's the changeover from the regional health, from a provincial model to a regional health authority model in many regards. And so this'll be very, very important.

He talks specifically about, the Act will repeal:

. . . those sections of the Act dealing with confidentiality and release of information and substituting *The Health Information Protection Act*, allowing for better collaboration among areas of health services and other ministries while still protecting personal health information.

And so that's really key. That's really important that we hear that piece.

But again, what was the Privacy Commissioner's input on this? Is it a better idea? Is it not a good idea? We know for example, and I can speak from my own experience, when we've raised issues around the Workers' Compensation Board legislation that was recently introduced and passed a year ago, the Privacy Commissioner had concerns. They weren't really paid attention to. They were ignored. The same with the employment Act. He had concerns about that. He was not listened to. And that's unfortunate because, as an officer of the legislature and someone who specializes in this area, we are at our own risk

when we produce legislation where we don't have the proper information.

I do want to say, you know, there was one example where this government did withdraw legislation on the advice of the Privacy Commissioner. That was when we were dealing with a few years ago the idea of super licences or super IDs [identification]. And it was at the last minute. The legislation was in front of us. And it was like a day like today where we were having second reading debates, and the government of the day realized it had gone too far, that the legislation had gone too far.

This is one that we'll be asking . . . Well unfortunately I guess we'll be asking the Acting Privacy Commissioner because there is no permanent head right now. We're going to be busy at work finding one, and I hope we find one as good as the last. But we need to find out what do they think about this. This is very, very important for us.

So it also talks about reducing the criteria for community treatment orders, which will allow for involuntary treatment in the community and increasing the period of time, the time period of CTOs, the community treatment order, to reduce barriers to treatment for very vulnerable clients. Hugely important, and I know there's many sides to this. We know families who are saddened by the tragedies of what happens when appropriate treatment is not available, cannot be available because of restrictions on legislation. So we hope this really works to resolve that issue and actually can make it better so that people can get help, that people can get the kind of care that they need.

It would be really interesting to know, again here is the consultation piece, who has the ministry talked to about the family groups, the clients? Because again, we can gain a lot from the perspective of clients in terms of what works, what doesn't work. How can we make the process flow, especially when we're trying to reduce the barriers? What is it that's not making things work?

But I do want to say that again this is where consultation is so important because this is a very sensitive, very sensitive area where we want to protect rights, and that's a very important issue, but at the same time we don't want to be hamstrung by rights that really aren't helpful to either the patient or the client or the family. Somewhere in between we have to find the middle ground that's respectful and that there's dignity but, at the same time, help can be there in a very quick and effective manner. So this is very, very important.

It talks about transferring the responsibility for licensing mental health approved homes from the ministry to the regional health authorities to align more closely to the day-to-day practice of using the facility design regulations under *The Regional Health Services Act* instead of *The Mental Health Services Act* to designate facilities.

So that will be interesting, and again this is where we'll need the expertise of the folks from the ministry to help us understand what that may look like. But it's interesting: from moving the responsibility for licensing of approved homes from the ministry to the local health authority, what does that mean

in terms of . . . How far does that responsibility go because we know at the end of the day we have . . . And we may end up with questions here in the House about certain health authorities that are not living up to that kind of standard and may be inconsistent across the province. And there's various reasons for that inconsistency, and sometimes it's just related to resources and it's related to the ability to have the appropriate staffing and people who can make those kind of decisions in an appropriate way.

[14:45]

We've seen the inconsistency with long-term care homes. We've had those questions come up in the House here. That's right across the map and yet the minister will hide behind that it says on the front page, they have standards. They have minimum standards, but we know that when it comes to the actual nuts and bolts there are no minimum standards. And they're letting themselves off the hook by saying, well we're doing this on an individual needs basis. And we understand that. You know from my background as a teacher, that's the best kind of teaching you can do, be it based on an educational . . . [inaudible] . . . individual standard.

But at the end of the day, you need to make sure there are some basic minimum standards right across the province. We have a province. There is a reason for a province. There is a reason for responsibility for health care is at the provincial level so that it can be done. And everyone knows that their tax dollars, the public money, is done for the common good for all of us, no matter where you live in this province, and so that there is some consistency across the province and there is some accountability. And this is the place for that accountability, in this legislature.

So I do get concerned when I do see . . . And it may be a really appropriate way of putting responsibility at the local level. But is this downloading responsibility so nobody will be accountable for, or there's no process for being accountable for the standards of licensing? And what does it mean when it goes off the rails? And it doesn't matter whether it's in a small town or large cities, there is a place where people can get an answer. And this is the place. And I tell you that we'll be watching very carefully about what this really, really means. So we have some concerns about that, and hopefully it's the right thing.

And again it gets back to the consulting. Who asked for this change? Was it the regional health authorities who asked for this change? Was it the parent groups or the family groups where the clients is saying, you know, the provincial people don't quite understand what's happening in our town, so we think the licensing should be done at a local level? I really need to . . . We'll be asking a lot of questions around that.

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, again, it goes along with the licensing of the homes. Again the accountability aspect of it, this may be more effective. There may be savings. But it would be interesting to know what caused this change to come. Who asked for it? Why did they ask for it? What kind of an analysis of this?

I mean there are reasons why we have provincial authorities. And so we're concerned if there's a weakening of provincial responsibility or downloading the responsibilities onto organizations that may not have the capacity, who may not have the capacity to understand the, you know, the ability to appoint regional directors of mental health and chief psychiatrists. That might be just better left at the provincial level. We have questions about that. It may be the best way.

But again if it's downloading responsibilities . . . And I know this government is very interested in the whole concept of lean. And I'm not sure if I see the need when, you know, you have I assume only one regional director of mental health for each region, for each health authority, and chief psychiatrist. So you're only . . . For each region, there's two people.

And so you need to have a capacity to supervise these folks, to hold them accountable, and a process for them also to be able to get together. And I hope we're not creating silos across the province, that Regina will do one thing and Saskatoon will do another thing and Moose Jaw will do yet another thing. So how will this be handled? And how will this be a good thing?

I understand though the connection to the local area. It's hugely, hugely important. But I do have a problem with creating silos and that the expectation across the province is that there will be some consistency of care, some consistency of service delivery. And if that's not the case because we've broken down that provincial responsibility, how will we guarantee that? How will we guarantee that while at the same time keeping to the lean process? Now I don't know all the terms of lean, but I can't see how this can be as effective in some ways because you're creating many layers of bureaucracy.

So as I go through this, and I think that the minister does say and he points out that we are aware and the Assembly is aware that they're developing an inter-ministerial mental health and addictions action plan. He doesn't give a date for that. We don't know whether that will be before the end of this term. It's getting close, as we're into the second half. And clearly it won't be in this year's budget, so it would be in the last year's budget. And who knows whether it will actually make that.

That's disappointing. That's disappointing. We could have had an interim report. We could have had this report. You know, as I said the other day, I was talking about the lobbyist bill and how they took that on right away. Well I would have thought the mental health and addictions crisis that we're facing here in Saskatchewan was much more of an urgent nature than this bill here. But we do . . . If it's making good sense and we'll have the time to talk about that in committee, then we'll definitely, definitely have those questions.

So, Mr. Speaker, it talks about the current Act as 27 years old, and we have to keep up with modern practice. And I will take a minute here. And I just have this, and maybe this is a little bugaboo, but I do . . . It's one that drives me to the wall on this because here we have the word Sunday. Somehow I thought this government had got rid of the word Sunday because when we talked about *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, the minister was bound and determined that we cannot talk about the word Sunday. There was no way we were going to see that word again because, as he was saying, he was anticipating that

there would be constitutional challenges and that there would be problems. Well here when I look at the interpretation, it talks about “**business day**” means a day other than a Saturday, Sunday or holiday.” I don’t know. That sounds like a definition that’s at least 27 years old.

And I have some questions, and we’ll ask the minister: how did the Minister of Health get to use Sunday in a bill, where his counterpart in Labour says you can’t do that — you can’t do that? Sounds like we’ve got the makings of a weekend here, you know.

And I have to say that I was really surprised but pleasantly surprised that we are retaining some of this. This is just a recognition of what practice is in business — that you actually have a business day, and you have a business week, and it is usually not Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday. Now I find it even passing strange that he feels quite adequate to say holiday, not a public holiday or a statutory holiday. You know, I’ll have to look back in my notes from the employment Act. I don’t know if they call them holidays anymore. But here we see this line, and I think we’ll have to ask a little bit more about this.

It shows again the inconsistency of this government when it comes to drafting legislation. In Health they recognize the weekend, and they recognize that work will happen most likely during the five days, Monday to Friday, whereas for some reason, the Minister of Labour could not seem to come to a point where he could appreciate that schools work on a business week. Most of government works on a business week. Most of the workplace works on a work week, and there is such a thing as a weekend.

And so here you have here, in this legislation . . . And I don’t know by highlighting this whether the government will now go back and take this out because clearly . . . Now I don’t know what sections this is relevant to or what it’s relevant to, but I find it interesting when they’re talking about improving access to health care, particularly mental health care, that they talk about the week, the business week. So I just find this interesting when I glance through some of their things here.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that we have a lot of work ahead of us, and I just again want to say how important this piece of legislation is and how important that we take the time to examine it fully and completely. As I’ve said, it’s important to update and modernize the language in it.

It’s important to get that balance of privacy. Again we’ll be asking the minister, in terms of consultations, who did he consult with in terms of privacy? Did he avail himself of the officer, the privacy officer, and what were those comments? We haven’t seen them. And particularly in this type of issue we know the Ministry of Health does not have a strong record. As I’ve said, whether it’s the fax phone number fiasco that we’ve seen or whether it was the dumpster fiasco that made the front page of the *Leader-Post* a few years ago, not a strong track record when it comes to privacy. And so did they consult with the Privacy Commissioner on this, and what did he have to say at the time, or what does the office have to say?

Important, though, important that we get the right balance between rights and services here because we know that it’s a

delicate balance, and we know families are constantly hopeful that their loved ones will get the services they can get as quickly as they possibly can, as quickly as they possibly can. But we need to do it in a respectful and a dignified way. It’s so critical that that’s the case, that it’s not . . . people’s rights are not trampled. I’m hoping that this is not the case here. I think that’s really, really important.

We also want to ask those questions about downloading. When you download services, are you providing the capacity to deliver those services? Whether it’s licensing or appointing chief psychiatrists or regional folks, it’s very important that we get it done in the best way possible and that in fact you have better services, that you have better services, and the people who are in those positions have the resources that they really need to deliver their obligations. Again, as we’ve said over and over again, and from our perspective, it’s important to have a provincial bar, a provincial standard of care that we know that we won’t see an inconsistent level of care throughout the province that’s based largely because of inconsistent resources or priorities. It’s important that, especially when we come to mental health, that we do that the right way.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know there’ll be members who want to be speaking about other topics here today, but I do want to especially underline — there are so many important parts to this I could emphasize — but we are anxiously awaiting the mental health and additions strategy from this government. We hope to see it soon. We hope that it’s not delayed. And we actually hope that it can be put into place before the end of the term. We are concerned about I think the time it’s taking to do that.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to move adjournment at this point now of Bill No. 127, *An Act to amend The Mental Health Services Act and to make a consequential amendment to The Health Information Protection Act*. I do so move.

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.

[15:00]

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 member for Regina Lakeview.

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It’s my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 128, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Employment Act and to repeal The Public Service Essential Services Act*. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this is the next chapter in a long history of bungling of labour legislation that we have from this government. When they were

elected in 2007, they had some ideological perspectives around labour that they allowed to overwhelm their common sense perspective on how labour issues had been dealt with in the province. And, Mr. Speaker, this particular bill today is one more attempt to tear off the band-aid from the wound and put a new band-aid on to see if they can get it fixed.

And the reason that I say that, Mr. Speaker, is that the legislation that's being mentioned here in this Act as it relates to *The Public Service Essential Services Act* is legislation that's presently before the Supreme Court of Canada. And people in Saskatchewan know that this case will be argued in the Supreme Court in May of 2014, just a few months from now, and that the whole issue of how the original legislation was brought forward in the province has been subject to substantial discussion.

Now, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Justice Dennis Ball wrote a very detailed and thoughtful decision around the constitutionality of *The Public Service Essential Services Act*, and that's the legislation that in this particular Act is being abolished. And, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that the ideological-driven Premier and cabinet did in 2007 and 2008, much to the consternation of many people who were supporters on the right of some of the things that they were doing, was what they did was allow for some of the questions around what rights are guaranteed by the Constitution of Canada should be protected.

And, Mr. Speaker, one of those questions relates to the right to strike. Now that's not specifically mentioned in our constitution in Canada. But as a result of this case, which will be heard in May 2014, the opportunity is there for the Supreme Court of Canada to adopt Mr. Justice Dennis Ball's perspective on the original legislation and enhance rights for workers right across the country.

Now I think this particular legislation today is an attempt by a new Minister of Labour to try to blunt the effect of their bungling in 2008 and see if they can't slip away from some of the perspectives that they took at that time. Unfortunately I'm not sure that it's possible to undo what they've done. And how did they get themselves into this kind of bind? Well, Mr. Speaker, most new governments have some ideas about things they want to do, but unfortunately this government did not talk to either employers or workers and allowed for an ideologically written bill to be presented in the legislature. As we all remember, there were many discussions during the time that that bill was being looked at. And I think that if you go back and look at the records, we may end up having some of the longest, most incomprehensible sentences in the history of the English language that were the responses of the minister of the day to the very pointed questions from some of our members on this side of the House. Mr. Speaker, a lot of that baffle-gab is on the record. It's what the courts have looked at and used as they've evaluated the constitutionality of that legislation.

So, Mr. Speaker, here we have Bill 128. It has a whole new section, a whole rewriting of *The Public Service Essential Services Act*, and it's being placed in *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*.

Now we know that last year *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* was passed with a placeholder for something to deal with *The*

Public Service Essential Services Act, and that Act in and of itself was not very helpful for the people of the province. What it did was raise many, many questions about issues that all the people of Saskatchewan thought were resolved for sometimes a hundred years. So we have now at this stage again a move by this Premier and this government to destabilize the ability of workers and employers to resolve their own issues through a bargaining process.

So, Mr. Speaker, when we have that kind of a record of the government over the last five years of this destabilization, then we end up having to say, well what is it that they're trying to do in this legislation that may create some other problems? Unfortunately it's not very easy to tell until we get the decision from the Supreme Court of Canada, which probably won't happen till later in the fall.

Now I'm assuming and I'm hoping that both the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Labour will be advising the Premier that they should not have this legislation go into effect before we see what comments the justices of the Supreme Court have about this whole area of Saskatchewan labour law. And the reason I say that, Mr. Speaker, is that this law may actually further complicate what's happening in Saskatchewan if various parts of the original law are held unconstitutional because of the way the legislation was passed in 2008.

So, Mr. Speaker, it's possible or probably is more likely that a reasonable government would have waited to introduce this legislation until we had the advice of the Supreme Court of Canada. But that's not necessarily how this government works. They don't always listen even to some of their own supporters when they do things, as evidenced today in question period when we talk about the Merit Contractors who are clearly people who support this legislation, who are now taking on the minister of the P3s and privatization and saying, hey, this is about Saskatchewan contractors and about Saskatchewan work; let's do it in a reasonable fashion.

So we have that same kind of an issue arising in this legislation because when you looked at Saskatchewan's labour relations over the decades — and we've had scholars both on the right and on the left and the centre take a look at the systems that were available — I think it was quite clear that even though Saskatchewan didn't have some very specific essential services legislation, they did have mechanisms that dealt with these issues that arose during strike situations. And in actual fact, the numbers of incidents that arose and actually the number of days of work that were lost were probably at the low end compared to some of the other more defined systems, which is what the government is now trying to put in place.

So the question becomes, why did the government move on this? Why did they go ahead without listening to the people of Saskatchewan, both on the management side and on the worker side? I'm not sure it's clear. I think when the historians go back and look, they will say that the Premier had a particular ideological perspective that he wanted to bring forward and set out in the province, and he did it to the detriment of labour relations in Saskatchewan.

Now there are some commentators who have looked at this particular legislation we're dealing with today and are saying

well this is a more reasonable Minister of Labour stepping back and trying to correct some of the excesses of the previous legislation. I guess putting the best construction on everything, that's maybe what people would like to believe. But what we also know is that the Minister of Labour has the same perspective about changing the balance between workers and employers in Saskatchewan, and that perspective comes through even in these changes that are here because it doesn't go and directly deal with some of the specific issues that have been raised by both workers and employers.

So how do we deal with this particular legislation? I think an appropriate thing to do, Mr. Deputy Speaker, would be to table this legislation until we receive the advice of the Supreme Court of Canada as it relates to the previous legislation. The reason I say that is we could then look at some of the comments and some of the constitutional issues that were raised in that particular case and make sure that we get the right balance. I think what will happen, Mr. Speaker, is, if we proceed with this legislation, we're going to end up with another bill in the fall that tries to fix what the problem is with this legislation in light of what the Supreme Court says. And once again, we'll be pulling off a bandage on a sore and tearing apart the healing that's going on and putting a new one on. So we will have had then five years or six years of basically uncertainty about what the law is and also concern about how people who are bargaining in Saskatchewan should operate.

Now there's always a time for new ideas and new approaches to be introduced into legislation in any area of endeavour within the community. The difficulty we have here is that the trigger and the initial push did not listen to most of the people who work in the province. And so, Mr. Speaker, there's a great suspicion about this government, about this Premier, about this Minister of Labour when they come forward with what they say is, oh, the panacea or the fix or the final cure or the healing of all the issues.

And so we have a bill that attempts to set out some new ways of resolving some of the issues, but we don't have a clear perspective that this is going to be constitutional either, that it's going to be a valid law. And so, Mr. Speaker, there are, I think, a number of ways that the government could proceed. But I think the most appropriate one would be for the Minister of Labour to basically say that we're going to leave this bill on the order paper or drop it now and reintroduce it after the Supreme Court of Canada has dealt with the issues that are here.

[15:15]

Now when you end up with a track record like the Sask Party government has or like the Premier has as it relates to labour law, it's quite difficult to return to something that's more reasonable. And I think that when the Premier tries to do that, there's a lot of concern that arises. People look carefully at what's being proposed. They look carefully at what the minister is talking about. I think that in this particular bill, there ends up being a number of ideas or issues that are laid out that are, I guess, difficult to square with what we know is a very reasonable, detailed review of the legislation that was put forward by Mr. Justice Dennis Ball.

So what do we do? What's the role for the legislature in this

process, because we're being asked to set out some rules of reasonableness or of practical response to what can be very difficult situations. I mean this is the situation where people are deemed to be essential. Their work is deemed to be essential to the point where they no longer have any right to use some of the traditional ways of bargaining for contracts. And so when you take away those kind of constitutional rights that people have, there must be some very strict rules on the people who are going to take advantage of the removal of those rights.

So that's what this legislation is about. It's about making sure that health care workers are available when there are needs for them. But also it's about protecting the workers and making sure that they're not being taken advantage of. It's about, in a province like Saskatchewan, where an issue with the lack of power or the lack of natural gas could be or will be a life-and-death situation on some of the coldest days of the year. It's about snowstorms and making sure that highways are safe to be travelled and how you treat those people who basically risk their lives to clear the roads and make sure that others can have access there. And so, Mr. Speaker, these are really serious issues, and it's not a place where past missteps by the government should govern or decide how an issue is being dealt with.

And so what I suggest again, Mr. Speaker, is that the Minister of Labour, together with the Premier, that they end up stepping back from this legislation at this time and, you know, wait until we hear what the Supreme Court has to say about the type of interests and powers that are protected under our Constitution.

Now when legislation doesn't do what everybody expects it to do, that also creates a problem for the legislature and us here in this place as legislators, because we didn't get a chance to have any input or advice before the legislation was introduced five years ago. When this legislation came forward, we also were somewhat surprised by the introduction of the legislation in the midst of the Supreme Court case that's there right now.

What we end up raising questions about, then, is what is the role of the legislature? When a government has a substantial majority like they do now, there's even a greater onus on the Premier and on his colleagues to be very careful in what kinds of changes they make and how they make those changes. Mr. Deputy Speaker, I think that, in the whole area of labour law, this is an area where the Premier in retrospect, looking back as a historian or political science, will have some fairly difficult and strong criticism because there was not a process of listening to the people. There was not an understanding that this was much more complicated than the Premier thought.

And so this legislation that we have here today further complicates that perspective that the legislature isn't necessarily doing their job, that they're being used as an ideological tool by the Premier and the Sask Party government and doing things which, if we put the best construction on, they don't intend to do. But more importantly, I think they're doing things . . . that they basically are responding to certain elements within their own area of support that is not appropriate for a government to respond to. So I think, Mr. Speaker, when we deal with this particular legislation, that we have to be very, very careful.

Now always when you're looking at legislation where there are

competing interests, you have to examine which right or which concern takes precedence. This legislation deals with that fundamental question of the protection of a worker, the right of a worker to bargain, the right of the worker to withdraw services over and against the right of the public to have that service provided. Some of the toughest questions that have arisen in society have arisen in this area where these two interests are competing with each other. That's all the more reason, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there should be more thoughtful work done and, I think, a respect for the courts to allow the courts to make some responses on this before we get this proposal that we have here, which I think attempts to blunt some of the comments that we know are going to be coming from the Supreme Court of Canada.

Now another possible scenario here, and probably the most likely one given the majority government that the Premier has, is that this legislation will be passed. The case will be argued in the Supreme Court of Canada. There probably will be some further protections for workers that weren't there before the government sort of misstepped and introduced the 2008 legislation. And we will have more questions arrive which causes more expense, both for employers and workers, around what's the effect of this legislation in light of the comments of the Supreme Court of Canada. And so rather than simplify things, if I can use that in quotes, or rather than coming up with some kinds of "brilliant" solutions, what we will have is further discussion and further expense both for workers and for employers as we try to sort out what's going on.

And so when we look at this whole scenario, it raises questions about the ability of the government to listen to advice but more importantly the ability of the government to actually go and get advice from all of the appropriate groups that are involved.

Now when we will look at this legislation here, and I know a number of my colleagues will have further comments about it, but when we also will look at it in committee, we'll be doing a lot of speculation as to what will be the effect of this legislation vis-à-vis the comments that are going to be coming out in the court. I think practically our session ends just a couple of days before the case will be argued in the Supreme Court of Canada. So that ends up adding another element where it once again forces me to, you know, advise the Premier and the Minister of Labour to spend some time looking at whether this bill shouldn't, in actual fact, be held back for now and reintroduced after we've heard from the Supreme Court of Canada.

So practically, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this is one more step on a kind of a stumbling, blundering path of dealing with important issues for Saskatchewan employers and workers. It shows how the government does not necessarily consult with people to get appropriate solutions. And it's one more example of a situation that has not been handled well, and it's going to take quite a few more years to sort out.

But at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move to adjourn debate on this particular bill, and I know some of my colleagues will have more to say later. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 128, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment 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 member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to wade into the discussion about Bill No. 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act*. I think I'd like to lay out a little bit about what this bill will do and talk a little bit about that.

So this particular bill is quite a complicated one. It consolidates the provisions of *The Government Organization Act* with Executive Council provisions of *The Legislative Assembly and Executive Council Act, 2007*. Then it also incorporates the provisions of *The Tabling of Documents Act, 1991* and *The Federal-Provincial Agreements Act*.

The new legislation will remove, as the minister said, "any confusion about the organization of ministries and the assignment of ministerial responsibilities." So we've got a few things going on with this Act, Mr. Deputy Speaker. But the bottom line is it deals with executive government, which in essence is the Premier's office and the cabinet's, and that is who has sole responsibility really for the daily administration of our province.

So some of the things that this legislation does — and the minister laid this out too in his comments — is that legislative secretaries will not be reappointed every year. Currently that's not the case. And it's interesting, one of my colleagues in his earlier remarks was asking . . . just took a straw poll about who on the other side of the House who happens . . . raise your hands who has been a legislative secretary. And we think that the list is better asked, who hasn't been a legislative secretary on the other side of the House.

But not to diminish some of the work that the legislative secretaries have done. There's been some very good work done, Mr. Speaker. I had the privilege actually of sitting on the Traffic Safety Committee with the legislative secretary for traffic safety. So there's been some very good work done in that regard, Mr. Speaker. But that's one of the things, when you take power away from . . . The goal, Mr. Speaker, in some of this Act is removing power actually from the legislature and taking more power and concentrating it in the hands of the executive which means less oversight, Mr. Speaker. Less oversight and more power to the Premier and the Premier's office is in essence what some of this bill does, Mr. Speaker.

[15:30]

What else does it do? Regulations establishing ministries will not be subject to review by the legislature. Again I know the minister in his comments remarked that that already, very rarely . . . I should just go to his exact quote here: “Presently this approval is required if the advisory committee’s appointment is for more than one year. This will provide more . . . Pardon me. This is the quote regarding “. . . regulations establishing ministries will not be subject to review by the legislature.” The minister went on to say that “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.”

So again, this is removing the need to come before the legislature in some cases, which ultimately is about concentrating power in the hands of the Premier and the executive, which we’ve heard federally now seems to be the case, and there’s some concern here that that might be the case as well.

Another thing that’s happening here, Mr. Speaker, is “the appointment of the advisory committees to ministers will require cabinet approval in all cases.” I think one point that’s interesting here is, and I’m not quite sure what the government has in mind here, but the federal-provincial agreements will not require cabinet approval unless they require an expenditure by the government of more than \$50,000.

So I’m just curious. Obviously when you’re looking at legislation and changes to legislation, you want to know what was the impetus for the change. What was the government thinking when they’ve decided to make the change? Where does that stem from? What did they have in mind? So I think some of the questions at committee will be, what particular agreements or what thoughts went behind this particular change? Again that is something that we will be asking.

I think often when . . . The goal when the opposition is debating bills and when bills come before the House, Mr. Deputy Speaker, we think about why a bill has come before the House. Who’s asked for it? Who are the stakeholders? Have the stakeholders been consulted? And in this particular case, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the stakeholders . . . Initially I thought well, who are the stakeholders? It’s not entirely clear. This is about executive government. But ultimately, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the stakeholders here are the people of Saskatchewan, and that is the reality. We’re talking about the people who are being ultimately governed by executive government who has the sole authority and responsibility for the day-to-day operations of our province, Mr. Speaker. So I’m curious to know what the general citizen would think about some of these changes around the power concentration in the Premier’s office, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

What else is happening with this Act? All department Acts 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.

So it’s interesting to me. I wasn’t here in this legislature at the time of the debate between . . . And there was no debate, Mr. Speaker. The government in 2007 had a majority and made a

move from calling things departments and moving them to ministries. And I won’t debate the merits of that here. I actually don’t know the rationale or the virtues of referring to something as a ministry rather than a department. I do know that there’s financial costs that come with doing those kinds of things. There are costs . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . The Minister of Finance is saying there’s very limited costs, but the reality is there are still costs for changing letterheads and all those kind of things.

But I don’t know. I’d be interested . . . As I said, I wasn’t here in the legislature in 2007. I wasn’t here. I wasn’t here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, at that point in time, but I’m curious about the rationale why a ministry over a department. I’m not sure about that, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

One of the other things that happens here, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is grant-making and agreement-making powers are removed from *The Department of Justice Act*, as they will appear in *The Executive Government Administration Act*. So the minister pointed out those grant-making and agreement-making powers are redundant because they would have appeared in another Act already. That seems quite straightforward. And exceptional grant-making and agreement-making powers will remain in their respective Acts. So he lines that out.

The Financial Administration Act is being amended to eliminate the investment board and provide the treasury board can have non-ministerial members. Well I think, Mr. Deputy Speaker, one has to be clear that that already happens. So this government currently already appoints non-ministers to treasury board, so this Act is simply catching up with the current practice of this government, Mr. Speaker.

And I know just along the lines of responsibility, ultimately in a ministry where does the buck stop? The buck stops with the minister. And having spoken to some of my colleagues about this who’ve had the opportunity to sit around a cabinet table or sit on treasury board, that there can . . . And this goes back to the discussion about legislative secretaries, so both to the point about legislative secretaries and putting non-ministers on treasury board, there can be the question or concern, and it’s a valid concern to raise, that blurring the lines of responsibility is a possibility, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And again, where does the buck stop? Does it stop with the Legislative Secretary? Does it stop with the minister? It should ultimately stop with the minister. Or when you’ve got treasury board decisions, should the buck be stopping with the ministers rather than backbenchers who are sitting on treasury board?

So those are all things to think about, Mr. Deputy Speaker, with Bill 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act*. I know I will have colleagues who will also want to enter the debate, and we will have a chance to have questions, to maybe get some clarification, when the bill eventually goes to committee. So with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale 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: — 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 Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to discuss Bill No. 130, *The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*. I've just spoken to its companion bill, Bill 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act*, and touched on some of the changes that will have . . . Basically this is just making sure that changes that occur with other bills are taken care of in this Act. So I have few words to say on that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, and I think my comments on Bill 129 stand. So with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 130, *The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 130, *The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to say congratulations to the Premier and the minister on this one. It's taken a long time, but we have here a municipalities Act which effectively allows for the "forced" amalgamation of municipalities because it sets out all the rules about how you would have smaller communities join with their neighbours in creating a whole new map for Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the caucus across the way has spent a lot of time looking at this bill or not, and I do want to thank the minister for providing some fairly detailed comments when he introduced the bill on November 25th, 2013. But I know he did say quite clearly on page 4175 in *Hansard*, the statement: "Nor are the proposed amendments about forced amalgamation." And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that he knew and

he knows that what's been introduced here is all of the rules around how the government, over some time, will make some fairly substantial changes to how our municipalities operate in the province.

Mr. Speaker, it's curious that they would do this in a way that it's not necessarily straightforward, but it's not surprising, given how a number of other changes that have been made by the government have been made over the last few years.

And so, Mr. Speaker, what is this bill about? Well I think that what we're doing or the minister is doing and obviously the Premier and others are saying that there are municipalities in the province that don't function very well, and we need to do something about that. And so we're going to set out some rules about how some of these changes can take place. And they basically console themselves in saying it's not forced amalgamation because there's nothing in here that specifically directs the various amalgamations to take place. But when you look at the way the legislation's worded and you look at the ability for regulations to be put in place by cabinet on the advice of the minister, it's very clear that there will be incentives to various parts of the province to organize their municipalities and the things that they do in quite a different fashion. And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this isn't necessarily a difficult or bad thing that's being proposed here, but I think what's hard for many of us is that it's being done in a bit of a backhanded way.

And so what do we have here? Well the minister states right upfront that the first thing this bill will do ". . . is provide better criteria on which to determine whether unincorporated communities and areas have sufficient capacity for local governance and municipal status." And so, Mr. Speaker, there appears to be an underlying theme that there need to be broader regional type governments. They don't use the word county anywhere in here like we have in our neighbouring province of Alberta, but there are a number of themes that come out of this legislation. And when you look at other pieces of legislation that are there around particular services, whether it's some of the water legislation that's been introduced by the Minister of Environment or some of the legislation around various regional services, whether it's waste disposal or other kinds of things, you put all these pieces together, and we do have a plan. I don't know if I can call it quite a plan, but it's a possible path towards some fairly main significant changes in what's going to happen in the province.

So I'm not sure if this will be part of the budget of the Minister of Finance that we'll see some incentives that come forward that make it obvious that these municipalities or villages or resort villages or however all the different pieces are put together, it just makes sense for them to do things more closely together. But clearly a lot of the rules that are in this particular legislation will be part of facilitating some fairly major change in the province.

And so what, you know, what do we make of this? Now we know from what the minister said, and we've also seen letters of support from different groups in the province, and specifically SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] is quite pleased with this particular legislation, which is that practically we need to have some bigger areas that

are managed together and that the old traditional distance between towns of 6 miles, or I think it was about an hour or a little less ride with a horse and wagon between our communities, isn't really workable in the 21st century.

[15:45]

So what is it that is the vision for the province? That part is not here, either in the minister's comments or in the legislation, and I think that that is a failing of . . . What we have here is that we may end up with a patchwork of things happening in the province that are quite difficult for everybody, but especially difficult for some of the smaller communities. And most people don't mind having clear rules that come as a result of conversation and discussion across the province, but what they do object to is when things are sort of hinted at or pushed or somebody has a vision but they don't really tell everybody what it is that that vision is, and they go ahead and make changes that facilitate that.

Now I'm going to also comment about this particular legislation in light of the legislation for the Global Transportation Hub just outside of Regina. What we've seen is that the mayor of that Global Transportation Hub, which is, you know, bigger than many of our municipalities in the province, happens to be the Minister of the Economy, and basically that place competes with the city of Regina, competes with the RM [rural municipality] of Sherwood, competes with the city of Moose Jaw and other places across the province, but it can move very fast because there is really no council, at least no elected one position. It's basically just the Minister of the Economy running that operation. And so what we see is transfer of taxpayers, or in the light of Crown corporations, people who . . . organizations that compensate the city of Regina or the city of Moose Jaw for services that are provided, moving to the Global Transportation Hub where they obviously pay for some services but it's outside of the control of either of the cities involved or of the RM of Sherwood.

And so, Mr. Speaker, we have this kind of strange creature which has been created by not public discussion, but just sort of things happening. And so, Mr. Speaker, given the history of how that's worked, we have now this legislation being introduced in this session which has many of the same kinds of powers of transformation which aren't clearly set out, which haven't been discussed in the community, which don't have any clear boundaries, and in many times they're defined in the regulations which nobody has seen to this point. And so what are we supposed to do here in the legislature when this type of change to our communities is being introduced?

Now if you're a mayor of a small town or a resort village or even one of our cities, some of the things in this legislation are very good because it allows for some expansion of the area of responsibility without a huge amount of discussion. And so for existing local political leaders, it has some advantages.

But do the public know about this? Do the public understand what this legislation means? Do they understand that what may have been a traditional area of local responsibility could be changed all of a sudden without them knowing much about that? I don't think so, Mr. Speaker. And I think that that is an area where we need to watch very carefully because practically

what we have is once again an example of some inadvertent changes being brought forward that may or may not accomplish what's intended, but clearly it will transform our province such as we have now.

Now is this legislation here as a result of some of the initiatives that have come from the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities around clearing a path, making sure that there's common rules and regulations across some of the rural areas that allow for businesses to work properly, whether it's oil and gas or whether it's other businesses? I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker. We don't really see or hear where this comes from.

What we do know though is that the minister who has introduced this information knows the issues and challenges that are present in rural municipalities and municipalities in general across the province. We know that he has, for many years, looked at some of these issues. I think what we all would have preferred is we'd use those skills and the skills of the Premier to communicate, to have a discussion about what the province of Saskatchewan should look like in 2025 or 2040. Because it really is our province. It's our communities. And when things happen that are not explainable or you don't understand where some of the rules come from, then you end up causing further difficulty over the longer term.

And so, Mr. Speaker, this particular legislation has a number of aspects of that type of uncertainty which we don't need because uncertainty is always a factor in having the economic health of the province suffer. And so when I first saw this legislation, as I said before, I thought, oh here we go.

But we don't have the plan. We don't have the perspective. We don't have the vision that basically can drive some of this type of legislation to accomplish what many people within the province want. I don't think people are afraid of reorganizing how we provide services in municipalities or in regions. I don't think they're afraid of that, but they want to have a fair discussion. They want to have a reasonable discussion, and they want to be part of the discussion. And so that's where some of this legislation, I think, fails because it's been brought forward in a way that doesn't have the bigger vision, the bigger plan for what the province is.

It's not dissimilar to what happened with the labour legislation. Things are brought forward without a lot of discussion. Now here, maybe some of these tools will be used in positive ways. I think probably many of them will. But to have the actual discussion, to actually have a sense of what Saskatchewan will look like in the longer term, that's not part of this particular legislation.

So I'm looking forward to hearing further comments about this. I'm expecting that there may be some financial incentives around some of these amalgamation provisions that will come in the Minister of Finance's budget in a few weeks. There may be some other announcements that nudge this process along. But I'm disappointed and I think people of Saskatchewan should be disappointed that we don't have the bigger picture. We don't have the longer term vision of what the province can be because I think that people are ready to have this discussion, and they'd rather do it openly than have things happen to them in a surprised or unexpected way.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I don't have any further comments right now. I know that we'll have some questions when we get to committee, but I do also know that a number of my colleagues will want to comment on this legislation because it affects all parts of the province in slightly different ways. And I look forward to somebody, hopefully the Premier, presenting a vision which this legislation fits into. With that I would move adjournment of debate. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 116. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise and speak to Bill No. 117, *An Act to make a consequential amendment to The Non-profit Corporations Act, 1995 resulting from the enactment of The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*.

And so effectively what this legislation does in one page is kind of capture all of the change that is in the previous bill that was introduced, Bill No. 116, because what it does is it adds another definition in *The Non-profit Corporations Act* of something called municipal district. And so that word could be county. It could be regional authority. It could be lots of different things, but in Saskatchewan it's called municipal district because maybe that's not as disruptive as some other terms. And so what's happening in this particular legislation is that this newly defined municipal district or this amalgamation tool from Bill No. 116 is going to be acknowledged in *The Non-profit Corporations Act* and is going to be recognized in the same fashion as municipalities and rural municipalities.

So once again we have a possible vision of what the province is going to be like in 10 or 20 or 30 years, but there's really no vision that unifies all of this and says, oh that makes sense. This piece of legislation is here to accomplish building strong regional governments and strong regional communities that will serve all of the people of the province.

And so I think all Saskatchewan people are waiting for the Premier to articulate that, for the minister to articulate that, for the budget of the Finance minister to show us what the financial incentives will be to amalgamate. And we'll accept that they won't call it forced amalgamation, but I think it may be called facilitated amalgamation or it may be called encouraged amalgamation. But whatever you want to call it, it will be

consolidation or amalgamation of regional governments in the province.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know that others of my colleagues will want to comment on this bill as well, and at this point I will adjourn debate on Bill No. 117.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Regina Lakeview has moved to adjourn debate on Bill 117. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

[16:00]

Bill No. 118

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 118 — *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to waste into the discussion on Bill 118, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act*.

I think one place that I'd like to start here today is on the consultation piece, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And this government hasn't had the best track record when it's come to consultation, but noting in the minister's comments actually, he does in fact say that they've consulted widely with the post-secondary sector including those at the University of Regina, the University of Saskatchewan, the regional colleges, the Dumont Technical Institute, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, and the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission. And he goes on to say that SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] has consulted with its student association, SIAST faculty association, and the Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union, Professional Services.

So he doesn't go on to say what those organizations said about the legislation, but he does in fact say that they've consulted. But this government has a track record of doing cursory consultation and listening, but not always hearing what organizations have to say, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But it's good to know, at least in this case, that the government has reached out to all the stakeholders. That's absolutely imperative when making legislation, that those impacted by the legislation are in fact involved in the process of saying their piece on the proposed legislation or what they'd like to see.

What does Bill 118, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act* do? I keep saying polytechnique, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm thinking about Quebec actually which was in Canada, I believe, it was the first province to have polytechnique institutes. And I remember as a young person doing a French immersion and learning about all my cohort who were going to polytechniques.

So basically what this bill is doing, it has a few different parts and pieces to it. SIAST will be changing . . . It's a name change, Mr. Deputy Speaker, from Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology to Polytechnic. So the minister points out that this is an evolution moving from being an institute of applied . . . What word am I looking for, Mr. Speaker? Moving from an institute of applied science and technology to a polytechnic. So he doesn't lay out particularly what a polytechnic is, but one of the things that a polytechnic can do is grant degrees, Mr. Speaker. So there will be degree granting at this institution. As well they'll be able to do applied research and scholarly activity.

One of the things that's interesting is it'll allow, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act* will clarify SIAST's ability to fundraise for property. And the minister says this is increasingly important, and he points to the fact that SIAST was able to attract very significant dollars from Husky, which is useful, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Organizations that are benefiting from greater skills and trade training should participate in the growing economy, Mr. Speaker.

But there are some things to flag here. You have a government who has had some difficulty with funding around education, both at the pre-K to 12 [pre-kindergarten to grade 12] level and at the university level and at the technical institute level, Mr. Deputy Speaker. We heard today about tuition rates going up at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan]. So we welcome participation from obviously industry, but you have to be mindful too that government . . . It shouldn't be an opportunity for government to abdicate its responsibilities, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

I know when we think about technical colleges . . . Well my own experience, I have both a university degree and a diploma. And my diploma actually came from SAIT [Southern Alberta Institute of Technology] in Calgary. And I do know very well first-hand the advantages of a technical college, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I know in my two years of time at SAIT, I don't have any experience here in Saskatchewan, but my two years at SAIT were incredibly beneficial, very hands-on, very practical learning. When I graduated from SAIT with a journalism diploma, I felt very well equipped to be able to go out in the world and work as a journalist. I benefited greatly from my university education as well, but I'm a big believer in skill and trade training, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And anything that supports SIAST's ability to further do their job is a good thing.

So interesting again, I think I've covered some of the things that are happening here — the degree-granting piece, the applied research and scholarly activity, the ability of SIAST to be able to fundraise for property, and the fact that the minister's outlined that consultation has happened here, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I do know I have colleagues who undoubtedly will have further to add to this debate and will have questions when we come to committee. And that's always a good time to get a better sense of what has happened and why it's happened, and it's good to have that opportunity to be able to ask questions.

But again the work of SIAST over the years, prior to this legislation coming into force at some point and becoming a polytechnic, SIAST has contributed greatly to our economy throughout the province and helped ensure our ability to have a

trained, a high-quality, trained workforce, whether you're a child care worker or someone working in the other trades, Mr. Speaker.

So with that I would like to move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 118, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act*. Thank you.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 118. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 119

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Norris that **Bill No. 119** — *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Consequential Amendments Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act* be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to weigh into the discussion on Bill 119, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Consequential Amendments Act, 2013*. That is a mouthful.

This Act is a companion Act to Bill No. 118, to which I just spoke. It's just dealing with pieces of . . . changes that need to happen in other pieces of legislation to ensure that Bill 118 can go ahead. So I know I've addressed some things in Bill 118, and my comments on that still stand. So between now and the time that this bill makes it to committee we will have an opportunity to think of some further questions, but I think it's fairly straightforward, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So with that, I would like to move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 119. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 120

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 120** — *The Lobbyists 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. It's always good to be recognized by yourself to join in the debate in this Assembly. Bill No. 120, *The Lobbyists Act*, interesting piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker. I should say off the

top, I haven't been lobbied one way or the other about the contents of this legislation, just to register that for the House.

But it's interesting. The sort of genesis of this particular piece of legislation would seem to have been an article that Guy Giorno, one-time chief of staff to Stephen Harper, a prominent Ottawa lawyer, had written in which he'd talked about how Saskatchewan was the Wild West when it came to the lack of lobbying legislation.

And it was interesting to see the wheels kick into action after that, Mr. Speaker, in terms of special committee activity being undertaken on the part of the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee. I believe it was the work heading out to Ottawa to meet with various folks there including, I believe, Mr. Giorno, and then the sort of gestation that was undertaken on the providing of a committee report, and then how that ultimately translated into the legislation that we are debating here today, Bill No. 120.

I'd like to say a special word of thanks to our member and representative in those proceedings, the member from Saskatoon Nutana, herself a lawyer, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And she certainly kept us as a caucus well abreast of the developments and well briefed on the developments and at the end of the day, in terms of the work that she'd done in conjunction with the committee, felt compelled to provide a minority report as regarded the final report of the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice Committee. And then it's her that we look to for guidance as we proceed through the legislation.

So it's been an interesting evolution for this particular piece of legislation, Mr. Speaker, now, and I guess one of the more interesting descriptors as this has come to fruition in terms of Bill No. 120 finally being in front of the House.

Again given the contributory role that Mr. Giorno, Mr. Guy Giorno had played in terms of spurring action from the provincial government on this front, it's interesting to look to what his take is on it now. Whether or not it takes Saskatchewan from being the Wild West perhaps to being the mild west we shall see, Mr. Speaker.

But it's interesting, in an interview with Saskatchewan political columnist Murray Mandryk from November 23rd, 2013 in the *Leader-Post*, Mr. Giorno described Bill No. 120 as . . . stating that, to set up the quote, Mr. Speaker:

The key is for the public to be able to see what government is doing, said Giorno, likening the Lobbyist Act to a flashlight rather than a hammer.

"Right now, you (in Saskatchewan) don't even have a two-watt flashlight," he said.

And then carrying on here, Mr. Speaker . . .

Admittedly this law — as Giorno points out — could have gone much further in its transparency requirements. Its failure to even require public disclosure about individuals and organizations cabinet ministers and premiers meet with speaks to its ample deficiencies.

But bills can always be fixed in second reading with amendments. Laws, too, can always be later amended.

This may not be a great law right now, but it is a start.

From the article again authored by Mr. Murray Mandryk and reported in November 23rd's *Leader-Post*. So moving from no flashlight to possibly a 2-watt flashlight with this legislation, Mr. Speaker.

It's interesting to see that, again referring to the column Mandryk had written wherein:

Giorno suggested the proposed law "would give the province one of the most strongly enforced lobbying laws in the country, and lobbying conflict-of-interest rules among the toughest in Canada."

You know, that would seem to be a good thing on the fact of it, Mr. Speaker.

And to carry on with the quote:

He went on to credit the law for its broad, encompassing definition of lobbying activities, which, incidentally, include any communication regarding "privatization, out-sourcing and contracting out."

Again, given the various activities we see this government up to, Mr. Speaker, those kind of provisions are now more important than ever in terms of the increasing activity we see when it comes to privatizing, when it comes to outsourcing, and when it comes to contracting out. And so again that Giorno thinks that they're well dealt with in terms of the scope of the legislation. That brings some encouragement.

Carrying on from the Mandryk article:

However, the lawyer and lobbying expert was far less generous in assessing the "large gaps in the legislation" that mean the law "would not affect interest groups, many non-profit organizations and some businesses."

[16:15]

Again, Mr. Speaker, there are some interesting things that you can do with legislation. Sometimes you go broad and deep. Sometimes maybe you go more like a laser in terms of penetration. But sometimes legislation arises in this Chamber where you think it's more like a light in the window. And if again the scope is such and the activities that are to be covered under the legislation are fairly encompassing, fairly significant, that's great. But if alongside that then you've got the ability to find out what those organizations that are involved in lobbying are up to and they're excluded or exempted from the Act itself, then that doesn't make for the greatest teeth in the world in terms of the legislation.

So I think the way that Giorno described it on his website on November 22nd when the legislation was brought in or introduced in the House, he had titled his thoughts on it: "Saskatchewan government introduces long-awaited lobbying law — strong enforcement, strong conflict-of-interest rules, but

many lobbyists unaffected.”

So again, Mr. Speaker, it's sort of like you've got a big, ferocious dog that doesn't have any teeth. So you know, while we all, I'm sure, fear a vigorous gumming from the big ferocious dog, at the end of the day, it's not like the going-over you got if there's some actual teeth in the equation. So if you've got this big, ferocious-looking dog of a piece of a legislation here, Mr. Speaker, but all you're going to get is a good gumming at the end of the day, then it doesn't accomplish very much at all, other than perhaps the need to towel down for all the slobber involved.

But you now . . . So with apologies to Marmaduke I guess, Mr. Speaker, in terms of, you know, where we're going with this legislation, right out of the gates I mean I think Giorno has very charitably taken the approach that it's better than what went before. But in terms of having some teeth and some effect, Mr. Speaker, and in terms of who is incorporated into the legislation, I think that there's some doubts emerging in terms of the work of the commentators.

In terms of, again in Giorno's thoughtful discussion of the bill, he goes over the scope of the bill — so obviously very important, and we touched on that — it goes over the conflict of interest rules. And there, I might add a bit parenthetically, Mr. Speaker, where he talks about:

One significant omission from Bill 120 is a code of conduct for lobbyists. The federal, Quebec and Newfoundland and Labrador laws itemize specific ethical rules that lobbyists must follow. The Saskatchewan Government has declined to do likewise at this time, but will continue to review the possibility.

Again, Mr. Speaker, something that would equip, better equip the law to have better effect right out of the gates, you know, in terms of the fundamental rules of engagement, the ethical expectations that are there to be lived up to or to clearly demarcate that line. And if you're on the right side of that line or not, that we don't have that code of conduct in place is a bit of work that I would submit remains undone. So again, we'll be looking to see how that is addressed either in amendments to come or perhaps in future iterations of the legislation, Mr. Speaker. But odd for its omission right out of the gates.

Carrying on in Giorno's discussion of the bill, where he talks about other transparency features, and again this would seem to be a good change. Under the legislation, “The bill proposes that the government and government institutions would be required to publish information about any payments that they make to lobbyists.”

Again, Mr. Speaker, it's always interesting to know who's involved at the dance. Just last week, Mr. Speaker, we had an individual introduced in the Assembly, former colleague of members opposite who has been engaged by one of the post-secondary education institutions in this province to engage in some lobbying work, presumably between the province and the federal government and the institution.

And again, Mr. Speaker, knowing who some of these individuals are and where they come from and what the

connections are, it helps to break down how different decisions are made that otherwise might not be readily apparent, Mr. Speaker. But critical to that is knowing who's at the dance, knowing who's doing the matchmaking, knowing who's trying to put deals together.

And certainly lobbyists have a very legitimate function to perform, Mr. Speaker. But the people also have a very legitimate expectation that they should have transparent, accountable government. And if you don't know who the people behind the scenes are, really making the magic happen, then it's less than it should be. It's less forthright than it should be for the people in terms of the legislation that we're entertaining here today and how government makes decisions.

And again I'd remind you, Mr. Speaker, that this is a government that said they would be the most transparent and accountable government in the history of the province. Well you know, seven years on we're here debating Bill No. 120, the lobbyist registry Act. And you know, great, great. Glad to see it here. The seven-year alarm on the snooze . . . The snooze bar hit seven years. But you know, again, good start. It's maybe not a hammer. It's maybe a bit more of a 2-watt flashlight, but you know, on we go.

Anyway, again carrying on in Mr. Giorno's discussion of the legislation, he talks about enforcement. And again, Mr. Speaker, to provide my own sort of analysis of again Mr. Giorno's analysis and the way that he had described it at the top: “. . . long-awaited lobbying law — strong enforcement, strong conflict-of-interest rules, but many lobbyists unaffected.” Again you can have very . . . Maybe you've got the big dog, and maybe you've got the big, ferocious dog. And maybe you've got teeth for that dog. They're just not in that dog's head. And if you've got the teeth somewhere offstage, Mr. Speaker, or the teeth deployed in a manner in which they'll never be allowed to give some bite, some force to the legislation, then again is it more about doing right or trying to be seen to be looking like you're doing right? Is it more about managing the optics of the situation or is it more about having something that has force and effect and will provide real and urgent transparency and accountability for the people of Saskatchewan? So as it regards to the enforcement provisions of Bill 120, again there would seem to be some good provisions therein, but we'll see how those play out in reality.

I guess the one thing that's of particular interest for us, Mr. Speaker, again is arguably the product of bipartisan co-operation to a certain extent, and we're glad to see that in the House. But as is sometimes the case, it doesn't seem to go far enough in terms of some of the exemptions.

And again the exemptions, there are legitimate concerns to be countenanced there, Mr. Speaker, you know, how to strike that balance in a province like Saskatchewan where you've still got . . . You know, politics is very close range here. And people not only expect that they're going to have that level of contact and connection with their legislators, but that you've got a system that on the other hand is workable and doesn't have you running around with a stopwatch or something to perhaps make it a bit more ridiculous than need be the case, Mr. Speaker. But again having a workable, viable solution that doesn't hinder or harm that close contact that I think in many ways really recommends

the Saskatchewan experience in terms of that connection between the political process and people.

But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, it's to provide that balance to make sure that it's above board, that there aren't sort of mystery operations taking place backstage that you don't understand where particular things come from, but you know who's talking to whom. You know, what the agendas are and how to get that in plain sight of the public, I think, is very much in the ken of a piece of legislation such as the Bill 120.

So we've got a lot of questions, Mr. Speaker, and some of them are best given voice to here in the Assembly. Some of them obviously we'll be addressing in committee, and some of them it will be I think a function of wait and see in terms of what sort of consequences arise from the legislation. Does it improve that transparency and accountability? Is the regime workable? Does it strike that fair balance between the people and the process in a durable manner? These are things that we'll be looking to see in the days and weeks and months ahead, Mr. Speaker.

But there's an interesting parentage with this legislation, Mr. Speaker, and an interesting process that has it before us today for consideration. And I'm sure that its continued evolution will only be more interesting as well. So with that, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to put a few thoughts on the record from our perspective as regards Bill No. 120, *The Lobbyists Act*. And with that, I would move to adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 120, *The Lobbyists Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 122

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 122 — *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)/Loi n° 2 de 2013 modifiant la Loi de 1997 sur la réglementation des boissons alcoolisées et des jeux de hasard*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 122, *An Act to amend The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act, 1997*. And I think this is one that people pay an awful lot of attention to.

And I want to just say one thing before I get into the main body of my comments, about how a bill like this is so important, important to our Canadian identity, our Saskatchewan identity. I think about the Olympics and just how the big controversy about how we wanted the public houses open on that Sunday morning so we could watch the Olympic, the men's hockey final at 6 o'clock in the morning. And I do want to acknowledge the government. It's unfortunate that not every house or bar or establishment could be open, but Regina and Saskatoon, I know

people were appreciative of it. And it's a bit of the sign of the times. You know, I don't know whether 20 years ago or 30 years ago, whether we could have been watching a hockey game like that in the morning, period, or the quality of that. So it's about keeping up with the times and I know that people were very appreciative of it, and in fact they were lining up.

And I think that somebody said there were three things that make Canadians patriotic, and one of them of course is the Olympic hockey. And both the women and the men did us so proud, and a little add-on like being able to do this is a very, very, very good thing. So I think that in some small way it might be an unusual thing for me to acknowledge the good work of the government for that thing, but I know that I join I think a lot of people in acknowledging that.

[16:30]

But having said that, having said that, now that I want to get back to the main body of my comments on this important piece of legislation and how important it is because it really does affect the fabric of our communities. And we've seen that. And I will in a minute talk a bit about the minister's comments, and we'll go through them very carefully and parse them out to really understand the ramifications. This is one piece of legislation . . . I mean they all are, but this is one in particular where you want to make sure there are no unintended consequences and that it is not completely driven by the ability to raise money.

And while we are . . . And particularly at this time we are thinking about the provincial budget that's about to come down in a few days, and government resources. We're hearing a lot about the challenges the government is facing, and well they may be looking at different pots of money and wondering how can we expand income from this pot or from that pot, how can we get more resources. This is one where the unintended consequences are huge.

And just earlier in the day we were debating and I entered into the debate — I believe it was Bill 127, the mental health amendment Act — where we talked about the unintended consequences there in the issues around addictions. And we'll talk about that and talk about the comments the minister has made about that. And I have some grave, grave concerns that we are not doing enough to deal with gaming addictions. And I think we need to do more. In fact and I just recall a story in the paper, and I don't know if you've heard this.

The news story out of Los Angeles, but based in Las Vegas where a fellow and his girlfriend travelled to Las Vegas as part of the Super Bowl weekend, and after the game — I think it was after the game; it could have been before the game — where the fellow decided to partake in some gambling activities. And the law of Nevada is that you cannot, you have to make sure that the person who is gambling is in full capacity of their abilities to gamble. They can't be too intoxicated.

Well this fellow had gambled for 17 hours straight, had numerous drinks — unbelievably intoxicated — and couldn't remember himself gambling and lost half a million dollars. And of course the casino has come after him to pay up on his bill. But his line of defence is he was too drunk; he doesn't

remember this. And well we'll see how this plays out in the court. But I do say that we need to, we need to have strong regulations, strong regulations when it comes to that kind of thing.

We see that in our communities. And it's great when we can, in our establishments, celebrate the great things in life like Canada winning the gold medal and allowing that to happen. That's a common sense thing and we support that kind of common sense activity.

Except for in P.A. [Prince Albert], and I will get to P.A. in a minute. But . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Yes, I will get to Prince Albert; that's on my list of topics to hit here. But at the other hand, I do want to say that when we have situations where people have issues, have real problems with addictions and whether they be alcohol, whether they be, you know, illegal substances, or whether they be gambling or any of the other addictions, we need to make sure we have the proper regulations in play here. And so I think that's critically important.

Now and I was reminded, and rightfully so, by the members opposite, about who should be consulted, and we know that's a common concern that we raise over here in terms of who has been consulted with these regulations. What did those consultations look like? What was the input?

We know for example the minister — and I'll talk about this in a minute — has gone on at length about cutting red tape. And we know that's an important initiative of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It's one that in many instances, particularly as governments evolve over time, you see doubling up of regulations, things that just don't make any sense. So it's only reasonable that we continually examine our regulations and our legislation to make sure they are current and they're not doubling up, that they make sense. But at the same time, Mr. Speaker, at the same time, we have to make sure we protect the vulnerable in our society. And often those aren't just people who we often may think in stereotypical ways, but those who actually do need some help with their addictions. And so this is really important.

And I know the minister has referred to public safety, that there's a balance between cutting red tape and public safety. And of course we see in some communities and we think of — and we've heard about this a lot in the media — communities like Prince Albert who wrestle a lot with this. And it'd be interesting to hear what the members, the two members from Prince Albert have to say about this. Of course we won't, unfortunately, hear their comments. We might hear their questions in committee. But it is deeply, deeply unfortunate when we don't see the proper consultation with communities at stake.

So what makes sense? What is giving too much power to local businesses that make sure we don't have a consistent business community . . . playing field across the province? Why is it that some of our communities seem to wrestle with this issue, particularly with alcoholism and gambling, to a larger extent than others? What is it that makes that difference? And what can we do as a province to support them to make sure that people are healthy, that they are able to make choices and be

able to go out for a night, have some entertainment, have some fun, but at the same time not put themselves at risk either through accidents or whether through long-term situations?

And so this is deeply a concern of mine. I think it's an important one. But I do want to take a minute here to review what the minister has to say about this. I always find it insightful and helpful to review back on the minister's comments. And again she doesn't . . . And it seems to be the style of this government to not talk about their consultations. And we don't know whether that's because they don't have anything to talk about, that's it's not one that they've gone out and done a lot of consultation on. And again as I say, in opposition, those changes that make sense, we'll be there. We'll support. Those that we have and I think the public has some questions about, we will raise those questions and hold this government to account.

So this again this was introduced just before the dying days of the Christmas session before we rose and went home for Christmas. But she talks about this Act, the Act to amend *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act, 1997*, establishes the foundations and regulation of licensing alcohol and gaming products in Saskatchewan.

And so she talks about having four primary themes. And I mean this seems to be vague, but this is what I'm quoting the minister saying: "The first is providing authority for a First Nations gaming licensing authority to register on-reserve charitable gaming employees and suppliers." That sounds like a worthwhile theme. "The second is allowing Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority to establish a subsidiary corporation through an order in council. The third is ensuring effective regulation." Now that's the one I do have . . . I don't know exactly what that means, but when we get to it, we'll pull at that a bit and find out more about what she's really aiming to do. And the last, Mr. Speaker, is the housekeeping amendments which often seems to be an awful lot of work that this government does.

But I want to take a look at the first one, and this is about the First Nations gaming and licensing authority. And what's happening now, we understand, that there's been more . . . This is, you know, a continuation of the 2002 agreement which was started with the 1995 Gaming Framework Agreement that talked about respecting the regulation of on-reserve charitable gaming by First Nations. So to facilitate this, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations created Indigenous Gaming Regulators or what's known as IGR. Since 2007 they have been responsible for the licensing and registration of on-reserve charitable gaming, including bingos, break-open tickets, raffles, Texas hold'ems, Monte Carlo, table games, and so forth.

During that time, they fulfilled, they've done a good job, according to the minister, and that's good. I would believe that would be the case. We have a lot of faith. And we think the SIGA [Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority Inc.] and IGR, they have done good work, and it's good to see that they have a co-operative relationship that's beneficial to both. That's an important thing.

So it's important to have this registration. It's a tool that is used to make sure that there is integrity and accountability within the

gaming industry, and that's very, very important.

And so apparently, come my understanding from what the minister is talking about, SIGA and IGR began discussions, talking about IGR's authority to register on-reserve charitable gaming employees and suppliers. And there we are, here we are later, and this sounds to be the part that fulfils that discussion. And I think that sounds like a reasonable thing. So as a result, she's proposing amendments that will authorize a First Nations gaming license authority such as IGR to register on-reserve charitable gaming employees and suppliers, and that it will be only exercised by a First Nations gaming licensing authority that has an agreement with SIGA. So that's very, very important. So that's good. That's pretty well straightforward.

And in addition, amendments to the Act will enable the Liquor and Gaming Licensing Commission to review the decisions of IGR. So this talks like a very productive, very co-operative relationship, and an important tool is talking about registration and the decisions that flow from that. So this will resemble those already in place respecting commission views of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority. So that's really pretty well straightforward.

And I think, you know, at this point, I would say that we would have questions about that to help us understand it further. But we would think that's straightforward, and it's really important to see a good working relationship between the Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority, SIGA, and the IGRs, very important that that has that happening. And this is an important tool to ensure appropriate accounting and management.

She does go on to talk about the red tape committee review of liquor regulations in Saskatchewan. And she talks about just a short time ago, November 2012, she wanted to take a longer look, continue to look for ways to reduce red tape and remove redundant regulations for business. And that continues on with this bill. And so it takes out apparently the irritants that no longer have relevance for an effective regulation of alcohol in this province. She's getting rid of the requirement for medical use, non-consumptive use and educational use liquor permits, and removing provisions that grant Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority to demand explanations from permittees when a person has been refused entry. So that's an interesting thing and we might have questions about that. It sounds like there's a story there that, when people have been refused entry, that we don't have to ask why.

And I automatically go to my human rights aspect and say, who is doing the checking up on their permittees? And now if they've been refused entry, we automatically go to the place — and I would — that maybe it's because of intoxication. And that's fair enough. And that's good.

But I have questions, you know, because we've seen just in Saskatoon a tragic, tragic story of a bouncer where apparently there was conflict with a fellow in a bar, and now we understand there may be charges laid. But a young man lost his life apparently. His body has not been found in Saskatoon but he had been on some of the buses that cruise from bar to bar. It was his stag night.

[16:45]

And we want to make sure that there's not an unintended consequence here of not having, you know, appropriate records or information for what happened that evening. I know that in fact we are hearing calls, we're hearing calls from the woman who is engaged to this fellow saying that there has to be better and stronger training of bouncers. What happened that night in Saskatoon that apparently led to the passing, the untimely death of this young man? I think there's a lot of questions we have.

And can we learn from that, a tragic incident, to say, so here is a really happy story — you know, a stag where you're celebrating the wedding, the marriage of a young man — that went tragically wrong, that went tragically wrong. That he went missing so quickly. His friends lost track of him. He apparently may have got onto a bus, got to a different part of the city. We don't know all the details, and that'll be uncovered in the courts. But clearly alcohol was involved. Clearly public safety was involved, clearly some decisions that we need more background on.

So I think that this is a real question about red tape, and this one about refusing entry just causes me to think right away, are we creating a problem here? What's the unintended consequence of that? I mean on one hand it seems relatively straightforward, but there is a responsibility for the community that when this kind of thing happens we want to make sure people are safe, that they're not just . . . And especially, Mr. Speaker, as we know how cold this past winter was, if somebody's had too much to drink and they're at the door of the bar and you say you can't come in, I think that it's incumbent on all of us as a community to think, so can this person get home safely that night?

I don't know what happened in that situation, all the details, but I do know that it's something that we should be learning from and so that kind of thing doesn't happen. And we know the young woman who was engaged to be married thinks that there should be something. Whenever a tragedy happens we always hope that (a) it won't happen again, and (b) that we can learn something from it. And if we can from this situation that happened in Saskatoon just a few short weeks ago, I think that we really need to take that opportunity.

So the minister talks about taking the opportunity to remove outdated legislation, for example eliminating the discretionary ability of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority to require a permittee to stock beer manufactured in Saskatchewan. It's not been enforced in recent memory, and there is no need to regulate in this area.

And you know, I'm not sure what the implications of that is, and she talks about recent memory. I don't know what the definition . . . and I looked in the Act to see if there was a definition of recent memory. It's not defined. And so I'm curious to know what the implications are. I mean we can remember the days when most beer was actually manufactured in the province, and that was a big deal. We had a much more vigorous, lively industry, but that seems to have gone by the wayside. But we still have some, some fantastic beer in Saskatchewan, and I think that those producers may appreciate having some home team advantage. And I don't know if this comes out of the New West deal and you know, it will be interesting to know. And I am thinking of Great Western. They

are, I think, our last larger manufacturer even though — of beer — even though that they are not in the big leagues as say Molson or Coors or Labatt's. But still, has there been some consultation with Great Western on this?

It would be interesting, seeing we're on the topic of beer, whether or not there's been changes to allow more craft beer in. And what are the regulations around craft beer, particularly in terms of safety, but also in terms of promotion? I think that's really important.

So and she does go on. She says, and I quote, "We continue to recognize the government has a role in the effective regulation of alcohol in order to maintain public safety." And that's where I just want to stop for a minute and say, so we've heard concerns from communities across the province, as have members from across the way. And I'm glad they recognize that Prince Albert, but there are other communities have concerns. What are their thoughts on this and do they think that this is the appropriate way to be going? Do they have some comments and what were they? And did the government listen to them or did they push them off to the side?

She goes on to say:

As a result, Bill 122 contains an amendment that places increased responsibility on permittees to not only refuse to serve alcohol to persons who appear to be intoxicated but to ensure that those persons are not in possession of beverage alcohol.

And so that's a good safety thing as well.

But again in Saskatchewan, and I think, you know, it would be interesting to know if — and we'll talk about this in committee — some sort of sense of responsibility so people get home safely or are not just pushed out the door. When we've seen the kinds of winters that we've had just . . . I shouldn't say as if it's in past tense. We're not quite finished winter even like today may feel like it's the end of winter. We could be back into really cold weather. And you know, whether it's the incident that I talk about where we had the young fellow die in Saskatoon earlier this year or in Prince Albert where we had four people die because of exposure and we know . . . We see the Minister of Social Services have a cold-weather strategy, but what do bars have in terms of cold weather? It would be interesting to know if there's been any research or any data done on this. I don't know, but I think in a province like ours, it's critically important that we don't have people . . . that same sort of scenario that played out in Saskatoon or in Prince Albert the year before.

So she talks about doing some housekeeping amendments. Again as I said, it's important to keep current. It's important that we have legislation that's in plain English that people can read, they can follow, and they do the right thing. We want to make sure that Saskatchewan has a great hospitality reputation. It's a safe one, but it's a lot of fun. And I think about the summers in our cities and our communities. They're absolutely wonderful. And I think about, for example, the jazz festival that's about to come up and how much fun people have at that, or our different communities.

So we want to be a real tourist attraction. We don't want to be sort of outside what's happening across Canada. I remember a few years ago. My wife and I were touring Quebec, and we were in a beautiful old hotel, and we were able to purchase a bottle of wine and go out onto the lawn and have wine out on this grand lawn looking across the St. Lawrence River. And so that's a kind of thing; it's really important that we have those kind of initiatives.

And I think one of the best initiatives that I've seen from . . . And you know, I'm not sure what side of the House started this, was the fact that you now can not finish a bottle of wine but have it recorked and take it home with you. But it would be interesting to hear, we want to . . . Mr. Speaker, it's important that we have people drink responsibly and not overdo it, not feel that they have to drink a whole bottle of wine that, in fact, they can cork it and take it home. I have not yet myself taken advantage of the ability to bring my own wine to a restaurant. I look forward to that occasion. I think that's going to be really interesting.

I'm not sure; I understand there's issues around corkage and different things like that. But I know, Mr. Speaker, that we all want to make sure that our province truly is, as I say, a place people want to come to and that we are part of the 21st century. But I do want to say that there are some challenges that we have. And when it comes to addictions . . . and I do want to say I don't understand why we can't do more to work on regulations that help protect people from overdoing it when it comes to gambling.

I think and I know that many on this side, and I would bet on that side too, think that gambling can be a real problem. We know people in our own communities where it's unfortunate when we hear the stories of it having gone too far and lost homes, lost savings. Things have gone too far and there was . . . We would all hope that there would have been some way that the establishment, whether it would be a local bar with VLTs [video lottery terminals] or whether it be casinos, would have stronger powers to do that. In fact actually, I think casinos probably do have, and I understand they have the training. But it is some of the other smaller places that may not.

And so it's curious that we do a lot to reduce regulation. But sometimes I think it is important that we in fact strengthen regulation because as new challenges come up, we think about new innovations, but we also think of new challenges. It's important that we have the ability to do the right thing. You know, on one hand we're going to be dealing, we hope in the near future, with a mental health and addictions strategy, and it'll be interesting to see what recommendations come out of that and whether there'll be recommendations that deal with the gaming Act. And I would encourage government to be really thinking that completely through.

You know, I'll go back to where I started. There is a lot of positives. I think about the Olympic hockey game where we could all celebrate, and we all feel very good about being Canadian, and that's a kind of thing when you should be innovative and on the spot and flexible, but at the same time, you know, we've seen it, as I say, in our community in Saskatoon where we lost a young man because of things that went awry, went horribly awry in the bars early this year. If

there was some way that we could have done something to protect him and the family, that would have been great.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'll wrap up my comments, and I think it's important that we get more people into this, and I would like to adjourn debate now on Bill 122, *An Act to amend The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act, 1997*. I do so move. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill 122, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. 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. In order to facilitate the attendance of members at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association function this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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