



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

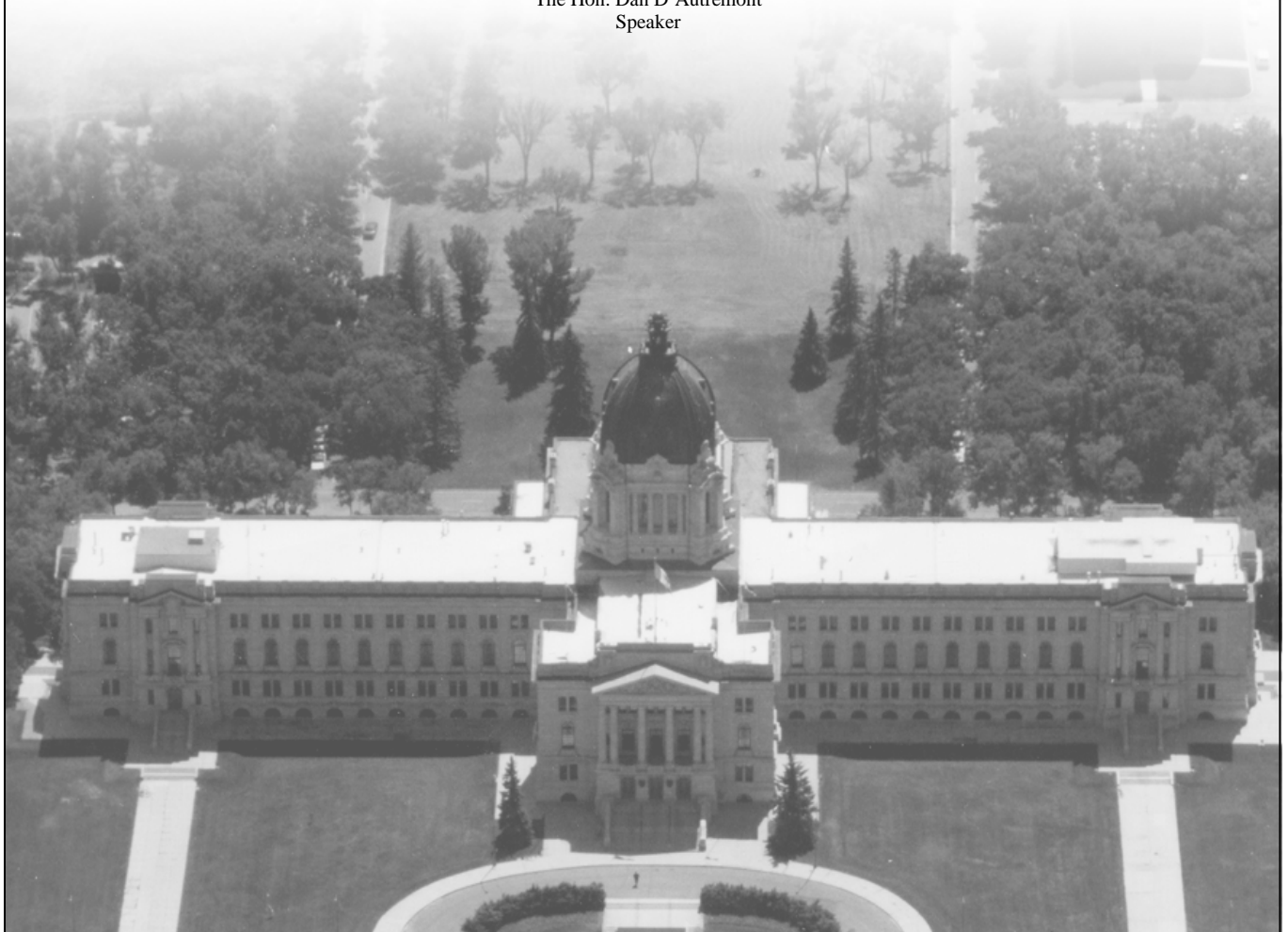
of the

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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Elhard: — Mr. Speaker, with leave, I would request an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — The Provincial Secretary has requested leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure today to introduce and to welcome to the province of Saskatchewan and to our Legislative Assembly a very special guest in your gallery. Now we have with us today His Excellency Luis Carlos Delgado Murillo, the ambassador of the Republic of Costa Rica to Canada.

This is the ambassador's first visit to Saskatchewan. In fact, I think this might represent his country's first visit to the province of Saskatchewan. During his stay here in the land of living skies, His Excellency will meet with provincial and local government officials. He'll meet business leaders, some officials from the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, along with our Lieutenant Governor, the representative of the Queen in our great province.

Mr. Speaker, the ambassador's visit here signals the first steps in a relationship between the province of Saskatchewan and the nation of Costa Rica. It provides an opportunity to explore potential markets for Saskatchewan's exporters to this very important Central American country. Costa Rica's attracted one of the highest levels of foreign direct investment per capita in Latin America, with its primary industries including microprocessors, food processing, medical equipment, textiles and clothing, construction materials, fertilizer, plastic products, and ecotourism. It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that Costa Rica produces more than 90 per cent of its electricity through renewable resources.

And of course I'm sure everyone in the Assembly who's braved our winter very much wishes that we could explore some innovative way to import Costa Rica's tropical weather to our part of the world. Not likely to happen, Mr. Speaker. But we look very much forward to working with the government and the people of Costa Rica and to nurture a very strong new relationship and of course warm friendship.

Mr. Speaker, I'd ask that all members of the Assembly please join me in welcoming our very special guest, His Excellency Luis Carlos Delgado Murillo, to Saskatchewan's legislature.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Provincial Secretary in welcoming His Excellency to the Assembly today. The Provincial Secretary outlined many of the economic ties and opportunities that exist, so we thank His Excellency for being here. And I know we do export a few of our residents each year for a few months to enjoy the beaches and the good climate of Costa Rica, whether it's down for a wedding or just a good holiday. It's a popular destination for many people. But the ongoing ties are very important so we thank you for your work here and thank you for your presence here in the Assembly today.

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

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, I have the honour of introducing a very special group of women from the University of Saskatchewan. Joining us today from the Women in the Legislature student society are Meritt Kocdag, president, and 22 colleagues. And maybe when I announce your name you could wave: Aimee Ferré, Rebecca McMillan, Kayla Hrudka, Serena Dimitrie, Shannon Evans, Helen Tang, Erin Phillipow, Ariel Fitzgerald, Amanda Lindgren, Chelsea Lehner, Carlie Heagy, Kendra Schreiner, Joree Nelson, Nicole Kozar, Janna Mitchell, Natasha Steinback, Desiree Steele, Samantha Gauvin, Olya Stepanenko, Christine Young, and Brenda Schurr. Also in attendance is Pat Faulconbridge, the Status of Women office and Ministry of Social Services.

Mr. Speaker, these young women have been in the legislature for a couple of days to learn about the provincial political system and to see first-hand how women contribute to government institutions.

This non-partisan group was formed to increase awareness of under-representation of women in Canada politics, to inspire interest in governance, to encourage women to become active in political life, and to provide women with the opportunity to learn about the Canadian political system.

Alumni of the Women in the Legislature have gone on directly to participate in politics and governance, and graduated alumni are now contributing to political campaigns, and/or they hold positions in the federal, provincial, or First Nations governance.

I want to thank all of these women for their passion and their inspiration and wish them all the best as they take the experience they have gained over the last couple of days and use it in their own future. I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming these outstanding women to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming the Women in the Legislature participants. And it's been great to see this program grow over the last couple of years and see larger groups of women and students coming to the Assembly and exploring the possibility of a future in politics.

And I know our NDP [New Democratic Party] staff and MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] have thoroughly enjoyed the opportunities to meet with you and to discuss items. And I hope the glimpses of life in the legislature that you've had over the last few days encouraged you to think more seriously about a future in politics. I hope it's not the other way around in terms of the thoughts that you've had over the last while.

After the next election, we need to see many more women elected to the legislature. I hope many of those women are you, and I also hope many of you are in the New Democratic Party and caucus, but perhaps that's a discussion for another day. I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming the Women in the Legislature group. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with my colleagues and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming His Excellency the ambassador from Costa Rica to our province. We're very grateful for your country's first official visit to Saskatchewan, as we are grateful for the trading relationship that we enjoy, and frankly the other relationships that have been referenced by the Leader of the Opposition, more and more of recreation and tourism, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to say hello and welcome to the Women in the Legislature student club participants who are here. One thing that the Hon. Leader of the Opposition and I would agree with is that there are too many in this Assembly of our gender and not enough of yours. And whether it's on that side of the House or this side of the House, we very, very much need more women in this particular Chamber, in the House of Commons, in government right across this country. And so we want to encourage them as they consider all of these options in their future and welcome them to their Legislative Assembly here today.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister, the Premier, and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming the Women in the Legislature group. It's been my privilege the past three years to sit down with the various participants and share a little bit about my own experience. But I want to give a special shout-out to Meritt Kocdag, who I had the opportunity to meet when we founded Equal Voice, the Saskatchewan chapter. Meritt took on a job that many people aren't interested in. She jumped right in and was the treasurer of Equal Voice and did that job incredibly capably and is I think a really great inspiration to other women. So with that I'd like everyone to join me in welcoming the Women in the Legislature, and a special hello to Meritt, and of course to Pat Faulconbridge with the Status of Women. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce someone that's very special in my life. Our daughter Kayla is here with us today, and she's here as part of the Women in the Legislature delegations. Give

us a wave, Kayla. There you go.

Kayla has a very, very busy life, Mr. Speaker. In addition to her studies, which she works very, very hard at, she's the mother of our granddaughter, Mia, who's three years old. And of course Mia, as anyone else knows who has a grandchild, is the light of our life. And so we're very, very happy.

Kayla also has the great distinction of being only one of two women on my wife's approved date list when she's out of town. So that's why oftentimes you'll see Kayla accompany me when I'm out. And the other one is my other daughter.

Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to introduce Nikki Kozar. Nikki is also with us today as part of the delegation. Nikki's a very good friend of our family, and she's also very, very busy with her studies and raising her young son. So, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask my colleagues in the legislature to welcome Kayla and Nikki to their legislature.

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

Ms. Ross: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I, along with my colleagues, would also like to extend a welcome to the women of WiL [Women in the Legislature]. I, along with my colleague from Regina Wascana Plains and Saskatoon Riversdale, had the opportunity to present to them and entertain a very fruitful dialogue yesterday morning. And I do hope that each and every one of them will consider public life. So thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House someone in your gallery who really needs no introduction — he's no stranger to this House — Graham Addley, the former member from Saskatoon Sutherland, who was with us last night celebrating the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association dinner. So I'd ask all members to give a great welcome to Graham over here. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Mr. Addley to the gallery today. Mr. Speaker, I can remember well when we were in opposition working with Mr. Addley. I remember somebody at one point having changed the licence plate on his car to a Saskatchewan Party licence plate and he had several weeks of good travel during that period of time. And I would like of course to remind him of that and welcome him back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Docherty: — Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to the rest of the Assembly, sitting in your gallery, I'd like to invite all members to join me in welcoming a delegation of the Anatolian Heritage Foundation. They are also affiliated with the Intercultural Dialogue Institute and the Turkish Canadian

congress.

Here today — and I'm going to really do my best here — but here today are, and just give us a wave: Ayan Ozturk, Menaf Ozturk, Ahmet Oksum, Mustafa Erdem, Ozgar Tas, Omer Yildiz, Emre Eroglu, Bilal Sayin, Omer Kacar, Ibadullah Catal, Mehmet Kahraman.

The AHF [Anatolian Heritage Foundation] is an organization with the purpose of bringing people together. Their mission is to promote cultural, educational, social, business, and arts-related events and activities that bring Canadian and Turkish communities together.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members to join me in welcoming them to the legislature, and invite all members to the AHF's first friendship reception being held later today in room 218. And again, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and welcome.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to join with the member opposite and welcome the Anatolian Heritage Foundation, the Intercultural Dialogue Institute here today. These are certainly leaders within our community. They assist in building very important relationships with the Turkish community, both within our province and abroad. I'd like to say that the nurturing of relationships and dialogue that they're promoting within our province are certainly building important understanding, building relationships, and strengthening us from an economic, social, and cultural perspective.

I've had the privilege of getting to know many of these individuals and to count many of them as friends. I've enjoyed the conversations in our community office. I found their first banquet that they held last year here in Regina to be just exceptional in bringing together the community. And I know my wife, Stephanie, and I really enjoyed the public Ramadan tents that you held last summer in Victoria Park here in Regina — an exceptional opportunity to learn together and to share with the public. So thank you for your leadership on those fronts.

So it's my pleasure to join with the member opposite in welcoming these community leaders here today. And I ask members to join me in doing so.

Mr. Speaker, while still on my feet I want to introduce a good friend that's here today, Mr. Arlee McGrath from LeRoy, Saskatchewan who's here today assisting and supporting the Women in the Legislature delegation. I understand he's volunteering his time and his vehicle, and thank you for doing so.

Arlee's certainly a leader within this province from a community perspective, from an economic perspective. And he's a strong producer in this province — both a grain producer and pork producer — and a good friend.

I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome Arlee McGrath to his legislature.

[13:45]

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have two guests that I'd like to introduce. I feel pretty lucky following my good friend from Coronation Park and doing such a great job on those names. Mine is really quite simple.

Sean Wilson, Mr. Speaker, is the president of G.W. Construction, and he's also the Chair of the board of the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association. We've had a great working relationship obviously with Sean and the construction association over many years, and we certainly look forward to that great relationship as we move forward.

Also sitting next to Sean is Ghantel Lipp who is the executive director of the Saskatchewan Heavy Construction Association. For any of you that have got to know Ghantel, you'll know that she may be small in stature, but she can rule those heavy construction guys around like you wouldn't believe, Mr. Speaker.

Anyway I thank both of them for the great work that they do for this province and the infrastructure that we need to make this province tick. Thank you.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the minister and welcome the representatives of the Heavy Construction Association here today and to thank them for their work within our province. Thank you for joining us here today. Thank you.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition in support of anti-bullying initiatives. And we know that bullying can cause serious harm, and the consequences of bullying are devastating, including depression, self-harm, addictions, and suicide, and that other provinces have brought forward legislation and various tools and programs showing swift and effective government action. We know that this government is not doing enough to protect Saskatchewan youth and that bullying happens wherever children gather to live, learn, or play.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on this government to take immediate and meaningful action to protect Saskatchewan's children from bullying because the lives of young people are at stake and that this government must do

more to protect our youth.

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

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents from across our province as it relates to the failed audit by this government, an unprecedented failure, the first ever in Canadian history for a provincial government to fail an audit by the . . .

The Speaker: — The member should know better than to enter into debate during the presentation of petitions. I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Of course this is of concern to Saskatchewan people, and I present a petition here today calling for books that Saskatchewan people can trust. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the Sask Party government to provide Saskatchewan people with the fair, true state of our finances by providing appropriate summary financial accounting and reporting that is in line with the rest of Canada, in compliance with the public sector accounting standards, and following the independent Provincial Auditor's recommendations; and also to begin to provide responsible, sustainable, and trustworthy financial management as deserved by Saskatchewan people, organizations, municipalities, institutions, taxpayers, and businesses.

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

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition because the leaders and residents of northern Saskatchewan are concerned about seniors' care in the North. The Croft report of 2009 showed a serious shortage of long-term care beds for seniors, and the problem has only gotten worse. The seniors have done their part for this province and it's time for the government to do its part. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to treat northern Saskatchewan senior citizens with respect and dignity, and to immediately invest in a long-term care facility in the La Ronge area.

I so present. And it's signed by many people of northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

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 undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan bring to the Assembly's attention the following: 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. In the prayer that reads as follows, Mr. Speaker, they:

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

Mr. Speaker, this petition is signed by citizens in the city of Regina. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

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

Women in the Legislature

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take an opportunity to recognize the participants and organizers of the University of Saskatchewan's Women in the Legislature or WiL program, an initiative that aims to encourage women to get involved in politics.

I had the chance, alongside several MLAs and staff, to meet with the group and discuss my experiences as a woman with a career in the legislature. This is one of my favourite parts of the job, sharing honestly the ups and downs of our work, and working to spark an interest in other women to consider elected office as a possibility in their future.

These women are in the Assembly today as part of their two-day trip to Regina. The opportunity to spend time in the legislature gives them a chance to get a glimpse of the work of politicians, public servants, and political staff, and to learn there are all kinds of ways to be involved in politics and to serve.

The mission of the Women in the Legislature is echoed by another important organization in the province, Equal Voice. Equal Voice Saskatchewan has provided integral support for the Women in the Legislature program. Equal Voice is a national, multi-partisan organization whose mission is to elect more women to political office in Canada. We commend them for their work, and look forward to their important contributions to the province in years to come.

I would like to call on the Assembly to recognize these women and all of those who've worked so hard to make this WiL event a success. We look forward to the day when women's voices are heard more loudly and clearly at all levels of government in Canada. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatchewan River Valley.

First Nations Agency Receives Accreditation

Ms. Wilson: — Saskatchewan Rivers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise in the House to talk about a wonderful announcement in Prince Albert this morning by the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation. Just recently the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation First Nation Child and Family Services agency was accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities or CARF.

Mr. Speaker, CARF is an internationally renowned organization recognized for its rigorous service standards and guidelines. An accreditation through CARF requires significant time and effort, but it's time and effort that is meaningful because it's a seal of approval. It's a seal of trust. This accreditation means that Peter Ballantyne Child and Family Services is providing the best possible service to the children and families in its communities. It means that Peter Ballantyne Child and Family Services cares.

This type of accreditation isn't an easy thing to achieve or maintain. It sets a very high standard for child welfare services. We truly admire them for committing to this important work. They have set the bar high for both themselves and for child welfare services across the province.

In closing, I want to congratulate the Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation and thank them for working with us to help make life better for vulnerable children. Thank you.

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

Artifact or Artificion

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, this past Saturday I was pleased to attend the second annual Artifact or Artificion here in Regina hosted by the Friends of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum. The Friends of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum is a non-profit organization that promotes Saskatchewan's culture and natural history by encouraging public involvement and financial support of the museum and increasing its visibility within the community.

I'm happy to report that the event was a great success. The guests enjoyed incredible food provided by Crave Kitchen & Wine Bar and participated in a silent auction and the egg scramble raffle. Further, the event was an opportunity to explore the museum and challenge the participants' knowledge of our province's rich history. Artifacts and specimens from the museum's collection were on display, each with its own story told by museum staff, volunteers, and curators. Participants were asked to guess what was fact and what was fiction. The unique event was a lot of fun.

Proceeds from the event go towards scholarships to help further Saskatchewan's scientific and historical heritage.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the Friends of the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, the board of directors and staff, as well as the leadership and staff at the RSM [Royal Saskatchewan Museum] for their ongoing dedication in promoting and celebrating Saskatchewan's culture and history. I ask all members of this Assembly to join with me to congratulate and

thank all those involved for hosting and making this event a great success. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Regina Company Raises Funds in Silicon Valley

Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to acknowledge a young local entrepreneur recently returned from a trip to Silicon Valley where he raised an impressive \$200,000 for his tech start-up company. Jordan Boesch, CEO [chief executive officer] of the Regina-based 7shifts, founded the company in 2011. 7shifts has developed an employee scheduling app designed to make running a restaurant and coordinating staff easier for businesses in the food service industry.

Jordan, along with his wife Andree Carpentier and colleague Johannes Lindenbaum, travelled to San Mateo, California last October after being selected by a start-up accelerator called Boost. In exchange for a piece of the company, the trio was given the opportunity to work on building 7shifts right in the heart of Silicon Valley under the direct guidance of successful tech entrepreneurs. During their three-month trip, 7shifts doubled its revenue, signed major new clients, and secured funding from new investors. After settling back in Regina, Jordan plans on seeking out more investment and eventually finding an office space to work in.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating Jordan and his team at 7shifts on their incredibly successful trip to California and wish them all the best in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Women Build Launched in Prince Albert

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to inform the Assembly about an exciting new housing project between the province and Habitat for Humanity that I helped launch last week in Prince Albert. This project will result in a Saskatchewan family receiving a home to call their own. The initiative will be led entirely by women and is the first of its kind in Prince Albert.

Established by Habitat for Humanity, Women Build is a program that encourages and promotes women's leadership and participation in construction and skilled trades. The program provides an environment in which women can feel comfortable learning a variety of construction skills.

Mr. Speaker, I will take this opportunity to recognize and thank Habitat volunteers, women and men, who will be participating in this project. Our government believes in this can-do spirit, and we feel privileged to work with Habitat and its many community partners to help another family come home.

Mr. Speaker, since 2009 we have dedicated \$7.1 million in funding to Habitat for Humanity affiliates to help build 130 homes across our province. This investment is a concrete demonstration of our commitment to increase the supply of

quality, affordable housing across Saskatchewan and to encourage Saskatchewan women to lead and to learn skilled trades. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Huskies Women's Basketball Team Wins Canada West Title

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am both excited and proud to share the news that the University of Saskatchewan's women's basketball team took home the Canada West championship title last weekend, Mr. Speaker.

The Huskies downed the Fraser Valley Crusaders 67 to 56 in the gold medal game at the Canada West Final Four in Edmonton. Kabree Howard led the Huskies with 20 points and six assists, while Canada West MVP [most valuable player] and Defensive Player of the Year Dalyce Emmerson recorded a double-double with 19 points and 22 rebounds along with eight blocked shots.

This marks the third time in team history and the second time in four years that the Huskies have won the Canada West title, Mr. Speaker. It also marks the 100th title in the history of Huskie athletics varsity programs. The Huskies came into the tournament as the underdogs against top-ranked Alberta and Regina, but played their best basketball of the year and left as champions.

The women's basketball team will now head to Windsor, Ontario for the CIS [Canadian Interuniversity Sport] Final 8 championship from March 14th to the 16th, the seventh time in the past nine years the team has headed to the national finals.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in congratulating the women's Huskies basketball team on their huge win and wish them the best at nationals later this month. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Carrot River.

Effects of Carbon Levies

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well, Mr. Speaker, it finally happened. For over a year now, we've been waiting for the NDP leader to release some sort of economic policy. Today he finally did it on Twitter. The problem is it's a policy that could potentially do a lot of harm to our economy and to Saskatchewan families. He wants a carbon levy and he wants it now.

Our side of the House has been asking him for months to present a plan, to do more than just call for more and more spending. But now he's proposing a carbon levy which could have a huge impact on SaskPower, on SaskEnergy, and on Saskatchewan families' utility bills. Has he ever considered this, Mr. Speaker: does he have any idea of how much this would cost Saskatchewan families, how much it would cost Saskatchewan's economy, before he goes rushing headlong into this NDP carbon levy?

Mr. Speaker, I know we have been calling on the NDP leader to finally release some of his own ideas instead of just opposing everything, but if carbon levies without consideration of the cost to Saskatchewan families is the best that he can do, Saskatchewan could do without the NDP's ideas. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Inspections of Personal Care Homes

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The independent Provincial Auditor reviewed this government's approach to regulating personal care homes back in 2012. The auditor said that this government was failing to provide proper oversight of personal care homes. And the auditor also said that this government should start conducting more unannounced inspections and publicly post the results of those inspections.

Mr. Speaker, this government has still not yet followed through on that. My question to the Premier: why not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the Leader of the Opposition's question about when we will begin publicly reporting on inspection results, the reason why we haven't done that yet is because the bill is still before the House, Mr. Speaker. There is an amendment to *The Personal Care Homes Act* that is before the legislature that I introduced in the fall. I certainly hope that will be passed this spring, Mr. Speaker, which will give us the legal framework to be able to publish the inspections online.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the inspection process, we do have the ability to conduct spot inspections when there is a complaint that has been received, Mr. Speaker. And that does happen from time to time, as well as the inspections that do take place during the regular licensing process.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, most private care home operators do a good job in caring for seniors in the province. But we know that there are some bad apples in the mix and we know that the condition of care, the quality of care in some of those homes is deplorable. The inspection records that the government has refused to post publicly reveal serious incidents not reported to the Ministry of Health. The records also talk about medicines not being properly administered, food safety problems, blocked exits, and fire sprinkler systems that aren't working.

My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: can he guarantee that his government ensured that every single one of these serious concerns were addressed after the inspections were completed?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, certainly when there are complaints that have been

raised, either through the complaint process or whether there are deficiencies with the inspection during the licensing process, Mr. Speaker, the inspectors do follow up with those personal care home operators, Mr. Speaker. The consultants that do work for the ministry, for the regional health authorities, do follow up with those to ensure that the operator is aware of the deficiency, they're aware of what the expectations are that are set out in the handbook for operating a personal care home, Mr. Speaker, and that those are rectified.

Mr. Speaker, I certainly believe this government has taken the position that we agree with the Provincial Auditor in terms of enhancing the accountability and the transparency for operators of personal care homes. Mr. Speaker, certainly I would expect that with the understanding that deficiencies in the inspection and the reporting will be now made public with the passage of this Act, the amendments, that personal care home operators will know that if they are deficient it will be made public.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. These inspection records show that at least one personal care home still did not have a carbon monoxide detector in 2012. And that's two years after three seniors died in St. Mary's Villa because of carbon monoxide poisoning. That is simply unacceptable. And we don't even know how many other homes did not have a carbon monoxide detector, Mr. Speaker, because this government didn't even bother to inspect 47 privately run care homes.

My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: how many homes did not have a carbon monoxide detector? And can he guarantee today that every private care home has a carbon monoxide detector?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, following the tragic circumstances at St. Mary's Villa, we ensured that all long-term care facilities in the province — all hospitals, those facilities that do keep people overnight — do in fact have, Mr. Speaker, carbon monoxide detectors. In fact we are expanding that to all health facilities within the province, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the Act and publishing the results of inspections, Mr. Speaker, we can do that today. Mr. Speaker, we could go forward with the process if the Leader of the Opposition, if the opposition wishes to do that today, certainly the government is prepared to do so.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, what we see is a lack of willingness of this government to come forward with information unless they are pressured to do so, Mr. Speaker. It's interesting. I asked, Mr. Speaker, if every private care home had a carbon monoxide detector. There was no answer whether or not every one today in fact had one. It's hard to know, Mr. Speaker, because there were 47 private care homes that were not even inspected. So it's hard to know the current state.

Residents in care homes deserve the best possible care, Mr.

Speaker. And their friends and family members deserve the peace of mind, the peace of mind to know that their loved ones are receiving great care. But the inspection records reveal that some care homes, Mr. Speaker, are not clean, are not sanitary, and are not safe. It even stated, Mr. Speaker, that some care homes don't have the proper temperature so that seniors can be comfortable.

My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: when will this government start ensuring proper inspections of every home? When will this government post that information online? And when will this government start enforcing appropriate standards?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is right; this is a serious issue, Mr. Speaker. And the government has brought forward legislation that will be certainly part of the solution here in terms of transparency, in terms of the immediate availability of inspection reports.

Mr. Speaker, with the Leader of the Opposition's co-operation, with the co-operation of members opposite, we can ensure that that bill is dealt with in committee today, passed in this House today, and in effect as soon as possible. Will the Leader of the Opposition agree to that timetable?

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

Support for Educators

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, according to a recent study of Saskatchewan teachers conducted by the Saskatchewan instructional development unit at the U of R [University of Regina], a full 90 per cent of our province's teachers say they feel unappreciated by that government. That's nine out of ten Saskatchewan teachers feeling unappreciated by the current government. Teachers are passionate about what they do, and they're good at what they do. They've been holding up their end of the bargain, but this government hasn't listened to them and have made their jobs much more difficult.

To the Education minister: with 90 per cent of our province's teachers feeling unappreciated by that government, will he admit that this government's track record of education has been a failure?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can advise the member opposite, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak to all the teachers in the province, the work that they do is absolutely vital. It's something that is taking our province forward. It is part of the plan, the province's growth initiative, of increasing the workforce by 60,000 people by the year 2020, also by increasing the graduation rate from just over 70 per cent to closer to the national average of well over 80 per cent. Mr. Speaker, I look forward to working with teachers for that.

I can advise you as well, Mr. Speaker, that in October we announced that two advisors would hold province-wide consultations to ask teachers, students, and parents how do we

improve the education system? Those people are Patricia Prowse and Russ Mirasty who have been working tirelessly to do that. They have been travelling around the province hosting a large number of meetings.

Mr. Speaker, the work that is done by our teachers in the province is invaluable. We respect and value them.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The reality is there's fewer educational assistants in many classrooms all across this province. That's a big part of why teachers are frustrated with this government. And here's what the report says:

When teachers fill the gaps in services as support staff positions are reduced or eliminated, the decline in adequate supports affects both students and teachers. Operating with fewer educational assistant positions means that intensive supports cannot be provided to students. It also compromises teachers' time by adding to the pressure of their existing responsibilities.

To the Education minister: is he actually willing to listen to Saskatchewan teachers? Has he read the report that's been submitted to him, the one that we're referencing here today, or is he still going to stubbornly dismiss the concerns of Saskatchewan teachers as it relates to the impacts of cutting educational assistants in classrooms across Saskatchewan?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I take strong exception to the premise of the member's question. Mr. Speaker, we value and appreciate the hard work that teachers do in our province. They do great work. They're the ones that are the experts; they are the ones that provide front-line services to our ... [inaudible].

And we've provided substantial increases in funding. Since we have formed government, Mr. Speaker, we have increased operating funding by over 23 per cent. Since we have formed government, there are 566 more regular teachers. There are 159 more student support teachers, the number of psychologists in our province up 37 percent, speech language pathologists up 26 per cent, occupational therapists up 5 per cent, social workers up 12 per cent.

Mr. Speaker, we've also helped teachers that are dealing with immigrant students, and the number of teachers that have to work with English as a foreign language, those teachers are up nearly 17 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue doing those type of things and increasing things, and I'd encourage the members to support the budget so that we can have those things in order in a prompt manner.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we're raising direct concerns of educators in this province, a study of teachers. And all we see from that minister is more arrogant dismissal of the real concerns that exist in today's classrooms. It's evident that that minister and that government is unwilling to listen to the

teachers of this province. This is a recent study that's been sent to that minister. It seems as though he hasn't even read it.

About 80 per cent of teachers in this study say their workload has increased under that government. They're frustrated with the top-down nature of decision making, ramming simplistic decisions upon classrooms across the province. And they are adamantly opposed to that government's effort to bring in standardized testing because "standardized assessment initiatives are not drivers of improved learning outcomes."

To the Education minister: when will he finally start listening to teachers, or is he going to simply keep dismissing their concerns about workload, top-down decision making, and his ill-advised standardized testing scheme?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, things have become more complex in our province for teachers. There's no doubt the things that teachers are asked to do and required to do are more complex because of the nature of our demographics changing.

Mr. Speaker, we know that those things are taking place. We've done a large number of things to try and increase the supports that we have for teachers. I've indicated earlier some of the things that are there. I will indicate some more of them. In 2007 there was 3,546 EAs [educational assistants]; in 2014 there are now 3,601.

Mr. Speaker, we will work hard to continue to support teachers and ensure that they've got the necessary supports so that they can do their work. I would encourage the members opposite to support us in doing those things. We want to go forward with those initiatives and ensure that things continue to get better, not just for the teachers in our province but for all of the students.

We've introduced now, Mr. Speaker, a sector plan. And we have had the deputy minister do some work on the sector plan. And I want to tell you just a few of the people that they've consulted with: 31 communities, 756 schools all within the province, 295 teachers, and on and on . . .

[14:15]

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, what part of 90 per cent of teachers being upset in this province does that minister not understand? You know, that minister has failed to listen to educators across the province. And all they've done is ram forward with a simplistic agenda on top of classrooms in this province, tinkering around with the school day, bringing forward a wrong-headed standardized testing agenda, and cutting educational assistants in classrooms across Saskatchewan.

My question to the Minister of Education: has he read the study that was presented to him from the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation that was put together by SIDRU [Saskatchewan

instructional development and research unit]?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I had indicated earlier that we have a sector plan in place. We're working forward to having that in place in the near future. And I had indicated — and I had started, Mr. Speaker, and I ran out of time — the number of consultations that took place: 31 communities, 756 schools, 295 teachers, 106 parents, 193 students, 25 adult learners, 50 First Nations and Métis partners, all school division directors, all principals were invited to participate, 44 STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation] members, participants from LEADS [League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents], SSBA [Saskatchewan School Boards Association], post-secondary partners. And, Mr. Speaker, that sector plan is receiving a lot of support.

I have a letter that I would like to read, just a short quote from Gwen Dueck from the executive director of STF. And I will read the quote, Mr. Speaker, and this is dated March 10th, so the member opposite might want to update: "Teachers see the need for strategic and long-term sector planning and applaud the ministry for the leadership shown in this initiative."

Mr. Speaker, that's the direction that we're going on. That's the direction we're taking. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, three times asking that minister whether he's read the study that was submitted to him. No answer from that minister. It's consistent from a minister that's failed to listen to the education sector, to teachers across our province.

This isn't just a discussion about frustrated educators in Saskatchewan. That would be concerning enough. This is about the quality of education for our kids. Teachers across Saskatchewan are committed to providing an excellent education for students across our province to open their minds and ensure that they're ready for success into the future. And they're doing a great job of this despite the actions of that government. But what's clear in this study is that that government is undermining our education system, making it difficult for teachers to do their job.

To the Education minister: what will it take for this government to stop undermining our kids' education system, start listening to teachers, and start supporting their very important work?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you one of the things that we won't be doing. We won't be closing 176 schools like the members opposite did. Mr. Speaker, their record was pretty well one a month during their term. So every month they'd say, well whose school are we going to axe this month? Mr. Speaker, that's what happens when you've got a shrinking population.

Mr. Speaker, since 2007 we've increased operating funding to school divisions by over 23 per cent. We've increased capital

spending by 264 per cent. We've increased the number of child care spaces by 48 per cent. We've increased funding to CBOs [community-based organization] that manage daycares by 19 per cent. We've increased pre-K programs by 98 per cent. Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to do that thing, and we're going to continue to listen to teachers.

Mr. Speaker, the teachers in our province do great work. We value them. We're going to continue to work with them. Mr. Speaker, we've got a lot of work left to do, but we won't be taking any lessons from the members opposite on this issue.

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

Poverty Reduction Measures

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. A recent report from StatsCan shows that Saskatchewan tops the list of Canadian provinces with the highest rate of women residing in shelters because of spousal abuse, and Saskatchewan is the only province in Canada to have more children than women living in shelters.

To the minister: what is this government doing to address this heartbreaking reality?

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, thank you very much. Interpersonal violence and abuse is a significant concern for our government, and not only harms individuals and families but entire communities. We appreciate the community organizations that partner with interpersonal violence and abuse programs, units to make life safer for Saskatchewan citizens and families.

Mr. Speaker, in this province we operate 42 services delivered by 32 community-based organizations across Saskatchewan. This includes increases to community agencies for wages, enhancements, new funding for a new transition house and new transition services, Mr. Speaker. This includes development of the province's first new transition house since 1989.

Mr. Speaker, this government takes this issue very, very seriously. Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work with our community partners to address it.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know there are various factors that contribute to the number of women and children in shelters in our province, but poverty plays a huge role, and the human cost of poverty is tremendous. But poverty also costs the government and society a lot of money. It contributes to an estimated \$420 million in higher health care costs, \$720 million in increased social assistance costs, up to \$120 million in increased criminal justice costs, and billions of dollars in lost economic opportunity.

Saskatchewan is only one of two provinces in all of Canada that doesn't have a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy. To the minister: will the government agree today that

Saskatchewan needs a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know that lately we've been hearing information about the poverty strategies that are in place in other areas. And I think the members opposite should be aware that according to Stats Canada, since 2007 our government has reduced the number of low-income people more than any other province in Canada, including all of those that have a poverty strategy.

Mr. Speaker, what we're talking about is action to deliver results. Mr. Speaker, we know that working together is an important part of what we're doing, and that's why when we talk about looking at programs like SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] taking 11,000 people off the roll. We talk about things like the Hub and the COR [centre of responsibility], where people have a chance to sit together and talk about the issues that are affecting families. We have hot-spotting in place, Mr. Speaker. We're working to ensure that we find out why people are needing services.

Mr. Speaker, there's always more work to do. Through the child and family agenda, we have seven ministers that sit together and talk about the work we can do to improve the lives of children. We agree there's always more work to be done and we'll learn from other jurisdictions, but we're not just basing that on another report. What we're talking about is action. That is the role of our province.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, we're not just talking about another report. Mr. Speaker, other provinces have had good success by implementing anti-poverty strategies, and there is no question that Saskatchewan needs a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy. And there have been many calls for this over the years, including from Poverty Free Saskatchewan and now Poverty Costs.

The NDP would be very pleased to work with the government to help make this a reality. And as the legislature, we have struck an all-party special committee on a variety of topics: about tobacco control in 2000, about the abuse and exploitation of children through the sex trade in 2001, and most recently about traffic safety. To the minister: will this government agree to announce initial funding in next week's budget, then work together with the NDP in an all-party special committee to develop a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, I told the member opposite a few minutes ago that the number of low-income people in Saskatchewan has decreased more in Saskatchewan than places that have a poverty strategy. The number of children in low-income families has decreased more than any other province. And I really don't know if we need to take any lessons from the NDP because the number of low-income people declined in the NDP's last seven years by 16 per cent, has declined by 30 per cent in the last six years under our

government.

Children in low-income families has declined by nearly 36 per cent in the last number of years. Mr. Speaker, you know we have spoken to the members from Upstream. We talked about working together and we'd be willing to do that, Mr. Speaker. We have to talk about the fact that we have results.

We have the lowest unemployment in Canada for the last 14 months. We have the record number of people that are employed. The average weekly earnings have increased by 27 per cent. We've raised minimum wage by 26 per cent. And yes, there's more work to do. In fact some of my colleagues had an opportunity to meet with Upstream yesterday and we talked about how we can work together with some of the very great policies we have in place right now.

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

Passage of Personal Care Homes Legislation

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of question period, we were talking about a quality of care in many private care homes that simply is not adequate. We've talked about problems that have existed. We've talked about concerns that the Provincial Auditor raised and action that was called for by this government. But, Mr. Speaker, we have not seen the urgency and the seriousness that is needed to address this issue in order to ensure that every senior has the quality of care that they need.

And when I called for this government to finally release, Mr. Speaker, and take action in providing the reports from inspections online, they used the excuse that the legislation was not in place, Mr. Speaker. Well as an opposition, the legislation that the minister referenced, we sent to committee in early December, Mr. Speaker. The ball is clearly in this government's court. If they took this seriously, they could call this legislation to committee, and we could begin with the important work at the committee stage in order to ensure that people in Saskatchewan have access to the information that they need. We're prepared to facilitate that and not filibuster, Mr. Speaker. I would ask why the government took so long to call this to committee if this was a urgent priority of theirs?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, our respective House leaders set the agenda for committee. Mr. Speaker, our side of the House ensures that there is plenty of input for the Leader of the Opposition's House Leader in terms of the timetable of committee. Further, members will know what's in the bill. They'll know the specifics of the bill. I think by and large we all agree that this is part of the solution. There's more, there's other things we need to do, but this is part of the solution.

At the end of question period today, Mr. Speaker, the Government House Leader will take to his feet, hopefully to be recognized by you. And if he is, he will ask leave of the House to bring this bill back, to waive committee, bring it back, get it passed, and do precisely what the NDP have been asking for, Mr. Speaker. Will they agree?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. There's been discussion with respect to Bill No. 111. I would ask for the leave of the Assembly to forgo committee and move the bill to third reading right now.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, this bill has been properly moved to committee. It was properly moved to committee in December 3rd. In terms of the government bringing forward the agenda that can come to committee . . .

The Speaker: — There is a motion on the floor. This is a request for leave; it's not time for debate. The Government House Leader has requested leave to move Bill 111 from committee to third reading. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: — No.

The Speaker: — Leave is not granted.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answers to questions 223 through 224.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled answers to questions 123 and 124.

[14:30]

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 123

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 123** — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)* 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 and enter into the debate on Bill No. 123, *An Act to repeal miscellaneous obsolete Public and Private Statutes and to make certain consequential amendments*. And of course this is important stuff that we have before us. And you know, it is interesting as we enter into passing of bills and how they get managed or mismanaged, however we decide this may be. And I know there are fingers pointing . . .

The Speaker: — I wonder if members could take their conversations outside of the Chamber, please. It's difficult to hear the debate. I recognize the member for Saskatoon Centre.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. So I continue my comments on Bill 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. And I think it's important that we take some time to reflect on these things.

Of course the big issue is, when we see these kind of bills before us, what are the unintended consequences? Obviously we will have a lot of legislation that often sits on the shelf because for whatever reason they become obsolete, irrelevant, maybe not having the appropriate type of language for the day. But it's important that we take the time to have a fulsome debate about this.

And while we could be in committee today and this government, in its management of whatever, it's missed some opportunities and clearly that's before the House right now.

So I want to take a moment to talk about what the minister, back on December 2nd, when he came to his feet and talked about amendments to certain public and private statutes and they would include *The Dental Care Act*. And I know I could go at length in terms of how important that legislation is and what the implications are. We'll have questions about that in the House, in the committee, at the appropriate time, the time at which we usually rely on the government side to put out the list of bills that we'll be taking . . . put on the agenda for the committee. *The Dental Care Act*, *The Medical and Hospitalization Tax Repeal Act*, *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefit Associations Act*, and *The Senior Citizens' Heritage Program Act* — they are all repealed. And then of course we have consequential amendments including *The Dental Disciplines Act*, *The Health Information Protection Act*, and *The Insurance Premiums Tax Act* are all amended in various ways. And *The Pharmacy Act* part of it, section 19(1)(d) is repealed as well.

Going through as we see that there's an Act to validate a certain agreement with regard to Lady Minto hospital at Edam, and that is completely repealed. The French version of the Sisters of Charity of Notre Dame, that is also repealed. The repeal of *An Act to provide for Tax Exemption of Certain Property of Sisters of Charity, Providence Hospital, Moose Jaw*, and then we go through the list of a variety of hospitals right across Saskatchewan.

And I know for example that it's important to clean up the records and make sure our legislation is as fresh and as current as possible. That is the job of the legislature here. But it is also to make sure that when we do these, that the proper consultation has been done and that these organizations, some of which may not be in existence today . . . Some may very well be continuing to do their good work, and so I think it's important that the consultation has been done, they've been contacted or the attempt to contact them is done. But it may be a course of history where they're no longer relevant and that in fact it's best to purge them and repeal them and get them off the record. So there will be lots of questions about this. It's always interesting to know the history behind these certain pieces of legislation.

And when I look at the minister's comments, the 14 private Acts that are connected to community organizations, in particular many religious congregations, and they have played — and I agree with the minister in this case — significant roles in our province's health care system, and it's very important that we acknowledge that. So if these have no more direct impact on our health care delivery, then we need to make sure that they're repealed, that there is no ambiguity left, that this is the task before us. So the minister puts this forward for us to take a look at. And of course we do have questions for them. And I think it's important we continue to have those conversations.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to move adjournment of Bill 123, *An Act to repeal miscellaneous obsolete Public and Private Statutes and to make certain consequential amendments*. I do so move.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 124

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Harrison that **Bill No. 124 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential Amendment) Act, 2013/Loi de 2013 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)**** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise again to enter into the debate about Bill No. 124, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. And it seems relatively straightforward. This is a much smaller Act, and it really talks about the use of the word community clinic or clinique communautaire as part of its premises. And it seems really straightforward in that nature.

And so you know, as I review what the minister or his representative that day was actually . . . how it was presented in the House, he talks about the importance of making sure that our legislation is current as it can be.

Now clearly what we want to do again is making sure that there was consultation and that, particularly when it comes to health clinics . . . And of course we're on the record of being very supportive of co-operative health clinics. We think they're a very, very effective way of delivering health services in our communities. And we know that there are several in the province who have done a very good job of serving their communities and their membership with appropriate health services. And they've played a really strong role in terms of advocacy and leadership as we move forward to make sure that medicare is a strong principle in Canada and in particular

Saskatchewan where we have taken a real leadership in that area of public health care. And we can tip our hats to our co-operative health clinics throughout our province.

So you know, and we do get worried about the consultation, make sure that's happening, but we also get worried that the government seems to be spending an inordinate time in terms of a wording change, that this is not going to impact an awful lot in terms of health care delivery. There are bigger challenges, and every day we stand and we ask about that. And we would like to see much more than a simple verb tense change in an Act. So clearly they need to do more. They need to do more for recruiting physicians and health care professionals here in this province, make sure our emergency rooms are working completely and fully.

And I have to say that, you know, there is a higher expectation from the people of Saskatchewan for this government as we see record revenues coming in, and yet we see, oddly, health care delivery actually slipping. And why is that? And why is that as we see more funds being spent that actually we're not seeing the results that we would think should happen? And while we all have our own personal stories in terms of health care and every one of them is very, very critical as we strive to ensure and advocate for better health care in this province. We want to be leaders. We have been leaders in terms of health care delivery in Canada, but unfortunately that does not seem to be the case as it once was.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I think that while there is much that we can go and we can talk an awful lot about health care in terms of the challenges that lay before us. And today I asked a straightforward question in terms of an anti-poverty reduction strategy, the impact it has on health care.

Yesterday we had discussions around mental health in terms of what's happening with that, the mental health and addictions strategy that seems to be . . . We have questions about where it is, and it should be here. We are in the third session of this term. Will that strategy actually see the light of day before the next election, and will it get the resources? Will it get the resources? Or unfortunately we have concerns that maybe this government is not moving as fast as it could. What are the real priorities of this government when it comes to health care?

It's great. We heard the minister say today that she doesn't want just another report. We don't want to see another report. But we want to see the report and we want to see action on the report. We want to see action on the mental health and addictions report.

So I urge the government to do that, to do that as quickly as we can on whatever the issue is, and particularly where we saw and we agreed in December to move the bill to committee, the personal care home bill to committee back in early December. And here we are, months later, and it has seemed to have slipped off the edge of the desk of this government. And somehow they want to spin it back to somehow it's our fault over here. Forty-nine to nine and yet we have to manage what they should be managing as a government? Is not anyone over there? Are they asleep at the wheel or what's happening?

An Hon. Member: — Embarrassing the Premier.

Mr. Forbes: — Yes. And we do feel sorry for the Premier as we acknowledge he probably was embarrassed because the implication was he thought the bill was still before the House in debates and he hasn't been properly briefed and hasn't really been kept up to speed about what bills are in committee and what bills are before the House. Today I even looked at the schedule that we get from the Government House Leader and I was looking for that bill and it wasn't on there. And so I was thinking, most of the bills would be on there and it wasn't on there.

So, Mr. Speaker, I want to re-emphasize how important we take health care in this province. And we see this bill before us and we see that there are bigger challenges out there. And while we can definitely live . . . And of course, it only makes sense to have properly constructed bills and legislation before us, so it only makes sense that if this is the only issue with the bill that's being amended, then for sure we should be doing that.

But again it will be the question of when you open up an Act . . . And I wonder if this is the case of when the government and the Minister of Health talked to the folks who were . . . who are affected — and I should make sure I get my tense right, not were affected but are affected — by *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefit Association Act*. Have they all been consulted about ways to improve the Act? Or did they do a grammar check and just say, well we see it appears the “is” or “was” are out of sync, and that's the biggest concern we have with the community clinics and the co-ops, the health co-ops?

[14:45]

So did they do the full-blown consultation, saying to these folks, we are opening up the Act? If you are affected by *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefit Association Act*, if you are affected by that Act, please let us know. And they probably should have a list of the different groups who are affected by it. They should know that group. They should send out a letter. We are considering opening up the legislation. It will be before the House. Right now the only error we can see in it is a very small one. Are there ways that we can improve the legislation today so we can make your work better? Because once you open up a piece of legislation, we all know — and they should know on that side — that it's an opportunity to improve the work done. Here you have an opportunity to improve the work done by, you know, the health clinics and any of the groups that would be affected by this. Have they done that?

If they have, that's great. And what was the response? And have they listened to it? I would imagine and I would say and I would imagine I can understand, I know the Saskatoon Health Clinic would be very interested and would have probably a few more words than just saying, well correct the tense please on this legislation. They would have lots to say because, as I said, they are real leaders, real innovators when it comes to providing health care to our communities, in our communities right across Saskatchewan. And there are several — whether it's Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Regina, Saskatoon, and others — that I'm aware of.

So, Mr. Speaker, having said that, I think that it's important that we have further discussion with this, and I know my colleagues will have more to say on this. But with that, I would like to

move adjournment of Bill No. 124, *An Act to make consequential amendments resulting from the enactment of The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. I do so move. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 124, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential Amendment) Act, 2013*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 125

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 125 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*** 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. 125, *An Act to amend The Traffic Safety Act and to make a consequential amendment to The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Now, Mr. Speaker, this particular legislation has been brought forward by the government in response to a committee that went around the province and looked at issues of traffic safety. And that's a laudable task. It's a task that takes much effort on behalf of the members but also on behalf of the staff of the legislature.

So we had a seven-member committee go around the province and listen to the public about possible changes to our legislation. And, Mr. Speaker, the legislation responds to the recommendations of that committee except for the recommendations that were made in a minority report by the two members of the committee from the New Democratic Party. And so, Mr. Speaker, there's an issue there around responding to the community. And I'm going to start and talk about those particular issues, and then I'll go into the bulk of what's in the bill.

But what are the points that were raised by the minority report of the NDP members in the Traffic Safety Committee? Basically what our two members, the member from Saskatoon and the member from Cumberland believed was that there should be short-term vehicle impoundment that's done in a similar fashion to what's happened in Alberta and British Columbia. And basically it's an issue around what happens the first time a driver is picked up and they have a .05 blood alcohol concentration while they're driving. And effectively in British Columbia and Alberta they introduced this legislation which added the risk for a driver of having a .05 blood alcohol concentration, allowing the police officer to impound the vehicle immediately.

What the minister has done here in this legislation is to say, well that can happen the second time but not the first time. And that debate or that discussion was a bit of a surprise to our members but I think also to the public because what we have

seen is that this type of legislation has dramatically reduced the number of alcohol-involved traffic deaths in both British Columbia and Alberta. And so the question becomes, why wouldn't our minister bring this forward? Why wouldn't the government bring this forward?

Now I went and took a good look at the comments made by the minister when this legislation was introduced on December 2nd, 2013. And I thought that this contentious issue might be included in the minister's speech, which is, as we all know, used by the courts who interpret how these rules should be used. And unfortunately there really isn't a rationale for the decision of the Premier and of the cabinet and of the minister as to why they've chosen to have a different law here in Saskatchewan than what they have in Alberta and British Columbia.

And so the question arises, well how many alcohol-related deaths in Saskatchewan could be prevented after this legislation is introduced that are the responsibility of the cabinet and Premier as they have looked at this particular change to the legislation?

Now, Mr. Speaker, it's always difficult to look at these kinds of things. But I think it's very important for the rationale for the choices that have been made by the government to be put on the record, to be described for the public so the public can assess why this has been done. I'm not going to try to speculate as to why we will have lesser protections for our drivers on our highways than they do in Alberta and British Columbia, but that becomes the fundamental question.

Now our members on the committee were quite adamant about making sure that these provisions were included. One of the reasons that they were quite adamant about this is that they knew, and I think the government knows, that the Saskatchewan Association of Chiefs of Police strongly recommended that there be vehicle impoundment on the first offence over .04, not .05. And they acknowledge this legislation has provisions for impoundment for the second offence for seven days, but they state quite clearly, "We believe impoundment on the first offence is similar to the Alberta and British Columbia models which have proved successful."

So, Mr. Speaker, we have the Chiefs of Police who have looked at the legislation carefully. They've looked at the reports from both the majority opinion and the minority opinion of the Traffic Safety Committee, and they have made a strong recommendation to actually make it slightly tighter legislation in Saskatchewan than is there in Alberta and British Columbia. Now we all know how much damage is caused by alcohol-related accidents in our province and also the number of deaths, and so it's a bit mysterious to me why the minister would not address this particular issue and explain why they have made the choices that they have, as opposed to what we know works in our neighbouring provinces.

And so, Mr. Speaker, when you go through the legislation which is, it was quite lengthy, it does respond to quite a number of the changes that have been suggested by the committee. And much of it is administrative change around how various certificates of safety are used, how you make sure vehicles are inspected properly, and how those types of inspection

certificates are used within an administrative system. And obviously that's things that need to be done. But when it comes down to the heart of the bill, which is how are we going to protect the public on our highways, there appears to be a place where they have stepped back without explanation. And, Mr. Speaker, it may be that in the committee we'll end up getting some better explanation for the choice that's been made. But I think that there's a strong prerogative on the government to say why they have chosen to do some of the things that they've done.

Now one of the other aspects of this whole process is that it relates to providing information from the public to the legislature so that we can do the appropriate amendments here. And this doesn't happen that often, I know. I had the responsibility a number of years ago to respond to the committee on tobacco use. And it was very much a valuable document and valuable advice that came from across the province, and it literally allowed us to change the use of tobacco in Saskatchewan. And I think most people are quite happy with the things that have happened, and now it's I think probably time to look at some new things that happened there.

What we have here again is the result of a committee going out and listening to the public, and I think that they got a strong message that drinking and driving are not appropriate and that the time has come to make stronger or stricter laws as it relates to that. And the government almost got there, but then they stepped back, and they haven't fully explained why they've stepped back on this particular legislation.

Now when the legislation was introduced, there are comments about quite a number of different activities that are being done. I notice one of them is a standard kind of line that now comes forward, and I'm not sure I totally agree with it, but basically the minister says that we'd like to shift vehicle registration exemptions from legislation to regulations.

And this is a trend that happens in government, but it also is something where it makes it more difficult for the public to know, for businesses to know what the rules are. And they've indicated that they've done this to allow for the vehicle registration regulatory framework to more closely ally with what happens in Alberta, but there's no mention about why they don't follow the Alberta and British Columbia suggestion around impoundment of vehicles.

So it appears that there are times when we'll get similar protections or similar ways of registering things in our neighbouring provinces, but when there's actual evidence to show that a particular step could save lives of Saskatchewan people, they've stepped back and not taken that step even when the chiefs of police have strongly recommended that that happen as well.

[15:00]

Now when we deal with these kinds of legislation, we know that much of the detail of the actual legislation has been worked out with the regulatory body, which in this case is managed by Saskatchewan Government Insurance, and that whole registration process ends up being one where we have constant changes, you know, almost every year. And this particular

legislation does make a substantial number of the changes that we will end up having to look at as we go into committee. But when we look at what are the practical effects of this, I think we have to remind the public at this stage of what are some of the things that are there.

I notice that there's further refinement and further work done as it relates to the whole system that we have of an ignition lock, or an ability for people to, once they've been convicted of a drunk driving offence, to drive their car again if they submit to a process using an ignition lock. And, Mr. Speaker, this is something that's been developed over the years to help people who are ill. I think that's the only way to describe it. They're not well; they've got an addiction problem. But they also end up having to work. And one of the things about this ignition interlock system is that it can allow people to use their vehicle in a safe manner.

And sometimes people don't understand how this works, but practically what happens is when a person gets in the car to start the car, they need both the key and they need to be able to blow into this Breathalyzer device that's attached to the lock of their car. And if in fact they've had any alcohol to drink, it's not possible for them to start their car using their key. And, Mr. Speaker, this system is one that wasn't there not that many years ago. And so often people who were making the efforts to deal with their addiction problems didn't have a chance to drive in a safe way.

And so, Mr. Speaker, I acknowledge and I appreciate the effort that's gone into making sure that all of these programs work properly and safely, because ultimately for those people who have the greatest difficulty with drinking and driving, the best method is to keep them safe driving and keep the public safe. And so I acknowledge the work that's done as it relates to the ignition interlock system. And I also acknowledge and confirm that some of these types, this new technology, and who knows what the next type of technology that comes forward, will make sure that we have sober, safe drivers on our roads.

So, Mr. Speaker, the numbers of activities that are regulated under *The Traffic Safety Act* are numerous and they are obviously important. We also know that people in Saskatchewan travel long distances, they travel at fairly significant speeds, and that a combination of alcohol with that speed can be very, very difficult for everybody and result in many deaths.

So the provisions that are not included in the Act around impoundment of vehicles is I think a flaw in the legislation. It may be that the minister and the government will rethink this so that we'll actually see some amendments when we get to committee that reflect the minority position of the NDP members of this Traffic Safety Committee. If that happens, I would applaud the government for doing that. I think that's something they should seriously consider. We know that the legislation has been out for public discussion and there's substantial support for an impoundment of vehicles on the first offence rather than on the second offence, the way it's set out here.

Now there's another issue that some of the police officers have raised that relates to this legislation. And in the legislation there

is ability for a second reading to be taken that doesn't necessarily recognize how Saskatchewan operates. And basically what I'm saying here is that if an RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police] officer stops somebody and gives them a Breathalyzer test out in a rural community, the ability to get to another Breathalyzer test within a reasonable time is often not possible. And so I think that some of those provisions that have been identified by the police should be looked at as well. And so possibly we will see some amendments being brought forward that will reflect the fact that we have a very sparse population in some parts of our province.

So with those suggestions that we actually go ahead and have an amendment that reflects the minority position from the Traffic Safety Committee and also that we deal with this particular issue raised around the second Breathalyzer test, I encourage the minister to look at both those items. I have no further comments, and at this point I will adjourn debate.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 125, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Bill No. 116

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

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to wade into the discussion on Bill 116, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013*. I'm going to start by looking at the minister's second reading comments, and I've got the bill in front of me as well, but a good place to find context.

Sometimes when you have a bill, Mr. Speaker, it's not always clear as to what the intent of the government is in just reading the language of the bill, but the second reading speech can often provide context for the general public, Mr. Speaker, and some background details. It's also good to know with whom the government has consulted, and I'll talk a little bit about that as well, and some ongoing concerns.

So looking at the minister's second reading speech, Bill No. 116, *The Municipalities Amendment Act, 2013*, the minister outlines that there's five different groups of amendments or five different areas which this bill will be dealing with. And the first, Mr. Speaker, is a set of amendments the minister just says, "will provide better criteria on which to determine whether unincorporated communities and areas have sufficient capacity for local governance and municipal status."

And the minister explains that obviously this first set of amendments relates to incorporation criteria, and they propose

two things. And one of them is introducing “criteria for the establishment of an unincorporated community as an organized hamlet.” And the minister points out there is no criteria right now to base the minister’s decision on whether a community has sufficient capacity to meet the legislative requirements of an organized hamlet.

And the second part that this particular group of amendments deals with is providing the criteria to incorporate new villages and resort villages to be set in regulation. And the minister in his comments says:

This is to ensure sufficient capacity for governance and for meeting the challenges and opportunities [that come] . . . with growth. [Right now] the current criteria for villages and resort village incorporation: 100 persons, 50 separate dwelling or business premises, and a minimum taxable assessment of 15 million.

And this has been in place without change since at least 1930, the minister points out.

And the minister points this out, but we’ve heard this as well, that many smaller communities still struggle or struggle now “. . . to operate independently and generate [their] sufficient own source revenue to deliver services, fund infrastructure, and retain qualified administration.” There’s been some communities in rural Saskatchewan that have seen growth, but there’s been some rural depopulation as well. And I know many communities find it harder and harder to find councillors, people to serve. It becomes increasingly challenging to have the numbers of people in place to govern a particular area, Mr. Deputy Speaker, now.

The next area of amendments the minister talks about, he lays out in his second reading speech: “They will provide objective criteria for action when municipalities are no longer able to function and meet their statutory requirements as local governments.” So the first set is about the new establishment of a local government or a municipality, but the second piece is about what happens when you do have that depopulation. And he lays out here that:

These amendments propose to require a council to act and potentially dissolve its municipality if it’s non-compliant with specified statutory requirements for two or more consecutive years and if it no longer meets a minimum population for two consecutive censuses.

I know from even a practical standpoint, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that may be practical, but I know people are very tied to their communities. And even if it becomes increasingly difficult to find people to serve and to govern and to have the tax revenue to do what they need to do and to provide the services, we are attached to our communities, whether it’s . . . I grew up in an urban setting, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in Holiday Park in Saskatoon. And I’m incredibly tied to my community of Holiday Park. That is my home. It’s been my family’s home since the late 1940s, and I feel an affinity for that area.

So I know there’s some sensitivities and we are tied to our communities. So even if something might make sense, that when you can’t meet your obligations of governance that it’s

still a very difficult and sensitive issue for many communities to think about dissolving their community or their municipality. I don’t think you’re dissolving a community but dissolving a municipality. That would be an incredibly sensitive issue, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

A third area of proposed amendments that the minister speaks about actually are about providing “. . . more flexibility and choice for interested urban and rural municipalities to voluntarily restructure to form a new type of municipality known as a municipal district.”

It’s interesting, having spoken to the city of Saskatoon recently and to the city caucus of SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], I know that obviously some of the challenges, or some of the opportunities actually, in and around cities like Saskatoon and Regina, you’ve got communities who want to work together and are looking at regional plans working together, whether it’s Regina and Sherwood Park. Or in Saskatoon, you’ve got Saskatoon and outlying areas of new cities like Martensville and Warman, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that there are benefits that come from working together and having a larger plan in place.

But these particular proposed amendments:

. . . provide for urban and rural municipalities to voluntarily agree to join to form a new type of municipality called the municipal district, recognizing it is both urban and rural in nature. [Would we say rural?] These provisions will better enable councils to agree on how representation, elections, administration, and services will be undertaken in the new municipality, drawing on both urban and rural municipality approaches.

[15:15]

In essence, there is some amalgamation involved in this but in a more voluntary capacity. Again, people are tied to their communities and have very strong feelings about governance of their communities. But this particular set of amendments lays the groundwork for being able to work collaboratively, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

Fourthly, these amendments “. . . provide a new means for citizens with concerns about the financial or operational management of their municipality to have these concerns addressed locally.”

The minister in his comments talks about this, that these amendments:

. . . provide citizens with the ability to petition their council to conduct and make public the results of the financial or management audit. [And the minister points out that] this will provide a means for citizens to address their concerns locally. [At this moment or] currently the legislation provides for annual audits of a municipality’s financial statements, the main objective being to confirm whether these are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles [or GAP].

So this will make the locality of . . . it happen, Mr. Deputy

Speaker:

The fifth area of proposed amendments . . . is intended to ensure municipal compliance with legislation and regulations and to constrain the potential misuse of local property tax tools and tax abatements if it occurs. [The minister points out that] . . . these amendments will do the following: they will provide the authority to prescribe limits if necessary on minimum taxes and base taxes, and restrict by ministerial order the use of tax tools by an individual municipality. [And the minister says that] This is to give the government more ability to constrain misuse and misapplication of local tax tools if it occurs.

And he also goes on to say that:

These amendments will also add the ability for an owner or occupant of property in a municipality and the minister to apply to a court to quash an illegal bylaw or resolution. Currently this ability is limited only to voters of the municipality.

So those are some of the things that these amendments do, Mr. Speaker.

I know in the consultation, when we think about legislation coming forward, you want to know who has been . . . All those people involved are impacted by the legislation. Have they had an opportunity to weigh in on potential changes? What do they think of those changes? Why are those changes coming forward?

And the minister lays out in his second reading speech that they've:

. . . consulted extensively on these amendments with . . . the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities and the Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association, and . . . with municipal administrator associations.

These consultations, the minister points out, started last April and concluded in September: "They involved meetings, presentations, and sharing drafts side-by-side of the amendments for review and comment."

So consultation though involves . . . is a two-sided process. So it isn't information going one direction, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's the opportunity to provide input and hear back how that input might be used and provide further input — the back and forth. So I'm not sure if that has happened, Mr. Deputy Speaker, how fulsome . . . Might we know sort of the time frame and we know with whom the minister has consulted, but we are not sure how fulsome that process is and if there's room to continue.

I know, hearing back from SUMA on this particular bill, Bill 116, SUMA has said that of course they support transparent and accountable municipal operations and the principle of municipal autonomy, and in fact these amendments may further these goals. But they point out that the regulations, that again the devil is always in the details. And these could further these goals, provided that the regulations are well constructed with an emphasis on the needs and abilities of urban governments.

So SUMA has said this bill may be good and do what it says it's going to do, but the regulations will be key. And I know SUMA has said that they will continue to monitor the amendments with respect to, and particularly with respect to the proposed petition for financial and management audits — they have some concern about that — and the regulatory framework with respect to municipal districts.

So I know SUMA and other bodies will continue to look at how this progresses and what the regulations look like. And we will have many questions in committee about how this will shape up. And I know that I will have colleagues who will be interested in weighing in on the discussion on Bill 116 as well. So until we get to committee, I think for me, I will move to adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried.

Bill No. 117

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

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Pardon me here; I'm just organizing my notes. I wasn't quick enough in the turnaround there. I'm pleased to speak to Bill No. 117, an Act to make a consequential amendment resulting from the enactment of *The Municipalities Amendment Act*.

Basically these are changes that need to happen in order for Bill 116 to happen as well. It is a companion bill, Mr. Deputy Speaker. So I think my comments on Bill 116 stand, and so with respect to Bill 117, I will move to adjourn debate.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 117. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

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

Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to join in Bill 118, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act*. And I guess opening comments, I guess I want to give some credit to SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] and for the campuses that SIAST does operate and for many good programs that SIAST does offer Saskatchewan residents and for years the good work that SIAST has done. I mean at the end of the day we'll talk about the changes and the amendments that they're being asked, in this legislation, to bring forward.

But I want to talk a bit about, I guess some of the good work SIAST has done. And I know, I have family members, I have community members that I represent that have attended SIAST. Whether it's been in partnerships, whether in the trade, they have offered some good programs, courses, for individuals. Whether it's to upgrade your education, go into a course, trades, SIAST has done this and has done a great job of it.

I think we can all agree, under many administrations, SIAST has been an institute that has been in our province. And many people see when you look at the campuses — whether it's Woodland; you know, Palliser; all the different areas you look at — the good work that SIAST does.

But having said that, you know, clearly it has been . . . Lots of great work that they have done, have given opportunities to a lot of individuals. And if you look at some of the success, at the end of the day, I think it's important to recognize the success that it's given families, our young people an opportunity whether they stay in the province or they've moved on and they've gone on to other jobs within our, you know, Canada. And I guess, you know, some have left Canada even.

I think the quality of the work that these young people or whoever it is . . . It could be somebody that later on in life decided to have a second trade or to have a course or to move, you know, their job for whatever reasons, cuts. But having said that, I just want to recognize that SIAST has done some excellent work. There's many individuals very proud of the courses they take, the ability and the dreams that they've had. And SIAST has helped them: the institute, the staff.

And sometimes, you know, it's easy to criticize. But sometimes to recognize the good work of the staff — whether it's the cleaning staff, whether it's the instructors, tutors, you name it; administration staff, support staff, and every different capacity — to make sure that our Saskatchewan residents have an opportunity at a good education, have a good opportunity at trades, at a course, and to provide for their families, and have pride. And I think truly that has been accomplished and no one can take that away.

But having said that, you know, you look at it and I know we'll have some questions. And I know my colleagues . . . I've asked about different things about the change, and it's a name change they're talking about. And I'm concerned, well will . . . And if the names are changing, will that lose some of, I guess, the recognition SIAST has? By changing on buildings or communities where SIAST operates, changing the name, will that take anything away from SIAST?

And I mean obviously the government and I believe SIAST has, and I hope this has happened, has worked together and consulted in a positive way. SIAST has asked for this and that's fine if that's gone through that process. We just want to make sure that's happened. And I know we will ask those questions and we have the opportunity to consult, and I'm sure government will.

And if SIAST does want this change, and it's going to give them an opportunity to belong to . . . I guess I'm trying to understand the whole process, but there are other institutes in other provinces that belong to a certain group and they have I guess opportunities to give certification, accreditation. They have different I guess opportunities, accreditation, or certification. So we want to look at that, and there's a group, so they would belong to that group. I don't know if all those groups that belong or the institutes that belong to this have changed their names. In this case, it looks like this is being requested. The change to the legislation would be changing the name.

And like I've said, is there going to be costs? And we see a time when tuition rates and anyone taking courses and stuff, is it going to put any more costs to the students? And by changing all the naming and stuff like that . . . So I don't know and I mean this might be a good thing.

But at the end of the day I always look at the costs. Whether it goes back to our students, whether they're from northern Saskatchewan, you know, we have to look at that. And right now everybody is struggling with the cost of living to make ends meet when you're a student — paying your rent, paying your utilities, providing food. For those that are families and maybe they come from a northern community, a rural community, where they have a family and they have to cover their costs while they're going to school and finding rent, they might have two households that they're trying to keep going and the costs.

So any time we see any costs occurring in any way to students, and I know it can be the smallest costs — and with a name change to this bill — but any, any costs that puts on to the student unfortunately causes them grief and can create challenges for them. So I just caution that. And I hope in committee we can find out and at the end, that it isn't the students if this change comes, whether it's stationery or whatever changes that are come with the cost.

We know sometimes government changes it from a government agency, a ministry, or a department. We've seen the great cost that's gone on there, and sometimes it's huge. It's not just a simple thing as saying, wow it was just some letterhead that was changed and there's not really . . . But there are huge costs and complications that come when some of these changes come in.

So we're hoping that, you know, and we wish SIAST well as it moves forward. And you know, as long as the due diligence is done, the consultation has been done with SIAST and its partners to make sure that they support this, that they're comfortable with it. And I know we've raised, you know, a few questions from this point. But in committee we'll get a chance to talk more about it and really, as our critic, define exactly

what changes will come. And later on changes come in different ways, whether it's regulations. So we've seen different things happening and it's to understand that process, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

But having said that, at this point I talk, and I know my colleagues talk that it's mainly a name change. We've talked about some of the areas where they will have an ability to give accreditation or degrees which they had already. So at this point, we'll wait and see what comes out of it, and at a committee we can decide and ask those tough questions and get clarification in committee from the minister and the ministry to see exactly what changes will happen and what the costs will incur on our students. And you know, will it take away from the recognition SIAST has earned and the good recognition? We hope that doesn't happen.

And we can ask some questions in committee, and I know our critic will and members that join the committee will ask those questions. And that's a good place to go and get clarification. And it's important to get clarification before it comes back for, you know, the good work that needs to be done to moving it forward.

So at this point, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'm prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 118.

[15:30]

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 118, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Act*. 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 from Cumberland.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To join in on the debate, Bill No. 119, *The Saskatchewan Polytechnic Consequential Amendments Act*. And I guess I just previously made comments about the Act, the changes that are coming in. This consequential amendment just comes in making could be some name changes within that, could be some of the documents that need to be changed just to be in compliance with the legislation that will follow later on.

So at this point I'm prepared to adjourn debate on this bill.

The Deputy Speaker: — The member from Cumberland 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.]

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 120, *An Act respecting Lobbying*. And, Mr. Speaker, this is legislation that's new legislation for Saskatchewan, and it's an attempt to respond to a number of suggestions around how this can be dealt with. I think I'll quote our Minister of Justice where he says on November 25th, on page 4187 in Saskatchewan *Hansard*:

I believe this bill strikes the appropriate careful balance between allowing continued access to public office-holders while ensuring that such paid lobbying activities is routinely disclosed to the public to ensure transparency and accountability.

I appreciate when the minister sets out what he's trying to do in legislation. I think he's done that quite clearly there. But this bill has a number of interesting aspects to it.

I think I'm going to start off with a bit of a story. A number of years ago, members from the legislature here in Saskatchewan, and one of them was Mr. . . . I think Wayne Elhard was along and — the member from Cypress Hills — Ms. Brenda Bakken who was a member from Weyburn, and there was I think one more. We all went on a legislative exchange to Des Moines, Iowa, to the Capitol Building for the state of Iowa. And one of the . . . There were a whole number of surprises when we went on that trip, but one of the biggest and most interesting surprises was what they call their open meeting policy. And it still exists today because some of us went down there just recently and that policy is still there today. But what they had and still have in Iowa is the fact that any one of us, as legislators, would have to post at the legislature who we're meeting with for coffee, if we meet with each other, every day, all the time.

It basically is saying, you people are the representatives of the people of the province and who you meet with should be open information for everyone. The only thing that was protected was caucus meetings. So if you met as a caucus, that meeting was closed. But with the open meetings, what it meant was that if another member on the opposition and I were going to sit down and talk about something, if it wasn't a caucus meeting we'd have to say, here's where we're going to meet, and anybody could come and listen to what we talked about. Same if we ended up talking across the floor. That kind of information would be there and open.

And you end up asking, well what's the purpose of that type of a policy? Well the basic point is that we are entrusted by the public as legislators to make decisions on their behalf, and therefore the public should have the right to know who is lobbying us, who is pushing us to do one thing or another.

Now when I was down there in Des Moines, I went to some of the committee meetings that were there, and they have many, many committee meetings that are part of their structure. And you'd have basically chairs for the people who were part of the committee, the members of the legislature, and all around there were people standing, watching. And depending on the issue, you could have up to 60 people in a small room, with most people standing, listening, and watching. And part . . . that once again, when you ask, well who are these people, they would say, well those are the lobbyists. And then you'd ask, well lobbyists for whom? And when you did further discussion, it was, well that lawyer there is the top paid lobbyist in the state of Iowa and he has these clients. Those ones over there, they're public interest lobbyists. And so everybody kind of had an idea who was there and who was making suggestions.

Now practically we have in our legislature a lobby. That's out . . . the big rotunda area. Well in Des Moines, Iowa, that rotunda is absolutely filled with lobbyists, with people who just hang around the lobby trying to buttonhole legislators and the governor and anybody else who might come by. And as was shown when we were down there just in early February, that's the place where every day there would be major events organized around pizza, around chicken, around whatever, to influence some of the legislation that was being brought forward.

And they don't have the same system in 2014 as they did 12, 13 years ago because basically they can put all their notices of meetings online. So people look online. They look on their BlackBerrys. They look on their other devices to see who is meeting with whom. So they don't have all the paper notices around, but they still have this same system of very open information for the public.

And so when we look at this particular legislation, it's a first step towards what some people would call open and accountable government. But there are many examples, like the one in Iowa, that go much broader than what's here.

So, Mr. Speaker, this legislation comes I guess kind of like many things that happen around here, with a bit of a public discussion by the Premier around, well maybe we should respond to some suggestions. We have some lobbyist legislation. We entered into a process which allowed for a committee of people from the legislature to work at looking at what other places do, and we got a report which came forward that took some tentative first steps towards lobbying legislation.

And I'm not necessarily criticizing them for that, but what I'm identifying I think here in this Chamber is that there are many more things that can be done if you want to go to a full, open disclosure as it relates to lobbying. And so we may end up having to have more discussion.

Now part of the challenge or the difficulty in Saskatchewan is that all of us meet with and talk to our neighbours and others, and many times those conversations have aspects of what are defined in the legislation as lobbying because people will say, well why don't you do this? Or why isn't something being done here? Or I want this kind of thing to happen. And it's not always clear whether that's something that's done in concert and done together in an organized fashion or whether it's just

the conversations that people have.

And so this particular legislation, you know, attempts to define what lobbying is, and I think it's got a definition that reflects the fact that we've carefully looked at the definitions in other places.

And so I think it's well worth discussing the actual definition in the Act which is part of section 2(i), and it's the definition of lobby. And it says, "means, subject to subsection 4(2)." And I guess we better look and see what section 4(2) says, but basically subject to 4(2) which sets out when submissions are made in a public committee or a matter of public record or they're made around to a public office-holder — that's to an MLA in a formal fashion or to an MLA on behalf of an organization or by a constituent. Those things are protected from public disclosure.

But if basically then lobbying is this definition:

(i) in relation to either a consultant lobbyist or an in-house lobbyist [and we can go and look at the definitions of those], to communicate with a public office holder in an attempt to influence:

(A) the development of any legislative proposal by the Government of Saskatchewan, a government institution or a member of the Legislative Assembly.

Then (B), going back to an attempt to influence:

the introduction of any Bill or resolution in the Legislative Assembly or the amendment, passage or defeat of any Bill or resolution that is before the Legislative Assembly.

Then (C), an attempt to influence:

the development or the enactment of any regulations within the meaning of *The Regulations Act, 1995* or any order in council.

Then (D), an attempt to influence:

the development, establishment, amendment or termination of any program, policy, directive or guideline of the Government of Saskatchewan or a government institution.

And then (E), an attempt to influence:

the awarding, amendment or termination of any grant, contract or financial benefit by or on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan or a government institution.

And then (F), an attempt to influence:

a decision by the Executive Council or a minister of the Crown to transfer from the Crown for consideration all or part of, or any interest in or asset of, any business, enterprise or institution that provides goods or services to the Crown or a government institution or to the public;

or

(G), an attempt to influence:

a decision by the Executive Council or a minister of the Crown to have the private sector instead of the Crown provide goods or services to the Government of Saskatchewan.

Now we can go and look at all of these things, but we can hear in the language here that any attempt to, example, go for a public-private partnership is included here as something that needs to be looked at carefully as to who is pressuring the government or who is pressuring the minister to have services provided in a private fashion as opposed to a public fashion. And then you go through the whole legislation and recognize that there are many, many issues and many things that happen and many decisions that are being made.

Now in Saskatchewan we're not used to having people look over our shoulders as we have conversations about all of these things. And this legislation introduces a new character, a new part to what happens. And I don't think that's a bad thing, but it's something that we would all end up having to get used to, whether either on government side or on the opposition side. But clearly it affects government much more than what happens otherwise.

Now part of the commentary around the legislation — I know some part of the commentary from my colleague from Saskatoon Nutana as this legislation was introduced — is that it has some pretty nice definitions. It follows other places, but there's some pretty large exemptions as to who doesn't have to comply with the legislation.

[15:45]

And so it appears that the way the legislation has been written in Saskatchewan is that we have good legislation, but it pretty well excludes all the lobbying in Saskatchewan. So this bill would exclude lobbying by employees, officers, and directors of interest groups, lobby organizations, other non-profit entities, except those that represent businesses or management, union or professional interests, and it would also exempt businesses whose employees, officers, and directors collectively lobby Saskatchewan public office holders less than 100 hours in a year.

And based on what we know about the lobbying that's happened in Saskatchewan, there are very few groups that would be caught by this definition. And so what we have is nice structure but a great big wide hole or a big barn door where you can drive through most everything that happens. And it clearly doesn't have the very dramatic open and accountable kind of structure that you have in the state of Iowa and other states to the south of us.

So what's happened here? Now I think in a way, and this is my own sort of personal reflection on this, is that it wasn't really something that was top of mind for Saskatchewan people because most people had a pretty good idea who was doing the lobbying and who wasn't doing the lobbying, especially those of us here who work in this building but also the press and

others. But when the Premier mused about, we should have some lobbying legislation, all of a sudden it became an issue, and so this whole process was entered into.

But when the report came down from the group looking at other places, it was a sense, well maybe this is more than what we bargained for. And I think that that's what we got. We got legislation that's got lots of rules, lots of things that are there, but the actual implications of having the legislation are very slight. They won't affect many people. And in fact they may affect some people or groups that really weren't intended to be included.

And so it's interesting to try to legislate in this area no matter what you do. And obviously Mr. Guy Giorno, who was in some ways a trigger for a lot of this, has some opinions. He also has a consulting business that looks at how to advise people to deal with lobbying issues. But I think he reflects quite clearly that, you know, the rules are pretty good, but most lobbyists won't be affected at all.

Now one area where I appreciate some of his comments were that those places that do have lobbying statutes do have a strategy to deal with what are called Astroturf organizations, grassroots organizations. And that's the situation where I guess we experienced . . . One of the bigger areas is with the tobacco industry where they fund all kinds of organizations that appear to be public organizations but that really don't have much substance behind them. And those kinds of organizations you call Astroturf because they have no roots.

And so basically our legislation doesn't deal with anything like that although it does say that we should report that. But I'm sure that that's one that will be interesting to watch as we look at it as we go forward because we know there are a number of organizations that appear to be member organizations that when you really ask questions about them — who are their members; where do they get their funding? — what happens? And so I'm willing to be surprised by the fact that maybe our legislation will draw out some of these groups and allow them to be identified, and maybe it'll be clear who it is that's funding them and why they're doing things that they're doing. So I think that may be important.

Now it's not dissimilar in a lot of ways from our freedom of information legislation over the years. We know that our Saskatchewan legislation was relatively early in the process. A number of provinces have worked with freedom of information legislation, have much better legislation than we now have. My understanding is that the Minister of Justice and officials are looking at that, and hopefully we'll get a 21st century version of that.

But it's not always clear where that can be used and how it can be used, the freedom of information legislation. Maybe this Act respecting lobbying will also have a similar effect that the rules will be there. Some enterprising individuals or groups will see some opportunity to get access to information around how certain decisions have been made, and it will actually surprise both the government and the public that it has some of the effects that it does.

And so, Mr. Speaker, the legislation I think is legislation that

will assist some parts of what's ... [inaudible] ... in Saskatchewan so that we do have a more open and accountable situation, but unfortunately I think the exemptions are just too great. Some of the rules that have been set out here are too unenforceable, if I can put it that way, and that it will be a second iteration of this, a second version of this or maybe even a third that finally gets at some of the specific issues that are of concern to the public.

When this legislation was brought forward, clearly some of our bigger institutions in the province were concerned — whether it was the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina — because they have so many people who give advice, give suggestions, lobby around particular activities of the government. I think there's some fairly broad exemption for the activity that comes from them. I think there are maybe a few of the companies in Saskatchewan that might be a bit surprised that they get caught in some of these rules, and we don't know exactly how that will happen. But I think that's interesting.

I think here, we as members of the legislature and particularly cabinet ministers in the government will have some rules about what kinds of jobs they can take after they leave politics. And that may be an area where we need to have further discussion. Some of the federal rules are quite extensive, where you end up having to wait five years, I think it is, before you can go and lobby within the federal government. And that may be too long.

I think this bill has six months for former MLAs, political staff, etc., that you have to have as a cooling-off period, and for ministers, one year. You know, maybe that's not enough. Maybe it's too much. But I think there's a debate there about how those provisions work and how they affect what happens. And we'll maybe even have some discussion around some aspects of that as we move forward with this into committee.

Another area of discussion or contention relates to this 100-hour a year involved in lobbying. And the way it's defined presently does give a pretty wide berth for most activities that take place in the province, and that I think will probably have to be looked at in more detail as we move forward.

So the enforcement mechanism that's set out here sounds pretty dramatic but I think, as my colleague from Regina Elphinstone said yesterday, it's like a great big dog on a leash with no teeth. And so we'll need to see whether the toothless enforcement regulations will have any effectiveness at all as we deal with this because ultimately that's the question. What's the penalty if you break the law? And so far it appears it doesn't apply to many people. The penalties look quite severe, but the actual chance of getting to the point where a penalty applies to you because you've done something is a real long, long shot, long chance that you would ever get any kind of penalty at all.

So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I made a number of comments about this. I know some of my colleagues are going to want to further comment on this legislation, so at this point I will adjourn debate.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Glad to join the debate on Bill No. 122, *The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Amendment Act*. It's a pretty substantial piece of legislation, fairly complex in some regards, and certainly very interesting in many regards, Mr. Deputy Speaker. The provisions in law around alcohol and gaming are almost as old as this province — older in fact, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the first of the regulations that the North-West Territories was seized with very early on. Of course alcohol was the object of various of those regulations, and of course we've seen different iterations of the legislative and regulatory regime since then. But this, this is a fairly substantial piece of legislation, and in terms of significant rafts of reform would I think measure up with significant airs of change in other times.

But I guess just to explain a bit about the approach I'll be taking to the Act in the second reading speech, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll provide a few sort of thoughts off the top just on the broad strokes of the bill. We've got some more specific sort of consideration of the minister's second reading speech, again a good sort of touchstone when you're considering where a government is going with a given piece of legislation.

[16:00]

There's some commentary around the way that this government has conducted itself on a very much related topic, that being horse racing and the impact that has had in my home community, Mr. Deputy Speaker. And then I'll be looking at the bill itself, going through sort of a clause-by-clause discussion thereof.

But I guess the first thing I'd say off the top, there has been a significant amount of work done with the sector partners in terms of the hospitality industry in terms of considering where the legislation needs to go in the future. I don't think this legislation necessarily comes out of nowhere, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I think there are a few different paths that lead us to this point. I know that members opposite have conducted a regulatory review as regards liquor and liquor, in particular, regulations in this province. And we see some of that work represented here. We know that last year the minister came forward with different proposals, some in regulations, some in policy, some in law. But again it was a fairly significant raft of activity on the part of the government, and we see that again reflected here today.

But I guess I'd be remiss if I didn't state off the top that with . . . on the one hand we see this big push in terms of activity on the alcohol and gaming regulatory framework. I know that we've got some work under way by this government in terms of the addictions needs and sort of the gap analysis and the way that various of our addictions services are, I think, oversubscribed in this province, Mr. Speaker, people needing treatment that aren't able to get it. And there's a broader sort of work of review that's going on in conjunction with that.

But again I think when the minister came forward with the package, again a substantial package of proposals regarding gaming and alcohol in this province last year, that that would have been an appropriate time to come forward with a significant raft of proposals certainly on gaming and addictions treatment, Mr. Speaker. And again we apparently go wanting for that big push from the government to this day.

Something else that's interesting about the legislation in just sort of a general sense, Mr. Speaker, again there's some fine things in this legislation. There's some housekeeping things. There's some, I think, useful amendments. There is some items that are responsive to various of the sector partners. But that as well takes place against the backdrop of as what has happened in the horse racing industry in this province and the fact of what took place around West Meadows Raceway, having had to cancel their season for standardbred racing and the fact that — and this is the words of the West Meadows press release at the time, Mr. Speaker — it stated:

The province of Saskatchewan is a rich province. It is plenty big to share two Home Market Areas as it has through several decades, so that both industries have an opportunity to grow.

Mr. Speaker, the argument that the individuals . . . that this is a passion for them, but it's also a livelihood, a way of life in terms of the folks that put together the West Meadows track again out northwest of Regina here, but the way that they ultimately came to grief. And again this is from a *Leader-Post* story dated August 7th, 2013 wherein they announced their cancellation. The sign that accompanied the announcement, "Horse racing cancelled. Sask Party picks winners and losers." Regina loser — to provide a partial quote there, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what those folks put up.

And what they'd said at the time as regarding the experience of dealing with this government, they talked about, again this is from the then president Jane Grainger, announcing that they were cancelling that season. The then president Jane Grainger stated that it was "probably the most difficult announcement" that she had had to make. And in terms of what she'd said, in carrying on in this article again from the *Leader-Post*:

Grainger says minister for SLGA Donna Harpauer 'sacrificed one track for another' when it comes to West Meadows, and that meetings to plead their case for a licence have 'gotten nowhere.'

'After two years of exceptional racing with record crowds and handles bet, SLGA has turned their backs on us,' Grainger wrote in an email.

Close the quote from the story altogether, Mr. Speaker.

And again these are folks that are very passionate and in terms of, you know, of a really interesting side of the gaming industry in Saskatchewan in terms of horse racing, in terms of standardbred racing, this was a pretty exciting development in terms of the Regina region.

But the way that this government has carried itself out, or has carried itself, is to pick winners and losers, and that's again not my estimation of it. It's the good folks at West Meadows raceway that again put up their own sweat and blood and money in terms of this investment. And so if the minister doesn't like that, she need not take my word for it. She can refer herself to the correspondence that she's had directly with the folks at West Meadows.

In terms of the legislation itself, Mr. Speaker, again a fairly substantial piece of legislation, fairly wide-ranging, and in terms of the scope of the legislation, again it sort of goes pillar to post. There's some good things in here, Mr. Speaker. There's some things that we have further questions about. There's some things that are more housekeeping in nature and there's some things that, quite frankly, are not just housekeeping but they're almost sort of archaeological in terms of the work that they do, in terms of again the question of regulating alcohol throughout the history of this province has been undertaken.

But in terms of the legislation itself, first off, dealing with the explanation for existing provision no. 3 and the amendments to section no. 2, the explanation states that:

. . . section 2 will add definitions to facilitate amendments to the Act, including a new definition for Indian Band to facilitate changes that will allow SLGA to issue a liquor permit to an Indian Band. New definitions for on-reserve certificate of registration; on-reserve charitable gaming licensee; on-reserve employee; on-reserve registrant; and on-reserve supplier are necessary to support amendments that will authorize a First Nation Gaming Licensing Authority that has entered in an agreement with SLGA to register on-reserve charitable gaming employees. Finally, the detailed definitions for gaming employee; gaming supplies or services; and supplier are being moved to regulation to better enable SLGA to adapt to changes in the gaming landscape.

That's one that's of particular interest, Mr. Speaker. Again in that explanation you see some good and you see some cause for further questions.

And one of the questions that we have, Mr. Speaker, and certainly given events of the past weeks, past months in this province, one of the questions I would have, and it's something that we'll certainly be raising in committee, the question of how this impacts online gaming in Saskatchewan. Does this have any impact or does this move activity from legislation into regulation that would better enable the people of Saskatchewan to keep track of what's happening with the question of this government's approach to online gaming in Saskatchewan? That's one question we've got.

Another question we've got, Mr. Speaker, is, this is in terms of

the specific designation around Indian Band — fair enough — in terms of further evolving the authority for First Nations gaming licensing and for the Indian gaming regulator. Again those would seem to be fair enough, but how those will come to pass, Mr. Speaker, and the individuals that are anticipated to be covered by that change in legislation and again the fact that various of the activities under this legislation has been moved from the legislation into regulation. again gives us some questions that certainly demand an answer.

Moving on through the legislation, Mr. Speaker, a change around the conflict of interest provisions in the Act. In the explanation provided:

Amended clause 11(1)(b) clarifies that an SLGA employee may be registered as a gaming regulator. Current clause 11(1)(b) prohibits an SLGA employee from being a gaming regulator, which contradicts the definition of “registrant” in section 2 of the Act. This amendment is housekeeping in nature.

The section is also amended to ensure that a person who contravenes subsection (1) cannot be charged with an offence under the Act. The conflicts of interest outlined in subsection (1) are often accidental or minor in nature when they do occur; however, the Act imposes potentially serious consequences. Going forward, SLGA can address these issues through appropriate workplace discipline policies.

So again you’ve got a mixture there, Mr. Deputy Speaker, in terms of housekeeping, in terms of things that will have real force, and then things that will be moved into policy, altogether out of legislation. Again we’ll be looking to see how that is given force and effect.

Next up, Mr. Speaker, in terms of amendments to section 19, again from the explanatory notes. These:

... coincides with amendments to section 39.1 and will give SLGA discretion to assess a combined monetary penalty and suspension against a permittee or registrant where warranted. Section 39.1 has been interpreted to only allow a suspension where a permittee or registrant refuses to pay a monetary penalty assessed against them. This change will better enable SLGA to ensure the terms of the Act are being followed.

Proposed new subsection 3 will clarify the power of SLGA to issue off-sale endorsements through a sealed bid process.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it would seem to be fairly mechanical, fairly straightforward in nature and again, in and of itself, probably worthy of support.

Moving along, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the proposed new section 20.1 allowing:

... SLGA to establish subsidiary corporations for the purpose of assisting it in carrying out its powers and duties under the Act. The Act, as currently drafted, does not allow SLGA authority to create or own a subsidiary.

I guess we’ve got questions there, Mr. Speaker, in terms of what kind of subsidiaries. What kind of activity is envisioned there? What current parts of the mandate with SLGA are not being sufficiently serviced so much so that you require the spinoff of a subsidiary? These are questions that again demand a good answer.

In terms of the section regarding certain interests prohibited, the explanation and explanatory notes for the legislation states:

The proposed new subsection (b) clarifies that a Commission member who contravenes subsection (a) cannot be charged under section 139 of the Act. The conflicts of interest outlined in subsection (a) are often accidental or minor in nature when they do occur. However, the Act imposes potentially serious consequences. The section is intended to provide guidance in appointing members of the commission, and not to bring about the type of penalties outlined in section 139.

[16:15]

Again, seemingly pretty straightforward work of drafting to clarify the intent and force of a particular clause in the legislation, making sure that the penalties are not rolled into the provisions around appointment of members of the commission. But again we’ll be interested to find out the experience from SLGA in terms of where this conflict has arisen. In previous, what’s the experience been, Mr. Speaker? And we’ll be looking to follow that up at committee ... [inaudible interjection] ... Oh, I will. I will. Very good. Okay. Thanks, Mr. Speaker, just a little encouragement from members opposite. We’ll carry on with the discussion here on the legislation. In terms of:

... the exception of adding the ability to review on-reserve registration decisions to the Commission’s powers, amendments to sections 26 and 27 are largely housekeeping in nature and:

clarify that registrants have a right to request a review of conditions imposed on a registration;

correct section references;

allow the Commission to rehear an application regarding the issuance, suspension or cancellation of an on-reserve charitable gaming licence or certificate of registration. Currently, this section only applies to a licence, horse-racing licence, permit or certificate of registration issued by SLGA;

clarify the method of service of notice for the various types of applications heard by the Commission; and

clarifies that service by courier is acceptable if it is left with the permittee or manager on duty at the time of service.

Again, Mr. Speaker, pretty straightforward and would seem to be a reasonable suggestion. But we’ll be looking to gain further confidence on that point on the legislation in committee.

In terms of the next amendment, it “would move subsection

28(5) to section 27, consolidating notice requirements for commission hearings within a single section.” Again, Mr. Speaker, one of the challenges of drafting legislation appropriately is to make sure that you’ve got that clarity and that focus in the respective clauses. And that would seem to be a straightforward amendment being proposed there.

A similar observation could be made of the amendments proposed to section 29, housekeeping in nature, and updating the existing legislation.

In terms of the amendment to subclause 30(a)(i), it:

... corrects an inconsistency within the Act. Gaming registrants have a right to seek a review by the commission of terms imposed on a certificate of registration, but clause 30(a)(i) as currently drafted fails to include a “certificate of registration” as a reviewable document.

Carrying on through the quote here, Mr. Speaker:

The amendments to clause 30(b) include on-reserve charitable gaming registrants as being eligible to apply to the Commission for a review of a decision by a First Nation gaming licensing authority.

Again, in the one hand it seems to be fairly straightforward, Mr. Speaker, as regards the clarification around the application of this Act to a First Nations gaming licensing authority. We will have, again, more specific questions about that in committee as regards the consultation that we would presume has taken place between this government and impacted First Nations as regarding the duty to consult. But we’ll certainly be asking further on that in committee.

Next up, Mr. Speaker, is:

The amendments correct an erroneous cross reference to subsection 146(5), where the proper reference should be subsection 146(9). The amendments also include a reference to section 147.3, allowing for an on-reserve charitable gaming registrant to apply for a review to the commission where new terms have been imposed on an on-reserve certificate of registration.

Again in terms of embedding more precise language as regards First Nations in the legislation and the changes or the clarification that arise from process attached to that, Mr. Speaker, would seem to be fairly straightforward, but we shall see.

In terms of amendments to section 32, these will:

... allow the Commission to dispose of a matter where an applicant for review fails to appear at the hearing by either adjourning the hearing; dismissing the hearing; or considering the application on the basis of the information before the Commission. Currently, when an applicant requests an oral hearing but fails to appear at the hearing, the only available option for the commission is to consider the application based on filed material.”

Again as these matters are brought to the commission’s

attention, it’s important to have means to properly dispose of them. It’s important to have the process by which these matters are disposed of being clearly understood, and this would seem to be in aid of that end, Mr. Speaker, and it would seem to be a fairly straightforward proposition.

In terms of:

Existing sections 33 and 34 which related to suspensions or cancellations by SLGA have been combined into one section as part of amendments to the Act to more clearly describe processes for SLGA when issuing sanctions and abilities for the Commission to consider review of those decisions. In addition, amendments will:

coincide with amendments to sections 19, 37.1 and 39.1 that clarify that SLGA or a First Nation gaming licensing authority may issue a suspension/cancellation either alone or in conjunction with a penalty;

clarify the process SLGA must follow in issuing a suspension or cancellation;

establish a three year limitation period for SLGA to issue a suspension or termination, which is in line with the current three year limitation period to assess a penalty pursuant to section 39.1;

clarify remedies available to the Commission if an applicant fails to appear at an oral hearing; and

clarify notice provisions.

Again, Mr. Speaker, disciplinary proceedings and suspension or termination of licences, it’s very important that those things are well understood in the legislation, that they’re well defined in the legislation. And this again would appear to be in aid of those ends.

In terms of the next provisions up for consideration, Mr. Speaker:

Existing sections 34.1 and 34.2 which related to suspensions or cancellations by a First Nations gaming licensing authority have been combined into one section. In addition, amendments will:

include reference to a registration issued by a First Nation gaming licensing authority (currently the sections only refer to on-reserve charitable gaming licences);

coincide with amendments to sections 19, 37.1 and 39.1 that clarify that SLGA or a First Nation gaming licensing authority may issue a suspension/cancellation either alone or in conjunction with a penalty;

establish a three year limitation period for SLGA to issue a suspension or termination, which is in line with the current three year limitation period to assess a penalty pursuant to section 39.1;

clarify remedies available to the Commission if an applicant fails to appear at an oral hearing; and

clarify notice provisions.

Again, Mr. Speaker, given the clarification of duties that attach to First Nations gaming licensing authorities, these would seem to be reasonable changes and would be attendant to that change in law.

Carrying along here, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the next:

Proposed subsection 35(2) is complementary to the provisions that will provide authority to a First Nation gaming licensing authority to register on-reserve charitable gaming employees and suppliers and provides that the Commission can direct a First Nation gaming licensing authority to issue, renew, vary or cancel an on-reserve certificate of registration. The current subsection only provides the Commission with these powers to direct a First Nations gaming licensing authority with respect to on-reserve charitable gaming licenses.

It would be good to know, Mr. Speaker, what's the context from which this emerges. We presume that it arises from discussions and observed experience with the Indian gaming regulator, but it's always important to know the precise details out of which a given piece of legislation arises, out of which given amendments might arise, Mr. Speaker. So I guess, what are the experiences to date in which various certificates, on-reserve certificates of registration, might have been renewed, varied, or cancelled? What is the particular experience as that has worked its way through the province?

Next up in terms of "... subsection 36(1) will expand the subsection 35(3) to apply to on-reserve certificates of registration, in addition to licenses and certificates of registration." Again dealing with the means by which SLGA is capable of licensing various activities.

Again next provision is section 37, housekeeping in nature, updating references in the section to coincide with amendments to section 26.

Next up, Mr. Speaker:

Proposed 37.1 applies to immediate suspensions by a First Nation gaming licensing authority and mirrors existing 37 which applies to immediate suspensions by SLGA.

Again, Mr. Speaker, more richly evolving the consideration of the First Nations licensing authority and its powers under the Act and more clearly delineating them within the legislation. That in itself would seem to be entirely reasonable. But again, we'll have questions on these matters in committee.

The amendments to section 39.1 will provide clarification of SLGA's authorities to issue administrative sanctions against permittees or registrants that fail to comply with the Act, Regulations or terms and conditions. Along with amendments to other sections, changes to 39.1 will better set out the service and notice requirements, update section references and provide the Commission with authority to

dispose of an application where an applicant does not appear at an oral hearing.

Again, would seem to be fairly straightforward and again helping the Act to more appropriately deal with matters of concern that are brought to the commission and how they might be discharged with.

Subsection 42(1), again sort of the consequential amendment type amendment.

Changes to section 22 of the bill thereby amending the French version of the Act, and it being housekeeping in nature.

Again the matters contained herein sort of running the gamut.

And then:

The proposed new section 47.1 will clarify that a franchise may issue special occasion permits, in accordance with the terms contained in an agreement with SLGA. Currently, there are no provisions in the Act that expressly allow a franchise to issue special occasion permits. This amendment will eliminate confusion and is housekeeping in nature.

Then, Mr. Speaker, that would certainly seem to be the case with that proposed amendment. Next up, dealing with section 48, Mr. Speaker, of the legislation, the where-prohibited provisions in the legislation. There's an amendment that:

... extends the physical areas covered by subsection (2) to include First Nation reserves. This amendment corrects a current inconsistency within the Act, as reserves are not legally part of municipalities, and do not fall within a prohibition operating pursuant to section 49.

[16:30]

Again, Mr. Speaker, an important distinction to be made in law for sure, to specifically reference First Nations and how that is considered properly under law. The old section 2 dealt with:

- (a) the Northern Saskatchewan Administration District;
- (b) a provincial park or a regional park established pursuant to *The Parks Act*, or *The Regional Parks Act, 1979*;
- (c) an area that, in the opinion of the authority, is a summer or winter resort area; or
- (d) a national park of Canada, subject to any regulations made pursuant to the *National Parks Act (Canada)*.

And again, Mr. Speaker, it's important to understand how First Nations are contemplated under law. And it would be good to know, just referencing the allowance that is made there in terms of the national park of Canada, how those sorts of issues, in terms of the individual First Nations jurisdiction and regulation, are dealt with under law, given that this is now more specifically being considered in this legislation and what sort of consultation went into ascertaining that.

In terms of the sections 57 and 58, this is more of a consolidation piece, Mr. Speaker, but they state that:

Most of the detailed requirements of sections 57 and 58 are being moved to the Regulations. This will better enable SLGA to make changes to the application requirements in response to feedback from stakeholders in the future.

Again, Mr. Speaker, these sections 57 and 58 have a lot to do with sanctions that are available under the Act and to whom they apply. And it'd be good to know from the government, in terms of the specific instances that are there that prompt this action, is this in fact a case where these would be better served in regulations? Or is it, you know, what is it about the Act that's so constrained the hand of government that they need to move them into regulations to enable more responsiveness? Again that's the kind of context that we'll be looking for under closer examination of the legislation in committee.

Up next, Mr. Speaker, in terms of:

The amendment to section 59.1 coincides with amendments to section 60 that clarify that an Indian Band is eligible to apply for a permit. The new clause (2)(c.1) provides that SLGA can consider evidence regarding the members of council of the applicant band in determining whether or not an applicant is of good character. This clause follows a similar format to the existing clause for corporations and partnerships.

Again it's interesting to see the elevation and the consideration of individual governing units on First Nations being considered alongside the existing legislation for corporations and partnerships. We'll be interested to see what the specific application of that and how it's anticipated to work out under the Act, Mr. Speaker.

And again:

The amendment to section 60 will allow an Indian Band to obtain a liquor permit. Currently, Indian Band are not a type of entity that may qualify for a liquor permit under the Act.

Again updating the provisions of the Act allowing for that more fulsome recognition of First Nations in the legislation, but how that works out and what basis of consultation that stands on are things that we will be interested in better understanding, Mr. Speaker.

The amendment to section 61 will clarify that small manufacturers (brew pubs, micro breweries, micro distilleries and cottage wineries) may own and operate a licensed restaurant.

Again, quite frankly I'll be very interested to see how this works out, Mr. Speaker, as I would presume are you, in terms of the microbrewery, micro distillery interests that are seemingly growing stronger by the day in this province, and not to mention the cottage wineries, lest we forget them, Mr. Speaker. But how this aids and enables the activities of those interests, it will be very interesting to see how that works out, Mr. Speaker. And we'll be following that with great interest and perhaps even appetite, Mr. Speaker.

Again some of the various amendments concerning matters

which are more housekeeping in nature, you know, changes to numbering and the like, in terms of difference of the amendments under consideration in this part of the legislation. One that's of particular interest, Mr. Speaker, is section 67, which is:

... being repealed and removes the ability of SLGA to require a permittee to carry set amounts of beer produced by Saskatchewan manufacturers. This provision is no longer relevant and is not enforced.

An interesting one of a measure from a bygone era, Mr. Speaker, perhaps speaking to a more protectionist era, but it would have been interesting to see, you know, when was the last time that was actually brought into any kind of force in the sector here in the province.

Next up, again another sort of interesting piece of this legislation, Mr. Speaker, is the medical use permits. And this amendment:

... removes the requirement for medical use permits and reduces the administrative burdens, both for SLGA and medical professionals. The actions of doctors, pharmacists and other medical professionals are regulated by their respective governing bodies, which ensure that activities related to the use of beverage alcohol for medicinal purposes are still regulated. Medical professionals will still be required to purchase all beverage alcohol from SLGA pursuant to section 82.

Again, Mr. Speaker, perhaps rooted in a more bygone era where, you know, under different experiences of different degrees of prohibition where if people wanted to get a drink, it very much involved a trip to the doctor and the kind of, you know, circuitous path involved getting a drink there. You know, thank goodness we're in a much more straight-ahead day and age, Mr. Speaker, where you don't need to go to the doctor to get a permit to get your own little quart of medicinal this or medicinal that.

And again, it's reflected in section 81 where it is being repealed: "With the removal of medical use permits from the Act, section 81 is no longer relevant." Again, Mr. Speaker, fair enough. A trip to the doctor should be on its own and a trip to the bar should be a trip to the bar.

Explanation concerning the amendment to section 82, "... coincides with amendments to section 77, which removes the requirement for medical professionals to obtain medical use permits from SLGA." Again, Mr. Speaker, perhaps derived from this more bygone approach to getting a drink in the province of Saskatchewan, and I'm sure some legitimate applications of medical use as well.

Then the amendments to section 83, removing:

... the requirement for a non-consumptive use permit for businesses or individuals that require beverage alcohol for uses other than as food or beverage. This will reduce administrative costs for both SLGA and businesses/individuals that require beverage alcohol for non-consumptive purposes.

Again fair enough. I'm sure the Bunsen burners of the province are shouting out with joy at that one, Mr. Speaker.

And again, this one of particular interest to me, explanation for the amendments to section 85 will:

... remove the requirement for educational institutions to obtain a permit for the purpose of serving beverage alcohol in connection with mixology or bartending courses conducted by that institution. This will reduce administrative costs for both SLGA and educational institutions.

Now I never got my degree in mixology, Mr. Speaker, but I actually have a friend who's got a degree in mixology. And I'm sure he'd be happy to know that the kind of hoops that his course had to jump through to get the raw materials for their course work have been removed and that this is now going to be an easier proposition in terms for all those hard-working mixologists and bartenders out there. So be glad to see that take effect, Mr. Speaker, and be interested to see the specific context from which that change arises, but again, it seemed to be fairly straightforward on the face of it.

Clause 90(e), this amendment:

... will expand the scope of that clause to allow the sale of any form of cooking beverage alcohol by a merchant, such as a grocery store. This is limited to beverage alcohol that is denatured and not fit for consumption on its own.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it would seem to be a fairly straightforward proposition. We'll see how that is implemented.

Amendments to subsection 99(1) simplifying notification procedures where SLGA intends to establish a franchise in a municipality in which a store or franchise does not exist. Currently, SLGA must engage in detailed notice procedures where a store or franchise was in operation but recently closed. The amendments would require notice from SLGA only where there has been no store or franchise in operation for over 180 days, resulting in reduced administrative costs for SLGA and shortened wait times for a business seeking a franchise.

And again this is one where I think about a case I've heard of, where a licence was given adjacent to a First Nation and the way that concerns have arisen from that. And what were the precise terms of consultation with the surrounding community in the granting of that franchise or that licence, how were they followed? And again I don't think they'll be impacted, in the main, by this Act, but again communities should have say in the provision of these licences, Mr. Speaker. And it's important to very much consider their interests in the granting of these licences. So we'll see how that one plays out, Mr. Speaker, and what the specific context from which that measure arises. But we'll be looking for that one in a more detailed way from the minister.

And again under:

The amendment to subsection (3) removes the reference to medical use permits and coincides with amendments to

section 77 that remove requirements for medical use permits. A person lawfully prescribed beverage alcohol by a doctor will continue to be able to consume that beverage alcohol in any place it is necessary.

That's going to be interesting to see how that works out again. "A person lawfully prescribed beverage alcohol by a doctor will continue to be able to consume that beverage alcohol in any place it is necessary." I don't know if anyone here has got a prescription, Mr. Speaker, but we'll be interested to see how that plays out through various workplaces and community gathering points in the province. But again that it's even contemplated directly under alcohol and gaming regulations or legislation here in the province arises from that different era where medical use permits were a much more vital part of the legislation, bigger ... [inaudible interjection] ... I can't hear, Mr. Speaker. I can only surmise that he's offering me a beverage at the end of this, but we'll see ... [inaudible interjection] ... You're still using medical permits? Okay. All right. Okay. Well there we go.

Again information being provided that medical use permits are very much in use, and we'll see. Again these are the kind of questions that we'll be asking of the minister to provide that more detailed understanding, and of course, Mr. Speaker, is not just someone who avidly following the goings-on in this sector of the economy and culture, but former SLGA minister himself. I'm sure he's followed this with great interest. But again the kind of questions that we'll be bringing to bear to get that more precise understanding under the consideration of this legislation.

[16:45]

Next up, Mr. Speaker:

The amendments to section 113 will clarify that a franchisee cannot allow minors to act in the sale or handling of beverage alcohol, consistent with the limitations imposed on commercial permittees. Previously, this has been addressed by agreement between SLGA and the franchisee, but there was no statutory provision prohibiting this practice. This does not represent a change in practice for franchises but creates legislative parity for franchisees and permittees.

Again, Mr. Speaker, that would seem to be fairly again one of the challenges of drafting legislation that's responding to the circumstances as they present in the field. And that would seem to clarify an existing oversight in the law as regarding that difference between treatment for the franchisees and permittees, and again would seem to be a fairly straightforward proposition.

Next up, Mr. Speaker:

The amendments to section 115 will allow SLGA to employ minors for the purpose of monitoring the compliance of SLGA stores, franchises and permittees regarding the service of beverage alcohol to minors. Currently, it is difficult to monitor whether or not franchises, SLGA stores, and permittees comply with ID requirements because SLGA cannot employ minors to test compliance, but rather, only youthful looking adults. This

change will better enable SLGA to focus on the public safety aspects of liquor regulation.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if the request ever came up to the minister's office to send you out, you know, the youthful person that you are, to see if you could test some of the carding provisions under the legislation. But again an interesting provision in the legislation. But also it'd be interesting to know what challenge this has posed for the SLGA, how they're going to handle the requirement for engaging the appropriate minors to do this work. The mind swims, Mr. Speaker, in terms of the way that the agency will handle this. But again it would seem to be a fairly straight-ahead proposition, and we'll be interested to see how it plays out.

The repeal of section 121 will:

remove the requirement that a permittee does not install or allow the installation of tables and seating that exceeds an amount set by SLGA. This provision is no longer relevant, as SLGA no longer regulates capacity.

Again, Mr. Speaker, you know, we'd be looking for a more precise answer on the part of the minister in terms of why the matter of capacity is struck from the legislation altogether. You know, having some frequency in various restaurants and finer dining and drinking establishments in the city and the province of Saskatchewan, I can imagine, but it'll be interesting to get the precise consideration from the minister on that point.

Concerning the repeal of section 123, it will:

... remove the ability of SLGA to require written reasons from a permittee when a person is forbidden entry or asked to leave a permitted premises. This is a business decision of the permittee that does not concern SLGA.

Again we'll see, you know, what the specific experience of this provision has been, whether or not this is in fact something that SLGA has stopped enforcing some time before, Mr. Speaker, and whether or not this is just dealing with an artifact in the legislation that need no longer apply. But we'll see. Again, Mr. Speaker, we've got questions, and we're hoping that the minister and officials have the answers. And that will certainly be a question we have in that regard.

"The amendment to section 125 clarifies that employees of permittees are also prohibited from selling or supplying beverage alcohol to a person who appears to be intoxicated."

Again there, Mr. Speaker, we'll be looking for a more precise understanding from the minister and from officials as regards how this has been carried out to date, whether or not this is adequate in terms of the strengthening of the provisions in legislation.

And again there are, you know, as recent as this past month, we've seen circumstances where occasions arise where individuals have had too much to drink. And what is the responsibility that the licence holders or the permittees have in those regards? So we will be looking for a greater understanding from the minister on this particular provision and how the different details, upon which this I'm sure has been

prompted into action, have been considered. And are there other steps that the ministry or that the SLGA is taking to deal with that provision, be it through policy or through education or through the different conditions that attach to the provision of permits or licences or through registration?

In terms of section 126, these amendments:

... will expand the scope of that section to prohibit a permittee or an employee of a permittee from allowing a person who appears to be intoxicated to consume or be in possession of beverage alcohol at the permitted premises. Currently, permittees are only prohibited from selling or supplying beverage alcohol to an intoxicated person. This change will better enable SLGA to regulate public safety in permitted establishments.

Again, Mr. Speaker, echoing the previous amendment and working to reinforce that responsibility that comes along with the permits or the licence and safeguards that need to be in place.

As regards the amendments to section 135, it will:

... remove the requirement that representatives and agents of an alcohol manufacturer be registered with SLGA. Instead, manufacturers will be required to provide the identities of all agents and/or representatives to SLGA. This amendment will reduce administrative burdens for SLGA and manufacturers.

So how this, again how this works on the ground, Mr. Speaker, works in practice is something that we'll be interested in getting a better understanding of and how this for example would affect your friendly neighbourhood Great Western rep or your, you know, pick your rep out there from the industry, Mr. Speaker. Will be interesting to see how that plays out in practice.

Section 141 is amended to:

... allow the value of prizes for which municipalities may issue a charitable gaming licence to be established in regulation, better enabling SLGA to respond to changes in the charitable gaming industry.

Again, Mr. Speaker, it seems to be fair enough. But what the current value is and how that will be expanded is certainly something we'll be looking for. We'll see how that is responded to. Again, Mr. Speaker, moving different provisions in the Act from legislation into regulation, we'll see how that plays out. But past being prologue, we have some pause for concern around that.

Amendments to section 142 will remove the requirement that local authorities that issue licenses provide an annual report to SLGA regarding licensing activities. Instead, local authorities will be required to maintain general licensing information for three years and provide such information for inspection by SLGA at SLGA's request.

Again, Mr. Speaker, seemingly fair enough. But we'd be interested to know what are the number of authorities that are duly constituted as such and how many of them have been

issuing these annual reports and what the anticipated sort of savings around reduced workload that SLGA is anticipating from this change in the legislation.

Subsection 146.1 will:

... permit SLGA to consider an applicant's associates and employees when making a determination of good character pursuant to subsection (1). This will allow SLGA to conduct more thorough investigations prior to granting a certificate of registration, similar to SLGA's authority under section 59.1 to examine the background of associates and employees of an applicant for a liquor permit.

Again, Mr. Speaker, a very important provision on the part of the government, on the part of the state, and again something that we'll be looking to see how that plays out and is utilized by SLGA in the granting of licences.

There's a new part VII.01 that:

... include provisions granting First Nation gaming licensing authorities (namely Indigenous Gaming Regulators (IGR)) who have entered into an agreement with SLGA authority to grant certificates of registration for on-reserve charitable gaming employees and on-reserve suppliers, together with other necessary provisions regarding IGR's authority in this area.

Again, Mr. Speaker, IGR [Indigenous Gaming Regulators Inc.] arising from the gaming framework agreement, and we'll have more specific questions as regards the application of the new authorities accrued to First Nations gambling or First Nations gaming licensing authorities and the way that works in conjunction with Indigenous Gaming Regulators. But we'll again look to gain that clarification from the minister.

Then we've got subsection 154(1):

The amendment will clarify that the owner of a conveyance seized in accordance with subsection 154(1) is responsible for the costs of towing and storing the conveyance. Currently, it is unclear who is responsible for these costs.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we'll be looking for a specific sort of understanding from the minister on how that provision arises, and why it is included in the proposed legislation.

Again we've got some changes that are more housekeeping in nature, more sort of consequential amendments flowing from other changes in the Act.

We've got changes regarding sections 156 to 160 respecting the disposition of seized alcohol being repealed from the Act. Again, Mr. Speaker, that would seem to make good sense given that ... Well I guess there's a question around SLGA liquor inspectors seizing alcohol and how that is then handled. But we'll see how that is explained by the minister.

So I guess there are some other changes towards the end of the bill here, Mr. Speaker, that again are more sort of housekeeping in nature, more clarifying different parts of the Act. But to end

where I started, Mr. Speaker, this is a piece of legislation that is fairly complex, that's got some interesting connections to the history of this province, particularly as regarded the medical use permits or different things like that under the Act.

But the greater evolution of the place of First Nations under the legislation is something that we'll be looking to ... that on the face of it is good to see in the legislation, but we'll be looking for a more precise understanding from the minister and officials as regards to the application of that, how it impacts broader questions in front of the province such as again that jurisdictional question and questions such as online gaming.

But for now, Mr. Speaker, I will take my place and move to adjourn debate on Bill No. 122, *An Act to amend The Alcohol and Gaming Regulation Act, 1997*.

The Speaker: — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 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 work of committees this evening, I move that this House do now adjourn.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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