



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

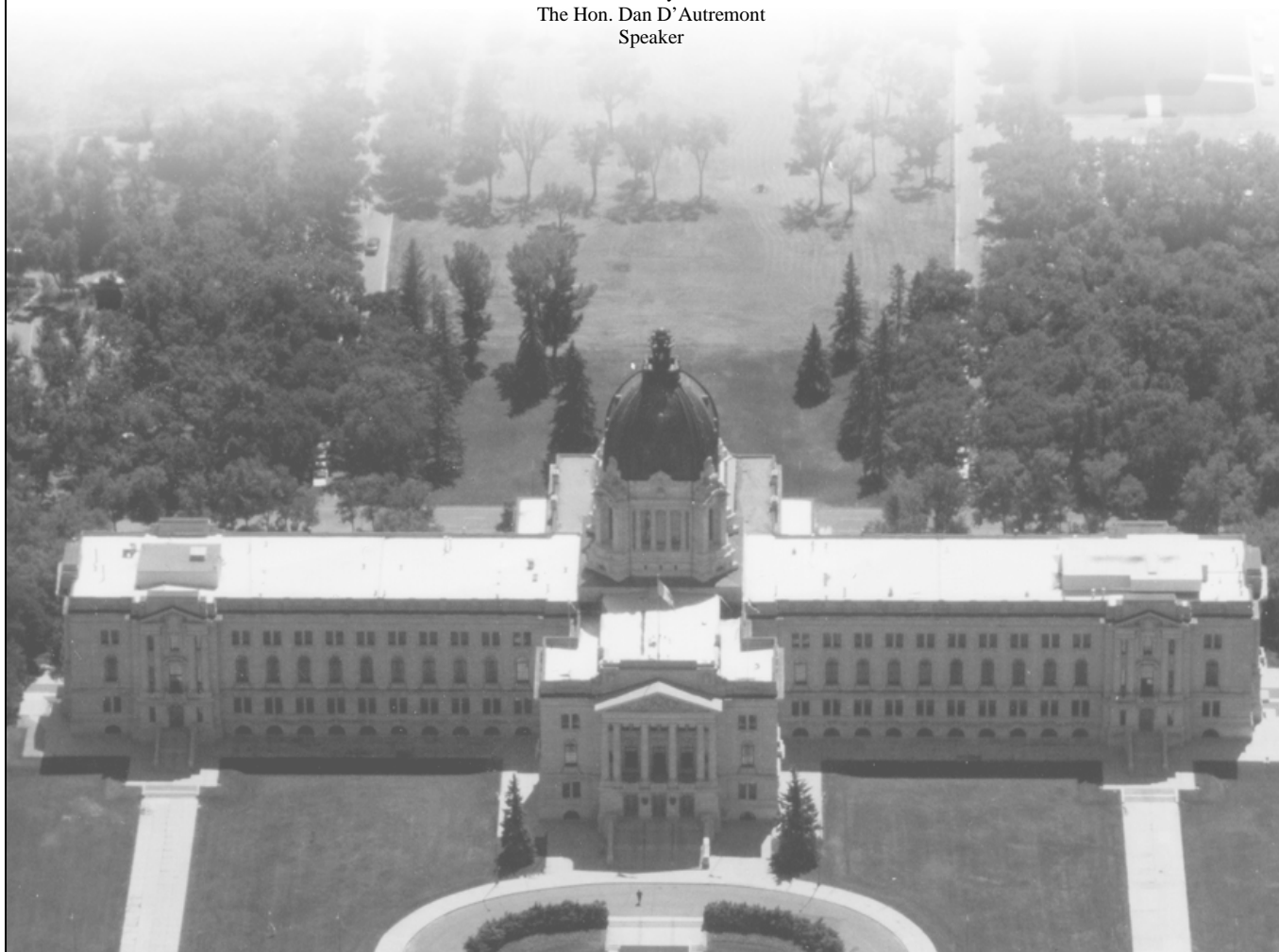
of the

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 |
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| 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 Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure and an honour, on behalf of the Government of Saskatchewan, to welcome the many guests that we see that have joined us for budget day. The presentation of the budget, Mr. Speaker, is obviously an important event in the life of our province, and represented here in this Chamber today, outside of the members of the Chamber, are leaders from across the province, people who are involved in their community at every possible level, Mr. Speaker, those who are helping to build the province in Canada. And so we just want to welcome them here to their Legislative Assembly. We're grateful that they take the time to come. We also want to thank them for their service, their respective service to their communities and to the province.

And, Mr. Speaker, I'll just take one small licence and single out two, Mr. Speaker. My mom and dad, John and Alice Wall, are here and I'm going to take every chance I can to say welcome to them lest I get in trouble a little bit later, Mr. Speaker. We'd just ask all members to welcome all of our guests to the Assembly today.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the Premier in extending a welcome to all the guests that we have in the Assembly today, Mr. Speaker. There's a lot of diversity in the crowd in terms of areas of the province represented and different organizations, but there's one thing in common with everyone in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, and that's that we love Saskatchewan and want the best for our province. So I thank everyone for the contributions that they are making to our province and thank them for joining us today here in the Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I would like to join the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming our guests here today. So welcome to your Assembly.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present petitions against Saskatchewan health care laundry privatization. And we know that in May 2013, the Government of Saskatchewan announced its plan to privatize health care laundry in Saskatchewan, handing it over for a for-profit Alberta-based corporation, K-Bro linens.

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly be pleased to cause the government to reverse the misguided decision to privatize Saskatchewan's health care laundry which will result in the devastating loss of over 300 jobs in the communities of Prince Albert, Moose Jaw, Yorkton, Weyburn, Regina, and Saskatoon.

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

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

And, Mr. Speaker, the people signing this petition come from Wawota, Carlyle, Kisbey, Arcola, Manor, Radville, Oxbow, Estevan, Redvers, Windthorst, Coronach, Weyburn, Stoughton, and Fillmore. I do so present. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I would like to remind our guests in the galleries not to take any photographs, please. I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, I rise today to present a petition. Many northern residents benefited from the rental purchase option program, also known as RPO. These families are very proud homeowners in their communities. Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, this government stubbornly ignored the call to maintain this program. Instead it cancelled the RPO. That means the dream of home ownership is destroyed for many families in the North. And the prayer reads:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly cause the Sask Party government to restore the RPO rent-to-own option for responsible renters in northern Saskatchewan, allowing them the dignity of owning their own homes and building communities in our province's beautiful North.

It is signed by many northern people. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm also standing today to present a petition on highways, all from throughout Saskatchewan. And this petition is in reference to the Cumberland House highway. Their prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

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

And as in duty bound, [Mr. Speaker], your petitioners will ever pray.

And the people that have signed this petition are from all throughout Saskatchewan, and I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition calling for the replacement of the gym at Sacred Heart Community School here in Regina. The petitioners point out that the gym has been closed since last spring due to safety reasons. They also point out that this issue has been raised since 2007 with the Sask Party provincial government without resolution. They point out that, as a matter of basic fairness and common sense, Sacred Heart needs a gym.

Mr. Speaker, this is the last one of petitions on this matter that have been submitted both through this Assembly, and directly to the Minister of Education, representing over 1,000 citizens from all over Saskatchewan.

In the prayer that reads as follows, the petitioners:

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 particular petition is signed from citizens from Regina and Saskatoon. I so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Women of Influence Award

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize one of my constituents, Linda Turta, who is the CEO [chief executive officer] of Ram Industries in Yorkton, and was recently named a woman of influence by *SaskBusiness* magazine. *SaskBusiness* magazine defines Women of Influence as:

... those who shape the business, social and public life of Saskatchewan through their expertise and achievement as well as their willingness to give back as volunteers. It acknowledges a body of work rather than a single event.

Mr. Speaker, it's clear to see why they chose Linda as one of the recipients of this award. In the past, Linda has served on the former Good Spirit REDA [regional economic development authority] and is now a member of the city of Yorkton economic development committee. She also sits on the Saskatchewan apprenticeship board and the provincial Manufacturing Council and has been highly instrumental in the highly effective and successful capital campaign in support of the Parkland College's new Trades and Technology Centre.

Most notably Linda left her career in real estate management in Regina to return to Yorkton and become CEO of Ram

Industries, which was Yorkton's 2012 Business of the Year. Mr. Speaker, Linda is a significant influence in the east central Saskatchewan business community. And I ask all members to join me in congratulating Linda Turta for becoming one of the *SaskBusiness* magazine's Women of Influence and wish her all the best in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Budget Priorities for Opposition

Ms. Chartier: — In the lead up to the budget, the NDP [New Democratic Party] opposition set out seven simple priorities for today's budget speech. First people want an end to the \$40 million contract with an American lean consultant, especially after this government wouldn't find the \$8.5 million needed for urgent requests for more seniors' care staff, equipment, and repairs. We also need action on setting minimum quality of care standards and minimum staffing ratios in all seniors' care facilities. The NDP has called for these minimum standards in Bill 606 as a vital first step to fixing this growing seniors' care crisis.

We have also called for this government to reroute standardized testing money into teaching. Students need one-on-one help in the classrooms. This means supports for teachers, like the important work of educational assistants. Saskatchewan classrooms are overcrowded. This government needs to reduce class sizes by implementing appropriate class size caps to help students get the attention every child needs and deserves.

Instead of its secretive P3 [public-private partnership] rent-a-school scheme, this government needs a transparent, cost-effective plan for Saskatchewan to build, own, and operate its own schools. And we've called on the government to reject the Premier's plan to pay for bridges and overpasses by increasing education taxes.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we are calling on this government to address the high cost of living and increased out-of-pocket expenses for families who have been paying more for fewer services from the government. Today, this government can take action to lower costs for Saskatchewan families and start respecting the budgets that families manage every day. Thank you.

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

Honouring Carole Sanderson

Ms. Jurgens: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last weekend my colleague from Saskatchewan Rivers and I had the pleasure of attending the Prince Albert Council of Women's Hall of Fame induction ceremony for Carole Sanderson who passed away last August.

Carole was an education advocate and recognized as a leader by all who knew her. Graduating with a Bachelor of Education in 1960, Carole Sanderson was one of the first indigenous, post-secondary graduates in the province. During her lifetime, she was an important member in establishing the Saskatchewan

Indian Cultural Centre, the First Nations University of Canada, and the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies. Carole was a real model for education, always encouraging others to pursue more education, regardless of their age. In her words, “We urgently need an educated workforce. You are the warriors of tomorrow, and the degree you attain will be your greatest weapon.”

She lived by this motto which is evident in her children. Her daughter, Dawn Robins, accepted the award on Carole’s behalf. Dawn commented on how, because of her humble nature, Carole would often have to be encouraged to accept major awards such as the Saskatchewan Order of Merit and the Order of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members of this Assembly to join me in recognizing the great life and contributions of one of Prince Albert’s most influential women, Carole Sanderson. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Reporting of Financial Statements

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The last time this government delivered a budget, the Provincial Auditor said it was full of errors and unreliable. The auditor said, “You should expect to receive accurate and reliable financial statements and accurate and reliable financial information from the government.” But she said this government’s last budget was not accurate and it is not reliable. And as a result, this government was the first government in Saskatchewan’s history and Canada’s history to actually fail its audit. The auditor said this government was wrong to say it had a \$60 million surplus when it actually had a \$600 million deficit.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear. Nothing short of books we can trust will be acceptable to the people of Saskatchewan and to the opposition. This government needs to listen to the Provincial Auditor and fix the four major problems that led to the failed audit.

Mr. Speaker, this government needs to report its budget on a summary basis. The NDP and the Provincial Auditor have been pushing for this for years, and this government no longer has any choice. It must move on this because surely one failed audit is embarrassing enough, especially when it’s the first time in Canadian history that a government has failed its audit. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

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

Students Against Bullying Bill

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Friday I had the privilege of participating in the Speaker’s outreach program for grades 4, 5, and 6 at Wadena and Kelvington schools. As part of the process for this day, a mock legislature was held. While both schools had prepared their students for the visit, I was very impressed with a bill titled Students Against Bullying that Kelvington students had written and were debating.

The bill started with “We, the students of Saskatchewan, want all students to feel good about themselves and to treat all other students with respect,” and then went on to 10 actions that could be taken to achieve this.

I’d like to read part of the transcript of the second reading:

Every day, people stop doing what they love because other people tell them they aren’t good enough. Believe in yourself, because you are worth it, and you’ll be able to soar higher. We all have the power within us to make a real difference in this world. Let’s get started right now because one life is too many to lose. Let’s get our children into schools where they feel safe and secure from bullying and create a positive attitude towards all people, despite their background or their appearance.

The opposition group in the school had some very good questions, like if you stop one bully, are there not more, like a dozen, waiting to take their place? How does making a child feel good about themselves not make the bully, someone who already has low self-esteem, have a stronger desire to act out against the newly elevated person?

Mr. Speaker, these students are now planning to make amendments to the bill. From what I was able to observe, our legislature will be in very good hands when the students become the future parliamentarians in Saskatchewan. Thank you to the students of Robert Melrose School.

[13:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for The Battlefords.

Battlefords Trade and Education Centre Fundraiser

Mr. Cox: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, last month my wife Linda and I had the pleasure to attend a Mardi Gras evening to help raise funds for the Battlefords Trade and Education Centre building fund. This was the second annual Mardi Gras, and it was a wonderful evening with a great meal and live and silent auction items. The event sold out nearly two weeks in advance with approximately 400 tickets sold. The organizers are overjoyed that they were able to raise over \$53,000 that will be put towards their building fund.

Mr. Speaker, our government is pleased to have contributed funding to assist with the capital cost of this much needed new facility, but with cost escalating, much more funding is needed. The Battlefords Trade and Education Centre is a non-profit organization that provides support services for individuals with disabilities, assisting them in their pursuit of independence and quality of life.

Mr. Speaker, they are presently operating out of a 100-year-old building that is in poor condition, and I know that everyone working in that building is anxiously awaiting the day when they can move into their new home.

Mr. Speaker, this event was not only successful in raising a substantial amount of money, but organizers also tell me it was equally important in that it helped raise the awareness for the great work ongoing at BTEC [Battlefords Trade and Education

Centre]. Mr. Speaker, I would ask all members of this Assembly to join me in thanking and congratulating Tammy Heinemann and her crew of 30 great volunteers who did such a wonderful job in organizing this evening and raising much needed funds for a great cause. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Arm River-Watrous.

Grain Transportation Backlog

Mr. Brkich: — Mr. Speaker, without doubt the biggest economic issue facing Saskatchewan today is the grain transportation backlog. Working with our federal colleagues, our government has taken action. Our committee of ministers and members have met with all the interested parties — the railways, the grain handlers, the national government, and producers.

We put together a solid plan for action in the near term, a plan which was accepted and enacted by the federal government. We put together a plan to fix the problem in the long term, including the need to ensure accountability between shippers and railways, the need to ensure grain companies fulfill their obligations to producers. We need to ensure at least 13,000 grain cars per week on the tracks, and we need an increase in penalties from the current 100,000 to at least \$250,000 per day, with those funds collected going to producers.

We also know who hasn't taken this issue seriously — the NDP. They have not even bothered to contact the federal government at any point — no letters, no phone calls, nothing. The Leader of the Opposition has had all session to address this matter. He hasn't. Fifty-six questions and counting from him in question period and not one on the grain backlog — zero. The Leader of the Opposition has a chance today to make that right. He can stand in his place, do the right thing, stand up for our agriculture producers. Will he do it? We're about to find out.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Consultant Fees and Lean Initiative

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This government, Mr. Speaker, signed a \$40 million lean contract with just one US [United States] consultant. This government, Mr. Speaker, is flying in Japanese senseis from Japan and paying them \$3,500 a day to provide some sort of training to our health care workers, and it's actually requiring health care workers, Mr. Speaker, to learn Japanese words and phrases and use them.

All that is bizarre enough, Mr. Speaker, but it's especially troubling to see this dismissive approach to the very real concerns that are being raised about this \$40 million lean project. My question is for the Premier, Mr. Speaker. How many concerns does he need to hear before he'll finally listen and scrap this lean pet project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, so

the NDP are advocating that we cut a program that has already paid for its costs in two of the four years of the program. This initiative has already found savings for the health care system greater than the full cost, Mr. Speaker. This initiative has also improved patient-centred care. And these are now a matter of record. Mr. Speaker, he says that, by the way, advising that the government cancel a program that's actually generating savings to the Health ministry, he's advising that this is Saskatchewan common sense.

Mr. Speaker, it is anything but Saskatchewan common sense. Saskatchewan people want to see improved health care. They want to see patient-centred care. They want the front line engaged in the process and they want to save money, Mr. Speaker. We're open to adjustments and changes in the program. But the principles, Mr. Speaker, we'll continue with. Because better health care while bending the cost curve, that's Saskatchewan common sense.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, if the Premier was actually listening to what front-line health care providers were saying, he wouldn't be giving responses like that because he would know, Mr. Speaker, that any of the achievements that have been made are not the result of the \$40 million contract with a US consultant. They're not because this government is choosing to fly in senseis from Japan and paying them \$3,500 a day. And they're not because they're forcing front-line health care workers to use Japanese phrases, Mr. Speaker. That stuff has all simply gotten in the way.

Even the lean deputy minister states, Mr. Speaker, that any improvements that have been made are because the ideas have come from the front-line health care workers. My question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker: why the extravagant \$40 million contract with one US consultant? Why are they flying in senseis from Japan to speak with Saskatchewan health care workers when what they really need to do is simply listen to front-line health care workers?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — That is precisely what lean is all about. And for the Leader of the Opposition to stand up and say the \$36 million already saved in the new approach to managing blood inventory, which was precisely the result of the lean initiative, precisely a result of this particular consultancy, if he's now saying that that's not part of lean, he's just fundamentally wrong, Mr. Speaker.

Yesterday he was quoting from SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] in terms of their concern about lean. While he was quoting that, a nurse was paying attention in Saskatoon. And here's what a nurse said, and this goes directly to the premise of the member's question that lean has nothing to do with the improvements we're seeing. She points out that because of lean . . . She was always frustrated as a nurse in terms of weighing newborns on cold steel scales with just a little bit of tissue on them. And we have the quote here; we could table it, Mr. Speaker. But she indicates that she had the suggestion that we should have warmer scales. And as a result of the new process in place where front-line carers are listened to — she attributes

it to lean, by the way, not the government — they've just taken a little blanket, Mr. Speaker, a flannel blanket to make sure that newborns are more comfortable during the weighing.

It's a small point. It's not the \$36 million we've saved in the blood inventory, but she says that's what lean's about. She likes lean. When is the NDP going to get with the program, Mr. Speaker?

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, why do we need to spend \$40 million to listen to a nurse about good ideas on how to improve the system? Why, Mr. Speaker? Why do we fly in senseis from Japan when we should be listening to a nurse on how to make the situation better for Saskatchewan patients?

This Premier, Mr. Speaker, this government needs to listen to what the nurses in the province are saying. And what they're saying, Mr. Speaker, is that this government's approach to lean is not working. They're stating that there are red flags with their lean project. Mr. Speaker, the province's nurses point out that the impact of the government's lean project is having a negative effect on patient safety and on quality of care, Mr. Speaker.

So we have the deputy minister saying that any advancements that have been made have been because they've listened to front-line health care workers. We have nurses and other health care professionals who are saying the negative consequences of lean are having an effect on patient care and the quality of care, Mr. Speaker. So my question is to the Premier: why not save a bunch of money, just listen to the front-line health care providers, Mr. Speaker, and finally put to rest the Premier's lean pet project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the member across the way says, why do you need a consultant to listen to front-line workers? Mr. Speaker, where were they for 16 years? Where were they for 16 years presiding over the longest surgical wait times in the country, cutting the number of nurses, cutting the number of doctors, Mr. Speaker, closing down long-term care beds?

Mr. Speaker, it's not just the Government of Saskatchewan that believes you can get a lean consultant for a short-term contract, save more than the cost of contract, and then have a long-term, embedded, new approach to health care in terms of listening to the front line. Guess who else is doing it. NDP Manitoba's doing the same thing. Major health care centres from around North America have retained the same firm and are achieving the same results, Mr. Speaker.

With respect to the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses, this is what that same president of SUN said about lean in August 2013, just last August when lean was in full effect:

There are many commendable transformational changes happening all around us under the umbrella of lean systems management. They range from primary health care design to the Saskatchewan surgical initiative and new models of care such as collaborative emergency centres.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know what's changed with SUN, but that's what they were saying about lean in August, Mr. Speaker. It is delivering better care, and it's doing it more efficiently, Mr. Speaker, and it'll continue in the province of Saskatchewan.

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

Mr. Broten: — What's changed, Mr. Speaker, is that this government has lost its way on the lean initiative. This government, Mr. Speaker, is flying in senseis from Japan to speak to front-line health care workers. Yesterday the nurses said, Mr. Speaker, that this government needs to go back to the "drawing board," Mr. Speaker.

Why \$40 million on one US consultant, Mr. Speaker? Why senseis being flown in from Japan? Why are we paying health care administrators, presidents of health regions, Mr. Speaker, hundreds of thousands of dollars? Why do we have these layers of administration and now this government wants to add a completely . . . another layer of US consultants, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Speaker, this approach has been completely unacceptable because it is affecting patient care and it is affecting the quality of care. But, Mr. Speaker, this government loves shiny objects, and it's been caught, Mr. Speaker. It's been caught hook, line, and sinker: \$40 million on one consultant, Japanese senseis, Japanese-English dictionaries, Mr. Speaker, kaizen promotion offices all over the place.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: when will enough be enough? When will they pull the plug on this lean pet project?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — I guess we've been caught reducing the time between diagnostics and care because of lean. I guess we've been caught, Mr. Speaker, in terms of eliminating the number of cancelled appointments in mental health and addictions. I guess we've been caught saving \$36 million in managing the blood inventory alone because of lean. I guess we've been caught saving over \$1 million in how we do vaccine management. I guess we've been caught employing the same innovative approach with the same consultancy that leading health care institutions around North America have been doing, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the member stands up and says, well that quote from August was too long ago. The reason that the position of SUN has changed is that a lot of time has passed since August. How about January the 15th, 2014, when that same president of SUN said, "The most exciting aspect of the lean process is that registered nurses are being engaged alongside the entire health care system on the front end of the change"? That's eight weeks ago. Is that timely enough for the Leader of the Opposition?

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

Patient Care and Lean Initiative

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, I think the Premier needs to check his inbox because there is a very different story being told from front-line health care workers across the province.

Last week, Mr. Speaker, the member from Riversdale brought forward the case of Ron Caron. He's 65 years old, has dementia, and desperately needs a spot in long-term care. But this government told him that he cannot go into long-term care because his needs are too high and there simply aren't the front-line health care workers available to care for his needs.

Mr. Speaker, I can't imagine having a loved one who needs care and being told no by the government, Mr. Speaker. That's what's happening to many families right now. It's heartbreaking for these families, Mr. Speaker, and it's frustrating — especially, especially at a time when government is choosing to spend \$40 million on one US consultant and choosing to fly in Japanese senseis, Mr. Speaker, at a cost of \$3,500 per day.

My question for the Premier, Mr. Speaker: why is his government prioritizing fat US contracts with consultants, Mr. Speaker, and neglecting the basics that need to be fixed in health care and seniors' care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, it's good politics for the member to repeat those elements of his question. It's good policy for us to repeat the truth of this. The truth is, whatever is going to be invested over four years in lean has already been recovered in efficiencies in two years. And we've seen improvements in patient-centred care.

With respect to the case that the hon. member raises, Mr. Speaker, the Health minister tells me that even as of this date, while it was raised in the legislature earlier, the critic that raised it has not yet brought the case to the Minister of Health's attention. We will look in . . . This government takes these cases seriously when they're raised by the NDP, Mr. Speaker, or raised by anyone else. No, we have not seen them come forward with any details. We absolutely can look into the specifics of the case, and we will.

It's interesting to note, Mr. Speaker, that it was under this government that we did see an increase in capacity in terms of dementia care in Saskatoon. We did it, Mr. Speaker, through a P3 with the Catholic Health Ministry, known as Samaritan Place. That Leader of the Opposition, when he was the Health critic, fought that Samaritan Place project every single day that he could, maybe because the Catholic Health Ministry was involved, maybe because it wasn't done the old government way. There's new dementia capacity with more needed, Mr. Speaker. The next time a project comes like that, regardless of whether it's a faith-based organization or not, will he stand up and support it, Mr. Speaker?

[14:00]

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the statements that the Premier makes about Mr. Caron's case are absolutely ridiculous. The Health minister was here, Mr. Speaker, and hearing the concerns, and as of this morning, Mr. Speaker, mid-morning today there's been no progress on the situation, according to Mr. Caron's daughter.

His case is hardly an isolated one, Mr. Speaker. If the Premier read through the 250 pages of urgent requests that came from seniors' care facilities, he would know that the issue of people being turned away from care facilities because they require too much care is a common problem right now.

On page 206 of the urgent requests, the Saskatoon Health Region has this to say: "There are clients that cannot currently be placed in long-term care as they have complex needs which require additional staffing that is not currently available." That's from the Saskatoon Health Region. But instead of fixing those problems, Mr. Speaker, instead of addressing what's broken, this government, Mr. Speaker, is transfixed on its shiny lean project.

My question to the Premier: when will this government get its priorities straight? When will they fix the basics and address seniors' care and health care needs here in the province?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the case of this family, I can inform the Assembly today that one of our senior officials asked an NDP senior official on the day it was raised, outside in the rotunda, if that official could please get us the contact information for the family because they have not contacted the government. That was now . . . Two days ago? Yesterday? Mr. Speaker, we haven't heard from the NDP. If they would please provide us the contact information that they have — because they haven't contacted the government as they were invited to do by our officials out in the scrum — if they will do that, we will look into the matter.

And you know, what's more, Mr. Speaker, what this side of the House will continue to do, we're going to continue to invest. We're going to hear about it in a moment from the Minister of Finance. We're going to continue to invest in health care infrastructure. Gone are the days of the NDP closing long-term care beds in rural Saskatchewan. Gone are the days of them closing the Plains, closing 52 hospitals, Mr. Speaker. Gone are the days when those members opposite would ignore seniors by not once even indexing for inflation the seniors' income assistance program, Mr. Speaker.

This government has made progress in terms of health care. We'll talk more about it, I'm sure, in a moment. And the work's not over, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, Sheila, Ron's daughter, has emailed directly with the minister. He needs to check his inbox.

Care facilities sent in 250 pages of urgent requests for desperately needed staff, equipment, and repairs. But instead of fixing the basics that are broken, instead of meeting those urgent needs, this government actually rejected \$8.5 million in urgent requests from facilities.

Mr. Speaker, this government said no to meeting those urgent needs. They said yes to \$40 million to John Black and Associates. They said yes to \$3,500 a day for Japanese senseis to be flown in to the province, Mr. Speaker. And what that

means for people like Ron Caron is that there's no help for him, and there's no long-term spot available for him, Mr. Speaker. And what it means for far too many of our parents and for our grandparents is that the quality of care that they are receiving is simply inadequate.

My question is to the Premier: why doesn't he listen to those on the front lines who say that this lean project is not working? Why doesn't he invest those dollars right into the front lines where Saskatchewan patients, Saskatchewan seniors, need them?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — It's interesting, Mr. Speaker. Here is exactly what the front line is saying about lean. Here are testimonials from registered nurses. Now we want the Leader of the Opposition to pay attention. He says his inbox was full over the weekend and we certainly believe that. By the way, we'd invite him to redact the names if they're worried about their names being disclosed, invite him to table those emails so that we can improve lean, because we're taking him at his word that his inbox is full.

But, Mr. Speaker, here are some testimonials. He's saying, listen to front-line workers. Here's what they're saying — nurses. This is about lean: "To get rid of so much waste and see how we can spend more time with our patients was enough to keep me wanting more." Here's another one: "Patients now get to spend more time with their nurses as we don't have to spend time running to the fax machine, clarifying physician orders, or looking for missing medications." There's about nine more. We'll get to them all. We're happy to read exactly what front-line workers are saying about this, including SUN who as recent as January said that this was transformative and important for the system.

Well they're saying yesterday changed. Fair enough. We'll find out more about it Friday. The bottom line is there is a side in this House that is listening to the front-line workers when it comes to health care. It's why we now have more nurses than we've ever had. It's why there are more doctors than there's ever been. It's why we're building long-term care facilities in rural Saskatchewan, not closing them. It's why there's a new hospital coming for Moose Jaw and more good news in a moment in the budget, Mr. Speaker.

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

Use of Resources in Education

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, we know this government's costly lean project goes well beyond health care and seniors' care. It's forcing lean onto our education system also. I guess that's fitting because this government's approach to education is not one listening to those on the front line or pursuing common sense ideas. Rather its approach to education is one of top-down decision making, refusing to listen to educators, and ramming simplistic decisions onto classrooms.

To the Education minister: will Japanese senseis be flown in to train our already overwhelmed and under-resourced teachers as well, the very teachers ignored and disrespected by that

government?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We have a lot of teachers in our province. All the teachers that we have work hard. They perform good service. We value them. We look forward to having ongoing consultation and discussion with them as to how we can make our system better.

Earlier in the session we appointed Russ Mirasty and Patricia Prowse to meet with teachers and to work on how we were going to roll out a Student First initiative and that we would want to do everything in that where we had teachers, students, parents, educators, and administrators involved. And, Mr. Speaker, I want to tell the members opposite and the teachers in our province, it's an initiative that we believe in and we think they do as well. And we look forward to working with them on that.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, that was a really straightforward question, and not a single answer from the minister. You know, instead of focusing on the basics and ensuring the classrooms have the right resources in place to deliver the best quality education for our kids, instead of doing that, this government is continually distracted by its costly pet projects. We see that in terms of the lean project. We see that as well with standardized testing. This government is ignoring all of the evidence, all of the concerns, and plowing ahead with its wrong-headed standardized testing agenda. To the minister: why is this government putting money into lean and standardized testing when it should be fixing the basics in our schools instead?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, we have got great students in our province. We've got a strong educational system. We of course want it to be better, and we want to work with teachers to do that. We know we need to have a balance between testing and teaching. Mr. Speaker, I have got a quote that I'd like to read:

... this is something that's very important, that we want our students to achieve. And it's great they're making that commitment to do that with the additional resources to make sure that happens and there is a balance between testing and teaching.

Mr. Speaker, that is a quote from *Hansard*, March 11th, 2013, from the member from Saskatoon Centre. And, Mr. Speaker, it's one of those situations where I agree with the member from Saskatoon Centre. We've had those type of situations before. He makes comments. He's an educator. I'm sure he believes in that. I believe in it and I think our teachers do as well.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, the evidence is pretty clear on standardized testing. They don't improve learning outcomes. What does improve learning outcomes is having the right

resources in our classrooms, the right supports for our teachers, the right help for our students. But this government has actually cut educational assistants in far too many classrooms all across our province, leaving teachers and students to deal with the challenges of overcrowded and under-resourced classrooms.

Again to the minister: why prioritize things like lean and standardized testing instead of making sure the basics are taken care of in our education system, where they actually make a difference in the life of a student?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, that's a question that's been asked before in this House. And, Mr. Speaker, I will remind the member opposite, and I will make exactly the same answer I did before. We have provided more resources to our classrooms than ever before in this province.

Since 2007 we've increased operating funding by over 23 per cent; regular teachers, 566 more; student support teachers, 159 more; psychologists up 37 per cent, speech language pathologists up 26 per cent, occupational therapists up 5 per cent, social workers up 12 per cent. In 2007 there were 3,546 EAs [educational assistants]; now there are 3,601.

Mr. Speaker, we'll take no lessons from the members opposite on how to fund schools and how to develop the best education system we can. And we're going to do it, and we're going to continue it. There's more work to do, but we'll take no lessons from the people over there.

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

Support for Agricultural Producers

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, because of our many questions we've thankfully seen this Ag minister change his mind on a number of key issues. On open rail running rights, he originally said it was a dumb idea. He now says they could be part of the solution.

On the \$100,000-a-day rail penalty, last week it was good enough, but now he's calling for that to increase to \$250,000. On provincial lease payments, he sent threatening letters to farmers in crisis to pay their leases immediately, but now he's giving them a breather until the end of July.

Mr. Speaker, he now needs to change his mind on pastures. The Community Pasture Patrons Association is working together on a plan that will save taxpayers money and run these pastures efficiently. It sounds like a lean approach to me, Mr. Speaker. But the minister is forcing these pastures to go out on their own instead of supporting the association. Why won't the minister change his mind on community pastures?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Agriculture.

Hon. Mr. Stewart: — Well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think I've changed my mind on too many things. One thing I'm pretty sure of is that I'm not going to change my mind on the way we deal with the former PFRA [Prairie Farm Rehabilitation

Administration] pastures. Another thing I haven't changed my mind on is the rail transportation issue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, our government and my ministry and myself have been working on this file since May of last year, long before we knew that we were even going to have a large crop or any crop at all for that matter, Mr. Speaker. We've met with all stakeholders. We've met with the . . . The Premier's met with the Prime Minister. We've met with the Minister of Transportation, Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture several times.

We've met with CEOs and high-level officials from all of the other stakeholders, Mr. Speaker. We've done all of these things, Mr. Speaker, and meanwhile we haven't had any support whatsoever from that Leader of the Opposition or that critic for Agriculture, Mr. Speaker. There hasn't been a letter. There hasn't been any kind of support for what the federal government's doing, Mr. Speaker. Rather than lay in the weeds and take cheap political shots at the people who are active on this file, it would be helpful if they would co-operate with us and do something.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the Community Pasture Patrons Association membership includes the majority of pasture patrons from 40 of the 62 community pastures in Saskatchewan. This government should be listening to them and working with them. But here's what CPPAS [Community Pasture Patrons Association of Saskatchewan] director, and rancher Brent Cammer says:

It's frustrating when you hear your own Agriculture minister speak about the importance of patrons on this issue, yet refuses to put in place an affordable program in this province that not only recognizes the public good but also recognizes the vast differences of private leased land versus the community pasture leased land.

To the minister: why is this government refusing to listen to pasture patrons, and why is it refusing to put in place an affordable and effective program for community pastures?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With respect to the question, the minister has certainly been working on the file. The answers have been consistent, and the stakeholders continue to be engaged, Mr. Speaker.

The theme of this question period has been lean and, Mr. Speaker, while we're pretty happy with the fact that lean's already paid for itself and is availing efficiencies in government, it's not as good as a couple of other lean projects I could point to.

There was one in 2007 when the people of the province decided to lean out the NDP. And then there was another one in 2011 where they decided the work wasn't quite over, and they leaned them out a little bit more, leaned them out to the point, Mr. Speaker, where they can now have a caucus meeting in the

member for Lakeview's Suburban, Mr. Speaker. I think they should probably be a part of more constructive solutions, or it will soon be the case that they'll be able to have caucus meetings in vehicles with much smaller carbon footprints, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TABLING OF ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to submit the estimates and supplementary estimates accompanied by a message from Her Honour the Lieutenant Governor.

The Speaker: — Would you all please rise for a message from the Lieutenant Governor. The message is as follows:

The Lieutenant Governor transmits estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2015, and supplementary estimates of certain sums required for the service of the province for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2014, and recommends the same to the Legislative Assembly. The Honourable Vaughn Solomon Schofield, Lieutenant Governor, province of Saskatchewan.

You may be seated. I recognize the Minister of Finance.

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY (BUDGET DEBATE)

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, colleagues, and visitors, I am honoured to rise today to present our government's 2014-15 budget.

I want to thank my cabinet and caucus colleagues and all of the government officials who contributed their expertise and hard work to this budget. Thank you as well to the many groups and individuals who provided recommendations on what should be in this budget.

And I want to thank the many family and friends that are here, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon. I am so pleased to have so many friends and family seated throughout the Chamber. Thank you to all of you for being in attendance today, but a special welcome to invited friends from Invermay, Buchanan, Canora, Yorkton, Hawarden, Milestone, North Battleford, Saskatoon, and of course here in Regina. Thank you for being here.

I'm also pleased to have a few family members seated on the floor of the Assembly. I would like to introduce my niece Barb and her husband Todd Asmundson, and my niece Cheryl Saunders who all travelled here from Saskatoon. My nephew, the little guy, Chris Krawetz from Kelowna, BC [British Columbia]. My daughter Lindsay, who lives in Calgary and came to hear her first budget address delivered by me, and my greatest supporter and best adviser, my wife Gail. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, it is tradition that the Minister of Finance wears a new pair of shoes on budget day. Today I'm breaking from that tradition and wearing an old pair of shoes. These shoes are actually half a size too small for me, so they're a little tight, just like this budget is a little tight.

But that's not why I chose these shoes. You see, these were my father's shoes. He only wore them a few times, including on his 89th birthday — November 1, 2006 — when I introduced him in this Assembly. Dad passed away just a few weeks later and I know he would be happy that someone is still getting good use out of these shoes. Mr. Speaker, I wear these shoes today to honour my Ukrainian-Canadian heritage and to honour my father, the son of a Ukrainian immigrant who stowed away on a cattle ship to escape oppression and create a new life in a new world for himself and his descendants.

Today one of those descendants has the tremendous honour to stand in these shoes and deliver a budget in this Chamber that represents all of the freedoms we enjoy in this great province and this great country, while remembering that even as we speak the people of Ukraine must struggle to secure those same freedoms.

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

Mr. Speaker, in July 2006 a lengthy article appeared in *The StarPhoenix* chronicling the history of Saskatchewan's population. That article included this stark statement, and I quote: "The story of Saskatchewan's population is one of boom, bust, and stagnation." Mr. Speaker, not anymore. Today there is a new story, a new story for our population, a new story for our economy, a new story for Saskatchewan. It is a story of steady growth. Today the boom-and-bust cycle that shackled our province for decades is behind us.

Today more people than ever before call Saskatchewan home. Earlier today we learned that Saskatchewan grew by over 20,000 people in the past year to an all-time high of 1,117,503 people. Our record is steady growth. Our goal is steady growth. And this budget is about steady growth.

This year's budget looks a little different. For many years, governments presented both an operating budget and an overall or summary budget, but the focus was always on the operating budget. Beginning this year, our focus will be on the summary budget as recommended by the Provincial Auditor. This includes . . . Stay tuned. There will be a lot more things that you'll be pleased with. Stay tuned.

Mr. Speaker, this budget includes all government entities, for example, ministries and agencies, treasury board Crowns, commercial Crowns, school divisions, and regional health authorities. As well the summary budget includes our insurance organizations like the Workers' Compensation Board, the Auto Fund, and the Crop Insurance Corporation.

During this session, our government will introduce legislative amendments reflecting the change and focus of the province's budget and financial statements to a summary basis. Presenting the budget on a summary basis captures the complete picture of the Government of Saskatchewan's finances and the total cost of providing programs and services to the people of

Saskatchewan. By presenting the full picture of the government's finances, there can be no question about the bottom line. And the bottom line is that this budget is a balanced budget — in fact this budget projects a surplus of \$71 million.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, this was not easy to accomplish. Total revenue was projected to be down 0.7 per cent from last year. That meant that some difficult choices had to be made. At the SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] convention in early February, the Premier indicated we might need to consider a tax increase, but he also noted, for our government, increasing taxes is always the last resort. Our preference will always be to balance the budget by controlled spending. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce we have done just that. And this budget contains no tax increases, no education property tax increase, no personal tax increases, no business tax increases, and no increase in the taxes paid by credit unions.

Our government has chosen to maintain the current special income tax treatment of credit unions, which credit unions estimate saves them \$7 million annually. This small-business tax savings, combined with their exemption from provincial capital tax, results in an overall provincial benefit to credit unions of more than \$12 million each year.

Mr. Speaker, since 2007 our government has delivered the largest income tax cuts in Saskatchewan history and the largest education property tax cuts in Saskatchewan history. Lower taxes are a big part of our government's growth plan and help keep life affordable for Saskatchewan people. A family of four or more with an income of \$75,000 will pay less in total provincial taxes and utilities than their counterparts in any other province, Mr. Speaker. Maintaining our low tax rates will keep Saskatchewan on the path of steady growth.

While that's good news, it meant making some difficult choices on the spending side. Overall summary spending is down about \$28 million from last year. You will see that expense in the core operational plan which is a subset of the summaries. That forecast is to be just 2.3 per cent more than last year, well below the 3 per cent expense growth projected in the four-year fiscal plan published in last year's budget. That means some areas funded by government will receive less than they might have been hoping for this year.

While controlling spending means making some difficult choices, there is one area of government spending where I am pleased to announce a significant reduction. Debt charges are down over \$50 million from last year. In fact, Mr. Speaker, more than \$3 billion of government's operational debt has been paid off over the past six years, saving nearly \$1 billion in interest costs.

Our government looks forward to the day when Saskatchewan's operational debt is completely retired and a portion of resource revenues can go towards a new Saskatchewan futures fund as recommended last fall by Peter MacKinnon. Even with the decline in overall revenue and no tax increases, this budget makes important investments in infrastructure and important investments in people that will keep Saskatchewan on the path of steady growth.

One of the key priorities of our government's growth plan is building the infrastructure needed for a growing province. Whether it's schools or hospitals, highways or high-speed data networks, water treatment or power generation plants, bridges or natural gas transmission lines, our government is building for the future.

Since 2008, government capital investment — including third party capital — combined with Crown corporation capital investment is close to \$16 billion, more than double what was spent the previous six years. SaskPower, SaskTel, SaskEnergy and the province's other Crown corporations are meeting increased demand by investing in infrastructure, and they are upgrading to address a long-standing infrastructure deficit.

Between 2000 and 2007, the Crowns spent an average of about \$568 million each year on capital. That doubled to \$1.1 billion annually between 2008 and 2012. Between 2013 and 2018, Saskatchewan's Crown corporations will invest an average of \$1.7 billion each year to maintain existing infrastructure and to build new infrastructure, triple the amount invested each year between 2000 and 2007. Capital spending by the Crowns is projected to be \$2 billion in 2014-15, an increase of \$100 million from the previous year and well above the five-year average.

[14:30]

This year, major capital investments by our Crown corporations will include \$1.2 billion: at SaskPower to develop new electricity generation such as clean coal, natural gas, and hydro, and to expand and renew the transmission and distribution systems that carry electricity to customers; \$355 million at SaskTel which includes the expansion of its wireless network in rural Saskatchewan and its Infinet project providing reliable, high-speed broadband to multi-dwelling units and businesses; and \$300 million at SaskEnergy to improve the safety of its system and expand pipeline and compressor capacity.

In addition to these significant investments by the Crowns, this budget invests nearly \$900 million in other capital projects across government. There is 124 million for municipal infrastructure; including more funding for the Regina stadium project, as well as \$74 million in transfers to municipalities.

A new commuter bridge is needed in the north industrial area in Saskatoon. Our government will work with the city of Saskatoon and the federal government to fund that infrastructure priority, with dollars expected to flow in 2015-16.

This budget also contains a significant announcement for the city of Prince Albert. Our next major health facility investment will be in that city, with \$2 million provided this year to begin planning the renewal of Victoria Hospital.

Building, maintaining, and operating Saskatchewan's extensive highway and transportation system is essential for steady growth. This year \$664.5 million will be spent on operations, maintenance, and capital through the Ministry of Highways and Infrastructure, an increase of \$88.5 million from last year. This level of investment means our government is on pace to meet our commitment to invest \$2.2 billion on highways and transportation over four years. This budget provides \$405

million for highway and transportation capital, including rural provincial highway upgrades in various locations throughout the province.

Passing lanes on busy highways improve traffic flow and enhance safety. This year pre-construction work will begin on passing lanes for Highway 7 between Delisle and Rosetown. We are funding the construction of 19.5 kilometres of new twinned lanes for Highway 16 east of Saskatoon to Clavet. Planning and land acquisition for the Regina bypass project is under way, and construction on the west portion continues to advance. We are also funding pre-construction work for twinning projects on Highway 7 west of Saskatoon to Vanscoy and on Highways 6 and 39 in the southwest corner of the province.

Mr. Speaker, the budget provides over \$96 million in capital funding for K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] schools, including \$46 million for ongoing construction of 10 major school projects; 24 million for school maintenance, an increase of 4.6 million or 24 per cent from last year; 9.5 million to proceed with the construction of the new Langenburg school and Gravelbourg Elementary School; \$7 million for 29 new relocatable classrooms and for moving 10 relocatables to schools with increased enrolment.

This budget also provides over \$4 million for the planning of four new major school projects: the replacement of Connaught and Sacred Heart elementary schools in Regina and the renovation of the K to 12 school in St. Brieux and the Sacred Heart elementary school in Moose Jaw. Planning continues for nine joint-use schools, each with a public and separate school in one building: three in Regina, four in Saskatoon, and one each in Warman and Martensville.

Mr. Speaker, our government is also committed to building and maintaining our universities and other post-secondary institutions. This budget provides 32.6 million in post-secondary capital transfers, an increase of over 7 million or nearly 28 per cent compared to last year. Those transfers include 20.6 million for maintenance capital, an increase of 4.1 million compared to last year; 6.5 million for continued construction of the Health Sciences facility at the University of Saskatchewan; 4.5 million for the Trades and Technology Centre at the Parkland Regional College in Yorkton; and \$1 million for continued construction of the Southeast Regional College facility in Weyburn.

Mr. Speaker, this budget also provides for the building and upgrading of hospitals and other health care facilities, including the Victoria Hospital in Prince Albert, as I've already mentioned. This year \$95 million for health-related capital investments includes 48 million for maintenance capital, equipment, and projects such as renovation of Saskatoon's Parkridge Centre long-term care home; new provincial laboratory machinery and equipment; increased funding for new medical imaging equipment and replacement of a linear accelerator; 27 million for ongoing construction of five long-term care facilities in Maple Creek, Biggar, Kelvington, Prince Albert, and Kipling; \$16 million to complete the new hospital in Moose Jaw; and 1.5 million for planning associated with the Regina Extendicare replacement and the long-term care expansion in La Ronge.

We are moving forward on construction of the Swift Current long-term care facility as a P3 project with 2.1 million in early-stage funding allocated in this budget. The Saskatchewan Hospital and integrated corrections facility in North Battleford also continues to move forward with \$2.5 million in early-stage funding.

Mr. Speaker, investments in affordable housing is continuing, including \$9.2 million for the first year of a five-year extension of the federal-provincial affordable housing agreement. That agreement provides joint funding for new affordable housing, home renovations, home adaptations, as well as rental and housing supplements. This budget also provides 750,000 in additional support to help Habitat for Humanity develop another 12 homeowner units across the province.

Mr. Speaker, our government does not believe in growth for its own sake. Growth must have a purpose — to create a better quality of life for all Saskatchewan people. That's why this budget supports children and seniors and people with disabilities. That's why this budget supports people who need health care services for themselves or a loved one. That's why this budget supports families. And that's why this budget supports those who seek education and training as a path to meaningful employment.

Record funding of nearly \$5 billion will be provided through the Ministry of Health, an increase of 3 per cent compared to last year. This record level of funding includes \$3.25 billion for regional health authorities, an increase of \$107.5 million or 3.4 per cent.

Health authority funding includes 60.5 million for the surgical wait-list initiative, with the goal of meeting the three-month wait-list target province-wide by the end of '14-15; an 8 million increase over last year for regional targeted programs primarily addressing renal disease, colorectal screening, and diagnostic imaging; over \$13 million, which is an increase of 3.4 million, for the operation of five collaborative emergency centres and to enhance primary health care sites; and 1.7 million to develop an emergency department wait times and patient flow program.

Our government recognizes the vital role of the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency in our province's health care system. That budget provides over \$155 million in total funding, a 4.9 million or 3.3 per cent increase to the Saskatchewan Cancer Agency. This will help to plan, organize, deliver, and evaluate cancer care throughout the province.

This budget also provides \$5.2 million, 2.2 million more than last year, to expand the rural doctor locum pool. And the rural family physician recruitment incentive program will receive an additional \$435,000 this year to help attract doctors to rural communities.

We are also providing 1.5 million in health funding to develop an innovative, hot-spotting pilot program to identify and provide more appropriate services to frequent users of the health system. Our health system struggles to meet the needs of patients with complex and varied issues, including those related to mental health. These patients may not require hospitalization, but they are using the emergency department. Just 1 per cent of patients account for 21 per cent of all hospital costs in the

province. This is not a good use of resources, nor is it providing the help many of these patients need. In the coming year, a hot-spotting pilot program will begin in Saskatoon and Regina to identify and assist these high-cost, high-use patients, helping them receive the care they need.

Mr. Speaker, care for seniors continues to be a priority of our government. This budget focuses on a number of initiatives for seniors including 4.5 million for the Home First/Quick Response home care program, an increase of 2.5 million over last year. This innovative approach provides home care services in Regina, Saskatoon, and Prince Albert. The program ensures that seniors have the supports they need to be able to go home more quickly after hospitalization and to reduce the unnecessary hospital admissions and emergency room visits.

Our other initiatives for seniors in this budget include increasing the seniors' income plan benefit by \$10 per month to \$260 for single individuals and \$225 for each member of a married couple. Next year the single benefit will increase to \$270, triple what it was in 2007.

3.7 million for the seniors' care urgent action fund to continue addressing issues in long-term care facilities and \$800,000 to develop a new seniors' house calls program for seniors with complex needs. This budget also provides increased funding of \$217,000 for additional claims under the ambulance assistance program for seniors.

Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan plan for growth sets a goal of making our province the best place in Canada for people with disabilities. Since 2007-08, funding for people with disabilities has more than doubled. This budget provides over \$446 million for new and enhanced programming for people with disabilities and for increased utilization, an increase of over \$84 million from last year.

This includes investments of \$166 million in funding for community-based organizations that help Saskatchewan people with disabilities, a \$20.4 million increase over last year; 174 million for the Saskatchewan assured income for disability program, a 55 per cent increase over last year. This will provide increases of \$20 per month for a person in residential care, \$50 for single individuals, and \$55 for couples who are living independently.

[14:45]

It will also accommodate a caseload increase of \$4,200 Saskatchewan people with disabilities. Mr. Speaker, momentum continues on Saskatchewan's child and family agenda responding to the most urgent needs of our children, youth, and families. Our government is increasing support to child and family agenda initiatives by 8.7 million. This brings the total commitment in new funding to \$62.5 million since the agenda was created in 2011.

Mr. Speaker, a multi-ministry approach is focusing on critical areas of education, health, family supports, and community safety. Among the initiatives are the mental health and addictions action plan, expansion of the positive parenting program, expansion of the building partnership to reduce crime initiative, the Hub and COR [centre of responsibility] model,

and an additional 15 new pre-kindergarten programs to improve reading outcomes.

Mr. Speaker, pre-K [pre-kindergarten] to grade 12 education will always be a priority for our government. This year's Ministry of Education budget is \$1.76 billion, an increase of 52.4 million, or 3.1 per cent over last year.

School operating funding provided to school divisions includes both 1.17 billion in funding from the Ministry of Education and 646 million in revenue from the education property tax, for a total of \$1.82 billion. This is up 2.4 per cent from last year.

Saskatchewan is growing, and that means school enrolment is growing. This year's budget provides over \$19 million in new operating funding for school divisions to address projected enrolment increases of 2,140 students in the upcoming school year. This budget also provides \$11 million — an increase of 1.6 million or more than 17 per cent — to address enrolment pressures at qualified independent schools, historical high schools, and the Sakewew First Nations high school in The Battlefords.

This budget also provides 11.3 million for CommunityNet bandwidth upgrades to substantially increase Internet speeds in schools. This is an increase of \$2 million, or more than 21 per cent over last year.

815,000 in new funding to implement the bullying and cyberbullying action plan.

Our government continues to invest in the education of our children before they even reach kindergarten. This budget provides over \$20 million — an increase of more than 6 per cent from last year — to support 15 new pre-K programs. This will bring the total number of pre-K programs across Saskatchewan to 316. This budget also provides funding to create 500 new child care spaces, bringing the total commitment of child care spaces in Saskatchewan to over 14,200, an increase of over 5,000 or 55 per cent since 2007.

Last year employment in Saskatchewan grew by 18,000, the largest job growth ever recorded in one year. Still, when Saskatchewan business owners are asked to identify the biggest challenge they face, it's usually finding enough skilled workers. A well-trained, highly skilled workforce is key to our province's continued growth and to achieving our goal of 600,000 people working in Saskatchewan by 2020.

It begins with education and training. This budget provides nearly \$669 million for post-secondary institutions, operating grants, and targeted funding, an increase of 16.8 million from last year. This includes 489 million in operating and program funding for Saskatchewan's universities and federated and affiliated colleges, 152 million in operating and program funding for technical institutes, and \$28 million in operating and program funding for regional colleges.

This budget also provides 216 million in funding that helps students afford post-secondary education. That's an increase of 9.4 per cent over last year. This includes \$82 million for the graduate retention program, which allows post-secondary grads to recover the cost of their tuition up to \$20,000 over seven

years if they stay and work in Saskatchewan after graduation. Mr. Speaker, we know this program is working. Nearly 50,000 recent graduates are taking advantage of this program, 50,000 who are proud to call Saskatchewan home.

The budget also provides 37.4 million for other ongoing provincial tax credits related to education costs and interest paid on student loans; 32.5 million for the Saskatchewan Student Aid Fund; 31 million for the provincial training allowance; 7.5 million for the Saskatchewan advantage grant for education savings; and \$7 million for the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship, which reduces tuition costs by up to \$2,000 over four years for every new Saskatchewan high school graduate who pursues post-secondary education in our province.

Our government is continuing to invest in the training of nurses and doctors. This budget provides 14.3 million for the final year of the registered nurse seat expansion to 690 seats; 13.7 million to continue the implementation of 100 new medical undergraduate seats; 10.4 million to continue the implementation of 120 new medical residency seats; 578,000 in new funding to double the number of perioperative nurse training seats at SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology] from 18 to 36; and 360,000 — an increase of 150,000 — to increase the number of nurse practitioner training spaces by five. This brings the total number of spaces to 15, three-quarters of the way to our government's commitment of 20 new nurse practitioner training seats by 2015-16.

Mr. Speaker, this budget provides just over \$189 million for programs and initiatives that specifically benefit First Nations and Métis people. A significant portion of this funding is to ensure First Nations and Métis people receive the education and training they need to take full advantage of the new opportunities that exist in Saskatchewan's growing economy. This includes 49 million for funding of First Nations and Métis initiatives through the Ministries of Economy and Advanced Education, including post-secondary funding and more money for skills training; and \$6 million to double funding for initiatives related to the joint task force on improving education and employment outcomes for First Nations and Métis people.

Adult basic education programs have helped many people get the skills they need to enter Saskatchewan's growing workforce. The growth plan set a goal of eliminating the adult basic education wait-list. Last year's budget added 300 new seats. This year's budget includes 2.1 million to add a further 700 seats.

This budget addresses continued demand for a skilled workforce. Last year's budget included funding to meet the growth plan target by adding 300 new apprenticeship seats. This year's budget includes a \$1 million increase for the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission to add a further 300 apprenticeship seats. It also includes a \$1.4 million increase in training allowances to support these new adult basic education and apprenticeship opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, this budget also contains our government's support of farmers and farm families across Saskatchewan. In 2014-15 more than \$371 million will be spent through the Ministry of Agriculture. This includes new funding for crop

insurance to introduce the livestock price insurance program. Budget also includes 34 million for AgriInvest, an increase of 1.7 million due to higher program demand; 43 million for AgriStability and its administration, down from last year based on federal forecasts and lower program utilization; 79 million — an increase of 7.5 million over last year — for the federal-provincial Growing Forward 2 program; and \$134 million as the province's contribution for crop insurance premiums.

The people working for Saskatchewan's rural and urban municipalities deliver important services to the people of the province. This budget provides over \$394 million of direct provincial support to municipalities, an increase of 32.8 million or 9.1 per cent from last year, an increase of 153 million or 63 per cent from the 2007-2008 budget. Mr. Speaker, that figure includes 257 million for municipality revenue sharing based on the formula of one point of the provincial sales tax. While this amount is down slightly from last year, it is still more than double the amount provided to municipalities in 2007. The budget also includes \$47.2 million in other municipal funding for policing and for transit assistance for people with disabilities, as well as 1.2 million for provincial emergency response.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan has what the world needs. Whether it's potash, uranium, or oil, wheat, canola, or lentils, or manufactured products, more than ever the world is buying it from Saskatchewan. Our government supports Saskatchewan's manufacturers, exporters, producers, and entrepreneurs. This budget provides \$500,000 for start-up costs to establish a manufacturing centre of excellence and 3.4 million for the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership, STEP. It's paying off, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan had a record year for exports, reaching \$32.3 billion in 2013 and making our province the largest exporter per capita in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, a little over 100 years ago when my grandfather, my gido, first came to Saskatchewan, he did so because this was a place of great freedom and incredible opportunity. It was a place that offered a better life. It is still that today. That's why Saskatchewan is setting employment records. That's why Saskatchewan is setting population records, and that's why Saskatchewan is firmly on the path of steady growth.

This budget is meant to keep Saskatchewan on that path. It is a balanced budget. It contains no tax increases. It controls spending. It makes important investments in infrastructure, and it makes important investments in people. Mr. Speaker, this budget will meet the challenges of a growing province, and it will keep Saskatchewan on the path of steady growth. Thank you very much.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Krawetz: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — The Minister of Finance, seconded by the member for Rosthern-Shellbrook, has moved:

That the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government.

Is the Assembly ready for the question? I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the official opposition, it's my honour to respond briefly to the budget that was tabled here today. Our response will reflect the listening that we've done across the province to the people of our province and what they've told us matters to them.

I'd like to welcome everyone that's joined us here today from across Saskatchewan to their Assembly. Thank you so much for joining us. It's an honour and a pleasure to be joined here in this Assembly by community leaders from across our province, municipal leaders, business leaders, education leaders, working men and women, so many good friends and even family, including my wife and also my best adviser Stephanie, as well as my mom and dad, Craik and Faye Wotherspoon, and my mother-in-law Barb Willows. Maybe give us a wave.

And, Mr. Speaker, as you may know, Stephanie's expecting our first child, and we're only a few weeks away from her due date. So with all due respect, if she heads for the doors, I'll be following her shortly thereafter.

It's fair to say that we're joined by Saskatchewan people that are doing their part in our province — those that are investing, creating jobs, and creating opportunity. Those that are working harder than ever to deliver services where it counts in the lives of families, and in the life of their own families. Those that are doing all they can do to lead, like our municipal leaders, and our education leaders. And this is the story all across Saskatchewan; families, workers, businesses are all doing their part.

But sadly, government is dropping the ball when it comes to the services that families count on. I don't think many people across our province will be very pleased with the budget when they get to know the budget. It's a budget that doesn't take into account Saskatchewan families' needs and hopes. Despite the rhetoric we hear today, it's a budget that actually cuts health care and education. It's a budget that has nothing to address the seniors' care crisis across our province.

Mr. Speaker, the reality is this government has tabled a budget that really only has cuts and crumbs for Saskatchewan families. This budget squeezes families and the services they count on, ensuring that for another year that the strong economy will only benefit government, not the people of the province.

Despite having over 50 per cent more revenue coming into government's coffers, government is heaping financial strain onto municipalities, health care, schools, universities, and students. And who will pay the price for that, Mr. Speaker? Is it a loved one in seniors' care by not receiving the standard of care or dignity they deserve? Is it a family in a health crisis that can't access the needed services and professionals at an emergency room when seconds matter in their life? Is it a

student sitting in an overcrowded classroom without the supports or educational assistants they deserve and that they need? Or is it families all across Saskatchewan, with higher bills and costs on every front, working harder and harder but slipping behind? Of course, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to who's left to pay the price for those types of choices, that type of budget, Saskatchewan families and taxpayers know they always do.

In advance of this budget, the NDP laid out seven simple must-haves as budget priorities. These are the priorities that Saskatchewan families, hard-working people, moms and dads, university students, young workers, and seniors tell us that matter most to them. But, Mr. Speaker, those priorities, the priorities of families, of seniors, of students, those priorities were ignored by that government in this year's budget. Mr. Speaker, shockingly despite the NDP's list of seven priorities, and those being a common sense, meat-and-potatoes, must-have list, the government managed to tick off just one of those seven boxes because, Mr. Speaker, this budget is a budget that is full of cuts and crumbs for Saskatchewan people. The message this budget sends to everyday families is, brace yourselves. The things you count on that really need improvement are likely to get even worse with this sort of budget.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan people are working harder than ever right now. They deserve a budget that uses our strong economy to benefit them now and well into the future. They deserve for the strong economy to translate into better hospitals, smaller classrooms, and improved cost of living. They deserve a government that invests in people instead of wrong-headed, costly pet projects.

Saskatchewan families have raised concerns over the high cost of living while the basics they count on, like education, health care, and seniors' care, get worse. But this budget calls for another \$51.9 million to be cut from health care. I'm not sure why that wasn't part of the minister's speech here today. We called on the government to end contracts that are making Saskatchewan a cash cow for consultants, including one contract with an American lean kaizen consultant that's costing Saskatchewan taxpayers more than \$40 million.

Additionally this government disregarded concerns of many front-line health care workers and professionals who say the program hurts patient care instead of helps. The budget doesn't redirect the millions that are being spent on these expensive contracts into better health care or front-line services.

The budget re-announces \$3.7 million already allocated to address urgent care in seniors' care homes, and not a single new dollar to address the deplorable conditions caused by lack of staff and the government's removal of minimum standards. We called for action to address the seniors' care crisis in this province, including minimum standards and enough staff to properly care for seniors living in care homes. The seniors of this province frankly deserve nothing less.

The budget also allocated more to pay for software required to plow ahead with an old-fashioned, outdated standardized testing regime. We had called for that funding for standardized testing to be redirected into teaching to ensure more one-on-one help for students, like increasing the number of educational

assistants in the province. We called for a plan to reduce and cap class size, but the budget does nothing to address the number of students crowded into crammed classes all across Saskatchewan. While classes are bursting at the seams, adding more kids, the dollars are stagnant, leaving kids without the learning environment and one-on-one attention that they deserve.

Despite the desperate need for more classrooms and smaller class size to relieve the overcrowding, the government cut the Education capital budget by nearly 20 per cent this year, taking \$23.4 million from school building and repairs that are needed. We called for Saskatchewan to build, own, and operate schools itself, build more cost-effectively and quickly. The government's P3 rent-a-school scheme will only receive a small amount of dollars here this year as we see in this budget — to work on design, I understand — guaranteeing that it's at least another year before shovels could be in the ground on the ill-advised plan of that government that will have the private sector own and operate the schools for our children.

We demanded action to address the high cost of living. The reality is, while Saskatchewan families are being asked to pay extra far too often, the government is plowing ahead with another budget that does nothing to relieve families' financial pressures. And on this front it's clear that that Premier and that government is out of touch with the household reality of far too many across this province.

By giving our growing municipalities less this year, more financial strain is dumped on residential property tax payers. Big increases they'll be facing and are facing at a time when the government is already increasing the monthly cost of SaskTel Internet, SaskPower, SaskEnergy, and SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], and of course many other costs as well.

Now the one must-have priority that the government took from us is a welcome flip-flop on the wrong-headed plan of the Premier and the government to raise the education tax to pay for bridges and overpasses. We strongly opposed this tax hike and were pleased to see them not hike that tax here today on families. And it's chuckles today, but there's been nervous nights for many families thinking one more bill was coming down from this Premier.

We believe education property tax should be for education, and that with 50 per cent more revenues flowing to that government since 2007 there should be more than enough money to get the job done without raising taxes on families.

When it comes to the environment, this government's record is not a good one. This budget cuts climate change initiatives, including go green, and reduces . . . reducing greenhouse gas emission projects by 35 per cent of their funding. That's a cut of 83 per cent since 2011. The only thing on climate change that we should be cutting is our emissions, and this government hasn't done that either. And, Mr. Speaker, the Premier goes to the United States and says Canada needs to give the US a little more environmental elbow room. The Premier says that we need to talk up our environmental record. Every time he says that, he comes back from the States to this legislature and makes cuts to environmental initiatives.

Saskatchewan could, should, and must become a leader in reducing carbon emissions. But at the moment this province is trailing the pack, moving farther away every month from the government's watered down emissions targets. Mr. Speaker, quite frankly on this front, government's actions are weak.

The cuts to agriculture are also stark in this budget. At a time when producers are already squeezed because of the grain transportation crisis and in part because of slow actions of government, grain is still piled up in bins and on fields all across Saskatchewan while bills are piling up for producers who haven't been paid for a record crop they produced. Producers deserve better from their government.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to speak briefly about northern Saskatchewan. We're happy to see some investment in long-term care beds in this budget after a . . . And I do want to attribute something here as well, so thank you for that investment, but fought by the community and also by the member from Cumberland.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, there's not much more for the North — no investment into roads, the roads that I think the member from Athabasca, who drives these regularly, refers to as gravel goat paths, Mr. Speaker. They're not safe, Mr. Speaker, and there are families in minivans and commercial trucks and school buses with kids on these roads daily. The infrastructure, the economic development, and the opportunities for the people of the North that they need to unlock the full potential of that region and of the people simply aren't in this budget.

[15:15]

Sadly this budget reveals the government will not build a Heritage Fund any time soon. While both the NDP and an independent advisor, Peter MacKinnon, advocate a plan to start thinking long term and putting money away into a savings plan, the government stubbornly refuses to contribute a dime to Saskatchewan's future until the debt is paid off, they say — a mission for which the government's moving in the wrong direction. Backing away from the Heritage Fund represents a broken promise of that Premier and a lost opportunity for Saskatchewan people.

And in an unprecedented jump, the government will add \$1.5 billion of debt this year alone and has actually increased debt, total government debt, by \$4 billion since 2009. Mr. Speaker, at that rate we won't have a Heritage Fund started any time soon, quite possibly never if that's the approach of this government. The government is using the non-renewable resource dollars that are coming in for just getting by, just paying the bills, keeping the lights on — nothing being saved for the future. Where's the investment in a Heritage Fund, in schools, in hospitals that should come with an economy like the one we've been blessed with for the better part of a decade?

Now, Mr. Speaker, there are a few steps in the right direction. We're pleased to see a shift to the summary budget, the summary focus, something we've been calling for. This is a good step. With some reorganization of the budget, we'll continue to track the implementation of the new system of reporting to ensure Saskatchewan people have nothing short than honest, transparent books they can trust.

As you'll recall, the government's last budget failed an audit, the first government in Canadian history to fail an audit. We made it clear that the official opposition, the people of Saskatchewan would not accept another set of improper books that wouldn't pass the auditor's scrutiny. So this is a positive step. But let me be clear. The position of that government was unsustainable and unacceptable. Every single person in this room, the businesses across Saskatchewan have to follow the rules. It should be the same for government.

I'm also pleased to see a small investment into following up on the anti-bullying initiatives, something we've called for. This is something that's important. We'll certainly track the progress on this front, but it's critical that students all across Saskatchewan have safe learning environments.

It's also good to see the previously announced manufacturing centre of excellence being funded in this budget. And I'm very pleased that this government did not pursue its ill-advised tax hike on credit unions, something we strongly opposed, credit unions that we've reminded the minister are a vital part of the Saskatchewan economy, in fact doing more than 50 per cent of the business lending to small- and medium-sized businesses.

But, Mr. Speaker, the NDP is disappointed that six of seven of the NDP's must-haves were not met by this disappointing budget. How many Saskatchewan families have had their needs ignored by this government and this budget? How many Saskatchewan families who were hoping for better health care, smaller class sizes, new publicly owned schools, or an end to the seniors' care crisis will be disappointed today? People tell us that government hasn't been listening, and this budget really shows that government is absolutely not listening to Saskatchewan people and doesn't understand what Saskatchewan families are facing today. And it's become evident that despite a strong economy and the hard work of many, that government is failing to get the job done where it matters to Saskatchewan families.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan families deserve better, and because Saskatchewan families deserve better the NDP will not be supporting the budget. While I'll have more to say on this budget tomorrow, provide a more detailed analysis and critique and a local perspective, it's been my privilege, my honour to enter debate here today.

Mr. Speaker, at this time I move that this debate be now adjourned.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

Resumption of Budget Debate

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move:

That debate on the motion that the Assembly approves in

general the budgetary policy of the government be resumed on Thursday, March 20th, 2014.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the Government House Leader:

That debate on the motion that the Assembly approves in general the budgetary policy of the government be resumed on Thursday, March 20th, 2014.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

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

The Speaker: — Before I place the question on adjournment, I want to first say thank you to our guests who joined us today and for your co-operation in observing the rules of the Assembly.

I would now like to extend an invitation to our guests to join the members for tea in the Legislative Library to your right as you leave the Assembly and in room 218 to the left. I ask that our guests allow the members of the Legislative Assembly to leave first by the side doors.

At this time I will place the question. The Government House Leader has moved that this 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 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:22.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Wall..... | 4773 |
| Brotten | 4773 |
| The Speaker..... | 4773 |

PRESENTING PETITIONS

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Forbes | 4773 |
| Vermette | 4773 |
| Belanger..... | 4773 |
| McCall | 4774 |

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

Women of Influence Award

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Ottenbreit | 4774 |
|------------------|------|

Budget Priorities for Opposition

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Chartier | 4774 |
|----------------|------|

Honouring Carole Sanderson

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Jurgens..... | 4774 |
|--------------|------|

Reporting of Financial Statements

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Belanger..... | 4775 |
|---------------|------|

Students Against Bullying Bill

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Draude | 4775 |
|--------------|------|

Battlefords Trade and Education Centre Fundraiser

| | |
|-----------|------|
| Cox | 4775 |
|-----------|------|

Grain Transportation Backlog

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Brkich | 4776 |
|--------------|------|

QUESTION PERIOD

Consultant Fees and Lean Initiative

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Brotten | 4776 |
| Wall..... | 4776 |

Patient Care and Lean Initiative

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Brotten | 4777 |
| Wall..... | 4778 |

Use of Resources in Education

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Wotherspoon | 4779 |
| Morgan | 4779 |

Support for Agricultural Producers

| | |
|--------------|------|
| Sroule..... | 4780 |
| Stewart..... | 4780 |
| Wall..... | 4780 |

ORDERS OF THE DAY

TABLING OF ESTIMATES AND SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES

| | |
|------------------|------|
| Krawetz..... | 4781 |
| The Speaker..... | 4781 |

MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF BUDGETARY POLICY

(BUDGET DEBATE)

| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Krawetz..... | 4781 |
| Wotherspoon | 4786 |

Resumption of Budget Debate

| | |
|---------------|------|
| Harrison..... | 4788 |
|---------------|------|

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN CABINET MINISTERS

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President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Bill Boyd

Minister of the Economy
Minister Responsible for The Global
Transportation Hub Authority
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Power Corporation

Hon. Ken Cheveldayoff

Minister of Environment
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
Water Security Agency
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Hon. Dustin Duncan

Minister of Health

Hon. Donna Harpauer

Minister of Crown Investments
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Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan
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Hon. Ken Krawetz

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Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan
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