



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

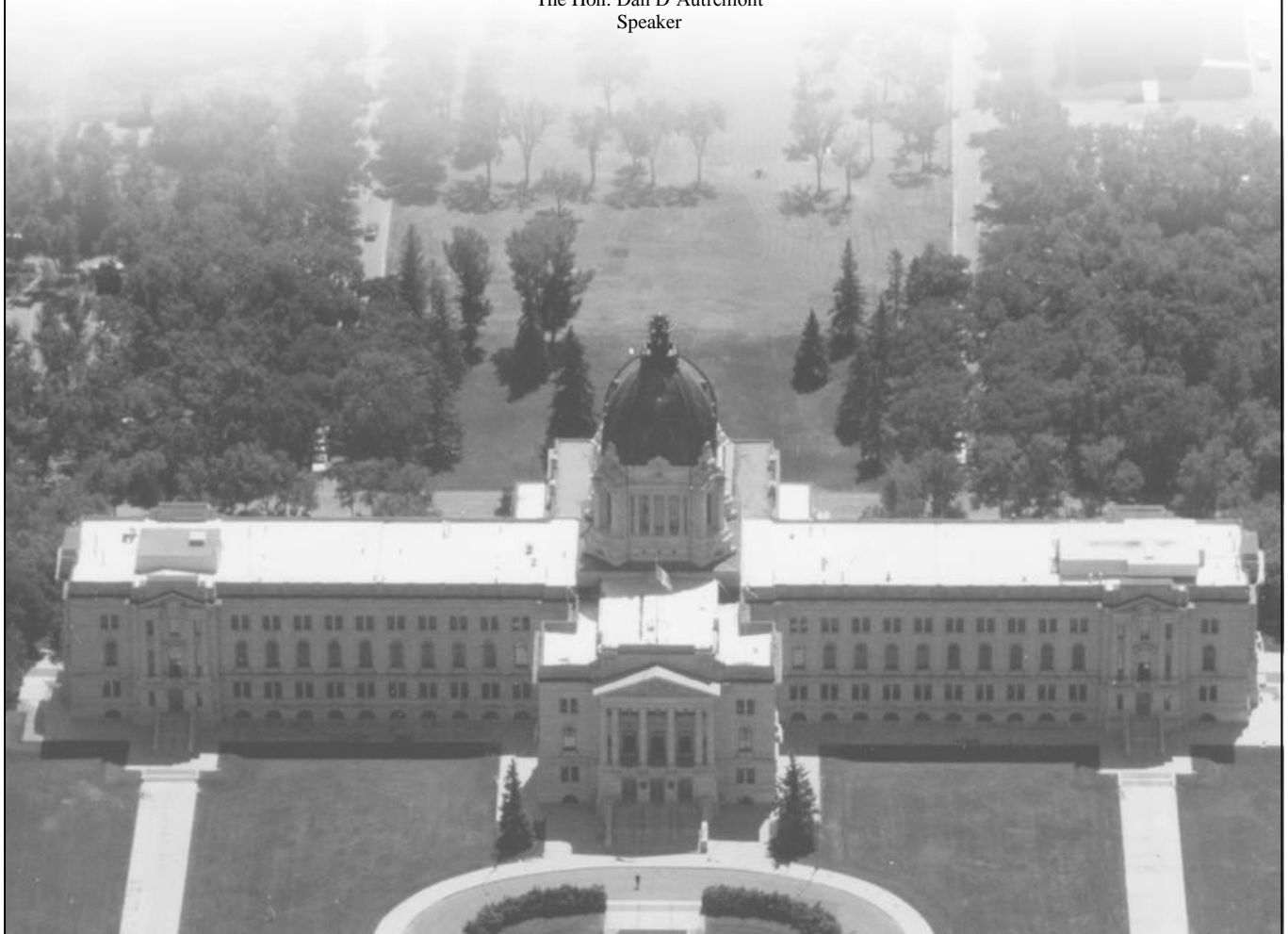
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

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



MEMBERS OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN

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

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

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to introduce to you and through you some guests in your gallery that indeed are from your part of Saskatchewan. The Camerons have joined us, Ron and Stacy Cameron and their four kids: Brody, 17; Alexa, 10, maybe they can just give us a wave; Mazie's 8; and Wyatt is 7. There's Wyatt.

Mr. Speaker, I had the chance to meet Ron and Stacy at Riderville on the occasions that I happened to get to Riderville during Grey Cup. And they indicated to me that Mazie was particularly interested at a very young age in politics, and interested in the legislature and was interested in meeting, if we could arrange that some day. So, Mr. Speaker, I'm glad we've been able to do that. We're going to meet with them a little bit later on and talk a little bit about this building and what they may have just witnessed here at question period, Mr. Speaker.

The Camerons are farmers, organic farmers in southeast Saskatchewan near Redvers. Storthoaks is where they make their home. He also works in the energy sector and she's a health care aid. So they've got two full-time jobs between the farm and what they're doing, and then their kids are involved in archery and ball and in dance, Mr. Speaker. So they're just a great example of really the best that we can claim of our province, not our resources but our families and our people. And we want to say to them that they're welcomed in this particular Assembly and that I look forward to meeting them a little bit later on. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if all members would join me in welcoming them to their Legislative 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 welcoming the Cameron family to the Assembly. To Ron and Stacy, it's great to see a family taking an interest in the democratic process and having a good family outing, seeing what goes on in the Assembly today. And so I would again just extend a welcome and wish you all the best as you're busy raising your family in your part of the province. Thank you.

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

Hon. Mr. Norris: — Thanks very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll have a couple of rounds of introductions. First, helping us to mark Adult Learners' Week, we have students here from SIIT, the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies, in both the construction careers apprenticeship program as well as the educational assistants program.

And so I'll just ask them to wave as I read out their names:

Tamara Tanner, Sheldon Dustyhorn, Laban Kuria, Steven Lerat, Claire Akapew, Morningstar Asapace, Priscilla McNab, Santanna Nagy, and Shania Obey. And they're also here accompanied by their instructor, Linda Bird. And I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these students from SIIT, which is doing great work across the province. Welcome all of these students to their Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And while I'm on my feet, this morning we had an opportunity to highlight some of the good works that have been undertaken by Mitacs, and this is a national network focusing on research and science. And so I'd like to highlight the presence of Forrest Parlee who is the director of partnerships at Mitacs; Christopher Bowman, the director of business development.

As well, we have some entrepreneurs that have participated in and benefited from the program: Suzanne Paschall who is with Indie Ink Publishing, David Callele is also here from Experience First Design. And importantly, most importantly we are also able to welcome some students who have benefited from the program: Richard Lomotey and Lorie Peters-Whiteman are also here.

And Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to welcome these fine individuals that are helping to make that transition from learning to earning all the more propitious for everyone involved. And so, Mr. Speaker, I'll ask all members to join in welcoming these students and participants to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the minister in welcoming the guests from the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technology here, both Ms. Bird and the students. If I gather from the names throughout Treaty 4, I think there was a strong Kawacatoose presence amongst the names there. But good to see those students here today at their Legislative Assembly and to help celebrate Adult Learners' Week.

And as well the individuals from Mitacs, congratulations on the scholarships both to the officials with Mitacs itself, but entrepreneurs and students that have taken advantage of the offerings of Mitacs. Good to see you here today celebrating this important enrichment of research and science in our province and in our critical post-secondary education sector. And I'd be remiss, Mr. Speaker, if I didn't say a very special hello to Lorie Peters-Whiteman. Good to see you here in your Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the legislature, Tom Graham who is sitting in the east gallery. And as we all know Tom in various roles that he plays, but he's president of the Saskatchewan Division of CUPE, the Canadian Union of Public Employees. He's always been a strong voice for working women and men here in Saskatchewan, but he's also a strong advocate for the public interest and all that we do. So he's very interested in what we do here in this legislature. I

ask all members to welcome Tom to his legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member opposite in welcoming Mr. Graham to the legislature today. I spoke at their conference recently, and it was at that time that Mr. Graham was acclaimed as the Saskatchewan president, so I was able to congratulate him there. So I'd like, on behalf of all members, to congratulate him on his recent acclamation.

Later today, I will find out whether I'm acclaimed to be the candidate in my own constituency, and I will be looking to Mr. Graham for advice in that area. In any event, on behalf of all members, I would like to welcome him to the Assembly today.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

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

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly be pleased to cause the government to reverse 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 the profits of an Alberta-based corporation; and furthermore, the privatization of health care laundry will put patient care at risk as Saskatchewan's health regions lose direct control over laundry and thereby will have 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.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents that

are in support of safety on Dewdney Avenue and rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic from Dewdney Avenue. The residents state that any further delays by that government are unacceptable in addressing an unsafe condition created by that government. And the prayer reads as follows:

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

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

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

The Speaker: — 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. 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's signed by many people of this province. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm very proud to stand today to present a petition on highways once again. And the prayer reads as follows, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to commit on repairing and upgrading Highway 908.

And Highway 908 is the highway that serves the English River First Nation and the community of Patuanak. And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are primarily from Ile-a-la-Crosse but, as I've said before, there are petitions signed from all throughout the province. And I so present.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to present the following petition for real action on climate change. The residents who signed the petition want to bring to the legislature's attention the following: that Saskatchewan produces the highest greenhouse gas emissions per capita in all of Canada; that Saskatchewan's emissions have continued to grow to 74 million megatonnes as reported by Environment Canada in October 2013 and show no signs of decreasing; that the Saskatchewan government has failed to tackle climate change, reduce emissions to the province's own targets, or put in a real plan to protect the natural environment; that slashing programs such as the Go Green Fund and the EnerGuide for Houses energy efficiency programs set the province on a backward course; and that since 2009 the Government of Saskatchewan has reduced climate change funding by 83 per cent, including another 35 per cent cut in the 2014-15 budget.

So in the prayer that reads as follows, the petitioners:

Respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enacts a real plan and allocates appropriate funding in the provincial budget to tackle climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, helping families transition to energy-efficient homes, and encouraging everyone in the province to take real action to protect the environment.

The petitioners come from the communities of Canora, Melville, Prince Albert, and Wadena. And I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Batoche.

Middle Lake Avengers Win Gold at Hoopla

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize the amazing basketball season of the Middle Lake Avengers senior girls. Mr. Speaker, this team of young women were dedicated to working hard to achieve their personal and team goals.

With many young girls wanting to participate on the team, the Avengers started their season by entering a grade 9-10 team in the Horizon Central Athletic Association league.

This gave the new players the practice and confidence they needed to participate with the senior girls. It was a great success with seven wins and only one loss. From there the team took off with tournaments in Foam Lake, Humboldt, and Kenaston, all of which the team ranked second place. After Christmas the team participated in multiple tournaments where they placed mostly first and second.

Mr. Speaker, the Middle Lake Avengers were excited to host the annual Avengers Athletic Basketball Classic where they won this tournament for the first time since 2008. This led the team to the Saskatchewan High School Athletic Association regionals where they advanced to the all-important Hoopla championship.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very excited to announce that all their hard work and practice time paid off. The Middle Lake Avengers

won gold for the first time ever in the 1A Hoopla championship division. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate all the Avengers senior girls team on their great season and recognize their team and their coach, Trevor Otsig, on all their wonderful work and their win of a gold medal this season. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Hearings

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this past weekend the Truth and Reconciliation Commission wrapped up nearly four years of public hearings which gave survivors of Canada's residential schools a chance to tell their stories of abuse.

For over a century, Aboriginal children were removed from their families and forced to attend residential schools. The trauma of being ripped away from their families was horrible enough for these children, but we know many of them also experienced horrendous abuse. The treatment of these children and their families is an incredibly dark chapter in our history.

I attended the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings in Prince Albert and in Saskatoon, and I am still deeply moved by the heartbreaking stories I heard: heartbreaking stories about the children that were taken, heartbreaking stories about the parents that were left behind, and heartbreaking stories about the effects on the next generations.

To all those who courageously shared their stories with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to all those who couldn't share their stories but who still carry the burden of that trauma, we as a society must ask forgiveness for failing them so profoundly. And we must take seriously the task of working for healing and reconciliation to bring people and communities together and to work for better and brighter shared futures. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[13:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Deputy Whip.

Adult Learners' Week

Mr. Makowsky: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our government is pleased to mark March 29th to April 6th as Adult Learners' Week in Canada. The week promotes the importance of adult literacy while raising the profile of lifelong learning and access to education.

Mr. Speaker, adult literacy, adult basic education and training as well as lifelong learning are important to our growing economy. As part of the Saskatchewan plan for growth, we need to add 60,000 more people to our workforce by 2020, so our government is committed to supporting adult literacy, adult education, and lifelong learning initiatives in Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, the government has provided a record investment of 5.5 billion in post-secondary education funding to ensure learners are well trained to enter our labour market.

Our post-secondary system also provides inclusive programming for adult learners to begin, continue, or upgrade academic studies and other training. In 2014-15 the

Government of Saskatchewan is investing 25 million in adult basic education and foundational skills programs in Saskatchewan, which will increase the number of ABE [adult basic education] training seats to 8,580. The budget also provides 31 million through the provincial training allowance for living allowances and child care costs for those in ABE and short-term skills training programs.

Mr. Speaker, our government is pleased to commemorate this week as Adult Learners' Week. Thank you.

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

Transgender Awareness Week

Mr. Forbes: — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to recognize the third annual Trans Awareness Week in our province. This week provides an opportunity to inform and raise awareness about challenges facing the sex- and gender-diverse community, while celebrating the lives of transsexual, transgender, and intersex people across Saskatchewan.

I would also like to recognize the important work of TransSask Support Services in helping provide services to meet the needs of trans-identified and gender-diverse people within Saskatchewan. We believe that all people of Saskatchewan should have the resources and support to lead their lives however they wish to and to have their needs accommodated without being hindered by discriminatory practices.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights, and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in that instrument without distinction of any kind. The acts of violence and discrimination directed towards people because of gender identity or gender expression are unacceptable. I've called for greater protection by changing *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* to include the terms gender identity and gender expression as prohibited grounds for discrimination.

Mr. Speaker, I call on all members to recognize and celebrate Trans Awareness Week and TransSask for their important work supporting the sex- and gender-diverse community and to pledge continued support to the goal of helping transgendered people feel safe and supported in their communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Walsh Acres.

Strong Kids Campaign Megathon

Mr. Steinley: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This past Saturday the member for Regina Qu'Appelle Valley and myself had the great opportunity to attend the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association] Strong Kids Campaign Mega Carnival.

The Megathon began with the Mega Swim-a-thon, which is a swim equivalent to Wascana Lake, which was preceded by the Mega Carnival which featured the Riders challenge, carnival games. The Mega Cannonball was next, and the evening finished off with the Mega Endless Cycle, which is a challenging three-hour cycle event.

Mr. Speaker, the megathon is an event focused on getting children, youth, and families active in the community, and they raise awareness about childhood obesity and inactivity. In Canada, one in five children are overweight or obese, which can lead to many chronic health conditions. Childhood obesity rates have tripled over the last 25 years in Canada, and around 93 per cent of children are not meeting the required 60 minutes of activity a day.

Mr. Speaker, our government is working to ensure that all families, no matter their financial situation, can help their children to become more active through the active families benefit. This fully refundable tax benefit helps families with the cost of their children's participation in cultural, recreational, or sports activities. Healthier children is something that we are all eager, in this province, to see.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating the YMCA Strong Kids campaign on a successful megathon event and thank them for the work they are doing to promote a healthy lifestyle for all of our children across Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Café Contributes to Community

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House to share the story of the Happy Nun Café in the southeast town of Forget in your constituency, Mr. Speaker.

Owned by locals Don, Shannon, Tim, Donna, Dave, and Dorothy, the café has ran with the philosophy of feeding your soul as well as your body and believing in the future of rural Saskatchewan. One of the most important ways they do this is providing their community with opportunities to express themselves onstage through music and giving their guests an opportunity to experience live music. The owners prepare and serve the food and follow with their own musical performance, Mr. Speaker.

They took the value one step further a year ago by donating all of the proceeds from the open mike nights to Souls Harbour Mission in Regina to help those who cannot afford to feed themselves. In the last year, Mr. Speaker, they have donated over \$10,000 to Souls Harbour. I was fortunate to attend a recent open mike night when the Walbaum family from Stoughton, consisting of Aaron, Jacquie, and two of their three children, Micah and Aaliyah, showed off their talents to the crowd. Ten-year old Micah performed a song she wrote and accompanied herself on the guitar, and she was absolutely great.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing and congratulating the owners and performers of the Happy Nun Café on their successful business and contributions to the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Support for Public-Private Partnerships

Ms. Campeau: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last week in a

scrum, the member from Athabasca was asked whether the construction of new bridges in Saskatoon ought to proceed using a P3 [public-private partnership] model. Given the track record of the members opposite, we expected a long-winded, process-focused answer which ignored the merits of the P3 model. However, this time the member from Athabasca surprised us. He said, "Saskatoon needs a bridge. We can't leave money on the table. It's good for the economy so we've got to take advantage of it."

That member agreed with the federal NDP [New Democratic Party], which said the P3 model can enable greater value for money for some infrastructure projects. The member decided to stand with his federal leader, Thomas Mulcair, who said a P3 can be the right solution in certain cases.

The member from Athabasca is in agreement with the Finance minister of the Manitoba NDP who said, "Public-private partnerships can provide an opportunity for the public sector to build projects more efficiently." The member from Athabasca knows that stubbornly refusing federal dollars simply for the sake of ideology just isn't good Saskatchewan common sense.

So now the question remains, Mr. Speaker: will the leader of the members opposite join the member from Athabasca, stand with their federal leader, and support the P3 process when it makes sense in providing the infrastructure this growing province needs? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Federal Funding for Health Care

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Canada's health accord expires today. What this means for the province of Saskatchewan is that we will lose \$1 billion in federal funding for health care over the next decade.

This is a direct result, Mr. Speaker, of a federal government that has very little interest in supporting Canada's most cherished social program. It's also the direct result of a Premier that has refused to stand up for Saskatchewan and demonstrate real leadership on this important file. My question to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: why has he refused to stand up to the federal Conservatives on the health accord?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I reject the premise of my hon. friend's question with respect to, especially with respect to the health file.

Actually, Mr. Speaker, our province has demonstrated leadership through things like the innovation Health ministers' working group where we have seen millions of dollars saved as a result of the joint purchase of pharmaceuticals, for example; where we're overseeing and have sponsored a number of innovation initiatives that will result in efficiencies right across the country in terms of best practices, in terms of improving the deployment of health care resources in looking at scope of practice, Mr. Speaker.

And moreover, what we have also expressed is a disappointment with the federal government's funding formula. We had asked as a province that there be a separate innovation fund that could be allocated to provinces that were demonstrating a willingness to move out, to set bold goals in the health care sector as we have done here including surgical wait times, including our goals around emergency services, that those provinces be recognized.

However I would point out, Mr. Speaker, that what we have said we needed to avoid was what we saw in the '90s where, rather than an escalator, a permanent escalator as a part of health care funding going forward, we saw cuts to the provinces from the federal government. We're not there, thank goodness. We see increases. We're still advocating for innovation funding, Mr. Speaker, and we'll continue to do that.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What we've seen from the Premier on this particular file is actually pretty embarrassing. While the federal government refused to renew the Canada Health Accord and said it will scale back federal funding of health care to the tune of \$1 billion for Saskatchewan over the next decade, the Premier actually supported the federal government and said it's fine, that the provinces will fill the void, as if that is some small, little void that needs to be addressed, while the parliamentary budget officer says this will place a huge fiscal burden on provincial governments and make it increasingly difficult for them to afford to deliver health care.

My question to the Premier: does he agree with the parliamentary budget officer, and why doesn't he stand up for Saskatchewan's interests?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, obviously we would like to see larger increases than what the federal government has agreed to provide the provinces. And let's understand the debate here. The debate is around the size of the increase in funding in transfers that are going to come from the federal government. Would we like to see those at a higher level? Yes. Have we communicated that to the federal government, along with other premiers in the country? Yes, we've done that, Mr. Speaker. Moreover, we've taken the additional step of suggesting to the federal government that they consider an innovation fund, especially to be applied to those provinces that are prepared to set goals.

Mr. Speaker, in health care today, in terms of a government standing up for Saskatchewan people, in health care today we have a government that is not shying away from setting bold goals in terms of reducing wait times for surgery. Mr. Speaker, we're making significant progress on that front. We have not shied away from setting important goals around emergency care and other parts of the health care system. We are going to continue to do that, and we would want a federal government to recognize those kinds of initiatives with innovation funding.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to continue to work towards that, Mr. Speaker, but it is important to note that we are talking about the

level of increase here from the federal government in terms of transfers and not an outright cut, fortunately, as we saw from the Liberal government in the '90s.

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

Costs and Benefits of Lean Initiative

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the reality is that the Premier has been far too consumed with promoting his lean pet project, telling other provinces that they should follow suit, Mr. Speaker, and unsuccessfully begging the Prime Minister for an innovation fund.

If only the Premier would listen to front-line health care workers like registered nurse Laurelle Pachal who has a letter in the paper today. She says, “Right now, there are nurses feeling pressure to put patient care needs on hold . . .” She goes on:

Nurses on units have been ‘volun-told’ to participate in the patient-flow project, and describe feeling heavily scrutinized by lean specialists monitoring with clipboards and stopwatches, often while also under the pressure of deliberate short-staffing because shifts have not been replaced or vacant lines remain empty.

Patient needs put on hold because of lean; deliberate short-staffing: this is the reality in hospitals and care facilities today in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. To the Premier: how much does he need to hear before he’ll put a stop to this?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the lean project has already recovered more in savings to the taxpayer than it cost the government. We’ve been able to see those savings in two years of the four-year program. Moreover we’ve seen improvements in patient care, in patient-centred care initiatives right across the piece. So, Mr. Speaker, obviously we’re going to continue with the program that’s delivering those sorts of results.

We’re certainly open to improvements to the lean program as it moves forward. That has been stated over and over in this Assembly, and it remains the case today.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this Premier has tunnel vision when it comes to lean, and he’s ignoring the other needs, the important needs, the basics that we have in health care.

Registered nurse Laurelle Pachal also says this: “My unit’s nurses are mandated to attend lean training for their June education day instead of the clinical education that improves nurses’ clinical practice and delivers yearly skills certifications.” She goes on to say:

So in June, nurses will make paper airplanes! They also will hear about Muda, Muri and Gemba. They will hear that lean is great, that it’s improving their work, and that it’s engaging them. But they don’t see that happening . . .

They won’t feel collaborated with, consulted or engaged

— and may be resentful and disillusioned. Decisions and directives are not putting patient-care issues first.

[14:00]

So we have nurses saying that patients’ needs, Mr. Speaker, are being put on hold because of lean. We have deliberate short-staffing of shifts in the health care. We have nurses who are being forced, Mr. Speaker, to take paper airplane lessons, learn Japanese terminology, instead of taking the clinical training that they should be having. That’s the reality in our health care system today. My question to the Premier: how on earth is this acceptable?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Leader of the Opposition quotes from a letter to the editor today, and we want to hear from that particular member of SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses]. We have heard from many other members of SUN. We have heard from doctors. We’ve heard from the SMA [Saskatchewan Medical Association], his previous employer when he was a researcher there, who have said that lean is a good thing, that what we are doing in this province is the right thing to do. In fact, Mr. Speaker, in the president of SUN’s message to all of the members, March 27th, very, very recent, she says this. She thanks nurses for joining the lean conversation and says:

I feel hopeful and encouraged that the positive aspects, and there are many [she says], can be translated into practical benefits for patients. [She says] We’ve made it clear and we’ll go on the record again, that there’s absolutely no doubt that lean has helped identify waste and make improvements and we will support our members’ continued engagement at work.

Mr. Speaker, that’s from the president of SUN. Now the hon. member says, well we’re focused on one thing or the other and not results. Here are some results that came out last week: number of people waiting for surgery more than 18 months, down 97 per cent; number of patients waiting more than one year for surgery, down 93 per cent; more than six months, 83 per cent; more than three months, 70 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That is results for Saskatchewan patients.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, \$40 million to one US [United States] consultant, flying senseis from Japan, paying them \$3,500 a day plus airfare, Mr. Speaker — this government has lost its way. They’ve signed a fat cash cow contract when it comes to lean.

We keep hearing incredibly concerning details about the quality of health care here in Saskatchewan. We hear about chronic short-staffing in hospitals and in care facilities. We’ve heard about families, Mr. Speaker, that hire private care providers to go into the hospital because there are not enough front-line staff.

Mr. Speaker, absolutely we need a federal partner in health care. We need the federal government, and they should

absolutely renew the Canada Health Accord. But we also need a provincial government, Mr. Speaker, that is focused on fixing the basics and not focused on pouring untold millions into its flagship lean project, a project, Mr. Speaker, that front-line health care workers are saying is getting in the way of patient safety and is getting in the way of quality of care for patients.

My question to the Premier: when will he listen to front-line health care workers? When will he stop wasting taxpayers' dollars on the fat contract? When will he start fixing the basics in health care and seniors' care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the president of SUN, as of late last week, on the 27th of March, the president of SUN representing the front-line workers — and you can ignore the fact that it is read in quotes because it doesn't fit with the line of questions he came up with prior to question period — says, "I feel hopeful and encouraged that positive aspects, and there are many [she adds parenthetically], can be translated into practical benefits for patients." Mr. Speaker, we've seen similar quotes from patients involved in lean, from the nurses involved in the front line in lean.

There are concerns. There's 40,000 people working in the health care sector. We're going to listen to those concerns and seek to adjust and improve lean. But we're not going to, Mr. Speaker, do away with a program that's already saved more in tax dollars than it costs. And we're not going to do away with a program that improves patient-centred care, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to focusing on results, we'll put our record up against his party's record any day of the week, because we've seen surgical wait times come down.

And, Mr. Speaker, do you know what's happening today in the province? A thousand more nurses are working today than they were under the NDP, Mr. Speaker. Almost 300 more doctors practising today than there were under the NDP, more nurse practitioners, more front-line workers, Mr. Speaker. That's why, that's why, Mr. Speaker, we are seeing some improvements, with the recognition that more work needs to be done.

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

Care of Landfills

Ms. Sproule: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The landfill at Katepwa started burning in October and it was finally put out late last week. The fire started on October 12th. Environment officials didn't even go to the scene until January 30th, and they were surprised to find out how big the fire still was three months later. To the minister: why did it take so long to investigate?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much to the member for the question. It's always a pleasure to talk about this government's environmental record compared to members opposite, that's for sure.

Mr. Speaker, the fire at Katepwa, as the member indicated, has been under way for quite some time. I understand, as recently as last week, that it was extinguished. Environmental officials have been on site. I've been getting regular reports on it. And the most recent report that I received was very favourable, that indeed it was extinguished.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, Katepwa needed this government to help hold up its end of the bargain and put the fire out. Instead the government didn't even show up for over three months, despite concerns about residents' health from the smouldering fire. And what the government said to local officials is that the ministry is "not a service provider."

The Katepwa emergency management official wrote back, saying, "I must note that smaller towns, villages, and resort hamlets have very limited staff or no staff. We do expect some assistance on matters we are not experts in." Local officials believe that this fire would not have lasted so long if the provincial government had lived up to its responsibilities. To the minister: why did this government refuse to help put this fire out, and why did the landfill have to burn for almost six months?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thanks very much for the question. This government is very proud of its record in dealing with communities about environmental concerns. Whether it's Kindersley, whether it's Katepwa, or any other community, this government takes our responsibility very serious.

We just recently went through SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] and SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association], and the meetings that we had with those communities are very favourable about the way this government treats the environmental concerns that they have and the innovation that this government is putting forward, something that we never saw from members opposite for 16 long years, Mr. Speaker.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, if this government takes it so seriously, why did the Provincial Auditor blast them in December for failing to properly regulate, monitor, and inspect Saskatchewan's 700-plus landfills?

And when we hear that this government didn't even attend to a landfill fire for three months and it didn't help put the fire out and let it burn for almost six months, that's a major concern to the people of Katepwa and to Saskatchewan people.

To the minister: when will this government take seriously its responsibility for landfills?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr.

Speaker. Thank you for the question. This government does take it very serious. As the member indicated, there are some 700 landfills in the province. And we will put our record up against the members' record any day of the week as we work together to address the challenges that are put in place, Mr. Speaker.

We certainly want to work with those communities. We realize that things can't be done overnight. Certainly members opposite did not address it when they were in government. We continue to look at it through revenue sharing and other members . . . We work with communities, with rural municipalities. We will have a solution. It will be an innovative solution that we can be proud of. That's more than I can say for the members opposite.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

New Bridge for Prince Albert

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Last week we heard two different stories from this government about a second bridge in Prince Albert. The Minister of Highways said this government is adamant that P.A. [Prince Albert] does not need a second bridge and that this government will not help fund one. But then the Premier said this government would actually consider supporting a second bridge for Prince Albert but only if it is a P3 bridge.

So to the Premier: which is it? Does this government think Prince Albert needs a second bridge or not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — I want to thank the member for his question, and I want to thank him for his support of P3s in the province. We have one member over there at least who's going to get beyond the ideology of at least the provincial NDP — not the federal NDP perhaps because they already also support P3s. But the Leader of the Opposition just can't bring himself to support a P3 even if it means a school in his own constituency, Mr. Speaker. So kudos to the member.

Mr. Speaker, we're going to work with the city of Saskatoon. As you know, they have a proposal to PPP Canada [Public-Private Partnership Canada].

I was asked in Prince Albert, if the people of Prince Albert were going to put their own money up and were going to apply to PPP Canada, would we consider being a part of that? I said, Mr. Speaker, we'd never turn down a meeting under those circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, the current request has been for the province to completely fund a new bridge, and the traffic numbers simply don't warrant it. That's what the study has shown that was actually sponsored by the city of Prince Albert together with the ministry. But we welcome the support of the member for P3s. We hope that it continues, Mr. Speaker, through schools and through other infrastructure that we need to build in the province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. The P.A. *Daily Herald* reported:

Regarding the perennial issue of a second bridge over the North Saskatchewan River, Wall said the government would monitor the success of the commuter bridge in Saskatoon based on a P3 and would be willing to converse with the mayor and city council should they choose that road.

So this government has been steadfastly refusing to admit that Prince Albert needs a second bridge. But the Premier now says that the government would talk, would talk to Prince Albert mayor and council if and only if the city chooses a P3 bridge.

So the question of whether or not P.A. needs a second bridge shouldn't depend on what model is being proposed. It either needs a second bridge or it doesn't. So once again to the Premier: which is it? Does he think Prince Albert needs a second bridge or not?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Well, Mr. Speaker, the member for Athabasca has got me cold, Mr. Speaker. I admit to my admission, Mr. Speaker. We said simply to the people of Prince Albert through the media that if the city was going to go ahead with a proposal to PPP Canada which would require the city of Prince Albert to make an investment, would we talk about that? Absolutely we would, Mr. Speaker. We've talked about the bridge project with them even after the report was done by the Ministry of Highways together with the city of Prince Albert.

Mr. Speaker, and if there's ever a doubt that this government's serious about infrastructure in the municipalities, just witness the budget that was just passed in this legislature last week with twinning in the budget, Mr. Speaker, for southeast Saskatchewan and passing lanes for 7, Mr. Speaker. We see in the budget the Regina bypass, the most significant Regina infrastructure project in a very, very long time, and yes, an interest as well in proceeding with the commuter bridge for Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, this government, this side of the House is about building infrastructure for a growing economy. And unlike members opposite, we'll look at traditional builds and we'll look at P3s, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Mr. Speaker, the people of Prince Albert need commitment, not talk and not just a play of words, Mr. Speaker. No wonder the people of Prince Albert and area are so frustrated with their local Sask Party MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] because they are so ineffective and they refuse to stand up for what matters to the people in Prince Albert and area.

The people of Prince Albert and area and the people of northern Saskatchewan deserve so much better from this government, and that's why today we are standing up for them and we are asking the question. So once again to the Premier, we need some financial commitment here today. Will he just admit that

Prince Albert needs a second bridge? And when will he finally say the words, we as a government, the provincial government, as Premier, I will commit to building a second bridge and will put real money into that second bridge? Will he stand up in this Assembly and say those words for the people of Prince Albert and area? Will he do that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Wall: — Mr. Speaker, the member's questions are a bridge too far in terms of the measure of this government's commitment to Prince Albert. Because of the voice of members of this side of the House in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, we've seen historic investment in that vital city in the province of Saskatchewan.

We've seen a historic investment in brand new child care spaces. We've seen a new gym for Carlton, Mr. Speaker. We've seen brand new Pineview Terrace long-term care beds. We've seen new mother-child programs. We've seen brand new addiction beds built in that community, Mr. Speaker, because of the efforts, because of the efforts of our MLAs who represent Prince Albert and area, Mr. Speaker. All of those projects represent additional investment over what they used to get when NDP members represented them.

The bottom line is this, Mr. Speaker. Whether it's a twinning project on 11 and expediting that with the federal government to the benefit of P.A. and area; whether it's other infrastructure and issues, we can work together with the people of Prince Albert. Whether it's work with Paper Excellence to get that mill reanimated at least in terms of cogeneration, this side of the House, Mr. Speaker, once again when it comes to P.A., has a record of action versus talk from members opposite.

[14:15]

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

Environmental Protection

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, there's a new report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change today and it's a very concerning one. The head of the IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] says that the findings in the report should "jolt people into action."

Unfortunately when it comes to this government, we don't see action on climate change. We see continual cuts. This government has cut climate change funding by 82 per cent since 2009. To the Environment minister: how can he possibly justify that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Thanks for the question. Certainly when we talk about environmental records in Saskatchewan, one fact is indisputably true. The worst record in this province's history was from 1991 to 2007. Greenhouse gases increased some 60 per cent over that 16-year period. What did our population do? It went down, Mr. Speaker. What did greenhouse gases do? They went up. What's

happening now, Mr. Speaker? The population is up. Greenhouse gases on a per capita basis are down 1.8 tonnes per person, Mr. Speaker. That's our record compared to theirs.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, the fact that this government has cut funding for climate change programs by 82 per cent since 2009 isn't surprising. It's concerning, but it's not surprising because this government has made it abundantly clear it does not prioritize sustainability and environmental protection. This government is delaying the Technology Fund. It watered down SaskPower's conservation target. It cut environmental protection and environmental assessment. It says it's a fallacy that we can increase our reliance on renewable power. It slashed our emission targets and presided over a significant increase in emissions. That's this government's shameful track record on the environment. And as a resource-producing and trade-dependent province, it's reckless for us to have this kind of track record.

To the Environment minister: with such a dismal record on the environment, how can he possibly justify the further cuts that we see in this year's budget?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister for the Environment.

Hon. Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Well, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated earlier, the member's facts just aren't true, Mr. Speaker. When we look at the record of this government and the very proud environmental record that we do have, we can talk about the nearly \$70 million that has been invested in the Go Green Fund, Mr. Speaker. We can talk about projects under that fund that have helped us reduce the greenhouse gas emissions in the province. Whether it's the Aquistore project, whether it's a wood pellet project, whether it's the high-level wind turbine and storage technology that we are working together with Cowessess First Nations on, Mr. Speaker, this government has a very proud record.

We can talk about the two air monitoring zones that we created, the stabilization of the greenhouse gases on a per capita basis. We became a leader in clean coal technology, Mr. Speaker. We have people from around the world coming here looking at us, and we are being a leader in that way, very far from what the members opposite did. Mr. Speaker, we've began testing our northern lakes.

And, Mr. Speaker, today we are talking about the budget. In 2004 do you know what the NDP did in their budget, Mr. Speaker? They cut 200 people and they closed offices around the province, Mr. Speaker. A far cry in 10 short years.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

WRITTEN QUESTIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government Whip.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the answer to question 310.

The Speaker: — The Government Whip has tabled answers to question 310.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

SECOND READINGS

Bill No. 123

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 123 — *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to wade into the discussion about Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013*. What this bill does, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what it says it does. It will be . . . The new legislation will repeal a number of public and private health Acts, related Acts that, as the minister said, are obsolete and outdated. And that's where I think some interpretation may come in whether or not in fact some of these Acts are in fact obsolete.

But the public Acts that are included that will be repealed are *The Dental Care Act, The Medical and Hospitalization Tax Repeal Act, The Mutual Medical and Hospital and Benefit Association Act, and The Senior Citizens' Heritage Program Act*.

I think the one very interesting piece, Mr. Speaker, is the repeal of *The Dental Care Act*. I know for any of us who grew up in the 1970s in particular, Mr. Speaker, a big part of the regular visits in the schools were to the dental health nurse, Mr. Speaker. And it was both preventative, and children also had the opportunity to have some minor dental work done in their school. This is in essence . . . Well this was brought in by the Blakeney government in the 1970s as a form of prevention, Mr. Speaker, the second phase of medicare, as it were, in terms of some of the prevention things that need to happen.

And I have many . . . I can't say that I loved going to the dental nurse. But I do know that it was something very appreciated by my parents — the youngest of seven kids, one income in my family, and a very busy schedule my parents had. So that opportunity during class time to go out to see the dental health nurse and see if there were any problems, have a fluoride treatment, and deal with any minor cavities was something that happened in schools throughout the province, Mr. Speaker.

And in fact it wasn't until, I don't think I saw a dentist or visited a dental office outside of my school until I was in grade 7 and knocked my front tooth out playing softball, Mr. Speaker. So it was all those years . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . My colleague asks if it was a fast pitch. It was in fact a bad bounce on very rocky, or very bumpy terrain, Mr. Speaker. So that put an end to my softball career, Mr. Speaker. But in fact those many years of seeing a dental nurse in the school kept myself and all my cohorts out of needing further, more extensive dental

care, Mr. Speaker.

And I think about my community and my constituency now at this point in time, Mr. Speaker, and I know there are many people in Saskatoon Riversdale who either can't afford dental care or getting to a dental office is a big deal, Mr. Speaker. And that's why having clinics in schools was a very beneficial thing, and I think would be today. My colleague from Regina Lakeview pointed out that in fact in Alaska they have a program that they've modelled very much after Saskatchewan's original dental care program. So I think to call that model obsolete is perhaps not the word that one would use, Mr. Speaker.

And I know that there are many . . . I think about the pediatric clinic actually at St. Mary's School, or where the first pediatric clinic started at St. Mary's School. Again it's about bringing health care and bringing services to where families are and where children are, to do that preventative work to ensure that kids have what they need and grow up healthy and happy and have improved opportunities, Mr. Speaker.

There's a few other pieces here that are repealed, and I know I'll have an opportunity in committee to ask some further questions. Actually my colleague from Regina Lakeview had talked about the repeal of *The Medical and Hospitalization Tax Repeal Act*, and he pointed out that many people don't remember that. I certainly don't, Mr. Speaker. But there used to be a hospitalization or medical tax that was across the province on the property taxes, Mr. Speaker. And that's been quite a long time since that's happened.

So another thing that's being repealed is *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefit Association Act*, and again my colleague from Lakeview points out that what this relates to is one method the community clinics or one Act where community clinics were created. And so we now have legislation that allows for a couple of other ways that community clinics will be incorporated or could be incorporated, so this Act will no longer be needed, Mr. Speaker.

But I know on Bill 123, *An Act to repeal miscellaneous obsolete Public and Private Statutes*, we will have an opportunity in committee to ask further questions. So with that, I'll complete my comments.

The Speaker: — The minister has moved second reading of Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)*. Is the Assembly ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Speaker: — Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this Bill.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

that Bill No. 123, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Speaker: — This bill stands committed to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 124

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Nutana . . . excuse me, Saskatoon Riversdale.

Ms. Chartier: — And proud of it, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to enter the discussion on Bill No. 124, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act*. And this particular bill, Mr. Speaker, again says what the . . . It's repealing miscellaneous statutes, a number again.

The minister, or actually it was the House Leader, the Government House Leader who spoke on behalf of the minister in his remarks and said that this bill will repeal a number of public and private related Acts, that again are, he uses the terminology obsolete and outdated. And as a result, three other pieces of legislation require minor amendments to remove references to an Act that is being repealed, *The Health Information Protection Act, The Insurance Premiums Tax Act, The Pharmacy Act, 1996*. And each of these Acts will have references to *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefit Act* removed as it is being repealed under *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal Act*.

So, Mr. Speaker, I know my colleague, again from Regina Lakeview, spoke to this bill as well. And it was interesting. You do look at the bill, Bill No. 124, so often you look to the minister's comments to see what the bill is about. But if you look directly at the bill, it is specific around *The Co-operatives Act* and how it relates to the previous bill that I just spoke to, Bill No. 123, affecting a bilingual piece of legislation. And my colleague went on to say that *The Co-operatives Act* . . . it affects *The Co-operatives Act* and makes some changes in that Act to reflect that there's nothing much being said by the House Leader on this bill or on the Minister of Health that references anything about *The Co-operatives Act*.

So this bill in particular, what it does, Mr. Speaker is, where community clinics in the past have been incorporated under what was called *The Mutual Medical and Hospital Benefits Association Act*, this was one of the ways that community clinics could be incorporated. And when the previous legislation proposes to get rid of that Act, there needs to be amendments to *The Co-operatives Act* to reflect that, and these amendments have to be in both English and French. So that is what this bill is about, Mr. Speaker, Bill No. 124. And when we move it, when we get this bill to committee, we will have some further questions about that. So with that, I will conclude my comments.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 124, *The Miscellaneous Statutes Repeal (Consequential Amendment) Act, 2013* be now read the second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

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

[14:30]

Bill No. 125

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Ms. Harpauer that **Bill No. 125 — *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)*** be now read a second time.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

Mr. Vermette: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to join Bill 125, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2013*. Just to make some comments I guess on legislation that's coming forward and to again thank the committee members. I want to acknowledge the colleagues in the House that came together to form a Traffic Safety Committee hearings that we went around the province.

And this legislation is bringing in some of those recommendations and will deal with some of those situations and I guess recommendations that were brought forward by the committee and recommendations that were provided to the Legislative Assembly after going through the summer, last summer, and doing the hearings, going through a lot of information. This clears up some of the safety issues. And I want to talk a little bit about that and get into that.

But again I just want to thank both sides of this House coming together to find ways of improving and, you know, preventing injury and saving lives. And that's what we were asked to do. And I think the committee came together with 26 recommendations. Of course we have our own minority opinion on one that we brought forward, and we hope at some time the government will look at that.

But having said that, Bill 125, there are some areas in it, and we'll have a lot of opportunity, I know, in committee to ask questions. But I just want to talk a little bit and looking at the booster seats was one thing. We had Dr. Martin bring forward from the Paediatric Society, a committee. And we heard from Dr. Martin, and she made it very clear. She'd referred to weights of children that are in booster seats, car seats, and

heights. But also, you know, when you look at the age limit that she recommended was nine. And I know the government's moving on a number of her recommendations, but unfortunately instead of going to the age of nine, for some reason seven was chosen.

Now I just want to give you an example, my own grandchildren. You know, some of them are, for their age, seven, they're fairly tall. And you know, they're heavier. We know that. But we also have some of my grandchildren who are actually, when you look at their age of them, they're not meeting the height or the weight, and they might be eight. And it's unfortunate they don't have to now be in a car seat.

And after hearing what the doctor had to share and what the recommendations and why and the accidents that, I guess, the doctor's concern that they had, when you see a child who's not properly in an adult seatbelt and you think that child's safe in there, the damage that can be done. I mean from that, I have to say honestly with my own vehicle, my grandchildren now, we have both, me and my wife, in our vehicles — and we have a lot of grandchildren, so trust me — we make sure that they're in car seats for a reason because of safety. And it's something we took for granted, I have to be honest, you know. If I wouldn't have heard of the injuries that you can prevent and save injuries to our, you know, our children and children of the province, our grandchildren, you want to do that.

I think we have a little bit more work to do on this. And in light of the recommendations, for some reason whether we didn't, you know, within the committee we missed it, or whatever, with the age of seven, and that was decided. I'm not sure. But in committee, I'd like to ask more about that and find out. And we will be asking that. And maybe there is a chance to look at that and see, maybe get more information, and maybe there's a good reason to change it or amend it, whatever. But anyway having said that, right now it's coming before us at age seven, not nine as was recommended. And that in itself, we'll work that out.

The other area, you know, I want to talk about, we did make some great gains in impounding vehicles when somebody's been under the influence of alcohol. There might be different reasons why and different levels. We know .08, there is provisions in there. But it also talked about some of the recommendations that came forward, was for between I guess the warning range is between point five and eight. And from my understanding, we chose to go ahead with the probationary driver's licence. Your vehicle would be impounded for 72 hours if you were in that category. But that was for a driver's licence, somebody with, you know, a probationary driver's licence.

Unfortunately we did take it serious enough and listened to the expert opinion and I guess the evidence that was, you know, came out of Alberta and BC [British Columbia] clearly stating, if you look at the numbers when they went with impounding, they saved lives. That piece of legislation did by saying no, we'll do a 72-hour impoundment for even in the warning area of all drivers in those provinces. Clearly the data, the evidence was clear.

And I think the different individuals or organizations that did the reports to the committee made it very clear what this . . . and the lives and injuries that were saved by, you know, taking this

next step and moving it. And it's unfortunately that's one part of it, I have to say. And we're going to talk about that, and we can in committee, we'll do some work on that area. But that is truly another area where we wish, you know, that would have been followed, following evidence, you know, and the data that was provided and I guess the evidence that I think just about 50 per cent of lives were saved by that, involving that impoundment in that category.

So it's unfortunate the government, you know, didn't introduce it that way. But you know, there's opportunity we can ask more questions. And maybe at the end the day, you know, there's opportunity for government to amend, and there's a way to do that. And maybe, you know, the members opposite and with committee members and members of the . . . We could bring it forward to say we can do better, and we have to do better. Saskatchewan people deserve better. And maybe that's one area we could move on.

You know, there's about 26 recommendations that were made. But these are just some of the areas we're talking about in this bill. And I know myself and my colleagues, we will have more questions when this bill goes to committee, to make sure that we do the due diligence and the good work that we're asked to do on behalf of Saskatchewan people and those concerns. It's a way to bring those issues. But at this time, Mr. Speaker, I have no further comments on this bill.

The Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the minister that Bill No. 125, *The Traffic Safety Amendment Act, 2013 (No. 2)* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

The Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Crown and Central Agencies.

Bill No. 128

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Morgan that **Bill No. 128 — *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2013*** be now read a second time.]

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

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to enter into the debate on Bill No. 128, *An Act to amend The Saskatchewan Employment Act and to repeal The Public Service Essential Services Act*. And this is quite a bill before us. It has quite a history connected with this government in so many different ways. And of course it really does talk about

how ineffective . . . how a government can go about in so many wrong ways to build strong, good legislation to serve the people of Saskatchewan.

And if there was ever to be a case study when this gets finished . . . Who knows when it will get finished actually because as we understand it will go to the Supreme Court. It's going to be heard in the Supreme Court in just a short while, and that means the story is not over yet. And here we are, seven years, seven years in on something that I think is critically important but could have been handled in so many different ways.

And there were so many opportunities to do the right thing, to say, how can we step back from our ideology that we know and I think we can all say was wrong-headed when it comes to protecting people, making sure they have the services they need but at the same time protecting the right of people to fair and collective bargaining? There's got to be a way of balancing that out. And we're talking about balance, aren't we, Mr. Speaker? And clearly this was a case of that being thrown out the window.

So it's been seven years and we are not finished it. We are not resolved it. And while we may finish this chapter, you know, the second reading today, it doesn't mean at all that it's finished, which is unfortunate because I think in Saskatchewan, we have a long, long history of people serving, working men and women serving people and their families through all sorts of extraordinary situations to make sure people are safe, that they're healthy. And somehow this went all wrong.

And so today we are here to debate this Act to amend *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and to repeal the public services essential services Act. And I need to say that of course there's a couple of parts to it. Of course the one that we often refer to right off the bat is, we call it the essential services legislation. But there's some other parts to it too because we have to deal with amendments regarding minimum wage and that type of thing and minimum age.

And of course what we'll see in this omnibus legislation that's become known as *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* formally . . . When it was in the House being debated, it was Bill 85. But now it's a piece of legislation, a piece of legislation that was passed just about a year ago but yet to be enforced because there are no regulations.

So we're still using the old legislation. We're using the old labour standards. We're using the old occupational health and safety. We're using the old trade union Act because of the rush, the rush to get this done and the cavalier attitude of the government to say, well why don't we just get it done, and then it'll be done?

And then people are . . . But people then say, so what is the legislation that we're following? Is it labour standards or is it employment standards? What's the definition of employee? All of those kind of questions. And where do I take my concerns to? Is it the Labour Relations Board? They will be the people you take the concerns to when you have employment standards infraction, but if you've got a labour relations thing, then you go there. Labour standards thing, where do you go with that? Well you go to the ministry. So it's just really quite, quite

confusing. And so we have a lot to say about this, and we'll have a lot to say in committee about this.

But I do want to talk a bit about the seven long years, that how this winding road . . . And it's not nearly over yet as we await what the Supreme Court says. What will happen in committee? And of course there will be some requests for amendments. And last year, Mr. Speaker, as you will remember, there were several last-minute amendments. And I'll talk about some of those in just a minute.

But I think that first we need to review this long and sordid story about essential services and the Sask Party government that started out with Bill 5. And it was introduced on December 19th, 2007. And clearly at that point, people were taken aback because there were no signs that this government was going to be doing something as extreme as Bill 5 and 6. They were coupled together. And people were not prepared, and we had quite a lot of unrest in that year of 2008 as the government rammed this through.

And of course I remember clearly when the International Labour Organization, ILO, ruled on it, saying there were major problems with the legislation, major problems with the legislation. Of course the minister at the time just said it wasn't the ILO's best day when they ruled accordingly. But then we had, just following that, Judge Ball's ruling.

And the whole issue really became around consultation and dispute resolution among other things, but those were the two big things, and just the way the government really acted in a way that was not respectful of the role of labour in a modern economy, especially in an economy such as Saskatchewan's because in so many ways it was the working men and women who built this province and were there. And if you're looking for a middle-class economy both to provide the services, to provide the necessary labour to make things work, it just wasn't a respectful, a meaningful way to engage those people who were so important to our economy.

And now of course then the government of the day then decided that it would appeal Judge Ball's ruling. And of course then we were off to the Supreme Court, and that's where we're waiting upon right now. And we'll wait and see what the arguments are and what the outcomes are in terms of essentially the right to strike and what are the parameters around that.

[14:45]

In the meantime the government decided that they would introduce Bill 85, *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. They said, well if we're going to rewrite the essential services legislation . . . Because they're going to have to do that. They're going to have to redo Bill 5. They might as well make a bigger envelope for it. And they wanted to create this omnibus piece of legislation, the employment Act, and of course here we are. And it's still struggling to make it work as we await the regulations.

And we are curious about what are the implications of this legislation as people will, you know . . . Mr. Speaker, we often see the situation where people are kind of forewarned that changes are afoot because, you know, there's been debates in

the legislature. There will be notices. There will be different things. People are aware that we're talking about these issues in the House. But here we already have a case of an amendment to Bill 85, the employment Act, and that Bill 85 has not been enacted. And so we're kind of in limbo here where we're amending things that aren't even in force. And we have before us the essential services component which may be impacted by, in just a few months, a ruling from the Supreme Court of Canada.

And of course there was an opportunity, and I would say a year ago there was an opportunity. And we had the media talk about this, and we talked about it really. We could have had an olive branch and say listen, why don't we get together and work to make sure that labour legislation is the best it can be? And that's important for all sides — the government side, for our perspective as . . . you know, in our roles advocating for fair and balanced legislation. But the government decided to rush forward, that it had to have this legislation passed. And here we are almost a year later and nothing's really changed. Nothing's really changed.

And we just have a lot of questions about what was the driving force behind that then? What was the driving force behind that? What was the driving force behind the December 19th, 2007 introduction of Bill 5? Well I think it's about ideology, isn't it? It's about just the world view this government has when it comes to working men and women, and especially those who are organized and I would say those who are unorganized as well, that somehow they feel that they're not worthy of the respect that they should get.

And at the end of the day I have to ask, I really have to ask, and we've seen this, about why is this legislation before us. So much of it is unnecessary and should have been worked out in a much more appropriate way. People do want to make sure our highways are safe, that our hospitals and health care is accessible for those essential situations. But we all appreciate the fact, when it comes to fairness, there has to be a process. There has to be a way that people can have fair collective bargaining.

And so with this, we have a lot of questions, and I know that there has been some that people have brought forward to the House. And I know that SEIU [Service Employees International Union] West for example — and the minister is well aware of this and so are members and I'm sure the staff of the ministry as well — talks about some of the needed amendments to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*.

Now it's really important, Mr. Speaker, that we recognize the fact that now that this legislation is open and what's odd now because you have this huge piece of legislation called the employment Act, that actually covers several former pieces of legislation that actually you can access. And I do plan on raising concerns about all parts of the employment Act because now it is open. For example though, if I had a concern about workers' comp issues, I really couldn't talk about that in this bill because there's not a section relevant to that. But this bill does cover all sorts of things, whether it's labour standards, now called employment standards, occupational health and safety, that type of thing.

SEIU West raises concerns about division 14, talking about establishing multi-employer bargaining units within the health sector. And of course that was an issue that was raised over a year ago because this government had talked about how are you going to organize the bargaining units. And of course their concern was, you want to make sure that they're bargaining units with . . . In fact they were doubling up the number of bargaining units and particularly in health regions and throughout the province where you wonder, how much more bureaucracy are we going to have to deal with in terms of new bargaining units and that type of thing? And how . . .

It works through and it talked about the Dorsey commission and the regulations and the subsequent health labour relations reorganizations that they insist must be continued in division 14 in the health sector. And it's really important that they take a look at the amendments and that those amendments be carried out.

And it does go on. SEIU does talk about the fragmentation of the bargaining unit and the issue around supervisory employee and what impact it will have and the potential to lead to the creation of three or more new bargaining units within the health sector, which leads to an increase in the number of collective agreements to negotiate and the minister.

And it's been so ironic that this government here has been so over-the-top in its commitment to lean and cutting red tape, but when it comes to bargaining, here we might have a situation where you might start to create three or more new bargaining units. And all the impact of this in terms of the health region is huge. You know, the Premier today even alluded to the fact that there are over 40,000 people who work in the health region, and how are you going to break this up? How are you going to fragmentize this? And that's really, really important that we try to use some common sense, that we try to make this as effective, and try to reach the goals in making sure people have fair collective bargaining agreements. But fragmenting it and breaking it up could be a real problem.

I'm also concerned about what the driving force is behind the changed definition of employee in section 6-1(1)(h) of the Act. It talks about how this is really quite a different circumstance and it could result in fewer working people having access to collective bargaining within their workplace. Again a real concern about that.

And they go on and talk about setting arbitrary limits upon the ability of a health care worker to gain experience, training, and access towards upward mobility within the health care structure. So again, problems with that. And of course the whole issue of minimum age at which employees may be employed at any class of employment. It's not readily apparent why these two matters have not been set up in the Act itself.

And so we have lots of questions that we want to make sure that they are not lost protections. But I did ask the minister in committee a year ago about what has been the result of the lowering of the minimum age and what's been the impact of that. What's been the impact in our schools? What's been the impact in our completion, our graduation rates? We know for example that one of the challenges in our high schools is having people complete grade 12. In fact this government has set out in

its vision, in its plan, that we see an increase in grade 12 completion rates. But what has been the impact of employment? And I will have questions about that.

I want to go on and talk about some of the problems identified, and I'm referring to SEIU West here, but I know other unions have raised this too. I'm talking about the definition of essential services in section 7-1(1)(c) — far too broad. It really remains unchanged from *The Public Service Essential Services Act* and talking about problems around that, and you know, how the definition was replied on by employers who justify business as usual and the overdesignation of essential employees within the health regions in the event of work stoppages. And they say if this issue is to be properly addressed, it needs to have a clearer, shared understanding of what constitutes essential services, and that's important.

They talk about using the British Columbia labour relations code definition, and I think that might be something we talk about in committee. And I think this is quite important because it was that dilemma, you know, it was so ironic that in fact many of the health regions said they needed so many people to be designated essential that in fact it was above the number of people actually working when you took into account the unfilled positions.

It talks about the public employer and what's going to happen with that, and we're not sure of what that all means until we see the regulations. And again this is the issue with so much of the legislation this government puts forward is it's all going to be, the devil's in the detail in the regulations. And this is really, really important.

Significant issues around timing and process issues are put into Bill 128, and we're not sure what the implications of all of that will be. In terms of the time frame, there's no time frame provided for the employer that furnished notice to the union, and that may be some problems.

The unilateral designation of essential services by employers, and it talks about the dispute resolution options for people to reach an agreement and how they can apply to the LRB [Labour Relations Board] and what this may all play out to be. So we're waiting to see how that plays out. And so in the whole case of the idea of a single arbitrator or arbitration board under section 7-22 does not lend to a fair and balanced resolution for outstanding issues.

And so it talks about the mandatory items but that they must also, arbitrators must also consider general economic conditions of Saskatchewan. So they call them the permissive items, include terms and conditions. But the whole thing is, when you talk about the whole economy of Saskatchewan, what that means for an arbitrator in terms of . . . The economy of Saskatchewan's quite broad and has a lot of different variables to it. And what that may mean in terms of how the arbitrators may rule, whether or not they're considering or focusing just on health sectors, maybe health sectors in other provinces, that is a question that we have to ask.

And of course the SEIU West questions the changes made under section 7-36, as the initial fine to a trade union has doubled, and it's setting it to \$100,000. And why the change to

\$100,000? And I will have a lot of questions about that in committee because I find it interesting, and these will be the questions that I have in committee.

Essentially we saw a doubling of fines for occupational health and safety, and this happened about two years ago. And yet we have seen that part of *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* that was brought into force . . . All of that Act was brought into force except for one key part, and that was the part about the occupational health and safety fines. That is still not enforced. And daily, almost weekly we read about the new fines against employers who are breaking occupational health and safety law. And they're being fined, and we think that's a good thing. But we are disappointed that in fact the fines are about half of what they should be because the new fine structure was passed two years ago and has not been brought into effect. And we have questions about that.

And when we see this piece of legislation where the fines are being doubled for trade unions to 100,000, will that same standard that's being used for employers, where employers are not being . . . Fines are not being doubled even though the legislation is passed, but it's not in place. It's not in effect. Will this happen with this specific piece, specific section, 7-36? We'll have that question for the minister and we'll have some good conversation about that as well.

[15:00]

So we just have to ask, what is the rush? What is the rush? And you know, we could have taken some time to get this right. We could have got all the parties together and said, let's get the essential services piece right and make sure it's balanced and it's fair and it respects labour's right to fair and collective bargaining. And a dispute resolution mechanism, or whether you call that the right to strike, we need to make sure that that is treated in a fair way. We could have done this so much better.

Mr. Speaker, I want to talk a little bit about *The Employment Act*. And it was really, you know . . . We were all here on December 3rd last year when the firefighters came and did their annual legislative lobby. It was the 15th annual legislative lobby in . . . And they talked about their concern that was in Bill 85. Of course Bill 85 was passed but not enforced.

And it was so ironic that the next day that Bill 128 would be introduced. But Bill 85, to the firefighters, had a very unfair solution to their bargaining situation in some of their locals. And it talked about section 3, how *The Fire Departments Platoon Act* sets out an exemption stating that firefighter unions in cities of a population of less than 10,000 did not have access to binding arbitration. Really it only affected one local, and that was Weyburn. And so the only option they had, if they didn't produce a collective bargain, was to serve strike notice, something they never chose to do. In Weyburn they've never done that.

And they go on to talk about how, for the others, the mandatory binding arbitration process specified in *The Fire Departments Platoon Act* for the other seven locals produced labour stability. And in fact if you took a look at firefighter collective agreements in Saskatchewan from 1969 to 2013, you would see that 146 of 198 contracts, or 74 per cent, were freely negotiated.

So it seemed to be a process, a process that was working. But what happened was that Bill 85 and division 15, which really was a replacement for *The Fire Departments Platoon Act*, raised the population threshold in the final stages — and I remember that day when they did this — went from 10,000 to 15,000 and ultimately to 20,000. So as a result of that, firefighters in Yorkton, North Battleford, and Swift Current joined Weyburn as those locals that had no access to the arbitration system that was in place. And in fact we know that these were already amongst the lowest paid professional firefighters in Canada. And then they would not be able to apply for interest arbitration like firefighters in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw, and Prince Albert.

So this was really a problem, and it's really something that the firefighters have argued that something be done to take its place. That actually this government step back and say, maybe we made a mistake. And I'll be asking this in committee. Are they prepared? Are they entertaining issues around or consideration of amending the employment Act so that these folks would have access to interest bargaining?

And so this is a real problem and I think that they do something to help the four smallest firefighters' locals, and have them, you know, have the same access to the kind of bargaining process that you have in Saskatoon or Regina and Moose Jaw and Prince Albert. So this is really, really important that we do something about this. And this is just one of the examples of many that we have where, as I said, this government has not taken the type of time and consideration to have good labour legislation here in Saskatchewan.

And the other one that I want to talk about is around minimum wage. And today we just heard of course that the minimum wage goes up to 10.20 on October 2014. So those summer students that will be looking for work, this will be the third summer that they will be paid \$10.00 an hour. We think that's unfortunate. And of course going up 20 cents is not an awful lot. It is about time that they actually did make an announcement. Of course it's sort of a mixed blessing and we have some disappointment. We thought it would be higher than that.

We know that Manitoba's 10.45; BC is at 10.25; Ontario, 11; Nova Scotia's 10.40. That goes up to 10.40 tomorrow. So somewhere between 10.40 and \$11 would have been a more reasonable number. And we have to see — we are looking for it, maybe we'll get some insight into this — the indexation formula. But we are behind eight provinces and territories. And then if we index it at this level, that means that we'll always be behind, that we always will be behind, you know.

And I know that the government takes a lot of pride in the individual taxpayers now pay no Saskatchewan income tax on their first 18,650. But of course we know that if you're full-time minimum wage, you're actually making much more than that. You're at 20,400.

So I think that while they can . . . You know, it was really interesting. There's a comment about, that was made about using income tax to solve, you know, this fact that you're paying poverty wages. But really, people just want to be paid a fair wage and they want to pay fair taxes. It's not an either-or

situation. It's not an either-or situation. And I think that this . . . We'll be looking forward to hearing more about this. And of course we're not going to hear the formula until quite a bit later in the year and what the formula will be made up of.

And so he's saying that the change in minimum wage will always be announced on or before June 30th of each year and it will take effect in October. So maybe on one hand that's getting ready for the season, Christmas rush, and people employed in that. That's good. But I know for students, they're going to be one year behind in terms of having a fair wage.

And so we are looking forward to seeing what the regulations will be. And of course when we asked this question last week, the government was sort of really taking its time in terms of getting this minimum wage regulations out. But it was so ironic because last year that was yet another reason why they said they had to get the employment Act passed, because they wanted to get the regulations for the minimum wage regulations out. But it will be at least a year before that is actually . . . You know, a year will have passed, a year will have passed.

So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Deputy Speaker, there is a lot that I can really talk a lot on this issue because it's a very, very important one, and one that we really should be focusing on, about what's really important to working women and men. And I would have to say — and I know this is one that the minister and I have often talked about and we share a lot of agreement — it is really around making sure Saskatchewan is a safer place to work. And I would rather be talking about occupational health and safety and those concerns. Previous year we saw a situation where, well about 60 people had died from workplace incidents. We don't want to see that kind of thing occur again.

We know that in the changing workplaces in Saskatchewan, whether it be agriculture and of course forestry, was announcements last week. But of course in our workplaces in the health regions, in our highways, all of these places where people do work, we have to make sure they're as safe as possible, you know. And I could go through the different sectors whether it's . . . construction is also one that needs a lot of attention.

We just have to strive to do a much better job and we need to focus on the issues that are important and not be distracted by ideology. And here we are seven years later, seven years after the fact, and I remember that, 2007, in the different situations that caused some concerns. But you know the working women and men were always there to make sure people were safe, and that if there was a critical situation that they were looked after.

So we were disappointed then. We continue to be disappointed about how this takes away from what really needs to be the key issues here in Saskatchewan. And I haven't even begun to talk about what the costs would have been over these seven years in terms of what it's cost the public purse in terms of court costs, developing a bill like Bill 5 just to have it thrown out. And now we're repealing it. What was the total cost of that failed adventure by this government?

And so, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would like to say that we won't be here next year debating yet another amendment to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, but I have a funny feeling we

will be. And we'll be here for many years to come, as this government can't seem to get it right in terms of labour legislation. And I think that we're going to have . . . it's going to be a piece of work that needs to be corrected, needs to be corrected. But of course this government's ideologically bound by some inability to consult and work with people who make this province what it is. I just feel that we've got to do better. We can do better, and we need to do better.

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I know that we'll have a lot of questions in committee because of course, as I said the employment Act is a large piece of legislation. And so not only are we going to be talking about essential services, we're going to be talking about minimum age. We're going to be talking about minimum wage. We're going to be talking about occupational health and safety. We're going to be talking about the firefighters sections and what's happening there. Because you know, once we get into committee and we're talking about amendments to legislation, this bill allows us to have the opportunity to ask those kind of questions.

And so with that, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I have no further comments at this time.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is the motion by the Minister of Education and Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety that Bill No. 128, *The Saskatchewan Employment Amendment Act, 2013* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker, to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Human Services.

Bill No. 129

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

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 129, *An Act respecting the*

Administration of the Executive Government of Saskatchewan, making consequential and related amendments to certain Acts and regulations and repealing certain other Acts. Mr. Speaker, this bill is a rather extensive bill in that it covers quite a number of the Acts and pieces of legislations in government. And it also deals with regulatory powers that change how the government is organized.

[15:15]

Normally when we look at these types of bills we're always concerned to see if there are unintended consequences, if there are things that are happening that may cause some difficulties down the road. I think the main issue for me, after many years on both the government side and on the opposition side, is that there needs to be transparency in how decisions are made. And so when I look at this particular legislation, I have a few questions that I will raise here about that particular issue.

Now one of the things that the minister's stated was the intention of government in presenting this bill was to remove confusion about how ministries are organized and how ministerial responsibilities are assigned. If this bill accomplishes that, I think that's a good thing. But the point becomes, will it do it in a straightforward manner or does it actually create some other layers or veils that will cause some difficulty for the whole operation of government?

And so one of the interesting aspects of this is quite an interesting governance issue which relates to how our parliamentary democracy works in Canada or in other countries in the Commonwealth, and that relates to this melding of the executive branch within the legislative branch. We know that there are many times where it's difficult to assert the power of the legislature over and against the executive, when the Premier and the executive effectively controls the government caucus. And one of the things that this particular bill does is to further consolidate that power of the Premier as it relates to the regulations establishing ministries.

Up until this point, any of those types of regulations are set up in a way that allows for legislative review under our standard review of regulations by the legislature, but in this Act it ends up changing the rules so that the regulations created by the Premier and Executive Council or the cabinet will not be subject to review by the legislature. Mr. Speaker, I think it may be important for especially the members of the legislature on the government side who are not part of the executive to take a good hard look at this one single provision because it does then eliminate the ability of this body to deal with that particular . . . to look at the regulations and how they're created.

And so what are those regulations, and what do they relate to? Now when you look at the legislation, it's pretty wide open. It is the, you know, regulatory power that you can designate words to mean anything you want, all those kind of things. But I think practically where this raises some concerns for us here in the legislature is as it relates to the ministerial appointments, the appointments of legislative secretaries, the ability of Executive Council to pay those legislative secretaries and pay for their travel and other kinds of things.

This is I think a way of the Premier spreading the tentacles right

throughout all of the members of the legislature on the government side. And when there isn't a control here in the legislature about how these things work, then it becomes an interesting question about diminishing the power of the legislature. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that we all need to look carefully at how these things are done because when you undermine that oversight role, you also undermine some of the ability to monitor how money is spent. And, Mr. Speaker, I think that this is just a point that is interesting, but it maybe gives a little more power to the Premier's office than they actually need.

And as the members know, I've often talked about this role and this trend to diminish the power of the legislature, increase the power of the executive branch. And, Mr. Speaker, I think there are aspects of this particular bill that go towards that particular issue.

Now there's some other changes that are made in the legislation related to advisory committees to ministers. And one of the interesting ones is that this again takes away power of ministers to appoint advisory committees that they might use in their activities without getting the approval of cabinet. And so, Mr. Speaker, what the legislation does is say that the appointment of advisory committees to ministers will require cabinet approval in all cases.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if there've been some problems with this in the five years of this government; maybe we can find out some of that when we get into committee. But it raises some interesting questions around that control. Presently the advisory committees, if they're under one year, the minister can appoint them without concern and basically get some advice on some very specific issues. And that's not necessarily something that's done without a fair bit of public information. But this appears to consolidate control around ministers' advisory committees more directly into the Premier's office and to the Executive Council side.

So I would say once again, this is an area where ministers need to take a bit of a look at this legislation to see what's the intention here. Why is this being put there? What are the problems that have arisen now that are requiring this kind of a change?

The next provision in this one relates to the federal-provincial agreements and the fact that they don't require cabinet approval if the expenditure is under \$50,000. Now I don't know if this is a reflection of the fact that the present federal government has some pretty small amounts of money that they send to the provinces or that, you know, what specifically it's dealing with. But it's interesting to say that you will basically eliminate any need to have that show up in the cabinet approval.

Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons that you end up with cabinet approval of all kinds of contracts done in various ministries is for accountability and transparency. And what we know is that if we don't have a record of it through an order in council or something that's public, it may take a long time before the public ever even knows about some of the agreements that are entered into. And I think a step that moves away from that accountability is not a positive step. And so I say on that particular clause once again, let's take a good hard look at it and

ask some questions because we want to make sure that the public has as much information as possible around how government works and how public money is being spent.

Now there's quite a few provisions in the Act, and actually the bulk of the Act relates to making changes in names around the words ministry and department. And I don't really have any comment about that other than it's a fair task to change all of that wording in all of the pieces of legislation. And I'm sure we'll get amendments next year and the year after and the year after that, as other pieces of legislation are being changed.

Now I think practically there's a couple of other changes where I ask the government to be careful. One of them is around the whole treasury board issue, where they're saying that they're going to change *The Financial Administration Act* to provide that treasury board can have non-ministerial members. And this here says it's consistent with all of the cabinet committees and how the government operates.

Mr. Speaker, there's been a traditional protection for cabinet and cabinet decisions when those decisions are made by cabinet. I'm not sure whether there's been sufficient legal advice sought on this particular issue, but I know that in a number of situations over the years there have been questions raised when non-cabinet members are part of a committee and decisions are made. And, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I'll give you one good example that I was involved with, and that involved the situation where the judges of the Provincial Court of Saskatchewan were suing the government and the cabinet, and the issue became discovery of the discussions and minutes of what happened in cabinet.

And, Mr. Speaker, it was clear from the cases that any discussions that took place within cabinet where there were no non-cabinet members, no MLAs available, all of that was covered by very clear rules around cabinet secrecy. But caucus meetings where the same issues were discussed, where there were both cabinet and sitting MLAs, those documents and those discussions were all available to the court for review for discussion of what was happening in the discussions around the compensation for Provincial Court judges.

And, Mr. Speaker, this legislation, the way it's worded here appears to raise concerns about ever having protection of cabinet secrecy around certain decisions and discussions that are made. And so I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, that this may be one that the Attorney General should be looking at again to make sure that the right protections are there. But this melding or this muddying of the water between what is a cabinet body and what is cabinet body with legislative members in it, I think has long-term consequences for the institution of the cabinet and the secrecy of that discussion that can take place there.

Now, Mr. Speaker, maybe we're at a point where we don't need a place where there can be fully protected discussions on decisions that are made. But I'm not sure we're there, and I think there are times and there are places where there need to be protected discussions, in camera discussions, that are protected by law. And, Mr. Speaker, I think there's a risk in this legislation that that protection will be further eroded. And I expect that when we get a chance to talk to the minister, who I think bringing it forward it's either the Premier or the Attorney

General, we'll have a chance to talk about some of those questions. But they're very serious questions, and you don't always know exactly where that protection will be needed or where it's required. But, Mr. Speaker, there's something in this bill, I think, that's going to cause difficulties for future governments, no matter what the political stripe, as we move forward.

So, Mr. Speaker, Bill 129 has some changes that I think have taken quite a bit of thought, but I also think there are some dangerous parts of this legislation that we will need to look at, and we'll get a chance to ask some of the questions about that in committee. But it may be that the ministers who are bringing this bill forward will want to take a look at some of those issues before it goes to committee. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

[15:30]

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 129, *The Executive Government Administration Act* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

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

The Deputy Speaker: — Stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice.

Bill No. 130

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

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

Mr. Nilson: — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise to speak to Bill No. 130, *An Act to make consequential amendments to certain Acts resulting from the enactment of The Executive Government Administration Act*. I think primarily this bill is another aspect of Bill No. 129 that we were just discussing, but it does relate to the bilingual bills that

are changed, and that's one of the main reasons for this particular legislation.

I think the other aspect of this goes right back to my concerns about this melding of the legislative powers together with executive powers. And I'm asking that the ministers involved with this take a good, hard look at what they're doing here because it does raise these same questions about the ability to rely on the traditional protections of cabinet when you meld together so many different people. And the issues in this particular Act relate to permitting members of the legislature to be chairpersons of Crown boards even though they're not part of Executive Council, some issues like that.

But, Mr. Speaker, there are a number of aspects around this melding together of the Executive Council functions together with the legislative council that I think bear some clear scrutiny because we could end up having unintended consequences of these changes as it relates to issues down the road. Now obviously the goal for legislation like this is to be more transparent and more accountable. If there are things that defeat that goal, then they should be rooted out as well.

But, Mr. Speaker, I say once again, take a good, hard look at this particular legislation as it relates to that muddying of the distinction between the cabinet and members of the legislature because I think it is a dangerous area and that we need to be careful looking at it. With that, I have no further comments.

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

Some Hon. Members: — Question.

The Deputy Speaker: — The question before the Assembly is a motion by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 130, *The Executive Government Administration Consequential Amendments Act, 2013* be now read a second time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — Carried.

Principal Clerk: — Second reading of this bill.

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

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

The Deputy Speaker: — This bill stands referred to the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. I recognize the Government House Leader.

Hon. Mr. Harrison: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In order to facilitate the work of committees, I move that this House do now adjourn.

The Deputy Speaker: — The Government House Leader has moved that the House adjourns. Is it the pleasure of the

Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Deputy Speaker: — That's carried. This House stands adjourned till tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 15:35.]

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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
Water Corporation

Hon. Kevin Doherty

Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Provincial
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Hon. Gordon Wyant

Minister of Justice and Attorney General