



THIRD SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

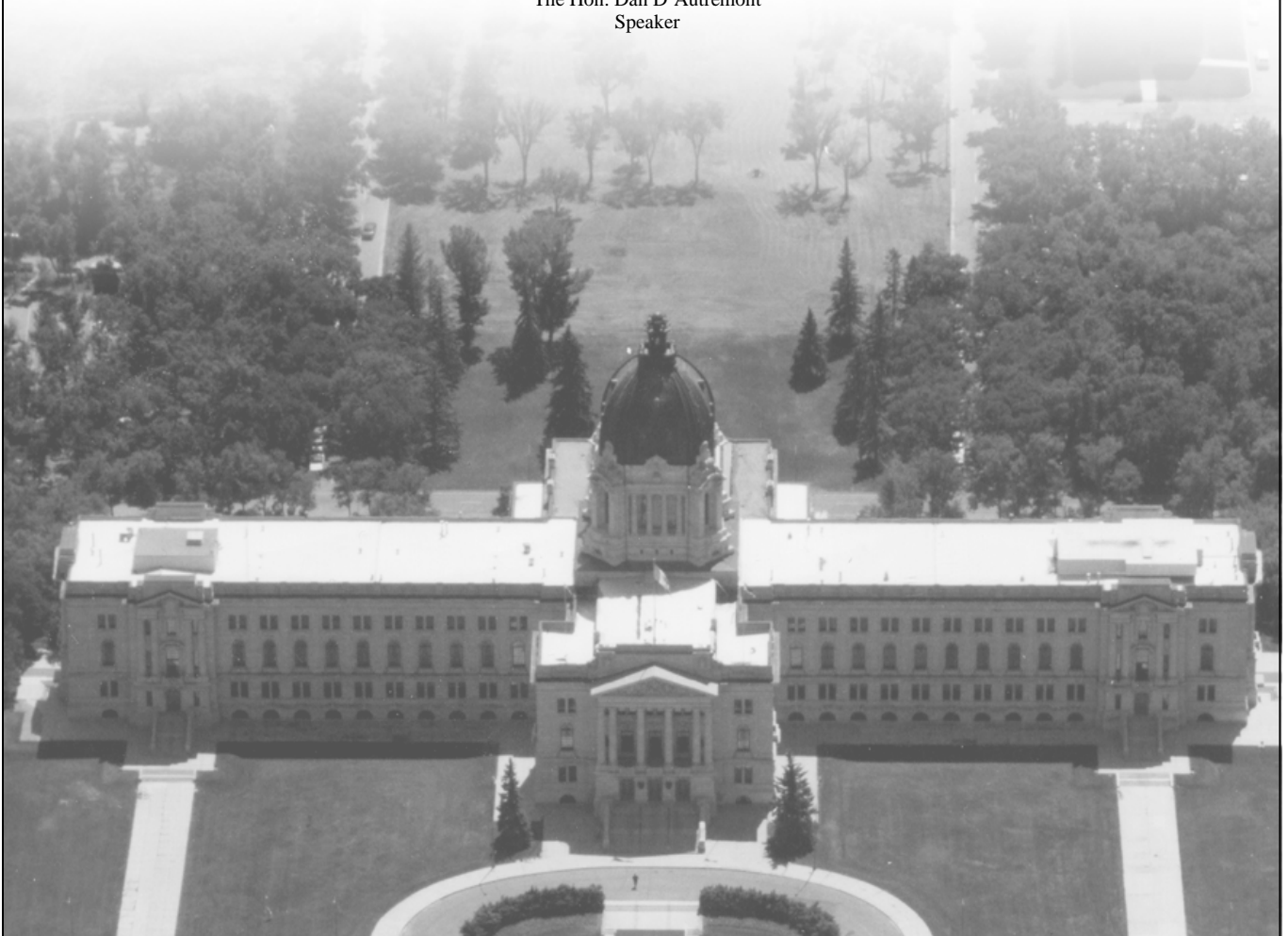
of the

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 member for Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to introduce my intern for the rest of this session and through the summer, Mr. Dustan Hlady. He's up there in your gallery. And he's living in Moose Jaw or, as I call it, Moose Gaw, and his wife and two little ones. And we will be delving deep into the history of Saskatchewan, so I would ask all members to welcome him to this Assembly.

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

Mr. Marchuk: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, I am very excited to introduce 22 grade 8 students from the Regina Christian School here in Regina, Mr. Speaker, just down the block from the legislature actually.

They are accompanied by their teacher, Mr. Geoff Glasspell. And he is one of the coaches of the Regina Christian School Grizzlies, Mr. Speaker, quite an athletic program. Mr. Glasspell in his own right is quite an athlete, having played basketball for the Regina Cougars.

I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming this group to their Legislative Assembly, and we'll have an opportunity to meet them afterwards.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, I'd like to introduce guests who are seated in your gallery from the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada, Saskatchewan Division. Members will know that they will be hosting MLAs [Member of the Legislative Assembly] this afternoon, after the House adjourns, at a reception.

Joining us this afternoon is the board Chair, Brian Duck; Vice-Chair, Bonnie Gleim; government relations committee Chair, Eugene Paquin. Also accompanying them are division president, Erin Kuan; and government relations and research support director, Jessica MacPherson.

Mr. Speaker, it's a pleasure to acknowledge this organization, their employees and their volunteers, who work tirelessly advocating on behalf of people with MS [multiple sclerosis]. I look forward to meeting them later this afternoon, and I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly.

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

Ms. Chartier: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure on behalf of the official opposition to join with the minister in welcoming the guests from the MS Society of Saskatchewan, or Canada-Saskatchewan Division. Excuse me, my lips are not working incredibly well today. Welcome to Brian Duck, Bonnie Gleim, Erin Kuan, Jessica MacPherson, and Eugene Paquin. I blame it on dental surgery, actually.

But to the guests, welcome and thank you for all the work that you do in providing services, and in terms of the research that you do and ensuring that people in Saskatchewan can live better with MS and hopefully will not have to live with MS down the road. So thank you for all the work that you do and with that, welcome these folks to their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Hart: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased that you remembered my riding. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure this afternoon to introduce guests seated in your gallery. We have a former Speaker and a former member of Last Mountain-Touchwood. Mr. Arnold Tusa is seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker. He's taken time to bring us a guest to the legislature who has travelled some distance to be here. He's accompanied by David Bekesi, and I knew I was going to have problems with that name. Mr. Bekesi is here on a cultural exchange program sponsored by the Hungarian national government. He arrived about 10 days ago, and he'll be with us here in Saskatchewan for about six months.

The purpose of his visit to Saskatchewan is to connect with Saskatchewan residents who originally came from Hungary, or else their ancestors came. And he's going to help them to reconnect with their Hungarian culture, Mr. Speaker. He's already mentioned that he's also a folk dancer and has already connected with a group here in Regina. And I know he'll be quite successful in his . . . and he will certainly be warmly welcomed. His first visit to a community happened to be to Mr. Tusa in my home community of Cupar. So, Mr. Speaker, I would like members to welcome them.

But before I take my place, Mr. Speaker, I see someone else who has a bit of a connection to Last Mountain-Touchwood: the former member of Melville, which Last Mountain-Touchwood does take part of that constituency, Mr. Ron Osika, the current mayor of Fort Qu'Appelle. I would certainly like to welcome Ron here to the Assembly and thank him for his time that he spent with myself and Graham Jacobs, a member of the Western Australian Assembly.

We spent two and a half great hours touring the All Nations' Hospital in Fort Qu'Appelle. And Ron's a member of the board, and I certainly thank him for all the time and effort that he spent with us that day. So, Mr. Speaker, I would ask members to welcome these guests to our Assembly.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the member opposite and, on behalf of the official opposition, welcome Mr. Tusa back to his Assembly here

today. Certainly I know he served with great integrity in this Assembly. I'd also like to welcome our guest from Hungary here today. Mr. Bekesi, welcome to our province. Thank you for your time here. We hope it's productive.

It's also a pleasure to welcome former Speaker and current mayor of Fort Qu'Appelle, Mr. Osika. Your Worship, pleasure to have you here today. Thank you for all you do. I know a tireless champion in Fort Qu'Appelle to this day. It's also a pleasure to see the mayor, His Worship of Torquay, here today. Pleasure to have you join us in this Assembly. I ask all members to welcome these fine members to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I do want to join with the member from Rosemont to welcome the mayor of Torquay, Michael Strachan, to his Legislative Assembly. Michael does a great job as the mayor of the community of Torquay. He also serves on the board of SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association] and is doing a great job in his first, I believe, his first term on the board of SUMA as a member of the executive.

Mr. Speaker, His Worship Mayor Strachan and I go back a few years, playing a lot of baseball and hockey when we were growing up. And I got to know him especially playing baseball in high school for a year with him. I just also want to acknowledge that Michael is seeking candidacy at a federal level for this upcoming federal election, seeking a nomination for a federal party, and I want to wish him all the best in that upcoming nomination run. And I want to ask all members to join me in welcoming Michael Strachan to his Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to welcome a school group from my constituency, right from the heart of Saskatoon Massey Place. And that's a group of grade 6 and 7 students, 28 of them, from Vincent Massey Community School. Along with them, Mr. Speaker, are their teachers: Ms. Allison Howdle, as well as Ms. Cindy Joyal, and along with chaperone, Jolene Agent.

It's great to have this group. The teachers have been very diligent in bringing school groups in previous years, and I look forward to the conversation with them later on this afternoon, Mr. Speaker. And it wasn't too long ago that I saw a good number of them during Literacy Week at the school for a time of reading in the library. So it's great to see the commitment of the students to learning, and the commitment of the students to learning about democracy and about our legislative system.

I would also like to highlight, Mr. Speaker, the important work that the staff and the students are doing at Vincent Massey Community School as it relates to building a strong community in Saskatoon. And they were recognized by the city of Saskatoon with receiving one of the Living in Harmony Awards for the work that they have done in hosting events like powwows as well as other cultural activities, showing off educational activities around new Canadians as well. So I really want to compliment the staff and the students on that. I ask all

members to join me in welcoming this group from Vincent Massey School, please.

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

Ms. Ross: — Mr. Speaker. I would like to introduce to you and through you to the rest of the House, Dr. June Zimmer, seated in your gallery. June is nationally recognized as a health researcher with a passion for sport and physical activities and the promotion of women and girls. June is also the founder of Girls in the Game here in Regina. June was awarded the Alumni of Distinction Award for Champion College.

We're pretty excited to have June facilitate the Dove workshop that the member from Regina Wascana Plains and myself will be hosting this Sunday because June is well recognized and very well respected within her field. And she's been named one of the women to watch on the Most Influential Women in Sport and Physical Activity list by the Canadian Association for Advancement of Women in Sport. So we're pleased, Mr. Speaker, to have June join us in the House today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join with the member from Regina Qu'Appelle Valley in welcoming Dr. June Zimmer to her Legislative Assembly, one Champion grad to another, and to thank her for all the great work that she does making Saskatchewan a better place for all.

I'd also like to welcome in the east gallery, Mr. Speaker, two individuals seated there. One is Ms. Taylor Apperley, and her friend, Ms. Deidre Brandt. And I've known Taylor since she was, even before she was born. And I think I've gone on about this before in the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, so I won't belabour the point. But certainly two young women with a great interest in the public affairs and life in this province, and it's really good to see them here today in their Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Provincial Secretary.

Hon. Mr. Elhard: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, I'd like to introduce again one of the members of the MS delegation that's with us in the gallery, in your gallery today. I want to single out specifically Ms. Bonnie Gleim. Bonnie is a businesswoman in the town of Eastend. Her office is located right next to my constituency office, so we see each other frequently.

But what I want to make clear today, Mr. Speaker, is that Bonnie is the driving force and the prime organizer behind the MS Walk in southwest Saskatchewan, which over the last decade and a half has literally raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for MS research. And I want to salute her for her continuing effort in that regard, for her patience, and for her commitment to the cause.

Ms. Gleim is no stranger to this facility. As you know, Mr. Speaker, she's the daughter-in-law of a former MLA, Mr. Ted Gleim, who represented the constituency of Shaunavon a number of years ago. I'd like to ask all of our colleagues to

welcome Ms. Gleim to her Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I just want to point out that it's not often that I get family here to visit us in this Assembly, especially myself being from the far northern community of Ile-a-la-Crosse. But I want to welcome my twin brother here, Ron Osika. A lot of folks may not notice, Ron and I are twins. We're very close friends, and we've become family over the years. But I want to say, Mr. Speaker, that Mr. Osika, being the mayor, has been a great, great confidant over the years. And he was also a great, but fair, Speaker like yourself, Mr. Speaker.

And I want to point out that he's been a source of friendship, a source of courage, and certainly a source of inspiration. And I want to thank Mr. Osika for the many, many years that he's helped me along, and to point out that he'll always be a friend to me and my family. And I'd ask all the Assembly to welcome one of the fair and great Speakers, Mr. Ron Osika.

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

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't sit in my seat when a mayor of one of the largest communities from my constituency is in the gallery, so I too would like to join with the members opposite and on this side and welcome Mayor Osika to his Legislative Assembly. Of course he, as was mentioned, sat on the floor here for many years.

Ron represents, as the mayor, one of the nicest communities, one of the most beautiful communities in the province, with the lakes and of course the ski hill, Mr. Speaker, that we frequented quite a bit, Mr. Speaker, as we had some boys growing up. But he does . . . I've noticed that he's visiting the city a little bit more than he did in the past. I think he's really enjoying those passing lanes on No. 10 Highway, Mr. Speaker. So welcome again to the city of Regina and your Legislative Assembly.

[13:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Estevan.

Ms. Eagles: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my colleagues in welcoming Mike Strachan to the Assembly. Mike is the mayor of Torquay, which is in my constituency. So welcome, Mike. I hope you enjoy the proceedings today.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today appears to be the day of reintroduction, introducing a lot of the people who are in the gallery. So I'd like follow suit and reintroduce Eugene Paquin who is here today with the MS Society, but also significantly for me, he lives in my constituency and happens to be the president of my constituency association. So I'd like to commend him on his good work, both in the constituency association and with the MS Society. And I welcome him down here and urge him to continue keeping up the very good work he does on both of those very important fronts. Thank you, Mr.

Speaker.

The Speaker: — Well I would like to join with members in welcoming two former Speakers to the Assembly: Mr. Arnold Tusa and Mr. Ron Osika, as well as their guests. And before we move on, I just wonder, is there anybody in the gallery who didn't get introduced?

PRESENTING PETITIONS

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

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

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.

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

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present petitions on behalf of concerned residents as it relates to the lack of safety on Dewdney Avenue, and the unacceptable inundation of heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue. They note that this issue was caused by actions of that government, and that any further delays by that government to resolve this unsafe circumstance is entirely unacceptable. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Legislative Assembly call on the provincial government to immediately take action as it relates to the unacceptable danger, disturbance, and infrastructure damage caused by the heavy-haul truck traffic on Dewdney Avenue west of the city centre, to ensure the safety and

well-being of communities, families, residents, and users; and that those actions and plans should include rerouting the heavy-haul truck traffic, receive provincial funding, and be developed through consultation with the city of Regina, communities, and residents.

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

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

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

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

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

It is signed by many good people of the North. I so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I stand today again and present a petition to build a second bridge for Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker. And the prayer reads as follows:

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable Assembly may be pleased to cause the government to guarantee that a second bridge that serves central and northern Saskatchewan, and as well the city of Prince Albert, will receive a commitment from senior governments.

And, Mr. Speaker, the people that have signed this petition are from Humboldt, they're from Regina, and they're from all throughout the land, Mr. Speaker.

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

And, Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to present this petition today. Thank you.

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

Ms. Sproule: — Mr. Speaker, I rise to present a petition for real action on climate change. And the residents who signed this petition wish to bring to your 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; and that slashing programs such as the Go Green Fund and the EnerGuide for Houses energy efficiency program set the province on a backwards course.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan enact a real plan and allocate 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.

Mr. Speaker, this is signed by citizens from Saskatoon. I so submit.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Cut Knife-Turtleford.

Volunteer Wins Professional of the Year Award

Mr. Doke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise in the House today to recognize a personal friend of mine, Ms. Pearl Hawkins, who is from the village of Meota in my constituency. Earlier this month Pearl was honoured at the Rivers West District for Sport, Culture and Recreation Awards Night in Radisson.

After being nominated by the village of Meota, Pearl received the Professional of the Year in appreciation of the many activities she heads or works in within the community. Pearl sat on village council for six years and belongs to the Meota Lakeshore Lions, Meota ADRA [Adventist Development and Relief Agency], and the Meota Community Complex management board.

She has been tireless in the fundraising to keep the Meota Community Complex a viable facility, organizing multiple events throughout the year. Meota is lucky to have such a fantastic volunteer as a member of their community, and they appreciate everything that she has done for them. Mr. Speaker, it is role-model citizens such as Pearl, who just turned 75 years old, who strengthen our communities and help make our province such a great place to live.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members of this Assembly to recognize and thank Pearl Hawkins for the outstanding work she has done for her community over the years, and congratulate her on her Professional of the Year Award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition Whip.

2014 Saskatchewan First Nations Winter Games

Mr. Vermette: — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the many young people who were a part of the 2014 Saskatchewan First Nations Winter Games in Prince Albert from April 20th to the 25th.

The Prince Albert Grand Council was a great host for the 40th anniversary of the games. The proud tradition of these games originated in 1974 by Chief Tony Cote, whose dream was to see more First Nations youth involved in mainstream sports. The 2014 games had 4,000 athletes from 74 First Nations participating in badminton, curling, basketball, broomball, volleyball, and hockey.

I enjoyed attending the games and watching some very exciting medal matches. Sports plays a vital role in the development of our youth in our communities, and the research proves that it helps build healthier lives. I commend the games manager, Mel Mercredi, and the Prince Albert Grand Council executive and staff, including Grand Chief Ron Michel, Vice-chief Joseph Tsannie, and Vice-chief Brian Hardlotte.

The First Nations communities should be proud of all they are doing to change the lives of our youth for the better. I congratulate the athletes, and I want to give special thanks to the many coaches, volunteers, organizers, and officials who made the 2014 games a reality. Without their support and commitment, the games would not have been so successful. Thank you.

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

Knights of Columbus State Convention

Mr. Michelson: — Thank you. Mr. Speaker, last Saturday I had the pleasure of bringing greetings on behalf of the Premier and the Government of Saskatchewan to the Knights of Columbus 92nd State Convention banquet held in Moose Jaw. The convention held over the weekend was a great event that brought many people together to recognize and celebrate this fraternal organization.

This year 170 delegates attended with their families, along with district deputies and state program directors, making it close to 400 in attendance at the state banquet. Also in attendance at Saturday's banquet were the four serving Catholic bishops: His Grace Archbishop Daniel Bohan of Regina; their excellencies Bishop Don Bolen of Saskatoon, Bishop Albert Thévenot of Prince Albert, and Bishop Bryan Bayda of the Eparchy of Saskatoon.

Mr. Speaker, the Knights of Columbus continue to work and contribute in many ways to their communities for a better living for us in the province. As effective advocates and defenders of civil rights, of religious rights, they contribute billions of dollars and millions of hours in volunteer service and charity.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the Knights of Columbus for all they do for our communities and congratulate them on the success of their annual convention. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Saskatchewan Paddling Symposium

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, I would like to both recognize a fantastic event celebrating paddling in Saskatchewan and to recognize Ric Driediger, a man who

helped shape it.

The Saskatchewan Paddling Symposium was held on April 25th in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of Churchill River Canoe Outfitters, one of Canada's oldest and foremost canoe outfitters and instruction companies. The event gathered people from far and wide. There was an opportunity to learn about and celebrate the history and future of paddling in Saskatchewan. Ric Driediger owns Churchill River Canoe Outfitters, and the symposium was also an opportunity to recognize his important contributions to the paddling scene here in Saskatchewan, to celebrate the anniversary of his business.

I know Ric, and I've had the opportunity to gain from his insights and passion as I've ventured on so many of my own canoeing adventures throughout our incredible North on the historic Churchill River. Quite simply, there is not much better than a fresh fish fry or shooting the rapids in this vast, remote wilderness. I could not be more pleased that Ric was honoured with the Saskatchewan Tourism's Lifetime Achievement Award, an award that is so well deserved.

Ric is a northern Saskatchewan paddling expert involved in wilderness leadership and guiding since 1973. He's well known for his stories from his many years of adventures.

I call on all members to recognize the success of Saskatchewan's first Paddling Symposium as well as the incredible leadership and contributions of Ric Driediger and the Churchill River Canoe Outfitters for helping shine a light on our beautiful North. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

Ms. Jurgens: — Mr. Speaker, Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month begins tomorrow. It is estimated that about 3,700 people in this province live with MS, the highest per capita rate in all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, following requests from MS patients and specialists, Tecfidera, an important new oral medication for MS, will soon be more available in Saskatchewan. Our province will be the first of the Pan-Canadian drug pricing alliance partners to cover this treatment. Saskatchewan led the negotiations that recently resulted in a pricing agreement between the manufacturer and the provinces and territories.

Mr. Speaker, our government understands how important MS research is in the search for answers about MS itself and how best to treat it. Our government funded participation by Saskatchewan people living with MS in a clinical trial in Albany, New York, but unfortunately the lead researcher closed the trial last September. Since then we have met with stakeholders and other partners to identify opportunities to support MS research for the benefit of Saskatchewan people living with MS.

Mr. Speaker, the MS Society is hosting an MLA reception later today, just one small part of its important work on behalf of the residents with MS and their families. We want to thank the MS

Society and all of its members for the good work they do to raise awareness of MS in Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Melfort.

MelBex Awards

Mr. Phillips: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, one of the building blocks for any thriving community is its business sector. Last Wednesday evening, I was very pleased to attend the Melfort & District Chamber of Commerce 18th annual MelBex Awards. This is an opportunity for the community to shine the spotlight on the excellence of many of the businesses in our community.

I would like to offer my congratulations to Catz 'n Jammers, who received two awards that evening. Other winners were Scotiabank, Melody Motors, and Northland Building Supply. The Community Involvement Award was won by Communities in Bloom, whose effort guided the city to a four-bloom award in the national competition.

The Melfort Journal won the Heritage Award for its strong involvement in the community for the past 107 years. Throughout those many years, the *Journal* only had four owners, of which my family was one for 28 years.

I was very proud to see a good friend and a very strong community leader, Peggy George, named Melfort Citizen of the Year. Peggy has worked for the good of the city throughout her life, and an interesting fact is that Peggy George was actually the chamber president 18 years ago when the Citizen of the Year was introduced.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members join me in congratulating these award winners and all of the nominees whose efforts are so valued by Melfort and surrounding area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Presenting Policy Alternatives

Mr. Hickie: — Well, well, well, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre claimed the Ministry of Highways is throwing tools and equipment out on the highway workers who need them, all because of lean. He knows it's not the case, Mr. Speaker. And all he can tell us is that someone came to him and told him this. He's just following his leader, making erroneous statements, and we have to correct the record. And the NDP [New Democratic Party] leader refuses them. All he can say is, quote, it was reported, or claims his inbox is full.

Here are some of the real facts reported that he can read today in today's *Leader-Post*, Mr. Speaker. From the Five Hills Health Region, savings of \$269,000 in acute and emergency care costs with new assessment tools and, more importantly, improved patient care; \$184,000 in savings for primary care and

mental health, reducing appointment times from weeks to days and lab services from hours to minutes. And the new Moose Jaw hospital costing \$30 million less than originally forecasted, thanks in part to lean.

If the Leader of the Opposition has given up on presenting policy alternatives, that's fine. If he wants to change his name to the new democratic protest party instead of saying where he stands on issues, that's fine as well. If he wants to ignore the civil servants who come to committee meetings and answer questions about lean, fine.

But in all the rhetoric and spin, Mr. Speaker, we ask the opposition to remember why we are in this Chamber. Principled and informed debate in this Assembly serves the people of our province better than fearmongering or torqued information ever will.

QUESTION PERIOD

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

Costs, Benefits, and Contract Terms for the Lean Initiative

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yesterday the Minister of Lean, Mr. Speaker, boasted, she actually boasted about government throwing away 60 fully decorated Christmas trees in the Moose Jaw Hospital storage area. Can the Premier confirm that those Christmas trees were part of the Moose Jaw Hospital Foundation's annual fundraiser, the highly successful Festival of Trees?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Wow, Mr. Speaker, leader's . . . [inaudible] . . . on Christmas trees. That's pretty spectacular. Mr. Speaker, the trees that were in the hospital were donated. They were taking up valuable storage space at the same time while the hospital was requesting additional storage space be built. Mr. Speaker, those trees were removed. Some of them were thrown away because they were so old. Other ones were donated to charitable organizations. And that space that held the trees was converted to an area for storage of maintenance equipment.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, here's what the Minister of Lean said yesterday:

. . . one of the examples of things that got thrown away were I believe at the Moose Jaw Hospital. Using up valuable storage space were 60 decorated Christmas trees. I don't know what any hospital needs with 60 decorated Christmas trees.

Well, Mr. Speaker, those trees for that annual fundraiser had raised \$2.7 million for the hospital foundation. But according to the minister, Mr. Speaker, those trees were thrown out to use for the fundraiser. It sounds bizarre. But what's more bizarre, Mr. Speaker, is that this government's go-to line now for the so-called success of lean is about throwing away Christmas trees for a fundraiser.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: is throwing away fundraiser Christmas trees really the best example of why we need to spend \$40 million on a US [United States] consultant and \$3,500 a day for each Japanese sensei?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, as I said, at a time when the hospital was asking for money for a new storage space, Mr. Speaker, there was an effort undertaken to look through their current storage facility to make sure that it was being used to its best capacity, Mr. Speaker, and there were trees in there. And as I said, some of the trees were thrown away because they were so old that they weren't in a good enough shape to be donated. And those that were in good condition were donated to charitable organizations, Mr. Speaker.

These were not the trees that were part of the Festival of Trees that were then auctioned off. I'm sure, Mr. Speaker, that the people of this province have far more pressing issues that they would like to discuss than the NDP's Christmas tree scandal.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, this government spends \$40 million on a US consultant; Japanese senseis, \$3,500 a day. And their best go-to line for the defence of lean, the need to spend that amount of money, Mr. Speaker, is because they had to clear out Christmas trees from the basement, Mr. Speaker.

Now John Black and Associates has a list of basic criteria for contracting. It says, "The following criteria must be met for all consulting contracts." Now, Mr. Speaker, on the list of requirements from John Black, I don't see Christmas tree disposal on the items. So perhaps that was an add-on from the \$40 million contract. Perhaps that was one that the senseis came up with. I don't know, Mr. Speaker, but the list of basic mandatory criteria does say this: "Add no people, no space, no new equipment, and spend no money."

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: does the government actually have John Black giving approval for new staff and new equipment, and is that why it's been so difficult for this government to actually fix the basics in health care and in seniors' care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition only needs to look to the Regina *Leader-Post* today to see some of the efficiencies and the savings through lean. Five Hills finds \$750,000 in savings through lean, is the title of the headline, the headline in the article.

Here's an example, and I think this is an important one. Obviously removing the trees that were not necessary in the hospital, especially the old ones that needed to be thrown away, is a good thing to do. You need to free that space up.

But here's a good one as well. Five Hills saved \$184,000 — this is just on the dollar side — by reorganizing appointment schedules. But here's why that's important. Patients who called for non-urgent mental health services could wait up to 30 days

for a callback and wait another 30 days for their first appointment. Sixty days is what we used to do, the norm, at Five Hills. Now after lean, patients have their first appointment in five days. Sixty days versus five days — I'll take that record any day of the week, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, John Black's stated criteria to have him engaged as a consultant says that . . . But the list of basic mandatory criteria does say this: "Add no people, no space, no new equipment, and spend no money."

My question, Mr. Speaker, was to the Premier: does government actually have to get John Black's approval for new staff, new equipment, and is that why it's been so difficult to get this government to act when it comes to health care?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Well, Mr. Speaker, I would just refer the member to the *Leader-Post* of today. I'd refer the member, the Leader of the Opposition, to the *Leader-Post* of the 24th of this month, just a couple of days ago, where it says that the number of registered nurses and nurse practitioners in Saskatchewan has hit an all-time high, 11,042. Karen Eisler, the executive director for the SRNA [Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association] says, "We haven't been over 10,000 ever. It's amazing."

Mr. Speaker, I think it's fair to say that we were able to invest those dollars to ensure that we have front-line staff, in this case RNs [registered nurse]. And no, we didn't need John Black's permission to do something.

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

Mr. Broten: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Also on John Black's mandatory list of criteria, it says that for consulting contracts that this must exist: "Establish a kaizen promotion office staffed with personnel approved by John Black and Associates." Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: does government have John Black approving personnel?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Again, Mr. Speaker, no.

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

Mr. Broten: — Mr. Speaker, the mandatory list of criteria that must be met for all consulting contracts for John Black, that's the \$40 million US consultant, it's a lengthy list. The mandatory criteria list also includes this: "Develop and implement a lean training matrix. Will include top leadership participation in Japan training led by master senseis who are students of Taiichi Ohno."

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier: how many top lean leaders will be travelling to Japan to take training from the master senseis who studied under Taiichi Ohno? Or are these the \$3,500 per day Japanese senseis that this government is repeatedly flying from Japan to Saskatchewan instead?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Health.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, with respect to the Leader of the Opposition's question in terms of Health officials going to Japan, the answer is zero.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We've heard a lot about the expenses related to this government's lean pet project. In Health there's \$40 million to John Black and Associates, \$3,500 per day for Japanese senseis, \$17 million per year for kaizen promotion offices, \$980,000 in hotel and travel for lean leader training, and \$17.6 million for wages covered for those taking the training. And we've heard about at least \$13.7 million for lean initiatives in other areas of government, including \$4.1 million for consultants alone.

So we've heard a lot about the expenses, Mr. Speaker, but this government has not been forthcoming with how much in total its lean pet project is costing Saskatchewan. Surely that is something Saskatchewan people deserve to know. So to the Minister of Lean: what's the answer?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we have repeatedly said in this House that the money that this government has spent on lean has paid for itself and then some. We've had millions and millions of dollars in cost savings. We've had about \$20 million in cost avoidance. We've had improved customer service, Mr. Speaker. In the case of Energy and Resources, the reduction in approval times for horizontal well drilling, every time one of those drills goes into the ground, Mr. Speaker, it's \$3 million to the economy of this province. Some of these things actually can't be measured in dollars, Mr. Speaker, because they're just so important to our province.

Mr. Speaker, I have example after example. I'll just give one right now. Saskatchewan residents were waiting over two months to be reimbursed for their out-of-country health expenses. There was a backlog of over 2,200 claims. That backlog has been eliminated and the processing time has been reduced by 81 per cent, Mr. Speaker. That is a direct benefit to the people of this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, again: how much in total?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I think the Minister of Health has been very clear on the contract totals. But, Mr. Speaker, in the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, which protects the interests of Saskatchewan's most vulnerable residents, Mr. Speaker, the time for payment was reduced from five days to just 1.4 days, a 70 per cent reduction. Their error rate was reduced from 15 per cent to 2.7 per cent. Mr. Speaker, these are for some of the most vulnerable people in our province. This is a direct benefit to the people of this province because of the lean initiative in this government.

Mr. Speaker, we will not apologize for doing things better, for serving the people of this province better. We didn't see that kind of improvement under the NDP, Mr. Speaker, and we see the results of that today in the House.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

[14:15]

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, we've heard the spin. But what is the sum total? Can the minister answer that for the people of Saskatchewan?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, I believe the Health minister has indicated that to date the Health contract is about \$26 million. In estimates the other night, I believe that we gave the total of, I think it's 1.4 within the corporate projects group which is now housed in the Ministry of Education, Mr. Speaker. The critic had the opportunity to sit through an hour and a half of estimates that covered lean. Mr. Speaker, he chose not to ask any questions, so there was a lot of time for information to be offered up there as well, Mr. Speaker.

But as I said, I have list after list of things that have been saved in this province, Mr. Speaker. I have quote after quote of government employees who are thrilled with the actions that we have taken, people who've said they've been in the public service for 28 years and nobody has ever asked them for their opinion on how to do things better, Mr. Speaker. We are engaging the front line of the public service and our third parties, Mr. Speaker, to make sure that we can do things better in this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, even taking a conservative approach to calculating the total cost for lean so far, based on the limited information this government has actually revealed, that very conservative estimate reveals at least \$92 million has been spent on lean to date. And we know even that number is far from complete because this government has refused to release information and they've refused to answer a number of our written questions.

Saskatchewan people deserve to know how much this government's lean pet project will cost them. So again to the Minister of Lean: what's the answer? How much will lean cost Saskatchewan taxpayers in total?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Mr. Speaker, pretty much every day that we come into this House, we listen to the NDP ask questions based on very erroneous information, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure where they get their information from, but 90-some million dollars is an absolute ridiculous assertion to be made in this House.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health has been on his feet day after day after day after day giving the numbers of the value of the contracts. Mr. Speaker, there is money being spent in other

areas across government. It's a few million dollars, Mr. Speaker. But as I said, the critic had an hour and a half in estimates the other day. He could have asked a lot of these questions instead of a couple of minutes in question period. Apparently it wasn't that important to him, Mr. Speaker.

But the public service in this province are very excited about the things that we are doing. Mr. Speaker, as I said, we've had public service employees who've been here for decades who are finally being asked their opinion on things. Another one said, "There's so many things that we do just because we've always done them." And, Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what we are trying to change in this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Opposition House Leader.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Speaker, I know this government's lean pet project seems to have taken on a life of its own and the costs are ballooning. So perhaps that's why this government doesn't want to put an estimate on how much, in total, the lean pet project will cost Saskatchewan taxpayers. It might be because they just don't know the answer, Mr. Speaker, or perhaps John Black and Associates haven't given approval for this government to release the information on how much the lean pet project will cost Saskatchewan taxpayers. But surely this government should at least be able to answer how much it has spent so far.

To the minister: why won't this government just release all of that information? What do they not want the people of Saskatchewan to know?

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

Hon. Ms. Heppner: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The member opposite has indicated that lean has taken on a life of its own. It absolutely has. It has changed the culture of the way this government does business, Mr. Speaker. That's exactly what it's supposed to be doing. And it's ongoing, Mr. Speaker. I don't think we should ever cease to look for improvements in the way government does things, Mr. Speaker. We saw under the NDP that they didn't make any effort to make improvements and we see today what the result of that was.

But, Mr. Speaker, another public service employee said:

When I first heard I was going to be involved in a lean project, I was hesitant because I thought lean meant finding ways to cut jobs. Once I learned more about lean I saw first-hand that it is not, but it's about finding ways to work more effectively to serve our clients.

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly the point of this: to serve our clients, the taxpayers of this province, better.

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

Support for Seniors

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we know that many seniors in our province are struggling with the cost of living and we hear heartbreaking stories about this all the time. And yesterday we learned that the number of seniors

having to use the food bank here in Regina has increased by 24 per cent just over last year. To the Minister of Social Services: how can she explain why the number of seniors accessing the food bank here in our capital city has jumped by 24 per cent in just the last year?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I also heard the report this morning about the seniors and the individual that was looking for housing, and that there was an increase in food bank usage. I think the question that the member opposite should be asking themselves is why, when they were in government for 16 years, they didn't look at things like the seniors' income plan. Never once in 16 years did they look at it. We've increased it 189 per cent since we became government, and for 16 years it was frozen under them.

Mr. Speaker, we've also looked at the housing issues for seniors and the social housing in Regina. The wait-list has decreased from 192 in June of 2012 to 92 in April of this year.

Mr. Speaker, we know there's always more work to do when it comes to helping those who are very vulnerable. But I know that we've also looked at things like the seniors' income plan, the personal care home benefit, the caregiver tax credit, and issues that we know impacts every one of them on a daily basis.

Mr. Speaker, there's never . . . Not one of us on this side of this House doesn't realize there's more to do, and we will continue to do that.

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

Mr. Forbes: — And, Mr. Speaker, under this government's watch, 3,000 seniors have been thrown off the seniors' income plan, and she knows that. It's cold comfort to seniors who have to go to a food bank — 24 per cent increase in the number of seniors in the last year, in the last year.

But we also know that there's an alarming increase in the number of homeless seniors seeking emergency shelter in Regina. And the director of the Salvation Army Waterston centre says, "This alarming increase is linked to rising rental and utility rates."

My question to the minister: is the government paying attention to this? Is it concerned? And when will it actually do something to help seniors who are living in poverty?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Mr. Speaker, the answer is each and every day and each and every budget we think about people that need our support. Mr. Speaker, there are 1,150 social housing units for seniors in Regina. Mr. Speaker, the wait-lists for those housing units have decreased from 192 in 2012 to 92 in April of this year.

And also, Mr. Speaker, we've talked about the seniors' income plan going up. We've talked about the personal care home benefit and caregivers' tax credit. And I think the member opposite should know that the seniors' income plan is based on

income. That's why people are not on . . . They're going off it because their income has increased. Isn't that what we're supposed to be doing? Isn't that what we're pleased to do in this province, is having seniors with more income? That's why we have the third-lowest percentage of low-income people in Canada.

We care about every one of those seniors that need support. And, Mr. Speaker, because of the changes we made in income tax, right now a single senior with \$25,000 in income tax, in income this year, pays \$59. You know what they paid in 2007? Nine hundred and thirty-three. Mr. Speaker, we are looking at things like the personal . . .

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

Mr. Forbes: — You know, Mr. Speaker, the members opposite can cheer while the minister recites stats, but what are the people on the front lines who are helping seniors every day saying? What are those people saying? They're seeing a 24 per cent increase.

And this is what the Regina Food Bank CEO [chief executive officer] has to say, and I quote. And he's a front-line worker. He's not regurgitating the stats. He's saying, "What we're starting to see now is people that would never have thought they would have to entertain the idea of reaching out for some support through the food bank."

And they laugh over there. The director of the emergency shelter says this:

The seniors that we've seen come to the shelter have been folks that have lived comfortable lives and because of their financial instability that they face, they've not been able to maintain that standard of living.

It's incredibly disturbing to hear about seniors' poverty. To the minister: will she just admit that Saskatchewan needs a comprehensive anti-poverty strategy?

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

Hon. Ms. Draude: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What I will tell the member opposite is what we need is continued action. The members opposite want to talk about another paper, another strategy, and we want to talk about action.

Mr. Speaker, a senior couple with a combined income of \$50,000 now pays \$494 in provincial income tax. That's a savings of \$1,699 compared to 2007.

All of a sudden there's a new-found caring about seniors from the members opposite. They had an opportunity for 16 years to look at our seniors' issues, and they didn't do anything. We've talked about the seniors' income plan. We've talked about ensuring that people that need our support are getting it, through access to housing, through personal care home benefits, the caregiver tax credit, to the Alzheimer Society, for the seniors' house call pilot program. The ministries together are recognizing the needs of our seniors, and I assure you, Mr. Speaker, that's something that we'll continue to do.

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

Funding for Education

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Yesterday I called on the Minister of Education to do two things: first, to scrap the lean clawback initiative that was sprung upon school boards and students in this year's budget; and second, to take the \$5 million that were earmarked for standardized testing and immediately redeploy them to the front lines of education where they make a difference in the life of students.

The Education minister had a lot of bluster but he didn't have any answers to a very straightforward question. So to the Premier: will he reverse the lean initiative clawback, and will he immediately redeploy the standardized testing money to places where it matters in the lives of students here today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Mr. Speaker, I answered the question yesterday. I indicated that we have a budget of just under \$2 billion a year. We'll never apologize for looking for efficiencies, especially efficiencies that will allow us to continue to redirect money to the front lines where our students are.

Mr. Speaker, some of the efficiencies that we've worked at and developed through lean in the Ministry of Education is: one, we've reduced the amount of time it took to get a contract approved for grant payments. The wait time for contract completion has now been reduced from rather than 20 to 40 days, to eight days, saving the province \$200,000 which is money that can go straight into a classroom.

Teacher certification process so we can hire teachers: we have reviewed the teacher certification process to streamline the process; cost savings, \$100,000. The turnaround time for Saskatchewan graduates has now reduced to three days where it was originally four weeks. The turnaround time for non-Saskatchewan graduates has reduced to two weeks from six weeks. Mr. Speaker, we'll not apologize for saving money and putting it in where the students are.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Mr. Speaker, what that minister has done is surprise school boards with millions of dollars of clawbacks across school divisions across the province, Mr. Speaker. In fact the approach of that government when it comes to education is increasingly embarrassing, and it's hurting students. We've seen how this government has been dismissive with teachers, with students, with educational assistants. But for this government to now be dismissing the very real concern of elected school board trustees is absolutely appalling. Elected school board trustees deserve better than that. Teachers deserve better than that. And certainly Saskatchewan's students deserve better from that government.

To the Premier: why can't he simply do the right thing here today, to scrap the lean initiative clawback and redeploy those dollars for standardized testing to where they matter in the lives of the students?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Morgan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we've had an increase in each and every year in the overall operating grant for school divisions — 26 per cent since November 2007. The members opposite are dismissive, stubbornly dismissive, but they just don't get it. They need to look back at what their own record was: '93-94 they reduced operating grants; 1995 they gave the school divisions zero per cent. That was how they treated the school divisions. The reason they were willing to do it, because they were willing to let students leave the province in droves, Mr. Speaker.

We're continuing to build schools. We've got 40 of them under way, are built now. Mr. Speaker, we're looking forward to growth and doing the best we possibly can for our students. And we'll take no lessons from that group over there.

[14:30]

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Energy.

Oilseed Trade Challenge

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning the Agreement on Internal Trade dispute resolution panel made a very important ruling, and the panel ruled in favour of Saskatchewan. It determined that Quebec's government's protection restrictions against production, sale, marketing of vegetable oil, dairy products contravened trade obligations.

Mr. Speaker, our government has taken a direction within Canada to be a leader in promoting and defending free trade. We took the lead in challenging the Quebec government's restrictions that directly hindered and limited our oilseed producers', our farmers' and processors' access to the Quebec market — one quarter of Canada's food market.

This is especially important for Saskatchewan when we consider that we had a record 8.9 million tonne canola crop last year. Saskatchewan's challenge was supported by the governments of Alberta, British Columbia, and Manitoba.

We are pleased with the panel's decision, as it will mean major new access to the Quebec market for our farmers and producers. This decision also highlights that free trade can and is working within Canada. To quote the Vegetable Oil Industry of Canada president, Sean McPhee:

We acknowledge the leadership shown by Saskatchewan, along with other western provinces, in pursuing open markets in Canada. It seems like a small thing, but businesses in Canada should not be discriminated against by unfair trade rules.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just a win for Saskatchewan farmers and producers, but it is also a win for Quebec consumers who will now have full access to the Canadian market for margarines, coffee creamers, and dessert toppings. We will continue to take strong action, promoting and defending free

trade both within Canada and internationally. This is why we have supported the Canada-EU [European Union] trade deal, the Canada-Korea free trade agreement. This is why we signed on to the New West Partnership and this is why we have stood up and defended free trade at every opportunity.

The evidence is in the numbers. Our province is the largest exporter per capita in Canada. Last year we exported \$32.9 billion worth of goods. That is up 70 per cent from 2007, Mr. Speaker.

We understand that the Quebec government is choosing to appeal the ruling from the panel. While it is within Quebec's rights to appeal, we will once again take a strong and just case for free trade. We will continue to defend our farmers, our producers, and our processors. We will continue to take action. We will also continue to defend Quebec consumers and, Mr. Speaker, I am confident that we will win and that free trade will win. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister opposite to welcome this good news and this good decision, a decision that's important certainly to the producers of this province, important to the economy of this province. And certainly we're pleased that Saskatchewan along with Manitoba, Alberta, and British Columbia came together to make the case that made sense certainly for our province and one that certainly is a matter of fairness.

This is important to Saskatchewan when you look at the oilseed producers and the role they play within Saskatchewan's economy. It's important when you look at the nearly 9 million tonnes of canola that was produced last year. And it's important for governments to be ensuring that there's broader markets for our products to get to, to be sold to, Mr. Speaker.

It's important of course as well for us to continue to work and to demonstrate leadership to make sure that those very commodities, those very goods, those very products can actually get to market, and that's where we're going to continue to look for and press for solutions on the transportation side of the equation as an export-driven province. But certainly we welcome this good news. We're pleased that Saskatchewan was a part of this effort.

And certainly this, you know, as it relates to trade irritants for Saskatchewan, there's other matters as well that need to be considered and be addressed. And we'll be tracking the progress of those in the days and weeks to come. Thank you so much, Mr. Speaker.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

The Speaker: — I recognize the Chair of the Economy Committee.

Standing Committee on the Economy

Mr. Toth: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am instructed by the Standing Committee on the Economy to report

Bill No. 136, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014* without amendment.

The Speaker: — When shall this bill be considered in Committee of the Whole? I recognize the Minister of Energy and Resources.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I request leave to waive consideration of Committee of the Whole on this bill and this bill be now read a third time.

The Speaker: — The minister has requested leave to waive consideration in Committee of the Whole on Bill No. 136, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014* and that the bill now be read the third time. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — The minister may proceed to move third reading.

THIRD READINGS

Bill No. 136 — *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014*

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Speaker, I move that this bill be now read the third time and be passed under its title.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the minister that Bill No. 136, *The Oil and Gas Conservation Amendment Act, 2014* be now read the third time and passed under its title. 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.

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

The Speaker: — Why is the member on his feet?

Mr. Wotherspoon: — With requesting leave to introduce guests.

The Speaker: — The member has requested leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, to you and through you, it's my pleasure to introduce, seated in the west gallery here today, two young leaders within their province,

Ben Bushell and Eric Holloway.

These young, bright leaders are leaders within the student movement. They're also leaders within Youth Parliament. And it's a pleasure to have them here in their Assembly here today. I know that they have a lot to offer. They offer a lot to our province here today, and I know their contributions will be many, moving forward in the years ahead. So I ask all members to welcome Eric Holloway and Ben Bushell to their Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Government House Leader.

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

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

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — This House stands adjourned to 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 14:37.]

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