



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

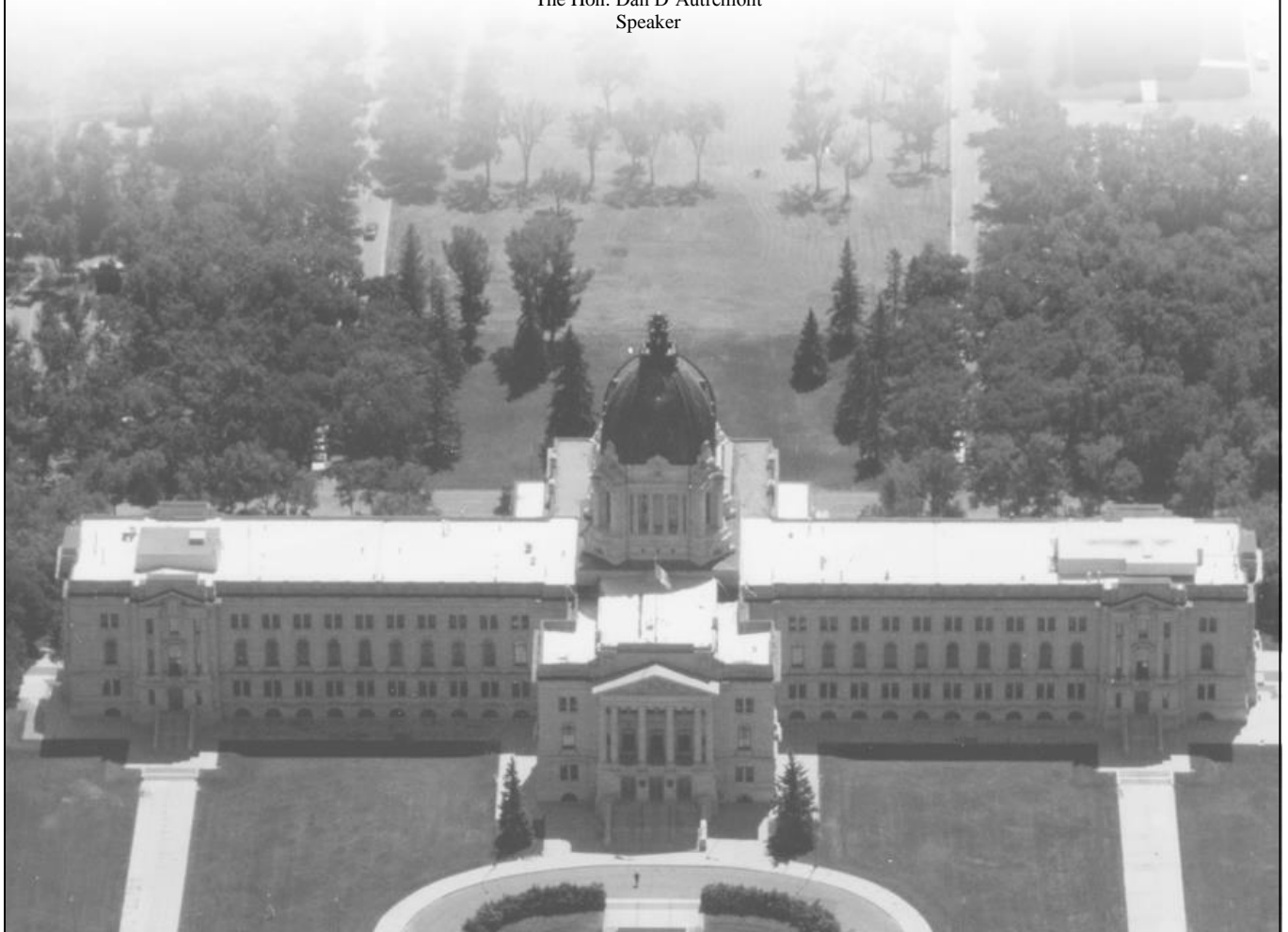
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

Published under the  
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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, Hon. 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, Hon. Mark      | SP                    | Regina Coronation Park    |
| Doherty, Hon. Kevin      | SP                    | Regina Northeast          |
| Doke, Larry              | SP                    | Cut Knife-Turtleford      |
| Draude, June             | SP                    | Kelvington-Wadena         |
| Duncan, Hon. Dustin      | SP                    | Weyburn-Big Muddy         |
| Eagles, Doreen           | SP                    | Estevan                   |
| Elhard, 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 |
| McMorris, Hon. Don       | SP                    | Indian Head-Milestone     |
| Merriman, Paul           | SP                    | Saskatoon Sutherland      |
| Michelson, Warren        | SP                    | Moose Jaw North           |
| Moe, Hon. Scott          | SP                    | Rosthern-Shellbrook       |
| Morgan, Hon. Don         | SP                    | Saskatoon Southeast       |
| Nilson, John             | NDP                   | Regina Lakeview           |
| Norris, Rob              | SP                    | Saskatoon Greystone       |
| Ottenbreit, Hon. 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, Randy            | SP                    | Biggar                    |
| Wilson, Hon. Nadine      | SP                    | Saskatchewan Rivers       |
| Wotherspoon, Trent       | NDP                   | Regina Rosemont           |
| Wyant, Hon. Gordon       | SP                    | Saskatoon Northwest       |
| Vacant                   |                       | Lloydminster              |

[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

## ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to introduce a number of guests to you and through you to all members of the Legislative Assembly, joining us in your gallery. They are made up of representatives from the Canadian Diabetes Association and the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists. And when I say their name, I'd maybe just ask if they could give us a wave so that we know who's here this afternoon.

From the Diabetes Association, Warren Wagner who is the regional director for Saskatchewan; Andrea Kwasnicki, the regional director for Manitoba; Brie Hnetka, the senior manager for programs and partnership; Ellen Williams, the coordinator for community engagement.

Janet Bradshaw, Clint Davies, Peter Dickinson, Rochelle Fiolleau, Bill Gowen. Mr. Speaker, Melissa and Tim Johnson and their children Salem and Emma, and I think I've actually had the opportunity to introduce them on a previous occasion, so it's great to see them back at their Legislative Assembly. Georgia Jooristy, Robert Lydiate, Diana Orser, Dwayne Tomkewich, Renee Mochnacz, and Bob Gawley, and they are all CDA [Canadian Diabetes Association] advocacy volunteers, and I want to thank them for being here this afternoon. Many of them will be joining us for a reception later this evening, as well Dr. Rhea Anderson who's vice-president of the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists.

Earlier this month we had the opportunity to announce that we're now going to provide coverage for an annual eye examination for diabetic patients, and that's thanks to the relationship that we do have with the Canadian Diabetes Association and the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists. And I would ask all members to join with me in welcoming all of these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to join with the minister on behalf of the opposition in welcoming these guests today, folks from the Canadian Diabetes Association and from the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists, so Mr. Warren Wagner and Andrea Kwasnicki and all the advocacy members, and of course Dr. Rhea Anderson.

Thank you for all that you do in ensuring that we as legislators have a good understanding of the issues around the need for support and around the need for different policies. So thank you, and for all the work that you do in supporting families and individuals who have diabetes. I know there are a number of

members actually in the House who live with diabetes, and I know that they appreciate the support and information that you provide. So thank you for all that you do.

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

**Ms. Ross:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you, 27 grade 7 and 8 students from MacNeill School here in Regina. Accompanying our students is their teachers: Mrs. Klein, Ms. Frisen, Mr. Grant. So please everyone welcome these fine students to their Legislative Assembly. And I will be meeting and having a nice visit with them after.

**An Hon. Member:** — Ice cream, you get ice cream.

**Ms. Ross:** — Stop it, you guys. That's just . . .

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all members, I'd like to introduce a few individuals seated in the galleries today.

In the east gallery is Mr. Brett Estey who is a U of R [University of Regina] grad and had worked for the Canadian Cancer Society and is a huge Riders fan as well and watches politics very closely here in the province. So nice to see you today, Brett.

And in the Speaker's gallery, two very important individuals to me, Mr. Speaker, my mom and dad. Chris Broten and Anne Broten happen to be in Regina today and thought they would come watch the proceedings for the afternoon. Both fairly recently retired, enjoying life, and also staying fairly busy helping out with grandkids in our family and in my sisters' families as well. So we're very appreciative for all that you do. Wonderful to have you here today.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Melville-Saltcoats.

**Mr. Bjornerud:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to introduce to you and through you to all members of the House today, 19 grade 10 students from Churchbridge School. They're accompanied today by their teachers: Laura Sveinbjornson, Reg Leidl, and educational assistant Cindy Basken. And I'd ask all members to welcome these students and their teachers from Churchbridge here today.

### 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 calling for greater protection for Saskatchewan citizens from developers defaulting on fixed-price contracts. And we know that in September this year this government walked away from a new 48-unit low-income affordable housing project here in the city of Regina, allowing a private developer to instead take control of and rent the units at

full market price. Mr. Speaker, a local political commentator wrote this about the government allowing a private developer to default on a fixed-price contract, and I quote:

It is the latest indication that the Premier seems unwilling to do anything to displease business even when he knows business is . . .

**The Speaker:** — I believe the member knows that he should not be provoking debate in the prayer of a petition. Will you please get to the question?

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly take the following action: cause the government to recognize that there are indeed desperate homeless people in our province and to immediately reverse its policy of now allowing private developers with whom the government has close relationships to default on fixed-price contracts for affordable housing projects.

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 unacceptable danger caused by actions and failure to plan by that government with heavy-haul trucks on Dewdney Avenue. This petition calls on that government to immediately act to ensure safety for those using Dewdney and along Dewdney. 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 are signed today by concerned residents from right along Dewdney Avenue here in Regina. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition in support of better health care in Saskatchewan. And the folks who signed this petition want to bring to the Legislative Assembly's attention a number of issues. We know that emergency room wait times in Saskatchewan have doubled since 2010, that's only four years ago; where the government's

own statistics show that patient safety is getting worse. The government's own surveys show the majority of doctors, nurses, and other front-line health care workers are frustrated with the quality of health care. We know that chronic short-staffing is a problem throughout our health care system, and the Saskatoon City Hospital is underutilized with patient rooms used as manager's offices, where an independent report shows that \$2.2 billion of repairs are needed in hospitals and care facilities.

In the prayer that reads as follows:

These individuals respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan take the following action: to cause the provincial government to recognize health care is getting worse under its watch and begin fixing the basics by listening to health care workers, patients, and their families, properly maintaining hospitals and care projects and focusing resources on front-line care instead of spending millions on its lean pet project.

Mr. Speaker, the folks who have signed this petition are from my riding of Saskatoon Nutana in Saskatoon. I so present.

#### STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Athabasca.

#### Graduation Ceremony at Centre for Northern Governance and Development

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It is my pleasure to bring recognition to a number of accomplished grads of the International Centre for Northern Governance and Development at the University of Saskatchewan.

I was invited to give the keynote address, Mr. Speaker, at a ceremony on October 25th, and I must say that I was quite thrilled to see so many proud and smiling faces there, faces from all throughout the North. There were graduates from many northern communities, including La Loche, La Ronge, Meadow Lake, Cumberland House, Sandy Bay. And many First Nations were there as well, Mr. Speaker, the graduates from Sucker River First Nations, Sturgeon Lake First Nations, and the Flying Dust First Nations.

I'm sure members here today are very aware of the remarkable program that is offered there at the universities, the master's degree in northern governance and development. This program is the only one of its kind in North America, and offers training to northern residents in a combination of different subjects including northern studies, political science, public policy, and Native studies. This innovative approach across many subject areas ensures that graduates have the skills they need to be leaders in our northern communities.

So, Mr. Speaker, I hope that all members here will join me to celebrate and to send congratulations and good wishes to these new graduates. Thank you.

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

### National Diabetes Awareness Month

**Mr. Doke:** — Mr. Speaker, next month is National Diabetes Awareness Month. Diabetes can have a significant impact on a person's life. That's why awareness and education are so important.

Mr. Speaker, our government has taken important steps to support people living with diabetes and their families. We've improved access to diabetes medication, devices, and supplies. The Saskatchewan insulin pump program was expanded in 2012 to provide coverage for residents up to 25 years of age. This past July, two rapid-acting insulins previously covered under exceptional drug status only were added to the formulary.

Just recently we have expanded the coverage for annual eye examinations to include adults with diabetes in addition to all children under 18. Receiving an annual eye examination is essential to help monitor and prevent vision loss, a possible complication from diabetes. This new service is part of the recent agreement with the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists. It will help remove financial barriers and ensure timely access to vision care for everyone living with diabetes in our province.

Mr. Speaker, we value collaboration with our partners such as the Saskatchewan Association of Optometrists and the Canadian Diabetes Association. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their contributions and express appreciation for their continued partnership. Thank you to the leadership, staff, and volunteers for all their work to improve the lives of people living with diabetes in our province. Thank you.

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

### 2014 Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, it was my distinct honour to attend the 2014 Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards in Saskatoon last night. The arts community was out in full force, celebrating the amazing accomplishments of all the short listed nominees. The Saskatchewan Arts Board put on a great show with musical, spoken word, film, and dance performances to round out the awards ceremony.

Zachari Logan of Saskatoon was chosen for the Emerging Artist Award for his stunning visual creations. Heather Cline of Regina, a great visual artist in her own right, received the Arts and Learning Award for her televised arts education programs. Richard Gustin of Regina received the arts Volunteer Award for his work with the Yorkton Film Festival. Celebrated poet Sylvia Legris of Saskatoon was selected for the Saskatchewan Artist Award. Angus Ferguson of Dancing Sky Theatre in Meacham took home the award for individual leadership, and my constituency's Friends of the Broadway Theatre received the organizational leadership award. To top it all off, the lovely and delightful Thelma Pepper received the Lifetime Achievement Award for her heart-rending photographic exhibitions.

[13:45]

Mr. Speaker, there were many memorable moments last night — too many to mention — but I was struck by the universal thanks and appreciation these creative Saskatchewanians expressed for our Saskatchewan Arts Board. It is an inescapable reality that the work of the Arts Board and other creative agencies is essential to a thriving creative community. What was also apparent was the pride of place, the deep roots these artists have in their communities and this province. Congratulations to all the nominees, and to the Arts Board for making it possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Government Whip.

### Terry Fox Ride

**Mr. Cox:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's my pleasure to rise today to recognize and to thank the Battlefords Quarter Horse Club for their successful Terry Fox Ride which was held on September 20th of this year.

This year's ride was hosted by Deb Flegel at her Hidden Meadows Ranch over some beautiful terrain along the Battle River. After the ride, we enjoyed a delicious meal prepared by the organizing committee. This year we had approximately 50 riders, from preschoolers to seniors, riding horses of all shapes, sizes, and colours.

Mr. Speaker, we are all familiar with the annual Terry Fox Run or the Terry Fox Walk, but this club has, for the last 32 years, held an equine ride. Organizers tell me that to the best of their knowledge, theirs is the only equine ride in Canada, and certainly the only one that has run continuously. This year we raised \$2,833 and that means that over the years, this ride has generated over \$67,000 for cancer research.

One year we were very proud to have Betty Fox, Terry's mother, join us riding in a carriage to recognize the uniqueness of this Terry Fox fundraiser. I've enjoyed participating in this ride for nearly all of the years it's been running, and it was great to see so many horse enthusiasts having fun while raising funds for such a worthy cause.

I'd like to ask all members of this Assembly to join with me in congratulating the Battlefords Quarter Horse Club on another successful Terry Fox Ride, and wish them great success in continuing this long-standing tradition. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Kelvington-Wadena.

### Construction Starts on Kelvington Health Care Facility

**Ms. Draude:** — Mr. Speaker, I had the pleasure of joining the ministers of Health and Rural and Remote Health, local residents, and officials to start the construction on the Kelvington and District integrated health care facility last Friday. This event marked a significant milestone on our journey to achieve better health, better care, and better value for the residents of Kelvington and surrounding areas.

Mr. Speaker, this renewal project will renovate and expand the existing Kelvindell Lodge and replace the Kelvington Hospital. The new facility will offer 45 long-term care beds, seven acute

care beds, and seven multi-purpose patient rooms. Mr. Speaker, we understand for many, long-term care facilities are their homes. Modern infrastructure is needed so they can live more comfortably and safely in their own communities.

Mr. Speaker, we want to recognize the 3P [production preparation process] team who worked on the design of the Kelvington and district health facility. They recently received the provincial Award of Excellence at the Health Care Quality Summit. While maintaining the quality of the new facility and ensuring patients' needs will be met, the team cut the project costs by close to \$7 million, bringing down the price tag to \$15 million.

Mr. Speaker, the dedication and strong teamwork from the local municipalities, from the staff, the Kelvington and District Health Care Facility Foundation, the Kelsey Trail Health Region, Mitch and Brenda Gawron who donated the land, and the Ministry of Health made this project a reality. Mr. Speaker, we want to thank all of those involved for their vision, ensuring health care facilities in Kelvington in the future. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member for Saskatoon Sutherland.

#### 2014 Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I have the pleasure of announcing the recipients of the Lieutenant Governor's Award this week, which was attended by our Minister Docherty, bringing greetings on behalf of the government.

This prestigious award celebrates the contribution, achievements of individuals, groups, and organizations in the arts, right here in Saskatchewan. This year's lifetime achievement recipient was Mrs. Thelma Pepper of Saskatoon. Thelma was introduced to photography at a very young age and still passionate at the age of 94.

Saskatchewan artist Ms. Sylvia Legris from Saskatoon published multiple volumes of poetry. Sylvia continues to enrich the arts community throughout Saskatchewan.

The Emerging Artist recipient of this year was Zachari Logan of Saskatoon, who uses large-scale drawings and ceramic installations, sometimes that make him internationally recognized. Mr. Angus Ferguson from Meacham this year is the recipient of the Leadership — Individual Award for his work in the performing arts.

The leadership — organization recipient is the Friends of the Broadway Theatre in Saskatoon. This group has worked hard to keep Broadway the gem of the Prairies. The arts and learning recipient was Mrs. Heather Cline of Regina who has created a distance learning program for grade 1 to 9 students. And finally, Mr. Speaker, the volunteer recipient is Mr. Richard Gustin of Regina, who has tirelessly supported the arts community throughout Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in congratulating all the recipients this year. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I would like to remind the member not to use proper names of members of the House. You might wish to inform your staff of that as well. I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

#### Oil Royalties

**Mr. Bradshaw:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We thought we had seen it all from the NDP [New Democratic Party], but they have come up with the same old plan to disappoint the residents of this province. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the NDP plans to review and increase oil royalties on a regular basis, something that would not only harm the economy of this province but a decision that his own members disagree with. On March 26th, the member from Athabasca was quoted as saying, "Don't change royalties and don't try and mess with any of the alliance we had with the industry that develops a lot of resources in our province." But it seems the Leader of the NDP wants to destroy these very alliances that helped grow our economy, something we have all benefited from. The Leader of the Opposition has learned nothing from the 2011 election campaign when citizens of this province rejected those same job-killing policies. Clearly the members opposite have not thought out any of their plans and again show us their lack of public policy. This is not forward thinking, but in fact more of the same old NDP. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Why is the member on her feet?

**Ms. Sproule:** — Mr. Speaker, I'd like to request leave to revert to introduction of guests.

**The Speaker:** — The member has asked leave for introduction of guests. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

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

#### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Ms. Sproule:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the Assembly. I'd like to introduce a couple of guests that are in our east gallery. These are individuals who have made careers in the film industry. First of all, Mr. Layton Burton who is an award-winning director of photography who is in demand across Canada. Sadly, his business in film in Saskatchewan collapsed as a result of this province being the only one in Canada without a film employment tax credit, but he has stayed and is living in Saskatchewan for family reasons.

I'd also like to introduce Mr. Andrew Gordon who's a former manager of the film company William F. White here in Regina. He had to leave Saskatchewan and is rebuilding his career in Vancouver. He would love to come back though and work here in his industry of choice.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to welcome both of these individuals to the Legislative Assembly and would ask the Assembly to do the same.

## QUESTION PERIOD

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

**Costs and Benefits of the Lean Initiative**

**Mr. Broten:** — The Health minister said yesterday, Mr. Speaker, that the \$3,500-per-day Japanese senseis and the \$600-per-day Japanese interpreters now are focused only on something called kanban. And the latest information that we've obtained from the government shows that they are planning to spend another \$650,000 on kanban that is led by the Japanese senseis. But, Mr. Speaker, the vast majority of Saskatchewan people have absolutely no idea what kanban is. My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: can he please explain what kanban is?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, through the continuous improvement work that we're doing in Saskatchewan, we use a number of different techniques that come from continuous improvement methodologies, whether that be kanban; whether that be 3Ps, rapid process improvement workshops; 5S-ing [sort, simplify, sweep, standardize, self-discipline] for example. Mr. Speaker, we certainly have seen some significant results. And in fact, through a recent 5S which works around, as well, inventory, this is what Dolly Kosar had to say. She is a registered nurse in Regina. She said, and I quote, "It's amazing. People used to yell, 'Where's this? Where's that?' because no one could find anything. Now, we know where things are . . ."

Mr. Speaker, Lois Schatz from the operating room in Regina said, "If [we] . . . go and find something in one second instead of 30, it's got to be freeing your time up for your patient care."

Mr. Speaker, these are just two examples of front-line providers that have seen the benefits of lean and show that it not only saves the system dollars, but also frees up time for them to care with their patients.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, organizing the supply closet is hardly worth \$40 million that we've seen from this government. We asked for a simple explanation of kanban, and it certainly wasn't there.

Let's get this straight, Mr. Speaker. Senior health administrators say this: "The orientation to the kanban process within RQHR by the sensei had little added value." So again, senior health administrators saying that Japanese senseis don't bring any real value to this kanban process. Yet instead of listening to that scathing criticism, Mr. Speaker, we see this government do the opposite. This government is now having the Japanese senseis focus exclusively on the kanban stuff — the exact thing, Mr. Speaker, that the senior health administrators say that they don't actually even bring any value to.

My question, Mr. Speaker, to the Premier: does he misunderstand the criticism that senior administrators have said, or is he just choosing to ignore it?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, certainly I would encourage the Leader of the Opposition to read the rest of what the memo had to say in Regina Qu'Appelle. Marlene Smadu on kanban had this to say: "Doing kanban is necessary for an organization of our size." They feel that this is an important thing.

Certainly the experience in the Regina General Hospital post-anesthetic care unit, this is the experience that they found. They removed more than 3,500 supplies out of about 9,000 items and actually returned them to the manufacturer for a credit: "The credit is still being estimated but it's expected to be in the thousands of dollars."

Mr. Speaker, that's the situation that we have. We have thousands of dollars worth of inventory that we don't use that eventually expires, and it is a waste to the system. And, Mr. Speaker, it is a patient quality issue if a patient in this system gets a piece of equipment used on them that is expired. This is why we have to focus on this work in this province.

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, you can organize a supply closet, but you don't need a \$3,500-a-day Japanese sensei plus interpreter to do the job. And that's precisely what the senior health administrators were saying, Mr. Speaker. The senseis do not add value to the kanban process. That's what the senior administrators say. But this government, they shovel 3,500 bucks a day out the door for the senseis, 600 bucks a day for the interpreter that's attached to the sensei, not to mention at least \$2,000 for each sensei to travel from Japan to Saskatchewan. And health administrators are adamant that the senseis do not add value to the kanban process.

My question again to the Premier, Mr. Speaker: is the Premier ignoring the criticism from the senior administrators, from front-line workers, or is he choosing to ignore it?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, I am told that yesterday, and it's from after question period, the Leader of the Opposition said, and I quote, "Any person that can read and use their brain can figure out when something expires."

So, Mr. Speaker, here's a great example. In Saskatchewan, in 2009 Saskatchewan and Manitoba both spent \$53 million purchasing blood and plasma products from Canadian Blood Services. Manitoba, since 2009, has gone from 53 million to \$61 million in expenditures with CBS [Canadian Blood Services]. Saskatchewan in that same time frame has gone from \$53 million — the same starting amount, \$53 million — to \$38 million, Mr. Speaker. Is the Leader of the Opposition saying that there's no brains in the NDP government in Manitoba?

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

**Mr. Broten:** — Mr. Speaker, the minister is proving my point. The blood exercise, Mr. Speaker, has no attachment to the JBA [John Black and Associates] contract, Mr. Speaker. You don't

need the senseis. Listen to the senior administrators. Listen to the front lines. The senseis do not add value with their interpreters to the kanban process, as the senior administrators clearly say.

April 7th email to John Black from a senior official: “We need to be more judicious with the use of the Japanese consultants.” But for some reason, Mr. Speaker, being more judicious isn’t because of the negative feedback from the front lines or from the senior administrators. Not at all with this government. Not at all with this Premier and this front bench. Here’s what the official said to John Black: “We need to demonstrate action based on the negative public perception in the media.” Just about the optics; that’s what motivates this government. That’s what motivates these decisions around keeping JBA, John Black, on the contract.

My question to this Premier: when will he listen to senior administrators? When will he listen to front-line workers? When will he listen to his own Health minister who says when JBA leaves, we can tailor this to Saskatchewan’s needs? When will he come to his senses and end the wasteful and toxic contract with John Black?

[14:00]

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, this is what motivates the government, the members on this side of the House. When we see examples where we can reduce the number of surgical in-patients, the inventory by 42 per cent, that’s what motivates us. When we can see a 100 per cent reduction in the time that a home care RN [registered nurse] needs to take to order supplies, that’s what motivates us. When we can see a quality defect in surgical supplies by 100 per cent in one health region, that is what motivates us.

Mr. Speaker, we are embarking on a process in this province to embed a tool that has been used effectively by a number of organizations, in fact including a health region under the NDP government early or late in their term. But this has been something that’s been used by organizations that we’ve talked about like Virginia Mason, Seattle Children’s Hospital, ThedaCare in Wisconsin, the Mayo Clinic, Massachusetts General Hospital, Johns Hopkins Hospital — some of the leading health organizations in North America.

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

### Smart Meter Program

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Yesterday the Premier was asked if it concerns him that the SaskPower minister didn’t know about smart meter problems in other jurisdictions. The Premier responded, “Well I didn’t either. I mean we were aware about the smart meter installation. I wasn’t googling about them either, neither was any other minister.” He went on: “If this information is not readily available, you assume the appropriate processes are undertaken. It’s not something you’re going to go out and google perhaps and find out.”

My question is for the Premier: did the SaskPower minister

actually tell him that such information wasn’t available?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, the member opposite would know that we rely on officials for the information. They gave us their best advice. They make recommendations to the government. And it’s been said in this very building that officials make decisions and they’re signed off, and the politician shouldn’t be involved in these decisions.

And you know, mistakes are made. And so it would be really useful when we are having these kinds of discussion that we don’t play the blame game. Blaming doesn’t help. Sometimes officials make mistakes and ministers aren’t necessarily involved in it. Mr. Speaker, who said that was none other than the former member for Saskatoon Nutana, Pat Atkinson, just a few short years ago.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, my question was a pretty straightforward one. And it was actually for the Premier because it was the Premier who said yesterday that he understood why the SaskPower minister didn’t know about the smart meter problems in other jurisdictions. And the reason the Premier gave for the minister’s ignorance was that the information was not readily available to the minister.

My question’s not to the minister who shouldn’t be a minister. My question is to the Premier. So again my question to the Premier: did the minister actually tell him that information wasn’t readily available?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, when the government learned that there was problems with respect to the smart meter program here in Saskatchewan, we immediately took some steps. We directed SaskPower to stop the installation and start the removal of them. In addition to that, we went to work with Sensus to recover the money that has been spent on the program, which we did. In addition to that, we immediately called for a review, and the review is in and has indicated where there was problems. We have now directed all of the Crown corporations to take a look at the recommendations that the reviews came up with, and they have done that, Mr. Speaker.

I believe that the government has acted in an appropriate way, Mr. Speaker. And when it comes to simple questions, the member opposite was asked a pretty simple question yesterday. And that question was, do you have an alternative, someone you’d like to see that SaskPower would use other than Sensus? And you know what the member opposite’s response was actually, Mr. Speaker? Those are technical questions that politicians shouldn’t be in a position to direct.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — For that minister and for the Premier to claim that information about the smart meter problems in other jurisdictions wasn’t readily available is absolute nonsense, Mr.



Speaker.

I understand that the minister received a briefing note dated October 10th, 2012, a full two years ago, that laid out major safety concerns about Sensus meters including “. . . fires in homes of Philadelphia-area customers served by PECO, the local electrical utility.” To the Premier: did he know the SaskPower minister was briefed on major safety concerns, including house fires, way back in October of 2002?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, there are . . . When you look at this program, you have to ask yourself, has this been handled appropriately by the government? Has it been handled appropriately by the government? And if you look at the independent commentators around this, and the most recent one was the *Leader-Post* editorial board of October 28th:

The smart meter episode has been an ugly one and we commend the government for tackling it head on and stepping in to halt it and order the meters removed once it was realized [that there were] lives were at risk and quickly making public a report that pulls no punches.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the appropriate steps were taken by this government all the way through this, and we'll continue to do that, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — The question, Mr. Speaker, was to the Premier. The minister answering never gave any reference of the briefing note in 2012, two years ago, Mr. Speaker. The Premier gave responsibility for SaskPower to the member from Kindersley in May, on May 25th, 2012. And just four months later, in October 2012, the member for Kindersley in his capacity as Minister Responsible for SaskPower was given a briefing note by officials at SaskPower. The briefing note that raises major concern about safety was prepared for the minister by SaskPower's chief operating officer who's now the CEO [chief executive officer].

And insiders have told us that this issue was the subject of a face-to-face meeting between then CEO Robert Watson and that minister in October 2012, a full two years ago. To the Premier: with a briefing note and face-to-face briefings, how can the government possibly claim that that information about safety concerns was not available to their government?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, earlier this day I had a conversation, a long conversation with and meeting with the new CEO of SaskPower, Mr. Mike Marsh. We went through all of the recommendations that have been laid out in the report. We talked about them in great length. SaskPower has accepted all of the recommendations and will be moving as aggressively as possible to implement those recommendations.

And I think what it says is that the appropriate steps have been taken. There has been, accountability has taken place with respect to this, and the government will continue to move in this

fashion.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, again that question wasn't to the minister. It was to the Premier, and it was about the briefing note two years ago and his meetings on this file. Yesterday the media asked the SaskPower minister why he didn't know anything about the problems with Sensus meters in the United States. The minister said, “If we aren't provided with information, it's difficult to make determinations. In this case, we weren't provided with any information that there were problems with the meters.” That's what the minister said yesterday.

But in October 2012, we are told the minister was presented with information from SaskPower officials about major safety concerns related to Sensus meters in the United States. To the Premier: what will he do now that he knows that serious information was readily available and conveyed to that minister?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, we will continue to embark upon the changes that are necessary with respect to the smart meter program. We will continue to do exactly what the report outlined in detail here in Saskatchewan. We will continue to do the appropriate steps.

We'll continue not to take the advice of the member opposite, which is to spend money willy-nilly as they did for years when they were in government. We will continue to do . . . We won't be dragged through court like the members opposite were in the SPUDCO [Saskatchewan Potato Utility Development Company] fiasco here in Saskatchewan.

And we'll continue to try and recover taxpayers' dollars, as is the appropriate thing.

**The Speaker:** — I would like to remind members to put their questions and comments through the Chair and not direct them personally to any member in the House. I recognize the member for Regina Rosemont.

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — To the minister: does he remember the briefing in October of 2012?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, if you look at what independent commentators are saying with respect to this, it says that there are a number of commentators that have weighed in on this important subject. *The StarPhoenix* editorial board made the comments just a few short days ago:

The Wall government deserves credit not only for intervening swiftly in the wake of eight fires in meters supplied by U.S. manufacturer Sensus and ordering SaskPower to immediately begin replacing the 105,000 installed units, but also for ordering an investigation into both the causes of the fires and the procurement process.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, a question to the minister: does he remember the briefing he received in 2012?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, we always rely on the advice and judgment of the officials when it's presented to us. They give us advice on a regular basis. We certainly understand that. When you take a look at what the officials have provided us, we always take a look at those kinds of recommendations and, if needed, we move in an appropriate fashion.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, we have a briefing note that that minister received. We understand that that minister was briefed two years ago, more than two years ago by the then CEO of SaskPower, yet that minister has been pretending that he wasn't aware of any of the problems with Sensus.

Back to the minister: does he remember the briefing note? Does he remember his face-to-face meeting?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for the Economy.

**Hon. Mr. Boyd:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower officials advised the government on a number of occasions that there were problems with the smart meter program. In addition to that, they outlined individual concerns as they happened here in Saskatchewan. They advised us that there was concerns, but they also advised us that these were within the industry level and tolerances.

Mr. Speaker, after there were seven incidents here in Saskatchewan, the government took what I believe is the appropriate action and asked for and directed SaskPower to remove all of those meters, Mr. Speaker. And that's what is exactly is taking place right now in Saskatchewan. The removal is taking place. We're doing the appropriate steps, and commentator after commentator agrees with that.

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Mr. Speaker, this minister is absolutely skirting around his ministerial responsibility, and his argument that he didn't know about the issues doesn't hold water, Mr. Speaker. The facts suggest something else. I'll tell you something that the minister said, I believe, just in the last day or two. That SaskPower minister said, "If there was information presented and we didn't act upon it, clearly there would be a problem with that and I would resign."

Well, Mr. Speaker, we understand that the fact of the matter is that information was presented to that minister. He didn't know about major safety concerns related to . . . He did know about major concerns related to Sensus, and he didn't bother to act on that information. And he spent the last several days and this time in question period, continuing his claim that he didn't know anything.

My question is to the Premier or the Deputy Premier: how can

they stand by this minister? Why won't they do the right thing and turf him today?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Deputy Premier.

**Hon. Mr. Krawetz:** — Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, the member from Rosemont has asked a number of questions in the last few days that lead to a lot of questions from this side of the House and, I think, from the public.

The public wants to see leadership by this government. The public wants to see leadership by this minister, Mr. Speaker. And let me tell you, there has been leadership. There has been leadership. For the member opposite to stand, and yesterday in a scrum when asked, as the minister has already mentioned, do you have an alternative? You know what the member from Rosemont said? He said, "Well I mean those are technical, technical questions that, you know, politicians wouldn't be in the position to be directing." That's what the member said, Mr. Speaker.

So for that member to suggest that there has not been leadership, the fact that we have regained all the money, that we have moved forward with replacement of smart meters is the right thing to have been done, Mr. Speaker.

[14:15]

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

### Support for Creative Industries

**Ms. Sproule:** — Prior to becoming the Minister for Parks, Culture and Sport, the member for Regina Coronation Park frequently told members of the film industry that he disagreed with the Premier's decision to yank the carpet right out from under the film industry in our province.

To that minister: does he still disagree with the Premier's ill-advised decision to scrap the film employment tax credit, and what is he going to do to restore our once-thriving film industry?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister for Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I almost thank the member opposite for the question. Nothing's changed, Mr. Speaker. I absolutely agree with the decision of this government in regards to the FETC [film employment tax credit]. This government isn't reinstating the film employment tax credit. In place of that, we've added in Creative Saskatchewan. And Creative Saskatchewan, Creative Saskatchewan's in place in order to support all of the creative industries.

So we've agreed to disagree with SMPA [Saskatchewan Media Production Industry Association], Mr. Speaker, and we're going to move forward. I suggest that the NDP move forward as well, with SMPA and the rest of the creative industries. And I'm assuming from the member's question opposite that disagrees with the fact that all the creative industries are being supported

now for the first time ever. So thank you. Thank you.

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

**Ms. Sproule:** — I suspected the minister would refer to Creative Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. He needs to take a look at what's happening there. It's clear that's not doing the trick, and he needs to take a close look at that. It's shameful that this new minister has changed his position on this issue just to please the Premier. Here's what our Premier had to say on July 9th, and this is a quote. He quoted:

I would be happy to agree if we could have other premiers in this country saying we ought not to have grants to any particular sectors. I'd agree with that, including the film sector, including any creative industry.

So the Premier opposes any incentives for creative industries and wants to see them eliminated right across the country but, on the other hand, he is bringing in a new tax incentive. This one is for manufacturing and processing. Maybe it will be available to the film industry. To the minister: will this new tax incentive apply to those who manufacture films and export cultural products here in Saskatchewan?

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport.

**Hon. Mr. Docherty:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We're going to continue to support the creative industries through Creative Saskatchewan, and there are grant programs in place with Creative Saskatchewan. We're happy to support the creative industries. We'll continue to support them. And as for the members opposite, who never supported any of the other creative industries, this government will continue to support them now and into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

##### **Bill No. 144 — *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 144, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 144, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall the bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting.

##### **Bill No. 145 — *The Fee Waiver Act***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 145, *The Fee Waiver Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 145, *The Fee Waiver Act* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

##### **Bill No. 146 — *The Fee Waiver Consequential Amendments Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 portant modifications corrélatives à la loi intitulée The Fee Waiver Act***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 146, *The Fee Waiver Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 146, *The Fee Waiver Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

##### **Bill No. 147 — *The Class Actions Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant la Loi sur les recours collectifs***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill 147, *The Class Actions Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Justice has moved that Bill

No. 147, *The Class Actions Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 148 — *The Vital Statistics  
Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 modifiant  
la Loi de 2009 sur les services de l'état civil***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 148, *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Health that Bill No. 148, *The Vital Statistics Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 149 — *The Health Administration  
Amendment Act, 2014***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Health.

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 149, *The Health Administration Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — The Minister of Health has moved Bill No. 149, *The Health Administration Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Duncan:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 150 — *The Residential Tenancies  
Amendment Act, 2014***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move Bill No. 150, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 150, *The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting.

**Bill No. 152 — *The Victims of Domestic Violence  
Consequential Amendment Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 portant  
modification corrélative à la loi intitulée The Victims of  
Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014***

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Justice.

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 152, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read a first time.

**The Speaker:** — It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 152, *The Victims of Domestic Violence Consequential Amendment Act, 2014* be now introduced and read the first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

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

**The Speaker:** — When shall this bill be read a second time?

**Hon. Mr. Wyant:** — Next sitting of the House, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — Next sitting. Why is the member on his feet?

**Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Mr. Speaker, asking leave to introduce a guest.

**The Speaker:** — The member is asking leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the member.

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Ottenbreit:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you to all the members of the Assembly, I'd like to introduce a very good friend of mine from Yorkton in the west gallery, Mr. Scott Fitzsimmons. Scott is a key person at 98.5 Christian radio, the Rock, in Yorkton, and a program director, host of drive at 5, and a bunch of other things that he does there.

He also just started an online venture, Game Time Radio, gametimeradio.ca. He's a huge sports fan. This fits right in with his interests. He's doing the online sportscasting. Again he's a great sports fan. I'm not going to even mention what team he cheers for when it comes to football.

But he's a great guy, great young family — a set of twins and a new one recently. He's helping to grow the province, grow Saskatchewan, grow Yorkton. I'd ask all members to join with me in welcoming Scott Fitzsimmons to his Legislative Assembly.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### SPECIAL ORDER

#### ADJOURNED DEBATES

#### ADDRESS IN REPLY

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Tochor, seconded by Mr. Lawrence, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

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

**Mr. Michelson:** — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand and talk to this House. First of all I'd like to add my condolences to the families of Corporal Cirillo and Warrant Officer Vincent on that tragedy of last week.

I also want to recognize the men and the women who play that important role of protecting our communities and our country and our province, Mr. Speaker. These men and women stand for protection and for security. They stand for democracy and for peace and for order and for freedom, freedom at any price. God bless the men and women who are there to defend the rights and the liberties of our country and to stand on guard. May we never forget and always be grateful for those who serve and those who dedicate their lives for providing us with the freedom that we enjoy.

Mr. Speaker, as we enter the Speech from the Throne debate, it gives me an opportunity to say thanks to a lot of people in Moose Jaw North, a lot of people starting with my wife, who is very supportive, and my children, my four children, Brent and Krista, Kimberly and Paul, and also my five grandchildren. And I'm just kind of watching my watch as time goes by because there'll be a sixth grandchild that is being a little, couple of days late now. So any hour or any minute, we could get a message that we have another grandchild in our midst.

Beyond that, this past summer's been an exciting one in Moose Jaw and Moose Jaw North. Probably one of the most significant of the events was the significant nomination process that was involved, and I want to thank a number of people of Moose Jaw North. And I was very humbled of the number of constituents who got involved with that democratic process and, like I said, there are many to thank — more than 465 members that were involved, and I certainly appreciate their support in the democratic process.

The reason that this was partly very momentous was the fact that at that nomination meeting there were over — over — 900 people that attended. And it was probably the biggest one-night event in Moose Jaw so far this year, when you consider, Mr. Speaker, that in contrast the NDP in their provincial convention in Moose Jaw just four days prior had attracted only about 230 delegates. So I thought that was very significant in the process. And it really shows the strength of our government and our party in the democratic process, and it shows the incompetency of the NDP. And people all across Saskatchewan are starting more and more to realize the strength of this government and this party.

And the people are realizing the NDP incompetency, and they have a record to prove it, Mr. Speaker. NDP incompetency in leadership like the Lingenfelter logic that does a lot of babble but makes no sense. The NDP incompetency in policy and that may not be fair to say because really they have no policy. The NDP incompetency in bad fiscal management. The NDP incompetency in their agricultural support, and we've all seen that over the years that they were in power. We'll talk about the NDP incompetency in health care. Mr. Speaker, they closed 54 hospitals and laid off a lot of the medical professionals. They have the NDP incompetency in seniors' assistance. And of course we know the NDP incompetency in infrastructure, in highways, in schools.

[14:30]

It's obvious that people's interest in Saskatchewan is for a strong future and for the strength Saskatchewan has achieved under positive leadership and fiscal discipline. That's the record of this Saskatchewan Party government.

You know, Mr. Speaker, we can talk about record population, and we will, because of the population increases that we've seen over the past several years. We can talk about record employment, and we do, because we've created more jobs than we've seen over several decades. We can talk about the low unemployment record, and we will do that too, because Saskatchewan again leads the nation in unemployment. And we can talk about record tax reductions and lower debt. These are all important to the people of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, there is a line in the Speech from the Throne that points out the true strength of our province is found in the compassion and generosity of its people. It is that strength that this side of the House believes in. It is the strength of seven years of leadership, of vision, of growth, and thus the theme of the Speech from the Throne, "Keeping Saskatchewan Strong."

Where does this Saskatchewan strong originate from? Well you might say it's government. But government is in general, as government, we've had government right since our inception in 1905. We may say it's in the agriculture. Well we've had agriculture for 110 years as well and beyond. Could it be in the oil and gas that's below the surface? Or in the potash? We've now started two new mines, the first new mine in over 40 years with K+S in Moose Jaw and BHP Billiton near LeRoy, Saskatchewan. Or in the opening of a new Cameco Cigar Lake mine for uranium?

Mr. Speaker, these are all resources, and these resources have been part of the province forever. It is just that we are now in a position that they're being developed, and the incompetency of the NDP are no longer in power. They never developed any of these for the good and the benefits of the people of Saskatchewan.

So keeping Saskatchewan strong centres around the confidence of our people. It is the people. It is our citizens. More than any single factor, it's the people of the province that provide us with strength, and thus the Saskatchewan motto, "from many peoples, strength." It's all part of keeping Saskatchewan strong.

Mr. Speaker, Her Honour stated in the Speech from the Throne the true strength of the province is found in the compassion and generosity of its people. What we might add as well as compassion and generosity: the ingenuity, the persistence, and the work ethic and the leadership and the vision and the attitude and the commitment and the caring. This is what makes Saskatchewan strong.

Mr. Speaker, for decades the incompetency of the NDP . . . Our people fled this golden province. Saskatchewan's population fluctuated around that million mark ever since 1928-29, along in there. Our population remained stagnant while our children left the province for other jurisdictions, and there was no growth and there was no strength.

The vision of the future became prominent to those who chose to stay. The leadership that changed attitudes and set forth a vision of growth and economic gain, this is the strength Saskatchewan is experiencing today. This is the strength whereby we continue keeping Saskatchewan strong.

Keeping Saskatchewan strong is about developing our resources for the benefit of our people. It's about increasing productivity. It's about increasing trade and trade opportunities. It's about transportation in a landlocked province. It's about education. It's about caring for people. It's about vision and understanding. It is about people.

Mr. Speaker, since 2007 Saskatchewan has seen tremendous growth. Our province continues to grow with more people, with more people working, while having the lowest unemployment rate in Canada. We see increases in weekly incomes. We now

have lower taxes. We've increased funding to cities and municipalities through an improved revenue-sharing program. We've improved highways.

The incompetency of the NDP closed 176 schools during their time in office. The new strength of Saskatchewan, the new strength has us building schools — 40 new schools being built or in the planning stages. That's keeping Saskatchewan strong.

Mr. Speaker, we're keeping our children here in the province to work and establish careers as well. We're retaining educated young adults with some of the most attractive student programs in the country: the graduation retention program for post-secondary graduates who stay in Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan grant for education savings, the Saskatchewan Advantage Scholarship for those entering post-secondary education.

The incompetent NDP not only closed 176 schools, Mr. Speaker, they closed 52 hospitals. But now Saskatchewan's strength comes from improving health care, with over 400 more doctors. And the number of nurses in all designations has increased by more than 2,600. We have new health care homes, we have health care facilities like the children's hospital in Saskatoon, the new Saskatchewan Hospital in North Battleford, and of course the new hospital in Moose Jaw which, Mr. Speaker, will include an MRI [magnetic resonance imaging] unit. This will be the first MRI unit to operate outside of our two major centres and is scheduled to be open next summer. That's the strength of Saskatchewan.

We have lowered surgical wait times and increased the number of drugs in our formulary.

Mr. Speaker, we can feel the strength of the province and the leadership in our people. The true strength of our province is found in our people.

The Speech from the Throne highlights a number of strengthening prospects and I'd like to touch on a couple of others. Mr. Speaker, the reintroduction of the Saskatchewan infrastructure growth initiative for municipalities' finance infrastructure. This program provides interest rate subsidies for up to five years on municipal borrowing for infrastructure development. You know, I can see this is a great opportunity for Moose Jaw and every municipality in Saskatchewan in need of significant infrastructure investments. And this program will work well with the revenue-sharing program that this government brought in back in 2008. Moose Jaw's share of that revenue-sharing program increased from \$2.8 million to \$6.8 million from 2007-08 to this fiscal year. That keeps Saskatchewan strong.

We're also seeing substantial investment in new housing, especially in Moose Jaw, with 145 social housing units being constructed or being in the planning stage. That keeps Saskatchewan strong.

The development of the poverty reduction strategy will further assist a number of low-income families and people in need in our province. That's keeping Saskatchewan strong. The community rink affordability grant is also available to assist communities in the operation of skating rinks and curling rinks.

That's keeping Saskatchewan strong.

Another beneficial program that will increase the scope and service that can be provided by pharmacists. This will enhance the practice of pharmacists by giving them the authority to administer vaccinations and other drugs as well as ordering, accessing, and using lab tests, and that is keeping Saskatchewan strong.

The new-growth tax incentive for manufacturers is a program that I am confident that will be well received by the Saskatchewan manufacturers. Mr. Speaker, since 2007 Saskatchewan manufacturing shipments have climbed by more than 50 per cent and that's substantial to our province. Back in June of this year the Premier asked me if I would act as the Legislative Secretary for the Minister of the Economy for manufacturing, and I was pleased to do so. And over the last five months, I visited dozens of manufacturers across Saskatchewan and there's many, many more that I want to get out and see.

Major manufacturers like Brandt Industries and Bourgault Industries do a lot for this province. When I think of Bourgault Industries, they've attracted other industries into this small community and have really created a community atmosphere that has grown the community with a lot of the input that they do there. But it's not only the major manufacturers that create employment and build communities that add the strength to Saskatchewan, and when you think of manufacturing, you generally think of farm machinery. And I don't want to minimize the strength of agricultural manufacturing but when you think of places like Honey Bee Manufacturing in Frontier or Dave Dietrich's Flexxifinger in Assiniboia or Gary LaRocque's Power Pin in Fort Qu'Appelle, and many brilliant minds in developing better agricultural products for our agricultural producers to feed a growing global appetite, they all are part of keeping Saskatchewan strong.

The ingenuity of Saskatchewan people goes far beyond the manufacturing of farm equipment, Mr. Speaker. I've met with a number of owners and managers and I had the privilege of seeing many of the manufacturing components in some of our major centres that are made right here in Saskatchewan. One of them was a mounting that goes on a ship for the drilling of oil in the ocean. That's made right here in Saskatchewan. There's another cone that was designed and built for the potash industry that will be at K+S just north of Moose Jaw and elements that will go into research for oil in northern Alberta as well as Saskatchewan. There's other manufacturing goods of electronic components, of diodes and connectors and resistors and sensors and a lot of these things that we are manufacturing right here in this province and that happen to help be the future of this province.

There are manufacturing initiatives like Failure Prevention Services in Watson, Vecima Networks, JNE Welding, and Mitsubishi Hitachi Power products and Superior Cabinets of Saskatoon, as well as Windows Plus and manufacturing in Moose Jaw, and processors like Mitch's Meats near Assiniboia and Thunder Creek Pork and Agropcorp International in Moose Jaw — all these great, wonderful processors and manufacturers that are helping Saskatchewan be strong, all keeping Saskatchewan strong.

Mr. Speaker, there are dozens and dozens of gracious manufacturers and processors in Saskatchewan that provide great economic strength in keeping Saskatchewan strong. Part of that success is derived from such things as the Global Transportation Hub, which helps with our transportation needs. I also want to recognize the assistance of the Saskatchewan Trade and Export Partnership and what they have done and continue to do, the tremendous work in promoting and exporting Saskatchewan products all around the world.

Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan is a gracious province with great leadership, with lots of resources and ingenuity that will take this province well into the future, and it's keeping Saskatchewan strong. The Speech from the Throne reflects our strength and our commitment to the people of Saskatchewan. Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne and I will not be supporting the amendment. Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments.

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is a privilege to rise in the House. Any time you get to respond to either the budget or the Speech from the Throne and talk a little bit more about kind of where you come from and who has got you here, for example, it is a pleasure because often when we get to speak it's on a specific issue. But certainly the Speech from the Throne and the budget gives all of us a little more latitude to talk about other things that kind of put us in this spot.

And I, as is tradition, want to thank a number of people that allow me to do my job, whether it's the MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Indian Head-Milestone, which is by far the most important job that I have, and the second job that I would have would be serving in the cabinet under our Premier, and that is certainly a privilege too. There have been some changes on that front as far as the responsibilities that I have. And it has been an interesting summer over the past four months to five months learning and getting up to speed on the various files that I have responsibility for, whether it's Saskatchewan Government Insurance, whether it's CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] or Crown Investments Corp., whether it's lean, whether it's Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming, whether it's the Public Service Commission, a number of different responsibilities, and I've enjoyed my time over the past number of months learning those different portfolios, at least getting a start to learn some of the issues in those portfolios. I certainly don't profess to know all the issues that are going on in those areas but I'm starting to understand a little bit better.

[14:45]

But before I get into what I want to say on the Speech from the Throne, I do want to thank a number of people that are, again, allowing me to do my work. And most importantly that allow me to stand in this position here today would be the constituents and the people of Indian Head-Milestone. A strong community, I guess a little bit like the Speech from the Throne. A strong community, but for . . . A strong constituency based on agriculture, whether it's in the Avonlea, Rouleau, Milestone area, all the way up to Fort Qu'Appelle which is a little bit more

tourism; Indian Head, kind of the home of the research farm and formerly the PFRA [Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration] and really kind of a leading-edge agriculture area.

I just am really blessed when I get to go to the various parades around the constituency, whether I get to go to the odd fowl supper, which is fowl supper season right now — that's a tough one to say — but I certainly enjoy my time when I get out into the constituency.

I had a great day last Friday. I went out to Sedley and got to speak, meet with some of the kids that go to school there. I read a book to the grade 1 and 2, which I don't read very often out publicly, and you can tell by my speeches that I don't read very often publicly. But I got to speak to the grade 1 and 2's and read a book that I had read many, many times when our boys were growing up. And then I also spent some time with the grade 4 and 5 and then 5, 6, 7, and 8's. And it was interesting the questions and the understanding that they have of our political system. I want to credit the teachers in that school and all the support staff for doing a great job. Well-behaved kids. Great questions.

But those are the times and the examples that really, when I get to stand in this place representing all those views and all those people, it truly is a humbling experience to think that, you know, there are roughly 18 to 20,000 people that live in the constituency that I represent. And I've been given the honour and been blessed to be able to express their views on what they think is going on in the province. And you know, we don't all agree on every issue but certainly it is a strong constituency with strong, strong people that are hard working and just want a fair shake and believe, I think, that we're getting that fair shake in the province right now.

There isn't a member in here that doesn't do their work for their constituents without a strong constituency assistant. And I think we'd all stand in here, at least I will, I'll say I've got the best. And probably the member from North Battleford or Cut Knife-Turtleford would say they have the best. But I certainly am very fortunate to have Nicole Entner-McCullough run my office. They have two young girls growing up in the Balgonie area and her husband owns a . . . is partners in a fertilizer and chemical company. Really kind of the bedrock of a constituency, and she does great work in my office in Balgonie and I want to thank her for that.

Also I want to thank the staff that I have in my ministerial office in this building. That has changed as of changing in responsibility. But I've been very, very fortunate to work with a very strong chief of staff and ministerial assistant and other assistants, administration assistants, that give me the information that I need to go to the events that I go to. If I have to do any media, they certainly have me briefed up very well. So I am very fortunate in that front as well.

The other area I just really briefly touch on is of course we don't get to stand in this place without probably strong family backing us up, whether it's spouses and kids or extended family. And I'm fortunate that way. I will just quickly say that it has been an interesting year and a half to two years, because normally when I would be in my constituency or talking to

people in the general public, they'd wonder how your life is going as an MLA. But they don't ask me that question anymore. In fact they really don't care what's going on in my life. They really care about more what's going on our boys' lives as far as what they're doing right now. And I will say just briefly, they're living a dream. I could only dream that life. They're living a dream and right now they are in California. They are on their way to Vancouver tomorrow. They are coming home finally — only for a couple days — and they are going to be speaking at the Milestone sportsman dinner, which should be kind of interesting. Scary, because that's in my constituency. So I may not win a poll there now.

But certainly they've kind of started on this speaking tour and this is about their fifth or sixth appearance that they speak together. And so I'm kind of looking forward to it. I've only seen about 20 or 30 seconds of their presentation so I'm looking forward to seeing what they have to say. But I think — I think — and what I hope it is, is thanking, you know, probably for the support, but the province for the support. You know, they were very, very fortunate in that they got to be on a number of provincial teams, whether it was when they were wakeboarding and the support from Sask Sport and SaskCulture and Sport, Culture and Rec, or whether it is the snowboarding team that they were on, that they were kind of founders of, but the province has been very, very supportive all the way along on our elite athletes, on all of our athletes, but elite athletes. And I think and I hope — not that I get to see their speaking notes because I guess I don't show them mine — but that I'll get to see their speaking notes and hopefully they have something to say about the support that this province has had. And I think that's why they want to come back and talk about, you know, they've got to where they are because of where they have come from, and that is in large part because of support, again, across the province, but also some small financial support provincially.

I also want to just touch on, and it's I guess really poignant as so many other MLAs on both sides of the House have spoke regarding the incidents that happened a week ago today. It's hard to believe it was a week ago today, what happened in Ottawa. And you know, the cowardly act of course has been mentioned many times, and the death of Corporal Cirillo and the tragedy around that. But I really want to acknowledge our protective services — RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], city police, first responders — so many of those people that work so hard to make sure that we are safe, not only on our day-to-day lives, whether it's on the roads or city streets, wherever, but especially in facilities like this, that it is a struggle, no doubt.

In Ottawa for sure, we are probably going to have more of a conversation about it here in Saskatchewan, about making sure that these buildings are accessible and we as public figures are accessible, but making sure that we're safe as well. Because you know that there's people, number one, they sometimes don't believe in the same beliefs, but there's also people that, you know, are struggling with many . . . whether it's addictions or mental illness and, you know, just aren't thinking straight.

And so how do you balance that between protection of elected officials and the freedom to access those elected officials? And so again it was . . . I think for anybody that work in these buildings or know people that work in these buildings, their



eyes were glued to the sets, of course, all last Wednesday. And then the fallout since that time to where we are today, which is a one-week anniversary, and I can't believe how quickly that time flies. So that's a little bit about the thank yous, and I certainly am fortunate.

What I do want to talk a little bit now is getting to the Speech from the Throne. I would hate to . . . Shoot, my watch is not working here. So I'm sure it's only been a couple minutes, but when I get to 20 minutes, somebody please tell me.

I do want to talk about the Speech from the Throne that was delivered. I hate to say I don't know if I responded to everyone since 1999 — can you believe that, member from Estevan, that we've been here that long? — but I have responded to most of them. And you know, it's always an interesting time to hear the debate back and forth. And some would question whether it's really debate. The opposition don't like it and the government just all likes it, and that's just the way it is, back and forth.

But it is interesting to look at the different perspectives of what the opposition has to say regarding the Speech from the Throne, what we have to say, of course, regarding the Speech from the Throne. But I try and contrast that, and I try and compare it to what I hear on the streets on a day-to-day basis. Now the people on the streets of Balgonie or Fort Qu'Appelle or Vibank or any of the communities that I represent may not refer to items specific in the Speech from the Throne. They may not talk about, you know, whether it's the education spending or the highways spending or the workforce spending. But what they tend to talk about is the direction of the province and how the province is doing. What I hear from the constituents that I represent is very, very closely matched to what is spoken about in the Speech from the Throne. And if it isn't item specific, Mr. Speaker, what it tends to be is it is very specific on the theme. And the theme is Keeping Saskatchewan Strong. And that's what people feel in the province right now.

I can honestly say from 1999 to 2014, today, there has been a marked change in the attitude of people within this province. I don't think in 1999 or 2000, 2001-02, up to 2007, I saw many speeches from the throne that would talk about a strong province. It would maybe talk about, no one gets left behind. That's a little bit different than strong. I just don't remember any of the conversation on the streets, the conversation in this building kind of matching up to where it does match up today.

Keeping Saskatchewan strong, being positive, a positive outlook into the future, a strong economy, a strong government, Mr. Speaker, that's what people are seeing throughout the province. And that's why it's always interesting when I hear opposition members that really don't have much positive to say about the Speech from the Throne. Now perhaps only the negative people live in those constituencies; perhaps there are. And believe me, I have some that don't care for the way we may operate as a government, but each and every one of them, there are very few, more than one, there are very few that would say the province is going backwards — very, very few.

They all believe that we're going in the right direction. They may not like the exact direction our government is moving, but they also believe that the province is in a much better place in 2014 than it was in 2004. In fact, I believe to a person that they

would believe the province is strong.

It's a long, long ways from some of the words that we used to hear in opposition days when . . . I remember and I have great respect for the former premier, Lorne Calvert. Again, him sitting on this side of the House, and I was sitting on that side the whole time that he was premier, not agreeing with a lot of the . . . not disagreeing with everything that he did, but not agreeing with a lot of what he did, Mr. Speaker.

But the one thing that I really struggled, when he would go to other provinces or abroad and he'd talk about the wee province, wee province. And I tell you, that really cut to my soul. I mean, are we Ontario as far as population? Or are we Quebec as far as geographic size? Absolutely not. But our province, I would believe right now in the Dominion, save for maybe Alberta, is the strongest province in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. I will guarantee you that you will never hear from our Premier going around trying to sell your province as the wee province, Mr. Speaker. That just is not, not acceptable.

Mr. Speaker, some of the other statements that we heard when the NDP were in government is . . . I remember asking the very question about, we should set targets for the number of nurses. And we set a target for the number of nurses because we thought the only way a government can be held to account is to set a benchmark and then try and get there, and asking the members opposite, why wouldn't you set a target? And it was interesting because the member from Saskatoon Nutana was saying that there just are not enough targets in the Speech from the Throne. But when they were on this side of the House, when we asked, would you set a target? They would say, well we don't want to set targets because there's a good chance we're just not going to make it. You know, that's hardly a reason to not set a target. So you go from that sort of mentality and psychological leadership to where we are today, keeping Saskatchewan strong.

There was another member from Prince Albert, I remember when he was in here I had the opportunity — and I don't know if I'll say fortune — but I had the opportunity to serve. And he would always talk about when there was population decline, when the population, the kids were leaving the province, and it was our kids leaving the province, Eldon would always say that, you know, yes, it's maybe not exactly what we want to have happen, but the best part is there's more left for the rest of us. If they leave, then we're okay, because we get more. I mean that's the exact opposite thinking of where the province is today. We are doing everything in our power, whether it's the graduate retention program, whatever the program may be, to make sure that we retain all of these that want to stay here, attract youth.

Mr. Speaker, we've never seen such a low unemployment rate, Mr. Speaker. We've never seen so many people work in this province. We've never seen higher wages, Mr. Speaker. That's a strong province, Mr. Speaker. That isn't saying there'll be more left for the rest of us.

The Premier's used this kind of rationale before and it really is interesting. I'd hate to be a luggage salesman in Saskatchewan right now, because it used to be every grade 12 gift to their kids in grade 12 was luggage. Well you know what? Luggage sales have dropped an amazing amount here in Saskatchewan

because people are staying in this province.

The last statement that I remember from the opposition was when we talked about population increase. And we, I remember well before the '07 election, I believe it was back in 2003, we set a target again of what we would like to see the population be after 10 years. We wanted to grow at the national average of 1 per cent. The opposition, the government at that time, when we talked about growing at the national average . . . Just think about this and how the province has turned around in 10 years. Growing at the national average at that time for the government was statistically impossible. It would be impossible for this province to grow at the national average.

[15:00]

Well we've far surpassed that over the last seven years, Mr. Speaker. We are dealing with issues of growth absolutely, but when you stand as a government and say, statistically impossible to be average in Canada, is not a strong government, Mr. Speaker, and doesn't promote a strong province. That isn't where we're at today. We have a strong province, Mr. Speaker. It's reflective in so many of the numbers. It's reflective when you go outside the province, and it's interesting when you go outside the province and how much Rider gear you see outside the province, which you always did, but how proud people are to be from Saskatchewan, if they're outside of the province, and how proud they are of their home province.

Mr. Speaker, I don't know if anybody has been more proud than a transplanted Saskatchewan person of where their province is today. Because you know, they came from here at a time when it probably wasn't doing very well and they're reflecting back and they're looking at the province — if they haven't moved back already — but they're reflecting back and seeing what a province could have been. And they're all probably saying, if that could have only happened a number of years ago, they wouldn't have had to look back and see, you know, from outside the province. Too bad they couldn't be there. But there are more people moving back all the time. There are opportunities. It is phenomenal.

There are a couple areas that I do want to touch on really briefly. I don't know how much time I have, but a couple areas that we talked about in the Speech from the Throne, and I think this is reflective. I have been kind of listening to the opposition through their replies to the Speech from the Throne, but more importantly, I've been listening to the opposition over the last couple years to see what their options are in the province. They don't like a lot of what we're doing, and I can, you know . . . I mean I sat on that side for far too long — eight years. I can understand opposing the government. But I always remember, especially the last five or six years, we would oppose the government, absolutely oppose the direction they were going, and offer solutions, offer suggestions, Mr. Speaker. And for the life of me, I cannot remember the last time they offered a solid solution.

Here is their solution. Health care is no good. Improve it. That's what they would . . . It should be improved. Okay, how will you improve it? They say there should be nurse/patient ratios. Okay, what are the numbers? What is the nurse/patient ratio? They come up with virtually no ideas. They criticize and they can be

pretty good at that, but they come up with no tangible platform or policy.

And I know I've heard a couple of snipes back from the other side that that's not fair or, yes, we have. Except, you know, try and find it on the website. Try and find it anywhere and you can't see a word from the opposition as far as, okay, you don't like what we're doing; what are your options? People need to be able to measure that. And there is never a better time to put those options out than when you're in a by-election. We're in a by-election in Lloydminster and not one word as far as policy for the NDP.

Mr. Speaker, I think we've been very transparent. We've had a strong platform in 2007. We kept those promises. We've got a strong platform in 2011. We've kept those promises. And even in between elections, Mr. Speaker, we talk about issues and we try and get the general public's opinion.

Most recently, and I'm fortunate to be Minister of Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming, but most recently the Premier had mused about privatizing liquor stores. Should we have government employees selling alcohol into the general public? Is that the best use of our dollars when it comes to capital? I mean it's one thing to just look at, so we've got so many employees, but they're working in government stores. How much does it take to keep those government stores up? If we need to increase the number of government stores, should the dollars that we have as government go into capital for building buildings that will sell alcohol or should we . . .

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Why is the Minister of Government Relations on his feet?

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — To request leave to introduce a guest, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The Minister of Government Relations has asked for leave to introduce guests. Is leave granted?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

## INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Hon. Mr. Reiter:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Deputy Speaker, to you and through you to this Assembly, it's my pleasure to introduce in your gallery, His Worship Mayor Greg Dionne from the city of Prince Albert. I had an opportunity just a few minutes ago to chat with the mayor, and I'm looking forward to seeing him at an event tonight.

He's here to attend meetings with the Saskatchewan city mayors' caucus. And I'll also be meeting with them more formally tomorrow. So I'm looking forward to the event tonight and also the meeting tomorrow. So, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I would ask all members to please give Greg Dionne a warm welcome to his Assembly. Thank you.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the Minister of CIC.

**SPECIAL ORDER**  
**ADJOURNED DEBATES**  
**ADDRESS IN REPLY**

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the address in reply which was moved by Mr. Tochor, seconded by Mr. Lawrence, and the proposed amendment to the main motion moved by Mr. Wotherspoon.]

**Hon. Mr. McMorris:** — Mr. Speaker, so as I was saying, the Premier mused about privatization of liquor stores. We already know the opposition, of course, any change, if they can go back to, you know, when they were in power in 2000, 2003 and have it set in that time, that would be perfect because any changes that we've made, they've opposed — haven't come up with any of themselves. But when the Premier mused about privatizing of liquor stores, the opposition I believe critic from Saskatoon Nutana said about privatizing our liquor stores, no, but not privatization; that isn't on the list. In other words, absolute flat out no. Not whether it would make more sense, not whether the people of the province thought it was a good idea, just philosophically they're dead set against it.

Mr. Speaker, what we want to do, and this will roll out over that next couple of months, we want to have hopefully input in by sometime around the end of January, but hear what the public has to say about, should we have government employees selling alcohol or could we do it a better way, Mr. Speaker?

And some of the assumptions that I heard the opposition . . . I think it's the critic; I'm not sure, but Saskatoon Nutana, some of the assumptions she said in her speech yesterday were just absolutely wrong. And it shows I think maybe a lack of knowledge of the system. And so I think the big part of what we are trying to do over the next three or four months is, number one, get input back in regarding the privatization of liquor stores. But I think most importantly is to educate the general public of how we retail alcohol within the province.

Most people think, well we have a public system. But we have really quite a mixed system of public/private. We have vendors in about 160, 170 locations. We have 400 outlets that sell alcohol, beer for example, Mr. Speaker. There's only a small number of stores that are public, 75 now, and so the vast majority is already sold public/private.

But what should that mix look like? The member opposite said, well we're making money in all our stores. That's just not quite the case because you've got to take into consideration all the expenses of the store, not just lighting, not just personnel, but the whole capital cost, Mr. Speaker, as well as head office support.

So what we are trying to do in this paper as we release it, is the first part, educate where we've come from regarding alcohol sales to where we are now. You know, in 2009 we had the introduction of private liquor and wine stores within our system, That's the first major change in 50 years, Mr. Speaker. You can go all the way back to 1958 where the government at that time decided that women should be able to drink in public establishments and, you know, we've crossed that bridge now

and I'm not going to comment any more on that. But, Mr. Speaker, there is a lot of education that needs to be done I think regarding the general public, as far as what type of system we have now along with options of what it could look like into the future.

Maybe it's status quo. Maybe it should stay the same. Maybe it should be all public. Maybe it should be all private. But there is a real myriad of options from one to the other. But first we kind of have to get an understanding of how the system works right now. I'm really looking forward to it over the next number of months to get the public's input, not just driven on ideology, but on what is best for the province, what is best for the consumer. There are stakeholders involved. There is a whole host. And I've said before on one interview I said is that, you know, I've had the opportunity to get public input on other issues, and sometimes it's really tough to get that issue in front of people and to get people talking about that issue. All you've got to do is talk about alcohol and I get a lot of responses, Mr. Speaker. We've had no problem getting public response back in. I look forward to that response over the next number of months and then moving on from there as far as maybe a position for into the future.

The issue I didn't get to talk on much about is lean — I look forward to that on some other opportunity — and the benefits of lean. I would just put out one challenge to anybody on our side but more importantly to anybody on the opposition side. I can understand criticizing lean. I can understand not understanding lean, thinking that it's just, like it's just common sense; anybody could do that. What you need to do is tour, whether it's a ministry that we've implemented lean, whether it's a health care facility that's implemented lean, or a health region. I don't think you can ever come across credibly . . . And I think that's the opposition especially leader's problem is he's coming across without any experience, without any opportunity. And he's had opportunity. He's been offered many times to get out and tour lean facilities, but he refuses to. He refuses to remain ignorant on the issue, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I will be supporting the Speech from the Throne, and I will not support the amendment.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Batoche.

**Mr. Kirsch:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I speak once again for the people of Batoche, and I thank them for the privilege and the honour of being here. Also I'd like to thank my board of directors for their support and guidance and my CAs [constituency assistants], and we call them team Telfer that looks after the office in Cudworth. Much appreciated, and I thank them.

I would also like to thank my wife, Valerie, for her love and understanding and her kind support. And just in a few days is November 1st and that is our anniversary, and it will be 39 years. So I know I don't look hardly that old, but it is there.

Today I speak in reply to the Speech from the Throne. I am thrilled to be able to speak of the new Saskatchewan, the land of opportunity. And the land held so much promise when our forefathers first arrived here. They saw the potential of the land.

They saw the land with a great future. They saw a land that you could build dreams on. Then along came the dirty thirties, smashed all of those dreams. And as that was ending, here comes Tommy and his dream of socialism that has held us back for 60 years.

Now we are back on track. Saskatchewan is now building, growing, and reaching goals that the NDP said were unattainable. The new Saskatchewan that is now often referred to has reached goals of epic proportion. Since the Saskatchewan Party has come to power in 2007, Saskatchewan has bloomed like the first flowers of spring on a dewy, sunny morning. Saskatchewan sparkles and glistens in the new light of the new Saskatchewan, and people are taking notice. Might I say, Mr. Deputy Speaker, the world is taking notice. Goals that were set by our first premier, Sir Walter Scott, are now being achieved. We are once again the fastest growing province in Canada.

I would now like to talk about some of the successes our government has made to help make this province stronger. For me, one of the biggest signs — and I've spoken of this before, but I must speak of it again — is K+S mines of Germany is back. K+S was one of the companies that the NDP drove out of this province when they took over the potash mines. Mr. Speaker, K+S has looked at the new Saskatchewan with a Saskatchewan Party government and they have decided to try again. Now they are back building a new potash mine.

Mr. Speaker, do you know what the odds were of a company coming back after being kicked out by the NDP government? Mr. Speaker, they must have given a real hard look at the new Saskatchewan and the new government of this province. They had to see a strong, stable government before they said, okay, we'll try again. They looked at us, we might say, through a powerful magnifying lens and a very sharp pencil, and they once again are risking millions of dollars to reinvest in Saskatchewan.

You know, this information was also available to the NDP. When they analyzed the information, they said Saskatchewan is sliding backwards and is bound to fail. I think the NDP needs some new analysts. Or is it, Mr. Speaker, that they want Saskatchewan to fail, not for economic reasons but purely political? The negative nine on the other side of the House have only one goal, and that is to regain power, not the betterment of this province but to regain power.

[15:15]

Mr. Speaker, you know that I'm a bit of a history buff, so I'd like to show a parallel. The location was southern USA [United States of America] and the time was the 1860s. It was the end of the Civil War and people were exploiting what they could from the defeated South. There were people, carpetbaggers and politicians, and they were given a name. That name was snollygoster. It means, and I quote, "self-seeker; somebody, especially a politician, whose actions are motivated by self-interest rather than high principle." Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan doesn't need any snollygosters. We don't need any self-seekers.

This province is rich with resources and blessed with a people who will put this province first and are willing to build their

future and that of this province. Our government is giving them the tools to do the job.

I must now return to some of the many successes our government has had in our province. Mr. Speaker, one of the biggest challenges we have faced and are still facing is of course health care. The bill for health care is a whopping 42 cents of every tax dollar. That challenge is to get the best mileage for that tax dollar. To do this we brought in the lean program at the cost of 40 million. So far, so far the savings are 59 million and counting. Mr. Speaker, I'd say that's a pretty good start. Yes, that's just a start.

Mr. Speaker, we're hearing some complaints about the lean program, other than our colleagues from across the aisle. But where are they coming from? I would say they are NDP Party members or strong union members. They are not your John Q. Public. When we talk to the public, they are impressed and happy with the lean program. We are also applying the lean principles to other departments of our government and are having tremendous successes. Yes, it's not all gold, but it sure beats the downward spiral that health care was taking under the NDP.

We had the longest waiting lists in all of Canada. The NDP were closing hospitals, and we were losing nurses and doctors. Now we are shortening waiting lists. The Saskatchewan Party government is building hospitals and reversed the outflow of doctors and nurses, and we are educating more doctors and nurses right here in Saskatchewan. We have broadened the prescription drug plan, and we are also building more seniors' homes.

Yes, there is much more to do, but these are steps in the right directions. It is a step forward and not a step backward like the now-opposition party was doing when they were in power.

Mr. Speaker, another huge measurement of success of Saskatchewan is the rating that Moody's, one of the large financial institutions in North America, has given us. Moody's has recently upgraded Saskatchewan to a AAA rating. That's their highest possible rating, and they're the second firm to do so. Mr. Speaker, the world says we are financially solid, and to prove it, they've given us a AAA rating. That's not just words, that's action. The NDP response to that has been to ignore it and not talk about it.

Mr. Speaker, the past weekend I was present at what I would call a historic event. I was part of the grand opening of the new St. Louis bridge. For the Batoche constituency this is a huge event. In fact for Saskatchewan this is a huge, great event. The old bridge has served the people of Saskatchewan well, but the time has come for a new bridge. In fact, the time has come 20 years ago.

The government of the day, the NDP, had said we need the new bridge. Well they just never got around to it, and it didn't happen under their watch. But the Saskatchewan Party government has built that bridge. History will record that on October 24, 2014, the Minister of Highways and the MLA for Batoche constituency opened the new St. Louis bridge.

Another giant project that our government has undertaken is

clean coal technology. There have been people who say it can't be done, but Saskatchewan took up the challenge. The result is that in early October, we opened the Boundary dam 3 power plant with clean coal technology. More than 90 per cent of the CO<sub>2</sub> emitted at Boundary dam will be captured and stored for use for enriched oil recovery. Mr. Speaker, that is equivalent to taking 250,000 vehicles off of Saskatchewan's highways. People have travelled here from all over the world to see what Saskatchewan has done. To the people who said it couldn't be done, I offer this quote: "People who say it can't be done should get out of the way of the people who are doing it."

We also have now almost completed the new facility at the U of S [University of Saskatchewan], which is the Sylvia Fedoruk Canadian Centre for Nuclear Innovation. That's quite a mouthful. This new laboratory will be making radiopharmaceuticals or, for us lay people, drugs containing radioactive materials. These drugs will be used to detect, diagnose, and treat diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and multiple sclerosis. Mr. Speaker, this is a giant step in the diagnosis and treatment of these terrible diseases. And to think it will be done here in Saskatchewan, not someplace else but right here in Saskatchewan with Saskatchewan uranium. This is an innovation that will touch the lives either directly or indirectly of every person in Saskatchewan. This is something we could not do or could not even have afforded to do in the old NDP Saskatchewan. This however is what is possible in the new Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, Batoche constituency is made up of small communities. We have no cities. As a result, the people of Batoche constituency will be very grateful for the province's revenue-sharing program, which has doubled from when the Saskatchewan Party first became government. The small communities are the backbone of this province, and our government is supporting them.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot take leave until I speak of my passion in life, and that of course would be agriculture. Agriculture is still the heart of this province. With 47 per cent of Canada's cropland, agriculture is not only important to Saskatchewan and Canada but to the world. In 2013 for the third year in a row we set a record for agriculture exports of 11.7 billion, and we have set a goal of 15 billion by 2020.

Being a former livestock producer, I was glad to hear that Canada won its challenge against the USA country of origin labelling, better known as COOL, at the World Trade Organization. Saskatchewan supports free trade, and we are working on international trade barriers.

We realize that we must also work on trade between provinces, and we've made a great start with the New West Partnership — so trade with Alberta, British Columbia, and Saskatchewan. Once again there's more work to be done. Our government is also increasing rural Internet and cell service.

Mr. Speaker, we all know things have changed in Saskatchewan. We no longer hear the line from the NDP days, will the last one to leave please turn out the lights? We are now putting up more lights, building more schools, hospitals, and homes. Most importantly, we are now the place to be, not the place to be from.

Mr. Speaker, as a postscript I would like to add that the member from Athabasca always says that we are blowing our own horn. Well, Mr. Speaker, that's better than blowing hot air. I'm very proud of what our government has accomplished since November of 2007, and this Throne Speech is another step in that right direction.

I would now like to make a few comments about the past week. Over the past two days, we've heard a lot of very emotional and heartfelt words about our fallen soldiers. We've shown a great respect for the men and women of our armed services, RCMP and police services, and legislative security. Let's not let it end there. I would suggest that each and every one of us go home this weekend and spread the word that November 11th is Remembrance Day and, to show respect, everyone should attend a Remembrance Day service. Let us contact our families, friends, neighbours, and organizations that we know, churches and clubs, and ask them to spread the word also. Let us as MLAs promote the largest Remembrance Day ceremony since the end of the Second World War. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

**Hon. Ms. Wilson:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. I'm pleased to rise today in the Assembly to add my comments to the reply to the Speech from the Throne. The events of October 22nd will be forever in our minds. Our thoughts are with Corporal Nathan Cirillo's family and his military family. Those who live for service of others will be remembered. Though we face troubled times, we can draw strength from the knowledge that our forefathers met and overcame great difficulties. May we face and conduct ourselves with dignity and fortitude that hence future generations can take equal pride in our achievements. As our Saskatchewan motto says, "from many peoples, strength," and yesterday's funeral of Corporal Cirillo has impacted so many of us, and a nation mourns. But we will prevail.

And now, Mr. Speaker, I will get on with the business of Saskatchewan, despite our challenges. Mr. Speaker, it was a very busy summer in Saskatchewan Rivers with many celebrations and happy occasions to attend with constituents, Saskatchewan residents, and tourists all enjoying what Saskatchewan Rivers has to offer. In this region where many lakes and beautiful parks abound, I was able to help celebrate an anniversary. It was the one-year anniversary of the Great Blue Heron Provincial Park at Emma Lake.

As well we announced 35 non-electrical campsites in Anderson Point campground and it will receive electrical service in 29 existing campgrounds, and Murray Point campground will have electrical services upgraded. Tourism is a very important part of this area, both economically and for a place of recreation and relaxation for all Saskatchewan people. I believe we had a good summer as the resorts, the roads, and parks were busy and well utilized, and as the Throne Speech indicated, our government has invested extensively in the provincial park system.

Mr. Speaker, I am honoured and privileged to represent the people of this amazing and distinct region of this great province where diverse cultures have created a home side by side as neighbours. Where else could I attend the swirling dancers in

their colourful regalia at the First Nations Thanksgiving powwow and then go on to a wonderful Ukrainian feast?

As parliamentarians, all my colleagues and I do this intricate dance of balancing work and family. Public events, parades, even shopping and weddings can become political arenas. However, saying that, I am grateful for the feedback from our constituents and welcome their honesty, faith and trust placed in me. I have met some great people that way, with interesting insights to help our great province move forward. Hopefully they'll continue to approach me with their concerns and issues. I am also fortunate to live close to the regional and provincial parks as well as the national park, where I can enjoy what Saskatchewan has to offer our families while engaging in dialogue of various opinions so that I can have current feedback to do better.

This past summer I toured across the riding of Saskatchewan Rivers and even further north. Wildfire management was one of the issues of discussion in the region. Therefore I took the opportunity to tour the provincial fire base along with my colleagues from Carrot River Valley, Prince Albert Northcote, and Rosthern-Shellbrook. I was impressed by the technology, the knowledge of the dedicated staff, and the accuracy of the wildfire detection equipment. During the 2013 fire season, 42 existing wildfire detection towers across the northern forest were fitted with cameras. The system started operating for the 2014 fire season. These cameras send images to the provincial centre where three specialists monitor images from all cameras and focus on the high-risk areas as required. These cameras operate seven days a week, and these images can be shared with others.

[15:30]

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Saskatchewan's system is the largest wildfire-detection camera system in North America. And as we stood there watching the monitor systems, we saw many images come across the screen from the North. We saw cars travelling, local bird life, and images of the trees swaying in the wind, the intricate close details to observe whether it was dust or smoke. We also learned that the provincial wildfire centre provides weather information critical to wildfire program operations and safety, information used to calculate hazards and predict fire behaviour, evaluate fire risk, and to manage resources effectively.

While I was there I also had the chance to visit with a team of firefighters being dispatched to fight a fire, and these are the brave men and women from across our province. Consequently, Mr. Deputy Speaker, this summer I had the pleasure of meeting Hope Pederson, author of *The Saskatchewan Smoke Jumpers*. Many of these men were from the North, an area I represent, so their family names were very familiar to me. This is a remarkable story detailing the courageous young men who served their province by fighting forest fires in the 1950s. They certainly did great work to protect our Saskatchewan resources and have remarkable stories to tell. I then had the privilege of meeting some of these men at the luncheon held earlier this summer, and their stories were highly interesting as well.

Our government believes in the protection of the environment and is dedicated to adding more resources to protect all of our

communities. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this spring I was pleased to gather with Smeaton village council and Mayor Sonia Fidyk; residents; and our local MP [Member of Parliament], Randy Hoback, to celebrate the grand opening of the new water treatment plant and reservoir. The village of Smeaton is benefiting from infrastructure funding through the Building Canada Fund, a joint provincial-federal program. This project increases the number of households that will have access to improved drinking water and provides all residents with safer quality drinking water.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, our municipal governments are on the front lines dealing with the opportunities and the challenges in our growing province. One way the government is helping is by providing our municipal partners with predictable funding tools for priority projects in their home communities. Municipalities, towns, and villages across the province are receiving a revenue-sharing increase by more than 100 per cent increase province-wide since 2007. One of the rural municipalities I represent, Buckland No. 491, has an increase of 219 per cent. Mr. Deputy Speaker, this government is also evaluating an innovated proposal from SARM [Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities] what would use federal, provincial, and municipal funding to leverage private sector investment on our rural roads.

Earlier this summer, I joined the member from Swift Current in Prince Albert, along with several of my colleagues, as the announcement was made that the province intends to fund its portion of a second bridge by way of a P3 project. It was also encouraging to see our Member of Parliament publicly inviting local municipalities and the province to come forward with a Prince Albert bridge proposal for the federal government to consider.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, this summer I was also happy to be invited to view the most recent addition to the Shock Trauma Air Rescue Society fleet, the state-of-the-art AW139, first of its kind in the province. This impressive helicopter will help save lives through quicker flying times and the larger medical interior. The pilot and the additional medical staff were quite helpful in explaining the details of their roles in helping save Saskatchewan people. Our government will also continue to focus on retaining and attracting health care professionals. Since 2007 a large number of nurses has increased. I believe it's 2,600 has come to Saskatchewan since 2007.

And as I watch the children come back into our communities and welcome another school year, I was proud of our government's high-quality education system. It's important to recognize the potential of our youth, as they will be the leaders of tomorrow. This government is committed to continuing work with all sector partners to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all students, no matter where they live in this vast province.

I spoke to a group of school children in Big River earlier this year. They were well prepared with questions and ideas. I applaud the principal and the teachers for extending a warm welcome and the hospitalities of all the schools where we were received, whether it be at Debden or across my constituency over to Choiceland. Our province's schools are a vital part of a strong Saskatchewan, and we will continue to invest in the Saskatchewan school system to meet the growth and challenges.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, I also had the pleasure this summer of attending the Lakeland Citizen of the Year dinner where we celebrated a wonderful senior of 91 years. He continues to enjoy the sport of curling and actively volunteers. Murray Smail is the gentleman's name, and we recognize and congratulate his accomplishments. He's a great model to all of us. Also the community volunteers continue to prepare a potluck supper for this annual award held at the Christopher Lake Legion Hall. As many communities can attest to, these volunteers are the backbone of many events, and it's not surprising that the province of Saskatchewan has the most volunteers in Canada.

In reflection on the Throne Speech, our government has committed to serving as a strong voice for rural Saskatchewan. And it's areas like this, the villages and the towns across the riding of Saskatchewan Rivers, that will benefit from the Throne Speech.

Agriculture also in Saskatchewan contributes greatly to our economy, and our government is committed to serving as a strong advocate of our agricultural community. The agriculture sector contributes 4.5 billion to Saskatchewan's gross domestic product and sustains 50,000 jobs in our province.

It's good news that SaskTel is doubling the available Internet speed in 220 rural communities and improving cellphone service in 111 rural communities, thus enabling the rural communities where they have businesses to be more efficient and more effective. This is what the public has been asking us, and we are delivering. I believe our government is addressing the needs of a growing province because of some of the issues I've discussed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, on September 1st, 1905, Saskatchewan became a province of Canada. The pioneers of that day are the grandparents of many of us today. It is in large part due to the courage and fortitude of these early settlers that so much progress has been made in Saskatchewan. These settlers went on to fight in the world wars, and for that, we are extremely grateful.

Today we are again discussing in our Throne Speech replies the progress our government has achieved in so short a time. Our first Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly was in 1888. The story of our province is now being told time and time again around the world. Our Saskatchewan communities have character, confidence, vigour, and new visions.

One of my granddaughters was born on the 11th day on the 11th month of the 11th year — Remembrance Day. And as we honour those who gave our lives, we also celebrate my granddaughter's birthday. It is bittersweet for some of us who have lost those in the wars.

As Remembrance Day nears, I'd like to quote Winston Churchill: "Never give up. Never, never give up. We shall go on to the end." And so, Mr. Speaker, our values and our way of life will prevail. We shall prevail and go on. And in conclusion, I will be supporting the Throne Speech. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Hart:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is certainly a pleasure to enter into the reply to the Throne Speech. Mr. Speaker, I've participated in quite a number of these replies, not every one, but quite a number.

And usually as customary, and I certainly follow custom, it's an opportunity for members to, what I would term, give us comments on their constituency, the state of affairs of their constituency. And there's good reason for that because there are things that go on in our constituencies, and if we're not here to speak about them, quite often our colleagues in this House don't know about them, but more importantly, the rest of the province. We do have a viewing audience. And I know sometimes the numbers go up. And I'm guessing that right now the numbers have gone up. Or maybe not. My parents aren't here to view, watch me anymore.

But before I get into what I would like to speak about, I would like to also, as many members of the House have done, is thank their families. I would like to thank Marlene and our two granddaughters. As I have referred to them many times, our little darlings, but they're not so little anymore. The oldest, Tenaisha's 17, will be graduating this spring, coming spring, has a number of plans for her future after high school. University is certainly one of them. She also is looking very seriously at perhaps joining a youth group and doing some volunteering here in Canada and in other countries in the world.

The youngest one, Alyx, is in grade 7 and is one who quite often gets upset with me when I refer to her as my little darling, and she takes me to task over that. She's quite a quick wit.

And while we're here in Regina tending to the affairs of the province, our families are at home. And they seem to adjust while we're away, and that's certainly the case for my family. In fact after a week or so of being away from home and being here in Regina when the House is sitting, when I do get home there are some difficulties that arise when I'm home on the Friday and over the weekends. They seem to have worked out a system that works quite well, and if I happen to interject into the system and perhaps say well, you know, why are you doing this or why is grandma allowing you to do that, I do now get pushback.

I can remember not so long ago at the dinner table, I did take the youngest one to task. And she looks at me with a very serious, straight face and she says, you know what, Grandpa? There are days when I think I like you better when you're in Regina. And upon reflection, I think she was right. Grandpa needs to find his role. But things, like I said, are going well.

I would also like to and I certainly thank the family for all the support they give me and help me, enable me to do the job that we're elected for.

The other people that certainly assist all of us, and certainly that's true in my case, is our staff in our constituency office. And I have very, I'm proud to say, I have very capable and loyal staff in my constituency office. Carol Mellnick has been with me for many . . . well from day one, and continues to serve well the people of the province ably and well.

And recently we have added another person, Donna Klein, who

is quite new to the position, started earlier this summer, very capable. She was here to witness the delivery of the Throne Speech. It was her first time. She was very . . . She really appreciated being here, really felt to be included in our world, I guess, by being here. We did go over to Government House and took in the hospitality of Her Honour, and she felt that, she very much appreciated, Donna very much appreciated that.

[15:45]

But I appreciated her being here because I think it is important for our staff, whenever possible, to be here to see what happens in this Chamber and to see what happens on a special day like the Throne Speech. And I thank them for their loyalty and the good work that they do on behalf of the people of this province, and certainly help me look much better than I would be if they weren't there.

As other members have spoken about and paid their respects to our two fallen soldiers of last week, the tragedy that happened that perhaps brought a new reality to our country and to this province, I certainly offer my condolences to Corporal Cirillo and Warrant Officer Vincent's families. And I certainly, along with, I'm sure, all the people of our province, value the work and the dedication of our armed forces, Mr. Speaker.

I know that the Board of Internal Economy in our legislature has met and are dealing with the issues that have arisen, security and so on. I know our Sergeant-at-Arms has put forward suggestions. I believe these suggestions have come forward in the past, and perhaps we need to look very closely at all these suggestions.

But I would, I suppose, offer a word of, perhaps caution isn't the right word, but perhaps a word of pause. I think we need to be very deliberate about what it is we will be doing. We certainly agree that we need to have a safe workplace for everyone that works in this building. And to sit and do nothing, I don't believe would be appropriate. But however I think what we need to do is find the balance that will serve the people in this building, those of us that are members, but also serve the people of the province well.

I was very pleased this afternoon when at 1:30 or just before 1:30 when I walked in and saw the galleries quite full. It is the people's building. This Chamber is their Chamber. We're here, we're elected by the people of the province to sit and speak for them. But it is theirs. And to reduce their ability to come and view the workings of this legislature, I think would be problematic.

But having said all of that, I realize that perhaps we do need to change some things. And again just to re-emphasize, I think we need to find the balance. And I think we need to, as members, we need to have the proposals so that we could review of them. And I believe we need to have a discussion and then have a common decision as to what it is we will be doing to ensure that everyone who enters this building is safe and the measures are in place to deal with the new reality of the world we live in, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to I suppose present the Last Mountain-Touchwood report of the year. And I must say

that 2014 has been quite a trying year in my constituency. The record rainfalls that we received over the year has certainly presented a lot of problems, created a lot of issues. The record rainfall in a short period of time that happened in the eastern side of the province at the end of June, beginning of July, we were severely impacted. We were much more severely impacted than back in 2011. And that is something that I have heard from the people of the constituency, whether it be RM [rural municipality] reeves and councillors or town councillors.

The impact on the highways, we certainly did have some impact back in 2011 on the highways in the constituency, but that was more a result of the rerouting of truck traffic when the No. 1 Highway was flooded back in 2011. It was again flooded in 2014, and there was some rerouting of traffic but perhaps not to the extent that happened in 2011.

But what we did have is we had one highway, Highway 22, with a major washout in Pearl Creek. I remember in that time frame when we had those heavy rains and flooding was rapidly happening, I did have the opportunity to do a fair bit of travel in the immediate area.

I remember the, I believe it was the Sunday. I had to meet some people in Grenfell early in the afternoon, and my usual route going to Grenfell was through Indian Head and on over, taking Highway No. 1 over to Grenfell. And so I did that. Well on the way, going east to Grenfell, the southbound lanes of No. 1 Highway in the Wolseley area were starting just . . . The water was just starting to come over the highway. There was some . . . Just as I got there or just before I got there, there was actually an RCMP officer there and he was slowing people down, and later on he was replaced by Highways people.

I spent about an hour in Grenfell and came back the same route. And by the time I got back in the Wolseley area again, the water was coming over, by this time, over the westbound lanes, the north lanes. The water was coming from the south of the highway and flowing to the north, and there was two areas, one east of Wolseley and one west, I believe. And so it wasn't a surprise that later in the day that the news media reported that Highway 1 was closed because there was a lot of water. It was quite fast moving. By the time I was heading back to Indian Head, I was quite happy I was driving my truck because I was really, I was concerned about if, particularly, inexperienced drivers in smaller vehicles if they were attempting to cross those flooded portions of the highway, there could've been some very unfortunate consequences of that.

Highways people were out there. They were slowing people down and they were warning them to be cautious and careful, and they certainly were looking after this emergency situation. So that was Sunday.

So Monday I received, June 30th, I received calls from mayors and reeves in the east part of the constituency, particularly over in the Neudorf area about, you know, they were quite concerned about the potential for highway trucks that were carrying primary weights coming over Highway 22 in particular, and they were concerned about perhaps that highway be damaged like it was in 2011. I believe that it didn't happen because, well I did travel that area and I was told about the potential flooding at Pearl Creek which is quite a narrow, deep creek. It's part of



the Qu'Appelle River drainage system, and there is quite a high fill through that creek with a railway trestle, oh I don't know, quarter or half a mile to the north which was blocking a lot of water also.

So on the 30th of June, the water on the north side of the highway — of course the water would flow south into the Qu'Appelle valley — it was quite high. It was almost to the edge of the highway. That was the Monday, and there was already some flooding on Highway 10. Yes, because I did go up to Melville that day and come back on Highway 10 west to Balcarres and beyond back home.

And at that time there was, in the Duff area there was . . . This situation was changing very rapidly. There was, flooding was starting to happen in the Duff area across Highway 10. And as you can well imagine, Mr. Speaker, the rain was falling. There had been a lot of rain. The water was gathering up and it was creating these flooding situations. And that was a situation where again I was quite happy that I was driving my truck and not a small vehicle because that was flooding, that portion of the highway, flooding. I was told later, just had, you know, it just started when I had crossed, and there was a lot of water, fast-moving water going across the highway, Mr. Speaker.

So that was June the 30th, the Monday. So Tuesday again I travelled the area and the situation was changing dramatically. Monday in the afternoon I was able to cross Highway 22 at Pearl Creek and go on up 47 to Melville. On the Tuesday I needed to go back to Grenfell. Well Highway No. 1 was already closed, so I thought, fine. I'll just head east on Highway 22 to 47, which is the highway south of Melville, and take it down to Grenfell and I'll be fine. I'll bypass the flooded area on Highway 1.

Well as I said, the situation was changing rapidly, and by Tuesday afternoon the highway was closed at Pearl Creek. There was a massive amount of water — Highway 22, that is — a massive amount of water going across the highway. And I'm sure if people who have probably saw the pictures of the washout which resulted later in the week, a huge washout. The culvert's gone. The cut, the fill there was probably . . . I'm still using the old English system. It was probably at least 40 feet deep and 40 or 50 feet wide.

The steel guardrail and the posts were dangling in the air. The only thing that was keeping them up was the steel along the side. And the water, it was a lot of water had gone through there and the fear was there was still a lot of water backed up behind that railway trestle. And if that had've given way, we would have had some huge flooding issues. So that gives you a bit of an idea of some of the issues and the results, and the impact of the flooding that we had, Mr. Speaker.

And I must say that Department of Highways, they did an excellent job, and it was a massive undertaking to repair the Highway 22 in Pearl Creek. Some of the members may have seen the pictures in the *Leader-Post* of this massive culvert that I was told 16 feet in diameter and 200 feet long was placed there, and that was a major undertaking. And it's been filled and the people over in that area . . . I haven't had an opportunity to go over and check the highway myself, but the people are very happy that they now don't have to detour around on gravel

roads. And the RM, I know I spoke to the RM secretary and he was very pleased with the work that the Department of Highways did and the contractors that were on site, and now that they don't have that extra traffic on their roads. Because with all the rain, Mr. Speaker, it's not only taking its toll on provincial highways but also on the municipal grid road system.

But there is good news also in the constituency. I'm happy to report that, not this year, but in 2013, there was construction work and the rehabilitation of Highway 310 between Balcarres and Ituna has been completed. I could tell you that the people particularly in Ituna are very happy with the work that was done. They are the major users of that highway. And I can tell you that the telephone in my constituency office isn't ringing as it did prior to this. It's been a long time coming, but it's done.

Something else that I can report, Mr. Speaker, is that a portion of No. 22 Highway over on the west end, the portion between Southey and Earl Grey, is a work-in-progress, but the first five kilometres are done. They look great. That part of the highway has been upgraded to primary weight status. I think the last time that I saw it, which was just last Thursday, the only thing we needed to do was have the lines painted and perhaps that's already done. However, the remaining nine kilometres over to Earl Grey is another matter. That was also slated to be upgraded and be completed this year but it isn't, and that is because there is a section in that portion of the highway that was under water once again this summer. And that particular area, it's not a very long area but there's very deep water on either side and it has nowhere to drain. And it was lifted probably four or five feet I believe or one and a half metres as a result of flooding in 2011, and it was flooded again this summer. And so the engineers need to go back to the drawing boards and do some redesign on that portion of the highway. But hopefully there's . . . the aggregate's in place so we'll get that done in 2015.

[16:00]

Mr. Speaker, as I had said, the flooding not only affected highways dramatically but it affected many municipal roads. I toured with the reeve and councillor of the RM of Ituna Bon Accord in mid-July and they took me to places where roads had been washed out. This in 2014 and they were also washed out, the very same road was washed out in 2011. And what they told me, Mr. Speaker, is that they're very appreciative of the provincial disaster assistance program. They said it's been hugely helpful, but they said there are some limitations in that the program only pays to replace what was there before.

And that's part of the program design. It's a national program. The federal government is involved in it and it's applied across the country. We were at a super-grid that was washed out in the creek area. So they had already ordered . . . and that same portion of road washed out in 2011. So what they have done, Mr. Speaker, is the RM said, look, to replace it with the same size culvert that was in there before, which they had done in 2011, that doesn't make any sense. So they certainly appreciated the assistance that they're getting, but they're going to put some of their own dollars into this repair and ordered a larger culvert so that hopefully in the future they don't have to deal with this problem again.

On that same tour they took me to a farmyard. I had spoken a

day or two earlier with the farm family that they took me to and we got to the farmyard. There was a lot of water. There was water across the road. There was water in the yard, but thankfully the house was built on a bit of a knoll and it was high and dry. But the farmer took . . . The only way we were able to get into his yard is we could get up to the house but we couldn't get into the rest of the farmyard except on his quad, and so we went through about two or three feet of water to get there. And what I saw there, there was bins in the water. One bin had burst open. There was canola floating on the water and the shop was under water.

He said he had a lot of spraying to do, but he couldn't even get to his sprayer. Eventually he did get it out of the water but he said, you know, his shop was flooded so his tools, that was a problem. And so if there's that much water in the farmyard, of course there was a lot of flooding in the fields, Mr. Speaker, and that certainly was challenging.

So that's some of things that we've been dealing with in my constituency as the result of the heavy rains at the end of June. Well of course I think most people would know that the rains continued. It seemed perhaps even if we didn't get record amounts of rain, the rain that we did get came in a very short period of time and resulted in some additional flooding.

But what I should tell you, Mr. Speaker, that there is an area in my constituency that received 10 inches of rain in less than a week in September and that has created some huge, huge problems, Mr. Speaker. And it is in an area of the constituency where there really isn't any external drainage. There are a lot of basins or sloughs, as we refer to them, which have now become lakes. And it's an ongoing issue. There are farmyards that are flooded.

And what's happening is some of these basins are so full now that they're running into another basin, but they're really not draining out of the area. So what's happening is that some of these flooded areas and particularly I know of a few farmyards where the threat is growing. You would think it hasn't been raining that much. I mean there's a few little showers that we've got. It's nothing too dramatic. It's not going to cause flooding. But the problem is growing in some of these areas.

We continue to get calls as to what can be done. We're working with the RMs to help assist them in whatever manner we can. The RMs of course are trying to do their best and do some pumping and so on, but there's only so many pumps out there, and they're still busy pumping water in other areas. So it is certainly a challenge, Mr. Speaker.

I did spend, about three weeks ago, I spent an afternoon with a constituent, a farm family who explained their situation. They had a well in the lower area. They said up until September there was water gathering but they could get to their well, which supplies the farmhouse and certainly, in the wintertime, their livestock. Well after the 10 inches of rain, they estimate there is about 4 feet of water overtop of the well, and there's nowhere to pump this water. So it's a matter of great concern, Mr. Speaker. We are working with them to find some solutions and hopefully we can.

If I could get back to the issue of what some of the municipal

elected people, particularly the rural councillors are saying, they have told me what we need to do is we need to find a method of perhaps blending our disaster mitigation along with PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] so that we can do things better and that we don't have a repeat of some of these things.

One other problem that has arisen recently, and obviously is a result of the record rainfall that we've had this year, is the only primary weight highway that I have going through the constituency, Highway 6 at the Qu'Appelle Valley just north of Regina, I hadn't driven it for a while. And here, middle of October, I see on the north slope of the Qu'Appelle Valley the red pylons and so on along the edge of the highway. What's happening is that it's slumping. The weight of the clay, it's just giving way.

Something else that's happened is in Highway 56 in the Fort Qu'Appelle area just outside of Fort San, and that highway has been there forever, I think. There's clay is slumping on to the edge of the highway. And I talked to the Highways officials because constituents are saying, well can't we do something about that? Just get some loaders in there and trucks and haul it out of there? Well it's not quite that simple, Mr. Speaker. If that is removed, the rest of the hill would come down and completely close that highway, so that's an issue that has certainly been difficult.

And as you can well imagine with all the rain and no drainage — or at least in part of the constituency — all the sloughs, the basins have filled up. It's been a real challenge for the producers, for the farmers to get their crop off. But there's always an upside to these situations, and the people that sell grain carts have done very well this summer and fall because there's been a real proliferation of grain carts throughout the area. And the producers have made that investment. There's a number of producers certainly had them before, but now it seems like everybody has them and they needed them because you couldn't take the trucks into the field as you traditionally do most of the time. The trucks were parked right at the edge of the field or on the approach or on the road and then the grain carts would haul the grain to the trucks. And so it's an added expenditure but there's an asset there.

And of course the people that sell heavy tow ropes to pull the combines out of the mud, and the tractors and the grain carts and the swathers, you know, they were having difficulty keeping the tow ropes in stock, because I know from personal experience that those ropes don't last forever. And there is a lot of tension, a lot of torque on those ropes when these large combines with large four-wheel-drive tractors and sometimes two tractors hook to them to get them out of that mud and so on.

But in true Saskatchewan fashion, our latest crop report and talking to producers, the majority of the harvest is done. There's still a few, a bit of harvesting to be done out there, but overall the majority is done even under these trying, trying conditions, Mr. Speaker. So that's kind of the report of 2014 and so on. Overall crop yields were certainly not as good as last year but they are average to even in some areas above average, and quality is actually in some cases quite surprising with all the interruptions to harvest and all the late rainfall that we've had, Mr. Speaker.

I should say I was . . . One of the issues in all of this that I heard over and over again from people in rural Saskatchewan is, and in my area, is the issue of draining, the draining and the ditching that has gone on in the past. And not all of it certainly was approved. There's a lot of illegal draining that's happening out there which causes problems for people who in the past never had that much water come on to their property and to their farmyards and so on. And that's an issue that certainly needs to be dealt with. And I was very pleased to hear the Minister of Environment speak yesterday about this whole area being under review. It is something that certainly we need to review.

We need to modernize the whole issue of watershed management. That's a big issue because it's not only the current situation that we have but, come spring, if we have an average rainfall and an average runoff, we are going to have flooding issues, more flooding issues to deal with. We're going to have more flooded roads. We may have more flooded highways. And it's a problem, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, overall though, you know, our province is strong. There's programs and measures that are in place to help our people when they're facing challenges like we've been facing this year. It's great to have a strong province so that the people can feel assured that, even though they are facing these challenges, that the government of the day is there to provide assistance where necessary. And I'm certainly grateful that, of the situation that we find our province in today.

So, Mr. Speaker, there are certainly a number of other things that I could raise at this time, but I think I have taken up my time and I know there are other members that would like to enter into the debate. So, Mr. Speaker, at this time I would say that I will be supporting the motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my privilege to rise for the sixth time in my five years as an MLA to respond to the Throne Speech. It's always a privilege and a pleasure to get up here and have an opportunity to talk about some of the things that are important to the people of Saskatoon Riversdale and important to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

As is tradition usually at the Throne Speech, we have an opportunity to acknowledge and thank those very important people in our lives, Mr. Speaker. And I do this every time, but with two young children — well, my 16-year-old wouldn't say she's young anymore — but with a 16-year-old and a six-year-old, it is a team of people who allow me to be able to do this job.

[16:15]

And two of those people on the team are my kids themselves, Hennessey and Ophelia, who are incredibly patient and supportive and willing to let their mom go to Regina for several weeks out of the fall and several weeks in the spring, which is no easy thing, Mr. Speaker. And I know my kids miss me and I miss them, but we make it work. And we make it work in large part due to my very amazing family, my parents who live two

blocks away from me. And I've done that on purpose, Mr. Speaker. I live very close to my parents because they are incredibly supportive and helpful, and it's nice to be able to see my mom and dad or grandma and grandpa on a regular basis.

So Ophelia is actually going to school now at the l'École Française de Saskatoon, which is just down the street from my parents' house, so my six-year old has the opportunity. She feels like a very big girl these days and gets to walk the one block to grandma and grandpa's house as my mom waits on the lawn for her every day after school, Mr. Speaker. And my dad continues, I think I've mentioned this before, but the after-school snack is an interesting one and always consists of ice cream that my dad has made, which is never really good for supper, but it's grandpa doing it for her so I think that that's all right.

My daughter Hennessey is pretty amazing. And I've just realized in recent months that I am the parent of a young adult. When I've been away, Mr. Speaker, Hennessey has picked me up at the airport with Ophelia in tow, which is really quite an amazing thing for me. When I've been very busy, Hennessey has taken my bank card and gone and bought groceries. So I can't believe I am the parent of a young adult, Mr. Speaker, and she's growing into a fine young adult at that.

My sister Michelle and her husband, John, continue to be huge supports, making sure that my kids have what they need. Ophelia's dad, Blair, is there for Ophelia when I'm not. And so it's a well-oiled machine. I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, this afternoon Ophelia had an appointment at 3 o'clock and it was, I kind of feel like a general coordinating the troops at times from a distance where I've got this person picking Ophelia up here and this person taking her there and someone else getting her going in another direction.

So I'm very, very grateful for all those in my life who make it possible for me to be able to serve the people of Saskatoon Riversdale because if it wasn't for my strong support network, which is primarily made up of my family, but some very wonderful friends too who are there for me as well, I don't think I could do this job, Mr. Speaker, so a big thank you to them.

I think it's important I have wonderful assistants who I think serve the people of Saskatoon very well, Saskatoon Riversdale, when I'm not there, Mr. Speaker. Vanessa Hyggen and Judy Gossen are compassionate, smart, thoughtful, industrious in trying to figure out, when people come to our constituency office with challenges, how to help them sort out and work their challenges through and connect them to the appropriate people. So I am very grateful for Vanessa and Judy who have two very different skill sets and experience. Judy had been a long-time constituency assistant for the former member from Saskatoon Nutana, Pat Atkinson, and Vanessa was brand new to my office just three years ago, and they complement each other incredibly well, Mr. Speaker. So I'm grateful for those, for my staff, and I think the people of Saskatoon Riversdale appreciate the work that they do as well.

And I would be remiss if I did not say a big thank you to the people of Saskatoon Riversdale who, on a regular basis, still have lots of things to say to me — good, bad, what's working,

what's not working, what I should be doing differently, what they see as some of the challenges facing them and some of their fellow citizens. So again it remains a privilege to represent the people of Saskatoon Riversdale.

I think I need to mention, Mr. Speaker, the events of last week, the loss of Corporal Cirillo and Patrice Vincent. I'm very glad that we went ahead with the Throne Speech last week, Mr. Speaker. It was a troubling day for everybody and a troubling week and we'll continue . . . There's many discussions that need to come out of that. But I was very glad that the Throne Speech went ahead.

And as the daughter of a police officer, I have to express a huge gratitude for protective services who were here: the RCMP, the Regina Police Service, our Sergeant-at-Arms, and our security staff here. And I think on one of those occasions I actually would like to agree with my colleague from Last Mountain-Touchwood who talked a little bit about this legislature being the people's legislature. And that is a very important thing that we can't forget, Mr. Speaker, and it is a surprisingly open place.

I know some people . . . I remember when I first came here, Mr. Speaker, and I don't know what I expected, but I thought that there would be more rigorous policies in terms of security. And it really is a pleasure that it is such an open place and it is the people's legislature, Mr. Speaker. So although we do have to discuss some . . . I think the discussion is what we need to put in place to ensure that people remain safe, but it remains as open as possible and as accessible by the general public because that is what this building is here for, Mr. Speaker, and we can never forget that.

But with that, Corporal Cirillo and Patrice Vincent, I think we can't forget them and think about . . . My thoughts and prayers go out to their family and friends, Mr. Speaker.

So the business of the day though, Mr. Speaker, is to discuss this government's Speech from the Throne, and as I said, this is my sixth opportunity to respond to a Throne Speech. And I think the one thing that stood out for me, I always think that throne speeches are supposed to be about visions going forward. And there seems to be a lot of . . . There are a few new items in here which I will talk about, Mr. Speaker, but a big concern of mine, this is still very much a reflection looking back, some back-patting and some things that have happened in the past which are undoubtedly good things. But a Throne Speech is about, supposed to talk about what the government plans to do going forward, Mr. Speaker, and this Throne Speech is surprisingly short on those details, Mr. Speaker.

As I walk through the Throne Speech, the third page there's a . . . And I think it's important today as there were a couple of people here in the gallery who are former film workers. Not former. There's one person who is still working here in Saskatchewan and another who is now having to make a living in Vancouver. He left his family behind and friends behind. And so I think it's important to talk a little bit about the film tax credit, Mr. Speaker, because in the Throne Speech we have on . . . The film tax credit was an incentive for producing film products, Mr. Speaker, producing and exporting film. It was a job creator. It was a benefit to the economy, Mr. Speaker. And

one of the new initiatives in the Throne Speech is the establishment of a new growth tax incentive tied to the creation of new jobs by manufacturers and processors as they expand their sales outside of Saskatchewan.

I know that as we talk about those things, many people in the film industry who . . . Families have been ripped apart. Careers have been decimated, Mr. Speaker, and they don't understand. They look to two and a half years ago when the film tax credit was cut. And they don't begrudge any other industry. It's the government's job in some respect to incent business and to figure out how to ensure that jobs are growing and the economy is growing here in Saskatchewan. So the film folks that I've talked to don't begrudge any other industry having incentives, but they wonder why the incentive that worked for their industry and worked so incredibly successfully, Mr. Speaker, was taken away. So there's some huge frustration with that.

I was talking about my daughter Hennessey, and Hennessey actually is at Evan Hardy school in Saskatoon in the media production program there this year. And it's interesting because Hennessey actually has an interest in health care, but she was very keen on an integrated learning experience and that's what the media school at Evan Hardy is all about. It's been a wonderful experience and that's it.

But she's not so interested in filmmaking. The cinematography, the special effects, the lighting, the sound, everything that they study, it's really quite amazing — the production, the directing. The thing that appeals to her most, Mr. Speaker, is in fact the producing. So she likes to run the show, Mr. Speaker. She's a bit of a bossy pants, but she likes to guide and lead and is very good at that, Mr. Speaker.

So Hennessey doesn't have an interest in a career in film. She wanted an integrated learning experience. But do you know what? With the exception of one other student who's much like Hennessey, everybody else in that program wants to pursue a career in film. They're passionate about it. Hennessey is amazed at the skill that some of these, some of her colleagues have already developed long before coming to this program. And the sad thing is that these teenagers who will soon be graduating — next year they'll be graduating — that they know that they can't have a career in their own province, Mr. Speaker, and that is incredibly unfortunate and was not necessary, Mr. Speaker.

And it's frustrating for those who've had to leave the province or who have stayed behind and had to change professions and still struggle with making a living here, that the film tax credit was cut. And the language around incentives, I think we need to clarify here a little bit with this government, Mr. Speaker. So that is the first thing that I mention because it's very near the beginning of the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

I'd like to talk a little bit also about health care, Mr. Speaker, as I am the Health critic. And it's been interesting to me. I've been the Health critic now for the past year and although we get a large variety of casework in our office in Saskatoon Riversdale — Social Services, SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance], child and family services — we get a host of casework, it's been interesting as the Health critic the number of issues that pour in, Mr. Speaker, ranging from mental health to long-term

care to concerns about conditions in our hospitals and long-term care facilities, cleanliness to decrepit buildings to not enough staffing, Mr. Speaker. So I've had the opportunity to be sort of a . . . People come to me to tell me some of these stories, Mr. Speaker.

I think that when the government talks about health, this Throne Speech was again very lacking in terms of talking about new initiatives or what the government might consider going forward. Rather they talked about a drop-in-the-bucket approach that they took this time last year in the Throne Speech with the Urgent Action Fund, Mr. Speaker, which this government only came to after they were dragged kicking and screaming to recognize that there was an issue in long-term care, after the opposition had been raising it, after people like Carrie Klassen and many others had come forward saying that there were serious issues in long-term care, Mr. Speaker.

So this government was dragged kicking and screaming. They didn't release the report. So they did a review of long-term care facilities. They did do that, but then they held on to the report, Mr. Speaker. It was July and they were finished the report, didn't release the report. We did a freedom of information request. It took 30 days. They still didn't release it. They asked for an extension. It was a report, Mr. Speaker. It didn't take a whole lot to . . . There was one question in the freedom of information request. It was about getting this report.

They got the extension. The day after, the day after the extension expired was when this government got up and gave their drop-in-the-bucket approach — 10 million additional dollars, which was only about half of what was required for urgent action, Mr. Speaker. And there was nothing new in this budget, this past budget on acknowledging the long-term care crisis, Mr. Speaker.

So to bury your head in the sand and pretend that everything is okay is not okay, Mr. Speaker. We continue to hear about a lack of staffing in our long-term care facilities, in our hospitals. We continue . . . I should mention actually a quote from Maura Davies. The recently fired CEO from the Saskatoon Health Region had this to say about long-term care: "We know that the complexity of the residents in long-term care is much higher than it used to be, and our staffing levels haven't kept up." And she also said, "There are lots of unmet needs in this province, so we do not have adequate resources and programs to meet the needs of our seniors." So those are recent comments by Maura Davies talking about long-term care.

And that came out, Mr. Speaker, those quotes happened when we had an individual, Mr. Roy Armstrong . . . He was 94 years old. He's 95 now, a veteran, three types of cancer, Mr. Speaker. He had been to the hospital, transferred to the hospital 10 times in the previous six months from his personal care home — 10 times. He had had, I believe, it was two heart attacks. And Roy Armstrong was assessed as not being eligible for long-term care, Mr. Speaker. How does that happen? Like he was . . . Well they said he's ambulatory. Mr. Armstrong could stand up and dress himself, and then he was done for the morning. So this, a 94-year-old man with three types of cancer and multiple heart attacks and transfers to the hospital, was not eligible for long-term care. So my question is, to this government, then who is?

[16:30]

It's interesting. In estimates last spring, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to ask the minister a little bit about long-term care and who gets into long-term care and the average length of time. And the minister actually pointed out that, he said that he thinks the average right now is about a year and a half. So that's the length of time that people stay in long-term care.

So he validates the fact that people are admitted into long-term care much older or much . . . not necessarily older, much more ill and in much higher need of care. But before they get there, Mr. Speaker, they don't have the services that they need to have a high quality of life. Many personal care homes, which do wonderful jobs, are not equipped to deal with high, high needs, Mr. Speaker.

And that's exactly what happened in Roy Armstrong's case. He had incredibly high needs, and his personal care home struggled to deal with them. And so a man who desperately needs long-term care is denied it.

This fall, just a couple of months ago or just actually I think less than a month ago, Emily Krushelnicki was transferred. She's from Ituna. That was her home community. She is in her 90s as well and had been very ill. She had been I think in three or four different health care facilities because she'd had some emerging health care issues. She is from Ituna and was in fact in a bed in the Ituna long-term care facility there, Mr. Speaker. And Emily, her doctor had recommended . . . The government wanted to transfer her to Foam Lake.

So this is a woman who's in her community, she's in a long-term care bed, but someone else from some other community needed that bed so they transferred Emily, against doctor's orders, to Foam Lake. So a woman who wanted to spend the last days of her life in Ituna got transferred to Foam Lake despite the fact she was already in a bed in her home community.

So I think that one of the questions came up, well do we need to have long-term care facilities in every community? And that obviously is not the answer. But when you have a long-term care facility in the community that you've lived for all your life, more than nine decades, Mr. Speaker, you're in a bed in that community, your doctor says you shouldn't be moved but because of space crunches elsewhere, you get pushed out, that is not acceptable, Mr. Speaker.

I've had the opportunity this summer as the Health critic to tour a variety of health care facilities. I'm including some long-term care facilities. And there's been some new long-term care facilities built, but they're not without their challenges, Mr. Speaker.

I was in Rosetown actually about a month ago, touring the facility there. And it's a lovely facility. There are some issues. Some of the staff have pointed out that there are things that could have been done differently, including involving the staff in terms of installing some of the fixtures. So you have people who need two . . . bed lifts, and what has ended up happening is there is no room. For example, with the toilets, there is no room to do a two-person lift. The bars are placed wrong. There are

little details, Mr. Speaker, that if you actually talked to staff, they could look very, very differently and serve the residents much better and serve the staff much better, frankly, too.

But with respect to Rosetown, I was surprised. I believe it's 55 beds. It might be 56 beds. I believe it's five homes and 11 beds, but give or take a couple, Mr. Speaker. I was surprised to learn that at night between 11:30 and 6:30 a.m., there are two continuing care aids on for 55 staff. There is a registered nurse, but the registered nurse is responsible for all the medications and all the administrative paperwork, Mr. Speaker. So that's something that's changed.

When we talk about how long-term care has changed — and the minister might be able to say numbers — there might be more staff, but the reality is the complexity of needs has increased and the roles of staff have changed. So the RN now continues to administer medication but has a whole host of administrative functions to play as well, Mr. Speaker, and supervisory functions.

So you have two continuing care aids to turn people, toilet people, help get people who wander back to their beds, Mr. Speaker. What do you do in the case of an emergency? It's completely unacceptable, two sort of hands-on staff at that point. Yes, it's nighttime, but there are still many needs that don't stop just because it's nighttime.

And the daytime staffing, Mr. Speaker, there was one individual, I understand, per house and then a couple of floating staff to cover off when people are on breaks — but one person for 11 people. And we talk about the Eden concept of care. And these houses are a great model, but you need to staff them properly to ensure that people have the care that the Eden model is supposed to provide, Mr. Speaker. So there continues to be huge issues around staffing.

We proposed a bill. In fact it was my private member's bill, *The Residents-in-care Bill of Rights Act*, and this government unanimously voted it down. Again as I said, you can't address issues and fix a problem if you are not willing to admit that there is a problem, Mr. Speaker, and any tour of a long-term care facility or health care facility will reveal that there are huge problems, Mr. Speaker. And there is nothing, nothing in this Throne Speech that addresses those concerns, just a reflection back on a drop-in-the-bucket measure that happened a year ago, Mr. Speaker.

When we talk about health care infrastructure, nothing in the Throne Speech on that either, Mr. Speaker. And again kicking and screaming, the government finally released, it's called the VFA report. It was an independent consultant that looked at infrastructure needs in Saskatchewan.

And their total, they came to . . . This was in summer of 2013, but the government didn't release it until the summer of 2014 despite freedom of information requests, despite conversations in estimates with the minister. And not just our freedom of information requests, media was trying to get a hold of this. Everybody wanted to see this particular report, Mr. Speaker, and the government begrudgingly released it this summer, which illustrated there was a \$2.2 billion health care infrastructure deficit which more than doubled in the last seven

years, Mr. Speaker. And according to the consultants who prepared this report, it was a conservative estimate because it didn't include any of the soft costs like architecture fees and didn't include the possibility of increased construction costs over time, Mr. Speaker. So \$2.2 billion in the infrastructure deficit.

You know, what I think is a smart approach is investing in repairing and maintaining facilities as you go along. This government has had record revenues, record revenues in this province. And the question is, why have you not, why has this government not put that money into maintaining and repairing those facilities?

Again Maura Davies, the now terminated CEO of the Saskatoon Health Region had this to say recently about this government's investment in infrastructure:

Since 2007, we've received approximately \$10 million per year to maintain and repair our buildings. That is less than a fifth of what we need for routine maintenance. Virtually all the dollars are, of necessity, spent on emergency building failures.

She also goes on to say, “. . . a multi-year plan to address the current, unacceptable situation.” And this is something she had called for, as we of the opposition have been calling for. We would like to see a multi-year plan to see how they're going to address this infrastructure, the failings of our health care facilities, Mr. Speaker. We would like to see a plan how they are going to spend their money, the people's money on ensuring that our health care facilities . . .

Mr. Speaker, there are people across the aisle who are heckling like crazy and because they do not have a plan. But they have more money . . . Mr. Speaker, I was going to say more money for brains than brains, but I probably shouldn't say that, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Speaker, this government has had record revenue at its disposal, and our health care facilities . . . Surgeries at Royal University Hospital have been cancelled because the HVAC [heating, ventilating, and air conditioning] system failed. Hot water on the maternity ward has failed. So as Maura Davies said, they have spent their limited infrastructure money that this government has provided on emergency maintenance, Mr. Speaker. That is not acceptable. The smart thing to do is to ensure that you're maintaining your facilities so they cost you far less.

It's great to cut the ribbon on a shiny facility, Mr. Speaker, and yes, we need many. There are many new facilities that we need, but it is absolutely imperative that we maintain and repair the facilities that we have to ensure that we're spending . . . Mr. Speaker, I seem to have touched on a nerve here. There's a great deal of noise coming from the other side. So this government needs to invest in repair and maintaining the facilities that we have, and they haven't done it. Maura Davies, who was the former Chair of the health region until she was fired by this government possibly for speaking out . . . is because this government has only provided a fifth of what they needed to keep their facilities in basic state of repair, Mr. Speaker. That is absolutely shameful, absolutely shameful.

Mr. Speaker, I think one thing that's important to talk about also is mental health. Mental health is quite near and dear to my heart and has been for a very long time. I remember as a reporter having an opportunity to spend time . . . I was a feature writer, Mr. Speaker, and had an interest in human interest stories. And 20 years ago I was writing about schizophrenia and bipolar disorder which was manic depression back then — it had a different name. But mental health has always been of interest to me. I've had friends and family members, and it was considerably elevated on my list of importance personally, Mr. Speaker, when I lost my nephew last summer to bipolar disorder after a brave struggle for five years.

And so in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker, there is a mention of Dr. Fern Stockdale Winder's report. She has spent the last year and a half interviewing, going around consulting, talking to all kinds of people about mental health. And the government does in fact mention that that should be released soon. I know people are eager to hear that 10-year action plan.

I continue to hear from people . . . Mental health touches one in five people here, Mr. Speaker, so many of us, I'm sure many of us in this Chamber have had family members or friends who have lived with mental health challenges. So it is a pressing issue for the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I'm eagerly awaiting Dr. Stockdale Winder's report, but I would have liked to have seen it prior to the Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker. I know the government is in budget deliberations and I hope, that because they didn't outline anything in the Throne Speech and there was a general mention to it, that we will see initiatives in this budget in the spring, Mr. Speaker. I'm eagerly awaiting that, as many people are, Mr. Speaker.

I know one of the things last . . . well the budget, I actually anticipated that maybe the government would do something. I know that Dr. Stockdale Winder was in the process of consultations, but there were many papers. Prairie North had a very good, Prairie North Health Region had a very good paper out actually about mental health, and it's several years old now, Mr. Speaker. And I understand there was actually a cabinet decision item before cabinet a few years ago, but we don't know where that went, Mr. Speaker, and it talked about the need for supportive housing.

So people leave a place, an acute psychiatric facility like the Dubé Centre in Saskatoon, and don't have the appropriate places to go after that. So in my nephew's case, my brother and sister-in-law had Jordan, my nephew, continue to live there. And it's not easy, Mr. Speaker, but my brother and sister-in-law are amazing folks and worked really hard trying to support their son. But many people don't have that kind of option. So you might leave an acute psychiatric facility and you don't have supported housing. You end up on the street. You end up in an apartment that you can't afford without any services.

So Prairie North Health Region had a very good proposal before the government a few years ago done with the ministry, Mr. Speaker, and so I really am hoping that that's some of that housing piece. I'm expecting actually, I'm not hoping, I'm expecting that is one of the big pieces that has been identified by many people that supported housing and step-down housing with services: caseworkers for example, to help people make

the adjustment back into . . . out of a hospital setting happen, Mr. Speaker. So I know that they've mentioned the mental health 10-year strategy, and I was hoping there'd be a little bit more in the Throne Speech. But I will remain optimistic that there will be measures in the budget, and I guess we'll see what happens then.

I think when it comes to mental health, it's been interesting. I know that I've raised this issue in the past of people who have complex needs, often community living service division clients living in acute psychiatric facilities a year, two years; in North Battleford multiple years. The Dubé Centre for example in Saskatoon — and I always use the Dubé Centre because Saskatoon is my home and I know that facility well — but it is a hospital, Mr. Speaker, where you get . . . It is not a residential setting. You've got people who are in psychosis around you. You've got stimulation. You've got all kinds of things that are not good. It's not a residential environment; it is an acute psychiatric facility, Mr. Speaker.

[16:45]

Last spring in estimates I had the opportunity to ask the minister about the number of folks with some of these complex needs, which are often intellectual disabilities coupled with mental health challenges or behavioural challenges. So last spring there were 12 individuals living in acute psychiatric facilities who were community living service division clients. And that's not everybody. Not everybody is a CLSD [community living service delivery] client who has behavioural or complex needs, Mr. Speaker. And the minister didn't have an answer then as to how to fix that. But I think one of the things that I would have liked to have seen in the Throne Speech — and I hope that we see in the budget — is recognizing that these complex needs we need to address, Mr. Speaker.

We had brought the case of Mr. Ron Caron here, last spring I believe it was. Ron was one of the individuals, he had early onset Alzheimer's, Mr. Speaker, in his 60s. And he was placed at the Dubé Centre and his daughter was advocating for him. He had his daughter to advocate for him. Mr. Caron suffered from very severe dementia, or very advanced dementia, which caused behavioural difficulties. And the folks at the Dubé Centre are not equipped to deal with dementia. They are a mental health facility. But this poor man, because nobody else would take him, there was no other place for him. He was living in this hospital setting, Mr. Speaker. So I was happy after some advocacy that Mr. Caron was moved to Parkridge, and I understand that he had a continuing care aide assigned to him to provide that support.

And you know, Mr. Caron passed away this past month, Mr. Speaker. So Mr. Caron passed away this last month, and I heard from his daughter just recently who was very grateful that, despite her father's challenges, we were able to get him out of an acute psychiatric facility and into a long-term care facility which was a residential facility. So he was able to spend the last few months of his life in a much more appropriate setting with much better supports, Mr. Speaker. But unfortunately not everybody who lives in these acute psychiatric facilities has someone like Mr. Caron's daughter to advocate for them, so they end up languishing in those kinds of facilities.

I had the opportunity this summer to head to Prince Albert and tour the adult psychiatric facility there. You know, the youth psychiatric facility there is wonderful and relatively newly built and has space and light. And it's an appropriate facility, and it's very good. And I know the people who work in the adult facility covet what those in the youth facility have. It's overcrowded, noisy. They had, if I get these numbers right, nine CLSD clients and three other complex cases at that point. I was told there were 12 complex cases, people who were very, very hard to place.

So the government right now is in the process of closing Valley View. And I was glad to hear actually that they extended that, the timeline, because there are huge concerns. In order for people to live in community and be included in community, you need to build the right supports in place and the right homes. And I can tell you that that's not happening because we have people living in acute psychiatric facilities very much like the people who are living in Valley View. So I would have liked to have seen more attention paid to that in this Throne Speech, Mr. Speaker.

I can't talk about health and not talk about the firing of Maura Davies. The largest health region in the province, probably one of the largest health regions, one of the largest health regions in Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker, and for this government not to do its due diligence and have a thorough process to hire a new CEO is reprehensible, Mr. Speaker. A \$1.14 billion budget, almost 14,000 staff, 1,000 physicians, and this government is going to have someone in place December 1st.

You know, Mr. Speaker, I am the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, and as such I have the opportunity to be part of the hiring committee, along with the member from Saskatoon Sutherland, when it comes to hiring the Provincial Auditor. And I've never done a process like this before, Mr. Speaker, but I've been told by people who've gone through it, including the staff who are preparing us, that it is a four-to-six-month process, and four months only because we already have a very well-established process in place.

So to hire the Provincial Auditor is going to take four to six months, and to hire the CEO of a \$1.14 billion budget health region is going to take just over a month, Mr. Speaker. This government owes the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Saskatoon and area and the people of Saskatchewan, due diligence in this regard, Mr. Speaker. And they are failing miserably on that front.

To say that you need to be lean-certified to . . . this job is about strategic vision. It is about governance. It is about leadership. It is not about lean, Mr. Speaker. To say that they are pre-qualifying the position to . . . Any manager and leader worth his or her salt can get up to speed on lean, Mr. Speaker, so to keep that hiring process internal is doing a huge disservice to the people of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker. And I do hope that this government comes to its senses and does a proper process, Mr. Speaker.

I think another important thing to talk about, and actually I'm very pleased to see in the Throne Speech, the poverty reduction strategy, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad that this government has had a conversion on their road to Damascus on this regard.

I was going through *Hansard* from the last three years. I was the Social Services critic, as was my colleague from Saskatoon Centre. So in the last four years, or pardon me, last three years, between the Leader of the Opposition, the member from Saskatoon Centre, and myself, I believe we asked the government four times. And I didn't look very hard actually. I found four occasions where we asked and encouraged the government to get with the rest of Canada and adopt a poverty reduction strategy, Mr. Speaker.

And some of the responses, Mr. Speaker, some of the responses that, as of . . . One of them, Mr. Speaker, I asked the question. I asked the question and the minister, I'm just finding the date here, Mr. Speaker. November 22nd, 2012, the now former minister of Social Services, when I asked her about needing a poverty reduction strategy, she said: "The members opposite are always wanting to have a plan and a strategy, and what they really don't want to hear is action," Mr. Speaker. So I'm not quite sure how what they're doing now is different or better than what they've been doing. That was one, that was one comment, Mr. Speaker.

Another comment that the minister said in response to the Leader of the Opposition is, this is from May 6th, 2014:

Mr. Speaker, my question to the Leader in the Opposition is why does he insist on a strategy when he really wants action. What we really need to do is to ensure that we have fewer people living in poverty.

I couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker, but you need to have a strategy to get there. And I'm glad, as I said, that this government has had their conversion and come to, come . . . You know, and there's been many good people for many years.

I have to commend Dr. Meili, Dr. Neudorf, Alison Robertson who's amazing at the food bank. She's done some really great work. There's some really good people who now have been working on poverty reduction issues. But there have been people . . . Poverty Free Saskatchewan actually. I had the opportunity shortly after becoming an MLA in 2011 in taking part of, in Poverty Free Saskatchewan's, which was a network, a wide network of many, many organizations dedicated to poverty reduction.

And they came up actually with some six key areas that need to be part of any successful plan to eliminate poverty in Saskatchewan: housing access and affordability, income security for vulnerable groups, education training and early childhood learning and development, enabling and rewarding work and participation in our communities, improving access to and quality of services for low-income people, and promoting health and preventing illnesses. So that came out of Poverty Free Saskatchewan in 2011 who is also advocating, has been advocating. There are many, many good people, Mr. Speaker, among them Dr. Meili, Dr. Neudorf, Alison Robertson.

Last week the member from Saskatoon Centre and I had the opportunity during anti-poverty awareness week to attend a really great event called Hands Across the Bridge, which really is about joining the west side and the east side in Saskatoon, about the goal to eliminate and reduce poverty, Mr. Speaker. And so I'm very glad that this government is committed to an



anti-poverty strategy.

I can you tell you in my constituency there are people who struggle with all those things — housing, the cost of living. We have a province, Mr. Speaker . . . The economy is doing well, but I can tell you that not everybody is benefiting from that. This is about people doing well, and I can tell you there are many people in Saskatoon Riversdale who are not doing well, Mr. Speaker. They're struggling with the cost of child care. They're struggling with the cost of housing. They are working incredibly hard and can't make ends meet. The cost of utilities are breaking them, Mr. Speaker. And there was not a single word about addressing, Mr. Speaker, the rising cost of living and the stresses and strains that those many, many families are living. Not just families who would be identified at being below the low-income cut-off, but middle-income families too, Mr. Speaker, are struggling and are finding that they have much less money at the end of the month.

I have to just point out that we will be watching very carefully and we would like to work with this government. This should not be a partisan issue. An anti-poverty strategy should not be a partisan issue. This should be about both sides of the House working together to ensure we get this right.

The member from Saskatoon Centre has put forward in the past private members' bills that the government has adopted, and our leader, on the asbestos registry. There's really good opportunity to make sure that we get this right, Mr. Speaker. And I know Upstream, which is a think tank, Mr. Speaker, that Dr. Meili helped found, these are some key . . . This is a document from Upstream which was part of the Poverty Costs campaign that I think seemed to push the government over the top when it came to finally realizing that we needed a poverty reduction strategy here.

But we'll be watching to ensure, we'll be watching to ensure that this poverty reduction strategy has targets and timelines, that it's comprehensive, that it involves the community. And that is absolutely imperative. I know people talk about, nothing about us without us, Mr. Speaker — nothing about us without us. So that piece of involving the community is absolutely key, has to be unique and address the issues in each jurisdiction, be non-partisan, Mr. Speaker, and require a commitment. And sometimes that's a legislative commitment. So as much as I commend the government for moving on this, Mr. Speaker, we will in fact be looking for action and to see how that rolls out, and we would like to be part of that process too, Mr. Speaker. I think that that's very important.

When we talk about . . . I'm also, aside from being the health care critic, Mr. Speaker, I'm also the child care critic and the Status of Women critic. And although child care is not a women's issue . . . I hate that term, women's issue. I really believe that issues of women are issues of family and issues of community, Mr. Speaker. But in my role as the Status of Women critic and the child care critic, I would be remiss if I didn't talk a little bit about child care and what is missing in the Throne Speech.

There's nothing, Mr. Speaker, nothing about how we are going to address the absolute lack of child care spaces for working families, Mr. Speaker, families who are going to school. We

have had . . . I don't have the numbers in front of me right now but I remember talking about them in the budget, Mr. Speaker, in the budget debate. In the previous . . . Up until 2013, the previous five years, there had been a birth rate of 60,000 kids, Mr. Speaker, which is awesome. That is incredible. It's wonderful to see our economy growing and our population growing, but we need to ensure that those supports are in place. We need to ensure those supports are in place, that people can be engaged in the workforce, be engaged in their families.

And I had the opportunity last night, I had the opportunity last night, Mr. Speaker, to attend a child care . . . speak with some child care providers — day home and group home providers. And they pointed out to me some of the huge issues that their families are experiencing, families who don't have money to pay the bare minimum bills. They pay their rent and they pay their child care and they can't afford food, Mr. Speaker. One family in particular had the opportunity. A single mother got a raise, and it bumped her over the threshold for the subsidy. And that raise was going to put her in greater financial distress than before she got the raise, because she was no longer eligible for the child care subsidy.

But with that, Mr. Speaker, there's many things lacking in this Throne Speech, but I will be supporting the amendment and cannot support the original motion. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Speaker:** — It now being near the hour of adjournment, this House stands adjourned to 10 a.m. tomorrow morning.

[The Assembly adjourned at 17:00.]

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