



FOURTH SESSION - TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan**

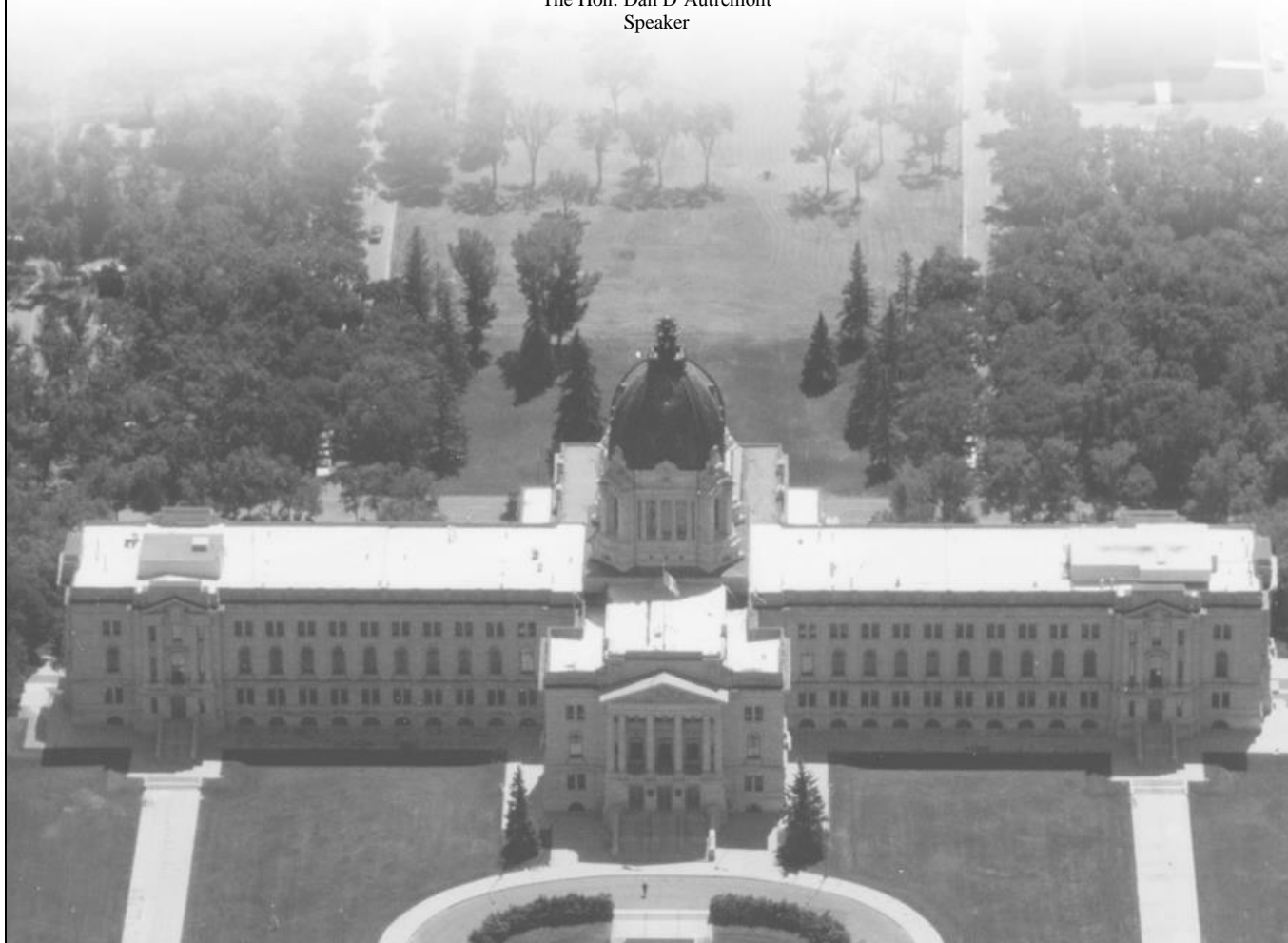
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**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

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(HANSARD)

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



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[The Assembly resumed at 19:00.]

EVENING SITTING

**The Speaker:** — It now being 7 o'clock, debate will resume. I recognize the member for Athabasca.

SECOND READINGS

**Bill No. 162 — *The Enforcement of Money Judgments  
Amendment Act, 2014*  
(continued)**

**Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Once again I am pleased to rejoin the debate after a great supper and, Mr. Speaker, the bill that we were speaking about before we broke for supper was of course Bill 162 which is an Act to . . . *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act*.

And as I was saying at the outset, Mr. Speaker, as I looked at the bill itself there was a lot of questions we had, and I was articulating the fact that we were very, very interested as an opposition to know who had proposed the bill to the government. Because obviously on this side of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker, we know that sometimes the government has a lack of imagination and a lot of times their legislative agenda is boring unless they get direction from some other source. And that's one of the reasons why, Mr. Speaker, we're asking the origins of this particular bill.

The original Act is not as updated as one would expect, but this new Act that's coming forward, as I mentioned, for a quick summary for those who may have missed this afternoon, the bill makes it clear and makes it easier for those who are owed money to collect on these debts. The government introduced *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act* two years ago, and it is now introducing amendments that makes it easier for debts to be collected. It allows wages now to be garnisheed for a longer period of time, from one year to two years, and the bill simplifies the process for seizing a bank account, Mr. Speaker. Section 27 makes it easier for sheriffs to seize land being sold by those owing money, and section 30 creates a director of sheriffs appointment by the minister, who will develop the new forms for the Act and of course takes all other responsibilities to be determined by the minister.

So that's kind of a quick snapshot of what the bill's all about. And in fact, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Party government actually issued a press release, and I want to read it in for the record because the press release really belies my point in terms of how they try and hide some of these things. And the press release reads as follows:

The Government of Saskatchewan is moving to enhance the province's debt collection law. These amendments will strengthen the present system and improve the seizure and sale of assets [Mr. Speaker].

Proclaimed more than two years ago, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Act* streamlined the process for a person to collect money from another person, increasing the chances of . . . [success] on a court judgment. It was the

first major update to the legislation in over five decades.

So one of the things I want to point out, Mr. Speaker, it's been five decades since this Act has been looked at, and one would assume that the Act would be more responsive to the current circumstances that many young families find themselves in. And obviously as a result of looking at the press release, Mr. Speaker, once again we see, as a result of the government's inability to govern correctly, we're seeing that they have to come back to a number of Acts later, a couple years later, to make improvements, to make rule changes. And that's one of the reasons and the purposes that we, as the opposition, have to make sure that we scrutinize these bills.

Now, Mr. Speaker, one of the things that's really important to explain to some of the people that may be watching, the purpose of the Assembly is to see what the government's agenda is in terms of introducing new laws and new bills. And the bill that we're discussing today, Bill 162, really deals with people that are owed money and how the government wishes to position those that are owed money to be able to collect that money sooner and quicker. They're taking away a lot of what I think is probably proper form and proper process to allow those that owe money to be able to see what their rights are, what their options are, what their circumstances might involve, and certainly, Mr. Speaker, give them an equal footing as to how they could become part of the solution as opposed to being guilty as charged right from the start according to this Act, and thereby they don't have the opportunity to explain their situations properly.

Now, Mr. Speaker, the bill itself as I mentioned talks about garnisheeing salaries and seizing of property. Now we hope that the judicial system is fair and accountable and transparent, which we know it always is and always should be, but we wonder some days as to what kind of Act or Acts that the Saskatchewan Party government puts in front of them as laws.

And many time the judges in the courts follow what is the penalty prescribed in law as per the bills that are being introduced in this Assembly. So many times judges and those in the legal profession might not like a certain Act. They might not . . . might think it may be punitive in nature. They might not like . . . It may be extreme in terms of what, how they're trying to deal with the problem. And I suspect that sometimes if we look at, get opinions from some of the legal firms in the province, that they look at this bill and one would automatically instinctively think, well where is the debtor's rights? Where is the person that owes money, where's their opportunity to argue the cost of a sheriff's bill or the cost of a sheriff's office bill or that proper process has been followed? These are some of the questions that we have to ask on this particular bill because there's all kinds of ramifications for this particular bill when you see how the government has conferred certain powers to, not only the sheriff, but to their offices as well.

So the minister has a lot of leeway. The minister has a lot of control of the rules and regulations. The minister can direct a sheriff what to do. Like there's a lot of . . . It just reeks of political interference potential, Mr. Speaker. And this is the reason why we have to be very careful, and the people of Saskatchewan know exactly what are our concerns about this

particular bill.

Now I know a lot of people in the province of Saskatchewan purchase a lot of things from different countries, and naturally the States are our natural trading partner. We have a lot of exchange of goods and services across the border. And many times as you may know there are people that get themselves involved with contracts or purchasing of goods and services from the States, and then they get into this arrangement. Now how does this bill affect that arrangement in the sense that if you are getting product from the States and all of a sudden the product stops coming to your doorstep but the bills keep arriving, and then obviously since you've signed some documentation somewhere and then you don't pay for the product that you're not receiving, how does that affect this particular bill? Or do you have an opportunity for the sheriff to hear your side of the argument? So it's really important, Mr. Speaker, whether it's interprovincial or inter-country, how the people that are owing this debt are treated.

That's one of the most important lessons, you know, that we ought to learn. Because if you follow the proper process, then you should have the right to be able to defend yourself. But what it doesn't . . . It doesn't show any of that information here as to how somebody could appeal a ruling by the sheriff's office or even appeal a ruling by the judge. Because, Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned, there are so many different deals that are going on out there that it's very difficult to see who signed what documentation, what was the agreement, and what were the terms of the agreement, product versus the cost of the product, and making sure that the person buying the product gets the product and the person that's supplying the product gets paid.

And generally some of these arrangements don't cause too many problems, but there are problems out there. I know a number of cases where families are getting billed on a regular basis as a result of them signing up for a product from a different province or a different country, and in this case the US [United States], and they never get their product. And yet the bill keeps coming through the mail and keeps collecting interest, and suddenly these families are really in some dire straits. So I think some of those issues have to be explained, and some of the process on how you protect yourself against claims that may not be yours to deal with. So I think it's important that process be understood as well.

So all throughout this particular bill, we see a lot of issues that need to be addressed, a lot of problems that we need to try and anticipate, a lot of questions that we have, we have to kind of get answers for. And I know that all my colleagues are going to have an opportunity to look at this bill, but at the outset we're just shocked at the bill itself in terms of how many powers are being conferred to the office of the sheriff and how many powers that the minister has in determining how these bills will be collected and how they will be assessed against some of the people being impacted by this bill.

So this issue and this particular bill is rife with problems and challenges from our perspective that really puts those that owe money at a distinct disadvantage versus those that are owed money. So we have to make sure that the process is fair.

We spoke about the number of different avenues that some of

the working families and children suffer through, and it's obviously something that we are very close to as we listen to many of the stories and we talk about some of the elders' care. And this is a good example of how some of the elders themselves are subjected to abuse and are also subjected to fraud. And they end up paying a lot of money to different people that are trying to take advantage of them and their goodwill, and sometimes they don't understand some of the deals that they're getting into.

What are some of their options to fight back? And this is one of the things that's really, really important as we look at the whole issue of the health care system and how we treat our seniors. And we know that in the news, there's been many occasions and many times where a lot of the seniors have come to the media and have complained about the fact that they have been defrauded. And they keep getting these bills and they never get their product or they never get any kind of service, and yet they have to keep continuing paying for these bills.

Where are their rights? Where's their opportunity for their defence? Where is their support when on many avenues that they have indeed been defrauded and they unknowingly signed documentation? And one can't blame a senior citizen, you know, for that because many times, you know, they certainly get confused. They get convinced. And, Mr. Speaker, we know a lot of evidence. We see a lot of evidence and we see a lot of cases of different elders being abused, being taken advantage of, and certainly being coerced into signing certain agreement that they have no idea that they're signing.

These are some of things that we think, from our perspective, is very, very important that we pay attention to and raise the issue, raise the issue with the government, because not all the time that people cannot pay back these bills are they, you know, they're not always the bad people in this, you know, in this arrangement. They have to have the opportunity to defend themselves. And all of a sudden when this bill starts talking about garnisheeing of salaries and seizure of assets, it really begins to . . . one begins to question where the Sask Party's priorities are.

So all in all, on this Bill 162, as I mentioned, we have a lot of questions. We're going to debate this bill vigorously. We're going to continue arguing the point. And, Mr. Speaker, we still don't know who's advocating for this bill from the Sask Party perspective. We have no idea who the interest behind the Sask Party government is, but we would encourage them to forward that answer to us so we know what the self-interest of these individuals or this individual is. And, Mr. Speaker, once we know who it is, then we need to make sure the people of Saskatchewan hear that loud and clear that they're the ones who are asking for the measures being pointed out in Bill 162.

So we have a few more comments on that, then I'm wrapping up this particular bill. But again I would point out to people if they have any concerns on this bill, any advice for the opposition, any particular examples, any particular examples, we would certainly be pleased to get that information from the general public. Anybody in the legal profession that do have some concerns, we would also ask them to come forward and give us some advice and show us some of the weaknesses of this bill because we know that there are many.

So one of the most important things to point out today is that we've got to have good, thorough debate on this. We've got to expose the Saskatchewan Party government to the public, that they're proposing these deals. And we need to know who is pushing their buttons or pulling their strings on that side to make sure some of the measures in this bill that are hard hitting get used to their advantage against the many people of Saskatchewan that are struggling to make ends meet and many seniors that may sign some of the agreements that they've signed with no recourse and no support for them, Mr. Speaker. And that's not fair at all.

So on that note, Mr. Speaker, we have a lot more to say on this particular bill, so I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 162, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act*.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 162, *The Enforcement of Money Judgments Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

[19:15]

## ADJOURNED DEBATES

### SECOND READINGS

#### Bill No. 159

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Stewart that **Bill No. 159** — *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Forbes:** — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to rise on this bill, No. 159, *An Act to repeal The Family Farm Credit Act*. It's a short Act, but it's one of a lot of interest, and I think people tuning in tonight may find this of interest. I mean it's one of the ones that in fact, it basically says, and I'll read the gist of it, "*The Family Farm Credit Act* is repealed." But there's a lot more to it than that, and I think that when we have some time to really think about and reflect on *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*, its history, its intent, we have a lot to say of it.

You know, and I know the members opposite think of this as a bit of a holy ground, that only they can talk about the family farm, but I can tell you that I come from a family farm. We have a very proud history out in Mortlach where my brother still farms the family farm. It's been in the family for over 100 years, and we have a great connection. You know, they say, Mr. Speaker, that you can take the kid off the farm, but you can't take the farm out of the kid.

And so it's always interesting to take a look back at *The Family Farm Credit Act*. And I'll just take a minute, and I'd like to read what it is that the intent, the purpose of the Act at the time was. And I have a question for the minister. Has this really changed?

The purpose of the Act, *An Act to provide Assistance to Farmers in the Establishment and Development of Family Farms as Economic Farm Units*, we'll talk about this over the next little while, about what's happening in rural Saskatchewan.

And while I represent downtown Saskatoon, probably one of the most urban ridings that we have in the province, we still are and we still believe and we still feel this strong connection to the family farm. But in many ways it is changing, and I'll talk a little bit about that.

But the purpose of the Act and the title of the Act is *An Act to provide Assistance to Farmers in the Establishment and Development of Family Farms as Economic Farm Units*.

The purpose of this Act is to make long term credit available to farmers to assist in the establishment and development of family farms as economic farm units and in the transfer of family farms from members of one generation to members of a later generation and to assist in the enlargement or conversion of family farms that are uneconomic farm units into economic farm units.

And so it has a lot to it actually. It's about the intergenerational transfer, but it's also, how do we assist in making family farms that were, in the '70s, uneconomic into economic farm units? And that can be either enlarge them — help them become bigger in size — or convert them into some other purpose that would be more appropriate.

So I think this is important. But you know, when I look at the Act, and when I look at and I'll talk about the minister's comments, I think about this government that takes a lot of pride in being one from the country. And clearly they have the seats in rural Saskatchewan, but if this is the best work they can do in the year before the election . . . This is the only piece of legislation they have for agriculture. And that is what is on the table right now: the only piece of legislation that deals with agriculture and all the issues that are happening out in rural Saskatchewan and farms that are facing all sorts of issues. I know we hear this in the House, that they'll talk about issues that we should be raising, but here we have only one piece of legislation that's one line long, and that is to repeal *The Family Farm Credit Act*.

That's the best they can come up with? That's the very best this government can come up for rural Saskatchewan when it comes to agricultural policy? Is that what's happening over in the agricultural ministry right now, this one piece of legislation? Is this the deal that they've come up with, one piece of legislation?

Many members spoke. Many members from their side and I know from our side talked about agricultural issues. And I've got to tell you, our critic, our critic has raised issues about rural Saskatchewan agriculture. And they can laugh because they think they own it, they own it.

But I've got to tell you, Mr. Speaker, if this is the best they can do, this is the very best that they can do, one piece of legislation that's not even . . . It's three lines long when you have the short title, then you say repealed, and when it comes into force. That's the whole thing of agricultural policy for the

Saskatchewan Party in the year before an election? In the year before an election, this is their piece of legislation?

We have talked a lot about how their legislative agenda is pretty thin, but the thinnest, the very thinnest, the very thinnest is in agriculture. And I would like to see and I hope that we see in the days ahead, because we are in that session, the time of the session when they are supposed to be bringing forward their best ideas so that we can talk about it and talk to the stakeholders . . . But if this is all they have, if this is all they have for agriculture, it's a pretty sad day.

I'd like to take a minute, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the minister's speech. And he rose on November 18th, just a few days ago, and he talked about *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*. And all he says is it ". . . needs to be repealed. This Act has long since become redundant. *The Family Farm Credit Act* was enacted in February of 1979."

He talks about the long-term credit being ". . . available for the establishment and development of family farms," and the purpose of intergenerational transfer. He talks about the Co-operative Trust Company of Canada and its role in this, and how this had been raised by the Ministry of Finance in April of 2012 and again December 2013 that they were not aware of any present securities or anything really happening.

So they consulted with agencies. I would be curious to know what those agencies were and what were the circumstances. Apparently there were no issues identified, so I'm not sure if they just talked solely about the credit, the loan aspect of it. Or did they talk about the intergenerational transfer aspect of it? I think that's an important piece to be talking about. Did they talk about that at all with this group that they consulted with? That would be of interest.

Did they talk about how they can make farming more economic? Actually this is an interesting one because, you know, farming in the last few years has been doing well, so maybe they've just taken it and said that there's no need anymore to talk about this any further. But I know that there are always challenges, and if it's the role of government and if this side is saying, if the government side is saying that it's basically done, that would be of interest.

So I would be curious to know, who did they consult with? What were the purposes of the consultations? How did it go? What were some of the issues raised, and was anything left on the floor because they really didn't want to talk about that?

He did give credit. He did talk about the Department of Co-operation and Co-operative Development had administered this Act, and then there was a period of Consumer and Commercial Affairs took over this. Then it went to Justice and then back to Agriculture in 2007 and '08, and the last payments were in '94.

Interestingly though when I look at the Act, I see that there were amendments, and I think about when those amendments happened. They were in '88-89, '89-90. And of course if we remember those times, those were not great times in terms of . . . The interest rates I think were still fairly high, and it was still a challenge for pretty much everybody to be talking about

credit and making sure that loans were being paid off and that type of thing.

Again in 2004, and I think that was the time when we had the look at the farm land ownership legislation and all of that, so whether there were changes then. And again apparently it looked like just even earlier there were still more amendments. So I don't know if the Act was so dormant, but we were still, the government was still amending it or amending the regulations that go along with it.

You know, he does talk about the purpose, ". . . that this redundant Act be repealed from the records of the legislature. As far as is possible, records should be kept clear of redundancies." Therefore he moves that the repeal Act be read a second time. And fair enough.

But I think that I would have liked him to say . . . What have they done in place of this legislation? What are we talking about in terms of intergenerational transfer? What are we talking about in terms of making sure farms are economical and that type of thing? What's happening in rural Saskatchewan? I think that this is the floor; this is the place to talk about those kind of things. And if the best that they can really say is that everything is okay, there's not going to be any legislation, really for this government I think that prides itself on its connection with rural Saskatchewan, that when they have no legislation to speak of other than this one piece, that we'll have lots of questions about that.

But, Mr. Speaker, I don't know if you're aware that this year is the International Year of Family Farming. This is an article that, when I was doing a bit of research on this . . . This is from Yorkton, *Yorkton This Week*, and the writer, "Agriculture This Week," Calvin Daniels I think really raises some interesting thoughts and really poses some things that I think we should be thinking about.

Because in rural Saskatchewan, we look back on the history of rural Saskatchewan and the changes that have happened, whether we talk about the one-room schoolhouse and the fact that basically if you had 12 children from four different families, you were able to have one school, and so schoolhouses were springing up all over the place. And of course with the development of better transportation, the fact that people expected more from their schools, schools began to consolidate. Rural electrification: what a change that happened in rural Saskatchewan. All of those things.

Really Saskatchewan, rural Saskatchewan goes through a lot of changes, and we're seeing that now with the size of family farms. And what does that mean? What does that look like? And as I said to you, Mr. Speaker, I grew up on a family farm. Actually we had a family farm, but we were one of the town kids. So we were one of that generation where we lived in town, but we still had the family farm just a few miles out of town.

Things change. Things change, but is it always for the better? Sometimes should we be looking back at how we make sure the intergenerational transfer can happen? It's happened for three generations in our family, but will it happen for a fourth? We're not sure, and that will be something that will be of interest as we watch over the next few years as my brother becomes older

and starts to think about other things that he'd like to do. What happens then?

So this was an interesting column, and I'd like to talk about it because it really does fit into the idea of economic farm units and about intergenerational transfer. And he goes, and I quote:

It is not something I suspect most in Saskatchewan are aware of, but the United Nations has declared 2014 the International Year of Family Farming.

There is obviously a chasm forming in farming, with the so-called corporate farm on one side, and the so-called family farm on the other.

The problem, of course, is clearly defining which side of the chasm any particular farm falls.

And I think that's true as we see how people make their farms economic, how it works for any particular family and in the products they produce, what works better, what kind of economic unit works best for them. So it's all about definition, and it's all about how we make things work in our communities.

He goes on to say:

It is simple enough if a multinational firm holds title to a farm to toss it on the corporate side, the side which carries with it the shadow of doom for many people these days.

If the farm is small, and owned by Bill and Margaret who farmed it for 40 years, it's a family farm, and in the spin-doctored world we live in, that makes what they do somehow better than the corporate-held farm down the road.

And that's sort of . . . that happen a lot, doesn't it, where we have these fond memories, these sentimental memories of farming.

[19:30]

But somehow we've got to come to terms with what is a family farm, what is a corporate farm, and we've got to call a spade a spade. I know we would like to hang on to those past ideas or values we've had about family farms, but are we really talking about the same beast? And I think that we have a lot of thoughts on that.

And he asks:

But what happens when a family farm grows, and Uncle Stan and his two sons take a share of the operation, and the dentist Phil who married Bill and Margaret's only daughter buys in. He'll never ride a combine, but he can invest and have a say in that fashion.

So the only solution to keep everyone's investments and returns straight, does the farm then become corporate?

It gets even more difficult when you look at something like the hog sector where not so long ago communities on the

Canadian Prairies built barns.

And so you go, talk about farm investors or corporate farmers, and is there a difference?

So on the international level, and I quote:

On an international basis, it is easier to grasp why the United Nations holds interest in the idea of family farms.

In many countries of the world, it is still very small farm holdings operated by a single family unit which produce the food.

Following the UN proclamation of the year, the Directorate General for Agriculture and Rural Development of the European Commission organized the international conference [organized this conference] "Family farming: A dialogue towards more sustainable and resilient farming in Europe and the world."

And so he goes on, talks about that there are 500 million family farmers all over the world feeding humanity, making up 80 per cent of all farms, although a nice, succinct definition of the family farm is missing. So that it's one that we wrestle with, isn't it, Mr. Speaker? You know, 500 million family farmers all over the world feeding humanity, making up 80 per cent of all the farms. "That said, small farms and the idea of family-operated generally seems to go hand-in-hand." And so the trend in North America is to massive farms while the ones in Europe and the rest of the world are much smaller in terms of farm size.

He talks about the European Union average farm size is about 14 hectares and about 70 per cent are under 5 hectares and only 3 per cent are larger than 100 hectares. So if you think about that compared to North America, that's a huge, huge difference.

So it's interesting how family farms evolve, and you know, rural areas in Saskatchewan, you may see them growing larger. And actually there's some census stats that I will get to in a minute talking about how the size of family farms are growing here in Saskatchewan, but there's a niche of farms that are staying quite small because they found other ways to be innovative and meet the needs of agriculture production. And I think that's very important.

So it talks about, and it's interesting that the writer, Calvin Daniels, talks about many innovations which move farming forward came from those on small holdings. And he talks about "Seager Wheeler made huge strides in breeding wheat in Saskatchewan in the early 1900s, and [he] was a homesteader." And this is so true. "Farming by its nature breeds innovation." There are hurdles to be overcome "and at times there are no available options or the money to purchase them if they existed, so farmers have learned to be inventors." So he talks about these kind of things and I think this is, this is really, really important.

And so you know, he talks about:

And this is where the debate about family farms always muddies for me. There seems an assumption because the

owner isn't getting his hands dirty seeding the crop that he will automatically not care about the long-term viability of the farm.

And hand-in-hand [with that], whoever is hired to do the work will care little for the farm either.

And he talks about how that's a questionable assumption to make, and I think that's fair.

I think he raises a really important point about what we think about the family farm. I think in many ways the family farm holds a very romantic, sentimental feeling for many of us because so many of us grew up on the farm, are connected to the farm.

You know, in our case there was a family of eight, but the farm wasn't large enough for eight of us to stay there and to make a living. So seven of us moved on. Seven of us went on to do all sorts of work, whether it's in social work or whether it's in mining, uranium mining in fact, whether it's in my work as a teacher first and now as a politician, whether you're a carpenter, whether you're a nurse. So many people from Saskatchewan farms have moved on but still feel very connected to the family farm.

But we understand the nature of change, that things have changed. Now in our case, our case, interestingly, interestingly, you know, my brother runs an organic farm and very proud of it, and has been for about 15, 20 years now and is doing very well, feeling very connected with his work as a farmer, in terms of marketing, looking after the land. And he's doing very well. He's been very fortunate that way. He's been very fortunate that way. And so in terms of making the farm economic, it's been very, very good.

But the question will arise about the intergenerational transfer. This is something I would've liked to have heard more from the minister in terms of.

So if he's repealing this, fair enough. Legislation every once in a while needs to be repealed, and we move on to something else. But what takes its place? Those key issues that were present in the '70s about the cost of running a farm, the economics of running a farm, the cost of borrowing, all of that were a big issue in the '70s. The size of the farm was also changing, and that's a big issue, but also the intergenerational transfer.

So in that Calvin Daniels goes on and closes, says:

In the end there is no doubt small holdings farms operated by a single family remain important to localized food production in most countries of the world.

But for large grain exporting countries like Canada, those small farms have been disappearing since the end of the First World War, and when a trend is so long entrenched, it is for a reason.

Bigger has been found to be better here, and while I applaud the UN for keeping talk of family farms around the world at the forefront, we have likely outgrown that

side of farming.

And so I'm wondering, is this where this government really is at, at the end of the family farm? And the minister wasn't clear on that, and it would be interesting to have that discussion. And I'm sure when we get to questions, that will be the discussion.

And you know, I looked . . . There was an article in *The Globe and Mail*, "Do corporate buyouts signal the end of the family farm?" And he talks about how this is really becoming more and more the thing. And we'll talk a little bit about this in terms of some of the things that are happening, but it seems to be, with the price of land, that this is becoming more and more the issue and a thing that's happening.

It starts out "Larry Spratt," and I'll quote:

Larry Spratt was combining with his father on their grain farm near Melfort, Sask. last November when a car pulled up along a nearby highway.

Out jumped Wally Johnston, a former Ontario farmer and now a vice-president at Bonnefield Financial, a Toronto-based investment firm. Mr. Johnston waved the Spratts over for a chat. "He said he was touring around Saskatchewan trying to meet farmers, and we talked to him for a while," Mr. Spratt recalls.

Mr. Johnston explained that Bonnefield was looking to buy farmland for investors and then lease it back to farmers to operate. The Spratts had heard that pitch before. They knew several farmers who had signed up with other investment companies and land prices in the area had been soaring as a result. Some farms were going for as much as \$1,200 an acre, more than double the price in other parts of the province.

Now this is from 2010, and we'll talk in a few minutes about what it seems the price of farm land is here now. And it's an interesting dilemma that we have such good farm land, but because in some ways it's affordable, it's become an interest to other people around the world.

It goes on to talk about:

Similar deals are being struck around the world in what has become an unprecedented rush by global investment funds to buy farmland. By some estimates these funds have sunk as much as \$20 billion (U.S.) into these acquisitions. Last year alone they bought 111 million acres of farmland, a tenfold increase from previous years.

It goes on to talk about how:

Saskatchewan has become one of the new frontiers in this global trend. The province has some of the most productive, and least expensive, farmland in the world. But restrictive ownership rules have largely kept out foreigners, pension funds and publicly traded companies. [But] pressure is mounting inside and outside Canada to change the rules and open up the province.

And now we, you know, and we've had the discussion about the



Canadian pension fund, CPP [Canada Pension Plan] buying farm land and what happens with that. And so we have some . . . This is an interesting discussion here. It goes on to talk about:

Today, investment funds at places as diverse as the Mormon Church, ManuLife Financial Corp. and the Dallas police department are pouring billions of dollars into farmland. In Canada, the CPP Investment Board is looking at investing in farmland and four companies are already snapping up thousands of acres . . .

And we know that in fact CPP has bought farm land, I believe, in Saskatchewan. So it goes on and to talk about what's happening with farm land. And so it's of interest that we see this bill before us. In the minister's speech, it didn't really talk about what's happening in the world. It says it's redundant. We're going to get it off the books. It sounds a bit like the statutes Act that I was talking about last week. And so we have some questions here about this, you know.

But as I was saying, that it is interesting when we talk about the size of farms in Saskatchewan. And this is from 2011, and so it is about three years out of date, but the 2000 census of agriculture recorded that there were 36,952 Saskatchewan census farms as of May 10th, 2011, a decline of 16.6 per cent from 44,329 census farms as of May 15th, 2006. So this government has seen a decline of almost 17 per cent of farms in Saskatchewan: farm units, economic units. And we know that many of these are actually getting bigger. And so we don't know what the number is today.

And maybe the minister, when we go into committee at some point, will tell us what the number of farms were in 2014. But we know it declined from 44,329, May 15th, 2006, to 36,952 in 2011. And that's 16.6 per cent. We know of the 37,000 farms, about 16,600 were larger than 1,120 acres, and we know that about 6,700 were less than 240 acres. And so you can see how the numbers are breaking out. And it's quite interesting here that actually the size of farms that decreased the most were the larger ones, the ones that were 1,600 acres or more to 2,200 acres. That had a big decrease. That was 23.4 per cent. So it seemed that you had to be really large or . . . The next size down, a quarter of those were snapped up. The number of farms that were in the 760 to 2,239 acres decreased by 23.4 per cent, almost a quarter — so that's something else.

[19:45]

Whereas the large farms, the very large farms, and there's, according to the census, 8,357 of them, and that would be ones with more than 14 quarters or more than 2,239 acres, increased slightly. But of course when that happens, you know, it's a matter of numbers, isn't it, Mr. Speaker? Because it takes a lot to make a big farm much bigger because they're already big. When they're gobbling up, when they're gobbling up the big ones, they have to really gobble up a lot to make themselves bigger. It's like the whale issue, right? How much bigger can you make a whale, right?

But you know, I do find it interesting, I do find it interesting that on the chart, the chart really demonstrates that the ones that were smaller were the ones that were not seeing the huge

changes, and obviously because there are not that many of them anymore.

But this is something, this is something that will . . . And I don't know if people are aware of this, that there's actually, that there is at least a 17 per cent change. Now it would be interesting to see what the latest stats are. And of course this is something that happens every five years. And of course I don't know whether this is something that the Ministry of Agriculture does or is it something that StatsCan does. And if it's StatsCan, we won't know whether or how accurate these stats are because of course with the whole slashing of staff at StatsCan, whether that will impact on these statistics at all. But it will be interesting to know, if this continues to be the trend, that we'll actually see the number of farms decrease in such staggering numbers. The size of farms will get larger, but the number of farm units are actually going down in quite significant.

Now we had talked about in that earlier story about the price of farm land. And I think it'd be of interest to people at home to talk about what is happening here in Saskatchewan with the fact that while the farms are disappearing, that actually in many ways the price of farm land is increasing and now from my understanding is levelling off. But we understand that in May, and this is from a CBC [Canadian Broadcasting Corporation] news story in May, that farm land values shot up in Saskatchewan between January 1st of 2013 and December 31st of the same year. And while nationally farm land prices went up by 22 per cent, and that's a significant increase, 22 per cent, that in Saskatchewan it was nearly 30 per cent, 28.5 per cent in that one year alone. And Farm Credit Canada told CBC news that it's actually the largest increase they've seen since they've been doing their study for the past 20 years.

And so it's really something to see that in that one year that you could see such a significant increase. And as I was saying earlier that, you know, the reason that Saskatchewan is looking more and more like the place to invest is because the land is so good, but it was so much more affordable. But this is really the changes that we're seeing.

Now apparently what happened in the spring were some of the changes in some of the regulations that happened, and one of the regulations then allowed for non-Saskatchewan residents and institutional buyers such as investment groups or funds like the Canada Pension Plan. As I was saying, in that *Globe and Mail* article from 2010, this was the issue that was starting to rise was that large groups or corporations were looking for places to invest and to buy, such as CPP, and this is something that they saw.

Now some people were saying they were going to see some levelling off, that that was a bit of a shock, but the prices would level off. And you know, another factor as the marketplace stabilized, of course, was the commodity prices dropping off. But anyways, they did go up and people were taking advantage of it. And there's numerous stories about, you know, farmers would say that this is the time, if they were thinking of retiring, that they should retire.

Then we had the story on October 1st, just a couple of months ago, that "Despite prices rising as much as 10 per cent . . . [so it was almost 30 per cent in 2013 and then 10 per cent in this

year] farmland is still a deal compared to the rest of Canada” — in many ways, I might add, Mr. Speaker. “Farmland [now] in Saskatchewan is listed for around \$1,800 per acre in the northwest and up to \$2,200 an acre in the central west region, according to Re/Max Market Trends Farm Edition 2014 . . .”

Then they were talking about, you know, land in southern Alberta. Apparently tile drained land sold for as much as \$10,000 per acre, which represents a 20 per cent increase there over the past year.

It goes on and some of the people in the article talk about how now that “You are not seeing people coming in and buying large tracts of land. They are only buying a few quarter sections instead of the many quarter sections.” But the sections are moving along.

But he talks about how we have doubled, at least in price, in the last five or six years. “A thousand dollars an acre was big money five years ago.” And this is Wally Lorenz, and that’s no stranger to us, Mr. Speaker. But now he’s working for Re/Max of Battlefords. But he goes on, and I quote, “We have at least doubled (in price) over the last five or six years. A thousand dollars an acre was big money five years ago. Now there is some selling for \$2,200 to \$2,400 (per acre).”

So it’s something to say and this is something that we have to think about in terms of how does that relate to the original intent of the bill, *The Family Farm Credit Act*. And you know, in the ’70s, when I think about some of the legislation that was produced during that period of time, some of it was so innovative, so visionary when we talk about the fact that, you know, Sask Housing was developed at that time to meet the needs of a growing population in Saskatchewan. And here was one to talk about how the farms were facing real challenge.

As I said in terms of *The Family Farm Credit Act*, was to make long-term credit available to farmers and to establish the development of family farms, you know, as economic farm units, and in the transfer of family farms from members of one generation to members of a later generation and to assist in the enlargement or conversion of family farms that are uneconomic farm units into economic farm units. So even in this Act, it recognized that family farms were growing, and they continued to grow. And that’s the reality.

And as I was talking about the article by Calvin Daniels, you know, and he does describe the chasm between those with sentimental recollections of, you know, family farm and a home on every half section, and in many ways that has not become the way of production in Saskatchewan. It’s not the way that so many are used to now. And while that can be the way in other parts of the country or other parts of the world . . . And as the article quoted, there’s some 500 million family farmers or family farm units in the world, feeding the world.

I think that we would have really liked to have heard more. We would have liked to have heard a lot more from the minister about the issues that *The Family Farm Credit Act* set out to address. It set out to address intergenerational transfer. It set out to address how do you make uneconomic units into economic units and how do you address the cost of borrowing. Now it may be right now that the issue of cost of borrowing is not an

issue and of course, you know, we often hear that we are fortunate that the cost of borrowing is reasonable. In fact, some would argue that we’re living in very fortunate times because the interest rates are so low. But how long will they be in that position? We don’t know.

And people are even, in talking about what the impact of some of the change is, and I would think this government is wrestling with this at treasury board and their mid-term reports: what is the impact of a lower Canadian dollar, a lower price for commodities? What is that impact for Saskatchewan? What does it mean for Saskatchewan farmers? Will we see interest rates go up?

And it seems weekly or biweekly we often hear people, the financial folks, have a debate about this. Some will say that interest rates are bound to go up at some point, but we’ve been fortunate for the last several years to see interest rates remain very low. But if that were to change, then things may have to . . . We may be back looking at a farm credit Act.

And I don’t know whether the government would call it a family farm credit Act, whether they’ve decided that they’ve come down on the corporate farm side. I would hope that there’s always a place for family farms here in Saskatchewan. I think that, you know, it’s interesting that so much of Saskatchewan and, as I said, there’s so many people who feel deeply connected, deeply rooted in family farms. While they may not be the farmer, they may not be the person who gets their hands dirty, but they do feel connected.

Whether it’s the weather . . . We all are paying attention to seeing how the combines are doing in the fields. We all watch that. We all feel concerned about when seeding is late. It’s just something that is part of the Saskatchewan psyche, and I think it’s an important thing that we . . . You know, it’s part of our heritage for so many of us.

So when we have these kind of discussions and, as I said, when we see this kind of legislation but the fact of the matter is that this is the only piece of legislation from the Ministry of Agriculture, we start to get concerned. Is this all that the ministry and the minister can come up with? Is this the extent of their vision, that they want to just repeal an Act and that’s it, that’s done?

You know, and I know and when we listen to throne speeches we know many on the other side, many people on the other side, many members on the other side rightfully spoke about agricultural challenges, rightfully spoke about that. But I don’t know if they were expecting that this would be the extent, the extent of their legislation, the extent of their agenda for agriculture in Saskatchewan. And when I look at it, it certainly is pretty thin and it doesn’t give a lot of insight into the thinking of this government.

And of course while the minister, his speech, you know, compared to the length of the bill was quite lengthy, but really, really didn’t talk about the intergenerational transfer and didn’t really talk about what happens when you find yourself wanting assistance to make your farm more economic . . . Now there are different ways of making that happen. Not all of it has to be legislation. But at least in the speech, the government may have

taken an opportunity to say, these are the things that are meaning that the original Act set out as a challenge, the three things: costs of borrowing, intergenerational transfer, and how to make uneconomic farm units into economic farm units. He didn't really address those other two, and so I know that there will be questions about that.

[20:00]

And we will be hoping that while this government is preparing for an election, that you would think they would have more to say about agriculture than this Act to repeal *The Family Farm Credit Act* because, I've got to tell you, people think and expect more from any government, from any government. I think, Mr. Speaker, if this had been . . . If we had presented only one bill in the last year before an election and this was the extent of that bill, I think these folks over here would have a lot to say about that. They would have a lot to say about that. So I think they need to think about where . . . This is the best we can come up with? This is the very best?

You know, and we're going to hear in just a few minutes about the statutes bill. Again you know, when we were talking about the kind of legislation that shows direction, shows vision, and we're getting this kind of legislation at this time of year, this is the kind of stuff that really can be brought out in the spring when . . . In many ways it's not controversial because, you know, as the minister did talk about the fact that it hasn't been fully utilized since '94, even though interestingly, as I pointed out, there has been several amendments it looks like to the regulations. And the last one was in fact this year, but I don't know what that amendment was because it looks like it was in the regulations.

We have some questions about that. We have deep, deep concerns about that, because clearly a government that prides itself on agriculture, and this is the extent . . . I'm not just holding the title page here, Mr. Speaker. I'm holding the whole bill in my hand. You know, I may be walking on thin ice because I know I'm not supposed to be using a prop, but in this case the prop is the legislation. The extent of . . . This whole bill is the extent of this government's agricultural agenda in many ways, and that is a sad thing. That is a sad thing.

So I really would hope that in the next few days we're going to see much more legislation or something from the Minister of Agriculture. Because I know he can get on his high horse and talk about how he's from the farm and he knows what's what. And you know, I give him credit. He appears to be a successful farmer. But I've got to tell you there's a lot of people that are depending on the wisdom of this government.

What we know, though, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately that number is shrinking, isn't it. Because it shrunk from 44,329 farms in 2006 to just under 37,000 farms. So there's fewer and fewer farms out there that are depending on this government for leadership because they're getting bigger. But still, they're our people and they do have a responsibility.

Now I know that we have many bills in front of us that we want to debate tonight and I know many people will want to get up and speak about this. And I really will want to hear what the critic has to say about this because I think this is a big deal, Mr.

Speaker, that if this is the best the government can do at this time of year . . . It's had all spring and fall to come forward with legislation around agriculture, and this is the harvest. This is all we got. This is sort of like "Jack and the Beanstalk." This is what I came home with. This is all I got. This is all I got is this one page, this one page. The Minister of Agriculture shows up with one page. I don't know. I don't know. There's got to be more. There's got to be more. There's got to be more.

With all the stuff that's happening out in rural Saskatchewan on the farms, there's got to be more. There's got to be more. There's got to be more. You know, when you talk about rail lines and the trains and all of that, and I know the government will get up on its high horse and say, we know . . . We're there. We're there. And this, I just got to say, if the government's staking its credit or its reputation on this one piece of legislation, it's a pretty thin reputation.

So, Mr. Speaker, with that, I know that there will be many people who will want to get up and speak on other bills, but with this Bill No. 159, *An Act to repeal The Family Farm Credit Act*, I would move adjournment of that bill.

Thank you.

**The Speaker:** — The member has moved adjournment of debate on Bill No. 159, *The Family Farm Credit Repeal Act*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 153

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 153** — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to enter the debate about Bill No. 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*. It's a fairly substantial bill in terms of size, Mr. Speaker. It's about a 27-page bill. It's interesting though. It's fairly straightforward in what it sets out to do. As the minister points out that *The Statute Law Amendment Act* makes "amendments to over 100 Acts to update outdated language, ensure gender-neutral language is used, and correct grammatical and reference errors." So I'll speak a little bit about that in a moment, Mr. Speaker, and about some of the things, the language that the bill does in fact change.

The minister goes on to point out that the bill, it's fairly straightforward but it "amends four Acts to remove the term lunatic and another eight Acts to remove reference to mental incapacity or incompetence in favour of lacks capacity."

And with respect to technological advances, Mr. Speaker, there's also, the minister points out that what "we previously referred to as telephone or facsimile transmission, electronic mail and Internet website are now commonly referred to as fax,

email, and website.” So this bill will change those things and it will update that terminology in 18 Acts.

And it will “also amend over 40 Acts to repeal the terms chairman and vice-chairman in favour of gender-neutral chairperson and vice-chairperson.” And I’ll speak in a few minutes, Mr. Speaker. I have quite strong feelings about the need for gender-neutral language, Mr. Speaker. And that’s been something that’s evolved over my time when I was a reporter. I was a little less . . . I had less concern about it, but there’s been some things in my life that made me realize that language does really have a huge role to play in how we see things, Mr. Speaker.

This bill also repeals and replaces “words that have a variety of spellings, such as extra-provincial . . . safe keeping, judgment, and pipe line,” working towards more consistency.

And the minister points out that this will assist in more accurate electronic searches of Saskatchewan’s legislation. And then after this bill, Mr. Speaker, there is a complementary bill with French language.

So I think some of the things that again, that I’d like to talk about, Mr. Speaker, is something very important. I was a reporter a very long time ago for about 12 years, Mr. Speaker. In my early days as a reporter, I never thought that gender-neutral language was very important. I actually used to think people were being kind of silly when they would push that issue, Mr. Speaker. But it was actually as I . . . when I became a mother, Mr. Speaker, and became an at-home mother, and I started to notice as an at-home mother I always got my hackles up when people would refer to working mothers and at-home mothers. And I would contend, and I’ve said this before in this legislature, that anyone who opts out of paid labour and who stays home with children is in fact also a working mother. And I think language sends a message to us about how we view the world and the how the world views us sometimes.

So that was . . . When I started thinking about that a little bit was when I, in fact, was in the position of . . . I felt marginalized as an at-home mother in that kind of language that was being used with choices that I had made, Mr. Speaker, at that particular time in my life. But I also had the opportunity, when I went back to school and did a social work degree and took a critical social work class and learned a little bit more about language and how important it is in shaping how we perceive people.

So I think about this bill, and it’s interesting. It’s removing the words lunatic, insane, mentally incompetent, and they become lack capacity or lacking capacity, in bills. And I have a few things to say about the definition of capacity, but before getting there I think that this is a very good move, Mr. Speaker, or a very . . . It’s not just about political correctness. It’s about again the message that we send to people about who they are and how we view the world.

My colleague from Saskatoon Centre, a few years ago when I had first become an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly], had a private member’s bill on removing the R-word, an incredibly offensive word to those who have intellectual or cognitive disabilities, Mr. Speaker, and a word

that I think many people still toss out without any regard to how hurtful it can be. And again, language says a lot about how people perceive us or how we perceive things. So as my colleague from Saskatoon Centre brought forward this private member’s bill . . . And I believe the government took it on. I don’t think they passed his bill directly, but my memory is a little faded on that, but I’m pretty sure the government decided to pursue that after he had brought that forward and to remove the R-word from our legislation.

But it’s not just in legislation. It has to be removed from all contexts. Like I said, I hear that word quite frequently in dialogue, and people don’t . . . It’s not that people are mean or trying to be negative or disparaging, but it was a common word that people used and didn’t really think about how hurtful it could be. So when I think, particularly when I think about the word lunatic, insane, or mentally incompetent . . .

I think about my own family, Mr. Speaker — and I know all of you know here, and maybe people who might be watching this don’t realize this — but I lost a nephew a year and a half ago to bipolar disorder. Beautiful, handsome, brilliant, incredible athlete. As my sister-in-law described him, my nephew, Jordan, was more of everything and felt more of everything.

Subsequently, mental illness was really quite difficult. I mean it always is, Mr. Speaker, but there is a huge stigma to mental illness in this province and in this country and in North America in general. And despite the fact that many people, they say . . . I’ve heard different statistics. One in four, one in five people are touched by mental illness, Mr. Speaker. And huge stigma. So changing language, I think, is absolutely imperative.

Actually it’s interesting. There’s a great article here, actually I read it just last week, on *Huffington Post* and shared it on my Facebook page. And the article is, “What if People Treated Physical Illness Like Mental Illness,” and it’s by Lindsay Holmes. Lindsay goes on to write that:

It’s no secret there’s a serious stigma attached to mental illness. According to the CDC [or Centre for Disease Control], only 25 per cent of people with mental health issues feel that other people are compassionate and sympathetic toward them. It’s a shameful statistic when one in four people have been touched by some form of mental illness.

And the author goes on to write that:

Experts say that part of the problem when it comes to criticizing someone’s mental health is a lack of empathy and knowledge about the ailments. Yet despite the staggering evidence and rhetoric aimed at helping people understand, many people still don’t get that being diagnosed with a mental illness isn’t something that’s in their control — just like having the flu, or food poisoning, or cancer isn’t in their control.

So it’s interesting, actually, the best part of this article, Mr. Speaker:

In an effort to reframe the conversation, artist Robot Hugs created a comic that displays what it would be like if we

discussed physical illnesses in the same way we do mental illnesses.

I can't use a prop, Mr. Speaker, but I'm going to describe some of these pictures to you. And I would direct anybody who's interested to check out my Facebook page, my latest post. I think that this is a really important article to share, and it's kind of cute but it sends a really serious message.

There's a cartoon of an individual who clearly is suffering from a very upset stomach, lying under a blanket and not feeling very well. And someone . . . This is under helpful advice, Mr. Speaker: "I get that you have food poisoning and all but you have to at least make an effort." And another, in another picture, Mr. Speaker, it's, "You just need to change your frame of mind, then you'll feel better." And it's an individual who has lost his hand, Mr. Speaker. But this is how people with mental illness feel when someone comes and tells them that it's just, you've just got to do something different, instead of accepting that it really is something out of their control.

There's another one with someone who is very ill, who's got the stomach flu and is leaning over a toilet. And the question that this cartoon asks is, "Have you tried, you know, not having the flu?" In another incident or in another cartoon, Mr. Speaker, it's an individual giving themselves an injection, perhaps someone who's got diabetes —someone like that could think about this as a possibility — and what the caption is, "I don't think it's healthy that you have to take medication every day just to feel normal. Don't you worry that it's changing you from who you really are?"

So these are all things that people with mental illness face on a regular basis, Mr. Speaker, the misinformed idea that you have total control over your mental health. It's no different than physical health.

[20:15]

There's a couple more that I'd like to tell you about. There's another cartoon character who obviously is injured, and his helpful colleague says to him, "It's not like you're even trying." And in the final cartoon, Mr. Speaker, someone lying in an ICU [intensive care unit] with an IV [intravenous] bag attached to them, and it says, "Well lying in bed obviously isn't helping you. You need to try something else."

So I think this is one of the best articles that I've read about mental health in a very long time, Mr. Speaker. And I know that some of the comments . . . People have shared this article. They feel that same way. If you've ever been faced with mental illness, you know that there's all kinds of helpful advice out there from people who think that you could just do something differently.

So I think when we talk about language and Bill 153 changing lunatic, insane, and mentally incompetent to lacks capacity or lacking capacity, I think is a very good way to go, but it's interesting. Again having been a former reporter, there's an article from December 3rd, 2012, "Congress could remove lunatic from US law." Apparently this was something that was going on in the States as well, but I have to . . . I'm going to make some editorial comment here. The lead, which is the first

sentence in a newspaper story, it says:

It's not like Congress has anything important on their plates worth tackling before the end of the term, but just in case, they're tackling the pressing issue of offensive terminology in the U.S. Code: the House is taking a look at the 21st Century Language Act, S. 2367, which removes the word "lunatic" from U.S. law.

So that's the lead. And I have to say that reporters can have a habit of being a little snarky or saying things . . . sometimes have a slightly darker sense of humour at times. But yes, maybe it wasn't the most pressing. There are many issues that Congress was dealing with, but when it comes to working on addressing stigma, I think that it is important to take these measures when it comes to legislation, and send a message. The Government of Saskatchewan is sending a message saying that it's not acceptable, that we need to reframe that language and think of people with mental health challenges differently, Mr. Speaker.

In the same news story, this bill passed the Senate in May and was sponsored by a Democrat from North Dakota and a Republican from Idaho ". . . to reflect the 21st-century understanding of mental illness and disease, and that the continued use of this pejorative term has no place in the U.S. Code." So I would agree that the government making this move is a very positive step, not dissimilar from my colleague from Saskatoon Centre who advocated to have the R-word removed from legislation.

But I think the one question that I'd have, and it's maybe outlined in some of the other bills, is the definition of capacity or lacking capacity, what exactly that means in the bill. That's not outlined at all in the bill, and I'd be interested and it'll be interesting in committee actually to have that discussion to find out what that looks like, Mr. Speaker. And I think that that is fraught in of itself.

I know I've talked to people who have had adult children with either mental health challenges or acquired brain injuries who know some of the challenges and struggles when it comes to making sure that their children have services, their adult children have the services and the care that they need. And it can be incredibly fraught, in terms of protecting the adult's privacy, for the health community, or ensuring that that individual gets the care that they need. So I would like some further clarification on what lacks capacity or lacking capacity means, Mr. Speaker. I think those are important things.

Again language does matter, and we do have to pay attention to how we use it and what we say because those send messages to everybody around us, so again I'm pleased that the government is making some of these changes. As I said, chairman becomes chairperson. I'm all about gender-neutral language, Mr. Speaker, now at this point in my life. It's been a bit of an evolution for me.

I think some of the interesting things, the little debates that we could have or discussions, again, having been a former reporter, we used to use something called the CP [Canadian Press] *Stylebook* and there was always debates about . . . So the *Stylebook* is what newspapers generally used to decide how

you'd spell neighbour or . . . Would it be o-u-r? The same with labour. Forget the dictionary. You rely on the CP *Stylebook*.

And it's interesting. The word in this bill, judgment, j-u-d-g-m-e-n-t becomes j-u-d-g-e-m-e-n-t, Mr. Speaker. So that is an interesting thing that this is where the government chooses to focus. But actually when it comes to language too, I was, when I was a reporter I was also a copy editor and I'm a bit of a stickler for language. There's certain things in grammar that really bother me. Dangling prepositions are one of the big ones, Mr. Speaker. I have a hard time with dangling prepositions. But I can remember reading a book called *Grammar Snobs Are Great Big Meanies* and the gist of the book was about how language changes and evolves over time and how sometimes those of us who are grammar snobs should get with the times and accept that those changes happen and that common usage is not a bad thing sometimes, Mr. Speaker.

But I was just looking up here. It was interesting to see where the jury falls on the word judgment, Mr. Speaker. And it was just, if you google judgment versus judgement, the different spellings, it's quite interesting actually because there is not a definitive, there is not a definitive where this falls down, Mr. Speaker. So I think that that's an interesting thing that the government has decided to pursue this. Again I do know, like I said the CP *Stylebook*, we always used to fall back on the CP *Stylebook*. So maybe I'm not quite sure why the government has moved to change the word judgment, but I think one of the comments the minister made was to use it consistently throughout. So they had to pick one, I guess, and go with it, Mr. Speaker.

Technological changes are an interesting thing that governments have to grapple with and legislation has to grapple with. I think many people wouldn't even know what fax stood for, Mr. Speaker. I had to stop and think for a minute, but fax came from the word facsimile.

So the reality is times change and bills have to be updated. And for the most part, I think these are not earth-shaking changes by any means, Mr. Speaker. And I'm particularly pleased around the changes around language for those who are lacking capacity, Mr. Speaker, who formerly would have been referred to as lunatic, insane, or mentally incompetent.

Yes, I think that's . . . You know, I just want to talk a little bit more about mental illness, Mr. Speaker, and that need to fight stigma. And I don't think you can talk about mental illness in Canada at all these days without talking about Clara Hughes, the former Olympian, who was a six-time Olympic medallist in both cycling and speed skating.

And this past year, Clara Hughes has been very vocal and very open about her struggle with depression, Mr. Speaker. And this past spring, she rode 11 000 kilometres over 110 days to raise the issue and awareness around mental illness. So I'm glad we are talking about it more, Mr. Speaker. But I think that you can't talk about mental illness in Canada without talking about the good work that she's doing and raising the profile of mental illness.

But I think that my colleagues will have things to say about this bill as well, and perhaps when we get to committee, we'll have

an opportunity to talk about Bill 153 around the words lacks capacity and what exactly capacity means, Mr. Speaker.

So with that, tonight I'd like to move to adjourn debate for Bill 153.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Saskatoon Riversdale has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 153, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 154

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 154** — *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)/Loi no 2 de 2014 modifiant le droit législatif* be now read a second time.]

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

**Ms. Chartier:** — Sorry, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I jumped the gun on that here. I'm pleased again to enter into the discussion about Bill No. 154, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014*. This is a complementary bill. The minister noted that, when introducing the English bill, Saskatchewan's last general statute revision occurred in 1978, which I didn't talk about, Mr. Speaker, in the previous bill.

1978 is a long time ago. I was eight years old, Mr. Speaker. I'm not eight years old anymore. That was a very long time ago and I think it was more than overdue in terms of looking at some of the language that needed to be changed.

So this particular bill will amend . . . My colleagues had encouraged me to speak in French but honestly despite my . . . I do have some capacity to speak in French but my confidence level is lacking, monsieur le Président. My confidence is lacking so I think I'll stick to English for this one.

So what this bill will do, it amends 12 bilingual Acts to make amendments to update outdated language, ensure consistent spelling, and correct grammatical and reference errors such as updating spelling of safekeeping, pipelines, subject matter, insofar, and extraprovincial. So it does exactly the same thing as the previous bill, Mr. Speaker, but in French. So it also replaces the telephone transmission, telecopier, facsimile, and electronic mail with fax and email, and will replace "be of unsound mind" with "lack capacity."

So my comments for the previous bill stand. I think moving to gender-neutral language where we can is a good move and I think we always have to remember to choose our words carefully, Mr. Speaker, because the words that we use send a message about what we think and what others perceive of us, Mr. Speaker, and of what we perceive the general world to be. Language is really, really important.

So with respect to Bill No. 154, I think also that term around

lacks capacity, I would like to have some sense of what the definition of lacks capacity is. And perhaps the minister in committee will talk about it, where it might be defined in another bill. But I think that that is an important piece to have a better understanding, of which to have a better understanding, Mr. Speaker. I almost used a dangling preposition, of, at the end of my sentence but I caught it, Mr. Speaker. Anyway to that effect I know I have colleagues who will also speak to Bill No. 154 and will have some questions in committee. So with that, I would like to move adjourn debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 154, *The Statute Law Amendment Act, 2014 (No. 2)*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

### Bill No. 155

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 155 — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014/Loi de 2014 sur les directives et les subrogés en matière de soins de santé*** be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To join in on Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*, going over I guess some of the change and the reason my government is introducing the change.

I want to talk a little bit about that it's going to go from English and also have our official second language, French, will be in this bill. They basically, as you go through it, for those that would go through the bill, will have an opportunity to look at the bill and have it in French, as our second official language, and that's important.

But I want to talk a little bit about I guess my own family and some of the stuff. And I think about my grandfather who was a Second World War vet who spoke, again we'll say French, Michif language. It's French; it's Cree. And sometimes some of the communities, when I go back and think about that . . . He was a very proud Métis, very proud of his language he spoke. But when I think about some of the stories he told, you know, when sitting around when I was a little boy, talking about . . . and watching my grandparents and my parents who both spoke Michif or French in their way.

Yet you know, some of my colleagues and the member from Athabasca, if you listen to some of his Cree, he talks about that it's the Michif. And some of them speak the Michif language. It's Cree and French. It's kind of jointed, blended in. And you know, some of them speak very well.

[20:30]

I've listened to some of them that actually instruct on the

Michif language and talk about that, and I know the member does. And I'm very proud, and we know those that speak the language are very proud. Anytime you can have a second language other than English, it's something that we're proud of. And it's not just French; it's, like I said, Cree, Dene. There's many different languages that people speak. But when we look at the bill and all that it's going to do, it's going to talk about the French and turning it over.

So when I think about my grandfather, you know, like I said, he was a veteran. He was a very proud man. He was wounded when he was serving our country, like many of the veterans that serve were wounded. And I remember him telling us the story about when he was first wounded, and he talked about that. Then finally after a time he got transferred. He got transferred to Winnipeg to where they would send the type of injuries that my grandfather had. He was shot pretty bad and wounded in the leg, and it was pretty bad and pretty serious. So anyway, he was there for physio and everything else.

But it was interesting. He talked about a priest. One day he was talking, and this priest came in and he looked at him kind of funny. He said he looked different. And he said . . . So he spoke. In his mind, he spoke to him, this priest. And it was amazing. He spoke Michif to him. And my grandfather was pretty . . . So they just got into it, and I remember him talking about it. It just made him feel . . . He felt good like at home and that type of thing to speak the language. But he didn't hide from it, which was kind of nice. And I talk about that, and I remember my grandfather and his language, like I said, he spoke.

So just talking about that, my grandparents, my aunts and uncles, some of them are in education as their careers, you know, principal. They work in different capacities. But they speak French. You know, some will say the Michif language. But having said that, it's some of those ties to the language, and it's important.

It's important for whether . . . and I've said this: language is so crucial and important to our young generation. And you know, when I think about it, sometimes my parents and grandparents for their grandkids spoke the language, and we didn't get the opportunity to speak the Michif and French, as I say. And you know, some of them, they would talk about, it was their way of kind of I guess having those conversations. I wish today, like so many that are losing, young people who are losing their language, whether I think about whether it's Cree, Dene . . . There are other languages that are out there.

But going back and thinking about this bill that's coming into effect, and I'm going to get a chance to talk about that, the bill itself where we have the change coming in. We know that the change will be having an official second language that will come into this bill, and it's going to give the French people an opportunity and those that speak, as it is our second language.

And I know, I think we're going to have a few questions. And people and I am wondering the change on this bill versus other bills that will come forward, and there must be a reason. And I know in committee we can ask questions, and I'm kind of interested myself to see, why is this bill being changed? There might be others, and I think the minister refers to some of the

other bills. But which bills, and why will certain ones trigger to have our official second language? Will they all be coming through at some point? Like I don't know. And I know there's questions, and we'll want to ask those questions in committee.

And who requested? I'm curious. Like was it the francophones who have requested that some of this legislation . . . Or is it because of the Supreme Court challenge? And I know there is some talk about that, that it's making it our official language as French as a second language. And is that the reason why this bill is coming into effect and taking over and making the changes so not only is it in English but it's in French? So I'm wondering, and I know we'll have lots of questions about it in committee. I'm just curious.

It gives a person a chance, and we've got some friends within the francophone school division, and I'm curious to, you know, I'm going to call one of them and just ask them, was it something that you guys have requested? Is it something that . . . And I don't know if the Minister of Justice, you know, is saying there's certain ones that trigger where we have to have legislation in the official second language. Or will they all be coming forward? I don't know that, and I guess it's going to be interesting to find out. Maybe in committee we'll find out and do a little bit of background research to find out, you know, what exactly and why the change.

And it's good. I mean I'm happy for the francophones and for those who want to have legislation that's being introduced in their language to understand it.

And sometimes some of the provisions in here are pretty serious when you look at having somebody, when it comes to health, to be able to act as I guess your decision maker, when you're appointing someone as a guardian, someone to make those careful decisions for you. You want to make sure they're understanding the legislation, the requirements in here that, you know, explain to them what their role is, what their role isn't, and who has the power to make these decisions when it comes down to health care and those decisions that will affect them, whether they need to go for some type of medical treatment, whether it's having somebody have those decisions on your medical treatment, whether it's a doctor, whether it's been somebody who's been appointed over . . . an adult. Is it an adult? Is it a child? Is it a senior where you appoint someone as your I guess decision maker to make sure that your wishes are . . . you know, when you share with someone that you're going to turn it over.

And there is different provisions in here, you know, whether it's a trustee, whether a power of attorney. They're different. In this one we're talking about medical, and you're referring to decisions that I guess caregivers will make for you.

And I guess the power is to be clear that they understand. Whether it's in English, or if their official language is French, this provides for that clarification to make sure that they understand this bill. And as you go through the bill as I did, comparing them, as they go from one page to the next, you have English, but you also have it in French, exactly the alternate page, to explain to them. So if someone is French speaking, they have that.

And this provision in here, it's going to give certain powers. And you want to be clear because there will be . . . You could end up being held and be brought before a judge because you're not taking the proper case and doing what you've been asked to do in the care that you've been asked, decisions you've been asked to make for someone who's living in a health care, whether it's long-term care, whether there are treatment is needed for this individual. You might have been appointed as a guardian, but you have to make sure that you're doing and that you understand the role that you've been asked to do when it comes to taking care of an individual.

And we're talking something about medical decisions and treatment that could cost someone their life, could be a pretty serious decision. But at the end of the day, those individuals need to rely on someone that's a caregiver, whether it's proxy that they are providing for an individual.

Now this bill goes through all the different areas in English, but again like I said, now it's been put in French. It's giving the opportunity for those that speak the official language an opportunity to look at the bill, understand it, and to make sure they understand the consequences if they don't act and they don't do what's in legislation to protect the individual and make those decisions when it comes to health care treatment that individuals need, and that you understand clearly, that you understand the obligation on yourself legally. And I said the provision talks about that. So in this provision it makes it very clear for the individual in English. Now it makes it in our official language. It makes clear for those individuals.

Now having said that, I mean I know my colleagues, and we'll have lots of questions in committee. And I know I have some questions I would like to ask, you know, and clarification. How many other bills will be coming into effect that will be changed? Maybe there's more of them. Like I don't know, but I'm curious to find out. And in committee we're going to have an opportunity to ask some of the those questions.

And you know, like I said, I know some of the second languages, even in La Ronge. And I think about the French immersion program that they have in our community, very important opportunity in our high school, our elementary school, for those parents that want to have their children taught our official second language of French that is provided in our local school in the North in a school division.

And I remember being on the school division, parents wanting that. And not only at the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] or K to 6, but they wanted it into the high school as well. And you know, parents lobbied and they asked the board of education to make sure that . . . They were proud of their language and they wanted their children to be taught in the language that maybe they spoke at home; maybe they didn't. Maybe they wanted their children to have a second language so that if they're planning for jobs, it gives them an opportunity at the, you know, not only English, but having a second language, French being the official language of Canada, not only the province. This gave family members and it gave community members an opportunity, like I said, not only at the K to 6 but also in the high school as they moved it up.

And we've seen the success in grade 7, grade 8, grade 9, 10, 11,



and it moved on. And there are many students, you know, that went through our school division in La Ronge and area, when I think about the French immersion program, that have done very well. They have gone on, being very successful having that language. When you talk to some of them and listening to some of them talk in our community, they're very comfortable in the language. You don't see, you know, they're very comfortable. Whether it's . . . We see some of our community members who are proud of the Cree. These individuals are proud of the French language that they speak and they do a service as ambassadors leaving our community and going out when they go to university, or they get employed with the Government of Canada. And some of them have had that opportunity and they've moved on. So having the language and having French, like I said, as a second language, has been a huge asset to them, an ability for them.

So here we have again, like I've said, an opportunity here. And we will have more questions to ask, Mr. Deputy Speaker, on this but at this point I have no further questions. I know in committee we will have some questions and some inquiring minds would like to know why. And maybe there's other legislation that will come forward to have the official second language being recognized in legislation like this. So it's a move and I think in a good way and a positive way for the second language.

So at this point I am prepared to adjourn debate on Bill 155.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 155, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 156

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Wyant that **Bill No. 156** — *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Vermette:** — Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. To join in on Bill 156, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014*. If you look at the provision, of course, it talked about the previous Act. And this consequential amendment is actually changing and has to . . . It triggers obviously four areas that need to come in compliance with the Act being changed and the official language. And at this point there's four of them that it will cause consequential amendments to be made to those four Acts and by this Act. So what it does, it does the consequential amendments. And I talked about the language and changing over. So at this point I have no further comments on Bill 156, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments, 2014*. I adjourn

debate.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Cumberland has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 156, *The Health Care Directives and Substitute Health Care Decision Makers Consequential Amendments Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried.

#### Bill No. 157

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Duncan that **Bill No. 157** — *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014* be now read a second time.]

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

**Mr. Wotherspoon:** — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to enter into debate here this evening as it relates to Bill No. 157, *The Human Tissue Gift Act* that's been brought forward by government. Certainly the Act itself and the objectives laid out by the minister, the objectives are to bring about the possibility of transplant in a more timely way. That in itself is important and making sure that there's, you know, options there for Saskatchewan families. That's important as well.

[20:45]

The question then remains as to whether or not what's being proposed by government is the best way to achieve that. And it's going to be interesting moving forward on this piece here to certainly consider what's being proposed by government directly with health and medical professionals in Saskatchewan, in Canada, around the world to ensure that we're connecting directly to Saskatchewan families to understand where they stand on the purchase of organs which is being proposed by government, and making sure that they've had time to consider some of the ethical questions involved in that as well.

And certainly it's our role as an official opposition to work directly with the stakeholders, who I should say, on a disappointed front, far too often by this government aren't properly consulted. But it will be our responsibility to certainly do that consulting. And importantly, we'll be listening to Saskatchewan families and from that we'll certainly have some further questions for the minister.

The minister's comments . . . You know, there's a significant change in proposing the purchase of organs. The statements by the minister to date actually have been very brief, very brief and very broad. And so there's going to definitely require some specificity to what's being proposed as well as examples as to where else this system is in place, what are some of the potential consequences here in Saskatchewan from a national and international global perspective with a purchasing system. Who else is doing this, and what has their experience been?

But certainly I think that when you're talking about organ

purchase, it's not something that can simply be brushed off as a simple bill. So certainly the goal that those requiring organs, whether that be kidney, liver, or whether it be corneas, which are discussed by the minister, and making sure that there's more options and that there's a timely response, is something that's certainly really important to the official opposition. And making sure that we have the specialists and the resources in place to support those transplants is something that certainly we'll be focusing on, and looking at all the other options that may be in place. And this is an area for which we'll draw, as I say, from the medical community, the medical profession, and from Saskatchewan families.

And you know, we have, you know, some examples of management of blood here in Saskatchewan, a system that works quite well, one that I know could be supported better. I think of even myself. I could do a much better job of being a more regular donor than I am. But we should certainly be doing that. So those are the aspects for us to focus on, Mr. Speaker.

But as I say, you know, the discussion and the change to purchase organs is something that is of relative significance, one that, you know, certainly we'll be listening to Saskatchewan people on, the medical profession, and making sure that this is the right step and the best way forward for Saskatchewan people.

As I say, on far too many fronts that government rams forward with changes or legislation without consultation and actually listening to Saskatchewan people and without consulting those who know best on the ground in stakeholder groups. And so we'll defer further comments at this point in time. We'll look forward to following up with the minister with some more specific questions and certainly ensuring that we receive from him more clarity as to what this plan is all about. But at this point in time this evening, I move adjournment of Bill No. 157. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member has moved to adjourn debate on Bill No. 157, *The Human Tissue Gift Act, 2014*. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried. Why is the member from Saskatoon Eastview on his feet?

**Mr. Tochor:** — Yes, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to move the motion to adjourn the House.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — The member from Eastview has moved that this House does now adjourn. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

**Some Hon. Members:** — Agreed.

**The Deputy Speaker:** — Carried. This House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 1:30 p.m.

[The Assembly adjourned at 20:50.]

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